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Wednesday, September 23, 2020

Speaker: The Honourable Anthony Rota



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HOUSE OF COMMONS

Wednesday, September 23, 2020

The House met at 2 p.m.

Prayer

• (1405)

[*English*]

The Speaker: It being Wednesday, we will have the singing of the national anthem led by the hon. member for Kingston and the Islands.

[*Members sang the national anthem*]

OPENING OF THE SECOND SESSION OF THE 43RD PARLIAMENT

[*English*]

The Parliament, which had been prorogued on August 18, 2020, met this day at Ottawa for the dispatch of business.

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

The Speaker read a communication from the Secretary to the Governor General announcing that Her Excellency the Governor General of Canada would arrive at the Senate of Canada building at 2:10 p.m. on Wednesday, the 23rd day of September, 2020, and that when it was indicated that all was in readiness, Her Excellency would proceed to the chamber of the Senate to formally open the second session of the 43rd Parliament of Canada.

The Speaker: While I am in the Senate, the reading of the Speech from the Throne will be broadcast live on the screens in the chamber.

[*Translation*]

Members can watch from their seats or from the galleries. Members must use their earpieces to listen to the speech. Simultaneous interpretation stations will be available as usual.

[*English*]

Alternatively, members may watch and listen to the televised speech in rooms 035B and 241A in the West Block.

BUSINESS OF THE HOUSE

Hon. Pablo Rodriguez (Leader of the Government in the House of Commons, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, it is great to see all the colleagues here in this room.

There have been discussions among the parties, and if you seek it, you will find unanimous consent to adopt the following motion:

That, notwithstanding any standing order, special order or usual practice of the House, until Friday, December 11, 2020:

- (a) members may participate in proceedings of the House either in person or by video conference;
- (b) members who participate remotely in a sitting of the House are counted for the purpose of quorum;
- (c) any reference in the Standing Orders to the need for members to rise or to be in their place, as well as any reference to the chair, the table or the chamber shall be interpreted in a manner consistent with the virtual nature of the proceedings;
- (d) the application of Standing Order 17 shall be suspended;
- (e) the application of Standing Order 62 shall be suspended for any member participating remotely;
- (f) in Standing Orders 26(2), 53(4), 56.1(3) and 56.2(2), the reference to the number of members required to rise be replaced with the word “five”;
- (g) documents may be laid before the House or presented to the House electronically, provided that:
 - (i) documents deposited pursuant to Standing Order 32(1) shall be deposited with the Clerk of the House electronically;
 - (ii) during Routine Proceedings, members who participate remotely may table documents or present petitions or reports to the House electronically, provided that the documents are transmitted to the Clerk prior to their intervention;
 - (iii) any petition presented pursuant to Standing Order 36(5) may be filed with the Clerk electronically;
- (h) should the House resolve itself in a committee of the whole, the Chair may preside from the Speaker's chair;
- (i) when a question that could lead to a recorded division is put to the House, in lieu of calling for the yeas and nays, one representative of a recognized party can rise to request a recorded vote;
- (j) when a recorded division is requested in respect of a debatable motion, including any division arising as a consequence of the application of Standing Order 61(2) or Standing Order 78, but excluding any division in relation to motions relating to the Address in Reply to the Speech from the Throne or the business of supply occurring on the last supply day of a period, other than as provided in Standing Order 81(18)(b), or arising as a consequence of an order made pursuant to Standing Order 57:
 - (i) before 2 p.m. on a Monday, Tuesday, Wednesday or Thursday, it shall stand deferred until the conclusion of Oral Questions at that day's sitting; or
 - (ii) after 2 p.m. on a Monday, Tuesday, Wednesday or Thursday, or at any time on a Friday, it shall stand deferred until the conclusion of Oral Questions at the next sitting day that is not a Friday, provided that, if a recorded division on the previous question is deferred and the motion is subsequently adopted, the recorded division on the original question shall not be deferred; provided that any extension of time pursuant to Standing Order 45(7)(1) shall not exceed 90 minutes;

Opening of Session

● (1410)

(k) when a recorded division, which would have ordinarily been deemed deferred to immediately before the time provided for private members' business on a Wednesday governed by this order, is requested, the said division is deemed to have been deferred until the conclusion of Oral Questions on the same Wednesday;

(l) for greater certainty, this order shall not limit the application of Standing Order 45(7);

(m) when a recorded division is to be held, except recorded divisions deferred to the conclusion of Oral Questions, the bells to call in the members shall be sounded for not more than 30 minutes;

[Translation]

(n) recorded divisions shall take place by electronic means, provided that:

(i) the House Administration be directed to develop and test a secure remote voting application that would include a visual component to authenticate members' identities and a notification to all members' House-managed mobile devices,

(ii) until such time as a remote voting application is ready for use, recorded divisions shall take place in the usual way for members participating in person and by roll call for members participating by videoconference, provided that members participating by videoconference must have their camera on for the duration of the vote.

(iii) when testing on the remote voting application has been completed and feedback received from members, if the Speaker has received a notice from the House Leaders of all recognized parties in the House stating that they are satisfied that it is ready to be used, he shall so inform the House and, until Friday, December 11, 2020, all subsequent recorded divisions shall be taken using the remote voting application and be governed by the provisions in subparagraphs (iv) to (vii),

(iv) before a recorded division is held by remote voting application, the Speaker shall announce the period of time allotted for members to cast their vote electronically provided that, if two or more votes are to be held successively without intervening debate, members may vote on more than one question during the time allotted if these questions are not dependent on another motion or proceeding,

(v) thirty minutes shall be allotted for a maximum of 10 votes occurring using the remote voting application and when necessary, three minutes shall be allotted for each additional vote,

(vi) the result of each vote occurring using the remote voting application is announced at the end of the time provided for voting,

(vii) when the question is dependent on another motion or proceeding, the Speaker announces each result and ten minutes are allotted to vote using the remote voting application on each subsequent question necessary to dispose of the item,

(viii) in the event of technical issues with either electronic voting system, the Speaker be empowered to take all necessary steps to ensure the integrity of the voting process;

(o) during meetings of standing, special and legislative committees and the Liaison Committee, as well as their subcommittees, where applicable, members may participate either in person or by videoconference and witnesses shall participate remotely, except for the first meeting to elect a chair, which shall be held virtually, provided that priority use of House resources for meetings shall be established by an agreement of the whips and, for virtual or hybrid meetings, the following provisions shall apply:

(i) members who participate remotely shall be counted for the purpose of quorum,

(ii) except for those decided unanimously or "on division", all questions shall be decided by a recorded vote,

(iii) when more than one motion is proposed for the election of a chair or a vice-chair of a committee, any motion received after the initial one shall be taken as a notice of motion and such motions shall be put to the committee seriatim until one is adopted,

● (1415)

(iv) public proceedings shall be made available to the public via the House of Commons website,

(v) in camera proceedings may be conducted in a manner that takes into account the potential risks to confidentiality inherent in meetings with remote participants,

(vi) notices of membership substitutions pursuant to Standing Order 114(2) and requests pursuant to Standing Order 106(4) may be filed with the clerk of each committee by email;

[English]

(p) the membership of the standing committees, other than the Standing Committee on Procedure and House Affairs, be constituted by each recognized party's whip depositing with the Clerk of the House the list of the members to serve on the committees no later than Tuesday, October 6, 2020, provided that the chief government whip shall name five members of the committees with a total membership of 11 and six members of the committees with a total membership of 12, the chief opposition whip shall name four members of each committee, the whip of the Bloc Québécois shall name one member of each committee, and the whip of the New Democratic party shall name one member of each committee;

(q) the House re-establish the Special Committee on Canada-China Relations, created on Tuesday, December 10, 2019, with the same mandate and provisions, provided that (i) the whips of recognized parties shall deposit with the Clerk of the House the list of the members to serve on the committee no later than Tuesday, October 6, 2020, and (ii) the evidence and documentation received by the Special Committee on Canada-China Relations during the First Session of the 43rd Parliament be referred to this committee and taken into consideration in this session; and

(r) the Clerk of the House shall convene organizational meetings of every committee whose membership is named under paragraph (p) and subparagraph (q)(i) no later than Monday, October 19, 2020, including, as necessary, during the period of adjournment beginning Friday, October 9, 2020, provided that the organizational meetings for the following committees shall be held no later than Friday, October 9, but no earlier than Thursday, October 8, 2020, and may be convened with 24 hours' notice: (i) the Standing Committee on Health, (ii) the Standing Committee on Finance, (iii) the Standing Committee on Access to Information, Privacy and Ethics, (iv) the Standing Committee on Human Resources, Skills and Social Development and the Status of Persons with Disabilities, (v) the Standing Committee on Agriculture and Agri-Food, (vi) the Standing Committee on Environment and Sustainable Development, (vii) the Standing Committee on Government Operations and Estimates, (viii) the Standing Committee on Public Safety and National Security, and (ix) the Special Committee on Canada-China Relations.

● (1420)

Mr. Alex Ruff: Mr. Speaker, I rise on a point of clarification. Can we confirm that in paragraph (j)(ii) the last sentence reads, "Provided that any extension of time pursuant to Standing Order 45(7.1)," however, I believe it was read "47(7.1) shall not exceed 90 minutes."

Hon. Pablo Rodriguez: Mr. Speaker, that is correct.

The Speaker: Does the hon. minister have the unanimous consent of the House to move the motion?

Some hon. members: Agreed.

[Translation]

The Speaker: The House has heard the terms of the motion. Is it the pleasure of the House to adopt the motion?

Some hon. members: Agreed.

(Motion agreed to)

VACANCIES

TORONTO CENTRE, YORK CENTRE

The Speaker: It is my duty to inform the House that vacancies have occurred in the representation: namely Mr. Bill Morneau, member for the electoral district of Toronto Centre, by resignation effective August 21, and Mr. Michael Levitt, member for the electoral district of York Centre, by resignation effective September 1.

Pursuant to subsection 25(1)(b) of the Parliament of Canada Act, I have addressed warrants to the Chief Electoral Officer for the issue of writs for the election of members to fill these vacancies.

* * *

• (1425)

[English]

BOARD OF INTERNAL ECONOMY

The Speaker: I have the honour to inform the House that the following members have been appointed as members of the Board of Internal Economy for the purpose and under the provisions of the Parliament of Canada Act, subsection 50(2), namely: Mr. Gérard Deltell and Mr. Blake Richards, representatives of the Conservative Party caucus.

* * *

PRIVATE MEMBERS' BUSINESS

The Speaker: Order. While we are waiting for the Black Rod, I would like to make a statement concerning Private Members' Business.

As members know, the Standing Orders guarantee the continuity of Private Members' Business from one session to the next within the same parliament.

[Translation]

In practical terms, this means that, notwithstanding prorogation, the list for the consideration of Private Members' Business established at the beginning of the 43rd Parliament shall continue for the duration of this Parliament. As a result, in accordance with Standing Order 86.1, all items of Private Members' Business originating in the House of Commons that were listed on the Order Paper during the previous session shall be deemed to have been considered and approved at all stages completed at the time of prorogation.

[English]

All items will keep the same number as in the first session of the 43rd Parliament. More specifically, all bills and motions standing on the list of items outside the order of precedence shall continue to stand. Bills that had met the notice requirements and were published in the Order Paper but had not yet been introduced will be republished on the Order Paper under the heading "Introduction of Private Members' Bills" in the order of business, and bills that had not yet been published on the Order Paper need to be recertified by the Office of the Law Clerk and parliamentary counsel and resubmitted for publication on the Notice Paper.

Of course, the 30 items listed in the order of precedence at the time of prorogation shall continue to stand.

Opening of Session

[Translation]

At the end of the first session of this Parliament and prorogation, the House had not had the opportunity to debate the Private Members' Business in the order of precedence. With the opening of the second session this fall, the next step in the process will be to hold a meeting of the subcommittee on Private Members' Business so that they can study each item in the order of precedence. Debate of Private Members' Business will then be able to begin shortly after the Standing Committee on Procedure and House Affairs has presented the report of the subcommittee on votable items of Private Members' Business.

[English]

In the hope that this information will provide members with a greater understanding of the process for Private Members' Business during the second session of this Parliament, I invite any members who wish to obtain further information to consult the table officers, who will be happy to answer their questions.

• (1430)

[Translation]

I thank the members for their attention.

* * *

OPENING OF SESSION

A message was delivered by the Usher of the Black Rod as follows:

Mr. Speaker, it is the pleasure of Her Excellency the Governor General that this honourable House attend her immediately in the Senate chamber.

Accordingly, the Speaker with the House went up to the Senate chamber.

And the House being returned to the Commons chamber:

* * *

• (1620)

[English]

ORDER PAPER

The Speaker: I wish to inform the House that, in accordance with the representation made by the government under the provisions of Standing Order 55(1), I have caused to be published a special Order Paper giving notice of two government bills.

[Translation]

I therefore lay the relevant document upon the table.

* * *

• (1625)

OATHS OF OFFICE

Right Hon. Justin Trudeau (Prime Minister, Lib.) moved for leave to introduce Bill C-1, An Act respecting the administration of oaths of office.

(Motion deemed adopted and bill read the first time)

*Opening of Session***SPEECH FROM THE THRONE**

The Speaker: I have the honour to inform the House that when the House of Commons did attend Her Excellency the Governor General this day in the Senate chamber, Her Excellency was pleased to make a speech to both Houses of Parliament. To prevent mistakes, I have obtained a copy, which is as follows:

Honourable Senators,

Members of the House of Commons,

Ladies and Gentlemen,

Every day on our shared planet, millions face hardships that test the human spirit. Extreme weather, wildfires, poverty, conflicts, discrimination and inequalities. Rarely though, has all of humanity faced a single common insidious enemy. An invisible enemy that respects no borders, thrives anywhere, hits anyone.

To overcome a pandemic requires the work and resolve of every order of government, every community, and every one of us.

We don't decide when hardship comes, but here in Canada, we have decided how we wanted to address it. We have adapted in remarkable ways.

We Canadians did our part. We changed our habits, postponed our plans, switched to teleworking or had to completely reinvent our work, all this, while caring for one another.

We owe an immense debt to those who served and still serve on the frontlines, to health care personnel and essential workers, women and men in uniform, volunteers and leaders, everywhere in the country.

There has been a lot of suffering and we all mourn those who have passed.

We trust science to lead the fight until a safe and effective vaccine becomes available. But until then, we must keep our guard up, using the tools that are available to us now — such as testing, treatments and physical distancing measures.

Like a reed in high winds, we might sway but we will not break. Because our roots are firmly in place, our goals clear, and because we have hope — the hope that lifts the soul on dark days and keeps us focused on the future.

Canadians have lived through uncertain times before and have always prevailed because determination, concern for others, courage, and common sense define our nation.

We must bring all those qualities to bear once again and continue to work for the common good, and for a better, safer and more just society.

This is who we are and what will see us through to brighter days.

Opening

For over 150 years, Parliamentarians have worked together to chart Canada's path forward.

Your predecessors met when Confederation was only a few months old, setting the course for a young country. They stood unit-

ed through Canada's toughest days, leading the nation through wars and depression. And as they did, each Parliamentarian was called to meet their times.

Today, Canadians expect you to do the same. They expect you to work together on their behalf and meet this crucial moment.

Less than a year ago, we gathered here for a Throne Speech to open the 43rd Parliament. Since then, our realities have changed. And so must our approach.

This pandemic is the most serious public health crisis Canada has ever faced.

Over 9,000 Canadians have died in six months. For our neighbours in the United States, this figure is over 200,000. Globally, it's nearly a million.

But these aren't just numbers. These are friends and family. Neighbours and colleagues.

The pandemic is the story of parents who have died alone, without loved ones to hold their hand.

It is the story of kids who have gone months without seeing friends.

Of workers who have lost their jobs.

The last six months have laid bare fundamental gaps in our society, and in societies around the world. This pandemic has been hard for everyone. But for those who were already struggling, the burden has been even heavier.

For parents — and especially moms — who are facing impossible choices between kids and career.

For racialized Canadians and Indigenous Peoples who are confronted by systemic barriers.

For young people who are worried about what their future will hold.

For seniors who are isolated, frightened, and most at risk.

And for workers who, while earning the lowest wages in the most precarious sectors, have been on the frontlines of the pandemic.

We must address these challenges of today. But we also cannot forget about the tests of the future.

The world came into this pandemic facing the risks and consequences of climate change. A lesson that COVID-19 has taught us, is that we need to match challenges with decisiveness and determination.

On all of these fronts — health and the economy, equality and the environment — we must take bold action.

The Government will meet these challenges.

The Government's approach will have four foundations.

The first foundation of this plan is to fight the pandemic and save lives.

The second foundation of the Government's plan is supporting people and businesses through this crisis as long as it lasts, whatever it takes. Effectively dealing with the health crisis is the best thing we can do for the economy. Government action has already helped Canadians stay safe, and buffered the worst economic impacts.

The third foundation is to build back better to create a stronger, more resilient Canada. To do this, we must keep strengthening the middle class and helping people working hard to join it, and continue creating jobs and building long-term competitiveness with clean growth. We must also keep building safer communities for everyone.

The fourth and final foundation of this plan is to stand up for who we are as Canadians. We cannot forget what has made us a country that is welcoming. A country that celebrates two official languages. That achieves progress on gender equality, walks the road of reconciliation, and fights discrimination of every kind.

This is our generation's crossroads.

Do we move Canada forward, or let people be left behind? Do we come out of this stronger, or paper over the cracks that the crisis has exposed?

This is the time to remember who we are as Canadians.

This is the opportunity to contain the global crisis and build back better, together.

Protecting Canadians from COVID-19

The first foundation of the Government's approach is protecting Canadians from COVID-19.

This is priority number one.

It is the job of the federal government to look out for all Canadians and especially our most vulnerable. We need to work together. Beating this virus is a Team Canada effort.

Over the last six months, Canadians have stood united and strong. Their actions embody what has always been the purpose of the federal government: bringing Canadians together to achieve common goals.

Personal protective equipment has been shipped across the country. Members of the Canadian Forces were there in long-term care homes.

Close to 9 million Canadians were helped with the Canada Emergency Response Benefit and over 3.5 million jobs were supported by the wage subsidy.

The Government will continue to have people's backs just like Canadians have each other's backs.

Through the first wave, contact tracing and testing ramped up across the country. The surge this fall further reinforces what we already know — that we must do even more.

Opening of Session

The federal government will be there to help the provinces increase their testing capacity. Canadians should not be waiting in line for hours to get a test.

At the same time, the Government is pursuing every technology and every option for faster tests for Canadians from coast to coast. As soon as tests are approved for safe use in Canada, the Government will do everything it can to see them deployed. The Government will also create a federal Testing Assistance Response Team to quickly meet surge testing needs, including in remote and isolated communities.

Local public health authorities are the backbone of our nation's efforts to stop outbreaks before they start. As members of the communities they protect, they know the devastating economic impact a lockdown order can have.

To prevent small clusters from becoming major outbreaks, communities may need to enact short-term closure orders. To make that decision easier for the public health authorities, and to help ease the impact that science- and evidence-based decisions can have on local businesses in the short term, the Government will work to target additional financial support directly to businesses which have to temporarily shut down as a result of a local public health decision.

This will ensure that decisions are made with the health of Canadians as the first priority.

The Government will also continue to work on what communities need more broadly.

The Government has already invested over \$19 billion for a Safe Restart Agreement with provinces and territories, to support everything from the capacity of health care systems to securing PPE.

To address the challenges faced by provinces and territories as they reopen classrooms, the federal government invested \$2 billion in the Safe Return to Class Fund, along with new funding for First Nations communities. This is money to keep kids — and staff — safe in the classroom, whether that's by helping schools buy cleaning supplies or upgrade ventilation.

These commitments build on federal investments to support people who are most at risk and those who care for them, including with the federal wage top-up for personal support workers. People on the frontlines who have been looking after seniors do vital work and the Government will continue to have their backs.

At the same time, the Government will continue to support Canadians as they take action to keep each other safe.

Opening of Session

Already, people are doing their part by wearing masks. That's important, and we can build on that commitment. Working with private sector partners, the federal government created the COVID Alert app. Canadians living in Ontario, Newfoundland and Labrador, New Brunswick, and Saskatchewan now have an extra tool to keep themselves and others safe. The Government hopes all the others will sign on so that people in all parts of the country can both do their part and be better protected.

The Government will also continue to work on getting Canadians the PPE they need.

This spring, the Government issued a call, and thousands of Canadian businesses and manufacturers responded. From shop floors to companies big and small, Canada's dynamic businesses met the challenge as their workers stepped up.

And in less than six months, Canadians are now manufacturing almost all types of PPE. The Government will continue building that domestic capacity, while securing supply chains to keep Canadians safe and create jobs.

Canadians are pulling together, whether that's with PPE manufacturing, through the COVID Alert app, or by wearing a mask. In the same way, Canadian researchers and scientists are pitching in to the Team Canada effort with their knowledge and expertise.

Vaccine efforts

In the long run, the best way to end this pandemic is with a safe and effective vaccine.

Canada's vaccine strategy is all about ensuring that Canadians will be able to get a vaccine once it is ready.

There are many types of potential candidates. Canada is exploring the full range of options. The Government has already secured access to vaccine candidates and therapeutics, while investing in manufacturing here at home. And to get the vaccines out to Canadians once they're ready, the Government has made further investments in our capacity for vaccine distribution.

From the Vaccine Task Force that provides the best advice on vaccine purchasing and roll-out, to the Immunity Task Force looking at how COVID-19 is affecting vulnerable populations, Canada's top scientific minds are guiding the Government every step of the way.

Helping Canadians through the pandemic

The medical and scientific fight against this virus is crucial. And so are the livelihoods of every single Canadian, worker, and family.

So the second foundation of the Government's approach is supporting Canadians through this crisis.

The economic impact of COVID-19 on Canadians has already been worse than the 2008 financial crisis. These consequences will not be short-lived.

This is not the time for austerity. Canada entered this crisis in the best fiscal position of its peers. And the Government is using that fiscal firepower, on things like the Canada Emergency Response Benefit and the Canada Emergency Wage Subsidy, so that Canadi-

ans, businesses, and our entire economy have the support needed to weather the storm.

Canadians should not have to choose between health and their job, just like Canadians should not have to take on debt that their government can better shoulder.

Creating jobs

People losing their jobs is perhaps the clearest consequence of the global economic shock that Canadians — like those in other countries — have faced.

The CERB helped people stay healthy at home while being able to keep food on the table.

The CEWS helped people keep their jobs, or be rehired if they had been laid off.

But there is still more to be done.

Unemployment is in the double digits, and underemployment is high.

Women, racialized Canadians, and young people have borne the brunt of job losses.

Canadians need good jobs they can rely on.

To help make that happen, the Government will launch a campaign to create over one million jobs, restoring employment to previous levels. This will be done by using a range of tools, including direct investments in the social sector and infrastructure, immediate training to quickly skill up workers, and incentives for employers to hire and retain workers.

One way the Government will create these jobs is by extending the Canada Emergency Wage Subsidy right through to next summer. The Government will work with businesses and labour to ensure the program meets the needs of the health and economic situation as it evolves.

Another example of how the Government will create jobs is by significantly scaling up the Youth Employment and Skills Strategy, to provide more paid work experiences next year for young Canadians.

Now, more than ever, Canadians must work together — including by eliminating remaining barriers between provinces to full, free internal trade — to get the economy back up and running and Canadians back to work.

Supporting workers and their families

With the job losses that Canadians have faced, it became clear early on that many people would need help until they could find work once again. But existing income support systems were not designed to handle this unprecedented situation. That's why the Government moved quickly to create the Canada Emergency Response Benefit as a temporary program to help millions of Canadians get through a very difficult time.

With the economic restart now well underway, CERB recipients should instead be supported by the Employment Insurance system. For people who would not traditionally qualify for EI, the Government will create the transitional Canada Recovery Benefit.

Over the coming months, the EI system will become the sole delivery mechanism for employment benefits, including for Canadians who did not qualify for EI before the pandemic. This pandemic has shown that Canada needs an EI system for the 21st century, including for the self-employed and those in the gig economy.

Women in the Economy

Women — and in particular low-income women — have been hit hardest by COVID-19. This crisis has been described as a She-cession.

Many women have bravely served on the frontlines of this crisis, in our communities or by shouldering the burden of unpaid care work at home.

We must not let the legacy of the pandemic be one of rolling back the clock on women's participation in the workforce, nor one of backtracking on the social and political gains women and allies have fought so hard to secure.

The Government will create an *Action Plan for Women in the Economy* to help more women get back into the workforce and to ensure a feminist, intersectional response to this pandemic and recovery. This Plan will be guided by a task force of experts whose diverse voices will power a whole of government approach.

It has been nearly 50 years since the Royal Commission on the Status of Women outlined the necessity of child care services for women's social and economic equality. We have long understood that Canada cannot succeed if half of the population is held back. Canadians need more accessible, affordable, inclusive, and high quality childcare.

Recognizing the urgency of this challenge, the Government will make a significant, long-term, sustained investment to create a Canada-wide early learning and childcare system.

The Government will build on previous investments, learn from the model that already exists in Quebec, and work with all provinces and territories to ensure that high-quality care is accessible to all.

There is broad consensus from all parts of society, including business and labour leaders, that the time is now.

The Government also remains committed to subsidizing before- and after-school program costs. With the way that this pandemic has affected parents and families, flexible care options for primary school children are more important than ever.

Opening of Session

The Government will also accelerate the Women's Entrepreneurship Strategy, which has already helped women across Canada grow their businesses.

Supporting businesses

As the Government invests in people, it will continue to support job-creating businesses.

Small businesses are the lifeblood of communities and the backbone of the economy. The Government introduced a range of supports for Canadian businesses, from help with payroll through the Canada Emergency Wage Subsidy to assistance with expenses through interest-free loans.

COVID-19 has caused businesses across the country, both large and small, to rethink their approaches. Entrepreneurs and owners are looking at more digital options, more creative solutions, and more climate-friendly investments.

The Government will help businesses adapt for the future and thrive.

This fall, in addition to extending the wage subsidy, the Government will take further steps to bridge vulnerable businesses to the other side of the pandemic by:

Expanding the Canada Emergency Business Account to help businesses with fixed costs;

Improving the Business Credit Availability Program;

And introducing further support for industries that have been the hardest hit, including travel and tourism, hospitality, and cultural industries like the performing arts.

Fiscal sustainability

This COVID-19 emergency has had huge costs. But Canada would have had a deeper recession and a bigger long-term deficit if the Government had done less.

With interest rates so low, central banks can only do so much to help. There is a global consensus that governments must do more. Government can do so while also locking in the low cost of borrowing for decades to come. This Government will preserve Canada's fiscal advantage and continue to be guided by values of sustainability and prudence.

There are two distinct needs.

The first is to help Canadians in the short term, to do whatever it takes, using whatever fiscal firepower is needed to support people and businesses during the pandemic. The best way to keep the economy strong is to keep Canadians healthy.

Opening of Session

The second need is to build back better, with a sustainable approach for future generations. As the Government builds a plan for stimulus and recovery, this must be done responsibly.

In the longer term, the Government will focus on targeted investments to strengthen the middle class, build resiliency, and generate growth. The Government will also identify additional ways to tax extreme wealth inequality, including by concluding work to limit the stock option deduction for wealthy individuals at large, established corporations, and addressing corporate tax avoidance by digital giants.

Web giants are taking Canadians' money while imposing their own priorities. Things must change, and will change. The Government will act to ensure their revenue is shared more fairly with our creators and media, and will also require them to contribute to the creation, production, and distribution of our stories, on screen, in lyrics, in music, and in writing.

This fall, the Government will release an update to Canada's COVID-19 Economic Response Plan. This will outline the Government's economic and fiscal position, provide fiscal projections, and set out new measures to implement this Throne Speech.

This update will make clear that the strength of the middle class, and the wellbeing of all Canadians, remain Canada's key measures of success.

Building back better — a resiliency agenda for the middle class

As we fight for every Canadian and defend everyone's ability to succeed, we also need to focus on the future, and on building back better. This forms the third foundation of the Government's approach.

Around the world, advanced economies are realizing that things should not go back to business as usual. COVID-19 has exposed the vulnerabilities in our societies.

The Government will create a resiliency agenda for the middle class and people working hard to join it.

This will include addressing the gaps in our social systems, investing in health care, and creating jobs. It will also include fighting climate change, and maintaining a commitment to fiscal sustainability and economic growth as the foundation of a strong and vibrant society.

Addressing gaps in our social systems

Central to this is recognizing that one of the greatest tragedies of this pandemic is the lives lost in long-term care homes. Elders deserve to be safe, respected, and live in dignity.

Although long-term care falls under provincial and territorial jurisdiction, the federal government will take any action it can to support seniors while working alongside the provinces and territories.

The Government will work with Parliament on *Criminal Code* amendments to explicitly penalize those who neglect seniors under their care, putting them in danger.

The Government will also:

Work with the provinces and territories to set new, national standards for long-term care so that seniors get the best support possible;

And take additional action to help people stay in their homes longer.

The Government remains committed to increasing Old Age Security once a senior turns 75, and boosting the Canada Pension Plan survivor's benefit.

The Government will look at further targeted measures for personal support workers, who do an essential service helping the most vulnerable in our communities. Canada must better value their work and their contributions to our society.

COVID-19 has disproportionately affected Canadians with disabilities, and highlighted long-standing challenges. The Government will bring forward a Disability Inclusion Plan, which will have:

A new Canadian Disability Benefit modelled after the Guaranteed Income Supplement for seniors;

A robust employment strategy for Canadians with disabilities;

And a better process to determine eligibility for Government disability programs and benefits.

Over the last six months, it has become clearer than ever why Canadians need a resilient health care system.

The Government will ensure that everyone — including in rural and remote areas — has access to a family doctor or primary care team. COVID-19 has also shown that our system needs to be more flexible and able to reach people at home. The Government will continue to expand capacity to deliver virtual health care.

The Government will also continue to address the opioid epidemic tearing through communities, which is an ongoing and worsening public health crisis. Additionally, the Government will further increase access to mental health resources. All Canadians should have the care they need, when they need it. We will all be stronger for it.

The same goes for access to the medicine that keeps people healthy. Many Canadians who had drug plans through work lost this coverage when they were laid off because of the pandemic. So this is exactly the right moment to ramp up efforts to address that.

The Government remains committed to a national, universal pharmacare program and will accelerate steps to achieve this system including:

Through a rare-disease strategy to help Canadian families save money on high-cost drugs;

Establishing a national formulary to keep drug prices low;

And working with provinces and territories willing to move forward without delay.

In addition to good health infrastructure, Canadians also need strong, safe communities to call home.

The Government has banned assault-style firearms. The Government will also continue implementing firearms policy commitments, including:

Giving municipalities the ability to further restrict or ban handguns;

And strengthening measures to control the flow of illegal guns into Canada.

Women's safety must be the foundation on which all progress is built. The Government will accelerate investments in shelters and transition housing, and continue to advance with a National Action Plan on Gender-Based Violence.

To keep building strong communities, over the next two years the Government will also invest in all types of infrastructure, including public transit, energy efficient retrofits, clean energy, rural broadband, and affordable housing, particularly for Indigenous Peoples and northern communities.

In the last six months, many more people have worked from home, done classes from the kitchen table, shopped online, and accessed government services remotely. So it has become more important than ever that all Canadians have access to the internet.

The Government will accelerate the connectivity timelines and ambitions of the Universal Broadband Fund to ensure that all Canadians, no matter where they live, have access to high-speed internet.

And to further link our communities together, the Government will work with partners to support regional routes for airlines. It is essential that Canadians have access to reliable and affordable regional air services. This is an issue of equity, of jobs, and of economic development. The Government will work to support this.

Strong communities are places where everyone has a safe, affordable home.

No one should be without a place to stay during a pandemic, or for that matter, a Canadian winter.

This week, the Government invested more than \$1 billion for people experiencing homelessness, including for this fall.

In 2017, the Government announced that it would reduce chronic homelessness by 50 percent. The Government has already helped more than a million people get a safe and affordable place to call home. Given the progress that has been made, and our commitment

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to do more, the Government is now focused on entirely eliminating chronic homelessness in Canada.

At the same time, the Government will also make substantial investments in housing for Canadians.

The Government will add to the historic National Housing Strategy announced in 2017 by increasing investments to rapid housing in the short term, and partnering with not-for-profits and co-ops in the mid- to long-term. For the middle class, the Government will also move forward with enhancements to the First-Time Home Buyer Incentive, including in Canada's largest cities, so families can afford to buy their first home.

Housing is something everyone deserves, and it's also a key driver of the economy. Construction projects create jobs, and having a home is critical so people can contribute to their communities.

Just like everyone deserves a home, everyone deserves to be able to put nutritious food on the table.

The pandemic has made that harder for Canadians. The Government will continue to work with partners — including directly with First Nations, Inuit, and Métis Nation partners — to address food insecurity in Canada. The Government will also strengthen local food supply chains here in Canada.

The Canadian and migrant workers who produce, harvest, and process our food — from people picking fruit to packing seafood — have done an outstanding job getting good food on people's plates. They deserve the Government's full support and protection.

The Government will also ensure that those in Canada's supply managed sectors receive full and fair compensation for recent trade agreements. Farmers keep our families fed, and we will continue to help them succeed and grow.

A stronger workforce

This pandemic has revealed gaps in health, housing, and food supply. And it has also laid bare inequalities Canadians face in the workforce.

We have an opportunity to not just support Canadians, but grow their potential. Working with the provinces and territories, the Government will make the largest investment in Canadian history in training for workers. This will include by:

Supporting Canadians as they build new skills in growing sectors;

Helping workers receive education and accreditation;

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And strengthening workers' futures, by connecting them to employers and good jobs, in order to grow and strengthen the middle class.

From researchers developing vaccines, to entrepreneurs building online stores, this pandemic has reminded us of the power of the knowledge economy, and how vital it is for our future.

Canadians are leading, and they should have government services that keep up.

The Government will make generational investments in updating outdated IT systems to modernize the way that Government serves Canadians, from the elderly to the young, from people looking for work to those living with a disability. The Government will also work to introduce free, automatic tax filing for simple returns to ensure citizens receive the benefits they need.

Government must remain agile, and ready for what lies ahead.

Taking action on extreme risks from climate change

Climate action will be a cornerstone of our plan to support and create a million jobs across the country.

This is where the world is going. Global consumers and investors are demanding and rewarding climate action.

Canadians have the determination and ingenuity to rise to this challenge and global market opportunity.

We can create good jobs today and a globally competitive economy not just next year, but in 2030, 2040, and beyond.

Canadians also know climate change threatens our health, way of life, and planet. They want climate action now, and that is what the Government will continue to deliver.

The Government will immediately bring forward a plan to exceed Canada's 2030 climate goal. The Government will also legislate Canada's goal of net-zero emissions by 2050.

As part of its plan, the Government will:

Create thousands of jobs retrofitting homes and buildings, cutting energy costs for Canadian families and businesses;

Invest in reducing the impact of climate-related disasters, like floods and wildfires, to make communities safer and more resilient;

Help deliver more transit and active transit options;

And make zero-emissions vehicles more affordable while investing in more charging stations across the country.

A good example of adapting to a carbon-neutral future is building zero-emissions vehicles and batteries. Canada has the resources — from nickel to copper — needed for these clean technologies. This — combined with Canadian expertise — is Canada's competitive edge.

The Government will launch a new fund to attract investments in making zero-emissions products and cut the corporate tax rate in half for these companies to create jobs and make Canada a world leader in clean technology. The Government will ensure Canada is

the most competitive jurisdiction in the world for clean technology companies.

Additionally, the Government will:

Transform how we power our economy and communities by moving forward with the Clean Power Fund, including with projects like the Atlantic Loop that will connect surplus clean power to regions transitioning away from coal;

And support investments in renewable energy and next-generation clean energy and technology solutions.

Canada cannot reach net zero without the know-how of the energy sector, and the innovative ideas of all Canadians, including people in places like British Columbia, Alberta, Saskatchewan, and Newfoundland and Labrador.

The Government will:

Support manufacturing, natural resource, and energy sectors as they work to transform to meet a net zero future, creating good-paying and long-lasting jobs;

And recognize farmers, foresters, and ranchers as key partners in the fight against climate change, supporting their efforts to reduce emissions and build resilience.

The Government will continue its policy of putting a price on pollution, while putting that money back in the pockets of Canadians. It cannot be free to pollute.

This pandemic has reminded Canadians of the importance of nature. The Government will work with municipalities as part of a new commitment to expand urban parks, so that everyone has access to green space. This will be done while protecting a quarter of Canada's land and a quarter of Canada's oceans in five years, and using nature-based solutions to fight climate change, including by planting two billion trees.

The Government will ban harmful single-use plastics next year and ensure more plastic is recycled. And the Government will also modernize Canada's Environmental Protection Act.

When the Prairie Farm Rehabilitation Administration was closed by a previous government, Canada lost an important tool to manage its waters. The Government will create a new Canada Water Agency to keep our water safe, clean, and well-managed. The Government will also identify opportunities to build more resilient water and irrigation infrastructure.

At the same time, the Government will look at continuing to grow Canada's ocean economy to create opportunities for fishers and coastal communities, while advancing reconciliation and conservation objectives. Investing in the Blue Economy will help Canada prosper.

The Canada we're fighting for

This is a fight for Canadians today and Canada tomorrow. So we must never forget the values that make us who we are. The fourth and final foundation of the Government's approach is defending Canadian values and ensuring they are lived experiences for everyone.

Canada is a place where we take care of each other. This has helped Canada weather the pandemic better than many other countries.

Canada must continue to stand up for the values that define this country, whether that's welcoming newcomers, celebrating with pride the contributions of LGBTQ2 communities, or embracing two official languages. There is work still to be done, including on the road of reconciliation, and in addressing systemic racism.

Reconciliation

Throughout the pandemic, the Government has made it a priority to support Indigenous communities, which has helped contain the spread of COVID-19 and kept people safe. That is something the Government will continue to do.

The Government will walk the shared path of reconciliation with Indigenous Peoples, and remain focused on implementing the commitments made in 2019. However, the pandemic has shown that we need to keep moving forward even faster on a number of fronts including by:

Expediting work to co-develop distinctions-based Indigenous health legislation with First Nations, Inuit, and the Métis Nation, and a distinctions-based mental health and wellness strategy;

Accelerating work on the National Action Plan in response to the National Inquiry into Missing and Murdered Indigenous Women and Girls' *Calls for Justice*, as well as implementation of the Truth and Reconciliation Commission's *Calls to Action*;

And continuing to close the infrastructure gap in Indigenous communities, working on a distinctions-basis with First Nations, Inuit, and the Métis Nation to accelerate the government's 10-year commitment.

The Government will also:

Make additional resiliency investments to meet the clean drinking water commitment in First Nations communities;

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And support additional capacity-building for First Nations, Inuit, and the Métis Nation.

The Government will move forward to introduce legislation to implement the United Nations Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples before the end of this year.

Addressing systemic racism

For too many Canadians, systemic racism is a lived reality. We know that racism did not take a pause during the pandemic. On the contrary, COVID-19 has hit racialized Canadians especially hard.

Many people — especially Indigenous people, and Black and racialized Canadians — have raised their voices and stood up to demand change.

They are telling us we must do more. The Government agrees.

The Government pledged to address systemic racism, and committed to do so in a way informed by the lived experiences of racialized communities and Indigenous Peoples.

The Government has invested in economic empowerment through the Black Entrepreneurship Program, while working to close the gaps in services for Indigenous communities. Important steps were taken with the release of Canada's Anti-Racism Strategy for 2019-2022, the creation of an anti-racism secretariat, and the appointment of the first-ever Minister focused specifically on diversity and inclusion. This is all good, but much more needs to be done for permanent, transformative change to take shape.

The Government will redouble its efforts by:

Taking action on online hate;

Going further on economic empowerment for specific communities, and increasing diversity on procurement;

Building a whole-of-federal-government approach around better collection of disaggregated data;

Implementing an action plan to increase representation in hiring and appointments, and leadership development within the Public Service;

And taking new steps to support the artistic and economic contributions of Black Canadian culture and heritage.

Progress must also be made throughout the policing and justice systems. All Canadians must have the confidence that the justice system is there to protect them, not to harm them. Black Canadians and Indigenous Peoples are overrepresented in the criminal justice system. That has to change.

The Government will take steps to ensure that the strong hand of criminal justice is used where it is needed to keep people safe, but not where it would be discriminatory or counterproductive.

The Government will:

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Introduce legislation and make investments that take action to address the systemic inequities in all phases of the criminal justice system, from diversion to sentencing, from rehabilitation to records;

Move forward on enhanced civilian oversight of our law enforcement agencies, including the RCMP;

Modernize training for police and law enforcement, including addressing standards around the use of force;

Move forward on RCMP reforms, with a shift toward community-led policing;

And accelerate work to co-develop a legislative framework for First Nations policing as an essential service.

Protecting two official languages

Our two official languages are woven into the fabric of our country.

The defence of the rights of Francophones outside Quebec, and the defence of the rights of the Anglophone minority within Quebec, is a priority for the Government.

The Government of Canada must also recognize that the situation of French is unique. There are almost 8 million Francophones in Canada within a region of over 360 million inhabitants who are almost exclusively Anglophone. The Government therefore has the responsibility to protect and promote French not only outside of Quebec, but also within Quebec.

In this vein, 51 years after the passage of the *Official Languages Act*, the Government is committed to strengthening this legislation among other things, taking into consideration the unique reality of French.

A welcoming Canada

Immigration remains a driver of Canada's economic growth.

With other countries rejecting global talent that could help their economy, Canada has an opportunity as we recover to become the world's top destination for talent, capital, and jobs. When people choose Canada, help build Canada, and make sacrifices in support of Canada, we should make it easier for them to formally become Canadian.

Earlier this year, the Government announced measures to grant permanent residency to people who, although not Canadian citizens, had cared for the most vulnerable in long-term care homes and other medical facilities.

The Government will continue to bring in newcomers and support family reunification. We know that there is an economic and human advantage to having families together.

As part of both the short-term economic recovery and a long-term plan for growth, the Government will leverage the advantage we have on immigration to keep Canada competitive on the world stage.

Canada in the world

We must take action on all of these priorities at home. But we must also address the world in which we live.

COVID-19 has accelerated the existing trends toward a more fragmented global order. It remains in Canada's interest to create and maintain bilateral and multilateral relationships to advance peace and economic prosperity.

The Government will invest more in international development while supporting developing countries on their economic recoveries and resilience. Canada will also support work to ensure that people around the world have access to a vaccine. We cannot eliminate this pandemic in Canada unless we end it everywhere.

The Government will also continue to stand up for human rights and the rule of law. It is unacceptable that any citizen be arbitrarily detained. Michael Kovrig and Michael Spavor must be brought home. This is something for which all Canadians stand united.

The Government will continue to fight for free trade, including by leading the Ottawa Group to reform the World Trade Organization.

Our likeminded allies and partners are investing to make sure their societies emerge stronger. This Government's plan does that as well.

Conclusion

Taken together, this is an ambitious plan for an unprecedented reality. The course of events will determine what needs to be done when.

But throughout, protecting and supporting Canadians will stay the top priority.

And the core values that have driven the Government since day one remain the same.

In 2015, Canadians asked their government to deliver real change on everything from middle class jobs to climate change. In 2019, the people chose a Parliament that would keep moving forward on these shared goals. And in 2020, Canadians expect nothing less.

It is no small task to build a stronger, more resilient country.

It will take hard work. It will require a commitment to finding common ground.

Parliamentarians, Canadians have placed a trust in you to guide this country forward. They have placed their faith in you to work together to meet whatever challenges we face.

Remember that we are here today because of the generations of Canadians who came before us. We are here because of the women and men — our parents, grandparents, and great-grandparents — who had the courage to reach for a better future.

Today, it is our turn. Our moment to build a stronger and more resilient Canada for everyone.

Members of the House of Commons, you will be asked to appropriate the funds to carry out the services and expenditures authorized by Parliament.

Members of the Senate and Members of the House of Commons, may you be equal to the profound trust bestowed on you by Canadians, and may Divine Providence guide you in all your duties.

[English]

Right Hon. Justin Trudeau (Prime Minister, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, I move:

That the speech of Her Excellency, delivered this day from the Throne to both Houses of Parliament, be taken into consideration later this day.

(Motion agreed to)

* * *

[Translation]

BUSINESS OF SUPPLY

Hon. Jean-Yves Duclos (President of the Treasury Board, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, I move:

That the business of supply be considered at the next sitting of the House.

(Motion agreed to)

[English]

The Speaker: It is my duty to inform the House that, pursuant to an order made Monday, April 20, a total of nine days will be allotted for the supply period ending December 10.

* * *

[Translation]

COMMITTEES OF THE WHOLE

APPOINTMENT OF DEPUTY CHAIR

The Speaker: I am now prepared to propose for the ratification of the House a candidate for the position of Assistant Deputy Speaker and deputy chair of committee of the whole.

[English]

Pursuant to Standing Order 8, I propose Mrs. Carol Hughes for the position of Assistant Deputy Speaker and deputy chair of committee of the whole. The motion is deemed moved and seconded.

Is it the pleasure of the House to adopt the motion?

Some hon. members: Agreed.

(Motion agreed to)

[Translation]

APPOINTMENT OF ASSISTANT DEPUTY CHAIR

The Speaker: I am now ready to propose, for the ratification of the House, a candidate for the position of Assistant Deputy Speaker and assistant deputy chair of committee of the whole.

Pursuant to Standing Order 8, I propose Mrs. Mendès for the position of Assistant Deputy Speaker and assistant deputy chair of committee of the whole.

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[English]

The motion is deemed moved and seconded. Is it the pleasure of the House to adopt the motion?

Some hon. members: Agreed.

(Motion agreed to)

* * *

● (1635)

VOTES BY VIDEO CONFERENCE

The Speaker: In light of the special order that was agreed to by the House earlier today, I would like to take this opportunity to share some information on the process for taking of recorded divisions that members may find useful.

As we learn to adapt to constraints brought about by the COVID-19 pandemic, it is clear that while many of the House's rules and practices can be adapted to allow for the remote participation of members, votes appear to require a departure from established practices.

At the request of each of the parties, the House administration conducted a simulation and, following comments received on the occasion, made a number of adjustments.

[Translation]

Applying certain rules and practices, such as ensuring that members hear the question and remain present until the result is announced, has proven to be challenging when used through virtual means. In addition, while every effort has been made to create a reliable and robust system, system and Internet connectivity issues beyond the control of the member or the House Administration can occur.

[English]

What happens when a member, for technical reasons, is unable to join the video conference in time, but hears the question through other means, such as CPAC or online webcasting, and is ultimately able to vote when his or her name is called? In such instances, the Chair has no way of determining if a member did indeed hear the question and would have great difficulty refusing a member's fundamental right to cast his or her vote.

[Translation]

In other instances, other members joining in virtually late after encountering technical difficulties would indicate that they did not hear the question and abstain from voting. Either affirmation would be accepted by the Chair, in keeping with the convention that the House accepts as true the word of the member.

In an effort to strike the proper balance between the integrity of the decision-making process and the participation of all members who wish to vote, and unless further decisions are taken by the House, the Chair proposes that votes proceed as follows:

*The Address**[English]*

When a question is put and a voice vote follows, we will not proceed with calling yeas and nays, nor will we require five members to ask that a recorded division take place. Instead, I will follow the normal process of reading the motion and ask if it is the pleasure of the House to adopt the motion. At that point, any one representative from a recognized party present in the chamber may request a recorded division. I will then call in the members or defer the vote, as the case may be.

[Translation]

All members will be admitted to the sitting by video conference at any given time, knowing that the Table will have the list of members who were in attendance when the whips take their seat;

Members on the list will then be called in alphabetical order, by party, to indicate how they are voting. I will intervene if we cannot see the member;

[English]

Once all the names on the list have been called, I will invite members whose names were missed or who encountered technical difficulties to identify themselves by using the “raise hand” feature. By then, IT ambassadors will have provided to the table a list of members who encountered difficulties and contacted the support team for assistance. As well, cameras must remain on during the duration of the vote.

[Translation]

It is possible that some members will be unable to connect and vote. In reading the special order, they would not be counted unless measures are taken to allow them to communicate with the Table before the end of the vote. I invite the representatives of the parties to carefully consider and perhaps provide some guidance to the Speaker on how best to address this issue.

[English]

Finally, decorum is certainly a challenge. I would ask that members uphold the dignity of the House when voting or participating in proceedings, including being judicious in the backgrounds they choose and how they dress.

In preparation for remote votes, members are invited to take part in a simulation of the voting process tomorrow, Thursday, September 24, at 7 p.m.

[Translation]

I want to thank members for their attention to this somewhat prosaic statement, as we navigate our new reality together. I believe it is important for us to acknowledge that the ongoing pandemic has altered the way we fulfill our role as members of Parliament. It is, however, equally important to take heart in the fact that we are adapting to those changes, and that our shared goal remains the same, to serve the people of Canada.

SPEECH FROM THE THRONE*[Translation]***ADDRESS IN REPLY**

The House proceeded to the consideration of the speech delivered by Her Excellency the Governor General at the opening of the session.

Mr. Emmanuel Dubourg (Bourassa, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, it is with great pleasure that I rise to speak to the Speech from the Throne.

At a time when the world is beset by an insidious virus and our government is building the foundations of a response that is strong, bold and responsible, I would like to start by thanking all those who have been on the front lines during the pandemic and who are still working hard as we speak to save the lives of the most vulnerable Canadians.

This message is especially important to me, because many of my constituents are front-line workers, and quite a few of them are members of my own community. I honour them for their courage, their sense of duty and their compassion. I am thinking in particular of those working behind the scenes, who get up every morning and jump back into the fray, and who sometimes end up paying the price. My thoughts go out to all the Canadians who are hurting after recently losing a loved one. On behalf of our government, I want to extend our deepest condolences to these people and to their friends and families.

I salute all the people of the riding of Bourassa, which I have the great privilege of representing here in the House of Commons of Canada. Like us, they are fighting this pandemic. I would also like to thank community organizations, countless volunteers, the business community and of course elected officials for their efforts. We must continue to be vigilant and follow the guidelines.

I hardly need to remind anyone that our reality has changed. We have gone through some tough months, and now the second wave is upon us.

Let me paint a picture of the current situation. COVID-19 has killed more than 9,000 Canadians. South of the border, it has taken the lives of more than 200,000 people. Around the world, the death toll will soon surpass one million. Almost nine million Canadians have lost their jobs in the last few months. Some are back at work, but millions of Canadians are still out of a job.

Some groups of people are particularly vulnerable. The pandemic has hit racialized people very hard. It has hit parents and mothers, who are often torn between their families and careers; young people who have lost their jobs and are worried about their future; our elderly fathers, mothers, aunts and uncles, who know they are more vulnerable and sometimes live in fear and isolation; and the precarious, low-income workers we depended on in grocery stores, care homes and the service sector in general.

The Address

We have all been affected by the COVID-19 pandemic, and over the past few months, our government has been there for Canadians. The Canada emergency response benefit and the Canada emergency student benefit were brought in to quickly help Canadians who had lost their jobs. As we announced recently, those benefits will be gradually transitioned to the EI program in order to help the economic recovery. The Canada recovery sickness benefit will be available to Canadians who are unable to work because they are sick or must self-isolate due to COVID-19. Those last two measures should be implemented in the next few weeks.

We have also helped businesses get through this crisis. Our government's goal is to prevent layoffs, encourage businesses to rehire their employees and create new jobs. That is why we created the Canada emergency wage subsidy and why we have been improving it as we go along; it must meet the needs of businesses.

Lastly, our government has been there to support agriculture, agri-food, culture, heritage and sports, tourism and many other sectors. Moreover, we have also been there for the provinces during this crisis, providing support in various ways. Our government worked to ensure adequate supplies of personal protective equipment while bolstering the development of domestic production capacity. We also developed the COVID Alert app, which is now available and offers one more tool for curbing the pandemic.

● (1640)

I want to take this opportunity to invite residents of Ontario, Newfoundland and Labrador, New Brunswick and Saskatchewan to download the app and use it. Everyone can contribute. We invite the other provinces to follow suit.

We have secured access to candidate vaccines and therapeutics and are funding their development here in Canada.

At the request of certain provinces, the Canadian Armed Forces were deployed to long-term care facilities to help regain control of the situation.

Under the \$19-billion safe restart agreement between the federal government and the provinces, we are contributing to all their efforts from supporting the capacity of our health care systems to the procurement of personal protective equipment.

The federal government has also invested \$2 billion in the safe return to class fund. By all accounts, our government has not hesitated to be there for Canadians, businesses, and the provinces and territories, to ensure the health and safety of all Canadians.

Nonetheless, this is not over. We still have a lot to do. Our government is proposing four priorities.

The first, obviously, is to protect the health of Canadians. We must continue to ramp up testing and contact tracing across the country. Canadians must be able to access testing quickly. To that end, our government will establish a testing assistance response team to quickly meet urgent needs, including in remote and isolated communities. We will also continue our efforts to ensure that Canadians can get the protective equipment they need. We will keep Canadians safe, and we will create jobs in the process.

We will be there to financially support businesses that will have to close their doors to curb transmission on the advice of public health authorities.

We will continue to work on securing a vaccine and the therapeutics we need. In the long run, that is how we are going to get through this pandemic.

The second part of our government's plan is to continue to support Canadians and businesses. We will continue with what is working well. The Canada emergency wage subsidy will be extended until next summer. We will continue to work with business to ensure that this subsidy meets their needs.

We will continue the Canada emergency business account, the business credit availability program and further targeted assistance measures for industries, such as travel and tourism, hospitality, and cultural industries like the performing arts.

For young people, we will significantly scale up the youth employment and skills strategy, to provide more paid work experiences next summer for young Canadians.

We also believe that Canadians must work together to eliminate the remaining barriers between provinces to full, free internal trade.

Our objective is to create one million jobs to restore employment to pre-pandemic levels. We will increase investments in infrastructure and in the social sector. We will provide assistance to help workers skill up and return to work. We will implement measures to encourage employers to hire and retain workers.

The pandemic has hit women especially hard. That is why our government will put forward an action plan for women in the economy to help more women get back into the workforce.

● (1645)

Our government is drawing on Quebec's approach to make a significant, sustained, long-term investment in creating a Canada-wide early learning and child care system. We will also support parents and families by subsidizing before- and after-school program costs.

We will also identify new ways to tax extreme wealth inequality, such as by limiting stock option deductions and cracking down on tax avoidance by digital giants.

The Address

Third, we need to think about the future now, in order to build back even better. COVID-19 has exposed a number of vulnerabilities within our societies. What has happened to our seniors is one of the tragedies of the past few months. We will work with the provinces and territories and do everything we can to support seniors. First, we will amend the Criminal Code to explicitly penalize those who neglect or endanger any seniors under their care. We will set new national standards for long-term care. We will take action to help people continue to live in their own homes. We will look at various ways we can help personal support workers.

We also remain committed to increasing old age security. We will do whatever it takes to ensure that our seniors are safe and live with respect and dignity.

Canadians living with disabilities have also suffered. To rebuild and improve our social safety net, we will create a new benefit specifically for people with disabilities. We will begin setting the foundation for a universal pharmacare program, focusing first on rare diseases. We will work with the provinces and territories willing to move forward without delay.

To build back better, we are investing in public transit, energy efficient retrofits, clean energy and affordable housing. We are also making major investments in rural broadband service, as the past several months have shown how important it is for Canadians to have Internet access. We will accelerate the ambitions of the universal broadband fund to ensure that all Canadians, no matter where they live, have access to high-speed Internet.

Our government will ensure that those in Canada's supply-managed sectors receive full and fair compensation for recent trade agreements.

Climate change will be central to our building back plan, which seeks to create a million jobs across the country. We plan to exceed Canada's 2030 climate goal and legislate Canada's goal of net-zero emissions by 2050. To that end, we will launch a new fund to attract investments in making zero-emissions products and cut the corporate tax rate in half for these companies to create jobs and make Canada a world leader in clean technology.

The fourth priority for all our government's actions is to defend Canadian values and ensure that our efforts benefit everyone. It is important to acknowledge that the situation of French is unique. Defending the rights of francophone minorities outside Quebec and anglophone minorities in Quebec are a priority for our government.

Furthermore, there is clearly more to be done on reconciliation and the fight against systemic racism, and we acknowledge that.

• (1650)

First, we will accelerate work on the national action plan in response to the National Inquiry into Missing and Murdered Indigenous Women and Girls' calls for justice and implement the Truth and Reconciliation Commission's calls to action. We will work with first nations, Inuit and Métis Nation partners to develop distinctions-based indigenous health legislation and a distinctions-based mental health and wellness strategy.

Finally, we will actively continue our efforts to close the infrastructure gap in indigenous communities. We will also introduce leg-

islation to implement the United Nations Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples before the end of the year.

Systemic racism is a lived reality for many Canadians, and I can attest to that. Our government will combat systemic racism. We will work hard to take action on online hate, go further on economic empowerment for specific communities and increase diversity on procurement. We will build a government approach around better collection of disaggregated data. We will increase representation in hiring and appointments, and in leadership development within the public service. We will take new steps to support the artistic and economic contributions of Black Canadian culture and heritage.

That is not all. We will introduce legislation to address the systemic inequities in the criminal justice system. We will enhance civilian oversight of our law enforcement agencies, including the RCMP. We will modernize training for police and law enforcement.

I am proud that our government announced in today's throne speech that it will ensure the health and safety of Canadians during the global pandemic. We will be here to keep Canadians healthy, protect their jobs and keep them safe. Yes, I am proud of our government. We will always be here to help our seniors, our young people, our families, and the most vulnerable members of society get through these tough times.

Therefore I move, seconded by the hon. member for Davenport, that the following address be presented to Her Excellency the Governor General of Canada:

To Her Excellency the Right Honourable Julie Payette, Chancellor and Principal Companion of the Order of Canada, Chancellor and Commander of the Order of Military Merit, Chancellor and Commander of the Order of Merit of the Police Forces, Governor General and Commander-in-Chief of Canada.

May it please Your Excellency:

We, Her Majesty's most loyal and dutiful subjects, the House of Commons of Canada, in Parliament assembled, beg leave to offer our humble thanks to Your Excellency for the gracious speech which Your Excellency has addressed to both Houses of Parliament.

• (1655)

[English]

Mr. Eric Duncan (Stormont—Dundas—South Glengarry, CPC): Mr. Speaker, it is great to be here today, to be back in Ottawa in Parliament getting back to work.

As we expected, the speech today had a lot of good lines and platitudes in it. However, as we speak, literally thousands of Canadians are standing in lines across the country and are being turned away because Health Canada has no plan or timeline when it comes to reviewing rapid testing options for them. Meanwhile, our allies are making good progress on it.

The United Kingdom, for example, has a home testing option that has been available for months. In Germany, its medical experts are months ahead with respect to approvals on more testing options.

The federal government should have known this by now. Its own co-chair of the immunity task force, Dr. David Naylor, has said, "It's suboptimal for Canada to be heading into the fall without a suite of rapid-test options, and without clarity about use of test substrates other than nasal swabs."

Today in Huntsville, Premier Ford of Ontario said this about Health Canada, "Health Canada, we need your help...I just can't stress it enough, all I'm hearing is crickets from Health Canada right now on these saliva tests. These...tests make it easier to test people, especially kids."

For the thousands of Canadians who are frustrated about the testing process, including some of our premiers, my question for the hon. member for Bourassa is this. Could he advise parents, children and people across the country of a specific date and timeline that we can expect the government to ensure that a full review process happens as fast as possible to help provinces and to help Canadians?

[*Translation*]

Mr. Emmanuel Dubourg: Mr. Speaker, I thank my colleague for his question.

He was here to hear the Speech from the Throne. He is talking about health. We have taken numerous measures to support Canadians across the country. We recently rolled out the COVID Alert app, which several provinces are using. We have also allocated money to help the provinces.

We are talking about a \$19-billion recovery plan. This is an unprecedented amount of money that we are transferring to the provinces so that the necessary steps can be taken to support seniors and all Canadians with all these measures. Screening, contact tracing, and providing PPE are all examples of measures that we have taken to ensure that Canada has everything it needs to get through this pandemic.

Mr. Luc Thériault (Montcalm, BQ): Mr. Speaker, my thoughts go out to all those who have been hard hit by COVID-19 and to all those who will be, the non-COVID patients. We need to learn from this health crisis. One of the lessons we need to take from this is that we do not need small measures and meddling from the government.

The member for Bourassa is a member from Quebec. We need sustainable measures and investments to get through this pandemic. One of the lessons that we learned is that we were not prepared. My grandmother used to say that an ounce of prevention is worth a pound of cure, but prevention fell by the wayside when the succes-

The Address

sive federal governments decided not to abide by the agreement to invest 50% in health transfers and payments.

The member for Bourassa, who is also a resident of that riding, must rise and tell us whether he will vote with the Parliament of Quebec, which is unanimously calling for \$28 billion in catch-up payments and the indexing of health transfers to 6%.

Will he vote with the united front presented by Quebec and the other provinces? He is a Quebec MP.

• (1700)

Mr. Emmanuel Dubourg: Mr. Speaker, I thank my colleague for his question.

In his question he refers to sustainable measures. We just delivered the throne speech, which sets out our vision and the direction we plan to take over the next few years. What more does he want in terms of sustainable measures? It talks about health, economic priorities, rebuilding and values. Yes, I am a member from Quebec. Yes, I am proud to be a Quebecker and a Canadian.

Not only is our government taking plenty of action to support Quebec, but the Prime Minister is also working with all the premiers of the provinces and territories to implement measures that will help everyone. That is becoming increasingly common during this pandemic. The Prime Minister has had, and continues to have, many telephone conversations with the premiers of the provinces and territories. We must continue to negotiate, but it must always be in the best interest of Canadians.

[*English*]

Ms. Mumilaq Qaqqaq (Nunavut, NDP): Mr. Speaker, the federal government failed Inuit before COVID-19 and continues to do so. Since the Liberal government has been in power, it talked about a distinctive indigenous housing strategy in 2017 and in 2019 about investing in more housing. We have yet to see these two items come into full action.

Last month I travelled to seven Nunavut communities, visiting over 100 homes. All homes I went to had mould and most of them were overcrowded. I also heard of parents losing their children to the foster care system because their homes were deemed unfit. I heard stories of parents finding their children hanging from the ceiling. I heard stories of elders forced to live with people who abused them.

The lack of basic human rights for indigenous peoples results in death. Inuit are dying, and were dying before this pandemic.

I did not have expectations of this throne speech. Since the day I was born, Inuit have heard promises of a good life, of positivity, of being able to contribute to society in a healthy way, of having basic human rights and we continue to have those promises broken.

I will start to have faith in the federal government once I see Inuit have the opportunity to live a life filled with dignity and respect. I will start to have faith in this institution once I see indigenous people have the right to self-determination.

The Address

When will the federal government stand up for Inuit and provide basic human rights, at least basic housing?

[*Translation*]

Mr. Emmanuel Dubourg: Mr. Speaker, I thank my colleague for her moving intervention. I invite her to work with the government to continue developing measures aimed at helping indigenous communities. We have two ministers addressing this issue.

Going off the speech I just read, I would remind my colleague that we are going to take a number of measures in response to the National Inquiry into Missing and Murdered Indigenous Women and Girls' calls for justice.

As my colleague said, there is a huge amount of work to do on health care and housing. However, if we all pull together, we can build a better future for all indigenous communities and marginalized groups.

• (1705)

[*English*]

Mr. Sukh Dhaliwal (Surrey—Newton, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, I thank the hon. member for Bourassa for his hard work.

My constituents know I have been a small business owner in the community of Surrey—Newton for many years. Thousands more Surrey residents have been able to take advantage of the wage subsidy that was provided.

How will this extension of the wage subsidy help thousands of small businesses in Bourassa, Surrey—Newton and all across Canada?

Mr. Emmanuel Dubourg: Mr. Speaker, I am really pleased to answer my colleague's question.

[*Translation*]

In the second part of the Speech from the Throne, we talk about the economy. Among the measures we are taking, we will create one million jobs across Canada.

As my colleague points out, we said that the Canada emergency wage subsidy would be extended until next summer, as it has proven to be beneficial. From the beginning of this pandemic we have seen how hard it was and continues to be for businesses. We said we would be there for them. We have been there, we are there and we will be there. We will help these businesses create jobs, keep operating, and hold on to their workers, like those in the agri-food industry who make it possible for us to keep food on the table every day. We will continue to help businesses in order to help us get through this pandemic.

[*English*]

The Deputy Speaker: I am going to use some discretion to take just one more question, giving members a little latitude this afternoon on the Speech from the Throne.

The hon. member for Calgary Skyview.

Ms. Jag Sahota (Calgary Skyview, CPC): Mr. Speaker, it is nice to be back in this place while respecting social distancing of course.

I was honoured to be named the shadow minister for women and gender equality. I plan to draw on my experience in this role to showcase that women can see themselves in this party. Women have been disproportionately impacted by this pandemic.

We have heard platitudes time and time again from the government, with very little action. Women and Canadians deserve action, and they deserved it on day one.

What does the member have to say to the women and Canadians who have fallen through the cracks and have not received the support they so desperately need?

[*Translation*]

Mr. Emmanuel Dubourg: Mr. Speaker, I thank my colleague for her question. This is an issue that affects her personally.

The Speech from the Throne clearly acknowledges how much women have been affected by the pandemic. We have taken a number of measures that have benefited women, such as the Canada emergency response benefit, among others. In the throne speech, we also said that we were going to introduce a special plan to support women economically, in order to help them start businesses and to give them more opportunities to get back into the workforce.

We continue to move forward.

[*English*]

Ms. Julie Dzerowicz (Davenport, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, as the very proud member of Parliament for Davenport, it is an absolute honour for me to rise in this chamber today to second the motion of my colleague, the member for Bourassa, regarding the address in reply to the Speech from the Throne.

As members of Parliament, we are gathered at a time of great uncertainty and anxiety. We are living in a world that is gripped by the greatest public health care crisis of our lifetimes. It is a global pandemic that has changed history, and our country has not been immune to the consequences.

When it began, Canadians were justifiably worried about their own health and the health of the people they love. They were anxious about the economic fallout, whether they would keep their jobs and how they would pay the bills if that happened. Just a few months ago, months that somehow seem like years ago now, everyone knew that the spring of 2020 would be one they would never forget, but no one knew when the COVID-19 pandemic would finally end.

Of course, it has not ended, and we must all come to terms with the fact that this crisis is not over. There are more challenges for all of us to endure, and there is an ever-present need for us to continue to work together. Canadians have shown that when faced with a crisis, they can rise to the challenges that face them. I believe that they have done that this year, and I am confident that they will continue to do that together, united as one people.

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As Canadians have done their part, so must we as parliamentarians. The people we all represent need their governments and their parliamentarians from all political parties to also rise to the occasion. They need their political representatives to lead.

Today, our government has come forward with a Speech from the Throne that does just that. We have before us a road map that provides leadership. There is leadership on how to fight the pandemic and save lives. There is leadership to support Canadian workers and businesses, and there is more leadership to build back our country's economy, strengthen the middle class and invest in critical infrastructure such as public transit and rural broadband. There are many critical social services on which Canadians urgently need action from their governments: child care, long-term care for seniors, pharmacare and affordable housing. We are providing action and leadership in each of these areas.

The throne speech also provides leadership to strengthen our core identity as a tolerant nation, with a commitment to fighting discrimination, standing up for gender equality and continuing on the road to reconciliation with indigenous people. Of course, we are also providing leadership on what we all know to be the critical challenge of our time: climate change.

This is a comprehensive and bold throne speech, fit for the times in which we live. There are many highlights in the speech, but I will do my best to draw members' attention to them in the limited time that I have.

Of course, our first priority is and will continue to be to protect Canadians from COVID-19. It has been our goal from the start to work relentlessly and non-stop with governments across the country at all levels and with all Canadians to beat this virus.

I am glad to say that Canadians have done their part. They have understood the need to stay at home. They know about and practise social distancing when they are not at home. They know the value of wearing a mask to help prevent COVID-19, and know, if they have it, to help prevent spreading it to others by staying at home.

Over the past several months, personal protective equipment, or PPE, has been shipped across the country and many members of our Canadian Forces were in long-term care homes to help our seniors. Throughout it all, Canadians have looked after each other in each of our communities from coast to coast to coast, and we are committed to continuing to look after each other.

In the first wave of the pandemic, testing for the virus and contact tracing were ramped up across the country. However, as we have seen far too much in too many news sources across the country just this week with all the many outbreaks, there is an enormous need for us to do even more.

• (1710)

Our federal government will help the provinces increase their ability to test Canadians so that the long waiting lines now occurring can be reduced. As well, we are pursuing every technology possible for faster tests. We have heard loud and clear, not only from the opposition but from Canadians, that everybody is looking for rapid tests to be approved. As soon as they are approved by Health Canada for safe use in this country, our government is com-

mitted to doing everything we can to see them deployed as quickly as possible.

Throughout this pandemic, our local public health authorities have been on the front lines, providing expert and authoritative advice and action. They have the best view on what is happening locally. As we move forward to prevent local outbreaks from becoming larger, it might be necessary for communities to enact short-term closure orders. If that happens, our government will provide targeted financial help directly to local businesses. We have already invested \$19 billion in a safe restart agreement with the provinces and territories to help support areas such as health care and purchasing PPE. Just recently, we announced a further \$2 billion to help with the reopening of schools, to help keep our students, their teachers and everybody who works within the school system safe.

However, as the throne speech notes, in the long run, the best way to end this pandemic is with a safe and effective vaccine. As such, our government has already secured access to potential vaccines. We continue to look at all the options and are devising a plan to distribute a vaccine once it is ready.

In addition to protecting the health of Canadians, we are committed to protecting their livelihoods. As we all know, this pandemic has hit the Canadian economy hard. Almost overnight, many Canadians found themselves out of work. Our government responded boldly and quickly with programs such as the Canada emergency response benefit, known as the CERB, and the Canada emergency wage subsidy, known as the CEWS.

As we move forward, there is so much more work to do because Canadians need jobs they can rely on. To make that happen, we will launch a campaign to create over one million jobs, restoring employment to levels prior to COVID-19. We will use a number of different tools to accomplish this, including direct investments in the social sector and in infrastructure, skills training for workers and incentives for employers to hire and retrain workers.

We will also extend the Canada emergency wage subsidy right through to next summer. As members know, the wage subsidy has been an absolute lifeline for businesses across this country and our economy. We are committed to working with businesses and labour in the months ahead to ensure that this program continues to meet the evolving needs of Canadians.

In addition to this, we will assist businesses by expanding the Canada emergency business account, which is our loan program, to help small businesses with their fixed costs. As well, we know there needs to be further support for hard-hit industries, such as travel and tourism, hospitality, and cultural industries like the performing arts.

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I believe the Canada emergency response benefit has helped many Canadians at exactly the time they needed to pay their bills, but as the throne speech points out, with the economic restart now under way, CERB recipients should instead be supported by the employment insurance system. Therefore, for people who would not traditionally qualify for EI, we will create the transitional Canada recovery benefit. In the coming months, the EI system will become the sole way to distribute employment benefits, including for Canadians who traditionally have not been able to qualify for EI in the past, such as gig workers and short-term contract workers.

We have seen very clearly that the economic impact of this crisis has been particularly hard on low-income women. Many women have worked bravely on the front lines or have shouldered the responsibility of unpaid care work at home.

● (1715)

We cannot let this pandemic roll back the clock on women's participation in the workforce. As such, we will create an action plan for women in the economy to help more women get back into the workforce.

This pandemic has further exposed a critical truth that many of us have long known: Canada needs more accessible and affordable high-quality child care. Our government recognizes this, and we are committed to making a significant, long-term sustained investment to create a Canada-wide early learning and child care system. This will be a game changer, not only in terms of maximizing participation of Canadians in the workforce, but also for growth in our economy.

As we make these investments, our government's approach will be guided by values of fiscal sustainability and prudence. Our plan for stimulus and recovery will be responsible, and in the longer term we will focus on strengthening the middle class and generating economic growth. We will also look for ways to generate revenue by taxing extreme wealth inequity. That includes limiting the stock option deduction for wealthy individuals at large, established corporations, and dealing with corporate tax avoidance by digital corporate giants.

As we look back at the lessons we have learned in the last six months, one is that we sadly let down our seniors in long-term care homes where too many died from COVID-19. Our elders deserve to be safe and to live in dignity. The tragedy of recent months cannot be repeated. Long-term care falls under provincial and territorial jurisdiction, but our federal government intends to take action.

We will work with Parliament on Criminal Code amendments to explicitly penalize those who neglect seniors under their care. We will also work with the provinces and territories to set new national standards for long-term care. We need to take better care of our seniors, and these two measures will go a long way toward helping us to do so.

This unprecedented pandemic has also disproportionately affected Canadians with disabilities. We will bring forward a number of measures to support our disabled community, including introducing a disability inclusion plan that will include a new Canadian disability benefit modelled after the guaranteed income supplement for seniors. We will also introduce a robust employment strategy for

Canadians with disabilities and a better process to determine eligibility for government disability programs and benefits.

There has been another pandemic under way across Canada. It has been around for a number of years, but it has accelerated during COVID. It is the opioid crisis, which has been ravaging our communities and creating a public health care crisis. We will continue to take action to address this crisis.

We will also continue to increase access to an area that has been under-invested in for too many years: the area of mental health. We will increase access to mental health resources in our country.

Finally, we strongly believe that it is the right time to ramp up our efforts to ensure that Canadians get the pharmaceutical medicines they need. Our government continues to be committed to a national, universal pharmacare program and we will take action to make sure that this happens. This means working with the provinces and territories, being willing to move forward without delay, and establishing a national formulary to keep drug prices low.

Canadians have a right to live in safe communities. Our government has banned assault-style firearms. We will continue to implement our promises in this area. We will give municipalities the ability to further restrict or ban handguns, and we will strengthen measures to stop guns from illegally entering Canada.

We must also work to ensure the safety of women in our communities. As part of that, we will accelerate investments in shelters and transition housing, and move forward with a national action plan on gender-based violence. In recent years the federal government has stepped up to take action on affordable housing.

● (1720)

Already, we have helped more than a million Canadians get a safe and affordable place to call home. Now we will add to our national housing strategy from 2017 by increasing investments in rapid housing and partnering with non-profits and co-ops.

I am also very proud of our commitment to eliminate chronic homelessness in Canada. This, to me, is one of the most ambitious and aggressive targets ever made around affordable housing by a national government.

As we look to the future, we must not take our eye off the immense challenge that faces us, our children and our grandchildren: climate change. We must continue to take action now to confront this threat to our planet. We do this to protect our way of life and to create new jobs.

The Speech from the Throne is clear. Our government will bring forward a plan to exceed Canada's 2030 climate goal and we will legislate Canada's goal of net-zero emissions by 2050. As part of this plan, we will create new jobs retrofitting homes and buildings. We will invest in reducing the impact of climate-related disasters. We will make zero-emissions vehicles more affordable and put more charging stations across the country.

I want to point out that the throne speech highlights the fact that we believe that Canada cannot reach net zero without the expertise of Canadians in the energy sector. This means Canadians living in provinces such as British Columbia, Alberta, Saskatchewan and Newfoundland and Labrador. Our government is committed to supporting the natural resource and energy sectors as they transform and transition to a net-zero future, a transformation that will create good, stable jobs.

We also recognize that farmers, foresters and ranchers are key partners in this fight against climate change. As we move forward, our government is steadfast in its resolve. We will continue our policy of putting a price on pollution, while also putting that money back into the pockets of Canadians.

As we press ahead with these policies, we will always remember the values that define us as Canadians. That means everything from welcoming immigrants with kindness to celebrating the contributions of those in the LGBTQ2 communities and embracing our two official languages.

We must never forget that much more needs to be done to work with indigenous peoples. We will do that on many fronts, from responding to the National Inquiry into Missing and Murdered Indigenous Women and Girls to making more investments in clean drinking water. We will introduce legislation to implement the United Nations Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples before the end of this year.

In recent months, many in our country have called for action to finally address the systemic racism experienced by indigenous people and Black and racialized Canadians. Our government is pledging to take action. We will also move to prevent online hate, further the economic empowerment of certain communities and increase hiring in the public service. Moreover, we will take action in the policing and justice systems. We will introduce legislation to address the systemic inequities in all phases of the criminal justice system, from sentencing to rehabilitation. We will modernize training for police and law enforcement, including standards on the use of force, and we will reform the RCMP with a shift toward community-led policing.

These are just some of the highlights of the throne speech. They reflect a government that is intent on working hard for Canadians as they face the challenges of the pandemic that has changed history this year. Our government is realistic about the gravity of these challenges, but we are confident that Canadians can emerge from

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these unsettling times stronger and even more united about what draws us together. Our government has a plan to put us on that road to recovery. I would ask all members of the House to support our plan.

• (1725)

[*Translation*]

Mr. Marc Dalton (Pitt Meadows—Maple Ridge, CPC): Mr. Speaker, there is another medical crisis happening at the same time as the COVID-19 pandemic. It is made far worse by the pandemic in major cities such as Montreal, Vancouver and Toronto, and in small towns and indigenous communities. I am talking about the opioid crisis.

In my riding, Pitt Meadows—Maple Ridge, I have cried with parents and grandparents who have lost a beloved child. More than 16,000 people have died since 2016. In British Columbia, deaths due to overdoses are five times greater than deaths caused by COVID-19 this year.

What young and not-so-young drug users need is more than just a safe place to get help or access to clean drugs. What they need is hope, deliverance and a future. Here, in the nation's capital, Friday is Recovery Day Ottawa. We absolutely must make significant investments in healing and treatment.

Last week, I toured Hope for Freedom Society and Hannah House, which are recovery centres in Maple Ridge. I was deeply moved when I heard about men and women sharing their stories of deliverance, hope and freedom. There are not enough of these centres. They are private and lack funding.

When will the Liberals work with the provinces to help addicts obtain treatment?

When will we see real action to resolve these problems?

I am not talking about just some nice words buried in this throne speech.

• (1730)

[*English*]

Ms. Julie Dzerowicz: Mr. Speaker, it is absolutely heart-wrenching to hear these stories. We have heard, loud and clear, that there is another pandemic happening across Canada. We know it is killing many people. We know it has to do with the fact that literal poison is being sold on our streets. That is why I was very proud when our government announced two safe supply sites in the city of Toronto. That means that a safe supply has been provided to two key centres within the city of Toronto. The government has worked directly with the city of Toronto to be able to provide this as quickly as possible.

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The Minister of Health has also started a 30-day consultation period to see how we could increase these pilot projects and what more we could do to urgently tackle this other pandemic that is killing way too many across Canada.

[*Translation*]

Ms. Andr anne Larouche (Shefford, BQ): Mr. Speaker, I thank my colleague for her speech.

I would like to hear her thoughts on the increase to old age security for seniors 75 and older, which was announced in the Speech from the Throne. This is a promise the Liberals made during the last election campaign. We also asked for an increase to the old age security pension for seniors, but seniors are still waiting.

I remember that on December 6, 2019, I asked the minister during question period why old age security was not going to be increased for seniors 65 and over, instead of 75 and over, to avoid creating two classes of seniors.

When we came back in January, we again asked for this pension to be increased for people 65 and older. Then the pandemic hit. Seniors' finances were hit hard by the health crisis. In response, the Liberals sent them a single \$300 cheque, which represented an additional \$200 for those receiving the guaranteed income supplement.

Today we are on the verge of a second wave. Seniors got one cheque, but they should have gotten a second. This brings us back to our demand.

When will the Liberals increase old age security for seniors 65 and older, instead of 75 and older?

Poverty does not wait until people turn 75. Rent increases do not wait until people turn 75. The rising cost of groceries does not wait until people turn 75. Rising drug prices do not wait until people turn 75. Senior women living in poverty cannot wait until they turn 75.

Why are they increasing old age security only for those 75 and older?

We are calling for an increase of \$110 a month for seniors 65 and older.

[*English*]

Ms. Julie Dzerowicz: Mr. Speaker, we indeed need to focus on our seniors. I was very proud that, in our last mandate, we reduced the retirement age from 67 to 65. That had a huge impact on our seniors and it gave them sooner access to CPP. We also increased GIS, the guaranteed income supplement, for those seniors at the lowest end of the income scale. In addition, we made a commitment to those who reach the age of 75 and over that we are going to increase old age security by 10%. As well, we are looking at increasing the CPP for people who are widowed.

I would remind everyone in the House that we made a huge commitment around long-term care standards for our seniors, making sure that if they enter one of these homes, they are taken care of in a way that allows them to live their lives with dignity and a great quality of life.

• (1735)

Mr. Daniel Blaikie (Elmwood—Transcona, NDP): Mr. Speaker, I will start by saying how grateful I am to have the opportunity to be in the House once again, and what an honour it is to represent the people of Elmwood—Transcona, who, like everyone across the country and indeed the world, have been suffering and struggling through this global pandemic that we are experiencing.

I have to say, having listened to the Speech from the Throne, that I do not think it really justifies proroguing Parliament when we still had another summer sitting to come. With the expiration of CERB coming, we had an opportunity at the end of August to get together to talk about what would be replacing CERB. Now we are only days away from the deadline and we still do not have legislation tabled in the House. There are only just beginning to be conversations between the government and opposition parties, meaningfully, about the details of the replacement. It was shameful for the government to shut down Parliament when that important item was before us.

Now we have a Speech from the Throne with hardly anything new in it. I heard the hon. member mention some initiatives that the government is contemplating for people living with disabilities. Would it please just deliver on the payment that it promised people living with disabilities in the spring, on an emergency basis? Frankly, the government needs to get that done. I wonder why it is that people living with disabilities and seniors who have been promised things by the government are still waiting. Another repeated promise that we have heard again and again is raising the old age security supplement for seniors. It was promised again but not delivered.

Now we have new promises for people living with disabilities who are still waiting on the emergency promise that was made to them in the spring. When is that payment going to be made and when are the Liberals going to actually deliver on these promises, or are we going to be hearing about them in the next Speech from the Throne?

Ms. Julie Dzerowicz: Mr. Speaker, I too am anxious for some action. I am very proud of the Speech from the Throne. I do not think it is just words. We have made enormous commitments around key things that for too long we have not taken action on, such as in terms of child care and moving toward a national child care program. Long-term care standards for seniors are much needed and we are making a firm commitment on that.

We know how important it is to move forward on pharmacare. On affordable housing, we are making a historic promise to eliminate chronic homelessness in Canada. I am very proud of the promises and actions that we are committing to in this throne speech. I very much look forward to receiving support from everyone in the House so that we can get going on implementing each of these actions.

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Mr. Mark Gerretsen (Kingston and the Islands, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, I know that the member for Davenport feels very strongly about our environment and our commitments to making sure that we fulfill promises with respect to the environment. One of the things that I found to be quite promising in the Speech from the Throne was where it said the government will immediately bring forward a plan to exceed Canada's 2030 climate goal and that it will also legislate Canada's goal of net-zero emissions by 2050. Then it laid out a number of items as to how it will do that through a plan.

I am wondering if the member for Davenport could comment on how she feels about this, given her commitment to the environment and to making a better, greener future for generations to come.

Ms. Julie Dzerowicz: Mr. Speaker, in my riding of Davenport, if we eliminate all the calls and emails around emergency support programs, the number one request is that we move toward a green recovery, that we do not forget our commitments to climate change, that we do not forget climate change is happening and that we do not forget that, as we are rebuilding and restarting the economy, we ensure climate action is the cornerstone of our economic plan. I am pleased to say that climate action is the cornerstone of our plan to support and create millions of jobs across the country. I am especially pleased that we have made a commitment to legislate Canada's goal of net-zero emissions by 2050. No longer can we move backwards on tackling climate change. We are moving forward.

In addition, there is a huge plan about how we are going to invest in moving toward a low-carbon future, toward a sustainable economy by creating thousands of jobs, green energy and green infrastructure, etc.

• (1740)

Hon. Candice Bergen (Portage—Lisgar, CPC): Mr. Speaker, I would like to congratulate everyone today who participated in the

debate and the questions and answers around today's Speech from the Throne.

I know our leader, the member for Durham, would very much have liked to have participated in this, as I know the leader of the Bloc party would have. We all wish both these gentlemen and their families the very best of health and a quick recovery. We appreciate them so much.

Conservatives are disappointed. The Prime Minister prorogued Parliament for the Speech from the Throne and we are not happy with what we are seeing. We will have more to say about that tomorrow and in the days ahead.

At this time, I move:

That the debate be now adjourned.

(On motion of Ms. Candice Bergen, the debate was adjourned)

[*Translation*]

Hon. Pablo Rodriguez (Leader of the Government in the House of Commons, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, I move:

That the House do now adjourn.

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

Hon. members: Agreed.

(Motion agreed to)

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

(The House adjourned at 5:44 p.m.)

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