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OFFICIAL REPORT
(HANSARD)

Friday, December 4, 2009

Speaker: The Honourable Peter Milliken

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HOUSE OF COMMONS

Friday, December 4, 2009

The House met at 10 a.m.

Prayers

GOVERNMENT ORDERS

•(1005)

[*Translation*]

FAIRNESS FOR THE SELF-EMPLOYED ACT

The house resumed from December 2 consideration of the motion that Bill C-56, An Act to amend the Employment Insurance Act and to make consequential amendments to other Acts be read the third time and passed.

Mr. Pierre Paquette (Joliette, BQ): Mr. Speaker, I will start by saying that I will share my time regarding Bill C-56 with the member for Terrebonne—Blainville.

When the government introduced Bill C-56 to make it possible for self-employed workers to receive special benefits, we were generally in favour of it. It is an idea that the Bloc Québécois has defended for a long time, that self-employed workers should have access to the employment insurance system, with some restrictions, of course. We imagined it would be much more inclusive, but this seems to be a step in the right direction. That is why we voted in favour of the bill at second reading, to refer it to a committee to be examined further.

Right from the start, however, we felt that the amount of \$1.36 for every \$100, which is not explicitly stated in the bill, was excessive. The Minister of Human Resources and Skills Development, through the Minister of National Revenue, announced that self-employed workers in Quebec would be asked to contribute \$1.36 for every \$100 of insurable earnings. Self-employed workers, especially women in Quebec, already have access to parental leave, which was implemented by the Parti Québécois some years ago. This program is very successful, and is partly responsible for the rather impressive and reassuring increase in the fertility rate in Quebec.

We therefore had some apprehensions, but once again, as I said, we wanted to give the government a chance, so we sent the bill to committee. Our fears quickly proved to be well founded. This premium of \$1.36 per \$100 would be used for two types of benefits: sickness benefits and compassionate care benefits. I would remind the House that we are talking about 15 weeks in the case of sickness benefits and six weeks in the case of compassionate care, if I

remember correctly, so these are fairly minimal benefits. In my opinion, very few male and especially female workers in Quebec are going to enrol in this system at a cost of \$1.36, even though enrolment is voluntary. As responsible legislators, we cannot accept this approach.

Consequently, in committee, we tried to amend the bill to ensure that the contribution rate for self-employed workers in Quebec would be fair, given the new coverage they were being offered. Moreover, the amendment was designed so that if another jurisdiction in Canada were to offer benefits such as parental or maternity leave or sickness or compassionate care benefits, there would be a formula to reflect that reality and prevent these self-employed workers from having to pay twice for the same type of coverage, either now or in the future.

We tried to debate this in committee, but the Liberals unfortunately did not see things our way, so we will be forced to vote against Bill C-56 at third reading.

In addition, the former EI chief actuary, Michel Bédard, took it upon himself to provide us with his assessment of what the contribution rate should be for self-employed workers in Quebec. He sent an email to my colleague from Chambly—Borduas, basing his calculations on the cost of these special benefits. We are talking about roughly \$1 billion for parental or maternity leave. The rest was for compassionate care and sickness benefits. I would like to quote his conclusion:

Quebeckers should pay a contribution rate of \$0.41 per \$100 under Bill C-56 for sickness benefits. A rate of \$1.36 per \$100 would clearly be excessive.

The former actuary said that. If I recall correctly, he served in that position from 1991 to 2003, so he has the expertise to make the necessary calculations.

That amount also takes into account system administration costs. The amount the government announced is over three times too high given the new coverage it will be offering to self-employed Quebec workers. We do not want to have anything to do with a Conservative government plan that verges on usurious.

Government Orders

That is why we will vote against this bill. If the bill passes, the Bloc Québécois will take it upon itself to make sure self-employed workers in Quebec know that this plan is a rip-off.

We have to look at things from a broader perspective. We have to say no to this bill because it is just a way to get money from workers whose income is already, for the most part, relatively low. But we think that this scheme is just cover for a Conservative government agenda to bring down the deficit, which is growing on a monthly basis because of the ongoing economic crisis and the recession, which have resulted in lower revenue and higher spending.

Basically, a review of the Minister of Finance's latest documents clearly reveals that the Conservative government will once again use the employment insurance fund as a cash cow to fight the deficit. That is the agenda behind Bill C-56, and we will not stand for it. We did not stand for it when Paul Martin's Liberals used the employment insurance fund—premiums collected from workers and employers, including small and medium businesses—for purposes other than those for which the money was collected.

The Minister of Finance's documents are very clear: over the next few years, more than \$15 billion will be taken out of the fund to pad the government's coffers. We find that deeply unfair and unproductive. Everyone knows that employment insurance premiums are an employment tax.

Proportionally speaking, what kind of businesses hire the most workers? Small and medium businesses. That is why this bill will perpetrate an injustice not only on workers, but also on the entrepreneurs who create the most jobs in our economy. That is especially true for Quebec.

We refuse to be complicit in another misappropriation of the employment insurance fund for other purposes. I would also remind the House that the Liberal government diverted somewhere between \$55 million and \$57 million for other purposes. Furthermore, two-thirds of the money used to pay down the deficit and create a surplus came from the employment insurance fund, and the rest came from unilateral cutbacks in federal transfers to the provinces. If memory serves, there was a surplus of approximately \$67 billion from 1998 until the end of the Liberal reign.

We are now witnessing the same scenario. It is a case of déjà vu. We simply cannot support this completely unfair practice. It is unwarranted, because there are other ways to balance the budget. Bill C-56 demonstrates the Conservative government's willingness to use the employment insurance fund to tackle the deficit. It has other means at its disposal. Perhaps those means may require public debates. Perhaps it is easier for them to use, in an underhanded way, the EI fund and the premiums that workers and employers have to pay. Maybe this prevents them from having to hold public debates.

That said, it would be in line with the Conservative way, which involves concealing information and imposing its vision for socio-economic development. And I am not even talking about environmental and cultural decay.

By stating here today that we will vote against Bill C-56, we are sending a clear message that we do not agree with this method of tackling the deficit.

As I said, there are other ways, including taxation measures, for example, particularly in the highest tax brackets. We have seen some bureaucratic spending and spending on federal government propaganda, which have been of no use whatsoever, either economically and socially. Our finance critic presented a plan a few weeks ago.

• (1010)

Accordingly, it will come as no surprise that we cannot accept this bill and that the Bloc Québécois will be voting against Bill C-56.

[*English*]

Mr. Jim Maloway (Elmwood—Transcona, NDP): Mr. Speaker, I have a feeling that the Bloc's research department should take a second look at this issue. It is supposed to have a very good research department, but I am not so sure it is right on this one.

For example, in this particular bill, this is optional. No one has to buy into this program. If individuals can find benefits that are cheaper in the private sector and insurance market, they are free to do so or they are free to do nothing. Second, the member said that the government would be using the EI surplus to pay the deficit. In fact, this program is not going to produce any surplus at all. There will be a deficit unless it is made mandatory.

I think the Liberal member had it tied down pretty good the other day. She suggested that she could not see how it could possibly make money because it would be selection against the EI system when it is made voluntary. It would have to be mandatory to break even. That is another issue. I would ask the Bloc member to comment on those items. I just think it has it wrong this time.

• (1015)

[*Translation*]

Mr. Pierre Paquette: Mr. Speaker, I am always stunned to see how naive the NDP can be. It regularly buys into the Conservative rhetoric for populist reasons. That may be the one thing that the NDP and the Conservative Party have in common: they base their arguments or their strategies on populism.

Our research department had nothing to do with it. The figures were validated. It was the former chief actuary for EI, Mr. Bédard, who did the calculations. Self-employed workers in Quebec will have to pay \$1.36, as opposed to \$1.73 for their Canadian counterparts. That is a difference of just 43¢, but self-employed workers in Quebec already pay 88¢ for every \$100 of insurable earnings for parental leave. Therefore, self-employed workers in Quebec will pay \$2.22.

First, this is extremely expensive considering what the real coverage is. We are not comparing this to the private sector. That has absolutely nothing to do with it. We are comparing this to how much it is costing the government to offer this new coverage and how much self-employed workers should be paying. Actually, they should be paying 43¢ for that coverage.

Second, Mr. Bédard told us that by 2014 the EI fund will have a \$100 million deficit on the Canadian side and a \$70 million surplus on the Quebec side. This means that self-employed workers in Quebec will pay for their counterparts in English Canada at a rate that I think is totally disproportionate.

We support the principle of solidarity within a society, but not at the expense of fairness and justice. This bill is unfair to the self-employed workers of Quebec.

[English]

Mr. Richard Harris (Cariboo—Prince George, CPC): Mr. Speaker, it is unfortunate that the Bloc is taking such an opposing view of this legislation. I think the Liberals and the NDP as well as our government realize that this is landmark legislation. It has never been offered before. This is something that is going to level the playing field as far as employment benefits for both workers and the self-employed.

If one does not try something new, one will never succeed in perfecting it. If we get this legislation through, we can take some time. If there are some areas that the opposition may feel need to be touched up a little bit, we have the committee to do that. As we go along with this program, which is new and innovative, we are going to see amendments that perhaps can make it better.

Let us understand that the self-employed business person in Canada plays a very key role and should have the opportunity to purchase this extra bit of protection. I am surprised that the Bloc is so opposed to it. Get with this legislation. It is—

[Translation]

The Speaker: Order, please. The hon. member for Joliette has the floor for a brief answer.

Mr. Pierre Paquette: Mr. Speaker, we tried to amend the bill. The Conservatives, together with the Liberals, refused to hear our amendment, which was a formula that would have provided equity for all workers in Canada and Quebec, if such a program were made part of employment insurance. We are talking about parental leave. We tried to improve it, but they refused. That is why we are voting against this bill.

Secondly, Michel Bédard, the former chief actuary of the employment insurance fund, was prepared to testify. He was even in the committee room. We suggested listening to what he had to say. Again, the Conservatives, together with the Liberals, refused to listen to Michel Bédard and hear the truth.

In closing, as I was saying, the reduction for Quebec, which the Minister of National Revenue is boasting about, is 37¢ from \$1.73. That represents 21.4% of the estimated cost of maternity leave benefits and parental leave, which, in fact, amount to 75%. Therefore, a 75% rebate should have been given instead of 21.4%

• (1020)

Ms. Diane Bourgeois (Terrebonne—Blainville, BQ): Mr. Speaker, we are here this morning to discuss Bill C-56, to amend the Employment Insurance Act.

The Bloc Québécois simply cannot support this bill because, once again, Quebecers will be paying for the rest of Canada.

Government Orders

We are used to paying for the rest of Canada. We have always paid. We have paid for Alberta's tar sands development because the federal government, with our taxes, has injected money into this sector. We have also paid for various Canadian structures. Now we will be paying once again to improve the employment insurance fund, which soon will be in the red.

The Bloc Québécois really cannot support this bill because it will penalize Quebec's self-employed workers. My colleagues in this House really have to think about that. Once again, the self-employed workers of Quebec will pay for measures that they can already access practically free of charge and will pay for those workers who do not have access to them. That is insulting.

This bill amends the Employment Insurance Act to establish a scheme that will pay special benefits to self-employed persons. The bill will amend certain sections on special benefits. We do not agree with this.

These special benefits are maternity benefits for a maximum of 15 weeks. As for parental or adoptive benefits, Quebec already offers these two types of benefits. We want to be clear about this: in Quebec we already pay for these benefits. Therefore, we do not need the benefits that will be included under employment insurance. Sickness and compassionate care benefits are acceptable.

The bill will give the self-employed voluntary access to special employment insurance benefits. Their premiums will be based on their tax returns. They will need to have earned a minimum of \$6,000 over the preceding calendar year to be entitled to benefits equal to 55% of their income. They will have to opt into the program one year prior to claiming benefits. For example, they will have to sign up in 2009 to receive benefits in 2010, and contribute for one year before having access to these benefits.

We have been told that this measure could be in place in 2010 with benefits based on the previous year's income, which would allow self-employed workers to sign up now.

However, once self-employed workers receive special benefits they must continue to pay premiums and cannot opt out. Of course, they will not be paying regular employee premiums.

Self-employed workers in Canada will pay \$1.73 per \$100 in insurable earnings to have access to the four measures. Self-employed workers in Quebec will pay \$1.36 per \$100 in insurable earnings to have access to two measures, which are the least expensive ones for the government.

It is as though I had four candies: one for \$1, one for \$2, one for 50¢ and another for 50¢. I make a deal and sell them for \$2. But I keep the first two candies in my pocket. So you end up paying \$2 for two candies worth 50¢. It is exactly the same thing.

• (1025)

What is shocking and insulting is that the government did not take into account that Quebec is proactive and already has measures to protect our self-employed workers. If they want to be fair and equitable, they should take that into account.

Government Orders

I hear my colleagues asking questions in the House and saying that this is a historic bill we could amend. But there is nothing historic about this bill, since Quebec has always paid for the rest of Canada.

My colleagues on the Standing Committee on Human Resources, Skills and Social Development and the Status of Persons with Disabilities tried to amend the bill, but no amendments ever passed. An actuary came to explain to the committee how it worked in Quebec, but they were not interested in listening. That is insulting and shocking.

Then, they try to say that the Bloc Québécois is against the bill simply because it is always against everything. Come on. My colleagues need to open their eyes. We have to fix this bill and come back to it, because it is unfair to Quebecers.

Quebec is unique because the CSST provides some protection for our self-employed workers. It does not make sense that Quebec should always be forced to foot the bill for services provided and measures implemented elsewhere. Self-employed Quebec workers need to know that they are being taken for a ride. Let me be the one to say that this is a dirty trick. My Bloc Québécois colleagues and I will unmask this bill. Why should we have to pay more than anyone else for our penny candy?

In committee, the Bloc Québécois was not very keen on this bill. When the federal government offers what it calls social measures to the rest of Canada, there is always a catch when it comes to Quebec. This is further proof of that. The Bloc Québécois tried to amend the bill, but did not succeed.

Moreover, Liberal and NDP members from Quebec are going to vote for this bill. When will it end? They are going to steal the shirts right off of Quebecers' backs. That is why this bill is so bad for Quebec. I am quite sure that Quebecers will not forget this.

This is not unlike what happened with the gun registry. Once again, Quebecers are falling through the cracks. So many of these bills seem to suggest that the rest of Canada expects Quebec to just suck it up and do as it is told.

I do not want Quebec to be a region. My region—my country—is Quebec, and Quebec is proactive when it comes to implementing social measures well before all of the other provinces.

I have no problem with anyone wanting to copy Quebec's social measures, but it is not right to make Quebec pay the price for the government's failure to come up with its own good ideas. They should have brought in measures to protect self-employed workers a long time ago, like Quebec did. I do not want to pay for the rest of Canada.

I have nothing against them bringing in social measures elsewhere, but I do not want them to tell Quebecers to foot the bill when the rest of Canada never pays for measures in Quebec. On the contrary, we fight for those measures.

• (1030)

[*English*]

Mr. Harold Albrecht (Kitchener—Conestoga, CPC): Mr. Speaker, I listened with great interest to the member's speech. One

thing I am a little saddened by is we are very close to Christmas and she seems so grumpy about this issue.

There are a lot of self-employed individuals in my riding. We have been clear for well over a year that this is one of the policies we would like to implement, and they have called for this change. It is a very positive change that will make a big difference for a lot of self-employed individuals. In Quebec there will be benefits for sickness and compassionate care.

Many associations have come out clearly in favour of the changes in this legislation. I am sure the member is aware of the Alliance of Canadian Cinema, Television and Radio Artists. It has said:

This is a positive first step by the federal government and so we are urging all parties to support the extension of parental leave benefits to all workers.

How can she stand in this place and say the option should be removed? It is an option that self-employed people can opt into it or not. How can she say she wants to remove a very good option for those who are self-employed in Canada?

[*Translation*]

Ms. Diane Bourgeois: Mr. Speaker, first of all, I am not grumpy; I am extremely angry about this bill.

The hon. member is hearing complaints from artists and citizens in his riding. He wants to offer benefits to self-employed workers because he seems to have a social conscience and to have social justice in mind.

How can he decide between Paul and Peter? How can he explain that?

Personally, I have no problem with the idea of granting benefits to self-employed workers. However, it needs to be done fairly, and not by making Quebec pay for the other provinces.

If my hon. colleague has a social conscience regarding artists and other citizens in his riding, will he have a social conscience when it comes to Quebec and will he listen to what Bloc Québécois members are saying, because this could involve an injustice? That is what I would like to ask the member.

[*English*]

Mr. Paul Szabo (Mississauga South, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, I listened carefully to the member and she makes a very important point. We expect the legislation will reflect fairness and equity to all persons and regions. That has to be acknowledged and accepted.

Being at third reading, however, and even if there is a fiscal issue with regard to the premiums to be charged to those who voluntarily take up this benefit, we only have a few options, many of which probably are not too salient right now.

One option would be to refer the bill back to committee so it could look at it more carefully and fix it, if necessary. The second option would be to let it go to the Senate so it could look at it. The third option, maybe, would be to have an undertaking from the government to examine this matter more fully and, if necessary, come back with amending legislation to make it fair and equitable.

Could the member comment on what approach we should pursue?

Government Orders

[*Translation*]

Ms. Diane Bourgeois: Mr. Speaker, I have always had a great deal of respect for the member who just asked me this question. I see him in this place all the time. We have even agreed on certain bills that have been extremely important to us, in terms of social justice. I continue to have a great deal of respect for him. He mentioned three options.

The first option would be to send the bill back to committee for amendments. That is in fact what the Bloc Québécois wanted. My colleagues who are members of the committee that deals with employment insurance proposed some amendments, which were flatly rejected. This is no joke. The actuary even came to explain the monetary implications of the bill, but no one would even listen to him.

Second, we cannot always count on the Senate to do our work for us. As members of Parliament, it is our duty to consider all aspects of a bill and examine it carefully.

Third, regarding an undertaking by this government, is the hon. member joking? In my opinion, when a government is not even open enough to listen to an actuary, it would never honour such an undertaking.

• (1035)

[*English*]

Mr. Paul Szabo (Mississauga South, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, I had an opportunity to listen to the debate when it commenced and a couple of items did strike my attention.

We are dealing, as we know, with Bill C-56. I believe this bill in principle has the support of the House, being passed at second reading and because it provides special benefits on an opt-in basis under the employment insurance system to self-employed persons.

I listened to the minister introduce the bill and I thought that the minister carefully framed the issue before us when she said that Canadians should not have to choose between the family and their business responsibilities. We all know that many people choose self-employment because it gives them the flexibility to take care of family responsibilities. Some are self-employed because they have lost their jobs but still have to work, and they have to scramble to make ends meet. There are a variety of other circumstances that may put people in situations where they must be self-employed.

The employment insurance system provides benefits for employed persons who, for a variety of reasons, may have to leave their jobs to get benefits. In addition to those, though, there are a number of special benefits that are attached. I have a particular interest in this act, because one of those benefits has to do with maternity leave under EI. Some years ago I was very pleased to be able, through one of my private member's bills, to get maternity and parental leave benefits extended to a full year from the then six months. I believe that particular change to the EI Act was very well received by Canadians. I would note that in France now, maternity and parental leave benefits are for a full two years, recognizing the research and studies done on head starts for children and how important it is that parents have the opportunity to determine when is the right time for their child to access day care or child care, or when the child needs their parents to be home. The bill will go part way in that regard for

self-employed persons. However, I fear it will probably not be enough and I hope that we will be pursuing this area of benefits for families with children. For me, it is so very, very important for families with children.

The minister also wanted to advise the House that self-employed workers in Canada are often the innovators in our economy. They are people who contribute their creativity, courage and capital in pursuit of a better life. They strengthen our communities, and it is the communities that make a strong country.

The minister also wanted to inform us that there are 2.6 million Canadians who are self-employed, and they account for about 15% of the working population. It is clear that this segment of our population faces circumstances that many people do not, or will never in their lifetimes, but it provides specific challenges. The difference for the self-employed is the fact that if they do not go to work or do the work, they do not get paid. There is a lot of work involved, but people make this sacrifice because it provides them with the flexibility to, among other things, make sure that the needs of their family, particularly their children, are taken care of.

Self-employed workers have been asking for these benefits for a very, very long period of time. The case has been well made, and self-employed Canadians do come from a broad range of situations and incomes. Some are professionals, scientists or technicians. They could be tradespeople or retailers, or they could simply be involved in a very small business where they are taking advantage of certain skill sets or abilities they have to provide goods and services. Thus it is an important segment of our economy that we really need to address.

• (1040)

About one-third of all self-employed women are also of child-bearing age, and many of them are choosing self-employment because it does provide the flexibility to combine a career with the responsibilities of raising a family. Obviously in these tough economic times, self-employment does offer a way for laid-off workers to stay active in the labour market and do their share in our economic recovery and, of course, to provide for their families.

Finally, with regard to the minister's comments, I thought that overall, the special benefits for the self-employed would mirror those of salaried employees. Under the EI program, the contributions and benefits for the self-employed would be comparable whether earnings came from self-employment, salaried employment, or a mix of the two; but clearly the overall goal was to make these special benefits for the self-employed the same as those for salaried employees, recognizing that some adjustments might be necessary. Those in fact have come to light in some of the statements made this morning and by the member for Laval—Les Îles, who raised the issue at the commencement of third reading.

Government Orders

In looking at the bill, I found it difficult to go through it because it has consequential amendments to a number of acts. There are also a number of exceptions. For instance, if one is self-employed and ill and wants to receive benefits, there is going to be a test whether one would be classified as self-employed without that illness. That is as simply as I can state it, but if we look at that in the act, it is not as clear as it would seem to indicate.

From the various conditions and exceptions, it looks as if there will be cases where it is going to subject to interpretation, and I only wish that this had been a little simpler. I wish the bill had been more focused on the requirements of people accessing these benefits and that it had relied more heavily on regulations, which allow a government the flexibility to make modifications by using formulas and regulations or by listing the certain kinds of things that would be there.

When we start to put everything in the bill and try to craft editorial remarks or prose around what our intent is, there is a risk of missing something. As I indicated earlier in response to the question by the previous speaker, we are at third reading now. This bill has received approval in principle and it cannot be changed in its macro sense. We can tweak it, but the only way to tweak it at third reading is either to refer it back to committee, or to pass it at third reading and let it go to the Senate and maybe it can help to clarify the bill or, if necessary, correct a problem.

Since these benefits subject to a voluntary opt-in will not kick in for a year, I guess there is time to deal with it in an amending piece of legislation, if we could do that. However, I have to say that when I looked at the minutes of the committee meeting, I appreciated what members had been saying about rushing through proposed amendments. As I read this last night, I see that it took a long time for the committee members to grasp the points that were being made in some of the amendments. There seemed to be a little too much pressure to deal with it quickly and get it out of committee.

That is a risk committees take when they simply take things on their face value. I say this with regard to the issue the previous speaker raised in the House, and also the member for Laval—Les Îles, because there seems to be a problem with the benefits and the premiums proposed for residents of Quebec.

• (1045)

Bill C-56 would amend the act to establish a mechanism to provide payment of special benefits, not the labour-related EI benefits that one can get as a salaried employee if one loses a job. There are other things, including maternity benefits, sickness benefits, compassionate care benefits, and parental or adoptive benefits. These are important to Canadians. We have a system that I believe provides adequately for those who are salaried, but not for self-employed persons.

In all provinces other than Quebec, these kinds of special benefits are not provided by provincial governments. Someone who wishes to have such coverage would have to get it through private insurance.

The Province of Quebec is different. The Province of Quebec already provides some of these benefits, which are included in the

provincial tax on residents of Quebec. These benefits are extended to Quebec residents, but they have a real cost for the people in Quebec.

However, in looking at the discussion in committee and also at the representations of previous speakers, there seems to be something wrong. If we compare what benefits someone would get in another province of Canada if he or she opted into this plan with the ones that he or she would need, the differential in the premium a self-employed individual in Quebec would pay and someone in any other province does not seem to match up clearly with what one would reasonably expect in terms of a pro rata cost per \$100 of earnings. That is an issue that some members have raised.

We have a situation where the standard of fairness and equity does not seem to have been met for all persons in all regions. Ensuring so is one of our critical responsibilities.

I am not going to go into the mechanics of the premiums, but just so that members are aware, I will say that self-employed workers in Quebec already have access to Government of Quebec benefits for parental leave, sick leave and compassionate leave to care for family. This means that self-employed workers in Quebec should not have to pay the same premiums as Canadians in other provinces, because they already receive some of these benefits, not from the Government of Canada but from the Government of Quebec. Therefore, it seems clear to us that the calculations have to reflect that.

I do not have the precise numbers, but let me give the House a broad indication of them. Since Quebec already has a parental insurance program, all regular employees and self-employed Quebecers pay into that plan. In recognition of that fact, the general employee EI premium is \$1.38 per \$100 of income in Quebec versus \$1.73 in the rest of Canada. Because Quebec has a provincial plan that overlaps what is otherwise available in EI and the residents of Quebec are already paying for these benefits, the current EI premium structure reflects that reality. Thus we can see the differential in premiums, taking into account the cost of programs that Quebecers already have.

Under this new bill, self-employed Quebecers would pay the same \$1.38 in premiums. That just does not make sense. If they already have some of the special benefits, why would they pay the same premium after this bill passes as they pay now before it is passed?

• (1050)

Apparently the government has not taken into account in the bill the fact that there is this exception. It is a clear exception. It is not debatable; it is a fact.

Something needs to be done. I asked a government member where the government got the numbers. I think it was the parliamentary secretary who responded that the premium that is going to be charged to Quebecers is going to be lower than the charge from private insurers. That may be true.

Government Orders

It depends, however, on what assumptions we make about the group which has been covered under a private insurer. It depends on the size, stability and all other good things. I have been involved a little in employee benefits. I am pretty sure I could go to different areas of the insurance system and find a range of premiums based on what one must take or cannot take or cannot opt in, and maybe a plan will not even be customized.

I am not sure it is good enough to say that it is generally lower than what private insurers charge. We need to be more specific. It has to recognize how much it costs for the benefits they already get, and if the premium is going to be adjusted, the cost should probably be deducted. We know what the cost is. There is another way to come at it, from the reverse side rather than to try to build it up.

I wanted to raise that because I do not like to see us get into these situations where a bill is at third reading and it is very awkward, cumbersome and maybe unacceptable for the government to move in one of the directions to make a change now. It would appear to me that there is time, because this program is voluntary, people can opt in, and benefits cannot be claimed until they have been in the program for a full year.

I urge the Minister of Human Resources and the parliamentary secretary to go back and look at what the experts and the witnesses have said. People have expressed a sincere concern. It is about fairness and equity for all Canadians in all regions. In the case of this bill, it would appear that is not the case.

I want to thank the hon. members who have raised this issue. It gave me an opportunity to look at it. I agree with them wholeheartedly that there have to be some changes here, simply from the standpoint of fairness and equity.

Mr. Ed Komarnicki (Parliamentary Secretary to the Minister of Human Resources and Skills Development and to the Minister of Labour, CPC): Mr. Speaker, I was listening to the member and on the one hand I think he is supporting the bill and on the other hand he is not supporting it. The time has come, perhaps, for the member and his party to decide whether or not they are going to support this bill and its speedy passage.

There are certainly a number of groups such as the Grain Growers of Canada and the Real Estate Association that have said they want to see action to address the many inequities in the employment insurance program faced by self-employed realtors. The director of the Grain Growers of Canada said that the legislation is very welcome, that it has a huge potential for quality of life in rural Canada, and that this could be the difference as to whether one member of a family has to seek off-farm employment because now families will have a choice.

The time is coming when that party will have to decide what it is going to do. It needs to pass the bill here and in the other house. There are important deadlines, such as January 1 when the contributions must commence. People have to decide whether they want to opt in.

Will the member support this bill? Will his party support moving this legislation forward so many people can be helped, and not oppose it as the Liberals did with the extension of the EI benefits from five to twenty weeks for long-tenured workers because they

wanted to force an election? Is that party going to get behind this bill and behind us to ensure the bill passes in a timely fashion so self-employed people can actually opt in as soon as possible?

• (1055)

Mr. Paul Szabo: Mr. Speaker, I said at the beginning of my speech that I and the Liberal Party support this bill. I gave the reasons and even cited the reasons laid out by the minister.

I do not know why the parliamentary secretary even wanted to go there. He did use two words which I think are indicative of the reason I wanted to rise to speak. He talked about “speedy passage”. In my 16 years of experience in this place, when we try to do things quickly, we sometimes make mistakes.

I think a number of members have raised the issue that in this case there is a small item, being the premiums to be charged. The bill is at third reading. We want to pass the bill. What I want to know is whether or not the parliamentary secretary, the minister and in fact the government are going to undertake to correct the mistake that they made.

Mr. Jim Maloway (Elmwood—Transcona, NDP): Mr. Speaker, I want to remind the member that if Quebeckers choose to take advantage of what is a voluntary program, they will pay the EI premiums at the same rate as employees in Quebec where the rates have already been adjusted downward to take into account the existence of provincial maternity and parental benefit plans which have been there for a while.

In addition, self-employed Quebeckers would pay the same premium rate as Quebec paid workers, which is 1.36% in 2010 which is reduced to account for the existence of the QPIP.

Does the member have any comments about that piece of information?

Mr. Paul Szabo: Mr. Speaker, I think the member repeated the case that I made during my speech. I believe that the bill does not fairly reflect the fact that Quebeckers are already paying for certain benefits under provincial programs that are available and that the prescribed EI premium for them will be more than it should be.

If members would look at what the current premium structure is between Quebec and the other provinces, they would get an idea of what the differential should be roughly in terms of percentage. We know it has to be lower than that. It cannot somehow be equal; it just does not make sense from a pragmatic standpoint.

What I did see in committee were very sincere attempts to make amendments which were frustrated by government members. I think they were blinded by their wish to have a speedy return of the bill to the House rather than to get the best bill possible. That is unacceptable.

The Speaker: Order. There are about five minutes remaining in the time allotted for questions and comments, but we will now move to statements by members as it is virtually 11 o'clock.

*Statements by Members***STATEMENTS BY MEMBERS***[English]***PERSONS WITH DISABILITIES**

Mr. Phil McColeman (Brant, CPC): Mr. Speaker, countless Canadians devote their lives to the care of family members with disabilities. The Hunt family from my riding of Brant are such Canadians.

Valerie Hunt was born with Down's syndrome. Along with her parents, Irene and Tom, her brother Doug devoted his life to his sister. Working with the disabled became his passion and his life's work. As a hobby, Doug and his wife, Katie, are entertainers using their considerable skills assisting community groups fundraise for worthy causes.

Valerie passed away this week at age 46. She loved music, Tim Hortons and her extensive pen collection. She will be missed by many, especially her close friends at Crossing All Bridges Learning Centre in Brantford.

Today we say "thank you" to the Hunts and to all in Canada who quietly and unselfishly give so much to the care of their family members. They are an inspiration to all of us.

* * *

●(1100)

SRI LANKA

Mr. Derek Lee (Scarborough—Rouge River, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, I want to draw the attention of the House again to the difficult situation in Sri Lanka following the conclusion of the military conflict there in May.

Over 100,000 Tamil civilians had been held in detention camps maintained by the military in the north. The camps presented huge challenges in terms of shelter, nutrition, human rights, and access by international and UN aid agencies which were severely restricted.

Earlier this week, happily, Sri Lanka opened the camps for all to leave at the time of their choosing.

Now is the time for Sri Lanka to invite and accept international assistance for this huge resettlement. Many have lost their homes, but resettlement is an essential part of post-conflict reconstruction. A successful reconstruction process is necessary for Sri Lanka to ensure that its minorities fully participate in a peaceful and prosperous citizenship. This is vital to Sri Lanka's future.

I call upon Sri Lanka to publicly embrace these goals and proceed quickly to resettlement, post-conflict reconstruction and reconciliation with its minorities.

* * *

*[Translation]***LA POUDDRIÈRE COMPOSITE SCHOOL IN DRUMMONDVILLE**

Mr. Roger Pomerleau (Drummond, BQ): Mr. Speaker, in the past two years, La Poudrière composite school in Drummondville has carried out a whole series of projects that have earned it accreditation as a national school in UNESCO's Associated Schools

Project Network. This network includes some 8,500 educational institutions in 179 countries. This honour is a credit to all the schools in the local board, the Commission scolaire des Chênes.

To earn this recognition, La Poudrière first joined Établissements verts Brundtland, then sent educational supplies and solar ovens to the Central African Republic and Guatemala. The school got involved in a project to refurbish the remains of the powder manufacturing plant that once stood on the school site, in addition to taking part in March 2/3 against poverty.

La Poudrière composite school in Drummondville is the fifth school in Quebec to be added to the list of UNESCO associated schools.

I am pleased to congratulate the teachers and students who, with their energy, their involvement and their commitment to UNESCO's values, are helping to make our society better.

* * *

FIREARMS REGISTRY

Mr. Thomas Mulcair (Outremont, NDP): Mr. Speaker, I will read an excerpt from a letter from 15 women's groups in Quebec to all parliamentarians. It is entitled, "20 years after the massacre at L'École Polytechnique, the gun registry is still necessary."

The Firearms Act has significantly contributed to decreasing the number of armed assaults in a domestic violence context. The number of women shot with a gun has dropped by more than 50%, going from 85 in 1991 to 32 in 2004. The rate of murders committed with rifles or shotguns has dropped by 70%.

...

Putting an end to violence against women and preventing tragedies takes more than just wearing a white ribbon on December 6, every year. It requires concrete action. Voting against Bill C-391 will contribute to keeping women and children safe and preventing massacres like the one at Polytechnique from ever happening again.

* * *

*[English]***ELCAN OPTICAL TECHNOLOGIES**

Mr. Bruce Stanton (Simcoe North, CPC): Mr. Speaker, I would like to recognize the tremendous success of a high-tech manufacturer in Midland, Ontario, in my riding, called ELCAN Optical Technologies.

ELCAN started business in Midland 57 years ago. Its 900-person workforce is growing. It has business partners around the world.

ELCAN tops its field in the production of precision lenses and electronics for the medical, defence and security, manufacturing, commercial, and entertainment industries.

Its precision scopes for military armaments have won acclaim from its customers in the U.K. and the United States. Its partnership with a firm in Austin, Texas is leading the advance of blood analysis technologies to assist in the fight against HIV-AIDS.

From new X-ray technology to night-vision imagery, ELCAN is best in its class. It is putting Midland, Ontario on the world stage.

I congratulate the entire team at ELCAN for its success in a highly competitive global market. It is once more showing how Canadian exporters are competing with the best in the world.

* * *

CHILD DEVELOPMENT

Ms. Kirsty Duncan (Etobicoke North, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, sadly, over a million children live in poverty in Canada.

Better Beginnings, Better Futures is one of the most ambitious research projects on the long-term impacts of early childhood development programming ever initiated in Canada.

Its purpose is to prevent young children in low-income, high-risk neighbourhoods from experiencing poor developmental outcomes which then require expensive education, health and social services. The Better Beginnings, Better Futures model has been implemented in several communities in Ontario since 1991.

This program has given beneficial effects to the children who have grown up with it, including a reduction of behavioural and emotional problems, and a promotion of positive development.

I would like to congratulate Highfield Junior School, its excellent teachers, caring parents, and community for terrific programs that will give our children important opportunities to enjoy a healthy and happy life.

* * *

• (1105)

FARM PRODUCTS

Mr. Gerald Keddy (South Shore—St. Margaret's, CPC): Mr. Speaker, earlier this week I delivered to my colleagues in the House some mouth-watering Nova Scotia Honeycrisp apples supplied by the Nova Scotia Fruit Growers' Association.

Based in Kentville, Nova Scotia, this association has been representing tree fruit growers since 1863. It acts on behalf of growers, packers and processors of Nova Scotia-grown fruits, and helps them to anticipate and adapt to the ever-changing marketplace.

Industrious workers and savvy business people, apple growers, like other farmers, Christmas tree growers and fishermen, continually work with scientists and governments both federally and provincially to adapt to changing market demands.

People should remember the next time they bite into one, that these apples are more than just the best apples they have ever eaten, they represent farm income.

I thank again the Nova Scotia Fruit Growers' Association for these great apples. Whether it is apples, lobsters, produce or Christmas trees, I encourage all Canadians to support Canadian farm and fishing families by buying local.

* * *

[Translation]

PHILMARDO FARM

Ms. France Bonsant (Compton—Stanstead, BQ): Mr. Speaker, the Royal Winter Fair was held in Toronto on November 13. This

Statements by Members

agricultural show hosts one of the largest dairy competitions in the world, with owners of the top animals in the industry receiving awards. Among the entries, a Holstein from the Philmardo dairy farm in Coaticook won in the female, junior yearling category.

The Philmardo farm also took first place in another prestigious competition in the summer, in addition to placing fifth at the very famous Madison Dairy Expo this fall.

I want to congratulate the owners of this Coaticook farm, Philippe Véronneau and his children, Marie-Ève and Dominic. These farmers are once again contributing to the renown of the riding of Compton—Stanstead nationally and internationally and are showcasing the expertise of Quebec's dairy farmers.

* * *

MONTREAL CANADIENS

Mr. Jacques Gourde (Lotbinière—Chutes-de-la-Chaudière, CPC): Mr. Speaker, one hundred years ago on this very day—December 4, 1909—John Ambrose O'Brien, Jack Laviolette and Newsy Lalonde founded the Montreal Canadiens, one of the most prolific hockey teams in history.

Throughout the 20th century, Richard, Béliveau, Lafleur and many other players inspired generations of Quebecers who sought to affirm their identity.

Les Glorieux showed us on many occasions that with courage, determination and hard work it was possible to overcome any obstacle, compete against the best and win.

I wish to congratulate this legendary team on behalf of the Government of Canada, my colleagues, fans and in the name of all the youth who practice tirelessly in the hope of one day wearing the Habs colours in a jam-packed Bell Centre.

Long live our team, the Montreal Canadiens.

Go Habs go!

* * *

[English]

VOLUNTEERISM

Ms. Martha Hall Findlay (Willowdale, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, they are the true unsung heroes of Canadian society. They deliver hot meals to shut-ins, they sift through mountains of used clothing, and they coach our children's sports teams. They are volunteers and today is their day.

[Translation]

Today is International Volunteer Day. I invite my colleagues to join me and warmly thank all those people who, out of pure altruism, collect donations in order to allow soup kitchens to continue helping the disadvantaged, bring comfort to patients in our hospitals, and collect and distribute toys to children.

[English]

We must always be aware of their many selfless contributions, and the tremendous social and economic benefits they provide to all of our communities.

*Statements by Members**[Translation]*

Today, we thank these volunteers for the very precious gifts of their time and effort.

[English]

I encourage all of my colleagues to join me today in not only thanking all of the volunteers in this country but also to join their ranks a few times a year.

* * *

VOLUNTEERISM

Mr. John Duncan (Vancouver Island North, CPC): Mr. Speaker, to mark International Volunteer Day today, the government honours two recipients of the 2009 Thérèse Casgrain Volunteer Award.

Wendy Cecil is the recipient of the award in the lifelong commitment category. She has provided vital leadership in strategic planning and fundraising for St. Michael's Hospital and the University of Toronto. She also spearheaded the urban angel campaign.

Gerjon Kalaci is the recipient of the award in the youth participation category. He has been actively involved with the United Way in Windsor-Essex county. He has organized events to assist community members with financial fitness, held networking events for volunteers, and led a community-wide event to support not-for-profit organizations.

I am honoured to extend our appreciation to Ms. Cecil and Mr. Kalaci, and to all Canadian volunteers who strive to make our communities stronger.

* * *

● (1110)

COMMUNITY SPIRIT

Mr. Joe Comartin (Windsor—Tecumseh, NDP): Mr. Speaker, I rise today to commend a constituent who, in her unselfish actions, represents a glowing example of the generosity of spirit and integrity that characterizes my community.

When Karen Coaton, the manager of Walkerville Manor, won \$1 million in a lottery last February, she did not quit her job. Rather, she followed through on a commitment she had made to the mentally challenged residents and staff of the home where she worked. She took them to Disney World in Florida. The task was not an easy one. It took eight months to make the arrangements, which included getting birth certificates and passports, as well as arranging transport and accommodations.

Recently, 22 residents and staff joined Karen on their big adventure to the Magic Kingdom. In order that no one was left out, those who could not make the trip had been treated to a special Thanksgiving dinner and all got Mickey Mouse watches.

Windsor has experienced many difficulties over the past number of years, yet the resiliency so wonderfully exemplified by Karen Coaton's big-heartedness lives on in our community. Well done, Karen.

HUMAN RIGHTS

Mrs. Joy Smith (Kildonan—St. Paul, CPC): Mr. Speaker, the Liberal leader has continued to parrot criticism levelled at us by the Chinese leadership and Chinese state-controlled news media. We in the House must remember what lies at the root of this criticism. The criticism flows from our government's principled decision to remain focused on human rights while at the same time seeking to strengthen trade and economic ties.

Whether or not they have the guts to say so explicitly, the Liberal leader and his party have bought into the premise that we were wrong to push human rights and wrong to defend people like Hussein Celil, who is not just a political prisoner but also a Canadian citizen. We make no apologies for pursuing both strong human rights and strong international trade.

The Liberals took a values-free approach to foreign policy and they are still peddling it today. In fact, yesterday the Liberal leader issued a statement on China that failed to mention human rights. How do the Liberals justify that?

* * *

*[Translation]***STATUS OF WOMEN**

Ms. Diane Bourgeois (Terrebonne—Blainville, BQ): Mr. Speaker, I want to express my support for the awareness campaign on violence against women launched by the major unions, the Canadian Labour Congress, the UFCW and the FTQ.

The "20 Days - 20 Ways to end violence against women" campaign, which runs from November 16 to December 6, asks women to send a postcard to the Canadian government, urging it to take action to stop violence against women, including maintaining the firearms registry.

The Prime Minister's insensitivity towards women is matched only by his lack of action on women's issues, in particular their inability to take legal action concerning pay equity issues, their lack of funding for social housing and their lack of accessibility to employment insurance.

We hope that thousands of women will take this opportunity to put pressure on the Prime Minister.

* * *

MONTREAL CANADIENS

Mr. Pablo Rodriguez (Honoré-Mercier, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, 100 years ago today, the Montreal Canadiens hockey club was born. This great team has provoked dreams, laughter, singing, celebrations and sometimes frustration for millions of Quebecers, and for Canadians across the country.

Since the club's inception, 776 players have worn the Canadiens jersey with pride. Among them were Maurice Richard, Dickie Moore, "Boom Boom" Geoffrion, Jean Béliveau, Guy Lafleur and, of course, Ken Dryden.

*Oral Questions**[English]*

I still remember those evenings with my father, watching TV, shouting and cheering for the Habs. I remember my first hockey game at the Montreal Forum. It was magical. I will never forget those moments.

[Translation]

I can still hear René Lecavalier describing Lafleur deking through the defence and finishing with, "He shoots. He scores."

They have won not 1, not 5, not 10, but 24 Stanley Cups. And the next one is coming soon.

But the Habs are about more than winning the cup or winning games. They are part of our history and national pride and that is what we are celebrating today.

Happy birthday—Joyeux anniversaire—to the Montreal Canadiens.

* * *

● (1115)

*[English]***THE ECONOMY**

Mr. Rob Moore (Fundy Royal, CPC): Mr. Speaker, Statistics Canada reported this morning that employment in Canada increased by nearly 80,000 in November. Today's numbers confirm that Canada's economic action plan is having a positive impact on creating and maintaining jobs.

By comparison, the United States lost 11,000 jobs in November. This is the 23rd straight month of job losses in the U.S. For the first time in a generation, the U.S. unemployment rate is nearly two percentage points higher than Canada's.

Here at home, Canada is weathering the current global economic challenges better than nearly every other industrialized country and our government's economic stewardship is the envy of the world. Yet, despite these positives, global economic recovery remains fragile and tentative.

That is why our government is committed to staying on course, protecting our economy, and fully implementing Canada's economic action plan.

ORAL QUESTIONS*[English]***AFGHANISTAN**

Hon. Dominic LeBlanc (Beauséjour, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, international and domestic legal standards are very clear. Canada has an obligation not to transfer detainees into situations where there is a reasonable risk that they will face torture. We have now heard clear evidence that the torture was widespread and systemic in the prisons where the government transferred Afghans.

Why did the Conservatives think that Afghans transferred by Canadians would be spared this treatment? Do they not understand

that they, the Conservative politicians in Ottawa, have failed to live up to their legal obligations?

Hon. John Baird (Minister of Transport, Infrastructure and Communities, CPC): Mr. Speaker, the fight against terrorism, the fight against the Taliban, against al-Qaeda, is very serious. Regrettably, the opposition is continuing to play partisan games on the backs of our men and women in uniform.

There has not been a single proven allegation of abuse of a Canadian-transferred prisoner. I should suggest for the member opposite that after three years of accusing our brave men and women in uniform of the very worst, it is time for the Liberal Party to apologize to our troops.

[Translation]

Hon. Dominic LeBlanc (Beauséjour, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, not only did the Conservatives do nothing to ensure that these people were not tortured, but they even seemed to be in a hurry to expose them to these atrocious conditions. The two senior Canadian commanders told investigators in the spring of 2006 that Ottawa had given them just 12 hours to transfer detainees.

Why did the Conservatives impose their poor judgment on these brave generals? Why did they prefer to order a quick transfer when they were aware of the risks of torture?

[English]

Hon. John Baird (Minister of Transport, Infrastructure and Communities, CPC): Mr. Speaker, the allegations made by the member opposite are pure nonsense.

We have a lot of confidence on this side of the House for the commanders in the field. They make decisions in these regards on an operational basis. They have demonstrated and comported themselves tremendously well in Afghanistan. They represent us tremendously well.

It is time for the Liberal Party to apologize to our men and women in uniform.

Hon. Dominic LeBlanc (Beauséjour, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, reports now indicate that it was the Afghans who first halted the transfers, contrary to Conservative claims. The Afghans wanted to stop the transfers because the Conservatives were failing to provide sufficient evidence that the detainees had done anything wrong, exactly as Richard Colvin had testified.

There are so many questions and no real answers. Why can the government not understand that its credibility is now shot? When will it realize it is finally time to call a full and complete public inquiry to get to the bottom of the cover-up?

Hon. John Baird (Minister of Transport, Infrastructure and Communities, CPC): Mr. Speaker, when Canadian officials, be they in the military or in the public service, have been presented with credible and substantiated evidence, they have taken the appropriate action. That is why we undertook a new transfer agreement. That is why we undertook visits. That is why General Hillier, when he appeared before a parliamentary committee, said that any suggestion that Canadian Forces, our men and women in uniform, were somehow rounding up Afghan farmers and taxi drivers was absolutely ludicrous.

Oral Questions

• (1120)

[Translation]

Mr. Marcel Proulx (Hull—Aylmer, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, the minister can skate and fabricate all he wants, but the laws of war are formal: detainees cannot be transferred if there is reasonable risk that they will face torture by the authorities to whom they are turned over.

The redacted documents we have access to refer to whips, braided electrical wires, electrocution and other atrocities.

Why did the Conservatives expose Canada to such risks?

[English]

Mr. Laurie Hawn (Parliamentary Secretary to the Minister of National Defence, CPC): Mr. Speaker, our first priority is protecting our men and women in uniform and the people they are trying to serve. We simply cannot release information that will endanger our troops and our relations with our allies and international organizations.

Redactions are done by non-partisan civil servants, public servants, who operate within the rules, the same rules that were applied after September 11, the same rules that were applied by the previous government, for the same good reasons: protecting our troops, protecting the people we are there to work with and protecting the organizations we depend on to give us information.

[Translation]

Mr. Marcel Proulx (Hull—Aylmer, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, it is too bad the parliamentary secretary did not answer the question.

The Conservatives abdicated their moral and legal responsibilities in this affair. In many cases, the secret service could not find sufficient reason to warrant incarcerating detainees the Canadian Forces turned over to them.

When will the government launch a public inquiry to uphold Canada's credibility and protect its international reputation?

[English]

Mr. Laurie Hawn (Parliamentary Secretary to the Minister of National Defence, CPC): Mr. Speaker, the decision to transfer detainees to Afghan custody was made by our commanders on the ground. They make them on very specific reasons: if there is clear evidence that those people have been involved in activities against our soldiers, against Afghan civilians and if there is clear evidence of gunshot residue, being caught in the act and so on. Once they are transferred to the Afghans, it is up to the Afghans to prosecute them as they see fit within their organization and their justice system. We are working very closely with the Afghan system to increase its capacity to do that effectively.

[Translation]

Mr. Pierre Paquette (Joliette, BQ): Mr. Speaker, on October 24, 2007, as he was about to leave Afghanistan, Richard Colvin drafted a memo to David Mulroney in which he criticized Canada's chronic inability to ensure the safety of prisoners that had been transferred to Afghan authorities since May 2006, if not earlier. The Minister of National Defence was unable to explain to the committee why Canada waited a year and a half to change the transfer protocol.

Will the minister admit that Canada failed to meet its responsibilities under international conventions?

[English]

Hon. John Baird (Minister of Transport, Infrastructure and Communities, CPC): Mr. Speaker, as I understand it, Mr. Colvin said that he did not send the letter in the first place.

[Translation]

Mr. Pierre Paquette (Joliette, BQ): Mr. Speaker, the memo is a summary of all of the warnings he had given over the course of the 18 months he was in Afghanistan. It shows his outrage at the government's inaction. In that same memo, Richard Colvin attacks the Conservative government's line of defence, which was to ignore the allegations of torture and to discredit anyone who was ringing alarm bells, for instance, the Red Cross.

Instead of shooting the messenger, the government should listen to the message and understand that it violated conventions like the Geneva convention.

[English]

Hon. John Baird (Minister of Transport, Infrastructure and Communities, CPC): Mr. Speaker, we cannot attack the messenger when the very document he cites was not even transmitted. We cannot attack the messenger when there is no message sent.

[Translation]

Mr. Jean Dorion (Longueuil—Pierre-Boucher, BQ): Mr. Speaker, in an attempt to prove that the new protocol was working well, the Minister of National Defence told us that Canada stopped transferring detainees a number of times because of indications they might be tortured. Now we have learned that Afghan intelligence service personnel were the ones who refused to put detainees transferred by Canada into prison, because of lack of evidence.

When will the Minister of National Defence stop telling us half-truths?

[English]

Mr. Laurie Hawn (Parliamentary Secretary to the Minister of National Defence, CPC): Mr. Speaker, we stopped transfers on a number of occasions. One time we suspended them and three other times we paused them. There were times when the Afghans stopped taking transfers, too, for reasons like religious holidays, lack of information or confusing information on detainees' personal information.

We have been collaborating very closely with the Afghan authorities. The new arrangement has been working very well since 2007. We made those changes when we received credible evidence of concerns from the field. We have acted responsibly at all levels and we will continue to do that.

• (1125)

[Translation]

Mr. Jean Dorion (Longueuil—Pierre-Boucher, BQ): Mr. Speaker, Canadian soldiers believed that Afghan authorities were uncooperative because they were covering up acts of torture. By halting the transfers, they exposed the Conservative government's incompetence. Since then, the government has been trying to cover up its failure to ensure the safety of Afghan detainees.

Does the government agree that it is high time to launch an independent public inquiry?

[English]

Mr. Laurie Hawn (Parliamentary Secretary to the Minister of National Defence, CPC): Mr. Speaker, we have heard from one individual, Mr. Colvin, who had a point of view. We have heard from three top Canadian generals. We have heard from the top diplomat in charge of that whole operation. We have heard from three very senior public officials who were deeply involved with that operation. All the evidence from their side points to the fact that there has not been a single substantiated allegation of abuse of a Canadian transferred detainee.

The government has acted responsibly. The Canadian military has acted responsibly. It is time to stop dragging the military through the mud and support it.

* * *

[Translation]

THE ENVIRONMENT

Mr. Thomas Mulcair (Outremont, NDP): Mr. Speaker, the NDP notes the change of direction by the government, which has done an about-face and given up its weak intensity targets. It was about time. Now that the government has listened to reason, it needs to move on to the next step. Canada must make a commitment to have fixed targets, with the same reference year as the rest of the world: 1990.

Is the government ready to show it is serious about fighting climate change? Will Canada support binding targets with 1990 as the reference year?

[English]

Hon. John Baird (Minister of Transport, Infrastructure and Communities, CPC): Mr. Speaker, the environment is a tremendously important priority for Canadians and an important priority for our government. We want to see an agreement in Copenhagen that is effective, and we will work to ensure Canada does its share.

I would remind the member opposite that in the spring of 2007 the government committed to an absolute reduction. It is unfortunate he did not read the plan at that time.

Mr. Thomas Mulcair (Outremont, NDP): Mr. Speaker, let us listen to what the rest of the world is saying about Canada. Monday's *Guardian* newspaper stated:

[We] watching the astonishing spectacle of a beautiful, cultured nation turning itself into a corrupt petro-state. Canada is slipping down the development ladder, retreating from a complex, diverse economy towards dependence on a single primary resource, which happens to be the dirtiest commodity known to man...In Copenhagen next week, this country will do everything in its power to wreck the talks. The rest of the world must do everything in its power to stop it...Canada now threatens the wellbeing of the world.

Is that the Canada the Conservatives want on the world stage? Is that the Canada they want for our children?

Hon. John Baird (Minister of Transport, Infrastructure and Communities, CPC): Mr. Speaker, this government, like Canadians, believes the environment is an important responsibility. Canada, as an industrialized country, is prepared to do its fair share.

Oral Questions

Instead of trying to run down the country, why do we not put politics aside, stop the blame game and work together on this important agreement in Copenhagen?

* * *

AFGHANISTAN

Mr. Jack Harris (St. John's East, NDP): Mr. Speaker, yesterday Richard Colvin's testimony was supported by two Canadian officers who the defence minister repeatedly says he trusts.

CBC released transcripts of interviews with General David Fraser and Lieutenant Colonel Putt. Here is a direct quote, "We were detaining the local yokels and handing them off".

We also learned Canadian detainee transfers were stopped this year because the Afghans refused to accept them due to insufficient evidence of wrongdoing, directly contradicting what the defence minister told the House on November 23.

It is time the cover-up ended. When will the government call a public inquiry?

Hon. John Baird (Minister of Transport, Infrastructure and Communities, CPC): Mr. Speaker, it is quite something for the NDP to get up and raise this issue. Let us look at Michael Byers who ran in Vancouver Centre as one of the NDP's star candidates, an official spokesman for the NDP in the last election. He wrote a letter accusing General Rick Hillier of possibly committing war crimes.

The NDP members should stand in their places and distance themselves from these outrageous allegations against a great Canadian hero who wore the uniform for a generation, who epitomizes the very best in Canadians. Shame on the NDP.

* * *

● (1130)

[Translation]

THE ENVIRONMENT

Mr. David McGuinty (Ottawa South, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, the Prime Minister always says the same thing: India and China have to make the first move. What has that gotten us? Lip service on his visit to India and a reluctant trip to Copenhagen to avoid losing face in front of 65 other heads of state.

Having been ridiculed by China, is he still going to tell the Chinese to make the first move, when their reduction targets are more ambitious than his?

[English]

Mr. Mark Warawa (Parliamentary Secretary to the Minister of the Environment, CPC): Mr. Speaker, I can barely believe my ears when I hear a Liberal member critique the environment policies of this government. The Liberals were in power for 13 years and did absolutely nothing.

The only party that is working hard, working with our international partners for a new international agreement in Copenhagen, is this party. That member needs to get serious about climate change.

Oral Questions

Mr. David McGuinty (Ottawa South, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, yesterday the minister described his climate change plan as a “two-page summary”. He actually said that.

For four years, the Reform-Conservatives have hidden behind emissions intensity targets. Isolated, in full damage control, they now flip-flop and announce absolute caps are needed to produce absolute reduction. Really? While Canada continues to slip in the trillion dollar a year clean tech market, the Chinese signed a \$250 million carbon capture and storage deal with the United States.

When is this recklessness going to end?

Mr. Mark Warawa (Parliamentary Secretary to the Minister of the Environment, CPC): Mr. Speaker, it is not just me who says that the Liberals did absolutely nothing. The Commissioner of the Environment and Sustainable Development said that when it comes to protecting the environment, the Liberals make bold announcements and then before the confetti hits the ground, those promises are forgotten.

The Liberals need to stop playing their political games. They need to get serious about climate change.

We are going to Copenhagen. We want a new international agreement. We are going to do our share. We are working hard.

Ms. Kirsty Duncan (Etobicoke North, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, four years, three ministers, no credible plan. Each time a new minister starts, bold statements are made, but when it comes time to deliver, the Conservatives balk.

In 2007 the Conservative government said that in order to meet its target, large industry would have to reduce emissions by 49 megatonnes in absolute terms from 2006 levels by 2010.

Could the minister tell the House if Canada will even meet the Conservative target by 2010?

Mr. Mark Warawa (Parliamentary Secretary to the Minister of the Environment, CPC): Mr. Speaker, Canada is going to Copenhagen with the targets that we announced two years ago, 20% absolute reductions by 2020 using the 2006 baseline.

President Obama recently announced identical targets. The European Union targets are calculated at a reduction of only 14%. What is being proposed by the opposition is a 39% reduction.

The opposition wants to tax Canadians and kill the economy. We are the ones standing up for Canadian jobs and for a cleaner environment.

Ms. Kirsty Duncan (Etobicoke North, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, asking if we are on track to meet a target is a simple question, and if we were, it would receive a simple answer.

The planet is running out of time and the government is running out of excuses.

Copenhagen represents the most important international meeting since the second world war. Now that the Prime Minister has agreed to go, will he do something to assure Canadians he will be representing us with clean hands and a credible plan?

Mr. Mark Warawa (Parliamentary Secretary to the Minister of the Environment, CPC): Mr. Speaker, this is what that member's

leader said about the environment, “I think our party has got into a mess on the environment”. The Liberals did get into a mess.

We are cleaning up that mess. We are working hard for a cleaner environment. We are working hard for Canadian jobs. Thank goodness this government is getting it done on the environment.

[Translation]

Mrs. Claude DeBellefeuille (Beauharnois—Salaberry, BQ): Mr. Speaker, the Minister of the Environment has announced absolute caps on greenhouse gas emissions, but no legislation that would make the measure binding. In addition, he is keeping 2006 as the reference year, instead of 1990. In short, his announcement is just a lot of talk that has Steven Guilbeault of Équiterre saying Canada's targets have no value.

Does the minister realize that, without a binding regulatory framework and 1990 as the reference year, his 20% target will never be achievable or enough?

• (1135)

[English]

Mr. Mark Warawa (Parliamentary Secretary to the Minister of the Environment, CPC): Mr. Speaker, hopefully the member has been listening and is aware that we are working on a continental approach harmonized with North American targets to reduce greenhouse gas emissions, an absolute 20% reduction by 2020. These are the toughest targets in Canadian history.

Canada is doing its part working hard with its international partners. We are going to work hard for a new international agreement on climate change in Copenhagen.

We all need to work together and stop the politics. Let us start working hard together.

[Translation]

Mrs. Claude DeBellefeuille (Beauharnois—Salaberry, BQ): Mr. Speaker, I can see that the minister has not listened to what Quebec wants. Using 2006 as the reference year instead of 1990 will wipe out 16 years' worth of efforts by industries in Quebec.

Does the minister realize that what he will propose in Copenhagen goes against Quebec's economic and environmental interests and benefits western oil producers instead?

[English]

Mr. Mark Warawa (Parliamentary Secretary to the Minister of the Environment, CPC): Mr. Speaker, setting crazy targets will not get anything done for the environment. It has to be a balanced approach. There have to be realistic targets. The North American harmonized approach on climate change is an absolute reduction of 20% by 2020.

That member needs to listen. She needs to participate. All parties in the House need to work together for a new climate change agreement in Copenhagen.

Oral Questions

[Translation]

FIREARMS REGISTRY

Mr. Thierry St-Cyr (Jeanne-Le Ber, BQ): Mr. Speaker, Heidi Rathjen, a survivor of the École Polytechnique massacre, deplores the hypocrisy of the Conservative government, which, on one hand, is commemorating the tragedy, but, on the other hand, is trying to dismantle the firearms registry. She says what the Conservatives are doing “is a slap in the face to the victims of the Dec. 6 massacre and all victims of gun-related crimes”.

Why does the Minister of State for the Status of Women not intervene with her colleagues who are trying to dismantle a registry that does help to prevent violence against women?

Mrs. Sylvie Boucher (Parliamentary Secretary for Status of Women, CPC): Mr. Speaker, the members of the opposition should be ashamed of playing politics on subject of the death of women. Violence against women is unacceptable. We must break the silence and break the chain of violence in all its forms. Whether physical, verbal or psychological, violence is unacceptable in any form and we are working with all women in Canada and Quebec to ensure that women are able to stand up—

The Speaker: Order, please. The hon. member for Jeanne-Le Ber.

Mr. Thierry St-Cyr (Jeanne-Le Ber, BQ): Mr. Speaker, it is not politicians who are denouncing this government, it is the survivors of the Polytechnique tragedy. These women have more courage in their little finger than the entire Conservative caucus combined.

Nathalie Provost, one of the victims injured by a bullet at Polytechnique, is surprised 20 years later that we are even questioning the need for gun control. She is distressed that the government is so attentive to the gun lobby and so reluctant to listen to those who are trying to eradicate violence.

Why is this government insisting on dismantling the firearms registry?

Mrs. Sylvie Boucher (Parliamentary Secretary for Status of Women, CPC): Mr. Speaker, on this side of the House, we think a great deal about violence against women. That is why we have introduced a number of bills to keep our communities safe, including legislation to eliminate conditional sentences for serious crimes such as sexual offences.

On this side of the House, we are standing up for the women of Canada.

* * *

[English]

CANADA-CHINA RELATIONS

Mrs. Bonnie Crombie (Mississauga—Streetsville, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, the fact that the Conservatives have let Canada's relationship with China fall apart these last four years has rightly received a lot of attention this week.

They claim they were dragging their heels on China because they wanted to see more progress on human rights. The reality is the Conservatives have made very little progress on human rights or anything else.

With this week's trade mission, do they now admit that the best way to improve both Canada's trade mission with China and enhance their commitment to human rights is to engage with China directly and consistently at the political level?

● (1140)

Hon. John Baird (Minister of Transport, Infrastructure and Communities, CPC): Mr. Speaker, I would say to the member opposite, yes, our refusal to ignore human rights differs from the previous Liberal government's stance.

Today I was very pleased to hear the Prime Minister once again speak out on behalf of Canadian values, on behalf of the values of freedom and democracy. We believe and our Prime Minister believes that we can advance human rights and strengthen economic ties. That is why we have been pleased in each one of the last four years to see our trade with China go up in a big way.

Mrs. Bonnie Crombie (Mississauga—Streetsville, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, is it any wonder there was so much international media attention paid to how frosty relations with China have become under the Conservative government.

The Minister of Citizenship, Immigration and Multiculturalism and the Minister of National Defence had previously accused the Chinese government of a massive spy ring targeting Canadian industry and individuals.

Do the ministers really have any evidence of this massive spy ring, or do they now understand that this wild Conservative rhetoric has undermined our relationship with China?

Hon. John Baird (Minister of Transport, Infrastructure and Communities, CPC): Mr. Speaker, today's Liberal attack is very consistent with the overall value-free foreign policy of the Liberal Party, go along to get along.

Let us look at what the Prime Minister accomplished. He has received approved destination status which will be a huge boost for the Canadian tourism sector, something the Liberal government failed to do. We have lifted the ban on pork exports, a big win for Canadian farmers.

Under the leadership of the Prime Minister we have seen greater co-operation on culture and on the environment.

The member opposite should be standing in this place to celebrate the success of the Prime Minister of Canada.

* * *

UKRAINE

Hon. Ralph Goodale (Wascana, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, more Canadian observers are needed to help monitor the presidential election in Ukraine in January. The leading expert on this issue, Mr. Davidovich, says Canada should match what we did so well in 2004.

Oral Questions

In that election, beyond the Organization for Security and Co-operation in Europe, Canada sent 500 additional observers. Now they are needed again. Ukrainian democracy is being tested. Legitimacy is crucial.

Why has the government slashed Canada's support by nearly 90%?

Mr. Deepak Obhrai (Parliamentary Secretary to the Minister of Foreign Affairs, CPC): Mr. Speaker, the Government of Canada is supporting free and fair elections in Ukraine by deploying Canadian election observers through the Organization for Security and Co-operation in Europe. Because of our strong commitment to Ukraine, Canada will be sending the maximum number of observers requested by the OSCE.

The OSCE has a respected track record and has observed elections in Ukraine since 1998. Supporting the OSCE mission improves voter coordination and ensures effectiveness.

Hon. Ralph Goodale (Wascana, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, the time is short here. The election is next month. The stakes are high. Ukraine is the only country in that region making substantial progress toward a durable democracy.

Canada has the ability to help. Our 500 observers are needed. The cost is modest. A distinguished Ukrainian Canadian, for example, the respected deputy premier of Saskatchewan, the Hon. Ken Krawetz, could lead that team. Canada would again be heralded on the streets of Kiev. For heaven's sake, why not?

Mr. Deepak Obhrai (Parliamentary Secretary to the Minister of Foreign Affairs, CPC): Mr. Speaker, Canada supports the free and fair elections in Ukraine, but we must understand that we must coordinate this with the Organization for Security and Co-operation in Europe. Whatever it has requested is what Canada is supplying.

People should understand that we must coordinate this with the Organization for Security and Co-operation in Europe and that is what we are doing.

* * *

EMPLOYMENT

Mr. Earl Dreeshen (Red Deer, CPC): Mr. Speaker, during the most challenging global economic period in recent history, our Conservative government was up for the fight. Canada's economic action plan is working, stimulating the economy, creating and saving jobs and protecting those hit hardest. We have already committed 97% of the plan, 12,000 projects across the country. The opposition may not like to admit it, but we are getting the job done.

Could the parliamentary secretary inform the House what Statistics Canada reported today about job creation in Canada?

• (1145)

Mr. Ted Menzies (Parliamentary Secretary to the Minister of Finance, CPC): Mr. Speaker, I would like to thank the hon. member for Red Deer for his help on implementing Canada's economic action plan, a plan that is providing positive news.

For the month of November, almost 80,000 Canadians have new jobs. That is incredible. That brings the average after the last four months to a 20,000 increase every month. Our economic action plan

is working. There is a recession that is challenging all countries, but we are gradually coming out of it.

* * *

[Translation]

VIOLENCE AGAINST WOMEN

Ms. Niki Ashton (Churchill, NDP): Mr. Speaker, every year more than 100,000 women and children in Canada spend time in shelters after fleeing violence in their homes. When these women and children leave the shelters, more often than not they are condemned to a life of poverty, because there is a causal relationship between domestic violence and poverty.

Will the government commit to making a coordinated effort to end violence against women, along with the provinces, municipalities and first nations communities?

Mrs. Sylvie Boucher (Parliamentary Secretary for Status of Women, CPC): Mr. Speaker, I thank my NDP colleague for this question.

As we know, the Minister of State has continued her support for women and yesterday announced a partnership with provincial shelter organizations throughout the country to strengthen their capacity to provide adequate services to victims of domestic violence, especially immigrants, aboriginal women and the handicapped. That is action; this government is taking action for women.

* * *

[English]

EMPLOYMENT

Ms. Niki Ashton (Churchill, NDP): Mr. Speaker, the government should not be bragging about a small 0.1% drop in unemployment. Statistics Canada is worried because too many former full-time workers are being forced into part-time jobs, and Canada's youth are being left behind.

Youth unemployment has increased almost 3%. With students facing record-high tuition fees and some of the highest student debt in Canadian history, being unemployed means not making enough money to make it back to university or college the next semester.

When will the government stop patting itself on the back and actually do something to get Canadian—

The Speaker: Order, please.

The hon. Parliamentary Secretary to the Minister of Human Resources and Skills Development .

Mr. Ed Komarnicki (Parliamentary Secretary to the Minister of Human Resources and Skills Development and to the Minister of Labour, CPC): Mr. Speaker, our economic action plan is working. It is creating jobs. We are moving forward. That particular party, the NDP, should get behind that program and vote for it, not against it.

Oral Questions

However, with respect to students, particularly this summer, we created tens of thousands of jobs through our programs, spending over \$20 million over two years in the Canada summer jobs program, creating over 40,000 jobs this summer alone; and provided \$15 million for 1,000 YMCA youth internships.

We are taking practical, everyday steps to make sure more youth are employed in this country.

* * *

[Translation]

SOCIAL HOUSING

Mrs. Josée Beaudin (Saint-Lambert, BQ): Mr. Speaker, according to FRAPRU, 203,000 Quebec households spend over 50% of their income on housing. The Conservatives committed to spending \$269 million on housing in Quebec. Despite the fact that the government's economic action plan states that this money is "committed", we still have not seen one red cent of it on the ground.

What is the minister waiting for before it pays that money to Quebec?

[English]

Mr. Ed Komarnicki (Parliamentary Secretary to the Minister of Human Resources and Skills Development and to the Minister of Labour, CPC): Mr. Speaker, there is no doubt that we have been working with the provinces and the territories, ensuring that agreements are executed and that money starts to flow as soon as that happens, and we are invoiced for that. Funding is being provided. In fact, over 50% of the funding allocated for this year has been delivered or is in the process of being delivered to provinces and territories. Money is flowing. Over 1,700 projects are under way across the country.

[Translation]

Mrs. Josée Beaudin (Saint-Lambert, BQ): Mr. Speaker, for the first time, the federal minister is taking part in the housing ministers meeting. Now she needs to free up some new funds for social housing.

Will the minister commit to paying the \$269 million already promised to Quebec, and will she make a long-term commitment regarding funding for social housing?

[English]

Mr. Ed Komarnicki (Parliamentary Secretary to the Minister of Human Resources and Skills Development and to the Minister of Labour, CPC): Mr. Speaker, we are taking a multi-pronged approach to provide housing for Canadians. We are talking to provinces and territories and communities and those who have something to do with housing, something that was not done for 13 long years by the previous government.

We committed \$2 billion to repair and build new social housing; \$1 billion for repairs and upgrades for seniors, and specifically designated \$400 million for seniors; \$75 million for persons with disabilities; \$400 million for first nation reserves; \$200 million in the north.

We have allocated funding right across the country to ensure that social housing is—

● (1150)

The Speaker: Order, please.

The hon. member for Sydney—Victoria.

* * *

FISHERIES AND OCEANS

Hon. Mark Eyking (Sydney—Victoria, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, lobster fishers in Atlantic Canada are facing a disaster. After a season of low catches, collapsing prices and a high dollar, many are faced with foreclosures and bankruptcy.

The program announced by the minister is inadequate. Only one in five fishers are eligible for the amount they are getting, and that is much less than the maximum of \$5,000.

What is the minister going to do to provide real assistance to lobster fishers faced with losing their livelihoods?

Hon. Gail Shea (Minister of Fisheries and Oceans, CPC): Mr. Speaker, when we met with the industry last spring, it was very concerned about the price collapse in the lobster markets and that fishers would not even qualify for EI. Therefore, we listened and we responded with a modest program to assist those with low income and who would suffer the largest revenue decline in 2008. Fair criteria were established and in a very short time, over \$7 million has gone out to more than 1,000 fishers in Atlantic Canada and Quebec.

Hon. Mark Eyking (Sydney—Victoria, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, I have young lobster fishers calling my office who owe hundreds of thousands of dollars and are ineligible for this program. Others have missed out on assistance because their catches are just a few hundred dollars short of the cut-off mark. One young couple has called my office. They have two young children and are faced with a Christmas and a winter where they are going to lose everything.

Why does the minister not go down to a wharf to see the real disaster that is being faced by the people and communities not only in my riding, but also in ridings all across Atlantic Canada?

Hon. Gail Shea (Minister of Fisheries and Oceans, CPC): Mr. Speaker, we are investing in the lobster industry by assisting it to take measures that will benefit all lobster fishers in the long run.

We are assisting with diversifying the market, with product development and eco-certification and traceability. We are assisting with reorganization so the industry can speak with one voice. We are supporting its long-term sustainability so the industry can protect its future.

This is more money than that party ever put on the table for the lobster industry.

*Oral Questions***PENSIONS**

Mr. John Rafferty (Thunder Bay—Rainy River, NDP): Mr. Speaker, on November 20, I rose in this House and asked the Minister of Finance if he was willing to meet with representatives of AbitibiBowater and CEP to hear their requests for changes in federal regulations to secure the pensions of more than 25,000 Canadian forestry workers.

The minister agreed to such a meeting, but only after they met with his provincial counterparts first. Those provincial meetings have now happened, so I ask today, has the minister finally met with these representatives as he said he would, and if not, is such a meeting scheduled? Will the minister be part of the solution?

Mr. Ted Menzies (Parliamentary Secretary to the Minister of Finance, CPC): Mr. Speaker, I did indeed answer the question positively that day and said that the minister would meet with them, but we know how busy the finance minister has been in implementing Canada's economic action plan. I am sure that the meeting will be forthcoming, but I should remind all members of this House what the finance minister has done to protect the retirement incomes of Canadians.

We will be meeting with provincial finance ministers in Whitehorse at the end of the following week to discuss what the provincial jurisdictions, as well as the federal jurisdiction, can do to make sure that we protect those incomes.

* * *

INFRASTRUCTURE

Mr. Alex Atamanenko (British Columbia Southern Interior, NDP): Mr. Speaker, after a year of competing with the heavily subsidized U.S. forest industry, Canadian companies have finally received some funding for environmental upgrades. However, this comes with a string attached. It has very strict short-term deadlines to spend the money.

Similarly, the City of Rossland recently received federal funding to fix its arena roof. This money must be spent by March 31, 2010, in an area that receives over 20 feet of snow per year, increasing the winter costs by 20%.

Why is the government imposing ridiculous deadlines instead of working with industry and communities to look at long-term, practical solutions?

Hon. John Baird (Minister of Transport, Infrastructure and Communities, CPC): Mr. Speaker, the opposition cannot have it both ways. On some days it gets up and says that the money is not flowing quickly enough, and the next moment it wants to see it drawn out.

In our economic action plan, we are working aggressively to stimulate the economy, to create jobs, to create hope and create opportunity. We were pleased with the 80,000 net new jobs that were created last month, but we are not going to celebrate. We are going to continue to work hard over the next 16 months to ensure that we fully implement the action plan and give more hope and opportunity to Canadians.

● (1155)

CONSUMER PRODUCT SAFETY

Mr. Harold Albrecht (Kitchener—Conestoga, CPC): Mr. Speaker, while the Liberal leader has been trying to divert attention from his inability to lead his party, his colleagues over in the Senate were maliciously tearing apart our consumer protection bill. That is a shame.

Could the hon. Minister of Health please inform this House and Canadian consumers what this will mean for them?

Hon. Leona Aglukkaq (Minister of Health, CPC): Mr. Speaker, the Liberal Party of Canada has hit a new low. Under the direction of the Liberal leader, Liberal senators gutted the consumer product legislation.

They have shown such contempt for Canadians that with these amendments the Department of Agriculture will have more effective tools to protect the health of animals than Health Canada will have to protect the health of Canadians.

The Liberal leader must either order his senators to stand down—

The Speaker: The hon. member for St. John's South—Mount Pearl.

* * *

TRANSPORTATION

Ms. Siobhan Coady (St. John's South—Mount Pearl, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, Marine Atlantic is a vital transportation link to Newfoundland and Labrador, and Canada is obligated to provide ferry service under the terms of union.

The Auditor General reports that aging assets and insufficient capacity put it at risk of being unable to deliver. This lifeline brings in half of the goods of the province, including 90% of all perishable items. It is a vital trade and transportation link.

When is the minister going to take serious action on this issue, or is he waiting for a catastrophe?

Hon. Rob Merrifield (Minister of State (Transport), CPC): Mr. Speaker, everyone in this House knows exactly what happened during the reign of the Liberals with regard to Marine Atlantic. They did absolutely nothing and watched it fall down around its ears.

We have invested over \$400 million in the last two years in Marine Atlantic, and even more from stimulus spending, including another \$9.5 million this summer.

We are getting the job done for Marine Atlantic and we have just started.

Speaker's Ruling

[Translation]

MUSEUMS

Mrs. Carole Lavallée (Saint-Bruno—Saint-Hubert, BQ): Mr. Speaker, barely days after the CN strike began, the Minister of Labour introduced a special bill in this House to force workers back to work and to impose arbitration.

In the meantime, workers at the Canadian Museum of Civilization and the Canadian War Museum are on their 75th day of strike action. They are calling for arbitration, but the minister refuses to intervene.

How can the minister explain her double standard?

[English]

Hon. Rona Ambrose (Minister of Labour, CPC): Mr. Speaker, it is always a very difficult decision when workers decide to go on strike, but this is a legal strike. The union recently overwhelmingly rejected the latest offer from the employer.

I encourage both parties to get back to the table as soon as possible to work out their differences.

* * *

AIRLINE INDUSTRY

Mr. Jim Maloway (Elmwood—Transcona, NDP): Mr. Speaker, the United States transportation department has imposed its first penalties in North America against Continental Airlines for tarmac delays, and has collected \$175,000 from three airlines for leaving 47 passengers stranded for six long hours on a plane in Rochester. This sends a signal to the rest of the United States airline industry that it must respect the rights of air travellers.

Is Air Canada going to stop flying to the U.S. because of these tough new tarmac penalties? When will the government stand up for Canadian air passengers and vote for the air passengers' bill of rights?

Hon. John Baird (Minister of Transport, Infrastructure and Communities, CPC): Mr. Speaker, obviously we care significantly about Canadian families who experience delays, particularly over the holidays. We also have to look at Canadians who live in rural areas. We have to look at Canadians who need these important air services.

Look at what the Montreal *Gazette* said about the member's bill:

Our airline industry is financially fragile at the best of times, which these are not. Altogether, this bill strikes us unwise.

I totally agree with the Montreal *Gazette*.

* * *

EMPLOYMENT

Mr. Devinder Shory (Calgary Northeast, CPC): Mr. Speaker, this week the Prime Minister and the finance minister delivered the government's fourth report to Canadians on the state of the economy. Canadians should be proud of the fact that our strong economic record in these tough times is making Canada the envy of the world.

Can the Minister of Transport, Infrastructure and Communities update the House and all Canadians on the progress we have made and how we are helping Canadians from coast to coast to combat the effects of the global recession?

● (1200)

Hon. John Baird (Minister of Transport, Infrastructure and Communities, CPC): Mr. Speaker, obviously job creation is the government's top priority. That is why we have Canada's economic action plan. We were very pleased with the 80,000 net new jobs that were created in November.

We do see that south of the border the United States lost 11,000 jobs. This is the 23rd straight month of job losses in the United States.

This shows that Canada is standing firm, that our economic action plan is working and that the partnerships that we have with the provincial and territorial governments and municipalities on rolling out infrastructure are making a big difference.

* * *

NATURAL RESOURCES

Mr. Paul Szabo (Mississauga South, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, on November 26, the Ethics Commissioner reported that there was clear evidence to launch a full inquiry into the ethical misconduct of the Minister of Natural Resources. Now we learn that the directors of the board have approved board minutes, allegedly to cover up political interference and gross mismanagement.

The Minister of Transport who is accountable for this federal agency also continues to refuse to take action, but under subsection 41(1) of the Canada Marine Act, he has the authority to call for an independent special examination.

Will he do that now, or will he continue this shameful cover-up?

Hon. John Baird (Minister of Transport, Infrastructure and Communities, CPC): Mr. Speaker, the Ethics Commissioner has made no such determination of ethical misconduct, as she is conducting an examination of the matter and I will trust her to do that job.

With respect to the Canada Marine Act, these special examinations are required every five years and one will be done this year.

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POINTS OF ORDER

ECONOMIC UPDATE ANNOUNCEMENT—SPEAKER'S RULING

The Speaker: I am now prepared to rule on the point of order raised on Wednesday, December 2, 2009, by the hon. member for Toronto—Danforth regarding the tabling of a document by the Minister of Finance. The hon. member argued that the document should have been tabled in the House. He acknowledged, however, that the document in question had been filed with the Clerk on Tuesday, December 1, 2009.

Indeed, in responding to the point of order, the government House leader read the excerpt of the Journals of that day where the tabling is noted at page 1115.

Routine Proceedings

[Translation]

The second edition of the *House of Commons Procedure and Practice* states on page 432:

As an alternative, the Standing Orders provide that papers required by statute, by Order of the House, or by Standing Order may be deposited by a Minister with the Clerk of the House. This is known as "back door" tabling. It is entirely at the discretion of the Minister involved as to which method to use for those documents that are required to be tabled;

[English]

As noted in the Journals, the document in question was tabled pursuant to an order of the House made February 3, 2009. I am informed that it was filed at 5:20 p.m.

However novel the lock up on the Prime Minister's aircraft may seem, I must conclude that there has been no breach of our procedures since the actual tabling of the document here at the House of Commons was entirely in keeping with our practice.

ORAL QUESTIONS

Mr. Borys Wrzesnewskyj (Etobicoke Centre, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, yesterday, during question period, I directly quoted from a document signed by the Minister of Finance, and I feel honour bound to table that document. I ask the House's permission to do so.

The Speaker: Does the hon. member for Etobicoke Centre have the unanimous consent of the House to table this document?

Some hon. members: Agreed.

Some hon. members: No.

ROUTINE PROCEEDINGS

[English]

GOVERNMENT RESPONSE TO PETITIONS

Mr. Tom Lukiwski (Parliamentary Secretary to the Leader of the Government in the House of Commons, CPC): Mr. Speaker, pursuant to Standing Order 36(8) I have the honour to table, in both official languages, the government's response to several petitions.

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LABRADOR-INUIT LAND CLAIMS AGREEMENT

Mr. John Duncan (Parliamentary Secretary to the Minister of Indian Affairs and Northern Development, CPC): Mr. Speaker, under the provisions of Standing Order 32(2) I have the honour to table, in both official languages, copies of the 2007-08 Annual Report of the Labrador-Inuit Land Claims Agreement Implementation Coordinating Committees.

* * *

●(1205)

PROVINCIAL CHOICE TAX FRAMEWORK ACT

Hon. Jay Hill (for the Minister of Finance) moved for leave to introduce Bill C-62, An Act to amend the Excise Tax Act.

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

COMMITTEES OF THE HOUSE

HEALTH

Mrs. Joy Smith (Kildonan—St. Paul, CPC): Mr. Speaker, I have the honour to present, in both official languages the eighth report of the Standing Committee on Health in relation to the supplementary estimates (B) for the fiscal year ending March 31, 2010 and reports the same.

FISHERIES AND OCEANS

Hon. Jay Hill (Leader of the Government in the House of Commons, CPC): Mr. Speaker, because there was no customary Thursday question, I did not get a chance to respond laying out business for the next week. There are a couple of items about which it is important to alert colleagues on both sides of the House.

I would like to designate Monday, December 7 as the day to complete the debate on the motion to concur in the eighth report of the Standing Committee on Fisheries and Oceans.

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BUSINESS OF SUPPLY

Hon. Jay Hill (Leader of the Government in the House of Commons, CPC): Mr. Speaker, I would like to advise the House that December 10 shall be the last allotted day in this supply period.

* * *

PETITIONS

PENSIONS

Mr. Paul Szabo (Mississauga South, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, last evening I received a communication from a Nortel retiree who was very distraught with the circumstances she found herself in now, being disabled and being unable to collect benefits.

The petitioners, representing Nortel retirees and other beneficiaries, call upon Parliament to amend the Companies' Creditors Arrangement Act and Bankruptcy and Insolvency Act to protect the rights of Canadian employees and to ensure that employees laid off by a company who receive a pension or long-term disability benefits during bankruptcy proceedings obtain preferred creditor status over other unsecured creditors. They also ask that the Bankruptcy and Insolvency Act be amended to ensure employee-related claims are paid from the proceeds of Canadian asset sales before funds are permitted to leave the country.

I believe this is a very important issue for us to consider and I hope the government will heed their petition.

TAX HARMONIZATION

Mr. Peter Julian (Burnaby—New Westminster, NDP): Madam Speaker, there are perhaps no words more hated in British Columbia right now than the harmonized sales tax.

The petitioners from Conservative ridings in Surrey, Delta and Richmond say that this is a profoundly unfair tax shift. The harmonized sales tax comes at a time when Canadians and particularly British Columbians are struggling to pay their bills.

They petitioners from Conservative ridings are saying, no, to the HST. They call upon the Government of Canada to rescind the HST.

I deposit this petition in their name.

ANIMAL WELFARE

Mr. Ted Menzies (Macleod, CPC): Madam Speaker, I rise today to present a petition on behalf of the constituents of Macleod. The signatories believe that animals feel pain and can suffer and that efforts should be made to prevent animal cruelty and reduce animal suffering.

Therefore, the petitioners request that the Government of Canada support a universal declaration on animal welfare.

Hon. Navdeep Bains (Mississauga—Brampton South, Lib.): Madam Speaker, I have a petition to present on behalf of the constituents of my riding.

The petitioners note that there is scientific consensus and public acknowledgement that animals can feel pain and can suffer. They say that all efforts should be made to prevent animal cruelty and reduce animal suffering.

They ask that the Government of Canada to support a universal declaration on animal welfare.

PEST CONTROL PRODUCTS

Ms. Linda Duncan (Edmonton—Strathcona, NDP): Madam Speaker, I am rising to present two petitions to the House.

The first is a petition in support of the enactment of Bill C-368 to impose an immediate ban on the further use of cosmetic pesticides. Consistent with the precautionary principle, I would remind the House that the Supreme Court of Canada has held that Canada is bound by the precautionary principle and that until their use and consequences are proven safe, they should be banned from use.

• (1210)

INTERNATIONAL AID

Ms. Linda Duncan (Edmonton—Strathcona, NDP): Madam Speaker, my second petition is a petition from residents in British Columbia and Alberta from Canadian Grandmothers for Africa. I am pleased to say that there is a very strong contingent of the grandmothers in my riding and across Alberta.

The petitioners are seeking the House to give support to the immediate setting of a timetable to meet by 2015, less than five years from now, its 40 year old promise to contribute 0.7% of our GNI to development assistance, contributing its fair share to the global fight against AIDS, tuberculosis and malaria and making the necessary legislative change for Canada's access to medicines. A good step along the way was made just this past week.

OIL AND GAS OMBUDSMAN

Mr. John Rafferty (Thunder Bay—Rainy River, NDP): Madam Speaker, I have three petitions to present today.

Routine Proceedings

The first one is on behalf of constituents who call for a speedy passage of Bill C-442, which was introduced earlier by my friend from Hamilton Mountain. It is an act to establish the office of the oil and gas ombudsman to investigate complaints relating to the business practices of suppliers of oil or gas.

It is particularly apropos right now because of the hated sales tax that is coming in and being presented by what one might call the axis of taxes.

There are 10 pages or so signed by constituents on this petition.

The second petition involves the same thing. The petitioners also call on the government to give speedy passage to the bill because it creates a meaningful vehicle through which the complaints of average Canadians about the oil and gas industry will be taken seriously, with mechanisms for investigation and remediation to further help consumers fight the gas price squeeze, which would be more next year with the HST. It would be 8% more in Ontario and British Columbia.

INTERNATIONAL AID

Mr. John Rafferty (Thunder Bay—Rainy River, NDP): Madam Speaker, my third petition is signed by residents right across Canada.

The petitioners call upon the government to ensure that Canada immediately sets a timetable to meet its 40 year old promise to contribute 0.7% of our gross national income to development assistance.

I am very pleased to stand in the House and present these today.

SALMON FISHERY

Mr. Don Davies (Vancouver Kingsway, NDP): Madam Speaker, I am proud to rise in the House to present a petition on behalf of citizens all across British Columbia and, in particular, the Lower Mainland of British Columbia, calling for the independent judicial inquiry into the salmon crisis.

We know that nine million sockeye salmon have disappeared during this summer's migration to the Fraser River. This is the lowest level in 50 years. We know this crisis is similar in magnitude to the East Coast cod collapse, which devastated the economy in Atlantic Canada, and it threatens to affect the way of life and livelihoods of West Coast communities up and down our coast, first nations, recreational fishers, commercial fisheries and businesses. As a result of this devastating threat, our entire ecosystem is also put in jeopardy.

The petitioners urgently call upon the government to get on with establishing the independent judicial inquiry and explore all the facts, consult with all the scientists and stakeholders to determine what went wrong with our salmon so we can take action to ensure we have a healthy sustainable salmon fishery in British Columbia.

CANADA-COLOMBIA FREE TRADE AGREEMENT

Mr. David Christopherson (Hamilton Centre, NDP): Madam Speaker, I am very proud to present a petition signed by hundreds of citizens from Newfoundland who add their voices to those from across Canada, from coast to coast to coast, who are opposed to the Canada-Colombia free trade agreement.

Routine Proceedings

Newfoundlanders understand, as well as everyone else in Canada, that this is an embarrassment to our nation in terms of the values we hold. That the kind of human rights violations we see in Colombia would in any way lead this country to enter into some kind of a preferred trade arrangement is something Canadians reject.

This petition, from one of our important coasts, reflects that it is a truly national reflection that Canadians do not want this Canada-Colombia free trade agreement.

INTERNATIONAL AID

Mr. Claude Gravelle (Nickel Belt, NDP): Madam Speaker, it is with great pleasure that I present this petition from Canadians.

The petition reads, "We, the undersigned residents of Canada, petition the House of Commons to ensure that Canada: immediately set a timetable to meet, by 2015, its 40 year old promise to contribute 0.7% of our gross national income to development assistance; contribute its fair share to the global fund to fight AIDS, TB and Malaria, example, 5% of the funding needed for each of the next 5 years; and make the legislation changes necessary for Canada's Access to Medicine Regime to facilitate the immediate and sustainable flow of low-cost generic medicine to developing countries".

• (1215)

SALMON FISHERY

Mr. Malcolm Allen (Welland, NDP): Madam Speaker, I rise today to table a petition that is signed by hundreds of folks in British Columbia on what has happened with the collapse of the sockeye salmon run.

History teaches us many lessons and one would think the government and the folks in the Department of Fisheries and Oceans would have learned from the collapse of the cod fishery in Atlantic Canada. If we are doomed to repeat our failures of the past, we will not fix the fisheries industry. It seems to me that we have failed both the east coast and now we have failed the west coast when it comes to the fisheries.

We need, and the petitioners say this, an independent judicial inquiry under the federal Inquiries Act to find out what went wrong. Clearly we did not learn any lessons from before. We tell our children that we should always learn the lessons of the past, but we have not done this. Clearly we need help to get it done.

Let us get on with it, call the inquiry and ensure this does not happen again.

The Acting Speaker (Ms. Denise Savoie): For the information of members of Parliament, presenting a petition is not a speech and petitions should not be read verbatim.

Mr. Fin Donnelly (New Westminster—Coquitlam, NDP): Madam Speaker, I rise today to present a petition that calls for an independent judicial inquiry into the salmon crisis. Nine million salmon disappeared this summer in the Fraser River. It is the lowest return in 50 years.

Hundreds of people have spoken out and have signed this petition, calling for the judicial inquiry. They want action now to save our B. C. salmon.

FIREARMS REGISTRY

Mr. Mark Warawa (Langley, CPC): Madam Speaker, I have two petitions to present to the House today.

The first petition deals with the long gun registry. The petitioners point out that the long gun registry was originally budgeted to cost Canadians \$2 million, but the price tag spiralled out of control to an estimated \$2 billion a decade later. They also note that the registry has not saved one single life since it was introduced.

The petitioners call upon the House of Commons to support legislation that would cancel the long gun registry and streamline the Firearms Act.

PROTECTION OF HUMAN LIFE

Mr. Mark Warawa (Langley, CPC): Madam Speaker, the second petition is from constituents in the Fraser Valley area.

The petitioners point out that Canada is a country which respects human life and includes in the Canadian Charter of Rights and Freedoms that everyone has the right to life. The petitioners call upon Parliament to pass legislation for the protection of human life from the time of conception until natural death.

INTERNATIONAL AID

Mr. Jim Maloway (Elmwood—Transcona, NDP): Madam Speaker, millions of people are dying needlessly in Africa from treatable diseases such as HIV-AIDS, TB and malaria. In sub-Saharan Africa, the HIV-AIDS crisis has been made worse by extreme poverty and lack of antiviral drugs. This is causing people to bury their adult children and raise their orphaned grandchildren. Development assistance and antiretroviral drugs offer people with HIV-AIDS the chance to live healthy and productive lives.

This petition demands three things of Parliament: that a timetable be immediately set to meet by 2015 its 40-year-old promise to contribute .7% of our gross national income to developmental assistance; contribute its fair share to the global fund to fight AIDS, TB and malaria, for example, 5% of the funding needed for each year in the next five years; and make the legislative changes necessary for Canada's access to medicines regime to facilitate the immediate and sustainable flow of lower cost generic medicines to developing countries.

In fact, that is what we dealt with in this Parliament this past week.

* * *

• (1220)

QUESTIONS ON THE ORDER PAPER

Mr. Tom Lukiwski (Parliamentary Secretary to the Leader of the Government in the House of Commons, CPC): Madam Speaker, the following questions will be answered today: Nos. 480 and 527.

Routine Proceedings

[Text]

Question No. 480—**Hon. Irwin Cotler:**

With respect to international legal violations of the rights of privacy, association and bodily integrity of lesbian, gay, bisexual and transgendered (LGBT) people, will the government: (a) condemn deprivation of such rights on the basis of sexual orientation as breaches of international law; (b) assist the United States Secretary of State's initiative, announced on September 11, 2009, to seek out partners at the United Nations to document human rights abuses against LGBT communities worldwide; (c) challenge states that are found to deny fundamental rights and freedoms on the basis of sexual orientation; (d) develop and implement a program, modeled on the United Kingdom Foreign & Commonwealth Office's LGBT Toolkit, whereby Canada's foreign missions would urge decriminalization of homosexuality in countries where it is penalized by death or imprisonment; and (e) address, through the ongoing Justice Undertakings for Social Transformation Program of the Department of Justice, the criminalization of homosexuals, and the impunity of their assailants, in Jamaica?

Hon. Lawrence Cannon (Minister of Foreign Affairs, CPC):

Mr. Speaker, the promotion and protection of human rights is an integral part of Canadian foreign policy. Canada stands up for human rights and takes principled positions on important issues to ensure that freedom, democracy, human rights and the rule of law, values that define this country, are enjoyed around the world.

With respect to sexual orientation, Canada was one of the signatories to the December 2008 Statement on Human Rights Sexual Orientation and Gender Identity at the United Nations General Assembly. This landmark statement condemns the violations of human rights and fundamental freedoms directed against people based on their sexual orientation or gender identity. It expresses deep concern for stigma and discrimination that undermines the integrity and dignity of those subjected to these abuses, and as a consequence makes them vulnerable to more serious human rights violations. The statement calls upon all states and relevant human rights mechanisms to commit to promote and protect the human rights of all persons, regardless of sexual orientation and gender identity.

Canada continues to bring the issue of human rights violations based on sexual orientation to the attention of the international community by raising these issues where relevant during the Human Rights Council's universal periodic review of states. For example, in the reviews of both Zambia and Senegal, Canadian statements recommended the amendment of their respective penal codes to decriminalize same sex activity between adults.

At the 2009 Commonwealth Summit in Trinidad and Tobago, the Prime Minister pulled aside Ugandan President Yoweri Museveni and indicated Canada's deep concern and strong opposition to the draft Ugandan anti-homosexuality bill and that we deplore these kinds of measures. Furthermore, the Prime Minister indicated that the draft bill was inconsistent with any reasonable understanding of human rights.

Canada opposes human rights violations based on sexual orientation and will continue to work with our partners at the United Nations, including the United States, to uphold human rights for all individuals. In May 2009, Canada's ambassador in Paris attended the World Congress on Human Rights, Sexual Orientation and Gender Identity where issues and strategies were discussed to confront and eliminate human rights violations directed against people based on their sexual orientation or gender identity.

With respect to the Department of Justice led initiative in Jamaica, the justice undertakings for social transformation, JUST, program is a four-year justice sector reform initiative funded by CIDA. The Department of Justice of Canada will implement the project as the executing agency.

JUST focuses on institutional capacity building in the Jamaican justice sector by supporting Government of Jamaica entities with justice sector mandates, e.g., Ministry of Justice, Office of the Director of Public Prosecutions, Law Reform Commission, and by supporting civil society organizations that contribute to overall stability by empowering marginalized groups in their interactions with justice sector institutions.

As a capacity-building initiative, JUST is not specifically meant to address matters such as the criminalization of homosexuality in Jamaica. However, one of the pivotal activities of the program is a close analysis of Jamaican legislation to identify provisions that, in their formulation or application, may create undue difficulties for vulnerable groups. Following this review of the legislation, the program will bring attention to provisions that appear problematic and suggest possible measures to deal with them. As part of this exercise and other program activities, JUST should therefore find a way of addressing, to the extent that it can, the issues raised.

Question No. 527—**Ms. Joyce Murray:**

With respect to the sockeye salmon crisis affecting the Fraser River in British Columbia: (a) what is the government's plan to address the decline of 9 million sockeye salmon in the Fraser River; (b) how much money is the government spending on this plan; (c) what entities have received government money, when and for what purposes; (d) what information does the government have regarding potential causes of the decline; (e) which stakeholders did the Minister of Fisheries and Oceans meet with in Vancouver during the month of October 2009; and (f) what were the recommendations, work plan, and proposed dates of action that came about as a result of October 2009 meetings in Vancouver between stakeholders and the Minister of Fisheries and Oceans?

Hon. Gail Shea (Minister of Fisheries and Oceans, CPC):

Mr. Speaker, in response to (a), on November 5, 2009, the Prime Minister announced a judicial inquiry to investigate and report on the reasons for the decline of sockeye salmon in the Fraser River. The final report of the inquiry is due by May 1, 2011.

In response to (b), the final report of the inquiry will help inform government on the development of a long-term plan for Fraser sockeye. It is premature to anticipate what that plan would entitle and associated costs.

In response to (c), Parliament has already provided appropriations for commissions of inquiry in the vote of the Privy Council Office. The commissioner will prepare a proposed budget for consideration by Treasury Board.

In response to (d), there has been no determination of the cause of the decline in Fraser River sockeye. The terms of reference for the judicial inquiry call for an investigation and an independent finding of fact regarding the causes of decline of Fraser River sockeye salmon including marine environmental conditions, aquaculture, predators, diseases, water temperature and other factors that may affect the ability of sockeye salmon to reach traditional spawning grounds or reach the ocean.

Government Orders

DFO science is evaluating a wide range of potential contributing factors to the low returns, and will then consider what further scientific work should be undertaken with regard to forecasting, marine survival, and the health of the oceans. It seems evident that an unprecedented combination of events has affected the survival of many of the sockeye runs that went to sea in 2007. The work of the inquiry will be very helpful in this regard, and we look forward to cooperating fully in its review.

In response to (e), the minister held a roundtable meeting with stakeholders on September 11, 2009 concerning Fraser River sockeye. Representatives from the following organizations participated: Pacific Salmon Foundation; Pacific Fisheries Resource Conservation Council; Fraser Basin Council; Commercial Salmon Advisory Board; Area B Seine, Fraser River Panel; Canadian Fishing Company, CANFISCO; B.C. Seafood Association; Sport Fishing Advisory Board; B.C. Wildlife Federation; Driftfishers Association; Watershed Watch; Salmon Enhancement and Habitat Advisory Board; David Suzuki Foundation; British Columbia First Nations—Fisheries Council; Sto:lo First Nation; Lillooet First Nation; Pacific Salmon Commission; and B.C. Ministry of Environment.

In response to (f), the minister hosted a roundtable meeting with stakeholders to seek input on an effective way forward on September 11, 2009, not in October. Many views and ideas were presented. All agreed that the approach would need to be comprehensive. A workplan was not created at the roundtable, recognizing that a government response was in development.

* * *

[English]

QUESTIONS PASSED AS ORDERS FOR RETURNS

Mr. Tom Lukiwski (Parliamentary Secretary to the Leader of the Government in the House of Commons, CPC): Madam Speaker, if Question Nos. 468, 482, 498, 503, 504, and 513 could be made orders for returns, these returns would be tabled immediately.

The Acting Speaker (Ms. Denise Savoie): Is that agreed?

Some hon. members: Agreed.

[Text]

Question No. 468—**Mr. Marcel Proulx:**

With regard to economic stimulus projects in the Pontiac constituency: (a) what projects have been announced; (b) what amounts have been allocated; and (c) when did the projects begin?

(Return tabled)

Question No. 482—**Ms. Yasmin Ratansi:**

With regard to the government's Economic Action Plan, for each of the project announcements in the constituency of Don Valley East: (a) what was (i) the date of the announcement, (ii) the amount of stimulus spending announced, (iii) the department which announced it; and (b) was there a public event associated with the announcement and, if so, what was the cost of that event?

(Return tabled)

Question No. 498—**Hon. Navdeep Bains:**

With regards to the government's Small Business programs, namely BizPal, Canada Business, the Canada Small Business Financing program, the Small Business

Internship program, the Paperwork Burden Reduction Initiative, the SME Financing Data Initiative and the Industrial Research Assistance Program, what are for each: (a) the total program costs and breakdown of all expenditures for each fiscal year since 2004-2005; (b) the total projected costs for the next 10 years; (c) the total number of employees (full-time, part-time and contract) assigned to each program; (d) the performance indicators used to measure the program's success and the results of any performance assessments made since fiscal 2004-2005; and (e) the total number of businesses helped by each program, including total numbers as well as the detailed breakdown listing them by name, location and whether they are recognized as a small business by the government's definition?

(Return tabled)

Question No. 503—**Hon. Joseph Volpe:**

Within the constituency of Eglinton—Lawrence, what was the total amount of government funding since fiscal year 2005-2006 up to and including the current fiscal year, itemized according to (i) the date the money was received in the riding, (ii) the dollar amount of the expenditure, (iii) the program from which the funding came, (iv) the ministry responsible, (v) the designated recipient?

(Return tabled)

Question No. 504—**Hon. Joseph Volpe:**

With regard to the government's Economic Action Plan, for each announcement in the constituency of Eglinton—Lawrence: (a) what was (i) the date of announcement, (ii) the amount of stimulus spending announced, (iii) the department which announced it; and (b) was there a public event associated with the announcement and, if so, what was the cost of that event and which elected officials, if any, were invited to appear?

(Return tabled)

Question No. 513—**Hon. Geoff Regan:**

With regard to Natural Resources Canada, what are the specific details of travel and hospitality claims from January 1 to June 30, 2009 for (i) the Minister, (ii) exempt political staffers?

(Return tabled)

[English]

Mr. Tom Lukiwski: Madam Speaker, I ask that all remaining questions be allowed to stand.

The Acting Speaker (Ms. Denise Savoie): Is that agreed?

Some hon. members: Agreed.

GOVERNMENT ORDERS

[English]

FAIRNESS FOR THE SELF-EMPLOYED ACT

The House resumed consideration of the motion that Bill C-56, An Act to amend the Employment Insurance Act and to make consequential amendments to other Acts, be read the third time and passed.

The Acting Speaker (Ms. Denise Savoie): When we left debate on this bill for question period, it was time for questions and comments. The hon. member for St. John's South—Mount Pearl.

Ms. Siobhan Coady (St. John's South—Mount Pearl, Lib.): Madam Speaker, I am wondering if the member could explain his concerns about the Quebec premium.

Government Orders

Mr. Paul Szabo (Mississauga South, Lib.): Madam Speaker, that is an excellent question because it probably is the only issue of concern that has been raised at third reading by hon. members.

This particular bill extends special benefits under employment insurance to Canadians, and that those premiums have to be established relative to the value of those special benefits, such as maternity leave, sickness or compassionate leave, et cetera.

The problem is that in the province of Quebec some of these benefits are already provided under provincial programs and therefore paid for by the residents of Quebec already. As a consequence, the remaining benefits for which they would be eligible to opt in to receive under the EI will in fact be less than the benefits all other Canadians would receive in all the other provinces.

The current premium rate that salaried Quebec employees pay on the EI system is actually already lower now than it is in the rest of Canada because the provincial program provides benefits.

If we have this new provision, where self-employed workers could get some of these special benefits, one would think that the premium levels that are paid in Quebec for these self-employed workers to participate would be less than the rest of Canada on a pro rata basis, or reflective of the economic value of the additional benefits that they would receive.

Based on what happened at committee, there seemed to be some haste to get things done. There were some questions raised about the apparent discrepancy or inequity of the premium structure for Quebec, but it did not get resolved at committee. Now we find ourselves at third reading. I raised in debate that there are some options. We could send the bill back to committee to look at it carefully. We could pass it here at third reading and allow the Senate to look into the questions that have been raised. There is a one year period over which no benefits could be derived under this. The government could at least undertake to review this and, if necessary, bring forward amending legislation.

The government is simply interested in speedy passage of the bill. First, we have to have fairness and equity before we have speed.

Mr. Jim Maloway (Elmwood—Transcona, NDP): Madam Speaker, I did want to follow-up on what the member for Mississauga South had to say, and also remind him, and he already knows, that this is a voluntary program. It would be better to get as much of the arrangements out of the way in this House first before the bill goes on to the Senate, but at the end of the day, if the program does not have a lot of uptake in the province of Quebec, for example, we will have to find out why and we will have to make adjustments at that point.

I did point out to the member before that in light of the fact that Quebec does have some of the programs, that would be included in this offer, that the people of Quebec have in fact had a reduction in their premiums for the last little while.

It is an optional program and I do not see why the Bloc would not understand that if people do not participate in it, it is obvious that they were right in the first place that the rates were too high, but at least people should be given that option.

• (1225)

Mr. Paul Szabo: Madam Speaker, the member seems to argue that because Quebecers already have a lower premium rate than the rest of Canada on the salary side now, that they are getting some sort of inappropriate benefit.

The fact that Quebecers pay through their Quebec provincial taxes for benefits provided by the Quebec provincial government, they do not need the coverage provided under the EI system federally, and therefore the only benefits they are getting are the ones they do not have. Therefore, their premium rate is currently lower.

If we now apply that system to self-employed workers, similarly we would expect that the differential between what Quebec pays now for salaried employees and what the rest of the provinces pay, should be also reflected—

The Acting Speaker (Ms. Denise Savoie): Order. Resuming debate, the hon. member for Elmwood—Transcona.

Mr. Jim Maloway (Elmwood—Transcona, NDP): Madam Speaker, I thank the member for Mississauga South for his final comments. I think we can get into some of the issues a little deeper regarding the system as it applies in Quebec.

The member should know that in the Quebec system it is mandatory, whereas this is an optional program that the government has brought in. That will lead us to some other issues about whether or not this particular system can in fact be self-financing and whether or not down the road the government may have to make this program mandatory for self-employed individuals because part of the process of making it optional allows a certain amount of selecting against the program.

If that were to happen and people selected against the program, they would only sign in when they knew in fact they were going to be making a claim. On that basis, the program will definitely lose money and will not be able to run on a break-even basis by any means. At a future point, the government may have to look at making the program mandatory.

At this point in time, I am happy the legislation has reached this point. I admit that the idea of this particular legislation was part of the NDP campaign in the last election, as well as part of the Conservative campaign, so the timing could not be better for the two parties to create a piece of legislation that both of their constituencies appreciated and wanted, and bringing it to the fore.

There has been an explosion of self-employed people in this country over the last number of years. Many of us grew up at a time when self-employed individuals were rather rare. When I was going to school, I do not recall many self-employed people at all. Almost everybody I knew worked on the railways. There were farmers, who are definitely self-employed, but compared to the number of self-employed people now, there was no comparison whatsoever.

As of 2008, there are some 2.6 million Canadians reporting income from self-employment, and for a large majority of them it is the sole source of the income. The share of self-employed in the labour force now has been relatively stable over the past decade at 15% and I dispute that figure. I am not certain that is the case and believe that in fact the number of self-employed people actually increases year by year.

Government Orders

People have this romantic idea that if they become self-employed, they become their own boss, and they can deduct all of the expenses they incur while attempting to earn income. And that in actual fact they will throw off the chains associated with a wage job and will be better off for it. The statistics are rather grim.

The fact of the matter is that a very large percentage of small businesses fail within the first five years. Those that continue beyond the five-year mark, many of them into the 10- or 20-year mark, if they are still in existence, basically live hand to mouth, just meeting their expenses.

• (1230)

The bottom line is that by and large they do it because that is what they are used to doing or because they find what they are doing self-fulfilling. Perhaps they have that optimism that things will get better, just as the farmers of this country are optimistic that there will always be a better year to come, that next year will be better than this year. That is a large group of self-employed people in this country.

There is another group. I do not know what percentage of the total 2.6 million people it might be. It is a substantial group of people who have become self-employed not by their own choice. They became self-employed because their companies went bankrupt or their companies left town, moved to Mexico, and left them here. They had no choice but to pull themselves up by the bootstraps, as the right-wing Conservatives are always prone to say. They have become self-employed.

There are other people who have, by mutual agreement, become self-employed. After working for a company for a period of time, they have decided to retire from the company, but they return and work for that company in a self-employed capacity.

The income tax department accepts that as long as they are earning income from more than one employer. They have to find another one or two people to pay them. They cannot be taking direction from any one employer. They need a contract drawn up to indicate that they are truly self-employed people, that they are serving more than one client, and that they are not taking direction from the client. On that basis, they are able to deduct their expenses.

The tax department, of course, is very suspicious about arrangements like that. It is very vigilant and watches very closely that people are not simply leaving their employment because of an agreement with the employer that it will keep paying them and they will keep doing the same job. In that way the employer would escape paying the benefits and they would be self-employed and would be able to deduct all their expenses for travel, for their basement office and for all sorts of other things.

The picture I am painting here is that these self-employed people are not the millionaires that a lot of people think they are. Just because they are tagged as self-employed does not mean they are earning double the money of salaried employees. In some cases, they are earning less. These people have had a tough time of it. Now, they have to go out and make a go of it for themselves.

What these people find out is that they are not eligible for a lot of the benefits they were getting as salaried employees. They may have had a pension plan. They may have had a group plan. They were covered under workers compensation. They were covered under the

EI system which gave them benefits. Now they find themselves without these benefits. That is why the business organizations have been lobbying the political parties. I personally have not been lobbied, but I know there has been a lot of lobbying going on to try to convince the parties to get onside with this particular issue.

Once again, we are not offering full EI benefits here. We are only offering the extra benefits, the compassionate care benefits, the maternity benefits, the parental adoption benefits, the sickness benefits. Those benefits are the only ones that are being offered under this program.

• (1235)

I know my office will be getting phone calls from self-employed people over the next number of weeks saying that they heard or read my speech in Parliament and when can they apply for their employment insurance benefits. Of course that is not part of this system.

Furthermore, it is not a mandatory program. We know that Quebec has extremely good programs. I am very proud of Quebec for having anti-scab legislation since the days of René Lévesque. It has a day care system for \$7 a day. It is the best in the country. It is no surprise to me that Quebecers have some of these compassionate care benefits provided by their province. Those are mandatory benefits. They are required. Everyone in the province is required to contribute.

What we have here is a voluntary system. People do not have to sign up. If they want to try the system out and they are residents of Quebec, they can sign up. If they do not think that they are going to benefit from the program, they do not sign up.

Anywhere in the country, self-employed people can look to the private insurance market for these sorts of benefits. Let me say that I have not met a life insurance agent yet who was not very eager to sell people products. If there is a way for them to find out how to do it, they will certainly do it. A lot of self-employed people now go to Blue Cross and buy benefits for their families. Maybe 10 or 15 years ago they could not do that. It just was not available because insurance companies were only interested in large groups of 50 or 100 before they would give quotes on benefits. That is the only way the insurance company could actually make money because it needed a large pool from which to work.

Over time we have seen that the market has segmented itself and there are companies that are available to give quotes on groups of 10 people, and then groups of 5 people. The reality is that the rates are a lot higher because once again, they do not have the pool to work with.

Government Orders

They also know that, particularly when it comes to dental plans, the companies get selected against. People join the plan when their teeth are not in good shape and of course they hit the plan big time the first year. The group plan can sustain that when there are 500 employees. They can take on new employees. They can pay for all these dental benefits in the first year. Once they are paid, they are done, so they will recoup their costs over the next 10 years that the people are in the plan. That is known as selecting against the company. If a woman knows she is going to become pregnant and she signs up for the program, automatically the company knows it is going to be paying out the benefits. A company cannot possibly make money in a system like that.

That is why I found it just amazing that somehow the government thinks it is going to be able to have a voluntary program where it is going to get selected against on a constant basis, and then if people do not draw the benefits, they can get out of the system, otherwise they have to stay in forever. A lot of companies are not going to last forever.

I do not know what the uptake is going to be in the first place, but let us say it is reasonable. We are going to find that the system is going to lose money and they are going to have to make a decision after two or three years to go with a mandatory program.

The Liberal critic is closer to the truth here than maybe even she knows. She was talking about her experiences at committee. The committee had an actuary come in and the members questioned the actuary.

• (1240)

I have not been able to get information from the government about what its projections are. One would think if the Conservatives are bringing in a government program they would have projections about how many people they expect to uptake on the program and the rollout of the program. I asked them questions and I could get no answers from them.

It sounds as though they are operating on a wing and a prayer. They are going to roll out this program with lots of advertising and get as much bang for the buck as they can. They will tell people it will be good old Conservative economics, sort of Grant Devine economics, that this system is going to be self-sustaining when they know that is not what is going to happen. They are going to get selected against in the early stages big time. They are going to have losses. Then they are going to have to come around and say they will have to make it mandatory and that is something that will be dealt with when the time comes.

The point is it is a good program. It is a good idea and we have to ease our way into it. That is why I suggest that the Bloc should have a little more patience on this issue as well, because once again, it is voluntary. There is no one saying that people in Quebec have to buy into the program.

Why should the Bloc say as a party that others cannot do it, that the Bloc is not going to give others the option at all? The Bloc members should be saying that they recommend that people not do it because the premiums are too high or whatever the reasons there are and try to make improvements to the program. That would be the most sensible thing to do rather than to say they just do not like what

they see of it so far and they will be voting against it because they do not even want to give people the option and they feel there are not enough redeeming features to the program that it cannot be changed. I do not think that is necessarily the best approach, but once again, I am not in charge of the Bloc.

The fact of the matter is there is a good system in Quebec. We admit that. The Quebec government is on the ball there as it is with a lot of other social issues. It has brought in a system that works well for Quebecers.

My notes say with regard to Quebec that there is an adjustment made for the fact that since 2006, the Quebec parental insurance plan, QPIP, provides maternity, paternity, parental and adoption benefits available to all workers, salaried or self-employed. Participation is mandatory. There is no voluntary participation at all on these programs. With this measure Quebec's self-employed will be eligible to opt in to claim sickness and compassionate care benefits that are currently unavailable through the QPIP. QPIP offers some of the benefits, but not all of them. Quebec's self-employed who opt in would pay the same premium rate as Quebec paid workers, 1.36% in 2010 which is reduced to account for the existence of the QPIP.

That tells me there is an adjustment. If that is not true, then I certainly apologize to the members for misrepresenting those facts. I want to be on their side on this issue. I think the Bloc members should be giving this program a proper hearing. It will not be good for the Bloc's political prospects in Quebec when the other parties start sending out materials to the artists in Quebec saying that the Bloc had an option to give these benefits and it said no. What are the self-employed real estate agents in Quebec going to say when they get their letter from the Liberal Party or the Conservative Party saying there was a program that agents could have participated in, but no, it was taken away by the Bloc MPs who voted against it. We all know what the Conservatives are doing with their ten percenters and how they personalize them. I can just imagine what sort of write-ups we are going to see on this program.

• (1245)

I have to tell the government members that what goes around comes around. We can come up with some really good ten percenters on their vote against the air passengers' bill of rights. They are going to look every bit as good in their ridings as those gun registry—

The Acting Speaker (Ms. Denise Savoie): Order. Questions and comments. The hon. member for Cariboo—Prince George.

Mr. Richard Harris (Cariboo—Prince George, CPC): Madam Speaker, I would like to thank the NDP member opposite and his party for supporting this great bill. It is a landmark bill, as I mentioned earlier.

If I may mention, because this is all about jobs and employment, there were 80,000 new jobs created in Canada in the month of November. That is five times as many as were expected. A lot of those jobs will be because of the small- and medium-sized businesses, self-employed business owners who deserve to have a program like this to draw on for their benefits.

Government Orders

I am sorry to say, with all due respect to the Bloc members, that their argument is simply more about politics than this program, this legislation itself. The reason I say that is because the more they see their fortunes slipping in Quebec as a separatist party and the more they see the resurgence of the Conservative Party in Quebec and it becomes a political threat, the more they are going argue against good Conservative legislation like this bill.

They should be ashamed of themselves for playing politics with a bill that is going to help the self-employed in their province.

Mr. Jim Maloway: Madam Speaker, that is a real tough question that the member asked me here.

If there is a fundamental flaw in the program, it is the whole issue of it being a voluntary program. The Liberal critic seemed to be on to something when she said, "Well, we went to committee and we had the actuaries there. The actuaries kept saying that this thing could not possibly be self-sustaining on a voluntary basis."

That is all because of being selected against. The people will join it when they know they are on the verge of making a claim. It just makes sense. It would be like an insurance company, when someone knows they are going to die in a month and they go out and buy a \$1 million insurance policy. That is called selecting against the company. There are procedures in place to make sure that does not happen.

The problem is solved by having it mandatory. The Quebec program is a mandatory program.

I am not saying we go there right now. We have to move one step at a time. This is a good bill for this time. It is a first. We have to support it, but I think over time we are going to find that it is not going to be self-sustaining as the governments says and that—

• (1250)

The Acting Speaker (Ms. Denise Savoie): Order. As there are many members standing up, I would like to give more time for questions.

[*Translation*]

Mr. Thierry St-Cyr (Jeanne-Le Ber, BQ): Madam Speaker, I listened carefully to my NDP colleague's speech. The same argument was repeated over and over, namely that it is no big deal if Quebec workers are cheated, ripped off, pay premiums that are three times those of other workers because it is not a mandatory program. To avoid being cheated, all they have to do is not opt in.

Let us suppose that employment insurance premiums in the Atlantic provinces were tripled but that it was no longer mandatory to pay into the plan. Would my colleague vote for such a measure?

[*English*]

Mr. Jim Maloway: Madam Speaker, the point here is that it is a voluntary program. It is as simple as that.

Across Canada, if there is no uptake in this program, the Conservatives are going to have an embarrassment on their hands. They are going to have to explain why nobody took up the program.

If they get selected against and the program loses millions of dollars, we will be holding them accountable, asking what kind of an incompetent government could have conceived of a program that

came up with so many losses in the first year or the second year of the program.

That is why at this point we have to, at a certain point, accept the figures that we are given. We are taking the government's figures but we are just saying that it stands to reason that unless there are huge numbers joining up, we are going to be looking at losses, and we are going to have to be looking at making the plan—

The Acting Speaker (Ms. Denise Savoie): Order. Questions and comments, the hon. member for Mississauga South.

Mr. Paul Szabo (Mississauga South, Lib.): Madam Speaker, I think the member needs to go back and look at what the bill does. He is concerned about whether it is going to be self-sustaining. He says that when people think they are going to be ready to use it, they are going to just opt-in and get the benefit. However, the bill does say that one has to be in for a full year beyond one even qualifies for any benefit. I do not know. Maybe he has to read the bill again.

The issue here has nothing to do with whether it is voluntary or not. It is all going to be part of the new EI commission. All premiums go into the pool and all benefits come out. That is the way it is. One cannot say whether it is voluntary or whatever that it is going to matter. The issue here, which has been raised by a number of members, is whether or not fairness and equity have been achieved in terms of the prescribed premiums.

It appears based on what exists now and what is proposed. The differential has gone askew. It is out of line and that is the issue. I would ask the member to please ensure he understands that it is voluntary, but that one cannot just opt-in when one gets sick.

Mr. Jim Maloway: Madam Speaker, the member should listen to his own critic. She was the one who was bringing up these questions last week. She had gone to committee and she had talked to the actuary. The actuary was bringing up these questions. She was saying that this was a little bit confusing to her, but she obviously should have received advice from the member for Mississauga South. He would have straightened her out on this issue.

The fact of the matter is that this is the Liberal Party that stole \$56 billion from the EI program, put it into general revenues—

The Acting Speaker (Ms. Denise Savoie): Order. I would like to ask the hon. member to withdraw the word "stole". It is unparliamentary.

Mr. Jim Maloway: Madam Speaker, I was not sure what the word was, but my colleague from Edmonton said "transferred".

The Acting Speaker (Ms. Denise Savoie): Questions and comments. The hon. member for Vancouver East. A quick question.

Government Orders

Ms. Libby Davies (Vancouver East, NDP): Madam Speaker, I think the member for Elmwood—Transcona made the point very well that these EI changes are so long overdue. I know New Democrats have called for years for these changes to be brought about to help self-employed people with employment insurance.

It strikes me that this is a much bigger issue in terms of social programs in general. I wonder if the member would comment on the fact that the NDP has been the champion of trying to make sure that these programs are actually there for Canadians. Whether it is EI, child care, social housing or our health care system, we are so far behind on everything.

• (1255)

Mr. Jim Maloway: Madam Speaker, that is an excellent question. We had a Liberal government in power for a 13-year period that never came up with a solution like this. The numbers of self-employed people were growing at huge rates. It is funny that, at the end of the day, it took a Conservative minority government and an NDP opposition to put this together. Maybe that is why the Liberal Party is so sour at this time of year over an issue like this.

The Acting Speaker (Ms. Denise Savoie): Question and comments. The hon. member for Peterborough. A very quick question because there is one minute left, so 30 seconds.

Mr. Dean Del Mastro (Parliamentary Secretary to the Minister of Canadian Heritage, CPC): Madam Speaker, the member for Mississauga South raises an awful lot of cautions and concerns. He says that he has been here 16 plus years and that he would not want to rush this kind of legislation. He says we need to really consider these things and give them a lot of thought. How much longer than 16 plus years does he think we should consider legislation like that? I would like to know.

The Acting Speaker (Ms. Denise Savoie): The hon. member has 30 seconds to respond.

Mr. Jim Maloway: Madam Speaker, as our House leader has said, this legislation is long overdue. It is time we got with it and brought it in as soon as possible. Let us get it through the Senate. Let us hope that the Liberals do not tinker with it over there. Let us get it into law so that people can start realizing the benefits of our hard work here.

[*Translation*]

Mr. Serge Cardin (Sherbrooke, BQ): Madam Speaker, I have heard some rather absurd things today, and I must speak to this bill. I was an accountant and also a self-employed worker in a former life. I started working in 1974, and in 1978, I started my own business as an accountant. Of course, I did many financial statements and tax returns for a number of self-employed workers.

For some businesses, there was a single owner, but some of them were incorporated. Over time, we could see how employment insurance in Canada—unemployment insurance at the time—could work when it enabled an employer, self-employed worker or small business owner to hire a spouse and to have them contribute to EI.

At the time, EI inspectors would often show up to inspect the business's books. They would see that the spouse worked for the business and did not contribute to employment insurance. So they asked them to contribute. If a spouse worked for the business—or for a self-employed worker—and contributed to EI, but, due to

decreased sales, applied for EI benefits, the inspectors would show up again and tell them they were not allowed to contribute. There were some standards to be met if the spouse wanted to contribute to employment insurance and be entitled to it if, unfortunately, they ended up unemployed.

For years, each situation had to be examined individually. When I gave advice to my clients—to say whether or not the individual should be insurable—and despite the bad intentions of the employment insurance inspectors, I was always able to suitably defend my position and I always won.

This brings me today to how the Conservatives see the program and employment insurance as such. The Bloc Québécois is constantly calling for some very important adjustments and policy changes with respect to employment insurance. In order to impress Canadians and Quebecers, the Conservative Party is doing things that make no sense at all. For instance, in the context of the economic downturn we just went through, and which we are still feeling, when we asked that the two week waiting period be eliminated, they instead added five at the end. We cannot criticize that, but it does not have the same impact as adding two weeks at the beginning. Then they accuse us of voting against many aspects of their employment insurance program, but none of it makes any sense.

Now they come to us with a bill that grants special benefits for self-employed workers. Of course the Bloc Québécois agrees with the principle of such a bill to support self-employed workers, since we have always believed these workers should have access to the EI system, as though they were salaried employees. So we agreed with the principle of the bill. However, we are being presented with a program whose intentions are unclear. Of course, we can see them if we carefully analyze the numbers. And naturally, the program proposed by the government would be voluntary.

• (1300)

Many have focused on that aspect, including the NDP, the white knight of justice and equality. The NDP wants the Bloc Québécois to change its mind and make sure that everyone votes for this bill. The NDP also pointed out that the program is voluntary, not mandatory. However, there is something I would like to say to the NDP members who tell us that if Quebecers are not interested, they need not sign up because it is a voluntary program.

Government Orders

The government is proposing social policy on a voluntary basis. I will not say that anyone is intentionally seeking to rob people, but I will say that someone is seeking to exploit people. If all Quebeckers were to sign up for this program tomorrow morning and pay the set premium, \$1.36, they would be financing the sickness and compassionate care portions of this insurance scheme for the rest of Canada. They would be footing the bill for everyone else in Canada.

Why should Quebec have to do that? Earlier, the Conservatives said that what they are doing is strictly political and that they are doing it because they are gaining ground in Quebec. Obviously, they are daydreaming.

Not a single Quebecker would want the Bloc Québécois to make it possible for the rest of Canada to exploit Quebec on such an important issue as sickness and compassionate care benefits.

Their behaviour is just so sad. They were not even interested in hearing what the actuary had to say to the committee. He was in the position for many years and dealt with this issue and contribution rates. In fact, he was the one who did the calculations at the government's request to reduce contribution rates so that the government could say it reduced the rates. The government also made deep cuts to benefits.

Now, what the Conservatives are trying to do with this bill is look like the heroes and make everyone believe that they have done something good for self-employed workers.

I may have lost my train of thought a little, but I have lost none of the anger that I want to convey to the Conservative Party. What the Conservatives are trying to do here is appalling. As I said earlier, they want to look like heroes and make everyone think that they are helping self-employed workers. They finally realized that self-employed workers are strategically, even critically important to Quebec's economy and Canada's.

Quebec already has maternity benefits and parental leave, which cost us 86¢. The government is adding \$1.36 to that, for a total of \$2.22 for all the benefits, while self-employed workers in the rest of Canada will pay \$1.73.

There may seem to be something wrong here. I would say that there is something wrong, but we also have to consider the fact that Quebec is slightly more progressive than the rest of Canada. It has more suitable parental and maternity leave programs.

Still, there is an unaccountable difference that I would describe as almost dramatic. I wonder how a Conservative member from outside Quebec would explain that to Quebeckers.

•(1305)

Quebeckers would certainly like to enrol in such a program, but how will they react when they find out they have to pay for the rest of Canada in addition to themselves?

The proposed rate of \$1.36 is three times the actuary's estimate of 41¢. Every self-employed worker who signed up for this insurance would pay for three Canadian workers. I had not thought about it, but maybe that means that one Quebecker is worth four Canadians. But that is not what I want to say.

It comes down to the same thing, because Quebeckers account for 25% of the population. One country represents 25% of the population of another country. But that 25% is actually 100%.

I am stunned that even a single federal member from Quebec could support such exploitation of self-employed workers in Quebec. I am convinced that the NDP member from Quebec, the member for Outremont, will vote against this bill. He will never agree to tell self-employed workers in Quebec that they can get ripped off by voluntarily purchasing this insurance. Does the member for Outremont really want to tell Quebeckers that he is voting for insurance that literally exploits them? Is there something wrong with his idea of fairness and equity?

In speaking of fairness and equity, I would like to point out the contribution of the member for Mississauga South who clearly stated, as did other Bloc members, that we must do much more. We cannot give up. Just because we are at third reading today does not mean we must give up. Some things need to be clarified and others need to be challenged. Some changes may even be required. It begs a fundamental question: should this measure be mandatory? What would have happened if the bill had stated that the measure was mandatory?

Obviously the rate of \$1.36 for Quebeckers would not have been acceptable and would not have been implemented. I even wonder if the intent of this premium rate is to have Quebeckers say no to this bill. It is important to ask this question. The Conservative Party constantly introduces bills that seem wonderful but that are at odds with Quebeckers' interests and do not work at all. That always happens. They are always sugar-coated and unfortunately the image projected almost never corresponds to the reality.

Once again, I appeal to all the members of this House and the Quebec members. I am convinced, even though these members sit in cabinet, even though they are ministers, that Quebeckers would never accept that they would agree to a bill to create a program that would shamelessly exploit them.

We actually were in favour of a program providing sickness and compassionate care benefits, but not on these terms.

•(1310)

It goes against our principles of fairness and equity to tell Quebeckers that we have managed to secure a sickness and compassionate care program but that they will have to pay so much and pay for the rest of Canada. I find that unacceptable and if no significant changes are made, if no adjustments are made to reflect the reality then, unfortunately, the Bloc Québécois will vote against the bill.

[English]

Mr. Richard Harris (Cariboo—Prince George, CPC): Madam Speaker, as one from outside Quebec, I would not attempt to explain this to someone in the province of Quebec. I will leave that to my colleagues, the MPs from Quebec and also the candidates from Quebec in the next election.

Government Orders

However, I will try to clarify for the people who live outside of Quebec, who are watching this debate, lest they be misled by the member for Sherbrooke.

The point the member is making is this incredibly low price Quebecers have for the benefits that already exist in Quebec. I submit that the only reason these programs are still operating and operating with a horrendous loss every year, and they are grossly underpriced, is because of the massive subsidies the province has to put in to support them. That is the reason the taxes in Quebec are the highest of any province in Canada.

The member for Sherbrooke said he was an accountant. He surely must know that we do not get something for nothing.

Where the employers and the self-employed may be paying a small premium for the benefits they are getting, the fact is their property taxes are more and every other tax in Quebec is almost higher than any other provinces in Canada.

Lest the people watching are misled, that is the whole point. The member is not being clear on that.

[Translation]

Mr. Serge Cardin: Madam Speaker, I am one of those who think that everything is worth something and that we have to pay a fair price. That is not the case here. Obviously the hon. member can tell the rest of Canada that Quebec has voted against this. With the figures they are presenting, the premium is being subsidized.

We have more progressive policies in Quebec because we pay for them and the federal government never pays us more than our share. We are not here to beg the federal government for money. We are here to get our fair share. We do not intend to finance the rest of Canada for things that, in some cases, do not concern us. This matter does concern us, but it is not up to us to finance self-employed workers in the rest of Canada. They too have to realize that everything is worth something and that they have to pay what this insurance for sick leave and compassionate care benefits is worth. They will benefit from four forms of insurance for \$1.73, while we are already paying 86¢ a year for two that are much more comprehensive and more in line with the needs of Quebecers. Quebecers are prepared to pay for what they get, but they should not have to pay for what they are not getting. It is only fair.

Everything is worth something and we will see what the Bloc Québécois is worth to Quebecers in the next election. Through you, Madam Speaker, I invite the hon. member to come sell his plan to us in Quebec.

• (1315)

[English]

Mr. Paul Szabo (Mississauga South, Lib.): Madam Speaker, we can see what is happening here. There seems to be a dispute in facts. When there is a dispute in facts, let us resolve them. Let us get to the facts because the facts will speak for themselves.

If we took the current salary for people in Canada, here is what they pay and here is what they get and apportion that premium, the \$1.73 to each of the elements of EI benefits and special benefits, and if we do the same for Quebec, we will find a couple of those special benefits that Quebec does not participate in the EI program because

Quebeckers already pay for them and they are provided by the Quebec provincial government. There is the disparity.

If we put in self-employed people from across Canada, we have to build on that model. There already is a differential for good reason. They are paying for it through their provincial taxes.

However, the numbers and the methodology for the proposed inclusion of Quebec self-employed persons does not build on the basic framework of cost of benefits and that is the problem. It is not subsidizing anything. It is fairness and equity and the numbers will show it.

[Translation]

Mr. Serge Cardin: Madam Speaker, I would like to once again recognize the contribution of the member for Mississauga South. There are conflicting ideas and positions because there is a very big disparity between the Conservatives' assessment and ours. We heard them. They are convinced that their assessment is the correct one.

There is about a 1¢ difference, but we believe that our assessment is the correct one. Furthermore, the former EI actuary supports us. For years, he gave the government exact figures so that it could assess the situation and, ultimately, so that it could dip into the EI fund.

[English]

Mr. Don Davies (Vancouver Kingsway, NDP): Madam Speaker, I have listened to the debate and a couple of points stand out.

The first is about the question of vision. I just heard from the government side what I consider to be a small and narrow-minded vision of the kind of services that government can provide to our citizens. The Government of Quebec has an expansive vision in many areas and one of them is child care. Quebec has led the country in providing child care services at an affordable rate. Quebecers have decided to pay for that service and it serves as a model for the rest of us. I agree services for Canadians should be paid for and valued.

I would like to hear about the member's vision for EI with respect to these benefits. We are talking about giving maternity/paternity benefits, sickness benefits and compassionate care benefits to self-employed people. Would he not agree that self-employed people have children, they get sick and they have family members who they have to take care of? Are these not the kind of programs that provide a good vision for our country, similar to the child care policy?

• (1320)

[Translation]

Mr. Serge Cardin: Madam Speaker, talk to Quebecers about their government, and they automatically think of the Quebec government because that is the authority that provides most of their essential services.

Government Orders

Talk to people from other provinces about their government, and they automatically think of the federal government. That is the first thing that comes to mind. As such, they easily buy into a lot of what the federal government gives them. But people in Quebec want to do things their own way to best meet the needs of Quebecers. The other provinces have a frustrating tendency to unquestioningly accept whatever the federal government hands them.

We have our own way of doing things, and when people ask us to do something, we do our best to make it happen. We collect money in lieu of federal services, and we provide Quebec-quality services, which are better.

In the end, what can we do? Quebecers have a completely different vision. They are moving toward complete independence—sovereignty—because they want to be done with these disputes.

This is yet another reason for Quebec to take charge of all of its own affairs and opt out of fruitless debates in the House.

I am sure that a lot of members must find these debates tiresome. The solution is easy enough: if they stop acting the way they are acting, things might get easier. In the meantime, Quebecers will progress toward the ultimate and best scenario.

[*English*]

Mr. Malcolm Allen (Welland, NDP): Madam Speaker, it gives me great pleasure to rise in this debate. What I heard from my hon. colleague from Sherbrooke was a complaint about a system that is broken and has not been fixed in a holistic way.

The present government, and the previous one that helped dismantle the system, is now in the process of adding band-aid upon band-aid instead of looking at the system that started to break in the 1980s, with a Conservative government led by Prime Minister Mulroney and continued on by Liberal governments through 1990s, when they gutted the system, overcharged us, pocketed the money and squandered \$57 billion. Now, in a moment of crisis, we are trying to add a band-aid solution to a program that at one time worked for all Canadians across this land and now no longer does.

I commend the government on one hand for saying we should extend benefits that a lot of us get when it comes to maternity leave, parental benefits, compassionate care and sick leave. That is an equality issue the New Democrats and the labour movement have been demanding for a long time.

Clearly, sickness knows no workplace, whether it be self-employed at home, in industry or the service sector working for an employer. When people get ill, the illness does not knock on their door and ask if they are covered by a sick plan. People get sick and their needs are still the same. In families with only one person working and bringing home income, the need to sustain those families, keeping a roof over their heads, putting food on the table for their children or themselves, remains the same.

To start to add more to the program is a good thing. The problem with this is it simply says that some people might like it and they should think about entering the program. I am not too sure that is the appropriate way to do these sorts of things when it comes to adding on a new program. We need to look at it in a way that tells people these are great programs for them, that they need to join and here are

the mechanisms to do it. It needs to be the same for the self-employed as it is for those of us who work for an employer and simply pay it.

Unfortunately, in life people will be faced with one or two of the benefits that will be available to the self-employed if we pass this bill. People will either get sick or require the compassionate care benefit. I have heard folks say for a long time that in life two things are absolute, taxes and the end of life.

When people deal with the end of life, whether it be parents, a loved one or a member of a family, we will all face that predicament. For a group to be singled out and not have the benefits as others who happen to be employed by someone else, to be honest from my own personal perspective, is criminal. We are not going to talk in a holistic way about those benefits. We are going to tell people they come into the program if they choose.

There are some difficulties with the program as there are with every program. I hope the government is listening. When people are sick, the two-week waiting period is an abomination. Regardless of whether people are laid off or get sick, it is really reprehensible when they are sick.

If people get sick and are unable to work, the first thing to happen is they lose money. We ought to be thinking about the fact that people do not choose to be ill. The illness could be of a catastrophic nature or people could end up in hospital, not like catching a cold and being laid up for a couple of weeks. It could be that someone has a major infection, lands in a hospital and is there for three, four, five, six, eight weeks. People have to wait for the stream of income required to sustain them through such periods of time.

They also have to go through the process of filling out cards and doing all those good things that the process talks about during an illness, and that is a delaying process. The two weeks really amounts to six by the time people receive any money.

Those who are ill need one less thing in their lives to worry about that could put them in a more serious situation than they are already in. We need to think about that element in the system. As I said earlier, it is really about justice and equality for all of us.

● (1325)

Why should some workers be treated in one way and others absolutely differently? When we look at the fairness of ensuring people having the ability to get involved in the program, it is long overdue. The New Democrats, as I said earlier about the labour movement, have been talking about a program that works for those of us in the working world because it is a program meant for us, as workers. It is designed for that.

Unfortunately, in the last 20 years, the design of the program is for the government to collect money. We watched the Liberals do it. The Conservatives, in their great thought processes, have looked at the Liberal plan. I have heard them from time to time say that the Liberals gave them a broken system. I have yet to hear them say that they will fix it. They continue with that broken system. They have said that in the House. I know it to be true because they would not mislead the House. What do they do? They do not fix it. That is a crime in itself. They need to fix the system if they know it is broken. Why would they continue with it? Yet they do.

Private Members' Business

We know the EI rates have been frozen for the next year. When we look at a plan of the Conservatives, we look at what they intend to do. They have obviously learned the lessons of the Liberals in the nineties. The Conservatives will be able to collect the money in 2011, heading to 2012, to 2013, to 2014 and forward. The revenue will be far greater than what they intended to pay out because the system will not be fixed. They are going to leave the 50-odd per cent of those who do not get covered by the system out of the system and collect the money. They saw what the previous government did. Then they will take the money, as my colleague said earlier, and transfer it, I would say squander it, and use it for other things, which places this program in jeopardy.

● (1330)

The Acting Speaker (Ms. Denise Savoie): Order, please. I am sorry to interrupt the hon. member. He will have twelve and a half minutes when the bill comes back before the House.

[Translation]

It being 1:30 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]

CRIMINAL CODE

Mr. Scott Andrews (Avalon, Lib.) moved that Bill C-464, An Act to amend the Criminal Code (justification for detention in custody), be read the second time and referred to a committee.

He said: Madam Speaker, it is a pleasure to rise in this House today and speak to my first ever private member's bill.

The proposed amendments will be to the Criminal Code in respect of bail. If enacted, this will amend the Criminal Code to provide that the detention of an accused in custody may be justified where it is necessary for the protection or safety of the accused's minor children. The protection and safety of minors remaining in the custody of individuals charged with serious crimes may be considered during bail hearing proceedings.

We need to give the judicial system another tool to do its job. We must make it attentive to the necessity of protecting minor children while they are in the custody of individuals charged with serious offences. A decision to deny bail to the accused may be appropriate for the intended protection of the rights and safety of children who are in the custody of the accused.

Members may ask how did I get to this private member's bill. In the first year members are in Ottawa, they are lobbied on many different things and many causes that come to their attention. In late March, I received an invitation to attend a special screening of the documentary *Dear Zachary* for senators and members of Parliament. I was joined by Senator Banks and former member Mr. Bill Casey at that screening. I had an opportunity to meet the producer, Kurt Kuenne, for the first time. Listening to the documentary and to personal stories that I had been familiar with had a profound impact on me as an individual.

I also met Kate and David Bagby. They are two amazing people who have used their strength and determination to attract the attention of decision makers to the need to bring important change to the current bail legislation in Canada.

It was shortly after that documentary that I decided that my first ever private member's bill would try to advance the efforts of bail reform.

Members need to hear the story of where and how this came about. Most of us in Newfoundland and Labrador, and many across Canada, have heard the terrible story of the tragic deaths of David and Kate's son, Dr. Andrew Bagby, in 2001.

Dr. Bagby and his girlfriend, Dr. Shirley Turner, of Newfoundland were in a relationship. They had their troubles and the relationship broke off. Dr. Turner travelled back to her home, leaving David in Pennsylvania. She then drove back across the country, over 800 miles, and killed Dr. Andrew Bagby in a Pennsylvania park. She then went back to her home on the west coast of the United States, and prior to being charged for the murder, she was advised by her lawyer to spend time with her family in Canada. She went to Canada and ended up in her home province of Newfoundland.

She was then charged with the crime of murdering Andrew and faced extradition hearings. While going through the process of extradition, she found out that she was pregnant with their child. During the extradition process, she gave birth to this child and was granted bail while she was in custody of the child. During the court proceedings, Zachary, the child, remained in the custody of Dr. Turner, and the grandparents, David and Kate, were granted supervision.

This went on for almost 13 months after Zachary was born, as extradition is a very long and onerous process, but that is another issue for another time. However, near the end of the extradition process, when it looked like Dr. Turner was going to be extradited back to the United States, Dr. Turner took her own life and that of her son, Zachary. On the morning of August 18, 2003, she walked into the waters of Conception Bay and both were drowned.

It had an impact on many Newfoundlanders and Labradorians. There was a public inquiry called to find out why this would happen to a young child, and Dr. Peter Markesteyn conducted a review and investigation. His report made a number of recommendations for provincial child welfare, and the province is working through those recommendations.

There was one aspect of the recommendations in this case that pertained to federal law, and that was bail reform. That is why my private member's bill is dealing with bail reform.

● (1335)

At the conclusion of the investigation, Dr. Markesteyn reached two key conclusions: Zachary Turner's death was preventable, and Zachary was in his mother's care when he should not have been.

That gets me to bail reform and to a conclusion. From this tragic ending, we bring a new beginning to bail reform so that no other family will go through the devastation that Kate and David Bagby have gone through.

Private Members' Business

Obviously, I had to come quickly up to speed on private members' business, this being my first time in Parliament. I looked at the options for amending the Criminal Code provisions pertaining to bail. We had to balance the Canadian Charter of Rights and Freedoms with the need to have our court system reflect a requirement to protect the safety of minor children in the custody of their parents.

After consulting with David and Kate Bagby and discussing my intentions with many colleagues and the legal community, we came to what we have here today, a bill entitled, An Act to amend the Criminal Code (justification for detention in custody).

In summary, the bill, when enacted, will amend the Criminal Code to provide that the detention of an accused in custody may be justified where it is necessary for the protection or safety of minor children of the accused.

I am also pleased to have the support of Senator Tommy Banks. He has pledged to be my sponsor in the Senate for this bill. I thank Senator Banks for that.

Bill C-464 is not about me; it is about the protection of children. MPs create private members' bills for two reasons: one, to make a political statement, knowing it will not go anywhere; or two, if an MP wants to make a difference and have success. Bill C-464 is an accomplishment that reflects the strength and determination of the parents and grandparents of the late Andrew and Zachary. It is in their memory that we move forward with the bill, and we will do everything in our power to prevent this from happening to another family.

I would be remiss if I did not acknowledge the efforts of Kurt Kuenne. Kurt is the producer of the documentary, *Dear Zachary*. I can assure hon. members that this is near and dear to Kurt's heart and that he has used his talents to have the story told and to promote legislative reform.

I will be sending copies of the documentary to all members as we move forward. It is worth the 93 minutes to have the opportunity to see how this story unfolded. Kurt was doing a documentary on Dr. Andrew Bagby to give to Zachary. It told the story of Andrew as a person and individual. As this was unfolding, so was Zachary's young life. Zachary's life, as we know, came to a tragic end. Kurt told the whole story in the documentary. It was recently aired on the CTV program *W5*.

After my announcement that I would introduce this private member's legislation, I had many calls from across Canada supporting this initiative, from B.C. to St. John's. If we can do one thing as legislators to protect the lives of children, then we should pass this bill, so this tragic act never happens again.

I thank hon. members for their support and encouragement as we move forward. I thank Kate and David for their vision and for being strong grandparents. It has been very tough on them. They came to Newfoundland last week and joined me, along with many of their friends and family, and we told them that we were moving forward. They have gone through a wide range of emotions over the last five years. It is a story that touched my heart and touched the hearts of many Newfoundlanders and Labradorians. If we can move forward with bail reform and change the bail law by putting in five simple

words to allow our lawmakers the ability to deny bail for the protection of children, it would be a great step forward.

Madam Speaker, I thank you for the opportunity to bring this forward today. I look forward to discussing it with members from all parties, and I hope I can gather the support of the House.

• (1340)

Mr. Jim Maloway (Elmwood—Transcona, NDP): Madam Speaker, I want to thank the terrific MP for Avalon for having the good sense to bring this bill forward. This is a very touching story, one that I remember from the past, and I want to promise my personal support for the bill when it comes to a vote.

There are some important messages that we have to take from this, and that is that the protection and safety of minors remaining in the custody of individuals charged with serious crimes, such as murder, be considered during bail hearing proceedings. We also have to get across the message that the judicial decision-makers must be attentive to the necessity of protecting minors who remain in the custody of individuals charged with serious offences, as was the case here. Third, a decision to deny bail to an accused may be appropriate, and in fact, even necessary, for the intended protection of the rights and safety of minors in the custody of the accused.

I want to applaud this member for doing such a terrific job on this bill.

Mr. Scott Andrews: Madam Speaker, I appreciate the member's comments. I will read the section of the Criminal Code:

—where the detention is necessary for the protection or safety of the public, including any victim of or witness to the offence, having regard to all the circumstances including any substantial likelihood that the accused will, if released from custody, commit a criminal offence or interfere with the administration of justice...

We would include after the word “offence” “or minor children of the accused”. In this exact case, she went on to commit a very serious criminal offence by taking the life of this young child.

We could add this little section in the Criminal Code and give our lawmakers the ability to deny bail for the protection of minor children. There is a whole host of other issues that were dealt with in the inquiry relating to child welfare. That is a provincial matter. I am sure the province is working through that, the Turner Investigation review report, which was two huge volumes. A lot of things slipped through the cracks on this one.

This is one aspect where we can stand tall in the federal Parliament and correct this.

Mr. Paul Szabo (Mississauga South, Lib.): Madam Speaker, I very much support the bill. It has a story behind it which demonstrates the need for this consideration. My understanding is this amendment to the Criminal Code would bring one other factor into play in the assessment of whether bail should be granted.

In his research, was the member able to determine, or get some background information that would indicate this was not an isolated incident that occurred but rather something that came up frequently enough that would warrant a proposed amendment to the Criminal Code?

Private Members' Business

Mr. Scott Andrews: Madam Speaker, we did have another case in Newfoundland of an individual, Chrissy Predham-Newman, who was murdered by her boyfriend. They had a child. Through Zachary's death and the inquiry that transformed in child welfare, the child was taken away from the parent in that case, which was a good thing. We are lucky we had the child welfare side of things.

With this bill, we can also add another level to it by removing the ability to have someone out on bail who would have custody of that child.

I know there are a few other cases that do not come to the top of my mind right now. There is a group in Vancouver, as well, that has advocated for this.

Mrs. Joy Smith (Kildonan—St. Paul, CPC): Madam Speaker, I want to commend my colleague on his work on this file. It is indeed a very compelling file.

Could the member please give us some information? What took 13 months to get her extradited? She should have been where she should have been when she was pregnant, not after the baby was born. Perhaps that is something else on which the member could work.

• (1345)

Mr. Scott Andrews: Madam Speaker, this is another issue that Kate and David have been very adamant on, that the extradition process took a very long time. It is a very complicated process to go through.

We need to look at that, as well. I will be speaking with the Bagbys about this. They have learned that file inside and out. They sat through the extradition hearings, and their hearts went out to get this changed as well. That is something we will look at in the future.

Ms. Lois Brown (Newmarket—Aurora, CPC): Madam Speaker, I am pleased to speak to Bill C-464 introduced by the member for Avalon.

The bill raises the important issue of the safety and protection of children from dangerous accused who are awaiting trial. More specifically, Bill C-464 proposes to amend paragraph 515.10(b) of the Criminal Code to remind courts to consider the safety and protection of minor children of the accused when determining whether pretrial detention is necessary.

After an offence is committed, the burden usually falls on the prosecutor to establish certain grounds for the judge or the justice to order the detention of the accused prior to trial. Under the primary ground for detention, bail can be denied to ensure the accused does not flee the jurisdiction. Under the secondary ground, bail can be denied when it is necessary for the protection or safety of the public. Last, bail can be denied under the tertiary ground when considered necessary to maintain confidence in the administration of justice.

Bill C-464 proposes to amend the secondary ground. I would like to indicate the government's support for the bill's laudable goal of protecting children from dangerous accused during the bail process. The purpose of the bill is consistent with this government's commitment to ensuring that the justice system operates in an effective manner to protect children, victims, witnesses and all Canadians.

In the last session of Parliament, Bill C-2, the Tackling Violent Crime Act, received royal assent. That legislation includes a number of Criminal Code amendments aimed at making Canadian communities safer. Among other things, it tackles serious gun crime by imposing higher minimum sentences of imprisonment. It places stricter conditions on dangerous and high risk offenders, and it creates a more effective sentencing regime. That same bill protects children from sexual predators by increasing the age of consent for sexual activity.

In the area of bail reform, Bill C-2 strengthens the bail regime by better protecting the public from offenders accused of committing serious firearm offences. Now there is an onus on those who allegedly commit such offences to demonstrate to the courts why they should be granted bail while awaiting their trial.

Bail reform is an ongoing priority for our government. Currently we are working together with the provinces and territories to develop comprehensive reforms to the bail regime at both the legislative and operational levels. The government is committed to finding ways to prevent the tragic loss of young, innocent lives, such as that of Zachary Turner, and ensuring that the bail regime adequately protects public safety.

If the bill is referred to committee, members would have a very important role to play in examining whether Bill C-464 is effective in ensuring the protection of children from accused persons and whether the bill can be improved. Among other things, committee members may want to examine the fact that the proposed amendment is specifically limited to children of the accused and whether the bill could be strengthened by removing this restriction. This would serve to remind courts to consider the safety and protection of all children and not just the children of the accused.

I look forward to hearing the committee's views on this and other issues involved in strengthening the protection of children at the bail stage.

It should be noted that Bill C-464 would build on the current bail regime which already affords protection to children. Under paragraph 515.10(b) the court considers "the protection or safety of the public, including any victim of or witness to the offence, having regard to all the circumstances" and is bound to consider the likelihood of the accused committing any offence pending trial. In addition, other sections of the Criminal Code outline specific orders that a judge or a justice must consider before releasing an accused charged with an offence involving violence against a person.

• (1350)

Thus, the proposed bill does not substantially change the grounds for detention. It does, however, expressly remind the courts to consider the safety of children when considering if an accused should be detained prior to trial.

Private Members' Business

The courts' task of accurately assessing the dangerousness or flight risk of an accused and ensuring public confidence in the administration of justice is not without challenges. The presumption of innocence and the right to not be denied bail without just cause are rights enshrined in our Constitution. Clearly, the courts must balance these rights, but must also be vigilant in their assessment of the risks associated with the release of accused persons. This bill appropriately signals the need for courts to assess the safety of children affected by the release of an accused prior to his or her trial.

The protection of children, be it from a dangerous accused or an abusive parent, requires all levels of government to work together. This government is committed to ensuring that appropriate consideration is given to the safety and protection of children during the bail process. More generally, we will continue to work with our provincial and territorial counterparts to improve the operation of the criminal justice system.

This bill complements other government initiatives that strive toward preventing harm by accused persons who threaten the safety of Canadian citizens. The government supports the purpose of this bill and suggests that it be referred to committee to allow for its full consideration as well as for potential amendments to make it even better.

[*Translation*]

Mr. Jean Dorion (Longueuil—Pierre-Boucher, BQ): Madam Speaker, I am pleased to rise today to speak to Bill C-464, An Act to amend the Criminal Code (justification for detention in custody), a bill introduced by the hon. member for Avalon.

I would like to begin by saying that I will be voting in favour of the principle of the bill, which amends the Criminal Code to provide that the detention of an accused in custody may be justified where it is necessary for the protection or safety of the accused's minor children.

As we have already heard, this bill is meant as a legislative response to the tragic events of the Bagby-Turner case. A woman, who was charged with the murder of her spouse in the United States and was out on bail in Canada, killed her son in a murder-suicide after she realized she was going to be extradited.

Everyone agrees that this tragedy could have been avoided. Zachary Turner could have been saved. His paternal grandparents, Kate and David Bagby, believe strongly that there are gaps in the legislation regarding bail and that the law must be reformed.

Between the time when a suspect is charged and the beginning of the trial, section 515 and subsequent sections allow a judge to determine whether the accused person should be held in custody or released.

Generally speaking, the accused is released on certain conditions. However, in some cases, if the person is charged with murder for example, they are generally detained until the verdict is delivered.

In the Bagby-Turner case, which was the impetus for this bill, we do not really know why Dr. Turner was released so easily and that is troubling.

We believe that a person charged with murder should not be released if she is considered a threat to the safety of her community

and more specifically to her child. That is why we think that the addition to the Criminal Code proposed in Bill C-464 will help draw the attention of the judges and prosecutors to people who are clearly the primary victims of the criminals, namely, their children.

This bill will likely also be useful in cases of spousal abuse, which are more frequent than cases as sordid as the one that resulted in the current bill.

In closing, I want to reiterate that the Bloc Québécois is especially sensitive to the fate of children, who are among the most vulnerable in our society. We make it our duty to defend them.

It appears that, with this bill, the hon. member for Avalon is giving us a way to increase the safety of children and that is why we support the bill in principle.

We hope that it will be passed at second reading. During its review in committee, we will study it carefully to ensure that the proposed legislative amendment is well drafted and inserted into the Criminal Code at the right spot, and that it will be effective.

● (1355)

[*English*]

Mr. Jack Harris (St. John's East, NDP): Madam Speaker, I am pleased today to have an opportunity to speak to Bill C-464 standing in the name of the member for Avalon. I want to thank the member for his work on this legislation and bringing it before the House.

I am here to speak in support of the bill. We support the changes to the Criminal Code provisions on what is known as judicial interim release or bail which are found in section 515 of the Criminal Code of Canada: "The detention of an accused in custody is justified only on one or more of the following grounds:"

The grounds that we are dealing with here are set out in the bill:

(b) where the detention is necessary for the protection or safety of the public, including any victim of or witness to the offence,—

And the additional words are added as follows:

—or minor children of the accused, having regard to all the circumstances—

As the member from the Conservative Party has pointed out, the provision for bail is a charter protection, that someone charged with an offence has the right not to be denied bail without just cause and these are the provisions that set out what the just causes are, the protection of the public of course is one of those.

As the member for Avalon has pointed out, the bill came about as a result of the efforts of Kate and David Bagby, the grandparents of a young child, Zachary Turner, who was killed by the child's mother whose name was Dr. Shirley Turner, who in killing herself also took the young infant child into the waters of Conception Bay, drowning both of them.

Private Members' Business

This case was a most heart-wrenching case that I have heard of in terms of a young child. The circumstances were such that the only son of Kate and David Bagby was a medical student at Memorial University in St. John's, along with Dr. Shirley Turner. They both graduated. They had a relationship. Zachary Turner was a child of that relationship born after Dr. Andrew Bagby was shot and killed in a park in Pennsylvania. Shirley Turner was then charged with an offence and the United States government was seeking extradition. While that was ongoing, Dr. Turner applied for and received bail from the Newfoundland Supreme Court.

It was during the bail proceedings, while she was released from bail, that she in fact killed herself, drowned herself and the young child, Zachary Turner.

The case of course was most heart-wrenching. One could only admire and respect Mr. and Mrs. Bagby. It is most difficult to explain in words the feelings after watching this case. Mr. and Mrs. Bagby came to Newfoundland numerous times throughout these proceedings to try, even after their son had been murdered, to build a relationship with this baby infant Zachary for whom they spent all of their time and energy trying to save, nurture and develop a relationship, even knowing in their minds that the person who they were dealing with had murdered their son. This was never proven in court but the extradition proceedings were ongoing.

David Bagby wrote a book about the experience and about all of the efforts that they had made to seek changes to the bail law. As the member for Avalon knows, what they would like to see is that anyone charged with first degree murder not be given bail at all.

That is not what the bill says but what the bill does say, and I think it is important that the bill be passed and we will be supporting it, is that in considering whether someone should be released on bail, that the protection and safety of the minor children of an accused ought to be taken into account.

• (1400)

This case was perhaps a failing not only of the judicial interim release provisions but perhaps also of the child welfare authorities, which I think were criticized in the report that was done a couple of years later.

However, the passion, the concern, the devotion, and the commitment of Kate and David Bagby, I think, was astounding and memorable. I have had several conversations with this couple in my capacity as a member of the House of Assembly of Newfoundland and Labrador and assisted in advocating for some of the reports that were done.

The change here would require a justice to take into consideration, in looking at the bail provisions, the necessity for detention in relation to the protection or safety of the public, including the minor children of the accused. So, where there are minor children involved in a situation, the situation of those minor children, the safety of those minor children, the possibility that some harm might come to them has to be, and can be, taken into consideration by a court in denying bail.

If this change can serve to save the life of a minor child in the future, this would be a very positive step. We support this legislation and seek to have it brought to committee.

I have no doubt that the committee will likely hear from Kate and David Bagby, who have devoted a lot of their efforts and time in a most painful process, but one that they feel very strongly about, in terms of trying to bring about changes to the bail laws in Canada. They are American citizens, but they have seen this as a cause that they have taken on.

I am pleased that the member for Avalon has brought this bill forward. We will be supporting it at second reading, and we hope that the committee will consider it favourably when it is sent there.

• (1405)

Ms. Siobhan Coady (St. John's South—Mount Pearl, Lib.): Madam Speaker, it is a privilege to rise today to speak in favour of this bill. It is Zachary's bill. I want to focus on some circumstances around the case, which has brought the issue of detention in custody to the forefront. It is a case that has shocked and shaken the confidence many people have in child protection services and the justice system.

In particular, I want to look at some of the findings of the Turner child death review conducted by Dr. Peter Markesteyn for the Office of the Child and Youth Advocate in Newfoundland and Labrador. In doing this, I intend to provide members of the House with some additional background information about this case and emphasize the need to make changes such as those being proposed here today.

Andrew Bagby was studying at Memorial University when he met Shirley Turner, a fellow medical student 12 years his senior. They dated for about a year before leaving Canada to practice in the United States, she in Iowa and he in Pennsylvania. According to reports, in the week before Andrew Bagby was killed, he told Turner that their relationship was over.

On the day before Andrew Bagby's murder, Turner drove the 950 miles to confront him. They agreed to meet in a park after his hospital shift. The next day, a park visitor found Andrew Bagby's body in the parking lot. He was shot five times. Zachary Turner was born after his father's death as his mother fought extradition to the United States, where authorities wanted to try her for the murder of the child's father, Dr. Andrew Bagby.

Shirley Turner was let out on bail. A judge determined that Turner had presented no indications of a psychological disorder that would give concern about harm to the public. This was done despite no psychiatric evaluation being ordered by the court and the Crown did not present any evidence collected by the U.S. authorities on what they described as Turner's emotional instability.

While out on bail fighting extradition, Shirley Turner walked into the icy waters of Conception Bay while holding Zachary Turner. Both drowned. The Office of the Child and Youth Advocate in Newfoundland and Labrador appointed Dr. Peter Markesteyn to conduct the child death review into the case in 2005. Dr. Markesteyn is very qualified and has extensive experience in conducting child and adult death reviews. He had worked as a consultant to the federal Department of Justice on several cases and he taught at the faculty of medicine at several Canadian universities.

Private Members' Business

Dr. Markesteyn conducted interviews and read various documents about Turner and found many cases indicating that she had personality and emotional problems before committing the murder of her son. The findings of the report, which was released in October 2006, are shocking.

In reference to Zachary and Turner's daughter from another relationship, the head of the review noted, "Nowhere did I find any ongoing assessment of the safety needs of the children". The child advocate for the province of Newfoundland and Labrador at the time of the release of the report summed it up by saying that, "Zachary Turner's death was preventable" and that "Zachary was in his mother's care when he should not have been".

While the terms of reference under which the review was conducted did not examine how Turner was able to obtain bail from the Newfoundland Supreme Court, Dr. Markesteyn did raise questions about how bail was granted and recommended that a separate review of the justice system's handling of the case be conducted.

I want to pay respect to Zachary's grandparents, Kate and David Bagby, who have been very passionate spokespeople for the change in the bail process and have travelled to Canada several times from their home in the United States to help keep this issue before the public. They demonstrate their love for their grandchild through the whole process.

The couple travelled to Newfoundland and Labrador to be with baby Zachary while his mother was accused of murdering their son. They looked after the child for a period and had to share custody with the mother who eventually murdered their grandchild. Through all of this, they continue to show their love for their grandchild and their son by fighting for changes to this legislation. I also want to commend the member for Avalon, who has brought this issue forward to the House of Commons.

● (1410)

This case forces us to re-examine aspects of our justice system and ask how they can be improved, especially issues around detention in custody and the provision of bail for people who are charged with serious crimes. Another issue which arose in the aftermath of this case was the provisions to ensure that people who are posting security for those on bail understand the process, the implications and that they are able to meet the obligations.

In Canada there are three grounds for detaining an accused prior to sentence. Primary grounds involve detention to ensure the accused's attendance in court. Secondary grounds involve detention for the protection or safety of the public. The third grounds involve the seriousness of the offence and the apparent strength of the prosecution's case, and the circumstances surrounding the offence, such as if a firearm was used. In retrospect, any of these grounds could have been applied to this case to keep Dr. Shirley Turner in custody.

As others have said, Zachary's bill is really about the protection and safety of minors remaining in the custody of individuals charged with serious crimes, and that the minors be considered during bail hearing proceedings. It is about judicial decision makers who must be attentive to the necessity to protect minors who remain in the

custody of individuals charged with serious offences. It is about a decision to deny bail to an accused may be appropriate for the intended protection of the rights and safety of minors in the custody of the accused.

The case of Zachary Turner is, by any account, a tragedy almost beyond imagination. It is a case that shocks us and saddens us. It is a case that shakes our belief about human nature. If anything good can come from such a situation, it may be that we as a society can learn. We can learn from the way we failed Zachary. We can commit ourselves to making changes that will hopefully prevent such tragedies from happening again.

In conclusion, I ask all members to support this amendment to the Criminal Code, which would provide justification for detention in custody in cases similar to the one I have just described.

Mr. Jim Maloway (Elmwood—Transcona, NDP): Madam Speaker, I am very pleased to speak to Bill C-464.

I must admit that this is a very touching story, one that I remember from the past. When I heard that this bill was coming up, I read the background and I wanted to be here today to support the member for Avalon in his efforts.

All too many times we have extremely good causes in the House and we get bogged down on parts of an issue and it does not allow us to get results. I am hopeful that all members in the House will support this bill. I understand Bloc members are in support of it. The NDP caucus supports this bill. I am not 100% sure about the government side. I note that the member for Kildonan—St. Paul asked a question at the beginning of the debate, and I think she is a good supporter of issues such as this one. The member for Avalon may be on the verge of getting unanimous support of the House, but I do not want to prejudge it. It certainly would be a good development if that were to happen.

In terms of the background of the bill, Bill C-464 is the result of the MP for Avalon taking the initiative in co-operation with Senator Tommy Banks. The member needed a senator to sponsor his bill in the other place. This bill is also the result of the determined efforts of Kate and David Bagby.

In 2001 Dr. Andrew Bagby was murdered in a Pennsylvania park. At that time police in the United States questioned Dr. Shirley Turner of Saint John's, Newfoundland about the murder. Soon afterward, Dr. Turner returned to Newfoundland and made known her pregnancy with the child of the late Dr. Bagby. Court proceedings followed. Dr. Turner fought to stay in Canada. Zachary was born. Grandparents Kate and David Bagby actually moved to Newfoundland to file for custody of Zachary. That was about the time that a lot of national coverage began on this story. During the court proceedings, Dr. Turner was granted bail and Zachary remained in her custody with the grandparents being given supervised visitations.

On August 18, 2003, Dr. Turner took her own life and the life of baby Zachary. While on bail, Dr. Turner jumped into the Atlantic Ocean at Conception Bay South, Newfoundland with Zachary and both died.

Private Members' Business

Since that time, Kate and David Bagby have been presenting their story and seeking reform of bail legislation. In addition, their friend and filmmaker has prepared a documentary entitled, *Dear Zachary: a letter to a son about his father*. This documentary has played throughout Canada and in the national media. The sponsor of the bill has indicated that he will be releasing copies of that film.

The MP for Avalon has pledged his support to the Bagbys. He has also committed to bringing about legislative reform within the Criminal Code that would hopefully strengthen bail requirements to achieve a common goal so that no one would have to witness and live through the devastation of losing loved ones through circumstances later determined as preventable. That is what this case was all about.

●(1415)

Dr. Peter Markesteyn is a friend of mine. I have known him for years. He conducted a review and investigation of the circumstances surrounding the death of Zachary in 2003. Dr. Markesteyn made two key conclusions, that Zachary Turner's death was preventable and that Zachary was in his mother's care when he should not have been.

This is a very important piece of information to lead us to make a determination that certainly in cases like this the child should not be in the care of the individual. My colleague from Newfoundland pointed out that child and family services should have played some sort of a role in this situation.

In 2001 a criminal case unfolded in Newfoundland and Labrador, Turner-Bagby, and provided sound rationalization for Bill C-464.

There are some other points that should be mentioned. The decision to deny bail to an accused may be appropriate for the intended protection of the rights and safety of minors in the custody of the accused. We can split hairs here and get into all sorts of arguments. Each case will obviously be judged on its merits. I can see arguments being made about one case being different from another, and how some people believe they should have custody when they are accused of a murder.

In addition, judicial decision makers must be attentive for the necessity of protecting minors who remain in the custody of individuals charged with serious offences. In this case the charge was murder. I cannot think of a more serious charge or serious circumstance where action should have been taken.

Hindsight is always perfect and it is easy for us to look back on a situation and say that if only we had done this or that, then the result that happened would not have happened. Unfortunately it is very difficult for this to occur. At a certain point we have to simply draw a line, make a decision and follow it.

In addition, the protection and safety of minors remaining in the custody of individuals charged with serious crimes has to be considered during the bail hearing procedures.

The enactment amends the Criminal Code to provide that the detention of an accused in custody may be justified where it is necessary for the protection or safety of the accused's minor children.

I am not certain at the end of the day whether that should be the end of it or whether or not it should include more than just the accused's children. There may be other people who may be at risk in this situation. That certainly is part of it.

I know that while Kate and David Bagby are supportive of the member's bill, as my colleague, the member for St. John's East pointed out, initially they did want more restrictive bail measures, but at the end of the day, they are happy with what is in this bill. Presumably when the bill gets to committee, we will hear from the Bagbys and we will get a better bearing of where we are.

I understand my time might be getting short, but I am not sure how short. Madam Speaker is indicating 25 seconds.

An hon. member: That's pretty short.

Mr. Jim Maloway: Madam Speaker, as my Conservative friend said, that is getting short. I know he is right, because yesterday he had an unlimited speech which began to sound like an unlimited speech. At the end of the day he knew when to cut it short, and I think my time is nigh.

●(1420)

Mr. Scott Andrews (Avalon, Lib.): Madam Speaker, it is a pleasure to close debate on this and I would like to thank all those who have spoken today from the government, the Bloc and the NDP. I thank them for their comments.

I look forward to moving this to committee so we can talk about it, so David and Kate can come and present their case and their story to the committee. I would like to thank them for the work they have done on this legislation in making us, as legislators, move forward with a cause and an issue that is of concern to them. It makes us feel a little better when we go home at night, knowing we can have a small impact when we get up in the morning and come to this place.

I thank all members for their comments today and for supporting the bill. I look forward to getting it to committee and getting it to the next stage. Once again, I thank members for supporting Zachary's bill, and David and Kate and Kurt Kuenne for producing the documentary, which was so moving.

The Acting Speaker (Ms. Denise Savoie): The question is on the motion. Is it the pleasure of the House to adopt the motion?

Some hon. members: Agreed.

The Acting Speaker (Ms. Denise Savoie): Accordingly the bill stands referred to the Standing Committee on Justice and Human Rights.

(Motion agreed to, bill read the second time and referred to a committee)

[*Translation*]

The Acting Speaker (Ms. Denise Savoie): It being 2:25 p.m., the House stands adjourned until next Monday at 11 a.m. pursuant to Standing Order 24(1).

(The House adjourned at 2:25 p.m.)

APPENDIX

**ALPHABETICAL LIST OF MEMBERS WITH THEIR
CONSTITUENCIES, PROVINCE OF CONSTITUENCY
AND POLITICAL AFFILIATIONS;
COMMITTEES OF THE HOUSE,
THE MINISTRY AND PARLIAMENTARY SECRETARY**

CHAIR OCCUPANTS

The Speaker

HON. PETER MILLIKEN

The Deputy Speaker and Chair of Committees of the Whole

MR. ANDREW SCHEER

The Deputy Chair of Committees of the Whole

MS. DENISE SAVOIE

The Assistant Deputy Chair of Committees of the Whole

MR. BARRY DEVOLIN

BOARD OF INTERNAL ECONOMY

HON. PETER MILLIKEN

MR. RODGER CUZNER

MS. LIBBY DAVIES

MR. JACQUES GOURDE

MR. MICHEL GUIMOND

HON. JAY HILL

HON. GORDON O'CONNOR

MR. JOE PRESTON

MR. MARCEL PROULX

ALPHABETICAL LIST OF MEMBERS OF THE HOUSE OF COMMONS

Second Session—Fortieth Parliament

Name of Member	Constituency	Province of Constituency	Political Affiliation
Abbott, Hon. Jim, Parliamentary Secretary to the Minister of International Cooperation	Kootenay—Columbia	British Columbia	CPC
Ablonczy, Hon. Diane, Minister of State (Small Business and Tourism)	Calgary—Nose Hill	Alberta	CPC
Aglukkaq, Hon. Leona, Minister of Health	Nunavut	Nunavut	CPC
Albrecht, Harold	Kitchener—Conestoga	Ontario	CPC
Allen, Malcolm	Welland	Ontario	NDP
Allen, Mike	Tobique—Mactaquac	New Brunswick	CPC
Allison, Dean	Niagara West—Glanbrook	Ontario	CPC
Ambrose, Hon. Rona, Minister of Labour	Edmonton—Spruce Grove	Alberta	CPC
Anders, Rob	Calgary West	Alberta	CPC
Anderson, David, Parliamentary Secretary to the Minister of Natural Resources and for the Canadian Wheat Board	Cypress Hills—Grasslands	Saskatchewan	CPC
André, Guy	Berthier—Maskinongé	Québec	BQ
Andrews, Scott	Avalon	Newfoundland and Labrador	Lib.
Angus, Charlie	Timmins—James Bay	Ontario	NDP
Armstrong, Scott	Cumberland—Colchester—Musquodoboit Valley	Nova Scotia	CPC
Arthur, André	Portneuf—Jacques-Cartier	Québec	Ind.
Ashfield, Hon. Keith, Minister of State (Atlantic Canada Opportunities Agency)	Fredericton	New Brunswick	CPC
Ashton, Niki	Churchill	Manitoba	NDP
Asselin, Gérard	Manicouagan	Québec	BQ
Atamanenko, Alex	British Columbia Southern Interior	British Columbia	NDP
Bachand, Claude	Saint-Jean	Québec	BQ
Bagnell, Hon. Larry	Yukon	Yukon	Lib.
Bains, Hon. Navdeep	Mississauga—Brampton South	Ontario	Lib.
Baird, Hon. John, Minister of Transport, Infrastructure and Communities	Ottawa West—Nepean	Ontario	CPC
Beaudin, Josée	Saint-Lambert	Québec	BQ
Bélanger, Hon. Mauril	Ottawa—Vanier	Ontario	Lib.
Bellavance, André	Richmond—Arthabaska	Québec	BQ
Bennett, Hon. Carolyn	St. Paul's	Ontario	Lib.
Benoit, Leon	Vegreville—Wainwright	Alberta	CPC
Bernier, Hon. Maxime	Beauce	Québec	CPC
Bevilacqua, Hon. Maurizio	Vaughan	Ontario	Lib.
Bevington, Dennis	Western Arctic	Northwest Territories	NDP
Bezan, James	Selkirk—Interlake	Manitoba	CPC
Bigras, Bernard	Rosemont—La Petite-Patrie	Québec	BQ
Blackburn, Hon. Jean-Pierre, Minister of National Revenue and Minister of State (Agriculture)	Jonquière—Alma	Québec	CPC
Blais, Raynald	Gaspésie—Îles-de-la-Madeleine	Québec	BQ
Blaney, Steven	Lévis—Bellechasse	Québec	CPC
Block, Kelly	Saskatoon—Rosetown—Biggar	Saskatchewan	CPC
Bonsant, France	Compton—Stanstead	Québec	BQ
Bouchard, Robert	Chicoutimi—Le Fjord	Québec	BQ

Name of Member	Constituency	Province of Constituency	Political Affiliation
Boucher, Sylvie, Parliamentary Secretary for Status of Women	Beauport—Limoilou	Québec	CPC
Boughen, Ray	Palliser	Saskatchewan	CPC
Bourgeois, Diane	Terrebonne—Blainville	Québec	BQ
Braid, Peter	Kitchener—Waterloo	Ontario	CPC
Breitkreuz, Garry	Yorkton—Melville	Saskatchewan	CPC
Brisson, Hon. Scott	Kings—Hants	Nova Scotia	Lib.
Brown, Gordon	Leeds—Grenville	Ontario	CPC
Brown, Lois	Newmarket—Aurora	Ontario	CPC
Brown, Patrick	Barrie	Ontario	CPC
Bruinooge, Rod	Winnipeg South	Manitoba	CPC
Brunelle, Paule	Trois-Rivières	Québec	BQ
Byrne, Hon. Gerry	Humber—St. Barbe—Baie Verte	Newfoundland and Labrador	Lib.
Cadman, Dona	Surrey North	British Columbia	CPC
Calandra, Paul	Oak Ridges—Markham	Ontario	CPC
Calkins, Blaine	Wetaskiwin	Alberta	CPC
Cannan, Ron	Kelowna—Lake Country	British Columbia	CPC
Cannis, John	Scarborough Centre	Ontario	Lib.
Cannon, Hon. Lawrence, Minister of Foreign Affairs	Pontiac	Québec	CPC
Cardin, Serge	Sherbrooke	Québec	BQ
Carrie, Colin, Parliamentary Secretary to the Minister of Health	Oshawa	Ontario	CPC
Carrier, Robert	Alfred-Pellan	Québec	BQ
Casson, Rick	Lethbridge	Alberta	CPC
Charlton, Chris	Hamilton Mountain	Ontario	NDP
Chong, Hon. Michael	Wellington—Halton Hills	Ontario	CPC
Chow, Olivia	Trinity—Spadina	Ontario	NDP
Christopherson, David	Hamilton Centre	Ontario	NDP
Clarke, Rob	Desnethé—Missinippi— Churchill River	Saskatchewan	CPC
Clement, Hon. Tony, Minister of Industry	Parry Sound—Muskoka	Ontario	CPC
Coady, Siobhan	St. John's South—Mount Pearl	Newfoundland and Labrador	Lib.
Coderre, Hon. Denis	Bourassa	Québec	Lib.
Comartin, Joe	Windsor—Tecumseh	Ontario	NDP
Cotler, Hon. Irwin	Mount Royal	Québec	Lib.
Crombie, Bonnie	Mississauga—Streetsville	Ontario	Lib.
Crowder, Jean	Nanaimo—Cowichan	British Columbia	NDP
Cullen, Nathan	Skeena—Bulkley Valley	British Columbia	NDP
Cummins, John	Delta—Richmond East	British Columbia	CPC
Cuzner, Rodger	Cape Breton—Canso	Nova Scotia	Lib.
D'Amours, Jean-Claude	Madawaska—Restigouche	New Brunswick	Lib.
Davidson, Patricia	Sarnia—Lambton	Ontario	CPC
Davies, Don	Vancouver Kingsway	British Columbia	NDP
Davies, Libby	Vancouver East	British Columbia	NDP
Day, Hon. Stockwell, Minister of International Trade and Minister for the Asia-Pacific Gateway	Okanagan—Coquihalla	British Columbia	CPC
DeBellefeuille, Claude	Beauharnois—Salaberry	Québec	BQ
Dechert, Bob	Mississauga—Erindale	Ontario	CPC
Del Mastro, Dean, Parliamentary Secretary to the Minister of Canadian Heritage	Peterborough	Ontario	CPC

Name of Member	Constituency	Province of Constituency	Political Affiliation
Demers, Nicole	Laval	Québec	BQ
Deschamps, Johanne	Laurentides—Labelle	Québec	BQ
Desnoyers, Luc	Rivière-des-Mille-Îles	Québec	BQ
Devolin, Barry, The Acting Speaker	Haliburton—Kawartha Lakes— Brock	Ontario	CPC
Dewar, Paul	Ottawa Centre	Ontario	NDP
Dhaliwal, Sukh	Newton—North Delta	British Columbia	Lib.
Dhalla, Ruby	Brampton—Springdale	Ontario	Lib.
Dion, Hon. Stéphane	Saint-Laurent—Cartierville	Québec	Lib.
Donnelly, Fin	New Westminster—Coquitlam	British Columbia	NDP
Dorion, Jean	Longueuil—Pierre-Boucher	Québec	BQ
Dosanjh, Hon. Ujjal	Vancouver South	British Columbia	Lib.
Dreeshen, Earl	Red Deer	Alberta	CPC
Dryden, Hon. Ken	York Centre	Ontario	Lib.
Duceppe, Gilles	Laurier—Sainte-Marie	Québec	BQ
Dufour, Nicolas	Repentigny	Québec	BQ
Duncan, John, Parliamentary Secretary to the Minister of Indian Affairs and Northern Development	Vancouver Island North	British Columbia	CPC
Duncan, Kirsty	Etobicoke North	Ontario	Lib.
Duncan, Linda	Edmonton—Strathcona	Alberta	NDP
Dykstra, Rick, Parliamentary Secretary to the Minister of Citizenship and Immigration	St. Catharines	Ontario	CPC
Easter, Hon. Wayne	Malpeque	Prince Edward Island	Lib.
Eyking, Hon. Mark	Sydney—Victoria	Nova Scotia	Lib.
Faille, Meili	Vaudreuil-Soulanges	Québec	BQ
Fast, Ed	Abbotsford	British Columbia	CPC
Finley, Hon. Diane, Minister of Human Resources and Skills Development	Haldimand—Norfolk	Ontario	CPC
Flaherty, Hon. Jim, Minister of Finance	Whitby—Oshawa	Ontario	CPC
Fletcher, Hon. Steven, Minister of State (Democratic Reform)	Charleswood—St. James— Assiniboia	Manitoba	CPC
Folco, Raymonde	Laval—Les Îles	Québec	Lib.
Foote, Judy	Random—Burin—St. George's	Newfoundland and Labrador	Lib.
Freeman, Carole	Châteauguay—Saint-Constant	Québec	BQ
Fry, Hon. Hedy	Vancouver Centre	British Columbia	Lib.
Gagnon, Christiane	Québec	Québec	BQ
Galipeau, Royal	Ottawa—Orléans	Ontario	CPC
Gallant, Cheryl	Renfrew—Nipissing— Pembroke	Ontario	CPC
Garneau, Marc	Westmount—Ville-Marie	Québec	Lib.
Gaudet, Roger	Montcalm	Québec	BQ
Généreux, Bernard	Montmagny—L'Islet— Kamouraska—Rivière-du-Loup	Québec	CPC
Glover, Shelly, Parliamentary Secretary for Official Languages	Saint Boniface	Manitoba	CPC
Godin, Yvon	Acadie—Bathurst	New Brunswick	NDP
Goldring, Peter	Edmonton East	Alberta	CPC
Goodale, Hon. Ralph, Wascana	Wascana	Saskatchewan	Lib.
Goodyear, Hon. Gary, Minister of State (Science and Technology) (Federal Economic Development Agency for Southern Ontario)	Cambridge	Ontario	CPC

Name of Member	Constituency	Province of Constituency	Political Affiliation
Gourde, Jacques, Parliamentary Secretary to the Minister of Public Works and Government Services and to the Minister of National Revenue	Lotbinière—Chutes-de-la-Chaudière	Québec	CPC
Gravelle, Claude	Nickel Belt	Ontario	NDP
Grewal, Nina	Fleetwood—Port Kells	British Columbia	CPC
Guarnieri, Hon. Albina	Mississauga East—Cooksville	Ontario	Lib.
Guay, Monique	Rivière-du-Nord	Québec	BQ
Guergis, Hon. Helena, Minister of State (Status of Women)	Simcoe—Grey	Ontario	CPC
Guimond, Claude	Rimouski-Neigette—Témiscouata—Les Basques	Québec	BQ
Guimond, Michel	Montmorency—Charlevoix—Haute-Côte-Nord	Québec	BQ
Hall Findlay, Martha	Willowdale	Ontario	Lib.
Harper, Right Hon. Stephen, Prime Minister	Calgary Southwest	Alberta	CPC
Harris, Jack	St. John's East	Newfoundland and Labrador	NDP
Harris, Richard	Cariboo—Prince George	British Columbia	CPC
Hawn, Laurie, Parliamentary Secretary to the Minister of National Defence	Edmonton Centre	Alberta	CPC
Hiebert, Russ	South Surrey—White Rock—Cloverdale	British Columbia	CPC
Hill, Hon. Jay, Leader of the Government in the House of Commons	Prince George—Peace River	British Columbia	CPC
Hoback, Randy	Prince Albert	Saskatchewan	CPC
Hoepfner, Candice	Portage—Lisgar	Manitoba	CPC
Holder, Ed	London West	Ontario	CPC
Holland, Mark	Ajax—Pickering	Ontario	Lib.
Hughes, Carol	Algoma—Manitoulin—Kapuskasing	Ontario	NDP
Hyer, Bruce	Thunder Bay—Superior North	Ontario	NDP
Ignatieff, Michael, Leader of the Opposition	Etobicoke—Lakeshore	Ontario	Lib.
Jean, Brian, Parliamentary Secretary to the Minister of Transport, Infrastructure and Communities	Fort McMurray—Athabasca	Alberta	CPC
Jennings, Hon. Marlene	Notre-Dame-de-Grâce—Lachine	Québec	Lib.
Julian, Peter	Burnaby—New Westminster	British Columbia	NDP
Kamp, Randy, Parliamentary Secretary to the Minister of Fisheries and Oceans	Pitt Meadows—Maple Ridge—Mission	British Columbia	CPC
Kania, Andrew	Brampton West	Ontario	Lib.
Karygiannis, Hon. Jim	Scarborough—Agincourt	Ontario	Lib.
Keddy, Gerald, Parliamentary Secretary to the Minister of International Trade	South Shore—St. Margaret's	Nova Scotia	CPC
Kennedy, Gerard	Parkdale—High Park	Ontario	Lib.
Kenney, Hon. Jason, Minister of Citizenship, Immigration and Multiculturalism	Calgary Southeast	Alberta	CPC
Kent, Hon. Peter, Minister of State of Foreign Affairs (Americas)	Thornhill	Ontario	CPC
Kerr, Greg, Parliamentary Secretary to the Minister of Veterans Affairs	West Nova	Nova Scotia	CPC
Komarnicki, Ed, Parliamentary Secretary to the Minister of Human Resources and Skills Development and to the Minister of Labour	Souris—Moose Mountain	Saskatchewan	CPC
Kramp, Daryl	Prince Edward—Hastings	Ontario	CPC
Laforest, Jean-Yves	Saint-Maurice—Champlain	Québec	BQ
Laframboise, Mario	Argenteuil—Papineau—Mirabel	Québec	BQ

Name of Member	Constituency	Province of Constituency	Political Affiliation
Lake, Mike, Parliamentary Secretary to the Minister of Industry ...	Edmonton—Mill Woods—Beaumont.....	Alberta	CPC
Lalonde, Francine	La Pointe-de-l'Île.....	Québec	BQ
Lauzon, Guy.....	Stormont—Dundas—South Glengarry	Ontario	CPC
Lavallée, Carole	Saint-Bruno—Saint-Hubert.....	Québec	BQ
Layton, Hon. Jack.....	Toronto—Danforth.....	Ontario	NDP
Lebel, Hon. Denis, Minister of State (Economic Development Agency of Canada for the Regions of Quebec).....	Roberval—Lac-Saint-Jean.....	Québec	CPC
LeBlanc, Hon. Dominic	Beauséjour.....	New Brunswick.....	Lib.
Lee, Derek	Scarborough—Rouge River ...	Ontario	Lib.
Lemay, Marc	Abitibi—Témiscamingue	Québec	BQ
Lemieux, Pierre, Parliamentary Secretary to the Minister of Agriculture	Glengarry—Prescott—Russell .	Ontario	CPC
Leslie, Megan	Halifax	Nova Scotia	NDP
Lessard, Yves.....	Chambly—Borduas	Québec	BQ
Lévesque, Yvon	Abitibi—Baie-James—Nunavik—Eeyou	Québec	BQ
Lobb, Ben	Huron—Bruce.....	Ontario	CPC
Lukiwski, Tom, Parliamentary Secretary to the Leader of the Government in the House of Commons	Regina—Lumsden—Lake Centre.....	Saskatchewan	CPC
Lunn, Hon. Gary, Minister of State (Sport)	Saanich—Gulf Islands	British Columbia	CPC
Lunney, James.....	Nanaimo—Alberni.....	British Columbia	CPC
MacAulay, Hon. Lawrence	Cardigan	Prince Edward Island....	Lib.
MacKay, Hon. Peter, Minister of National Defence and Minister for the Atlantic Gateway.....	Central Nova	Nova Scotia	CPC
MacKenzie, Dave, Parliamentary Secretary to the Minister of Public Safety	Oxford	Ontario	CPC
Malhi, Hon. Gurbax	Bramalea—Gore—Malton.....	Ontario	Lib.
Malo, Luc.....	Verchères—Les Patriotes	Québec	BQ
Maloway, Jim.....	Elmwood—Transcona	Manitoba	NDP
Mark, Inky.....	Dauphin—Swan River—Marquette.....	Manitoba	CPC
Marston, Wayne	Hamilton East—Stoney Creek .	Ontario	NDP
Martin, Hon. Keith.....	Esquimalt—Juan de Fuca	British Columbia	Lib.
Martin, Pat.....	Winnipeg Centre	Manitoba	NDP
Martin, Tony.....	Sault Ste. Marie.....	Ontario	NDP
Masse, Brian.....	Windsor West	Ontario	NDP
Mathysen, Irene	London—Fanshawe.....	Ontario	NDP
Mayes, Colin	Okanagan—Shuswap	British Columbia	CPC
McCallum, Hon. John	Markham—Unionville.....	Ontario	Lib.
McColeman, Phil.....	Brant	Ontario	CPC
McGuinty, David.....	Ottawa South.....	Ontario	Lib.
McKay, Hon. John	Scarborough—Guildwood.....	Ontario	Lib.
McLeod, Cathy.....	Kamloops—Thompson—Cariboo	British Columbia	CPC
McTeague, Hon. Dan	Pickering—Scarborough East ..	Ontario	Lib.
Ménard, Serge	Marc-Aurèle-Fortin	Québec	BQ
Mendes, Alexandra.....	Brossard—La Prairie	Québec	Lib.
Menzies, Ted, Parliamentary Secretary to the Minister of Finance ..	Macleod	Alberta	CPC
Merrifield, Hon. Rob, Minister of State (Transport).....	Yellowhead	Alberta	CPC

Name of Member	Constituency	Province of Constituency	Political Affiliation
Miller, Larry	Bruce—Grey—Owen Sound	Ontario	CPC
Milliken, Hon. Peter, Speaker of the House of Commons	Kingston and the Islands	Ontario	Lib.
Minna, Hon. Maria	Beaches—East York	Ontario	Lib.
Moore, Hon. James, Minister of Canadian Heritage and Official Languages	Port Moody—Westwood—Port Coquitlam	British Columbia	CPC
Moore, Rob, Parliamentary Secretary to the Minister of Justice	Fundy Royal	New Brunswick	CPC
Mourani, Maria	Ahuntsic	Québec	BQ
Mulcair, Thomas	Outremont	Québec	NDP
Murphy, Brian	Moncton—Riverview—Dieppe	New Brunswick	Lib.
Murphy, Hon. Shawn	Charlottetown	Prince Edward Island	Lib.
Murray, Joyce	Vancouver Quadra	British Columbia	Lib.
Nadeau, Richard	Gatineau	Québec	BQ
Neville, Hon. Anita	Winnipeg South Centre	Manitoba	Lib.
Nicholson, Hon. Rob, Minister of Justice and Attorney General of Canada	Niagara Falls	Ontario	CPC
Norlock, Rick	Northumberland—Quinte West	Ontario	CPC
O'Connor, Hon. Gordon, Minister of State and Chief Government Whip	Carleton—Mississippi Mills	Ontario	CPC
O'Neill-Gordon, Tilly	Miramichi	New Brunswick	CPC
Obhrai, Deepak, Parliamentary Secretary to the Minister of Foreign Affairs	Calgary East	Alberta	CPC
Oda, Hon. Bev, Minister of International Cooperation	Durham	Ontario	CPC
Oliphant, Robert	Don Valley West	Ontario	Lib.
Ouellet, Christian	Brome—Missisquoi	Québec	BQ
Pacetti, Massimo	Saint-Léonard—Saint-Michel	Québec	Lib.
Paillé, Daniel	Hochelaga	Québec	BQ
Paillé, Pascal-Pierre	Louis-Hébert	Québec	BQ
Paquette, Pierre	Joliette	Québec	BQ
Paradis, Hon. Christian, Minister of Public Works and Government Services	Mégantic—L'Érable	Québec	CPC
Patry, Bernard	Pierrefonds—Dollard	Québec	Lib.
Payne, LaVar	Medicine Hat	Alberta	CPC
Pearson, Glen	London North Centre	Ontario	Lib.
Petit, Daniel, Parliamentary Secretary to the Minister of Justice	Charlesbourg—Haute-Saint-Charles	Québec	CPC
Plamondon, Louis	Bas-Richelieu—Nicolet—Bécancour	Québec	BQ
Poilievre, Pierre, Parliamentary Secretary to the Prime Minister and to the Minister of Intergovernmental Affairs	Nepean—Carleton	Ontario	CPC
Pomerleau, Roger	Drummond	Québec	BQ
Prentice, Hon. Jim, Minister of the Environment	Calgary Centre-North	Alberta	CPC
Preston, Joe	Elgin—Middlesex—London	Ontario	CPC
Proulx, Marcel	Hull—Aylmer	Québec	Lib.
Rae, Hon. Bob	Toronto Centre	Ontario	Lib.
Rafferty, John	Thunder Bay—Rainy River	Ontario	NDP
Raitt, Hon. Lisa, Minister of Natural Resources	Halton	Ontario	CPC
Rajotte, James	Edmonton—Leduc	Alberta	CPC
Ratansi, Yasmin	Don Valley East	Ontario	Lib.
Rathgeber, Brent	Edmonton—St. Albert	Alberta	CPC
Regan, Hon. Geoff	Halifax West	Nova Scotia	Lib.

Name of Member	Constituency	Province of Constituency	Political Affiliation
Reid, Scott	Lanark—Frontenac—Lennox and Addington	Ontario	CPC
Richards, Blake	Wild Rose	Alberta	CPC
Richardson, Lee	Calgary Centre	Alberta	CPC
Rickford, Greg	Kenora	Ontario	CPC
Ritz, Hon. Gerry, Minister of Agriculture and Agri-Food and Minister for the Canadian Wheat Board	Battlefords—Lloydminster	Saskatchewan	CPC
Rodriguez, Pablo	Honoré-Mercier	Québec	Lib.
Rota, Anthony	Nipissing—Timiskaming	Ontario	Lib.
Roy, Jean-Yves	Haute-Gaspésie—La Mitis— Matane—Matapédia	Québec	BQ
Russell, Todd	Labrador	Newfoundland and Labrador	Lib.
Savage, Michael	Dartmouth—Cole Harbour	Nova Scotia	Lib.
Savoie, Denise, The Acting Speaker	Victoria	British Columbia	NDP
Saxton, Andrew, Parliamentary Secretary to the President of the Treasury Board	North Vancouver	British Columbia	CPC
Scarpaleggia, Francis	Lac-Saint-Louis	Québec	Lib.
Scheer, Andrew, The Deputy Speaker	Regina—Qu'Appelle	Saskatchewan	CPC
Schellenberger, Gary	Perth—Wellington	Ontario	CPC
Sgro, Hon. Judy	York West	Ontario	Lib.
Shea, Hon. Gail, Minister of Fisheries and Oceans	Egmont	Prince Edward Island	CPC
Shiple, Bev	Lambton—Kent—Middlesex	Ontario	CPC
Shory, Devinder	Calgary Northeast	Alberta	CPC
Siksay, Bill	Burnaby—Douglas	British Columbia	NDP
Silva, Mario	Davenport	Ontario	Lib.
Simms, Scott	Bonavista—Gander—Grand Falls—Windsor	Newfoundland and Labrador	Lib.
Simson, Michelle	Scarborough Southwest	Ontario	Lib.
Smith, Joy	Kildonan—St. Paul	Manitoba	CPC
Sorenson, Kevin	Crowfoot	Alberta	CPC
St-Cyr, Thierry	Jeanne-Le Ber	Québec	BQ
Stanton, Bruce	Simcoe North	Ontario	CPC
Stoffer, Peter	Sackville—Eastern Shore	Nova Scotia	NDP
Storseth, Brian	Westlock—St. Paul	Alberta	CPC
Strahl, Hon. Chuck, Minister of Indian Affairs and Northern Development, Federal Interlocutor for Métis and Non-Status Indians and Minister of the Canadian Northern Economic Development Agency	Chilliwack—Fraser Canyon	British Columbia	CPC
Sweet, David	Ancaster—Dundas— Flamborough—Westdale	Ontario	CPC
Szabo, Paul	Mississauga South	Ontario	Lib.
Thi Lac, Ève-Mary Thai	Saint-Hyacinthe—Bagot	Québec	BQ
Thibeault, Glenn	Sudbury	Ontario	NDP
Thompson, Hon. Greg, Minister of Veterans Affairs	New Brunswick Southwest	New Brunswick	CPC
Tilson, David	Dufferin—Caledon	Ontario	CPC
Toews, Hon. Vic, President of the Treasury Board	Provencher	Manitoba	CPC
Tonks, Alan	York South—Weston	Ontario	Lib.
Trost, Brad	Saskatoon—Humboldt	Saskatchewan	CPC
Trudeau, Justin	Papineau	Québec	Lib.
Tweed, Merv	Brandon—Souris	Manitoba	CPC

Name of Member	Constituency	Province of Constituency	Political Affiliation
Uppal, Tim	Edmonton—Sherwood Park	Alberta	CPC
Valeriote, Francis	Guelph	Ontario	Lib.
Van Kesteren, Dave	Chatham-Kent—Essex	Ontario	CPC
Van Loan, Hon. Peter, Minister of Public Safety	York—Simcoe	Ontario	CPC
Vellacott, Maurice	Saskatoon—Wanuskewin	Saskatchewan	CPC
Verner, Hon. Josée, Minister of Intergovernmental Affairs, President of the Queen's Privy Council for Canada and Minister for La Francophonie	Louis-Saint-Laurent	Québec	CPC
Vincent, Robert	Shefford	Québec	BQ
Volpe, Hon. Joseph	Eglinton—Lawrence	Ontario	Lib.
Wallace, Mike	Burlington	Ontario	CPC
Warawa, Mark, Parliamentary Secretary to the Minister of the Environment	Langley	British Columbia	CPC
Warkentin, Chris	Peace River	Alberta	CPC
Wasylycia-Leis, Judy	Winnipeg North	Manitoba	NDP
Watson, Jeff	Essex	Ontario	CPC
Weston, John	West Vancouver—Sunshine Coast—Sea to Sky Country	British Columbia	CPC
Weston, Rodney	Saint John	New Brunswick	CPC
Wilfert, Hon. Bryon	Richmond Hill	Ontario	Lib.
Wong, Alice, Parliamentary Secretary for Multiculturalism	Richmond	British Columbia	CPC
Woodworth, Stephen	Kitchener Centre	Ontario	CPC
Wrzesnewskyj, Borys	Etobicoke Centre	Ontario	Lib.
Yelich, Hon. Lynne, Minister of State (Western Economic Diversification)	Blackstrap	Saskatchewan	CPC
Young, Terence	Oakville	Ontario	CPC
Zarac, Lise	LaSalle—Émard	Québec	Lib.

ALPHABETICAL LIST OF MEMBERS OF THE HOUSE OF COMMONS BY PROVINCE

Second Session—Fortieth Parliament

Name of Member	Constituency	Political Affiliation
ALBERTA (28)		
Ablonczy, Hon. Diane, Minister of State (Small Business and Tourism)	Calgary—Nose Hill	CPC
Ambrose, Hon. Rona, Minister of Labour	Edmonton—Spruce Grove	CPC
Anders, Rob	Calgary West	CPC
Benoit, Leon	Vegreville—Wainwright	CPC
Calkins, Blaine	Wetaskiwin	CPC
Casson, Rick	Lethbridge	CPC
Dreeshen, Earl	Red Deer	CPC
Duncan, Linda	Edmonton—Strathcona	NDP
Goldring, Peter	Edmonton East	CPC
Harper, Right Hon. Stephen, Prime Minister	Calgary Southwest	CPC
Hawn, Laurie, Parliamentary Secretary to the Minister of National Defence	Edmonton Centre	CPC
Jean, Brian, Parliamentary Secretary to the Minister of Transport, Infrastructure and Communities	Fort McMurray—Athabasca	CPC
Kenney, Hon. Jason, Minister of Citizenship, Immigration and Multiculturalism	Calgary Southeast	CPC
Lake, Mike, Parliamentary Secretary to the Minister of Industry	Edmonton—Mill Woods—Beaumont	CPC
Menzies, Ted, Parliamentary Secretary to the Minister of Finance	Macleod	CPC
Merrifield, Hon. Rob, Minister of State (Transport)	Yellowhead	CPC
Obhrai, Deepak, Parliamentary Secretary to the Minister of Foreign Affairs	Calgary East	CPC
Payne, LaVar	Medicine Hat	CPC
Prentice, Hon. Jim, Minister of the Environment	Calgary Centre-North	CPC
Rajotte, James	Edmonton—Leduc	CPC
Rathgeber, Brent	Edmonton—St. Albert	CPC
Richards, Blake	Wild Rose	CPC
Richardson, Lee	Calgary Centre	CPC
Shory, Devinder	Calgary Northeast	CPC
Sorenson, Kevin	Crowfoot	CPC
Storseth, Brian	Westlock—St. Paul	CPC
Uppal, Tim	Edmonton—Sherwood Park	CPC
Warkentin, Chris	Peace River	CPC
BRITISH COLUMBIA (36)		
Abbott, Hon. Jim, Parliamentary Secretary to the Minister of International Cooperation	Kootenay—Columbia	CPC
Atamanenko, Alex	British Columbia Southern Interior	NDP
Cadman, Dona	Surrey North	CPC
Cannan, Ron	Kelowna—Lake Country	CPC
Crowder, Jean	Nanaimo—Cowichan	NDP
Cullen, Nathan	Skeena—Bulkley Valley	NDP
Cummins, John	Delta—Richmond East	CPC
Davies, Don	Vancouver Kingsway	NDP
Davies, Libby	Vancouver East	NDP
Day, Hon. Stockwell, Minister of International Trade and Minister for the Asia-Pacific Gateway	Okanagan—Coquihalla	CPC
Dhaliwal, Sukh	Newton—North Delta	Lib.

Name of Member	Constituency	Political Affiliation
Donnelly, Fin	New Westminster—Coquitlam	NDP
Dosanjh, Hon. Ujjal	Vancouver South	Lib.
Duncan, John, Parliamentary Secretary to the Minister of Indian Affairs and Northern Development	Vancouver Island North	CPC
Fast, Ed.	Abbotsford	CPC
Fry, Hon. Hedy	Vancouver Centre	Lib.
Grewal, Nina	Fleetwood—Port Kells	CPC
Harris, Richard	Cariboo—Prince George	CPC
Hiebert, Russ.	South Surrey—White Rock—Cloverdale	CPC
Hill, Hon. Jay, Leader of the Government in the House of Commons	Prince George—Peace River	CPC
Julian, Peter	Burnaby—New Westminster	NDP
Kamp, Randy, Parliamentary Secretary to the Minister of Fisheries and Oceans	Pitt Meadows—Maple Ridge—Mission	CPC
Lunn, Hon. Gary, Minister of State (Sport)	Saanich—Gulf Islands	CPC
Lunney, James	Nanaimo—Alberni	CPC
Martin, Hon. Keith	Esquimalt—Juan de Fuca	Lib.
Mayes, Colin	Okanagan—Shuswap	CPC
McLeod, Cathy	Kamloops—Thompson—Cariboo	CPC
Moore, Hon. James, Minister of Canadian Heritage and Official Languages	Port Moody—Westwood—Port Coquitlam	CPC
Murray, Joyce	Vancouver Quadra	Lib.
Savoie, Denise, The Acting Speaker	Victoria	NDP
Saxton, Andrew, Parliamentary Secretary to the President of the Treasury Board	North Vancouver	CPC
Siksay, Bill	Burnaby—Douglas	NDP
Strahl, Hon. Chuck, Minister of Indian Affairs and Northern Development, Federal Interlocutor for Métis and Non-Status Indians and Minister of the Canadian Northern Economic Development Agency	Chilliwack—Fraser Canyon	CPC
Warawa, Mark, Parliamentary Secretary to the Minister of the Environment	Langley	CPC
Weston, John	West Vancouver—Sunshine Coast—Sea to Sky Country	CPC
Wong, Alice, Parliamentary Secretary for Multiculturalism	Richmond	CPC
MANITOBA (14)		
Ashton, Niki	Churchill	NDP
Bezan, James	Selkirk—Interlake	CPC
Bruinooge, Rod	Winnipeg South	CPC
Fletcher, Hon. Steven, Minister of State (Democratic Reform)	Charleswood—St. James—Assiniboia	CPC
Glover, Shelly, Parliamentary Secretary for Official Languages	Saint Boniface	CPC
Hoepfner, Candice	Portage—Lisgar	CPC
Maloway, Jim	Elmwood—Transcona	NDP
Mark, Inky	Dauphin—Swan River—Marquette	CPC
Martin, Pat	Winnipeg Centre	NDP
Neville, Hon. Anita	Winnipeg South Centre	Lib.
Smith, Joy	Kildonan—St. Paul	CPC
Toews, Hon. Vic, President of the Treasury Board	Provencher	CPC
Tweed, Merv	Brandon—Souris	CPC
Wasylycia-Leis, Judy	Winnipeg North	NDP
NEW BRUNSWICK (10)		
Allen, Mike	Tobique—Mactaquac	CPC
Ashfield, Hon. Keith, Minister of State (Atlantic Canada Opportunities Agency)	Fredericton	CPC

Name of Member	Constituency	Political Affiliation
D'Amours, Jean-Claude	Madawaska—Restigouche	Lib.
Godin, Yvon	Acadie—Bathurst	NDP
LeBlanc, Hon. Dominic	Beauséjour	Lib.
Moore, Rob, Parliamentary Secretary to the Minister of Justice	Fundy Royal	CPC
Murphy, Brian	Moncton—Riverview—Dieppe	Lib.
O'Neill-Gordon, Tilly	Miramichi	CPC
Thompson, Hon. Greg, Minister of Veterans Affairs	New Brunswick Southwest	CPC
Weston, Rodney	Saint John	CPC
NEWFOUNDLAND AND LABRADOR (7)		
Andrews, Scott	Avalon	Lib.
Byrne, Hon. Gerry	Humber—St. Barbe—Baie Verte	Lib.
Coady, Siobhan	St. John's South—Mount Pearl	Lib.
Foote, Judy	Random—Burin—St. George's	Lib.
Harris, Jack	St. John's East	NDP
Russell, Todd	Labrador	Lib.
Simms, Scott	Bonavista—Gander—Grand Falls—Windsor	Lib.
NORTHWEST TERRITORIES (1)		
Bevington, Dennis	Western Arctic	NDP
NOVA SCOTIA (11)		
Armstrong, Scott	Cumberland—Colchester—Musquodoboit Valley	CPC
Brisson, Hon. Scott	Kings—Hants	Lib.
Cuzner, Rodger	Cape Breton—Canso	Lib.
Eyking, Hon. Mark	Sydney—Victoria	Lib.
Keddy, Gerald, Parliamentary Secretary to the Minister of International Trade	South Shore—St. Margaret's	CPC
Kerr, Greg, Parliamentary Secretary to the Minister of Veterans Affairs	West Nova	CPC
Leslie, Megan	Halifax	NDP
MacKay, Hon. Peter, Minister of National Defence and Minister for the Atlantic Gateway	Central Nova	CPC
Regan, Hon. Geoff	Halifax West	Lib.
Savage, Michael	Dartmouth—Cole Harbour	Lib.
Stoffer, Peter	Sackville—Eastern Shore	NDP
NUNAVUT (1)		
Aglukkaq, Hon. Leona, Minister of Health	Nunavut	CPC
ONTARIO (106)		
Albrecht, Harold	Kitchener—Conestoga	CPC
Allen, Malcolm	Welland	NDP
Allison, Dean	Niagara West—Glanbrook	CPC
Angus, Charlie	Timmins—James Bay	NDP
Bains, Hon. Navdeep	Mississauga—Brampton South	Lib.
Baird, Hon. John, Minister of Transport, Infrastructure and Communities	Ottawa West—Nepean	CPC
Bélanger, Hon. Mauril	Ottawa—Vanier	Lib.
Bennett, Hon. Carolyn	St. Paul's	Lib.

Name of Member	Constituency	Political Affiliation
Bevilacqua, Hon. Maurizio	Vaughan	Lib.
Braid, Peter	Kitchener—Waterloo	CPC
Brown, Gordon	Leeds—Grenville	CPC
Brown, Lois	Newmarket—Aurora	CPC
Brown, Patrick	Barrie	CPC
Calandra, Paul	Oak Ridges—Markham	CPC
Cannis, John	Scarborough Centre	Lib.
Carrie, Colin, Parliamentary Secretary to the Minister of Health	Oshawa	CPC
Charlton, Chris	Hamilton Mountain	NDP
Chong, Hon. Michael	Wellington—Halton Hills	CPC
Chow, Olivia	Trinity—Spadina	NDP
Christopherson, David	Hamilton Centre	NDP
Clement, Hon. Tony, Minister of Industry	Parry Sound—Muskoka	CPC
Comartin, Joe	Windsor—Tecumseh	NDP
Crombie, Bonnie	Mississauga—Streetsville	Lib.
Davidson, Patricia	Sarnia—Lambton	CPC
Dechert, Bob	Mississauga—Erindale	CPC
Del Mastro, Dean, Parliamentary Secretary to the Minister of Canadian Heritage	Peterborough	CPC
Devolin, Barry, The Acting Speaker	Haliburton—Kawartha Lakes—Brock	CPC
Dewar, Paul	Ottawa Centre	NDP
Dhalla, Ruby	Brampton—Springdale	Lib.
Dryden, Hon. Ken	York Centre	Lib.
Duncan, Kirsty	Etobicoke North	Lib.
Dykstra, Rick, Parliamentary Secretary to the Minister of Citizenship and Immigration	St. Catharines	CPC
Finley, Hon. Diane, Minister of Human Resources and Skills Development	Haldimand—Norfolk	CPC
Flaherty, Hon. Jim, Minister of Finance	Whitby—Oshawa	CPC
Galipeau, Royal	Ottawa—Orléans	CPC
Gallant, Cheryl	Renfrew—Nipissing—Pembroke	CPC
Goodyear, Hon. Gary, Minister of State (Science and Technology) (Federal Economic Development Agency for Southern Ontario)	Cambridge	CPC
Gravelle, Claude	Nickel Belt	NDP
Guarnieri, Hon. Albina	Mississauga East—Cooksville	Lib.
Guergis, Hon. Helena, Minister of State (Status of Women)	Simcoe—Grey	CPC
Hall Findlay, Martha	Willowdale	Lib.
Holder, Ed	London West	CPC
Holland, Mark	Ajax—Pickering	Lib.
Hughes, Carol	Algoma—Manitoulin—Kapusking	NDP
Hyer, Bruce	Thunder Bay—Superior North	NDP
Ignatieff, Michael, Leader of the Opposition	Etobicoke—Lakeshore	Lib.
Kania, Andrew	Brampton West	Lib.
Karygiannis, Hon. Jim	Scarborough—Agincourt	Lib.
Kennedy, Gerard	Parkdale—High Park	Lib.
Kent, Hon. Peter, Minister of State of Foreign Affairs (Americas)	Thornhill	CPC
Kramp, Daryl	Prince Edward—Hastings	CPC
Lauzon, Guy	Stormont—Dundas—South Glengarry	CPC
Layton, Hon. Jack	Toronto—Danforth	NDP
Lee, Derek	Scarborough—Rouge River	Lib.
Lemieux, Pierre, Parliamentary Secretary to the Minister of Agriculture	Glengarry—Prescott—Russell	CPC
Lobb, Ben	Huron—Bruce	CPC

Name of Member	Constituency	Political Affiliation
MacKenzie, Dave, Parliamentary Secretary to the Minister of Public Safety	Oxford	CPC
Malhi, Hon. Gurbax	Bramalea—Gore—Malton	Lib.
Marston, Wayne	Hamilton East—Stoney Creek	NDP
Martin, Tony	Sault Ste. Marie	NDP
Masse, Brian	Windsor West	NDP
Mathyssen, Irene	London—Fanshawe	NDP
McCallum, Hon. John	Markham—Unionville	Lib.
McColeman, Phil	Brant	CPC
McGuinty, David	Ottawa South	Lib.
McKay, Hon. John	Scarborough—Guildwood	Lib.
McTeague, Hon. Dan	Pickering—Scarborough East	Lib.
Miller, Larry	Bruce—Grey—Owen Sound	CPC
Milliken, Hon. Peter, Speaker of the House of Commons	Kingston and the Islands	Lib.
Minna, Hon. Maria	Beaches—East York	Lib.
Nicholson, Hon. Rob, Minister of Justice and Attorney General of Canada	Niagara Falls	CPC
Norlock, Rick	Northumberland—Quinte West	CPC
O'Connor, Hon. Gordon, Minister of State and Chief Government Whip	Carleton—Mississippi Mills	CPC
Oda, Hon. Bev, Minister of International Cooperation	Durham	CPC
Oliphant, Robert	Don Valley West	Lib.
Pearson, Glen	London North Centre	Lib.
Poilievre, Pierre, Parliamentary Secretary to the Prime Minister and to the Minister of Intergovernmental Affairs	Nepean—Carleton	CPC
Preston, Joe	Elgin—Middlesex—London	CPC
Rae, Hon. Bob	Toronto Centre	Lib.
Rafferty, John	Thunder Bay—Rainy River	NDP
Raitt, Hon. Lisa, Minister of Natural Resources	Halton	CPC
Ratansi, Yasmin	Don Valley East	Lib.
Reid, Scott	Lanark—Frontenac—Lennox and Addington	CPC
Rickford, Greg	Kenora	CPC
Rota, Anthony	Nipissing—Timiskaming	Lib.
Schellenberger, Gary	Perth—Wellington	CPC
Sgro, Hon. Judy	York West	Lib.
Shiple, Bev	Lambton—Kent—Middlesex	CPC
Silva, Mario	Davenport	Lib.
Simson, Michelle	Scarborough Southwest	Lib.
Stanton, Bruce	Simcoe North	CPC
Sweet, David	Ancaster—Dundas—Flamborough—Westdale	CPC
Szabo, Paul	Mississauga South	Lib.
Thibeault, Glenn	Sudbury	NDP
Tilson, David	Dufferin—Caledon	CPC
Tonks, Alan	York South—Weston	Lib.
Valeriotte, Francis	Guelph	Lib.
Van Kesteren, Dave	Chatham-Kent—Essex	CPC
Van Loan, Hon. Peter, Minister of Public Safety	York—Simcoe	CPC
Volpe, Hon. Joseph	Eglinton—Lawrence	Lib.
Wallace, Mike	Burlington	CPC
Watson, Jeff	Essex	CPC
Wilfert, Hon. Bryon	Richmond Hill	Lib.

Name of Member	Constituency	Political Affiliation
Woodworth, Stephen	Kitchener Centre	CPC
Wrzesnewskyj, Borys	Etobicoke Centre	Lib.
Young, Terence	Oakville	CPC
PRINCE EDWARD ISLAND (4)		
Easter, Hon. Wayne	Malpeque	Lib.
MacAulay, Hon. Lawrence	Cardigan	Lib.
Murphy, Hon. Shawn	Charlottetown	Lib.
Shea, Hon. Gail, Minister of Fisheries and Oceans	Egmont	CPC
QUÉBEC (75)		
André, Guy	Berthier—Maskinongé	BQ
Arthur, André	Portneuf—Jacques-Cartier	Ind.
Asselin, Gérard	Manicouagan	BQ
Bachand, Claude	Saint-Jean	BQ
Beaudin, Josée	Saint-Lambert	BQ
Bellavance, André	Richmond—Arthabaska	BQ
Bernier, Hon. Maxime	Beauce	CPC
Bigras, Bernard	Rosemont—La Petite-Patrie	BQ
Blackburn, Hon. Jean-Pierre, Minister of National Revenue and Minister of State (Agriculture)	Jonquière—Alma	CPC
Blais, Raynald	Gaspésie—Îles-de-la-Madeleine	BQ
Blaney, Steven	Lévis—Bellechasse	CPC
Bonsant, France	Compton—Stanstead	BQ
Bouchard, Robert	Chicoutimi—Le Fjord	BQ
Boucher, Sylvie, Parliamentary Secretary for Status of Women	Beauport—Limoilou	CPC
Bourgeois, Diane	Terrebonne—Blainville	BQ
Brunelle, Paule	Trois-Rivières	BQ
Cannon, Hon. Lawrence, Minister of Foreign Affairs	Pontiac	CPC
Cardin, Serge	Sherbrooke	BQ
Carrier, Robert	Alfred-Pellan	BQ
Coderre, Hon. Denis	Bourassa	Lib.
Cotler, Hon. Irwin	Mount Royal	Lib.
DeBellefeuille, Claude	Beauharnois—Salaberry	BQ
Demers, Nicole	Laval	BQ
Deschamps, Johanne	Laurentides—Labelle	BQ
Desnoyers, Luc	Rivière-des-Mille-Îles	BQ
Dion, Hon. Stéphane	Saint-Laurent—Cartierville	Lib.
Dorion, Jean	Longueuil—Pierre-Boucher	BQ
Duceppe, Gilles	Laurier—Sainte-Marie	BQ
Dufour, Nicolas	Repentigny	BQ
Faille, Meili	Vaudreuil-Soulanges	BQ
Folco, Raymonde	Laval—Les Îles	Lib.
Freeman, Carole	Châteauguay—Saint-Constant	BQ
Gagnon, Christiane	Québec	BQ
Garneau, Marc	Westmount—Ville-Marie	Lib.
Gaudet, Roger	Montcalm	BQ
Généreux, Bernard	Montmagny—L'Islet—Kamouraska—Rivière-du-Loup	CPC

Name of Member	Constituency	Political Affiliation
Gourde, Jacques, Parliamentary Secretary to the Minister of Public Works and Government Services and to the Minister of National Revenue	Lotbinière—Chutes-de-la-Chaudière	CPC
Guay, Monique	Rivière-du-Nord	BQ
Guimond, Claude	Rimouski-Neigette—Témiscouata—Les Basques	BQ
Guimond, Michel	Montmorency—Charlevoix—Haute-Côte-Nord	BQ
Jennings, Hon. Marlene	Notre-Dame-de-Grâce—Lachine	Lib.
Laforest, Jean-Yves	Saint-Maurice—Champlain	BQ
Laframboise, Mario	Argenteuil—Papineau—Mirabel	BQ
Lalonde, Francine	La Pointe-de-l'Île	BQ
Lavallée, Carole	Saint-Bruno—Saint-Hubert	BQ
Lebel, Hon. Denis, Minister of State (Economic Development Agency of Canada for the Regions of Quebec)	Roberval—Lac-Saint-Jean	CPC
Lemay, Marc	Abitibi—Témiscamingue	BQ
Lessard, Yves	Chambly—Borduas	BQ
Lévesque, Yvon	Abitibi—Baie-James—Nunavik—Eeyou	BQ
Malo, Luc	Verchères—Les Patriotes	BQ
Ménard, Serge	Marc-Aurèle-Fortin	BQ
Mendes, Alexandra	Brossard—La Prairie	Lib.
Mourani, Maria	Ahuntsic	BQ
Mulcair, Thomas	Outremont	NDP
Nadeau, Richard	Gatineau	BQ
Ouellet, Christian	Brome—Missisquoi	BQ
Pacetti, Massimo	Saint-Léonard—Saint-Michel	Lib.
Paillé, Daniel	Hochelaga	BQ
Paillé, Pascal-Pierre	Louis-Hébert	BQ
Paquette, Pierre	Joliette	BQ
Paradis, Hon. Christian, Minister of Public Works and Government Services	Mégantic—L'Érable	CPC
Patry, Bernard	Pierrefonds—Dollard	Lib.
Petit, Daniel, Parliamentary Secretary to the Minister of Justice	Charlesbourg—Haute-Saint-Charles	CPC
Plamondon, Louis	Bas-Richelieu—Nicolet—Bécancour	BQ
Pomerleau, Roger	Drummond	BQ
Proulx, Marcel	Hull—Aylmer	Lib.
Rodriguez, Pablo	Honoré-Mercier	Lib.
Roy, Jean-Yves	Haute-Gaspésie—La Mitis—Matane—Matapédia	BQ
Scarpaleggia, Francis	Lac-Saint-Louis	Lib.
St-Cyr, Thierry	Jeanne-Le Ber	BQ
Thi Lac, Ève-Mary Thai	Saint-Hyacinthe—Bagot	BQ
Trudeau, Justin	Papineau	Lib.
Verner, Hon. Josée, Minister of Intergovernmental Affairs, President of the Queen's Privy Council for Canada and Minister for La Francophonie	Louis-Saint-Laurent	CPC
Vincent, Robert	Shefford	BQ
Zarac, Lise	LaSalle—Émard	Lib.

SASKATCHEWAN (14)

Anderson, David, Parliamentary Secretary to the Minister of Natural Resources and for the Canadian Wheat Board	Cypress Hills—Grasslands	CPC
Block, Kelly	Saskatoon—Rosetown—Biggar	CPC

Name of Member	Constituency	Political Affiliation
Boughen, Ray	Palliser	CPC
Breitkreuz, Garry	Yorkton—Melville	CPC
Clarke, Rob	Desnethé—Mississippi—Churchill River	CPC
Goodale, Hon. Ralph, Wascana.....	Wascana	Lib.
Hoback, Randy	Prince Albert	CPC
Komarnicki, Ed, Parliamentary Secretary to the Minister of Human Resources and Skills Development and to the Minister of Labour	Souris—Moose Mountain	CPC
Lukiwski, Tom, Parliamentary Secretary to the Leader of the Government in the House of Commons	Regina—Lumsden—Lake Centre.....	CPC
Ritz, Hon. Gerry, Minister of Agriculture and Agri-Food and Minister for the Canadian Wheat Board.....	Battlefords—Lloydminster	CPC
Scheer, Andrew, The Deputy Speaker	Regina—Qu'Appelle	CPC
Trost, Brad	Saskatoon—Humboldt	CPC
Vellacott, Maurice	Saskatoon—Wanuskewin.....	CPC
Yelich, Hon. Lynne, Minister of State (Western Economic Diversification)	Blackstrap	CPC
YUKON (1)		
Bagnell, Hon. Larry	Yukon.....	Lib.

LIST OF STANDING AND SUB-COMMITTEES

(As of December 4, 2009 — 2nd Session, 40th Parliament)

ABORIGINAL AFFAIRS AND NORTHERN DEVELOPMENT

Chair:	Bruce Stanton	Vice-Chairs:	Jean Crowder Todd Russell	
Larry Bagnell Mauril Bélanger Rob Clarke	Earl Dreeshen John Duncan	Marc Lemay Yvon Lévesque	LaVar Payne Greg Rickford	(12)

Associate Members

Jim Abbott	Rick Casson	Gerald Keddy	James Rajotte
Harold Albrecht	Michael Chong	Greg Kerr	Brent Rathgeber
Mike Allen	Nathan Cullen	Ed Komarnicki	Scott Reid
Dean Allison	John Cummins	Daryl Kramp	Blake Richards
Rob Anders	Patricia Davidson	Mike Lake	Lee Richardson
David Anderson	Bob Dechert	Guy Lauzon	Andrew Saxton
Charlie Angus	Dean Del Mastro	Pierre Lemieux	Gary Schellenberger
Niki Ashton	Jean Dorion	Megan Leslie	Bev Shipley
Gérard Asselin	Ken Dryden	Ben Lobb	Devinder Shory
Carolyn Bennett	Kirsty Duncan	Tom Lukiwski	Joy Smith
Leon Benoit	Rick Dykstra	James Lunney	Kevin Sorenson
Maxime Bernier	Ed Fast	Dave MacKenzie	Brian Storseth
Dennis Bevington	Carole Freeman	Inky Mark	David Sweet
James Bezan	Royal Galipeau	Pat Martin	David Tilson
Steven Blaney	Cheryl Gallant	Tony Martin	Brad Trost
Kelly Block	Shelly Glover	Colin Mayes	Justin Trudeau
Sylvie Boucher	Peter Goldring	Phil McColeman	Merv Tweed
Ray Boughen	Jacques Gourde	Cathy McLeod	Tim Uppal
Peter Braid	Nina Grewal	Ted Menzies	Dave Van Kesteren
Garry Breitkreuz	Richard Harris	Larry Miller	Maurice Vellacott
Gordon Brown	Laurie Hawn	Rob Moore	Mike Wallace
Lois Brown	Russ Hiebert	Anita Neville	Mark Warawa
Patrick Brown	Randy Hoback	Rick Norlock	Chris Warkentin
Rod Bruinooge	Candice Hoepfner	Tilly O'Neill-Gordon	Jeff Watson
Dona Cadman	Ed Holder	Deepak Obhrai	John Weston
Paul Calandra	Carol Hughes	Daniel Petit	Rodney Weston
Blaine Calkins	Bruce Hyer	Pierre Poilievre	Alice Wong
Ron Cannan	Brian Jean	Joe Preston	Stephen Woodworth
Colin Carrie	Randy Kamp	John Rafferty	Terence Young

ACCESS TO INFORMATION, PRIVACY AND ETHICS

Chair:

Paul Szabo

Vice-Chairs:Patricia Davidson
Bill SiksayKelly Block
Bob DechertJean Dorion
Carole FreemanPierre Poilievre
Greg RickfordMichelle Simson
Borys Wrzesnewskyj

(11)

Associate Members

Jim Abbott
Harold Albrecht
Mike Allen
Dean Allison
Rob Anders
David Anderson
Charlie Angus
Leon Benoit
Maxime Bernier
James Bezan
Steven Blaney
Sylvie Boucher
Ray Boughen
Peter Braid
Garry Breitkreuz
Gordon Brown
Lois Brown
Patrick Brown
Rod Bruinooge
Dona Cadman
Paul Calandra
Blaine Calkins
Ron Cannan
Colin Carrie
Rick Casson
Michael Chong
David Christopherson
Rob Clarke
Joe Comartin

John Cummins
Claude DeBellefeuille
Dean Del Mastro
Earl Dreeshen
John Duncan
Rick Dykstra
Ed Fast
Christiane Gagnon
Royal Galipeau
Cheryl Gallant
Shelly Glover
Yvon Godin
Peter Goldring
Jacques Gourde
Nina Grewal
Michel Guimond
Jack Harris
Richard Harris
Laurie Hawn
Russ Hiebert
Randy Hoback
Candice Hoeppner
Ed Holder
Brian Jean
Randy Kamp
Gerald Keddy
Greg Kerr
Ed Komarnicki
Daryl Kramp

Mike Lake
Guy Lauzon
Jack Layton
Pierre Lemieux
Ben Lobb
Tom Lukiwski
James Lunney
Dave MacKenzie
Jim Maloway
Inky Mark
Pat Martin
Colin Mayes
Phil McColeman
Cathy McLeod
Serge Ménard
Ted Menzies
Larry Miller
Rob Moore
Anita Neville
Rick Norlock
Tilly O'Neill-Gordon
Deepak Obhrai
Robert Oliphant
Pierre Paquette
LaVar Payne
Daniel Petit
Joe Preston
James Rajotte

Brent Rathgeber
Scott Reid
Blake Richards
Lee Richardson
Andrew Saxton
Gary Schellenberger
Bev Shipley
Devinder Shory
Joy Smith
Kevin Sorenson
Bruce Stanton
Brian Storseth
David Sweet
David Tilson
Brad Trost
Merv Tweed
Tim Uppal
Dave Van Kesteren
Maurice Vellacott
Mike Wallace
Mark Warawa
Chris Warkentin
Jeff Watson
John Weston
Rodney Weston
Alice Wong
Stephen Woodworth
Terence Young

AGRICULTURE AND AGRI-FOOD

Chair:

Larry Miller

Vice-Chairs:André Bellavance
Mark EykingAlex Atamanenko
France Bonsant
Wayne EasterRandy Hoback
Pierre LemieuxBlake Richards
Bev ShipleyBrian Storseth
Francis Valeriote

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Mr. Deepak Obhrai	to the Minister of Foreign Affairs
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Mr. Ted Menzies	to the Minister of Finance
Mr. Tom Lukiwski	to the Leader of the Government in the House of Commons
Mr. Dave MacKenzie	to the Minister of Public Safety
Mr. Pierre Lemieux	to the Minister of Agriculture
Mr. David Anderson	to the Minister of Natural Resources and for the Canadian Wheat Board
Mr. Rick Dykstra	to the Minister of Citizenship and Immigration
Mrs. Alice Wong	for Multiculturalism
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Mrs. Sylvie Boucher	for Status of Women
Mrs. Shelly Glover	for Official Languages
Mr. Colin Carrie	to the Minister of Health
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