



HOUSE OF COMMONS  
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# House of Commons Debates

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OFFICIAL REPORT  
(HANSARD)

**Wednesday, March 23, 2016**

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**Speaker: The Honourable Geoff Regan**

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# HOUSE OF COMMONS

Wednesday, March 23, 2016

The House met at 2 p.m.

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*Prayer*

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● (1405)

[*English*]

## JIM HILLYER

**Hon. Rona Ambrose (Leader of the Opposition, CPC):** Mr. Speaker, it is a very sad day for our Conservative family and for our parliamentary family.

Our colleague and friend Jim Hillyer passed away very suddenly this morning. I thank you for your kindness this morning, Mr. Speaker.

This has come as a shock to all of us who knew Jim and worked closely with him. He was a friend. However, most of all, our thoughts and prayers are with his family, with his wife Livi, and with his kids, who have these fantastic names: London, Taylor, Asia, and Nation. I spoke with her this morning, and she wanted me to pass along her thanks for all of the kindness.

[*Translation*]

Jim was a valued member of our Conservative team. He was a passionate advocate for the people he represented.

I would like to extend our most sincere condolences to Jim's wife, Livi, and his four children in this time of painful loss.

[*English*]

I made sure this was in my speech, because Jim spoke very good French, and he was very proud of that.

I know that the thoughts of every member of this House are with his family today. I have heard from many members; all of us have, and I want to thank them for their kindness.

I want Canadians to know that Jim was so proud to represent his constituents in the riding of Medicine Hat—Cardston—Warner and, before that, the riding of Lethbridge, where he was first elected in 2011. He described the job of being an MP as the job he had wanted his whole life.

Before being elected, Jim was an entrepreneur. Like so many westerners, he was very proud to make a living in the natural resources sector.

He also brought with him to Parliament an understanding and a great sympathy for the concerns of regular, hard-working Canadians, and it really showed.

When we talked to Jim, it was like talking to a neighbour. It was clear that he loved his life, he loved his wife, he loved his community, and he loved his job.

He was very open, very honest, and a very humble guy, and he had a goofy sense of humour. He was the kind of guy who people were proud to have represent them and one who they felt they could approach. He took his job very seriously.

As I said, he had a goofy sense of humour. He said something funny in the media recently. He was from southern Alberta; that says something about him. He was talking about Donald Trump. He was asked about his views on Donald Trump. He said, “We’re kind of redneck down here, but not that redneck”.

He had a sense of humour, but he was also a fighter. Many people here may not know that he had faced and beaten leukemia earlier in his life, and he sought to help others by becoming a spokesman for the Canadian Cancer Society.

A lot of us here know that he had a very serious ski accident. After his ski accident, he had to use a little scooter because he had hurt his leg quite badly. It was the kind of scooter that senior citizens use. However, he was only 41, so we teased him a lot about that.

In fact, one of the House of Commons security guards, Franchi, told me this morning that his memory of Jim was that he kept threatening to give him a speeding ticket for his scooter.

There were a lot of issues about which Jim was passionate. Here in Ottawa, he fought for a stronger justice system, he sponsored some tough-on-crime legislation, and he was really passionate about keeping his community safe and respecting the rights of victims.

He worked hard and he had a family, so he did not have a lot of spare time. However, he did have some hobbies. When he was here, he used to play hockey with his MP colleagues, and he also volunteered for minor hockey back in his riding.

At home, he was a very devoted dad. He was also a music lover. I did not know this myself, because it did not fit my view of Jim, but he was an amazing violin player, and he played in the Lethbridge Symphony, and he was even a singer.

*Tributes*

Some members may not have had a chance to get to know Jim, because they are new to the House. That is okay. Their thoughts and prayers mean just as much to his family, and I thank them for their support, on the family's behalf.

I thank all the MPs for the kindness they have shown to those friends of Jim's in the House.

In particular, Mr. Speaker, thank you for the arrangements you have made today.

It is my hope that, in the coming days, the pain we feel will be replaced by the great memory of Jim as a friend, as a father, and as a great public servant.

This Parliament is better for having had Jim serve in it, and we are better to have known him.

I thank everyone for their kindness today.

● (1410)

[*Translation*]

**Right Hon. Justin Trudeau (Prime Minister, Lib.):** Mr. Speaker, it is with great sorrow that I speak to you today in tribute to the member for Medicine Hat—Cardston—Warner, Jim Hillyer.

[*English*]

I want to begin by thanking the hon. Leader of the Opposition for her warm words and for telling us about many aspects of Jim that will come as a surprise to many of us here, including me.

This is a moment when we should all reflect on the fact that we do not know each other as well as we should in the House. We learn of each other through comments made in the media, through speeches that we give or have to give in the House, but we do not often actually dig into the lives and stories that each and every one of us brings to this place.

If today's tragic experience, which we all share, of having lost a member of the family, is to have any positive outcomes, let it be that we take a little more time on the occasions afforded to us, on hockey rinks or soccer fields or after work in the watering holes around Ottawa, time to get to know each other a little more, because we are bound together, all of us, in service to this great country.

Like all of us, I learned of Jim's death this morning with shock and disbelief. His youth and the suddenness of his passing have blanketed the Hill with a weighty sadness today; and I know that this heaviness will remain for quite some time, for while we sat on opposite sides of the House, we were part of the same parliamentary family. We are all here, each and every one of us, in service to this great country; and that certainly was the case with Jim. He was a valued member of his party, a hard-working public servant, and a strong voice for his community.

[*Translation*]

Everyone here will remember him for how he served his fellow Canadians, which he did with tremendous passion and deep conviction.

[*English*]

Jim's presence will be missed on the Hill today and all days. We will stand united and support one another in our grief. On behalf of the Government of Canada and all Canadians, I want to extend my deepest, most heartfelt sympathies to Jim's wife, Livi, and their four children. They should know that their husband and dad served our country well. May they find strength in the faith that sustains them during the difficult days ahead.

If this House and this country are made strong by the broad range of people and voices who serve, then this morning we have certainly been diminished by Jim's passing.

[*Translation*]

Rest in peace, Jim.

● (1415)

[*English*]

**Hon. Thomas Mulcair (Outremont, NDP):** Mr. Speaker, it was with great sadness that we learned today of Jim's passing, and it is with equal sadness that I rise today to pay tribute to that colleague of ours, Jim Hillyer, a husband, a father, and a parliamentarian taken from us far too soon.

Catherine and I wish to extend our heartfelt condolences to his wife, Livi, and their four children.

[*Translation*]

Today our parliamentary family is grieving the loss of our colleague, Jim Hillyer. Catherine and I wish to extend our deepest condolences to his wife, Livi, and their four children.

[*English*]

Jim was a family man, passionate in his political convictions, who enjoyed overwhelming support from his constituents. His voice will be sadly missed.

He helped the people of his riding so well that his office was even honoured with an award for exemplary service, and his remarks about that work are a tribute to his conviction that people matter. Politics, Jim said, can really be about making the world a better place.

He was also given an indigenous name by the Blackfoot Canadian Cultural Society: Api Stamiik. It means "white buffalo bull" and was given to him for his strong work with first nations.

Jim leaves behind a loving family, a legacy of hard-working public service, and a profound commitment to his faith. These are qualities that will define his memory in this place.

On behalf of all members of the NDP, I want to extend our deepest condolences to his entire family, to his constituents, and to every one of his Conservative caucus colleagues on this extremely sad day. He will be deeply missed.

May he rest in peace.

*Tributes*

[*Translation*]

**Mr. Rhéal Fortin (Rivière-du-Nord, BQ):** Mr. Speaker, like every member here in the House, I was saddened this morning to learn of the passing of the hon. member for Medicine Hat—Cardston—Warner, our colleague Jim Hillyer.

On behalf of myself and the Bloc Québécois, I wish to extend my heartfelt condolences to his family, his wife, his four children, his loved ones, his constituents, and the members of his caucus.

The death of our colleague reminds us of the deeply human aspect of the work that we do in the House.

Behind our debates and our public roles, there are human beings who meet here to debate ideas, albeit different ideas, always showing a deep respect for each other and the fundamental value of democracy.

Jim Hillyer died doing his job, far from his loved ones, working hard for his people and his region.

I offer my sincere condolences to his entire family.

[*English*]

Thank you, Jim.

**Ms. Elizabeth May (Saanich—Gulf Islands, GP):** Mr. Speaker, I thank all of my colleagues here today. I particularly express condolences to all of my friends in the Conservative caucus. I was deeply affected by the words of the leader of the official opposition as we adjust to the enormous shock of losing a friend and colleague.

I regarded Jim Hillyer as a friend. We worked together here. Thank goodness there are enough non-partisan moments that I had the great pleasure of knowing him.

I think his strong sense of duty is exemplified by the fact that he insisted on being here for budget day. His commitment to this place and to his constituents is unquestionable.

I do not need to trespass on members' time very long. I think we share what the right hon. Prime Minister said. We in this place are a community, and it would be good to know each other and love each other better.

We are bound together today, recognizing the inevitable, which is the fragility of life, the certainty of death and, for many of us, hope for a world to come, and faith. All we can really do is hope that we have a life well lived in that blink of time allotted to us. In this, our friend Jim Hillyer excelled, with his wife, Livi, with four beautiful children, London, Taylor, Asia, and Nation. That family must know that we send them an enormous amount of love and condolence in this moment of their grief, which we share.

Rest in peace, dear friend, Jim Hillyer.

● (1420)

**The Speaker:** I invite honourable colleagues to stand to observe a moment of silence in honour of our dear colleague Jim Hillyer.

[*A moment of silence observed*]

**Hon. Dominic LeBlanc:** Mr. Speaker, I rise with a great deal of sadness, given the tragic news of the passing of our colleague Jim Hillyer. I want to add my voice to those of colleagues who have spoken, and express my sympathies to his wife and children.

We have had discussions among the parties, and it is my hope that we can dispose of two quick procedural matters before we adjourn the House.

Mr. Speaker, I believe that if you seek it, you will find unanimous consent for the following motion: that notwithstanding any standing order or usual practice of the House, on Thursday, March 24, 2016, the House shall consider Bill C-7, an act to amend the Public Service Labour Relations Act, the Public Service Labour Relations and Employment Board Act and other acts and to provide for certain other measures at second reading, and when no member rises to speak or at the expiry of the time provided for government orders, whichever is earlier, all questions necessary to dispose of the second reading stage of the bill shall be deemed put and the motion for second reading of the bill be deemed adopted on division.

**The Speaker:** Does the honourable minister have the unanimous consent of the House to move the motion?

**Some hon. members:** Agreed.

**Some hon. members:** No.

**Hon. Dominic LeBlanc (Leader of the Government in the House of Commons, Lib.):** Mr. Speaker, I find it regrettable that on a day like today we are not able to get unanimous consent.

Therefore, I move, seconded by the Minister of Justice:

That the House do now adjourn.

● (1425)

**The Speaker:** Is it the pleasure of the House to adopt the motion?

**Some hon. members:** Agreed.

**The Speaker:** The motion that the House do now adjourn is deemed to have been adopted. Accordingly, the House stands adjourned until tomorrow at 10 a.m.

(The House adjourned at 2:26 p.m.)



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