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Monday, June 17, 2019

—

Speaker: The Honourable Geoff Regan

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HOUSE OF COMMONS

Monday, June 17, 2019

The House met at 11 a.m.

Prayer

PRIVATE MEMBERS' BUSINESS

• (1100)

[*English*]

DIABETES AWARENESS MONTH

The House resumed from May 28 consideration of the motion.

Ms. Jenny Kwan (Vancouver East, NDP): Mr. Speaker, I am very happy to engage in this important discussion. In 2014, the Steno Diabetes Center in Copenhagen, along with the University College in London and Novo Nordisk, created the cities changing diabetes program. Its aim is to address the social and cultural factors that increase type 2 diabetes vulnerability among certain people in urban centres. The program now includes partnerships with 20 cities around the world. I am proud to say that Vancouver was Canada's first and only city to become involved, and was one of the first 10 cities globally to join the program.

It is estimated that about 9.4% of Vancouverites are living with diabetes, which is comparable to national incidence rates. However, this overall rate hides who is being most impacted. Vancouver is one of Canada's most socially, ethnically and economically diverse cities, and not all groups are affected by diabetes at the same rates. In Vancouver's more affluent neighbourhoods, diabetes rates are as low as 5%, but in the Downtown Eastside, in my riding of Vancouver East, it is 8%. We also know that indigenous people and people of Chinese and South Asian descent are at a disproportionate risk of developing diabetes.

In December 2017, I wrote to the Minister of National Revenue to express my serious concerns over the Liberal government's mishandling of the disability tax credit. Constituents were dismayed that the Canada Revenue Agency was denying the tax credits to those with insulin-dependent type 1 diabetes. Type 1 diabetes requires ongoing, expensive treatments. It is not uncommon for an individual to be forced to spend upwards of \$10,000 a year on various medical devices and insulin. Often, private insurance plans have gaps that lead to it not being covered, or restrictive caps that leave individuals paying large amounts out of pocket.

It is no wonder that the Canadian Diabetes Association found that 57% of Canadians with diabetes say they do not comply with their

therapy because they cannot afford the costs of the supplies, devices and medications. The impacts of this are far reaching. Unable to comply with their therapy, it puts people at increased risk of serious health complications. In addition to the human impact, this adds strain to our health care system, as it must deal with completely avoidable emergency interventions. It does not need to be this way.

New Democrats, since the time we won the fight for medicare in this country under Tommy Douglas, believe that our work will not be done until we also have a universal public pharmacare plan. The health and financial impacts of not having a universal public pharmacare plan are as clear as day when we look at the impacts of diabetes in this country. We must also keep in mind that prevention is cheaper than intervention. We know that there are other social policies we can engage in to reduce the risk of people developing diabetes in the first place. These policies will keep Canadians healthier and save our health care system's valuable resources.

Due to the cost of diabetes therapies, it is without question that those unable to comply due to costs are less financially secure. In Vancouver, much of this has to do with the lack of affordable housing. Whether it is kicking the can down the road on funding the national affordable housing plan instead of breaking ground on projects, or avoiding any action on money-laundering schemes that inflate real estate prices, the Liberal government is failing to address the national housing crisis that is acutely severe in Vancouver and in my riding of Vancouver East. Too often, my constituents are forced to choose between paying rent and paying for insulin. This is wrong.

Private Members' Business

My colleagues, the member for North Island—Powell River and the member for Hochelaga, have tabled bills in this House to take real action to affirm housing as a human right. It is shameful that the Liberal government does not agree. We also know that diet has a significant impact on increasing the risk of developing diabetes and worsening the condition if one is already living with it. Once again, Canadians struggling to make ends meet find themselves less able to have a healthy, well-balanced diet. Food insecurity in low-income areas leave lower-income Canadians struggling to eat well. This creates a third difficult choice for too many residents of Vancouver East, having to choose rent, medicine or food. Again, it does not need to be this way.

• (1105)

My colleague, the member for Berthier—Maskinongé, tabled a bill here to address food waste. Again, both the Liberals and Conservatives opposed our efforts. Another colleague, the member for Kootenay—Columbia, tabled a bill to recognize the importance of local food.

The NDP understands the vital role that food security plays in ensuring that Canadians are healthy and able to contribute to their fullest. We need to do more to both recognize and address the roles that housing and food security play in diabetes prevention and maintenance.

The Vancouver Second Mile Society provides health clinics each year which include diabetes testing. They also do great work with their health programs and preventing seniors from living in isolation and poverty. The Vancouver Native Health Society works to provide knowledge and support for food sustenance development and reducing barriers of access to the natural environment and nutritious traditional foods. They also run a medical clinic which offers a diabetes self-management program, a free learning program to help people with type 2 diabetes better manage their symptoms.

Then there is the Vancouver Chinese Diabetes Education Centre, which exists through partnerships with Vancouver Coastal Health and the Chinese Canadian Medical Society BC and is run out of S.U. C.C.E.S.S. The centre is a great resource for individuals with diabetes and their families to learn about diabetes management, its nature and causes, nutrition and meal planning, the role of exercise and medication and self-monitoring. There is also the kitchen program at the Downtown Eastside Women's Centre, and the Chinese Elders Community Kitchen with the Downtown Eastside Neighbourhood House.

REACH Community Health Centre uses a collaborative model that supports elder health and addresses social factors like loneliness and isolation, as these can be detrimental to overall health and wellness.

I would be remiss if I did not also acknowledge the incredible work that the neighbourhood houses play, whether it is food programs, cooking clubs or community lunches at the Mount Pleasant Neighbourhood House, or the Saige Food Bank and Community Kitchen at Kiwassa Neighbourhood House, to just name a few. Vancouver's neighbourhood houses are vital in efforts to improve the health and well-being of my constituents living with diabetes, and all of my constituents for that matter.

I am proud to stand in the House and support Motion No. 173. I also believe we need to act. We know many avenues where action can be taken; we just need the political will.

Diabetes impacts over three million Canadians every day. Its impacts are far-ranging, because of the range of factors that impact the disease itself. That is why I believe we need to be looking at diabetes through a holistic, intersectional lens. It is exercise, diet and food security, and it is housing security and affordability. It is access to health care, and it is access to affordable prescription drugs. So much of this ultimately comes back to income security and equality.

I think this provides a real launching point to examining big-picture changes to social policy and programming. The prevalence and impact of diabetes in our society is far reaching and requires far-reaching actions. One such action that I think we need to discuss is the National Inquiry into Missing and Murdered Indigenous Women's call to justice 4.5, which states, "We call upon all governments to establish a guaranteed annual livable income".

Let us take the opportunity that Motion No. 173 provides us to recognize the interconnectedness of all of this, and let us think big about solutions.

• (1110)

Mr. Nick Whalen (St. John's East, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, I am proud to have this opportunity today to rise and speak in favour of Motion No. 173 to create November as diabetes awareness month. People at home might be wondering why I have an opportunity to speak to this motion, given that it is close to the hearts of so many members of Parliament. I am sure they would be interested to know that my own private member's bill was preempted by work that was already being done by the House of Commons Standing Committee on Canadian Heritage.

I have had the opportunity to share my private member's bill with a number of members in the House. The member for Surrey—Newton and I were able to work together to make sure that his Sikh Heritage Month bill made it to the Senate and was passed by both Houses in time for declaration prior to the rising of the House.

I was able to work with the member for Cumberland—Colchester, on a couple of occasions, to make sure that his private member's bill for the repatriation of indigenous artifacts was also able to get through the House and be called into law.

People might be aware that in the last few weeks, the member for Saanich—Gulf Islands was able to get Bill S-203, on preventing the captivity of whales and dolphins, through the House by my offering my slot to her on one occasion, and with one of the members from the New Democratic Party.

Therefore, when the member for Brampton South asked if I could help with providing an opportunity to get to second reading on her private member's bill, I was more than happy to help.

Private Members' Business

One of the reasons is that I have a close connection to diabetes in my family. Just over three years ago, my cousin Jimmy Grouchev passed away from complications of type 1 diabetes, alone in his home in Arizona. Both of my parents come from large post-World War II families. My mom had nine siblings growing up, and my dad had four siblings and two half siblings. The family we were closest to were the Grouchevs, because we shared a summer home together. We would vacation together in the summertime, where Jimmy, Christina, David, Jennifer, Jon, Dan and I would have a really great time.

People with diabetes have to manage their disease, and certainly when they are living on their own, complications can result. Jimmy was always a go-getter, fun-loving and free-spirited. With the moratorium on the cod fishery, like many Newfoundlanders, he moved abroad to pursue his career. He had different careers, in sociology, as a patent agent, and in 2009, he became a nurse. He worked in North Carolina and then finally in Arizona.

Lack of awareness about this disease and the complications associated with it can be devastating for families. Jimmy passed away from that. He would have turned 50 on Monday of next week. I wanted an opportunity to tell Jimmy's story and share with the House that families can be affected by this. It is not just statistics; they are individuals and families like mine.

Our government recognizes the impact that diabetes has on roughly three million Canadians who live with it and the 200,000 new cases that are diagnosed each year. I would like to thank the member for Brampton South for her work in bringing this forward to the House. It is important to recognize and raise awareness about it.

By having awareness of diabetes front and centre, fewer people will succumb to the complications. Fewer people will allow themselves to get to the point where they develop type 2 diabetes. More people can have access to prevention methods. More people will have access to care. While friends may not be aware that they have type 1 or type 2 diabetes, the month itself will provide an opportunity to have that discussion, to let people know some of the symptoms of someone who might be in an insulin crisis and how to provide them with the help they need.

Our government has been supporting various measures. In 2016-17 alone, we invested \$47 million in diabetes research. We recently announced a \$30-million partnership with the Juvenile Diabetes Research Foundation. There are various members in the House who have helped to coordinate the multi-party caucus that led to this. It is not just those on this side of the House who are in favour of diabetes research.

• (1115)

When the Juvenile Diabetes Research Foundation comes to the Hill, members from all parties are present to listen to the stories of the ambassadors selected for their work in their cause across the country. It is great to meet those 10-year-olds, eight-year-olds, children of all ages who come from our ridings across the country to Parliament Hill to advocate for their cause. I am happy to participate with members on this side of the House, and I am sure that members from all sides of the House are happy to do so as well.

Also, in partnership with organizations in the private and non-profit sectors, as well as other levels of government, we are testing and scaling up interventions in communities across the country to prevent chronic disease, including diabetes. These interventions focus on common risk factors such as unhealthy eating and on physical activity.

Our government will continue to strongly support healthy living and diabetes prevention, including healthy eating, physical activity and smoking cessation. In thinking about my own health, I remember when the member for Brampton South had an opportunity to encourage some special medical testing on the Hill last year for members of Parliament, through the Juvenile Diabetes Research Foundation.

I had the opportunity to go to this mobile trailer, which provided heart rate monitoring, blood glucose level monitoring and a survey questionnaire, and members of Parliament who had a chance to participate had a deep dive into their health. The results of that were very interesting, and I learned a lot about what I could do to make myself healthier, but also how I could help my kids lead healthier lives as well. They are both far fitter than I am, and when we go jogging they are often about a minute a kilometre ahead of me, but they get me out. We also try to make sure we maintain an appropriate balance of carbohydrates, fats and proteins in our diet. I would like to thank the member for Brampton South for the opportunity to have that extra teaching here on the Hill.

According to the Canadian Chronic Disease Surveillance System, supported by the Public Health Agency of Canada, over three million Canadians, or 8.6% of the population, have diagnosed diabetes. Diabetes is a chronic disease that occurs when the body loses its ability to produce or to properly use insulin, a hormone that controls blood glucose levels.

Canada is famous for its role in the early work on determining that lack of insulin is the cause of diabetes, as well as treatments to provide insulin to people who are suffering with diabetes so they can have that cure. Canada is the perfect place to recognize November as diabetes awareness month. It is probably long overdue; it probably should have happened at the same time when the cure was found.

I am thankful for the work of the member for Brampton South. I encourage all members of this House to support this private member's motion. It would provide Canada an opportunity to yet again raise public awareness, encourage additional research and funding for diabetes, and remember family members like Jimmy Grouchev, a family member of mine who passed away just over three years ago and who would be turning 50 next week.

• (1120)

Hon. Peter Kent (Thornhill, CPC): Mr. Speaker, I rise today to speak to Motion No. 173, which seeks to declare November as diabetes awareness month.

Private Members' Business

Conservatives support the recommendation of the Standing Committee on Health that Canada implement a national strategy, like the diabetes 360° plan. The Liberals, on the other hand, have rejected the diabetes 360° plan put forward by Diabetes Canada. This is simply shameful. The Liberal government leaves the member's motion as nothing but another empty gesture. In just 10 years, this plan would have helped prevent more than one million cases of type 2 diabetes and saved Canada's health care system and economy billions of dollars.

Eleven million Canadians are currently living with or are at risk of diabetes and pre-diabetes. There are three types of diabetes: type 1, type 2 and gestational diabetes.

Type 1 diabetes is caused by an autoimmune reaction that causes the body to kill its insulin-producing cells. This variation of the disease is still not fully understood. People with type 1 diabetes produce very little or no insulin, causing an abnormal amount of glucose to accumulate in the blood. To keep glucose levels under control, people with type 1 diabetes must administer insulin daily and carefully monitor their lifestyle habits. If those with type 1 diabetes do not have access to insulin, they will die. Between 5% and 10% of people with diabetes possess the type 1 variation.

About 90% of people with diabetes have type 2 diabetes. It is most prevalent in adults, but alarmingly the incidence in children has been on the rise in recent years. Although individuals who develop type 2 diabetes are also genetically susceptible to this condition, it is largely the result of poor nutrition and a lack of physical activity, driven by environmental and socio-economic factors. Type 2 diabetes occurs when blood glucose levels increase because the body does not make enough insulin or cannot properly use the insulin that is produced. Type 2 diabetes can often be prevented by a high-quality diet and by regular physical activity. It can be treated with lifestyle measures with or without medications, including insulin.

Gestational diabetes is a temporary condition that occurs during pregnancy. It affects approximately 2% to 4% of all pregnancies in the non-indigenous population. It involves an increased risk of developing diabetes for both mother and child. Poorly managed gestational diabetes can mean serious health consequences, again for both mother and child.

Many patients take between three and 12 prescription medications and find the cost of equipment and supplies to be in excess of \$15,000 a year. For those who require insulin pumps or continuous glucose monitoring, that cost runs to \$15,000, in addition to the cost of medicine. Every day, more than 20 Canadians die of complications from diabetes, and 14 have lower limb amputations.

The World Health Organization has called for all countries to implement a national diabetes strategy. Despite having one of the highest diabetes rates in the world, Canada is still without a national strategy.

This motion being brought forward by the member is undercut by Liberal hypocrisy on this issue. Diabetes Canada came up with the diabetes 360° plan to achieve what the World Health Organization was calling for. That plan would have called for 90% of Canadians living in an environment that prevents diabetes; 90% would have been aware of their diabetes status; 90% would have been engaged in

preventing complications from their diabetes; and 90% would have had a very strong possibility of achieving improved health outcomes.

Despite committing to support Diabetes Canada, the Liberals again came up short, and they come up short again today, showing just how out of touch they are on issues affecting the health and well-being of Canadians. Not only did the Liberals not support the diabetes 360° plan, but Diabetes Canada asked for \$150 million and was left with zero dollars from the current government in budget 2019. We send billions of dollars abroad, yet we refuse to help our own people.

• (1125)

Another failure of the Liberal government on the diabetes file was the rejection of 80% of people living with type 2 diabetes from collecting the disability tax credit to help pay for these costs. When this first came to light, in May 2017, the government maintained that it had not changed the criteria or the process of approval. For months, it denied that anything had changed. However, evidence was finally produced that it had misrepresented the facts. The process had indeed been changed to discount the time spent preparing food. The 80% of individuals who were receiving the credit became the 80% denied.

After repeated Conservative challenges in question period, 58% were subsequently reapproved. However, 42% of them were later denied again, and without notice. The reason the Liberals were so keen to refuse people with diabetes from getting the disability tax credit was that one needs to qualify for the tax credit before one can access the disability pension. Of the folks with type 2 diabetes who were denied the DTC, many had \$150,000 accumulated in their pension plan that the Liberals were attempting to claw back. This is unacceptable. The Liberals' out-of-control spending caused them to attempt to victimize the disabled. It is important to support people living with diabetes by making their lives more affordable.

While Conservatives support the proposal to make November diabetes awareness month, we know that Canadians need more than the Liberals' proposed lip service that "a month of recognition" would provide. Canadians living with diabetes need tangible solutions and plans for themselves, their families and loved ones who are suffering from the various variations of this disease. Canadians expect us to be a leader in diabetes awareness, but this will not happen through photo ops and self-congratulation; it will happen only when real solutions, like the diabetes 360° plan, are implemented.

The \$150 million requested by Diabetes Canada will save \$20 billion in prevention alone, with 770,000 fewer cases of type 2 diabetes, 245,000 fewer hospitalizations for diabetes and an estimated 34,000 fewer lower limb amputations because of this terrible disease. That is a real-world solution that makes common sense.

Private Members' Business

In conclusion, I believe it is time that the government step up and do what is right and fully implement the plan, as the health committee recommended. Canadians expect the current government to do better. While we will support the motion before us today, we call on the Liberal government to stand up and do the right thing for the hundreds of thousands of Canadians suffering from diabetes.

Mr. Richard Cannings (South Okanagan—West Kootenay, NDP): Mr. Speaker, I am happy to speak today to Motion No. 173 that calls on the government to declare November of each year diabetes awareness month. I will say off the top that I will be supporting this motion.

Most Canadians are unaware of the diabetes crisis facing our country. Raising awareness of this disease is not only important for the health of Canadians, it is important for the fiscal health of our medical system.

I would also like, off the top, to thank my friend Brian Symonds, who, in his retirement, has become a passionate advocate for diabetes issues and has provided me with much of the material I will speak about today.

I want to speak first about the diabetes crisis facing Canada, how we need to reduce the number of Canadians with diabetes and how we can help Canadians suffering from diabetes deal with their medical issues. In particular, I want to mention how a public pharmacare system would not only save Canadians money but save the lives of hundreds of Canadians with diabetes and other diseases who die needlessly every year because they do not have full access to the treatments for this very treatable, but deadly, disease.

As has been mentioned by others, Canada has a strong history in the world of diabetes. It is very much a good news/bad news story. We all know the story of Frederick Banting and Charles Best, who, with their colleagues James Collip and James Macleod, discovered insulin in a University of Toronto lab in 1921. That discovery revolutionized the treatment of diabetes worldwide and remains among the most celebrated medical discoveries in Canadian, or even world, history. Diabetes was formerly a death sentence for young people who developed the disease, but with insulin treatments, now they can look forward to long, normal and productive lives.

We are on the eve of the centenary of that discovery, and you would think that we would be able to celebrate that centenary with pride. Unfortunately, the scourge of diabetes is in many ways far worse than it was 100 years ago. The number of Canadians with diabetes has doubled in the last 20 years. Right now, one in three Canadians either has diabetes or has a high risk of developing it. It is an epidemic. If someone is 20 years old in Canada, the chance of developing diabetes in one's lifetime is 50%. For first nations people, that risk is 80%.

The health care costs for diabetes will top \$40 billion by 2029. That is in 10 years. Thirty percent of strokes in Canada are the direct result of diabetes. It is the leading cause of blindness in Canada. Forty percent of heart attacks in Canada are a direct result of diabetes. Fifty percent of kidney failures, resulting in a lifetime of dialysis, are directly related to diabetes complications, as are 70% of foot and leg amputations.

Diabetes reduces the lifespan of people by five to 15 years. About 7,000 Canadians die each year as a direct result of diabetes. They die needlessly. We know how to cure this. We invented it. It is a highly treatable disease. A friend of mine, a young indigenous man, died in his twenties because of the complications of diabetes. This does not need to happen, so what do we have to do?

I think, first of all, as the member for Thornhill just stated, we have to listen to Diabetes Canada, the organization that promotes awareness and research on diabetes in this country. They have a well-researched, detailed plan called diabetes 360° that could dramatically reduce our rates of diabetes and reduce the significant impacts it has on the health of Canadians. It will cost money, but that investment will repay itself a hundred times over in savings to our health care system.

The goals of diabetes 360° are that 90% of Canadians live in an environment that preserves wellness and prevents the development of diabetes, 90% of Canadians are aware of their diabetes status, 90% of Canadians living with diabetes are engaged in appropriate intervention, and 90% of Canadians engaged in interventions are achieving improved health outcomes.

• (1130)

I want to pause here for a moment and talk about the medical nature of diabetes.

There are two main types of diabetes. Type 1 diabetes usually presents early in life. The pancreas stops producing insulin, and patients are unable to automatically manage the sugars in their system. With access to insulin and proper monitoring of blood sugar levels, patients can live normal, long, productive lives.

Type 2 diabetes usually presents later in life. It results from prolonged high blood sugar levels affecting the pancreas and suppressing the production of insulin. An individual who is overweight and has high blood pressure has an increased risk of developing type 2 diabetes. It can often be treated effectively with better diet and more exercise, but it also requires careful monitoring of blood sugar levels and access to insulin.

Let me get back to what we can do. The obvious place to attack diabetes is to prevent people from getting type 2 diabetes. We need more community programs to coach Canadians to live healthier lives, to have healthy diets and to exercise regularly.

We also need to ensure that Canadians know their diabetes status. Many Canadians have diabetes today but do not know it. They are at a high risk of developing diabetes and do not know it. Early treatment, combined with a change in lifestyle, can prevent the medical complications of diabetes and allow many patients to control the condition without relying on insulin.

Private Members' Business

For those who need medication, we need to ensure that they have free access to insulin. As the member for Thornhill said, it costs thousands of dollars a year to access insulin.

Canadians need free access to the medical monitoring devices that help them manage their condition. That could prevent 35,000 hospitalizations each year in Canada. The truth is, many people simply cannot afford the ongoing monitoring costs faced by diabetics. Their doctors ask them to monitor their blood sugar levels twice a day, but their medical plan only covers one check a day, so they do only one check a day. That results in complications, medical problems and hospitalizations. That risk could see them falling unconscious due to low blood sugar. It could result in the loss of nerve function in their feet, or even amputation. They could lose their jobs. A friend of mine was an airline pilot, one of the most prestigious jobs in this country, and he lost that job for life when he developed type 2 diabetes.

Many other countries in the world have developed programs that tackle diabetes from all angles. They have been proven to be both medically effective and cost-effective. We could save lives and money at the same time.

That brings me to the issue of pharmacare: comprehensive, universal and public pharmacare.

The Canadian Federation of Nurses Unions produced a report that found that 57% of diabetics reported failing to adhere to their prescribed therapies due to the fact that they just could not afford them.

According to the Juvenile Diabetes Research Foundation, 830 young and middle-aged diabetics in Ontario die each year because of poor access to insulin. That could dramatically change if all Canadians had access to the medicines they need, but they do not. Canada is the only country with a universal health care plan that does not include free access to prescribed medications. Ten to 20% of Canadians report not filling their prescriptions because they simply cannot afford the cost.

Canada should be proud of its history in the treatment of diabetes, with the discovery of insulin, but right now, we are at the bottom of the pack when it comes to prevention and treatment and are at the bottom when it comes to hospitalizations and needless deaths. We need to turn this trend around.

Simple awareness of the depth of the diabetes crisis is a start. I support this motion wholeheartedly, but we need real government leadership and investment in community health programs and public pharmacare to make a real difference in the health of Canadians. We need the government to listen to Diabetes Canada and to implement diabetes 360°. We can do this. We must do this.

• (1135)

Ms. Pam Damoff (Parliamentary Secretary to the Minister of Health, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, I am pleased to speak today to offer the government's support for Motion No. 173, brought forward by my colleague, the member for Brampton South. I would also like to commend the member for her dedicated work on this important public health issue. She has been a tireless advocate and has ensured that diabetes and the work that needs to be done remains top of mind for all of us. She introduced a motion at the Standing Committee on

Health to study this issue, which resulted in a very substantial report from that committee, and now she has brought forward this motion.

Motion No. 173 would declare November of each year diabetes awareness month. This would be another example of Canada showing leadership in helping those with diabetes. This is leadership that dates back to the discovery of insulin almost 100 years ago by Dr. Frederick Banting, from my home town of London, Ontario, and Dr. Charles Best.

Support for Motion No. 173 would also complement the recognition of November 14 as World Diabetes Awareness Day, which already takes place in Canada. A diabetes awareness month would create more awareness and understanding among all Canadians about this disease, what it is, how it can be prevented and how it can be managed.

Diabetes is a serious chronic disease that can hamper a person's ability to fully participate in the economic and social life of Canada. If left uncontrolled, all three forms of diabetes can lead to serious complications, and for some, premature death.

There are three types of diabetes. Type 1 is not preventable. Gestational diabetes, which occurs in pregnant women, usually disappears after delivery, although it does lead to an increased risk of developing diabetes later in life.

Close to 90% of diabetes cases in Canada are type 2, which is preventable. It is why a diabetes awareness month could have a great impact from an awareness and education perspective. Through greater awareness, we could help stop type 2 in its tracks. This would include drawing greater attention to how Canadians can address the risk factors for diabetes, including physical activity, unhealthy eating, tobacco use and harmful use of alcohol.

It is important to recognize that it can be challenging for some to address these risk factors for diabetes. They are often tied to issues such as income, education and the social and physical environments in which a person lives. These issues can result in a person having more difficulty accessing and affording healthy foods or undertaking regular physical activity.

The government support for Motion No. 173 aligns with recommendations from Diabetes Canada's diabetes 360° plan to promote healthier environments. It also complements this recommendation put forth by my colleagues on the Standing Committee on Health:

explore options to improve public awareness and education on diabetes, particularly through community programming, including public awareness of the relationship between nutrition and diabetes

Over three million Canadians, or 8.6% of the population, have diagnosed diabetes. Some population groups have higher rates of diabetes than others, including men, first nations and Métis people, people of African and South Asian descent and people with lower income and education levels.

Healthy eating has a significant impact on the health of Canadians and on the health care system. It contributes to obesity and to the onset of chronic diseases like diabetes.

Private Members' Business

Also challenging is that Canada's food environment can make it difficult for some Canadians to make healthy eating the easy choice. Less than half our teenagers report eating enough fruits and vegetables. First nations children living off reserve and Inuit and Métis children experience higher levels of food insecurity than non-indigenous children. Preliminary studies are also starting to show that the risk of Inuit developing type 2 diabetes has increased significantly in recent years.

The Government of Canada has been taking action through our healthy eating strategy. Led by Health Canada, the government has strengthened nutrition labelling on food products and has eliminated industrial-produced trans fats in foods.

The launch of the new Canada food guide, which is based on scientific evidence and facts, not only proposes a wide range of nutritious foods for Canadians but emphasises that healthy eating is more than just the foods one eats. It promotes lifelong healthy eating habits by encouraging people to prepare healthy foods at home and to eat together and it offers creative resources to help Canadians do so.

The government is also investing in promising community-based partnerships through the Public Health Agency of Canada's program called promoting healthy living and preventing chronic disease through the multi-sectoral partnerships. Funding delivered through this program has leveraged additional investment from non-taxpayer resources, which has enabled the government to increase the reach and impact of its funding. Funded projects, such as farm to school: Canada digs in; kid food nation; and APPLE schools are helping Canadian youth and children to eat better by building their food literacy skills and to have fun while learning.

• (1140)

The government is also investing in FoodFit, which provides low-income adults with hands-on food skills, tips for preparing affordable and nutritious meals, group physical activity and goal-setting to help participants eat well and lead healthier lifestyles.

Finally, our food policy for Canada sets out a vision that will help Canadians and the communities in which they live access food that is healthy, affordable, culturally appropriate and locally produced. This includes support for food security in northern and indigenous communities and support to reduce food waste.

Diabetes awareness month would also be an excellent opportunity to promote and reinforce efforts to get Canadians to move more and sit less. While Canadian adults report being more active now than in the previous decade, we know Canadians still are not getting enough physical activity. Only 18% of Canadian adults are meeting the 150 minutes of moderate to vigorous physical activity guideline per week, or the equivalent to biking for a little over 20 minutes a day. As well, only 40% of children and youth are meeting their recommended 60 minutes of moderate to vigorous physical activity per day. Of them, girls are less active than boys.

The government recognizes that we cannot solve the issue of getting Canadians more physically active alone. In June 2018, the government joined the provinces and territories in releasing a report entitled "A Common Vision for Increasing Physical Activity and Reducing Sedentary Living in Canada: Let's Get Moving". Federal,

provincial and territorial governments and a wide range of organizations and partners worked together to develop this policy framework. The common vision is catalyzing efforts across Canada at national, provincial, territorial and local levels to put in place actions to help Canadians get more physically active.

Through budget 2018, \$25 million over five years is being invested to support Participaction to increase participation in daily physical activity among Canadians through the Let's Get Moving initiative. Participaction is working with governments, communities and organizations from other sectors to change social norms through long-term and coordinated public education and engagement to increase physical activity. I recently participated in the community better challenge, run by Participaction, to identify Canada's most physically active community.

Another project funded through this program, which will help get Canadian girls moving more, is FitSpirit Healthy Lifestyles for Teen Girls. This eight eight-to-10-week training program for girls empowers them to adopt healthy lifestyle habits and to celebrate the completion of the program by collectively completing a five-kilometre running challenge.

In her 2017 report entitled "Designing Healthy Living", the chief public health officer of Canada highlighted that how we design and build where we live, work, study and play is key to improving physical and mental health for all.

With this objective in mind, the Public Health Agency of Canada has invested in projects such as Housing for Health. Housing for Health will combine improvements to neighbourhoods in cities with health promotion programming and encourage community engagement to increase physical activity, healthy eating and social interaction among residents in their communities. This project is an excellent example of how partners from diverse sectors can work together to encourage active and healthy living.

In closing, the government believes that recognizing diabetes awareness month would benefit all Canadians. It would help to increase awareness about this chronic disease, which can help reduce the stigma attached to those living with it.

I would like to again thank the member for Brampton South for sponsoring the motion in the House, and I am thankful for the opportunity to show the government's support for it today.

• (1145)

[*Translation*]

Mrs. Eva Nassif (Vimy, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, I am pleased to rise today for the last time in the 42nd Parliament of Canada to speak to Motion No. 173, which was moved by my hon. colleague from Brampton South. The motion says that November should be diabetes awareness month. I would like to congratulate my colleague on her work.

Private Members' Business

Although Canada has always promoted health care and health care developments and worked hard to improve Canadians' health—which we are all proud of—there is still a lot of work to do. Diabetes is a chronic disease resulting from an individual's inability to produce enough insulin or use it properly. There is no known cure.

The two most common types of diabetes are type 1, which requires daily insulin injections, and type 2, which can be managed with proper diet, exercise and medication.

According to the International Diabetes Federation, 425 million people around the world have diabetes. It is a veritable pandemic, as the incidence of the disease is increasing considerably. The World Health Organization estimates that 622 million people will have diabetes by 2040. In 2015, diabetes caused five million deaths worldwide. Furthermore, diabetes kills one person every six seconds globally, which is more than AIDS, tuberculosis and malaria.

The Public Health Agency of Canada has put out the following statistics: every eight minutes, someone in Canada is diagnosed with diabetes; one in four Canadians lives with diabetes or prediabetes; and 200,000 new cases are diagnosed every year. What is even more frightening about these statistics is the fact that diabetes can lead to other health-related complications including cardiovascular disease, kidney failure, nerve damage, vision loss and depression. These are all conditions that present challenges for those living with diabetes as well as their families, their communities and our health care system. On top of that, most Canadians who have diabetes have no idea they have it.

It is also important to note that Canada has the highest prevalence of diabetes in the world for reasons that are yet unknown. If current trends hold, one in three Canadians will have diabetes by 2020. Given the growing concern about health in Canada and my many years of experience working as a nurse, I share the hon. member's vision and understand the importance of having a diabetes awareness month. This month will have a significant impact. It will help in detecting the first signs of diabetes, preventing its onset for millions of Canadians and, most importantly, it will reaffirm Canada's commitment to fighting the prevalence of this increasingly common disease.

Canada has always been a leader in the fight against diabetes. However, despite our efforts, strategies and policies, the quality of data on diabetes monitoring in Canada clearly show that more effective approaches are essential and needed, now more than ever. The prevalence of diabetes has increased considerably over the past decade, which further increases the threat of this chronic disease.

At a time when rapid strides are being made in science, medicine and health care, Canada has the financial, scientific and technological resources to fund and develop new strategies and carry out research that will lead to groundbreaking discoveries. We have the means to make more of those discoveries.

I strongly believe that one of the key strategies for fighting this disease is prevention through education. In other words, we need to invest more in raising awareness of how serious this disease is and how it is linked to unhealthy lifestyles, reflecting strong support for government measures. This would stop diabetes from spreading further in Canada.

● (1150)

The president of the International Diabetes Federation, Professor Nam Cho, says that the most economical, effective and efficient way to solve diabetes-related problems, from prevention to intervention, morbidity and mortality, is through education.

That is exactly what creating a diabetes awareness month would do. It would be a great way to continue the discussion and would provide a tool for educating Canadians, promoting awareness, helping diabetics manage their own condition effectively and highlighting the message that every person with diabetes deserves the best information and the best care.

As a former nurse, I know how powerful health education can be, and I strongly believe that raising awareness of diabetes, enhancing education and improving knowledge on how to control and treat it will minimize the risk of complications. That will reduce morbidity and mortality among diabetics.

Secondly, establishing a diabetes awareness month would not just help Canadians; it would help us as well. It would enable the federal government to give more thought to the areas where increased efforts are required and to identify sectors for which we could provide more effective programs and policies.

Establishing a diabetes awareness month would encourage all levels of government to work together to ensure that Canadians get the care they need and can enjoy a better quality of life because of what we have done. That is why the following message regarding Motion No. 173 is so important: in partnership with private sector organizations, non-profits and other levels of government, we are testing and broadening the scope of the measures being taken in communities across the country to prevent chronic illnesses, including diabetes.

Listening to communities and working with other levels of government, partners and stakeholders will result in improved information and data quality as well as relevant and accessible programs. This will ultimately improve the health of all Canadians.

Diabetes is a disease that can affect anyone, and I am very concerned that some 44% of Canadians with diabetes do not even realize they have it. This chronic disease can cause alarming symptoms, which vary from person to person and should never be ignored. Symptoms include anxiety, confusion, concentration problems and visual field anomalies.

It is nevertheless important to recognize that although diabetes is incurable, it is treatable. We will save lives by educating Canadians about diabetes, disease prevention and healthy lifestyle choices and by providing further education on the symptoms and long-term complications of diabetes.

In closing, I want to express my strong support for this motion, because I know that promoting a diabetes awareness month will have a significant impact and will help us improve the lives and health of many Canadians.

• (1155)

[English]

The Deputy Speaker: Resuming debate. Accordingly, I invite the hon. member for Brampton South for her right of reply. The hon. member has up to five minutes.

Ms. Sonia Sidhu (Brampton South, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, I would first like to thank the member from St. John's East for the support he has provided for this important motion, Motion No. 173. He is also a great advocate for this issue.

When I introduced Motion No. 173 to make November of every year diabetes awareness month, my goal was to raise national awareness of this disease and its complications as an important first step leading to its prevention and elimination.

I want to thank my hon. colleagues in the House for their support on this issue which affects so many Canadians. The numbers are staggering and I am saddened every time I repeat them, but it is important to summarize them.

Over 11 million Canadians live with diabetes or prediabetes. A new case is diagnosed every three minutes and 90% of these cases are type 2, which means it can be prevented through better awareness, education and lifestyle changes.

I know this first-hand from my many years as a health care professional before I got into politics in my hometown of Brampton, Ontario; from the many experts I have heard from in Parliament, serving on the Standing Committee on Health; and as a chair of the all-party diabetes caucus.

Diabetes is the cause of 30% of strokes, 40% of heart attacks, 50% of kidney failure requiring dialysis and 70% of non-traumatic lower-limb amputations. This is the harsh reality. In the Peel region alone, the rate of diabetes more than doubled between 1996 and 2015.

The general public remains unaware that elevated levels of blood glucose are associated with long-term damage to the body and the failure of various organs and tissues. Diabetes can result in short-term and long-term complications, many of which, if not prevented and left untreated, can be fatal. All have the potential to reduce the quality of life of people with diabetes and their families. This condition has a number of long-term complications that have serious consequences.

It is very possible to control certain risk factors for type 2 diabetes, including making healthy lifestyle choices like eating well, exercising and reaching and maintaining a healthy weight. For individuals with prediabetes, medication can also help prevent the development of type 2 diabetes and avoid long-term complications.

Maintaining a healthy lifestyle and a healthy weight, together with medication to control blood sugar levels and vascular risk factors, are common cornerstones of diabetes management. It is possible to reduce human suffering from this disease, such as amputation through prevention, aggressive management of existing

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diabetes and the provision of the right education for people with diabetes and health care professionals.

Diabetes awareness month in November would serve as an important reminder of the increasing national incidence of diabetes and the significant human, social and economic costs of billions of dollars that it brings. It would be a time to alert Canadians to the fact that diabetes is a serious condition that is presently underestimated with respect to its frequency, cost and impact on quality of life. That is why I am proposing Motion No. 173 to make November of every year diabetes awareness month.

In recent years, the OECD has ranked Canada 15th out of 17 peer countries on diabetes mortality. We can and must do better.

I have had the chance to visit Banting House, the former home of the great Canadian physician and researcher Sir Frederick Banting, whose discovery of insulin was a game-changer in the treatment of diabetes for patients in Canada and around the world. Outside of Banting House, there is a flame that burns in recognition of the ongoing challenges that face each one of us. Until this disease is defeated, the flame will not be extinguished.

I know this is possible only if we work together in a non-partisan manner. I respectfully ask each and every one of my hon. colleagues from all parties to support Motion No. 173 to help defeat diabetes through awareness.

• (1200)

The Deputy Speaker: The question is on the motion. Is it the pleasure of the House to adopt the motion?

Some hon. members: Agreed.

Some hon. members: No.

The Deputy Speaker: All those in favour of the motion will please say yea.

Some hon. members: Yea.

The Deputy Speaker: All those opposed will please say nay.

Some hon. members: Nay.

The Deputy Speaker: In my opinion the yeas have it.

And five or more members having risen:

The Deputy Speaker: Pursuant to an order made on Tuesday, May 28, the recorded division stands deferred until Wednesday, June 19, at the expiry of the time provided for oral questions.

GOVERNMENT ORDERS

[English]

CORRECTIONS AND CONDITIONAL RELEASE ACT

BILL C-83—TIME ALLOCATION MOTION

Hon. Bardish Chagger (Leader of the Government in the House of Commons, Lib.) moved:

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That, in relation to Bill C-83, An Act to amend the Corrections and Conditional Release Act and another Act, not more than five further hours shall be allotted to the consideration of the Senate amendments stage of the said bill; and

That, at the expiry of the five hours provided for the consideration of the Senate amendments to the said bill, any proceedings before the House shall be interrupted, if required for the purpose of this Order, and in turn, every question necessary for the disposal of the said stage of the bill shall be put forthwith and successively, without further debate or amendment.

• (1205)

The Deputy Speaker: Pursuant to Standing Order 67.1, there will be a 30-minute question period. I ask hon. members who wish to participate in the 30 minutes to rise so I can get an indication of how many want to speak.

As is the usual case, I ask hon. members to keep their interventions to approximately one minute. That will allow all members who wish to speak the opportunity to do so. Members can be recognized more than once. I remind hon. members that most of the question time in the 30 minutes is reserved for opposition members. However, members from the government side are certainly welcome to participate as well.

We will begin now with questions. The hon. member for Kamloops—Thompson—Cariboo.

Mrs. Cathy McLeod (Kamloops—Thompson—Cariboo, CPC): Mr. Speaker, in 2015, the government said that it would do things differently, that it would respect Parliament and would move away from motions that did not allow appropriate time for debate.

I want to point out something very unique and interesting about this bill. It took you, Mr. Speaker, approximately 11 minutes to read the amendments to the bill. Within four minutes of debate, the government gave notice of a motion of closure. Not many speakers had the opportunity to debate the bill before that.

How is this consistent with the promises the minister made in 2015 to do things differently?

Hon. Ralph Goodale (Minister of Public Safety and Emergency Preparedness, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, we have arrived at the stage of debate where there is now an opportunity for the House to respond to the work that was done in relation to this legislation by the Senate. In other words, the bill has had a thorough debate in the House. It has passed through all the stages in the House. It has had extensive committee hearings. It has gone to the Senate and has been reviewed there. The Senate has considered the legislation, made a number of amendments and sent the bill back to the House with those amendments.

The point is that this is a very advanced stage of debate. We are not beginning with the bill in its raw form; we are beginning with the bill at a very advanced stage. Therefore, members have had extensive opportunity to debate, consider and in fact make amendments.

The point of contention between the House and the Senate is the independent review process that was crafted by the House. Therefore, we are defending the position that was taken by the House on the very important question of how there could be proper review and oversight of the correctional system.

Mr. Peter Julian (New Westminster—Burnaby, NDP): Mr. Speaker, I am so saddened, as I think most Canadians are, that every

day the Liberals continue to repudiate all the commitments they made back in 2015 to work with members of the House of Commons, to stop omnibus legislation and to stop the abuse of the use of closure.

As the House knows, the government has gone far beyond the previous government's abuse of closure by bringing in a new "gag" closure that allows only 20 minutes of discussion after it is moved and only one member of the government gets to speak. Members of the opposition do not get to ask questions, make comments or anything of that nature. It shows how toxic the government has become with respect to trying to move legislation through the House and get it improved so the legislation does what it purports to do.

In the case of Bill C-83, the NDP offered dozens of amendments, because the bill has been largely criticized by the Elizabeth Fry Societies and many other intervenors. We brought forward the witness testimony and said it would improve the bill. The government refused all of that.

Is that not the reason why the government is ramming it through today, because it is a controversial bill that has been much criticized and the government refused to listen to all the witnesses and members of the opposition who tried to make improvements?

• (1210)

Hon. Ralph Goodale: Mr. Speaker, with the greatest respect, I have to disagree with the hon. gentleman.

First, he was critical of omnibus legislation. This is not omnibus legislation. It is legislation pertaining specifically to the correctional service and is focused upon one piece of legislation, not a number of different bills.

Second, he was concerned about what he called a "gag" order or the closure procedure. This is not a closure procedure. This is time allocation, which is qualitatively different from what he was criticizing.

Third, I would point out that amendments to the legislation have been welcomed and accepted from all parties in the House and indeed by the Senate as well.

Therefore, this is not a preemptory approach. There has been a huge amount of debate and a lot of input. That input has been weighed very carefully and a great deal of it has been accepted.

Mr. Arnold Viersen (Peace River—Westlock, CPC): Mr. Speaker, this morning proves that the Liberals will do anything and say anything to get elected. In the last election, they promised they were not going to use closure motions as often as we had in the last parliament. They are also saying that they are not going to raise taxes after the next election, even though their spending is way out of control.

There has only been four minutes of debate on this bill prior to this closure motion being moved. Does the minister think that is appropriate?

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Hon. Ralph Goodale: Mr. Speaker, there have been many hours and days of debate in consideration of the legislation through all the stages in the House of Commons and in the Senate. We are now at the point of responding to the Senate's recommendations. It is not as if the debate was just beginning today or four minutes ago. In fact, the motion that was moved by the House leader provided for five more hours of debate on the specific question of how the House would respond to the recommendations made by the Senate.

This is not a closure motion, it is time allocation and it follows the full length of parliamentary procedure through both the House of Commons and the Senate, where many worthy suggestions have been made, a lot of very well-informed debate has taken place and many amendments have been accepted. We are now into the final stages of that discussion where it is appropriate for the House to take a decision and to vote.

Mr. Kevin Lamoureux (Parliamentary Secretary to the Leader of the Government in the House of Commons, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, there seems to be a great deal of concern in regard to the process of things. We have seen member after member stand up on a wide variety of pieces of legislation. Even when I was in opposition, at times we need to use this tool in order to advance legislation. We could see opposition members debating things indefinitely, unless either the tool of time allocation is used or the opposition is prepared to allow the debate to come to an end.

I wonder if my colleague can provide his thoughts on the matter that time allocation is a tool that is necessary at times, that we have seen New Democrats and Conservatives support time allocation, and that this is not outside the norm.

Hon. Ralph Goodale: Mr. Speaker, the parliamentary secretary is quite right. There are occasions when such procedures are perfectly appropriate, and that is especially the case when we are into the final days of a Parliament. We all know what the parliamentary calendar is, and it is important for key measures to be approved by Parliament while the time remains for that work to get done.

I would point out that the matters at issue in this legislation are also before a number of courts in this country where the courts have set a deadline. They have indicated that Parliament has an obligation to take certain decisions one way or the other, to make up their minds and vote, so that certain situations pertaining in the correctional system can be corrected. If Parliament is not able to take those decisions in a timely way, that could in fact throw the system into chaos. Therefore, because of the court proceedings, it is also important for Parliament to be timely in bringing this legislation to a conclusion.

• (1215)

Hon. Kevin Sorenson (Battle River—Crowfoot, CPC): Mr. Speaker, unfortunately here we go again. We see time allocation being moved by the current government. The Liberals have been lax throughout this Parliament. They are coming down to the last few days of Parliament and we see this *modus operandi* of the government to start pushing debates and halting debate to get this legislation through regardless.

Again, it is not simply that the Liberals are invoking this measure; this is the measure they said they would not be invoking. This is the measure on which the current Prime Minister stood and said it is the

kind of thing that Canadians lose confidence in a government on, and that the Liberals would not do this kind of thing. It is exactly what we have seen more and more, especially in the last few weeks.

The parliamentary secretary said that this prevents a filibuster by the government, and debate and debate and debate. We have had four minutes at this stage to even talk about this. Canadians expect that when issues like this come through, good healthy debate takes place here and it has not. Neither has consultation. I have a penitentiary in my riding. Not only is it the well-being and safety of offenders that Canadians question, but also of the guards and the correctional officers.

There are two points. We have legislation that needs to be debated and we have another promise broken by the current government as to time allocation.

Hon. Ralph Goodale: Mr. Speaker, I am glad the hon. gentleman brought up the issue of consultation because, as always, we try our very best to consult with all of those who have a stake in the decisions that are made with respect to our public safety systems in this country.

A couple of months ago, I had the opportunity to attend the triennial meeting of the major union that represents correctional officers who work at the various institutions across this country, including the one in the hon. gentleman's riding. That national meeting of the union was held in Calgary. It was very well attended by correctional officers all over the country. We had the opportunity to discuss this specific legislation. It was clear from that discussion that the union representatives were anxious to see legislation of this nature proceed because it is needed for the safety of the officers, the inmates and the other members of the public who attend from time to time within the correctional system. Indeed, that consultation has taken place.

Mr. Alistair MacGregor (Cowichan—Malahat—Langford, NDP): Mr. Speaker, with respect to the minister, I do understand the difference between a closure motion and time allocation. I realize that the government is allocating time for this.

The major issue, though, is the fact that on Friday Bill C-83 had proceeded with only four minutes of debate when the government House leader rose in the House to give notice that time allocation was going to be moved. I understand that this bill is at a relatively advanced stage, however, it is tradition that this House, the people's House, the representatives of each of these ridings get to have the time to carefully consider what the other place has done.

When I put what the government's actions are with respect to Bill C-83 within the context of what it did on Thursday with all of the other government bills, I think the pretense of any respect for Parliament has completely evaporated. Right now, the government is quite obvious. It has a week left, it has a checklist, and is it going to use its majority to simply ram through every piece of legislation, no matter what members of the opposition might have to say on it, despite the fact that on this side of the House, our parties, collectively, represent roughly 60% of the Canadian populace.

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Hon. Ralph Goodale: Mr. Speaker, once the discussion about time allocation has concluded, members will have five additional hours of debate to consider this stage, which is on top of all of the stages in the Senate, which was on top of all of the previous stages in the House of Commons.

There has been extensive opportunity to examine the details of this legislation. In particular, the portions of the legislation that are subject to the advice and recommendations coming from the Senate are the portions of the legislation which this House and the committee examined in detail, and made extensive changes and improvements to during the course of the parliamentary committee's work.

It is not as if this is a new subject that suddenly has been sprung upon the House of Commons or upon the public safety and national security committee of the House. The House examined this in detail, and in fact renovated these provisions in detail. It was the Parliamentary Secretary to the Minister of Health, who was not in that role at that time but who was a member of the public safety committee who moved those extensive amendments, which were then debated in the House and adopted in detail by the House.

There has been very careful, conscientious attention given to this issue by members of the House of Commons.

• (1220)

Mr. James Bezan (Selkirk—Interlake—Eastman, CPC): Mr. Speaker, here we go again. It is over 100 times now that the government has used closure or has limited the amount of debate we can have any time on these bills.

This stands in stark contrast to what the minister used to say when he was in the third party. The member for Winnipeg North used to stand and holler every time there was a closure motion or anything to limit the debate we were having on any motions before the House.

We only had four minutes on Friday to start the debate on the amendments that were proposed by the Senate. I still have to go back and talk to my UCCO members who work at Stony Mountain Institution in my riding to ensure that the health and safety provisions that are in the bill are going to be properly enforced and how that is going to occur. They still have those questions.

However, because the Liberals are stifling debate here in the House, I will not have the time to go and consult, and discuss this with UCCO members and with penitentiary staff on how this will impact our riding and how it is going to impact the care and incarceration of those who are currently serving sentences.

There are still so many questions out there. The hypocrisy that we are seeing from the Liberals continues to amaze all of us, because when they were in the third party, they used to scream and holler at the top of their lungs every time the previous government tried to do this.

Hon. Ralph Goodale: Mr. Speaker, while I may have spoken vigorously when I was a member of the opposition on issues of this kind, I do not think it is fair to describe it as screaming and hollering. It was passion.

In relation to this legislation and the important question the hon. gentleman makes with respect to the UCCO union, the point that

they made was really twofold in the consultation. Number one, there needed to be a system whereby when it was necessary, inmates could be separated from one another in the interests of public safety. They wanted to ensure that that kind of a system would be available to maintain safety within the institution. This legislation does that.

Secondly, they wanted to be sure that the resources would be there for the mental health services and the other correctional services that would be necessary to make this legislation effective. I am pleased to confirm that the Minister of Finance has made that funding available in the last fall update and in the spring budget. A total of \$450 million has been made available for the implementation of this legislation to meet what the UCCO union suggested was absolutely essential for success.

Ms. Jenny Kwan (Vancouver East, NDP): Mr. Speaker, I too am disturbed about the fact that the government is using this tactic bringing either time allocation or closure to this House on government bills. This would be the 76th time that the government has embarked on this since I have been here.

This is the end of our term but I am still a new member of Parliament. I still recall that in the 2015 election the Liberal members advocated for and promised Canadians that they would not embark on a process like the Harper government of shutting down debate in this House to put in time allocation or closure. Here we are, yet again, doing exactly that. Last week, the government moved a similar motion twice in one day on different bills.

I would say this to the minister. Will the Liberals not follow up on what they promised Canadians in the 2015 election and stand down on this motion?

• (1225)

Hon. Ralph Goodale: Mr. Speaker, let me once again point out that what we are beginning here is not the end of the debate but another five hours of debate on this very topic. There will be five more hours of debate, in addition to all of the debate that has taken place in the Senate, in addition to all three stages that were dealt with earlier in the House, plus extensive committee hearings by both the Senate and the House of Commons.

The opportunity to discuss in detail has, in fact, been very considerable. I congratulate all members on this side, on the opposition side and in the other place, who have participated in this discussion about Bill C-83 in a very fulsome way.

I would also point out this timing consideration. As I said earlier, there are several outstanding court cases pertaining to the use of administrative segregation in the Canadian correctional system. Those court cases date back to 2015. They have come to decisions in the last number of months, which have imposed upon the government and Parliament an obligation to consider the matters and make decisions in a timely way. We are up against those deadlines now, so it is simply not possible and it certainly would not be responsible to ignore the deadlines that have been imposed by the courts. Otherwise, we are inviting chaos in the correctional system.

Mr. Mel Arnold (North Okanagan—Shuswap, CPC): Mr. Speaker, I would like to pose a couple of questions to the minister on this time allocation motion.

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He has stated numerous times in the last few minutes of debate that there will be another five hours of debate.

I would like to ask the minister this. Has he confirmed with his government House leader that there will be no closure declared on that debate, similar to what the government did on Bill C-69 last week? It closed off debate on that. It closed off discussion on Bill C-69 at the committee stage when there were hundreds of amendments, hundreds even from their own Liberal Party on their own poorly drafted bill. The government closed off debate. It does it time and time again, because it simply does not want to hear the truth.

Will the minister confirm again that there will be no closure and there will be five hours of debate on this bill?

Hon. Ralph Goodale: Mr. Speaker, those are indeed the terms of the motion put before the House by the government House leader, and as soon as we adopt that motion, the five hours are written into the procedures of the House.

Ms. Pam Damoff (Parliamentary Secretary to the Minister of Health, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, my question is with regard to the bill and its importance for the corrections system. We had rigorous debate during committee hearings. A number of significant, not minor, changes were made at committee. The Senate has also made some changes to it. My understanding is that the only thing we are debating when the bill comes back is the Senate amendments. We have had rigorous debate on the bill itself. It has received support from the parole officers union and from the correctional officers union, which recognize the importance of getting this legislation done due to court challenges.

Could the minister speak about the importance of this legislation and what we are actually debating here?

Hon. Ralph Goodale: Mr. Speaker, I want to thank the hon. member, as well as all members who served on SECU and all the senators in the other place who have been debating this legislation. It has been given very conscientious attention, amended many times and improved in the process. We are now in the final stages of sorting out the last of the amendments to finalize the bill.

The issue is simply this. When we abolish the long-standing practice of administrative segregation, as this legislation does, and replace that with specific units within the correctional system that can provide the capacity to separate people when necessary but ensure that their programming, mental health services, counselling and other treatments continue nonetheless, when we establish that new system to replace administrative segregation, the question is what kind of oversight we need to ensure that all the rules are being properly followed by the Correctional Service of Canada.

The Senate has made one set of proposals. The legislation includes a different set of proposals. Indeed, we believe that the procedures in the legislation, with proposals put forward by the Parliamentary Secretary to the Minister of Health, are the correct ones. Our response to the Senate is to thank senators very much for their very hard work, but to defend the amendments that were made by the House.

●(1230)

Mr. Tom Kmiec (Calgary Shepard, CPC): Mr. Speaker, this is terminology that the hon. gentleman likes to use quite often in the House. I count eight substantive amendments that the government is accepting or has modified from the Senate. The minister said that the government has considered this and is satisfied with it, and therefore it is moving time allocation, which provides us with only five hours.

Several members who have penitentiaries in their ridings have risen on our side of the House. They would like to go back to their constituents and get their opinion on this, and I would like to go back to former prison guards who live in my riding. However, today we are being told there are five more hours and that is it.

The member for Peace River—Westlock mentioned this was four minutes at this stage of debate. How many members can speak in four minutes? Very few could provide substantive feedback. The time allocation being moved today by the government is shutting down debate. I have seen this time and again, both at standing committees of the House and on other legislation.

I spoke to Bill C-83 before and mentioned all my concerns and worries that constituents had explained to me over the distinct sections and technicalities of the bill. The issue now is that, with only five hours left, it gives us literally no time to return to our constituents to get their feedback on these eight substantive amendments.

Hon. Ralph Goodale: Mr. Speaker, if this were a brand new topic that had never been introduced in the House before, it would present a challenge to deal with all of the detail within five hours, but this is a topic that has been amply debated in the House, in the Senate and now back in the House again.

It is time, in light of the very pressing court decisions that are outstanding, for the House to conclude the debate and take a final vote, knowing very clearly, already on the record, what the important views are, for example, of the correctional officers union, which has been very clear in its position, wanting to see Bill C-83 accepted by the government and by Parliament.

Mr. Peter Julian: Mr. Speaker, as I said earlier and will say again, the government has repudiated all the promises it made back in 2015.

The minister was being a bit disingenuous a few minutes ago, when he said that this is not omnibus legislation. A point that opposition members have been making is that the government said it would end the practice of omnibus legislation, but instead it has accelerated it.

In terms of the gag closure, the government said that it would reduce the number of times it would impose closure, but instead it has accelerated it. The gag closure, which is a new measure, never before seen in Canadian history, eliminates the right of opposition members to even speak to a bill once closure is moved. The 20-minute government speech is all that is permitted on the floor of the House of Commons.

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We have before us legislation that is deeply flawed, and, for the 76th time, the government is imposing closure. The nitpicking about it being a different category of closure, TA closure as opposed to standard closure or gag closure, does not make the harm that this does to Parliament any less. The Liberal government has used closure 76 times, proportionally more than the Harper government.

The bill itself is deeply flawed. There is no limit on the number of days that somebody can be put in solitary confinement. Is that not the reason why the government is trying to ram the bill through the House?

• (1235)

Hon. Ralph Goodale: No, Mr. Speaker, and let me help the hon. gentleman with some further information.

All of his criticism in the statement he has just given is directed toward the procedure of closure. This is not closure. It is a different procedure under the House. I appreciate the passion with which he opposes closure, but he should direct that toward another target, because this is not closure.

The member is obviously very opposed to solitary confinement. So am I. That is why, in this legislation, we abolish it.

The Deputy Speaker: It is my duty to interrupt the proceedings at this time and put forthwith the question on the motion now before the House.

The question is on the motion. Is it the pleasure of the House to adopt the motion?

Some hon. members: Agreed.

Some hon. members: No.

The Deputy Speaker: All those in favour of the motion will please say yea.

Some hon. members: Yea.

The Deputy Speaker: All those opposed will please say nay.

Some hon. members: Nay.

The Deputy Speaker: In my opinion the yeas have it.

And five or more members having risen:

The Deputy Speaker: Call in the members.

• (1315)

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

(Division No. 1360)

YEAS

Members

Aldag
Amos
Arya
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Bratina
Carr

Casey (Cumberland—Colchester)
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Longfield
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Members

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The Speaker: I declare the motion carried.

* * *

OIL TANKER MORATORIUM ACT

The House proceeded to the consideration of amendments made by the Senate to Bill C-48, An Act respecting the regulation of vessels that transport crude oil or persistent oil to or from ports or marine installations located along British Columbia's north coast.

Hon. Bernadette Jordan (for the Minister of Transport) moved:

That a message be sent to the Senate to acquaint their Honours that, in relation to Bill C-48, An Act respecting the regulation of vessels that transport crude oil or persistent oil to or from ports or marine installations located along British Columbia's north coast, the House:

agrees with amendment 1 made by the Senate;

proposes that, as a consequence of Senate amendment 1, the following amendment be added:

“1. Clause 2, page 1: Add the following after line 15:

Indigenous peoples of Canada has the meaning assigned by the definition aboriginal peoples of Canada in subsection 35(2) of the Constitution Act, 1982. (peuples autochtones du Canada);”;

proposes that amendment 2 be amended by replacing the text of the amendment with the following:

“32 (1) During the fifth year after the day on which this section comes into force, a review of the provisions and operation of this Act must be undertaken by any committee of the Senate, of the House of Commons or of both Houses of Parliament that is designated or established for that purpose, including a review of the impact of this Act on the environment, on social and economic conditions and on the Indigenous peoples of Canada.

(2) The committee referred to in subsection (1) must submit a report of the results of the review to the Senate, the House of Commons or both Houses of Parliament, as

the case may be, on any of the first 15 days on which the Senate or the House of Commons, as the case may be, is sitting after the report is completed.”.

Mr. Terry Beech (Parliamentary Secretary to the Minister of Transport, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, on what is likely the last sitting week of the 42nd Parliament, I appreciate the opportunity to outline both the necessity and benefits of Bill C-48, otherwise known as the oil tanker moratorium act. Let me begin by reminding members that Bill C-48 is the fulfillment of an election promise made in 2015. It was later included in both the minister's mandate letter and the Speech from the Throne.

Bill C-48 would provide an unprecedented level of environmental protection for the northern coast of British Columbia and the adjoining Great Bear Rainforest, one of the most pristine and unspoiled places left in Canada, and indeed the world. The Great Bear Rainforest represents approximately one-quarter of the world's remaining temperate rainforest. It is an extraordinarily rich and productive ecosystem that is often described as one of the lungs of the world because of its high oxygen production. The forest is largely intact due to special measures taken by both the federal and provincial governments over many years and by the relentless efforts of local people, including indigenous communities, to protect this extremely valuable ecosystem.

Bill C-48 would be complementary to these efforts, as well as the long-standing and well-respected voluntary tanker exclusion zone agreement between Canada and the United States that keeps Alaskan tankers like the *Exxon Valdez* far from our coast. Bill C-48 would effectively formalize into legislation a long-standing federal policy dating back to at least the 1970s not to allow large tanker traffic off of the northern coast of British Columbia. In fact, on my first trip to Haida Gwaii, as the parliamentary secretary to the minister of fisheries and oceans at the time, I procured three posters that were used as fundraisers to campaign for this initial tanker ban in the 1970s, one of which is hanging in my constituency office in Burnaby.

Speaking to local residents, they are concerned about their environment and their way of life. A 2012 study reviewing offshore oil and gas development in British Columbia estimates the total annual benefits of marine-dependent activities in the traditional territories of coastal first nations at more than \$30 billion. Unlike other regions in Canada, this policy legacy ensures that there is no existing tanker traffic near this coast. This means that formalizing the moratorium will not disrupt any current jobs or economic activity in the region. In fact, it would help protect existing industries, including fisheries, aquaculture and ecotourism.

Bill C-48 would continue to allow for the shipment of non-persistent oils. What this means is that communities along the north coast of British Columbia would continue to be open to economic development opportunities, including the recently announced \$40-billion infrastructure project in Kitimat, B.C. Bill C-48 would not affect the estimated 10,000 jobs that are attached to that particular project. Very importantly, Bill C-48 would help to preserve the cultural and spiritual way of life of coastal first nations. As such, it is part of the Government of Canada's larger commitment to reconciliation with indigenous peoples. As we know, this is something that our government and our Prime Minister consider to be of the highest priority.

Government Orders

Members will recall that Bill C-48 was debated and studied in the House in 2017 and 2018. It was ultimately passed by the elected members of the House of Commons in May 2018, by a vote of 204 to 85. With the support of the Liberal Party of Canada, the NDP, the Green Party and the Groupe parlementaire du Parti québécois, only the Conservatives voted against it.

I would like to take a moment to thank the member for Skeena—Bulkley Valley, whose riding largely overlaps with the proposed moratorium zone and who has been a long-time advocate of formalizing the tanker ban into legislation. Along with our colleague from Vancouver Quadra, he has introduced private member's bills in previous Parliaments proposing a tanker ban, albeit through a different mechanism. He has been working with our government to secure support for this important bill in the other place, and his cooperation is greatly appreciated.

This bill was referred to the other place on May 9, 2018, and has been studied and debated there until just last week, more than a year before it was passed with an amendment and sent back to this chamber. I am grateful for the work undertaken in the other chamber, particularly during report stage and third reading. If colleagues have not had an opportunity to read or listen to some of these debates, I would encourage them to do so. They will be impressed by the high level and seriousness of the debate. Those debates ultimately led to the amendment that is before us today.

• (1320)

The Senate is proposing to modify Bill C-48 in a number of ways, most substantively by requiring a two-stage review. First would be a regional assessment that would be led by the Minister of Environment under authorities that would be established once Bill C-69 came into force.

The Minister of Environment would be required to invite the provincial governments of British Columbia, Alberta and Saskatchewan, as well as indigenous communities in the moratorium area, to enter into an agreement or arrangement respecting the joint establishment of a committee to conduct the regional assessment and the manner in which the assessment is to be carried out. This body would then have up to four years after coming into force to complete the report.

This would then feed into the second stage, a parliamentary review, which would take place five years after coming into force, and which would consider evidence gathered by the regional assessment and conduct further study and hearings before presenting its report to Parliament.

Let me begin by first stating that we acknowledge that this is a thoughtful, creative and substantive amendment. We also recognize that the Senate's amendment, including the regional assessment component, is a well-intentioned and honourable attempt to find a compromise between supporters and opponents of the moratorium, as well as an attempt to depoliticize what has turned into a very contentious debate on this bill by requiring a more technical, evidence-based study.

In terms of the government's response, we support the Senate's call for a parliamentary review of Bill C-48 after five years. During report stage debate in the other place, Senator Sinclair remarked:

I too have concerns about the bill because it does constitute what appears to be an absolute ban on tanker traffic in an area, for good reason that might be applicable today, but I'm not so sure it will be applicable in the future.

He went on to state:

When it comes to how we can improve the bill, one of the options I want to talk to the chamber about is whether we might consider allowing for communities to change their minds at some point in the future and if they all agree that the ban should be lifted, then we would allow the bill to say so.

A parliamentary review after five years would allow such a conversation to take place. Committees could look at scientific evidence and new developments, hold meetings outside of Ottawa and provide an opportunity for all interested indigenous communities, provinces and other stakeholders to express their views.

However, for a number of reasons, we respectfully disagree with the Senate's recommendation to undertake a regional assessment. First, we feel this is unnecessary, given the requirement for a parliamentary review, as I just discussed. Second, there is consultation fatigue, particularly among communities living in northern B.C. and coastal first nations, after many years of reviews and studies.

A non-comprehensive list of these reviews includes the Senate transport committee study of Bill C-48 in 2019; Transport Canada consultations with communities and stakeholders held in 2016 and 2017, prior to the introduction of Bill C-48; the Canadian environmental assessment and National Energy Board review panel of Enbridge's northern gateway pipeline proposal, held between 2010 and 2012; the Natural Resources Canada public review panel on the Government of Canada moratorium on offshore oil and gas activities in the Queen Charlotte region of British Columbia in 2004; the B.C. scientific review of offshore oil and gas moratorium in 2002; the joint Canada-B.C. west coast offshore exploration environmental assessment panel in 1986; the federal west coast oil ports inquiry in 1977; and, last but not least, the House of Commons Special Committee on Environmental Pollution in 1970-1971. I was almost tired going through the whole list, never mind the actual reports themselves.

It is important to note that many of the reviews I mentioned were led by regulators and bureaucrats, not politicians. They looked in detail at scientific evidence in a more technical way than parliamentary committees typically do. However, none of them led to a resolution of the fundamental political disagreements over this issue. At the end of the day, many of the scientific questions about whether or not it is safe or advisable to move crude oil in tankers off this particular coast are endlessly debatable. There is no reason to believe that yet another lengthy and expensive study would bridge these differences of opinion, especially one starting so soon after the coming into force of Bill C-48.

To be clear, the amendment proposes to start yet another review only 180 days after Bill C-48 comes into force. At some point, a decision needs to be made based on the best evidence available and using the best judgment of parliamentarians about what is fair and reasonable, taking into account the wider Government of Canada approach on energy and the environment and on reconciliation with first nations.

Government Orders

• (1325)

Furthermore, there is, in our view, a need for a cooling-off period and a break to allow passions to settle and to take a breath. Coastal first nations have been fighting for a bill like this for almost 50 years. They deserve a break and some peace of mind.

Finally, the proposed approach would result in a lack of clarity over whether the authority provided to the Minister of Environment in Bill C-48 would be inconsistent or in conflict with the authority provided to the Minister of Environment in Bill C-69.

For all these reasons, the government is proposing to accept the Senate amendment but in a modified form. We accept adding a parliamentary review five years after coming into force, but respectfully disagree with the requirement to hold a regional assessment. We feel this is a fair compromise with our colleagues in the other place and will allow them to achieve much, if not all, of what they intended, namely an opportunity to re-evaluate the law after a number of years.

Turning back to the bill itself, much of the debate on Bill C-48 so far has revolved around the question of why legislation is being proposed that effectively bans oil tankers from operating off the coast of northern British Columbia and not elsewhere in the country. Critics of the bill contend that this is arbitrary and unjustified, but I would argue that nothing could be further from the truth.

As the Minister of Transport explained when he appeared before the Senate transport committee, there are a number of factors that, when combined together, account for the uniqueness of the situation in northern British Columbia and the need for special measures to protect it.

The most obvious, unique attribute of British Columbia's pristine north coast is the ecological significance of the area. The coastline runs along one of the last temperate rainforests left in the world and, even more rare, one of the very few to remain largely intact. These kinds of forests are unusually productive and support an extraordinarily rich web of biodiversity. The interface between the marine, coastal and terrestrial environments in this part of B.C. is seamless.

The Senate transport committee heard from experts who testified both to the unusually pristine nature of this ecosystem and to its vulnerability to the effects of a major oil spill. Canada has a kind of jewel in the Great Bear Rainforest, which needs to be treasured and preserved for future generations. This is a responsibility we owe not only to ourselves but to the world. The precautionary principle, a principle I debated often within my previous role in Fisheries and Oceans, is fully justified in this case.

A second distinguishing factor is the long-standing policy legacy, at both the federal and provincial levels, of extending special protections to this part of the country. In essence, Bill C-48 would simply formalize an already well-established policy of barring oil tankers from this coast. As such, it would not be disruptive to any existing industries or employment, very much unlike the case if we were to propose such a moratorium off the coast of Newfoundland or Nova Scotia, or for the St. Lawrence, for example.

A third factor that differentiates the northern coast of British Columbia is its sheer size and remoteness and the navigational hazards of operating in these waters.

Environment Canada classifies the Hecate Strait as the fourth most dangerous body of water in the world for shipping. Winds of 100 kilometres per hour and waves between eight and 10 metres are not uncommon in both the Hecate Strait and the Dixon Entrance. These combine to make spill response more challenging than in more populated, built-up areas like the south coast, the St. Lawrence or the east coast. Although our government is dramatically boosting our capacity to respond to accidents through our \$1.5 billion oceans protection plan, resources cannot be unlimited. It will continue to be the case that northern B.C. will present special challenges, particularly during bad weather which is common on these seas.

Last, Bill C-48 is responding to a more than 40-year campaign by local people, and especially indigenous communities, who live along the coast to formalize the moratorium banning oil tankers. While it is true that opinion among indigenous communities is not universal, a clear majority of these communities that are situated in the proposed moratorium area want to pass this law. Most important, the communities that would be most vulnerable to the impacts of an oil spill, such as the Haida and the Heiltsuk, have campaigned persistently for this bill. As such, it is part of our government's larger commitment to reconciliation with the first nations.

While I am sympathetic to the voices of indigenous groups further inland, which might like to participate in the economic benefits of a future, yet highly notional, pipeline that would go to the northern coast of B.C., I cannot disregard what a major oil spill would mean economically, culturally and spiritually to those who would bear the brunt of its effects. They deserve the peace of mind that Bill C-48 would bring them.

• (1330)

I note as well that coastal first nations have been joined by their neighbours in communities such as the city of Prince Rupert, the village of Queen Charlotte, the district of Kitimat, the city of Terrace, the town of Smithers, and the Skeena-Queen Charlotte regional district, which have all passed resolutions or written letters in support of the moratorium. There is also support by the Province of British Columbia.

In the short time that I have been in the House, I have had the opportunity to work on the government's \$1.5 billion oceans protection plan, revisions to the Oceans Act in Bill C-55, restoring protections and introducing modern safeguards to the Fisheries Act via Bill C-68 and working to restore our whale population with our \$167 million action plan.

We have expanded our marine protected areas from less than 1% under the previous government to over 8%. At the same time, we have reduced unemployment to historic lows, lifted 825,000 Canadians from poverty and Canadians have created more than a million new jobs.

Government Orders

It is the responsibility of any government to work hard to protect and restore the environment while growing the economy and creating more opportunities for Canadians. To do this successfully, we must balance competing demands and constraints, and I believe Bill C-48 would help us accomplish this balance.

I would like to quote a colleague from the other place, Senator Harder, who recently remarked:

I hope that, one day, the people of the coast will tell the story of when their grandparents came to Ottawa to pass Bill C-48. I hope [we]...tell the story of how Canadians worked together to save the environment at this testing time.

It is time this bill was passed. I hope our colleagues in the other place will join our government in at long last making this a reality.

Mrs. Kelly Block (Carlton Trail—Eagle Creek, CPC): Mr. Speaker, I would note that this bill actually was created as a result of a directive that was given by the Prime Minister to the Minister of Transport through a mandate letter. When we were studying the bill in committee, to a witness, none of the witnesses were consulted when it came to it, especially when it came to first nations communities.

Would the member care to comment on why no first nations communities were consulted before the bill was introduced?

• (1335)

Mr. Terry Beech: Mr. Speaker, I look forward to discussing, during this question and answer period, our government's approach to balancing the environment and the economy, versus the Conservatives' approach previously, and what is proposed for the future.

There were over 75 consultations with indigenous peoples with regard to the legislation. I listed an extensive number of consultations that happened in previous studies as well. We have studied this issue and this is the appropriate action to take. We hope everyone in the House will support us in passing this amendment and passing the overall legislation in Bill C-48.

The Deputy Speaker: I note there is a lot of people standing for questions and comments. I will ask members to keep their comments and input concise, so we can get to everyone who wishes to speak.

Mr. Gord Johns (Courtenay—Alberni, NDP): Mr. Speaker, we certainly welcome the legislation for a tanker ban on the north coast. However, we have concerns. There are enough loopholes in the bill that a tanker could drive through it. In fact, the one thing the government has not done is put forward an amendment to limit the minister's power. Right now, the minister could override this whole legislation and make an exemption for tanker traffic on the north coast.

We also wonder why the government did not listen to ENGOs and concerns raised in coastal British Columbia about the maximum fuel-carrying capacity, which they recommended to be between 2,000 and 3,000 tonnes, and the government set that measure at 12,500 tonnes.

Maybe the member could speak to those important concerns.

Mr. Terry Beech: Mr. Speaker, Vancouver Island is my previous home town. My friend and I have had the opportunity to work on several pieces of legislation, including in my previous role in Fisheries.

It is important to note the extraordinary history that has led to the creation of Bill C-48. In 1971, a House committee suggested we oppose tanker traffic off the north coast of British Columbia. This was also backed by a unanimous motion by the B.C. legislature, also in 1971, opposing crude oil tankers on the north coast.

Some actions went all the way to 1985, when the first voluntary tanker exclusion zone was negotiated and then formalized in 1988. Of course, this happened just before the major incident in 1989 of the Exxon *Valdez* spill off the coast of Alaska, just showing how important this measure is.

With regard to the question of the limit of 12,500 metric tons, that was done in consultation with industry, environmental organizations, local governments and indigenous people. We think we got the number right.

Mr. Erin Weir (Regina—Lewvan, CCF): Mr. Speaker, while this legislation has been making its way through Parliament to ban oil tankers on the north coast of B.C., the government has approved the LNG Canada project, which would entail a significant number of liquefied natural gas tankers on the north coast of B.C.

I congratulate the government for putting in place safeguards to ensure that liquefied natural gas tankers can safely navigate the north coast of B.C. However, I would ask the member for Burnaby North—Seymour this. Why does he not believe those safeguards that would be adequate for liquefied natural gas would not be adequate to enable oil tankers to safely navigate those same waters?

Mr. Terry Beech: Mr. Speaker, my colleague from Saskatchewan is my previous neighbour on the same floor in the Confederation Building. We have had many opportunities to talk about various issues.

With regard to the defining difference the member raised, we are looking at banning persistent oils under a definition that is internationally recognized. These oils, once they enter a marine or terrestrial environment, are very difficult to dissipate. With non-persistent oils, such as the natural gas he mentioned, if there is an incident there is a greater rate of evaporation, which makes it easier to minimize the environmental impacts in that type of operation.

As we do with all our legislation in the House, this balances the economic opportunities for the region with the environmental protections, which are also the backbone of the economic activities in the region today.

• (1340)

Mr. Lloyd Longfield (Guelph, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, my constituents in Guelph are concerned about the environmental impacts of oil shipments off our west coast and what Bill C-48 would do to try to mitigate some of those concerns. It is interesting to see the amendments coming back from the Senate, especially to see the independence of the Senate in doing its studies.

Government Orders

Could the hon. member comment on the five-year review process being recommended, that Parliament look at this again in five years to see how things are working, working with all stakeholders and people who have given us input, either through the other place or through the House of Commons, and to see how effective the legislation is?

Mr. Terry Beech: Mr. Speaker, what is being proposed in the amendment is a two-stage approach, a regional assessment and a five-year parliamentary review. We are respectively opposing the regional assessment. However, the five-year review is a good opportunity to look at things that might have changed in either the biodiversity or the economic or political landscapes of the region.

Something that might be important to my colleague is to talk about just how important the ecological biodiversity is in this area. The Great Bear Rainforest is regularly describe as the “lungs of the planet”. Ninety-five per cent of the total breeding seabird populations breed in this area off the north coast of British Columbia. There are kelp forests 50 metres high that provide nourishment not just to the marine environment but produce oxygen to clean our atmosphere. Two-thirds of mammals and subspecies participate on the coast. Thirty-nine endangered or threatened species call this place home. It is a unique place in the world. It is our duty to protect it.

Mr. Mel Arnold (North Okanagan—Shuswap, CPC): Mr. Speaker, I would like to ask the parliamentary secretary why his government has chosen to cause a division across the country. The bill does not ban the transit of tankers, as the government would like the headlines to read. It really just bans the loading and unloading of those tankers in Canadian waters, which limits our western oil producers from getting their product to market. It is basically regional discrimination against one region of the country over another. Why would his government choose to divide the country in the way it has?

Mr. Terry Beech: Mr. Speaker, I completely reject the premise of that question. This type of legislation, along with our larger approach for environmental protections and growing the economy, is actually designed to help bring the country together.

I am not surprised to get those kinds of comments from the Conservative opposition. It is the only party in the House that voted against the legislation in the first place. The opposition has opposed Bill C-55, Bill C-68 and changes that protect by increasing our MPAs.

The opposition has also failed with respect to the economy. The last two Conservative governments have accrued over 72% of the total debt of the entire history of the debt in Canada. We cannot afford to have those guys back in power again.

Mrs. Kelly Block (Carlton Trail—Eagle Creek, CPC): Mr. Speaker, I rise today to respond to the government's motion on the Senate amendments to Bill C-48. While I do appreciate the opportunity to speak to the motion, what I do not appreciate, what millions of other Canadians do not appreciate, is that we have to respond to the bill at all.

I want to recap what the bill would do.

First, this legislation was created as a result of a directive in the Prime Minister's mandate letter to the Minister of Transport dated November 2015.

If passed, this legislation would enact an oil tanker moratorium on B.C.'s northwest coast. The proposed moratorium would be in effect from the Canada-U.S. Alaska border to the northern tip of Vancouver Island.

The legislation would prohibit oil tankers carrying crude and persistent oil as cargo from stopping, loading and unloading at ports or marine installations in the moratorium area. Vessels carrying less than 12,500 metric tons of crude oil would be exempted from the moratorium.

I would suggest that this bill is an open, sneering attack on our oil and gas sector, an anti-pipeline bill poorly masquerading as an environment bill.

Environmental legislation is supposed to be based on science. Bill C-48 is not. It is not science but rather politics and ideology that inform this legislation: Liberal ideology that is as damaging to national unity as it is cynical.

Afer reviewing the bill, which included travelling across the country to hear from witnesses from coast to coast, the Senate transport committee recommended that it not proceed. While the Senate as a whole rescued Bill C-48, the Prime Minister should have taken the hint and withdrawn this anti-energy legislation.

Six premiers, including Premier Scott Moe from my province of Saskatchewan, wrote an open letter to the Prime Minister outlining their legitimate concerns about the anti-oil, anti-energy legislation pushed by the Liberal government here in Ottawa, in particular Bill C-69 and Bill C-48.

The premiers explained the damage that these two pieces of legislation would do to the economy, but more importantly, they warned of the damage this legislation has done and will continue to do to our national unity.

This was not a threat. This was not spiteful. These six premiers were pointing to a real and growing sense of alienation, alienation on a scale not seen since the Prime Minister's father was in office.

Rather than listening to their concerns, the Prime Minister lashed out at the premiers, calling them irresponsible and accusing them of threatening our national unity if they did not get their way.

The premiers are not threatening our national unity; it is in fact the Prime Minister's radical, anti-science, anti-energy agenda that is, but he is refusing to listen.

Since the Prime Minister is refusing to heed these warnings on Bill C-48 and Bill C-69, I am going to take this opportunity to read them into the record now:

Dear Prime Minister,

We are writing on behalf of the Governments of Ontario, New Brunswick, Manitoba, Saskatchewan and Alberta and the Northwest Territories. Collectively, our five provinces and territory represent 59 per cent of the Canadian population and 63 per cent of Canada's GDP. We are central to Canada's economy and prosperity, and it is of the utmost importance that you consider our concerns with bills C-69 and C-48.

Government Orders

Canadians across the country are unified in their concern about the economic impacts of the legislation such as it was proposed by the House of Commons. In this form, the damage it would do to the economy, jobs and investment will echo from one coast to the other. Provincial and territorial jurisdiction must be respected. Provinces and territories have clear and sole jurisdiction over the development of their non-renewable natural resources, forestry resources, and the generation and production of electricity. Bill C-69 upsets the balance struck by the constitutional division of powers by ignoring the exclusive provincial powers over projects relating to these resources. The federal government must recognize the exclusive role provinces and territories have over the management of our non-renewable natural resource development or risk creating a Constitutional crisis.

● (1345)

Bill C-69, as originally drafted, would make it virtually impossible to develop critical infrastructure, depriving Canada of much needed investment. According to the C.D. Howe Institute, between 2017 and 2018, the planned investment value of major resource sector projects in Canada plunged by \$100 billion – an amount equivalent to 4.5 per cent of Canada's gross domestic product. To protect Canada's economic future, we, collectively, cannot afford to overlook the uncertainty and risk to future investment created by Bill C-69.

Our five provinces and territory stand united and strongly urge the government to accept Bill C69 as amended by the Senate, in order to minimize the damage to the Canadian economy. We would encourage the Government of Canada and all members of the House of Commons to accept the full slate of amendments to the bill. The Senate Committee on Energy, the Environment, and Natural Resources heard 38 days of testimony from 277 witnesses including indigenous communities, industry, Premiers, and independent experts. Based on that comprehensive testimony, the committee recommended significant amendments to the bill, which were accepted by the Senate as a whole. We urge you to respect that process, the committee's expertise, and the Senate's vote.

If the Senate's amendments are not respected, the bill should be rejected, as it will present insurmountable roadblocks for major infrastructure projects across the country and will further jeopardize jobs, growth and investor confidence.

Similarly, Bill C-48 threatens investor confidence, and the tanker moratorium discriminates against western Canadian crude products. We were very disappointed that the Senate did not accept the recommendation to the Senate Committee on Transport and Communications that the bill not be reported. We would urge the government to stop pressing for the passage of this bill which will have detrimental effects on national unity and for the Canadian economy as a whole.

Our governments are deeply concerned with the federal government's disregard, so far, of the concerns raised by our provinces and territory related to these bills. As it stands, the federal government appears indifferent to the economic hardships faced by provinces and territories. Immediate action to refine or eliminate these bills is needed to avoid further alienating provinces and territories and their citizens and focus on uniting the country in support of Canada's economic prosperity.

Perhaps having heard the letter read aloud, the Prime Minister will acknowledge that it contains no threats, but rather it is an appeal from leaders who have listened to their constituents. The Prime Minister needs to understand that simply saying things louder is not going to make them go away. Shouting will not put food in the stomachs of the laid-off construction workers' children. Chanting talking points will not pay the gas bill in the middle of winter.

If this were the only piece of legislation that the government had introduced, one might argue that this is an overreaction, but it is not just one piece of legislation, it is a targeted, cynical, ongoing political attack of our resource sector. The Prime Minister has filled his cabinet with vocal opponents of the oil sands. In 2012, the now Minister of Democratic Institutions posted a tweet that read, "It's time to landlock Alberta's tar sands - call on BC Premier @christyclarkbc to reject the #Enbridge pipeline now!"

Then there is the President of the Treasury Board, who said publicly that the approval of the Trans Mountain extension was deeply disappointing and who celebrated when the Prime Minister killed the northern gateway pipeline project. Here I should pause and point out the ridiculous theatrics surrounding the TMX project.

● (1350)

In 2016, the government approved TMX, yet tomorrow, we are told, the government will decide on whether to approve the project all over again. It is like we are in a terrible remake of *Groundhog Day*. Meanwhile, not an inch of pipeline has been built since the government nationalized Trans Mountain.

However, it is not only the cabinet that the Prime Minister has filled with anti-oil activists, but senior staff positions as well. Here I quote an article from the March 14 edition of the *Financial Post*:

Prior to ascending to the most powerful post in the Prime Minister's Office, from 2008 to 2012 Gerald Butts was president and CEO of World Wildlife Fund Canada... an important Tides campaign partner. Butts would use his new powerful position to bring other former campaigners with him: Marlo Reynolds, chief of staff to the Environment Minister...is past executive director of the Tides-backed Pembina Institute. Zoë Caron, chief of staff to Natural Resource Minister...is also a former WWF Canada official. Sarah Goodman, on the prime minister's staff, is a former vice-president of Tides Canada. With these anti-oil activists at the epicentre of federal power, it's no wonder the oil industry, and hundreds of thousands of workers, have plummeted into political and policy purgatory.

Why should we be surprised? The Prime Minister is no friend of the oil sands. The Prime Minister stated that he wants to phase out the oil sands and during the election loudly proclaimed, "If I am elected Prime Minister, the Northern Gateway Pipeline won't become a reality".

The Prime Minister has spent his time in office attempting to do just that and he has been willing to trample on not only the rights of the provinces, but the rights of aboriginal peoples as well to get his way. When the Prime Minister used an order in council to cancel the northern gateway pipeline, he stole the future of 30 first nations that would have benefited enormously from it. This very bill is facing a lawsuit from Laxkw'alaams Indian band for unjustly infringing on their rights and titles.

Bill C-48 will prevent the proposed first nations-owned and operated Eagle Spirit pipeline project from being built as the proposed route to tidewater ends within the area wherein this bill bans tanker traffic. It was done without any consultation with first nations communities. Again, this should come as no surprise.

Just last week I spoke against another anti-energy bill, Bill C-88. As I said then, C-88 makes a mockery of the government's claim to seriously consult with indigenous and Inuit peoples. Without any consultation with Inuit peoples or the territorial governments, the Prime Minister unilaterally announced a five-year ban on offshore oil and gas development. Not only did the Prime Minister refuse to consult the premiers of the territories, he gave some of them less than an hour's notice that he would be making that announcement.

Statements by Members

Does that sound like a Prime Minister who wants to listen, consult and work with aboriginal Canadians? Does it reflect the Prime Minister's declaration that his government's relationship with indigenous peoples is their most important relationship or does it sound like a Prime Minister who says what he believes people want to hear and then does the exact opposite by imposing his own will on them? If he had consulted, this is what he would have heard:

Minister Wally Schumann of the Northwest Territories, on how they found out about the ban and the impact it will have on our north, stated:

When it first came out, we never got very much notice on the whole issue of the moratorium and the potential that was in the Beaufort Sea. There were millions and millions, if not billions, of dollars in bid deposits and land leases up there. That took away any hope we had of developing the Beaufort Sea.

Councillor Jackie Jacobson of Tuktoyaktuk said:

It's so easy to sit down here and make judgments on people and lives that are 3,500 clicks away, and make decisions on our behalf, especially with that moratorium on the Beaufort. That should be taken away, lifted, please and thank you. That is going to open up and give jobs to our people – training and all the stuff we're wishing for.

Then premier of Nunavut, Peter Taptuna stated, “ We do want to be getting to a state where we can make our own determination of our priorities, and the way to do that is gain meaningful revenue from resource development.”

• (1355)

Mr. Speaker, I note that you are indicating that my time is up. I assume that I will be able to continue at another time.

The Deputy Speaker: I thank the hon. member for Carlton Trail—Eagle Creek. The time signal is to signal that we are going to switch into another mode for Statements by Members. Indeed, she will be able to resume her remarks when the House next debates the question before the House.

STATEMENTS BY MEMBERS

• (1400)

[*Translation*]

IMMIGRATION

Mr. Luc Thériault (Montcalm, BQ): Mr. Speaker, the Liberals' immigration policy is a complete failure.

After four years, hundreds of irregular migrants are still crossing the border into Quebec every day. No progress has been made at Roxham Road or in Ottawa on the processing of applications, and the Canada-U.S. safe third country agreement is still in force.

Our farmers are still concerned that they will lose their crops because their temporary foreign workers are not arriving in time. Applications have been stalled for months in Ottawa, and every summer the federal government seems somehow surprised when the problem comes up again.

Ottawa still wants to force Quebec to accept more refugees while it is deporting the Haitian refugees we want to keep. Ottawa is still

opposed to requiring newcomers to demonstrate a sufficient knowledge of French before they can become Quebecers.

The Liberals' record shows beyond a shadow of a doubt that Quebec should handle its own immigration without Ottawa's involvement.

* * *

[*English*]

GURU NANAK DEV JI

Ms. Sonia Sidhu (Brampton South, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, I am honoured to rise in the House today to shed light on an important milestone for Sikhs around the world. This year, in November, marks the 550th birth anniversary of the founder of the Sikh faith, Guru Nanak Dev Ji.

The teachings of Guru Nanak Dev Ji are based on the fundamental beliefs of faith and meditation on the name of one creator and the divine unity and equality of all humankind. These are not only Sikh values; they are Canadian values.

I would also like to take this opportunity to thank all my constituents for the honour they have given me to serve my community of Brampton South. We know that there is more to be done, and when Canadians re-elect us in October, we will finish what we began.

* * *

BARRIE—SPRINGWATER—ORO—MEDONTE

Mr. Alexander Nuttall (Barrie—Springwater—Oro—Medonte, CPC): Mr. Speaker, after eight years on Barrie city council, a year of campaigning and a three-week re-count, I was afforded what will forever be one of the greatest honours of my life, being elected the member of Parliament for Barrie—Springwater—Oro—Medonte.

I want to thank my staff; my wife, Erica; my children; all my extended family; supporters; and especially the incredible people of Barrie—Springwater—Oro—Medonte for this incredible honour.

As a Conservative, I know that I have fought for freedom, hope and opportunity, and that will never ever cease. It is the reason, even after this election, we will continue to partner with PIE restaurant providing backpacks to children in central Ontario through PIE Education and with the newly announced Boots and Hearts Barn Burner hockey game on August 7 to raise money for the RVH and many other local charities.

I look forward to seeing everyone there, and I am so very thankful for the honour.

* * *

LABOUR

Mr. Wayne Long (Saint John—Rothesay, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, unions built the middle class in Saint John—Rothesay, and today, unions like IBEW, CUPW, CUPE, PSAC, ILA, Unifor, IAFF, and SJPA, and union leaders like Darlene Bembridge, Duane Squires, Craig Melvin, Erin Howell-Sharpe, Tammy Nadeau, Pat Riley, Kevin Suttie, and Jean Marc Ringuette are pillars of my community.

Statements by Members

In 2015, the people of Saint John—Rothesay sent me here to stand up for them. One of the ways I have done just that since taking office is by standing up for my constituents' collective bargaining rights, both in this House and at HUMA, where I was tremendously proud to stand up for Bill C-4 and Bill C-62 to repeal of Conservative anti-union legislation in both places.

I will always stand up for the rights of workers in my riding, and I will always stand up for good middle-class jobs for the people of Saint John—Rothesay.

* * *

INDIGENOUS AFFAIRS

Ms. Niki Ashton (Churchill—Keewatinook Aski, NDP): Mr. Speaker, four years ago, people in our north held out hope when it came to the Liberal government's commitments with words like “reconciliation”, “nation-to-nation relationships”, “support for the middle class” and “champion on climate change”. However, fast forward four years, and the shine is off.

The housing crisis on first nations is worse than it was. Health care continues to be underfunded and inadequate, and when it comes to middle-class jobs, our north has lost hundreds of them, and the federal government has not lifted a finger.

As for climate change, not only has Canada failed, but first nations and northern communities are paying the price. The disappearing ice roads point to the urgent need for all-weather roads, and as wildlife is impacted, so are people. There must be immediate action.

Enough of the talk. First nations, Métis and northern people deserve a federal government on their side, one that works with them to take on climate change and crushing inequality. The Liberals are not the answer, and we cannot go back to the Conservatives. Only the NDP will fight for our north and our Canada.

* * *

• (1405)

BREAST CANCER

Mr. Peter Fragiskatos (London North Centre, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, I rise for the final time in this session of Parliament to highlight a remarkable community leader. In 2007, Londoner Theresa Carriere was diagnosed with breast cancer. This was a battle she faced head on, beginning treatment almost immediately, which included having a double mastectomy. Theresa ultimately beat the disease and turned her personal ordeal into a public service.

This past Friday, Theresa embarked on her fifth ONERUN, a 100-kilometre run that took her from London to the nearby community of Strathroy and back again. Five times over the past nine years, Theresa has run 100 kilometres in a single day to support cancer care programs that assist patients and their families. Supporters were asked to run a single kilometre alongside her, and I was honoured to take part.

Since being established in 2010, ONERUN has raised more than \$1 million. Theresa's strength, resilience and dedication to the cause is commendable. She is an outstanding Canadian, an example to all of us.

MEMBER FOR DAUPHIN—SWAN RIVER—NEEPAWA

Mr. Robert Sopuck (Dauphin—Swan River—Neepawa, CPC):

Mr. Speaker, this is clearly a bittersweet moment as I rise to give the last member's statement of my political career as a member of Parliament for the great constituency of Dauphin—Swan River—Neepawa. For three elections, the voters of this wonderful constituency have returned me to Ottawa to work on their behalf. The trust they have placed in me is truly humbling, and I hope that I have lived up to their expectations. My passion to do what I can to protect and defend our rural way of life remains undiminished.

I would be remiss if I did not mention my political idol, the great Duff Roblin, former premier of Manitoba. His achievements on behalf of all Manitobans have stood the test of time, and he inspired me with his vision and accomplishments. He proved to me that government can be a force for good.

To my beloved wife, Caroline, and my beautiful family, I thank them for the love, support and guidance over these years. All I can say is that I love them all. To my beautiful grandchildren, Eden, Esmee and Senon, who love nature, our farm and the outdoors as much as I do, all I can say is Papa's coming home.

* * *

KAYGE FOWLER

Mr. Terry Sheehan (Sault Ste. Marie, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, just four months ago, I spoke in this House about little Kayge Fowler from Sault Ste. Marie. I spoke about his diagnosis of diffuse intrinsic pontine glioma, or DIPG, a highly aggressive brain tumour, found in the brainstem, with a 0% survival rate.

It is with great sadness I share that little Kayge has passed away. Kayge died surrounded by loved ones. His last words were, “I love you, too.” His life was powerful, but short. His battle with DIPG has had a profound effect on the riding of Sault Ste. Marie. Our wonderful community rallied around his family with countless fundraising initiatives to assist with medical and transportation costs. Words of encouragement and support flooded the Superhero's Kayge Fighters Against DIPG Foundation on Facebook.

Today I will be tabling the petition his family created to establish May 25 of every year as national day for DIPG awareness, as May 25, 2018, was the date of Kayge's diagnosis.

This childhood cancer is the most fatal, and as such, we need to immensely increase awareness. Awareness is key for research and support, and research is desperately needed.

*Statements by Members***COMMUNITY VOLUNTEER**

Mr. John Oliver (Oakville, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, I am rising today to recognize an extraordinary woman who has been an incredible force in my community of Oakville. Fiona Fraser has been active throughout her life in charitable causes. She co-led a grassroots effort that saved the pediatrics department at her local hospital, served on the Bronte District Advisory Committee to shape the Bronte Outer Harbour, led Habitat for Humanity's campaign for property and has been an active member of the United Way for over a decade.

A member of the Oakville Federal Liberal Association, Fiona is a tireless fundraiser, events organizer and volunteer coordinator. She has directed successful campaigns municipally, provincially and federally. Fiona led the team through my nomination, was my campaign manager in 2015 and has served as my director of operations ever since.

I am so grateful for Fiona's incredible energy, huge support and wise counsel. I am delighted that Fiona has joined me in Ottawa today so I can thank her.

* * *

● (1410)

CARBON PRICING

Mr. Dean Allison (Niagara West, CPC): Mr. Speaker, the Prime Minister pretends he has a plan for the environment. He says his carbon tax will achieve the carbon emissions reduction targets under the Paris accord. However, his own government figures confirm that this is simply not true.

Just last week, the Parliamentary Budget Officer released a new report, which found that the Liberal carbon tax would have to increase to \$102 per tonne to achieve Canada's Paris accord climate targets. That is five times more expensive than it is today. This means that Canadians would pay more for groceries and home heating, and it would add 23¢ per litre to the cost of gas.

Saying things louder about carbon tax does not make them true, despite what the Minister of Environment says. The fact is that the Liberal carbon tax is simply not a plan to lower emissions; it is just another cash grab that is hurting already overtaxed Canadians. Let us make no mistake: A Conservative government will scrap the carbon tax, leave more money in the pockets of Canadians and help all Canadians get ahead.

* * *

[Translation]

VAUDREUIL—SOULANGES

Mr. Peter Schiefke (Vaudreuil—Soulanges, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, not quite four years ago, the people of Vaudreuil—Soulanges chose to trust me to speak on their behalf here in Ottawa, where decisions are made. We have made a lot of progress, and we have done so by working together. That is why I wanted to thank all my community leaders for championing progress.

[English]

I am thankful for the ideas and suggestions from my youth council, seniors committee, environmental committee and countless

engaged citizens. They allowed me to better represent our community's perspective on a wide range of issues here in Ottawa.

[Translation]

I would also like to thank my team— Jennifer, Ramy, Raphaël, Nina, Meet, Celine, Tamara, Patricia, Miled, Sarah, Lynda and Martin—as well as the volunteers and interns for their hard work in service of our community.

Lastly, I would like to thank the people of Vaudreuil—Soulanges for placing their trust in me. Serving them and working for them and their families has been a great honour.

Let's keep working together to build an even stronger Vaudreuil—Soulanges for us all.

* * *

[English]

WINNIPEG GENERAL STRIKE

Hon. MaryAnn Mihychuk (Kildonan—St. Paul, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, 100 years ago, the Winnipeg General Strike was the largest labour action ever seen, lasting six weeks as thousands walked off the job demanding better working conditions. Thirty thousand civilians left their jobs on May 15, including veterans who six months earlier had fought in World War I. First out were the 500 telephone operators known as the “Hello Girls”.

A courageous young woman named Helen Armstrong played a big role in the movement. She held soup kitchens for strikers and their families, free for women. For her involvement, she was imprisoned three times and called a female Bolshevik. In commemoration, we held a soup kitchen in the Ukrainian Labour Temple to honour the strong women and men who took part in fighting for workers' rights.

It is because of these courageous strikers that the next prime minister, a Liberal, brought in major labour reforms. One hundred years later, I am proud to stand here today to celebrate what they achieved for women and Canadian workers across the nation.

* * *

[Translation]

2019 GENERAL ELECTION

Mr. Jacques Gourde (Lévis—Lotbinière, CPC): Mr. Speaker, the Liberal government's plan for the environment is an unprecedented failure.

The Prime Minister claims to have a plan to combat climate change and that the carbon tax will allow us to meet our emission targets under the Paris Agreement, even though his government's own figures show that such is not the case.

The Parliamentary Budget Officer confirmed that the Liberal carbon tax would have to be \$102 per tonne in every province and territory in order for Canada to meet the Paris targets. The carbon tax would have to be five times higher than it is now, which means that Canadians would have to pay more for groceries, transported goods and home heating and gas would cost them 23¢ more a litre.

Oral Questions

On October 21, Canadians will choose the most credible, rational and achievable plan that will benefit everyone. They will vote for the Conservative Party.

* * *

LAURENTIDES—LABELLE

Mr. David de Burgh Graham (Laurentides—Labelle, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, after years of counterproductive efforts by political parties that only wanted to prove that federalism does not work, or that the federal government is the adversary, we have been an unrivalled federal partner in Laurentides—Labelle.

Half of the 43 municipalities will soon have access to modern high-speed Internet across their territory, and we are well on the way to getting full coverage throughout the riding. Les Pays-d'en-Haut, the only RCM in Quebec without an arena, will finally get its sports centre. Poverty and unemployment are declining. There are more opportunities for families to remain in the region.

In under four years, we have made a difference that has benefited the people of the Laurentians. This fall, we will have to decide whether the federal government is an adversary or a partner of our region. I believe the answer is clear. Together, we will succeed.

* * *

•(1415)
[English]

CUMBERLAND COMMUNITY FOREST SOCIETY

Mr. Gord Johns (Courtenay—Alberni, NDP): Mr. Speaker, the citizens of Cumberland, B.C., are taking forest and watershed protection into their own hands, buying up lands from forest companies under the leadership of the Cumberland Community Forest Society.

This small community of less than 4,000 has already purchased over 275 acres and raised over \$3 million to protect its forests for future generations. The whole community gets involved, from plant sales and trail runs to trivia nights and local arts events.

However, the stakes are getting higher. Climate change is impacting the Comox Lake watershed, and protection is increasingly critical to the whole Comox Valley. The Cumberland Community Forest Society is working hard to buy an entire creek system, Perseverance Creek, for \$2.6 million.

The people of Cumberland are leading, and all levels of government need to follow.

* * *

CARBON PRICING

Ms. Rachael Harder (Lethbridge, CPC): Mr. Speaker, the Liberals insist on making life more expensive for Canadians from coast to coast.

The PBO just confirmed that the carbon tax will need to be \$102 per tonne in order to reach the Paris accord targets. Now, that is five times what the current carbon tax costs. This will increase the cost of groceries and the cost of home heating, and it will increase the cost of gasoline by 23¢ per litre. Canadians cannot afford this.

The Prime Minister makes the false claim that this is an environmental plan, but it has nothing to do with the environment. It has everything to do with lining his pockets. If it truly were an environmental plan, then he would go after the biggest emitters, but they get let off the hook. Meanwhile, soccer moms are left paying the bill.

British Columbia has the longest-standing carbon tax, and we see the amount of emission actually going up rather than coming down. The carbon tax will not reduce pollution, but it will certainly cost Canadians a whole lot of money.

It is time for a real environmental plan, and that environmental plan is on this side of the House. It will be announced on June 19. We look forward to bringing that—

The Speaker: The member for Spadina—Fort York.

* * *

TORONTO RAPTORS

Mr. Adam Vaughan (Spadina—Fort York, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, bounce, bounce, bounce, bounce, game.

There were so many memorable moments as the Raptors won the historic championship they captured last week, and the riding I represent is quite literally today the absolute guaranteed centre of the universe, as millions of Toronto sports fans and sports fans across the country are celebrating.

The city is celebrating a team that means the world to us, but it is also a team that we can see the world in, and this is critical about this beautiful team that won. The six is sweet. Our city is not only where the best come to play; it is also a city where the best come to live, love, work, learn and invest.

The last names say it all: from Lin to Gasol, from Siakam to Leonard, from Nurse to Magloire and Masai, and of course Aubrey, Bhatia and Lowry, with those two beautiful kids.

Spicy P summed it up best when he said, “No French questions?”

Toronto's team is an international team because all the world has a home in TO. It is the Canadian way. *Nous sommes le Nord*. We the North. We won it all.

ORAL QUESTIONS

[English]

NATURAL RESOURCES

Hon. Candice Bergen (Portage—Lisgar, CPC): Mr. Speaker, when it comes to pipelines, four years have proven that no matter what side of the issue people are on, nobody can trust the Liberals.

We fully expect them to approve Trans Mountain later this week, just so they can say they did. Then we fully expect them to do absolutely nothing to get it built, because they do not want to upset voters in Burnaby.

Oral Questions

Why will the Liberals not just admit that they do not want pipelines and that Trans Mountain will never actually get built under their watch?

Hon. Amarjeet Sohi (Minister of Natural Resources, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, we have more confidence in Canada's energy sector than what is being portrayed by the members of the official opposition.

We gave approval to Enbridge Line 3, which is almost completed on the Canadian side. We are working with the U.S. on the Keystone XL pipeline. We are moving forward on the Trans Mountain pipeline expansion project in the right way, with meaningful consultation that has been concluded with indigenous communities.

We have full confidence in our energy sector.

• (1420)

Hon. Candice Bergen (Portage—Lisgar, CPC): Mr. Speaker, a year ago the Prime Minister promised that construction would start on TMX, and a year later not an ounce of dirt has been moved. The Prime Minister says one thing in one part of the country, and he says something completely different in another part, because, just like on everything else, he speaks out of both sides of his mouth.

The Prime Minister does not support pipelines and the jobs that come with them. Now he could try to prove us wrong, so will he tell us right now when construction on TMX will start in Burnaby?

Hon. Amarjeet Sohi (Minister of Natural Resources, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, it is quite known to Canadians that when Stephen Harper got into office in 2006, 99% of the oil from Alberta was sold to only a single customer, which was the United States. When he left office in 2015, that was still the case 10 years later: 99% of oil was still being sold to the United States.

The Conservatives' plan failed to build a single pipeline to diversify our market to non-U.S. markets. We are changing that.

Hon. Candice Bergen (Portage—Lisgar, CPC): Mr. Speaker, four major pipelines were built under the Conservatives' watch, with not one dollar of taxpayers' money used.

Over the last four years, though, the Prime Minister has done everything in his power to destroy jobs in Canada's energy sectors. He is forcing through devastating bills, like Bill C-48 and the no-more-pipelines bill, Bill C-69. Right now, he is playing political games with the TMX pipeline.

Will the Prime Minister finally be honest with our energy workers and admit he has no intention for construction to start in Burnaby?

Hon. Amarjeet Sohi (Minister of Natural Resources, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, if the members of the official opposition were really serious about moving forward with the process on TMX in the right way, they would not have voted to shut down and kill that process. That shows their lack of sincerity about getting our resources to non-U.S. markets.

We are doing the hard work to ensure that meaningful consultation is taking place with indigenous communities and that we are taking action on the environment with protection of the environment.

[Translation]

Mr. Gérard Deltell (Louis-Saint-Laurent, CPC): Mr. Speaker, the Trans Mountain project is essential to the economy of all Canadians, and above all, it is good for all of Canada. Unfortunately,

since announcing the project a year ago, the Liberals have not done a single thing. Not a shovel has hit the ground. All they have done is take \$4.5 billion of taxpayers' money and send it to Houston. They have also passed two bills, Bill C-48 and Bill C-69, that fly in the face of the principle of sound energy development.

Could the Liberals finally do what is right for Canadians by approving this project tomorrow and, most importantly, by announcing when Trans Mountain will be built?

[English]

Hon. Amarjeet Sohi (Minister of Natural Resources, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, once again, Conservatives are demonstrating that they have no confidence in Canada's energy sector.

We have been moving forward on this project from day one. When the Federal Court of Appeal made its decision cancelling the TMX project, one of the reasons that project was stalled was that, when the review process was started in 2013, under Stephen Harper's government, Conservatives failed to include the impact of marine shipping on the marine environment.

We are changing that. We are engaging with indigenous communities in the right way to move forward on the project, which will make—

The Speaker: The hon. member for Louis-Saint-Laurent.

[Translation]

Mr. Gérard Deltell (Louis-Saint-Laurent, CPC): Mr. Speaker, Canadians all know full well whose side the Liberal Party is on. The Liberals have nothing but contempt for energy sector workers in western Canada. In fact, he is on the record as saying that he hopes to phase out oil and that high gas prices are exactly what he wants. What is worse, he has insulted pipeline workers. That is how the Liberal Party really thinks.

We, the Conservatives, are in favour of the Trans Mountain project because it is good for Canada and for all Canadians.

Could the Liberal government show the same respect for Canadians and tell us when it is going to build it?

[English]

Hon. Amarjeet Sohi (Minister of Natural Resources, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, Conservative actions do not demonstrate their commitment to this project.

If they were really committed to getting this project right, then they would not have voted down the process we put in place for a meaningful consultation with indigenous communities to ensure that the impact of marine shipping on the marine environment was properly assessed, something that was excluded under Stephen Harper when their review took place.

We are changing the broken system.

Oral Questions

Mr. Peter Julian (New Westminster—Burnaby, NDP): Mr. Speaker, tomorrow Liberals are planning to announce their rubber-stamped approval on Trans Mountain, after pouring \$5 billion of taxpayers' money into it.

The project will need at least another \$10 billion from taxpayers, and former Liberal minister David Anderson and so many others say that this project has no business case. The project is not in the interest of our coast, indigenous communities, our planet or everyday Canadians. It is in the interest of shareholders of big oil and gas companies.

Instead of another rubber-stamped approval, why will Liberals not side with Canadians tomorrow and cancel the Trans Mountain expansion project?

• (1425)

Hon. Amarjeet Sohi (Minister of Natural Resources, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, on the one hand, we have Conservatives who do not get the environment. On the other hand, we have the New Democrats who do not get the economy.

We are moving forward, building a strong economy, creating jobs for the middle class, and at the same time taking action on climate, ensuring that we are putting a price on pollution, ensuring that we are taking action by phasing out coal and making sure that we meaningfully engage with indigenous communities.

Mr. Pierre-Luc Dusseault (Sherbrooke, NDP): Mr. Speaker, it is a former Liberal minister who is saying that there is no business case for this project.

[Translation]

People are right to be discouraged with this Liberal government. Even a former Liberal minister is finding it hard to believe that the Liberals are going to approve the Trans Mountain project tomorrow. His concerns are not about the environment or indigenous peoples. He is concerned about the economic viability of the project. He thinks it makes no sense to move forward with this project.

If the Liberals do not want to listen to the people living on our coasts or the many young people protesting in the streets, will they listen to a former Liberal minister and cancel this project once and for all?

[English]

Hon. Amarjeet Sohi (Minister of Natural Resources, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, we understand the diversity of opinions among indigenous communities on this project. We know that some do support this project and some do not support this project. It is our responsibility to engage with all of them, to listen to their concerns and then offer accommodations where accommodation is possible.

Also, we are taking unprecedented action to protect our coastal communities through the ambitious oceans protection plan we have put in place.

[Translation]

TAXATION

Mr. Pierre-Luc Dusseault (Sherbrooke, NDP): Mr. Speaker, will we really be surprised if tomorrow they put the interests of big oil ahead of the interests of Canadians? I do not think so.

Canada has never seen such a huge inequality. The Liberals brag about having lowered taxes for the middle class, but the wealthiest middle-class Canadians are the ones who benefit.

Yesterday our leader presented an ambitious plan to finally reduce inequality that would make the richest 1% pay a 1% wealth tax on wealth over \$20 million. We would reinvest these billions of dollars in the services that people truly need.

When will the Liberals make ultra-rich Canadians pay their fair share?

Hon. Bill Morneau (Minister of Finance, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, a fully functional tax system is very important.

We started by cutting taxes for the middle class. This was very important. At the same time, we changed the tax rates for the wealthiest Canadians.

What are we seeing now? Middle-class Canadians are better off, and for four years now, the average family has been pocketing \$2,000 more.

We will continue to make life easier for the middle class in the future.

[English]

Mr. Peter Julian (New Westminster—Burnaby, NDP): Mr. Speaker, it is the folks right behind the minister who gained the most from the Liberal tax cut, because people would have to earn an MP's salary in order to get the maximum benefit.

If we want to tackle inequalities in this country, we need to take bold action. We need to make the richest of the 1% of Canadians pay a 1% tax on their wealth above \$20 million. That would mean we could invest in solutions that Canadians need, like pharmacare, dental care and an affordable place to call home.

When will the Liberals stop siding with the ultra-rich of our country and put everyday Canadians first for a change?

Hon. Bill Morneau (Minister of Finance, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, the member opposite might not have been paying attention to what we really did.

It was the \$45,000 to \$90,000 tax bracket that we reduced by 7%. We also put in place the Canada child benefit, which was means-tested, which means significant benefits went to families at lower and middle income. It was means-tested after \$150,000 of family income.

At the same time, though, we raised taxes on the top 1%. These measures together have led us to be in a very positive economic situation, with the lowest rate of unemployment in history in our country, which is a positive situation. We are going to keep working in the future for the middle class.

Oral Questions

[Translation]

CARBON PRICING

Mr. Alain Rayes (Richmond—Arthabaska, CPC): Mr. Speaker, the Parliamentary Budget Officer confirmed last week that the Liberal government's plan just does not cut it. He has proven that under their plan, the Liberals will have to increase fuel prices by more than 23¢ per litre, because of their carbon tax. Only the Liberals believe that raising taxes could be an effective plan.

My question for the Prime Minister is simple. Why do he and his colleagues here in the House want to increase fuel prices by 23¢ per litre on the backs of Canadians?

● (1430)

[English]

Mr. Sean Fraser (Parliamentary Secretary to the Minister of Environment and Climate Change, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, the question that the hon. member put on the floor of the House of Commons is grossly misleading. He knows that the PBO report presumes that no action will be taken beyond measures that are currently in place in order to hit our targets. We will hit our targets. To date, we have put forward a price on pollution. We are going to make sure that 90% of our electricity comes from non-emitting resources from 2030. We have made the largest investment in the history of public transit.

I have taken hundreds of questions in this chamber, and not one of them from a Conservative MP asking us to do more. When it comes to the environment, the Conservative Party of Canada cannot be trusted.

[Translation]

Mr. Alain Rayes (Richmond—Arthabaska, CPC): Mr. Speaker, since this Liberal government came to power, the cost of living for Canadians has skyrocketed. That is quite the coincidence, much like the deficit. Eighty per cent of Canadian families started paying more taxes since the Liberal government came to power. Every year, \$800 more is coming out of their pockets.

I would therefore like to repeat my question to the Prime Minister. Why does he want to burden Canadians even more and increase fuel prices by 23¢ per litre?

[English]

Mr. Sean Fraser (Parliamentary Secretary to the Minister of Environment and Climate Change, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, with respect, when it comes to affordability, we have no lessons to learn from the Conservatives, who opposed the Canada child benefit which put more money in the pockets of nine out of 10 low- and middle-income families. They voted against cutting taxes for middle-class Canadians and voted for keeping them low for the richest 1%.

I have answered so many questions when it comes to climate, but the Conservatives do not seem to listen. They will not listen to Conservative stalwarts like Preston Manning. They will not listen to the Nobel Prize winner in economics. I would urge them to listen to the Pope, who this past weekend said, "For too long we have collectively failed to listen to the fruits of scientific analysis" and called carbon pricing essential.

It is time to get with the program.

[Translation]

Mr. Alain Rayes (Richmond—Arthabaska, CPC): Mr. Speaker, the facts speak for themselves: The Liberals cut the public transit tax credit and the children's fitness and arts tax credit. What is more, the Prime Minister created a deficit on the backs of our grandchildren, who will end up paying the bill one day.

Once again Canadians, honest workers, will end up paying more taxes because of this government.

Why is this Prime Minister increasing the price of gas by another 23¢ with his lousy carbon tax?

[English]

Mr. Sean Fraser (Parliamentary Secretary to the Minister of Environment and Climate Change, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, they want to talk about adding costs for the next generations. Inaction on climate change is the thing that is going to lead to the greatest cost for future generations. Every time we propose a measure to deal with the environment, the Conservatives oppose it. They opposed our price on pollution. They opposed our largest investment in history on public transit. For God's sake, when we announced we were going to be banning harmful single-use plastics and gave them an opportunity to support the environment or garbage, they chose garbage.

The Conservatives cannot be trusted when it comes to the environment.

It is time to get with the 21st century. Climate change is real, and we have found a way to make life more affordable for families at the same time.

The Speaker: I think the hon. parliamentary secretary meant "for goodness' sake". He has gone from the pope to a higher power.

Hon. Pierre Poilievre (Carleton, CPC): Mr. Speaker, speaking of the pope, it is time they made a confession over there.

They have been keeping a deep dark secret. If the Liberal government is re-elected, as the PBO has pointed out, the carbon tax will add a full 23¢ to the cost of gas. This is the PBO, whose word is much more reliable than that of a government that is missing its day to balance the budget by two decades.

Will the member unburden his soul and confess to Canadians the real price that he will add to a litre of gas if re-elected?

Oral Questions

●(1435)

Mr. Sean Fraser (Parliamentary Secretary to the Minister of Environment and Climate Change, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, when it comes to the recent PBO report, the hon. member knows that it presumes no further action will be taken on climate change. I suggest that the hon. member is projecting what we should expect to see in the Conservative plan due to come out this week. I would also invite the hon. member to review the prior report of the Parliamentary Budget Officer, which indicated that eight out of 10 families in his province will be left better off as a result of our plan.

We are following the advice of the leading experts in the world, including last year's winner of the Nobel Prize in economics. If the member will not believe me, not believe the Pope and not believe the Nobel Prize winner, I suggest that there is no convincing him.

Hon. Pierre Poilievre (Carleton, CPC): Mr. Speaker, the member still would not answer the simple question of how much gas prices will go up when the Liberal carbon tax is fully and finally implemented.

The PBO went on CTV last week and said that the Liberals' plan for the carbon tax would have to be twice as high as they now admit and five times as high as it now is, leading to gas prices that would rise 23¢ a litre. If the PBO is wrong, then how much will gas prices go up under the Liberal plan?

Mr. Sean Fraser (Parliamentary Secretary to the Minister of Environment and Climate Change, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, if the hon. member had actually read the PBO report, he would have noticed that he pointed out this was the least expensive option. I expect that the Conservatives' plan will mirror that of Doug Ford's, and I am curious that their strategy is to cozy up to the Premier of Ontario. However, we know that it is going to lead to a worse record in terms of emissions reduction and a greater cost for families. We have been transparent about our plan. The price will increase to \$50 a tonne by 2020. I will show him the website afterward. Until then, I will assume that their plan will mirror Doug Ford's and will make life more expensive for families.

Hon. Pierre Poilievre (Carleton, CPC): Mr. Speaker, there we have it: 23¢ a litre is the minimum cost that the Liberals would impose on Canadian motorists. I think Canadians would like to know the maximum cost of the Liberal carbon tax. He is right. The PBO did say that the Liberal carbon tax could actually be higher than the \$100 a tonne. It speaks about provincial politics. We know that Kathleen Wynne is their model. She lied in four elections about coming tax increases. She increased the cost of energy. If they are following that model, why will they not come clean before the election and tell us how much it will cost in higher gas prices if the Liberals are re-elected?

Mr. Sean Fraser (Parliamentary Secretary to the Minister of Environment and Climate Change, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, I thank the hon. member for the opportunity to clarify. As the Parliamentary Budget Officer pointed out, the climate action incentive makes life more affordable for his constituents. The whole system works by returning the rebates directly to households. A typical family of four, in the hon. member's own constituency, would have received \$307 off their taxes this year. I am curious that the Conservative Party of Canada has now adopted an approach towards politics that would see families pay more tax. It comes as no surprise to me after a

number of years of watching its members vote against the Canada child benefit, the middle-class tax cut and now against a price on pollution that will reduce emissions and make life more affordable.

* * *

[Translation]

HEALTH

Ms. Karine Trudel (Jonquière, NDP): Mr. Speaker, the health care system is no longer responsive to Canadians' needs.

It is not okay that some people are covered for dental and vision care and others are not. The Liberals' targeted approach simply does not provide the desired results. The NDP is proposing extending health care coverage to protect people from head to toe, while offering Quebec and the other provinces the chance to opt out with full compensation.

Can the government follow the NDP's example and commit to extending medical coverage to include dental and vision care?

Hon. Ginette Petitpas Taylor (Minister of Health, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, I am very pleased to be part of a government that makes historic investments in health in order to respond to the needs of Canadians today and in the future. We have invested more than \$11 million in mental health care and home care.

We will continue to work with the provinces and territories to ensure that Canadians continue to be proud of their health care system.

[English]

Mr. Daniel Blaikie (Elmwood—Transcona, NDP): Mr. Speaker, that was not really an answer to the question. It was over 20 years ago that the Liberals first promised pharmacare. They have had three majority governments since then, and their common criticism of the NDP is that we are in too big of a hurry. We are in a hurry. We think it should not have taken 20 years for Canadians to get affordable access to drugs. We are not prepared to apologize for that in the least. We also know, because the science tells us, that preventative access to things like dental care and eye care are less expensive in the long term and improve quality of life. Will they commit today to moving forward on that?

Oral Questions

Hon. Ginette Petitpas Taylor (Minister of Health, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, I am proud to be part of a government that has made historic investments in the areas of mental care and home care. To make sure that we could meet the needs of Canadians today and also tomorrow, we have invested more than \$11 billion in the areas of home care and mental health. From there, we continue to work with the provinces and territories, as we want to make sure that our health care system remains a point of pride for all Canadians.

* * *

● (1440)

NATURAL RESOURCES

Mr. Mark Strahl (Chilliwack—Hope, CPC): Mr. Speaker, when six premiers expressed their serious concerns about the Liberals ramming the anti-energy Bill C-69 through the House, the Prime Minister attacked them and accused them of threatening national unity. When respected economist Dr. Jack Mintz raised concerns with the damaging impact of the Liberals' energy policies, the Minister of Natural Resources attacked him and accused him of undermining Canada.

Why is it that whenever legitimate concerns about the energy sector are raised with the Liberals, their response is always “shut your mouth, Ottawa knows best”?

Mr. Sean Fraser (Parliamentary Secretary to the Minister of Environment and Climate Change, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, part of our commitment in 2015 was to put forward an agenda that would help us grow the economy and protect our environment at the same time. We noticed that after 10 years of government under Stephen Harper, where the Conservatives could not get major projects done, part of it had to do with the fact that they rammed through an environmental assessment process that did not gain the trust of Canadians.

We are advancing better rules that are going to enhance public participation, strengthen environmental protections and give certainty to industry. This is why the Mining Association of Canada is behind it, the industry that deals with these processes more than any other.

If the hon. member would like a tutor session with me, I would be happy to walk him through it afterwards.

The Speaker: I encourage members to be judicious in their choice of words.

The hon. member for Chilliwack—Hope.

Mr. Mark Strahl (Chilliwack—Hope, CPC): Mr. Speaker, if he wanted to see Ottawa Liberal arrogance, there it was.

Nine provinces have expressed their concern about Bill C-69. Indigenous leaders from across the country have expressed their concerns about Bill C-69. The government has ignored them every step of the way, because the Liberals believe when it comes to energy, they are the only ones who know anything.

How can the government come off saying that it knows best when it has been the worst government in Canadian history when it comes to Canadian energy workers?

Mr. Sean Fraser (Parliamentary Secretary to the Minister of Environment and Climate Change, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, with great

respect to the hon. member, it was the leader of the Conservative Party of Canada who said that Ottawa knew best. We are moving forward with an agenda that is going to strengthen environmental protection. It is going to provide certainty for industry. Importantly, it is going to allow the public greater opportunities to take part in the environmental assessments of projects that impact their communities. These are simple principles.

We went through an extensive period of consultations to understand the impact it would have on Canadians. We have come up with a process that will help grow our economy and protect our environment at the same time. I am proud to stand with this government as we move forward with this ambitious agenda.

Mrs. Shannon Stubbs (Lakeland, CPC): Mr. Speaker, the Liberals must approve the Trans Mountain expansion tomorrow, which they already did before, in 2016, except this time it actually has to get built. The Liberals are blocking all new pipelines with their anti-energy, anti-business Bill C-69, which nine out of 10 provinces and all three territories oppose this.

The Nisga'a, Lax Kw'alaams and hundreds of other indigenous communities are against the Liberals shipping ban, Bill C-48, and they have been against it from day one. Instead of cancelling it, the Liberals are steamrolling opposition and indigenous communities to force it through before summer.

Will the Liberals kill these anti-energy bills before it is too late?

● (1445)

Mr. Terry Beech (Parliamentary Secretary to the Minister of Transport, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, this government remains committed to delivering on its promise to Canadians to put forward this oil tanker moratorium and to formalize it in legislation.

I stood in the House this morning, addressing the Senate amendments that came over. We are hoping to work with all parliamentarians here. It is important for Canadians to understand that when it comes to Bill C-48, every single party in the House was in favour of it. The only party that did not vote in favour of it was the Conservative Party.

The Speaker: Order, please. I would remind members that those singing can do so outside.

The hon. member for Lakeland.

Mrs. Shannon Stubbs (Lakeland, CPC): Mr. Speaker, it is ironic that member would answer the question. He is the one from Burnaby who opposes the Trans Mountain expansion.

However, other changes to the Liberals' no-more-pipelines Bill C-69 would actually have increased the voices of locally impacted indigenous communities in resource reviews, but the Liberals rejected them.

Manufacturers, chambers, economists, provinces and municipalities are outraged too. Quebec warns that Bill C-69 “gives the federal government the equivalent of a veto over Quebec's economic development”. Ontario says that it is the worst possible news at the worst possible time which “hinders natural resource related economic development” in Canada.

Again, will the Liberals kill Bill C-69 before it is too late?

Oral Questions

Mr. Sean Fraser (Parliamentary Secretary to the Minister of Environment and Climate Change, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, with great respect to the hon. member, we know that the mining sector, as an example, is the sector that deals with environmental assessments more than any other industrial sector in the Canadian economy. It supports the process that is outlined in Bill C-69, because it understands that we are putting forward better rules than were put forward under the previous government.

We have better rules that are going to enhance environmental protection. It is going to increase the ability of the public to take part in the projects that affect them. It is going to engage indigenous voices at the same time we bring certainty to industry.

This is not complicated. This is common sense, straightforward proposals that will help improve our ability to get major projects done in the right way.

* * *

NATIONAL DEFENCE

Ms. Rachel Blaney (North Island—Powell River, NDP): Mr. Speaker, Amin was deployed seven times as a language and cultural adviser for the Canadian mission in Afghanistan. Like many Canadians, Amin brought the war home with him in the form of PTSD.

When he reached out to the government, he was told he was ineligible because he had not applied for civilian benefits on time. Civilians share the risk, but they do not get the support. That is wrong. Surely the government can support this gentleman in his desperate time of need, and all the other civilians who put their lives on the line for Canada.

Hon. Harjit S. Sajjan (Minister of National Defence, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, we are proud of the work of the women and men in uniform and civilians who have served in Afghanistan. I want to thank Mr. Ayubi for his work and dedication to helping our Canadian Armed Forces members.

For privacy reasons, I cannot speak to the specifics of the case, but I have directed officials to look into this case and find a solution.

* * *

HEALTH

Ms. Jenny Kwan (Vancouver East, NDP): Mr. Speaker, abortion is legal in Canada, yet some struggle to access this service in a timely fashion. It is not enough for the Liberals and the Conservatives to say that they will not reopen the abortion debate.

Under the Canada Health Act, abortion services are insured, yet only one in six hospitals actually offers these services. Some provinces will not cover the cost of surgical abortion in health clinics. Access is even worse for people in rural areas, the north and the Atlantic provinces.

Will the Liberals enforce the Canada Health Act to ensure medical and surgical abortion is available and covered in all parts of the country?

Hon. Ginette Petitpas Taylor (Minister of Health, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, unlike the Harper Conservatives, we know abortion rights

are protected under the Charter of Rights and Freedoms and we will always defend those rights.

We believe all Canadian women should have access to safe abortion services. That is why we stood up for reproductive health options in all parts of Canada, including expanding access to Mifegymiso in different parts of the country, including rural areas, to ensure that everyone would have access to abortion services.

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[Translation]

INFRASTRUCTURE

Mrs. Alexandra Mendès (Brossard—Saint-Lambert, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, today, the residents of Brossard—Saint-Lambert and I were delighted to learn that the new Samuel De Champlain Bridge will be opening soon. Our government was clear in 2015. We wanted to make it easier for families to commute so that they could spend more time together rather than stuck in traffic.

Could my hon. colleague, the Minister of Infrastructure and Communities, give us some highlights and updates on the opening of the new Samuel De Champlain Bridge?

Hon. François-Philippe Champagne (Minister of Infrastructure and Communities, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, I would first like to thank my colleague from Brossard—Saint-Lambert for her unwavering support while this work was being carried out.

We are proud to be able to give people on the south shore and in Montreal a modern and iconic toll-free bridge.

There are three important dates to remember. The northbound lanes will open on June 24, the official opening ceremony will take place on June 28, and the southbound lanes will open on July 1.

The real heroes in all of this are the 1,600-plus workers who worked tirelessly to give Canada this iconic bridge.

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[English]

FORESTRY INDUSTRY

Mrs. Cathy McLeod (Kamloops—Thompson—Cariboo, CPC): Mr. Speaker, in the past few weeks, the communities of Vavenby and 100 Mile House have been devastated by sawmill closures. We have an industry in crisis and it is moving en masse to the United States. Despite this urgency, the government failed to even consider it as part of the NAFTA negotiations.

The Prime Minister is heading to Washington next week to meet with the U.S. President. Will he commit to addressing the softwood lumber dispute with President Trump?

Mr. Robert Oliphant (Parliamentary Secretary to the Minister of Foreign Affairs, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, we strongly disagree with U. S. tariffs on softwood lumber. These are punitive duties. They are unfair. They are deeply troubling. Our government will take every opportunity to vigorously defend our forestry industry and its workers against protectionist trade measures.

My father is a professional forester. I grew up in that industry. We are committed to it. We will continue to work constantly to ensure our industry is successful and our workers are employed.

* * *

•(1450)

[Translation]

IMMIGRATION, REFUGEES AND CITIZENSHIP

Mr. Pierre Paul-Hus (Charlesbourg—Haute-Saint-Charles, CPC): Mr. Speaker, we have been asking the Prime Minister for two years to take appropriate action to deal with the border crisis. For two years, he has been spending millions of dollars to welcome illegal migrants but has done nothing to put an end to that migration.

On Thursday, the Prime Minister will be meeting with President Trump. Will he have the courage to stand up and address the subject of the illegal migrants who are entering Canada through the United States?

[English]

Hon. Bill Blair (Minister of Border Security and Organized Crime Reduction, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, from the outset, we have been very clear that our government is committed to a fair and compassionate system which does, in fact, provide protection to those who need it while ensuring the safety all Canadians. We have achieved an extraordinary reduction in the number of people who have been crossing our borders irregularly as a direct result of our work with the United States and our other partners right across Canada and around the world.

We will continue to work hard for Canadians to ensure our system remains fair and safe.

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FOREIGN AFFAIRS

Mr. James Bezan (Selkirk—Interlake—Eastman, CPC): Mr. Speaker, Canada's Arctic sovereignty is under threat. The United States refuses to recognize our sovereignty over our Arctic waters.

Last month, U.S. Secretary of State, Mike Pompeo, called our claim to the Northwest Passage “illegitimate”. The Arctic has never been a priority to the Liberals, and the Prime Minister has never stood up for our Arctic sovereignty.

The Prime Minister is meeting with President Trump on Thursday. Does the Prime Minister plan to continue his policy of giving away our sovereignty to Trump or will he finally fight for Arctic?

Mr. Robert Oliphant (Parliamentary Secretary to the Minister of Foreign Affairs, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, Canada's Arctic sovereignty is long-standing. It is well-established, and we have taken every opportunity to express that. We know that the north is an extremely important region of our country. It is more than photo ops. It is more than taking a picture and going to the Arctic once a summer. It is about real people, sustainable environmental protection and ensuring that Canada's sovereignty is protected.

We will stand firm. Canada's Arctic is Canada's Arctic.

Ms. Leona Alleslev (Aurora—Oak Ridges—Richmond Hill, CPC): Mr. Speaker, when will we see the Prime Minister stand for our sovereignty?

Oral Questions

Canadians are concerned about the Prime Minister's ability to convince the U.S. President when he meets with him this week to act with Canada to free two Canadians from a Chinese prison. The Prime Minister consistently fails Canadians in our global relationships and, in particular, with China to the point where the Chinese President has said that he will not meet with the Prime Minister during the G20.

With lives hanging in the balance, will the Prime Minister secure the support of the U.S. President to help release our imprisoned Canadians in China?

Mr. Robert Oliphant (Parliamentary Secretary to the Minister of Foreign Affairs, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, indeed, Canadian lives do hang in the balance. This is not about political grandstanding. It is not about rhetoric. It is about doing the work patiently and persistently and continuing to not try to score political points but to bring Canadians home safely.

We have rallied an unprecedented number of partners around the world in support of Canada's position: NATO, Australia, the EU, France, Germany, the United Kingdom, the Netherlands and the United States Senate.

We will continue to stand up for Canadians. We ask all members of the House to do the same.

* * *

[Translation]

THE ENVIRONMENT

Mr. Pierre Nantel (Longueuil—Saint-Hubert, NDP): Mr. Speaker, I wish I could believe that the government will eventually rise above partisanship.

A month ago, the NDP tabled a motion in Parliament declaring a climate emergency, but the Conservatives and the Liberals voted against it. The government chose to adopt its own emergency declaration by moving a motion that will not stop pipelines from being built or stop the flow of subsidies to oil companies. They chose to play political games rather than work with all the parties to tackle the emergency head-on.

Can the government stop making this existential crisis political and work with the rest of us to revise the greenhouse gas reduction targets? Can it stop subsidizing oil companies and embark on the climate transition an entire generation is calling for, yes or no?

[English]

Mr. Sean Fraser (Parliamentary Secretary to the Minister of Environment and Climate Change, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, I would be honoured to work alongside the member any day to advance a climate agenda that actually makes sense.

One of the problems with the NDP's climate motion is that it called for the immediate end to all subsidies no matter what, which included subsidies that provided electricity to northern, remote indigenous communities. It included subsidies for research that would actually help some of our biggest polluters bring their emissions down. It included subsidies that would help with the transition toward electric vehicles.

Oral Questions

As always, when it comes to climate change, the NDP members have their heart in the right place, but their heads simply have not caught up.

* * *

INTERNATIONAL TRADE

Ms. Tracey Ramsey (Essex, NDP): Mr. Speaker, as the Prime Minister goes to meet with Donald Trump in the U.S., he has shut down debate on a trade deal that will impact Canadians for generations to come.

The Liberals' promise of a full debate on the new NAFTA is now just another broken promise. The cost of medication, copyright extension, corporate powers over our regulatory bodies, dairy farmers losing out and jobs are all at stake.

On the TPP, the trade committee had over 400 witnesses on a cross-country tour. How many witnesses will we have at the prestudy on the new NAFTA tomorrow? There will be 12.

Why are Liberals trying to silence stakeholders and keep Canadians in the dark?

• (1455)

Mr. Robert Oliphant (Parliamentary Secretary to the Minister of Foreign Affairs, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, that member in particular should know that the new NAFTA is a great deal for labour and for auto workers, especially those in her own riding. The then president of Windsor-Essex Regional Chamber of Commerce, Janice Forsyth, said that the new deal was “a great step forward”. Flavio Volpe, the president of Automotive Parts Manufacturers Association of Canada said that “Windsor is perfectly positioned to take advantage.”

Why will the member not support the workers of her own riding instead of trying to score some political points?

* * *

THE ENVIRONMENT

Hon. Ed Fast (Abbotsford, CPC): Mr. Speaker, the Liberals are falling far short of their Paris targets, yet the minister continues to pretend that she is on track, trying to distract from her own climate failures.

Now she asks Canadians to believe that the Liberals will not hike the carbon tax past \$50 per tonne. Right. The Parliamentary Budget Officer has said that, for the carbon tax to have any effect, it would need to be doubled to meet the Paris targets. The Liberals cannot have it both ways.

When will the minister admit she will not meet the Paris targets?

Mr. Sean Fraser (Parliamentary Secretary to the Minister of Environment and Climate Change, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, with respect, we are going to meet our Paris Agreement targets because, quite frankly, failure is not an option.

With respect to the PBO report, I have pointed out a number of times on the floor today that it assumes that no further steps will be taken on climate change. Perhaps this is foreshadowing what the Conservative plan is going to look like.

We know that climate change is real, and we know that we have an obligation and an opportunity to do something about it. In fact, I

think we have an obligation to do the most effective solutions that we know exist today. That includes putting a price on pollution that is going to bring emissions down. By working with folks like the Nobel Prize winner in economics last year, we have found a way to do it that makes life more affordable for Canadian households.

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[*Translation*]

CANADA SUMMER JOBS PROGRAM

Hon. Steven Blaney (Bellechasse—Les Etchemins—Lévis, CPC): Mr. Speaker, can someone tell me why the Liberals are giving more than \$25,000 to an organization the CRA banned because of its links to terrorist entities?

The Islamic Society of North America is on the CRA's blacklist. An audit revealed that funds supposedly meant for charitable works were making their way to extremist entities that India, the United States and the EU consider to be terrorist organizations.

Terrorism and extremism. Why did the minister and the member for Mississauga—Lakeshore approve this funding?

What further proof does the minister need to revoke the funding immediately instead of conducting bogus reviews?

[*English*]

Mr. Rodger Cuzner (Parliamentary Secretary to the Minister of Employment, Workforce Development and Labour, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, my colleague knows we unequivocally condemn violence and extremism of any kind. It is unacceptable and is not tolerated.

We understand and share the member's concerns about this organization. ESDC is conducting a review of this matter through Service Canada Ontario. The member has long served in this House. He knows how this program works and that money will not be flowing if in fact this group is not compliant.

Hon. Michelle Rempel (Calgary Nose Hill, CPC): Mr. Speaker, the Liberals cannot stand up and say that they do not support terrorism and then give funding to an organization that was proven to have given money to terrorists. It is ridiculous.

The Liberals rejected funding to organizations that do things like support women who are single moms and support poverty reductions in our community, because these organizations would not sign their others' values test.

When are the Liberals going to do the right thing and revoke the funding to this organization? This is a no-brainer.

Oral Questions

Mr. Rodger Cuzner (Parliamentary Secretary to the Minister of Employment, Workforce Development and Labour, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, the Conservatives like to say that politics are being played with the Canada summer jobs program, but politics are being played by them. We know the Conservatives have continued to mislead Canadians with regard to the Canada summer jobs program. They say that we are not funding any faith-based groups anymore.

Even in their leader's riding, the Raymore Baptist Church, Avonhurst Pentecostal Assembly and Echo Lake Bible Camp have received funding, if Conservatives check their list. That would be another aspect of this program they continue to play politics with.

The Speaker: Order. I would remind the hon. member for Calgary Nose Hill that after she poses her question, someone else gets to speak. She should not be interrupting when someone else is speaking, nor should anybody else. We should all keep that in mind, that each side gets its turn.

* * *

● (1500)

[Translation]

NATIONAL DEFENCE

Mr. Yves Robillard (Marc-Aurèle-Fortin, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, in recent years I have had the privilege of being a member of the Standing Committee on National Defence as our government was putting together its new defence policy, "Strong, Secure, Engaged". This policy puts our men and women in uniform first, including Canadian civilians who choose to join the reserves.

Can the Minister of National Defence tell us about the recent changes made to support our reservists across the country?

[English]

Hon. Harjit S. Sajjan (Minister of National Defence, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, I want to thank my colleague from Marc-Aurèle-Fortin for his support of the reservists.

Last week, I was in Laval to announce changes to the reserve force pay. The reservists will now be paid the same as the regular force for the valuable work they do. This important initiative, laid out in our defence policy "Strong, Secure, Engaged", is a clear demonstration of how we value the dedication of all members of the Canadian Armed Forces.

Our reservists make us proud.

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ETHICS

Hon. Peter Kent (Thornhill, CPC): Mr. Speaker, last week, the Prime Minister claimed the Liberal member for Steveston—Richmond East had addressed allegations that the MP's law firm was used by a notorious Chinese drug boss to launder money. We now learn that the B.C. inquiry into money laundering has discovered that the same member was directly involved in another suspicious deal. The purported deal involved a wealthy gambler, hidden investors and an unexplained \$1-million transfer in and out of the MP's law firm.

Will the Prime Minister act, or is this just another case of one set of rules for Liberals and another for everyone else?

Hon. Bill Blair (Minister of Border Security and Organized Crime Reduction, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, we are working very hard with the provincial governments right across the country and, in particular, in British Columbia on the issue of money laundering. I am not going to comment on any unproven allegation at this point, but what I will say is that our government has been working very diligently to address all of the sector vulnerabilities, including working with law societies from across Canada to address the concerns that are being addressed.

* * *

NATURAL RESOURCES

Ms. Niki Ashton (Churchill—Keewatinook Aski, NDP): Mr. Speaker, a Vale tailings dam by my community of Thompson has been flagged by outside investigators for stability concerns. Vale told its shareholders of this, but not people living on the ground. In fact, it took an investigative report from The Wall Street Journal for this to come to light. No one wants another Mount Polley disaster, but this is a company that has shown repeatedly that it does not take these kinds of safety concerns seriously.

What is the government doing to ensure the protection of the people and the environment around Thompson and in our north?

Hon. Amarjeet Sohi (Minister of Natural Resources, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, we take the safety of communities very seriously. I will absolutely follow up with the hon. member to ensure that we are listening to her concerns, as well as the concerns of the community.

* * *

INTERNATIONAL TRADE

Mr. Francesco Sorbara (Vaughan—Woodbridge, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, the steel sector directly employs over 20,000 Canadians across the country and is vital to manufacturing companies in my riding of Vaughan—Woodbridge. In the face of the U.S. tariffs on steel and aluminum, Canadians stood together and firm to defend these important industries and our workers.

Now that we have succeeded in having the U.S. tariffs fully lifted, can the Minister of Finance update the House on how our government is working to continue to protect the industry and workers from unfair trade practices?

Hon. Bill Morneau (Minister of Finance, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, while we accept these challenges around the world, we need to continue to take actions to protect our steel industry against the potential of import surges. We introduced Bill C-101 in order to make sure that we have the flexibility to stabilize our market, to protect workers and to protect the industry in the case of steel surges that might come because of those protectionist issues.

Oral Questions

I want to thank the member for Vaughan—Woodbridge and the finance committee for their work, and I want to ask all members in the House to bring forth their unanimous support so we can move this bill forward quickly to protect steel workers and to protect our steel industry.

* * *

FOREIGN AFFAIRS

Mr. Tom Kmiec (Calgary Shepard, CPC): Mr. Speaker, nearly two million people in Hong Kong have taken to the streets to protest the draconian new extradition law that would have seen residents and visitors, including Canadians, sent to China to face trial in communist-controlled courts. They are on the streets to defend their hard-earned democracy. The extradition law is a clear assault on Hong Kong's autonomy. There is mounting pressure for Hong Kong's PRC-controlled leader, Carrie Lam, to resign after trying to ram through this law and silence peaceful protestors with violence.

What action is the government taking to support the people of Hong Kong and the 300,000 Canadians living there?

• (1505)

Mr. Robert Oliphant (Parliamentary Secretary to the Minister of Foreign Affairs, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, I want to thank the member for his concern about this topic, which I think is shared throughout this House.

We have expressed serious concerns about the proposed amendments to Hong Kong's extradition laws. They have been delayed; they have not yet been cancelled. The Hong Kong government must listen to the voices of its citizens. Last week, we issued another public statement expressing our concern about the impact of these changes. We are very aware that there are, indeed, 300,000 Canadians living in Hong Kong. That is of special concern to all of us.

I took this topic up with legislators when I met with them in Hong Kong. We will continue to advocate for human rights in our world.

* * *

[Translation]

INTERGOVERNMENTAL RELATIONS

Mrs. Marilène Gill (Manicouagan, BQ): Mr. Speaker, last night Quebec passed its secularism bill. Finally.

Will the Prime Minister now undertake to respect the will of Quebecers and their National Assembly and neither challenge the new Quebec bill in court nor fund legal challenges?

Hon. David Lametti (Minister of Justice and Attorney General of Canada, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, our position has always been clear. It is not up to politicians to tell people what to wear or what not to wear.

Canada is already a secular country and that is reflected in our institutions. No one should have to choose between their religion and their job. This new law violates fundamental rights and individual freedoms.

We will always defend the charter for all Canadian citizens.

Mrs. Marilène Gill (Manicouagan, BQ): Mr. Speaker, the chair of the Standing Committee on Justice and Human Rights, completely out of touch with Quebecers, has already dragged out his "it is a sad day for Quebec". It took less than 24 hours.

Whether he likes it or not, it is a good day for Quebec. This is a great day, and the culmination of over 10 years of debate on secularism in Quebec. The fight is not over, however. We still have to make sure that Ottawa will not drag this matter before the courts.

Will Quebecers get a solemn commitment that the federal government will respect their will and not challenge this secularism legislation either directly or indirectly?

Hon. David Lametti (Minister of Justice and Attorney General of Canada, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, I have known the chair of the Standing Committee on Justice and Human Rights for many years. He is a proud Quebecer. He is a proud Canadian. He is entitled to his opinion on an issue that is so fundamental to Quebec.

We as a government have always defended the charter. It is not up to the government to tell Canadians what to wear or what not to wear.

Canada is already a secular country, and as I just said, we will defend the charter.

* * *

[English]

NORTHERN AFFAIRS

Hon. Hunter Tootoo (Nunavut, Ind.): Mr. Speaker, my question is for the Prime Minister. It was one of the proudest moments of my life when I was elected to the first Legislative Assembly of Nunavut. There was such hope and promise.

However, fast-forward 20 years, and life is not better for Nunavummiut. For many, it is worse. Nunavut only works if we can build a sustainable economy, and we can only do that with the support that was promised by the federal government. It will take massive investments in infrastructure, housing, roads, ports and connectivity.

Will the Prime Minister finally work with the Government of Nunavut and fulfill the commitment Canada made 20 years ago, or do we have to wait another 20?

Hon. Carolyn Bennett (Minister of Crown-Indigenous Relations, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, it is with pride that Canada is working with the Government of Nunavut and all our northern partners to develop and implement the new Arctic and northern policy framework, which will be done based on the principles that were determined by northerners around infrastructure, investing in people and investing in our sovereignty.

I look forward to working and being able to announce that very quickly.

GOVERNMENT ORDERS

[Translation]

MACKENZIE VALLEY RESOURCE MANAGEMENT ACT

The House resumed from June 13 consideration of the motion that Bill C-88, An Act to amend the Mackenzie Valley Resource Management Act and the Canada Petroleum Resources Act and to make consequential amendments to other Acts, be read the third time and passed.

The Speaker: It being 3:08 p.m., pursuant to order made on Tuesday, May 28, the House will now proceed to the taking of the deferred recorded division on the motion at third reading stage of Bill C-88.

• (1515)

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

(Division No. 1361)

YEAS

Members

Aldag	Alghabra
Amos	Anandasangaree
Angus	Arya
Ashton	Ayoub
Badawey	Bagnell
Baylis	Beech
Bendayan	Bennett
Benson	Bibeau
Bittle	Blaikie
Blair	Blaney (North Island—Powell River)
Boissonnault	Bossio
Boutin-Sweet	Bratina
Breton	Brosseau
Cannings	Caron
Carr	Casey (Cumberland—Colchester)
Casey (Charlottetown)	Chagger
Champagne	Chen
Choquette	Christopherson
Cullen	Cuzner
Dabrusin	Damoff
DeCoursey	Dhaliwal
Dhillon	Drouin
Dubé	Dubourg
Duguid	Duncan (Etobicoke North)
Duncan (Edmonton Strathcona)	Dusseau
Duvall	Dzerowicz
Easter	Ehsassi
Ellis	Erskine-Smith
Eyking	Eyolfson
Fergus	Fillmore
Finnigan	Fisher
Fonseca	Fortier
Fortin	Fragiskatos
Fraser (West Nova)	Fraser (Central Nova)
Freeland	Fuhr
Gerretsen	Gill
Goldsmith-Jones	Goodale
Gould	Graham
Hardcastle	Hardie
Harvey	Hehr
Hogg	Holland
Housefather	Hussen
Hutchings	Iacono
Johns	Jolibois
Joly	Jones
Jordan	Jowhari
Julian	Kang
Khalid	Khera
Kwan	Lambropoulos
Lametti	Lamoureux
Lapointe	Lauzon (Argenteuil—La Petite-Nation)
Laverdière	Lebouthillier

Lefebvre	Leslie
Levitt	Lightbound
Lockhart	Long
Longfield	Ludwig
MacAulay (Cardigan)	MacGregor
MacKinnon (Gatineau)	Maloney
Manly	Massé (Avignon—La Mitis—Matane—Matapédia)
Mathysen	May (Cambridge)
McCrimmon	McDonald
McGuinty	McKay
McKenna	McLeod (Northwest Territories)
Mendès	Mendicino
Mihychuk	Monsef
Momeau	Morrissey
Murray	Nantel
Nassif	Ng
O'Connell	Oliphant
Oliver	O'Regan
Ouellette	Paradis
Pauzé	Peschisolido
Peterson	Petitpas Taylor
Picard	Plamondon
Poissant	Quach
Qualtrough	Ramsey
Rankin	Ratansi
Rioux	Robillard
Rogers	Romanado
Rota	Rudd
Ruimy	Rusnak
Sahota	Saini
Sajjan	Samson
Sangha	Sansoucy
Sarai	Schieffe
Schulte	Serré
Sgro	Shanahan
Sheehan	Sidhu (Mission—Matsqui—Fraser Canyon)
Sidhu (Brampton South)	Simms
Sohi	Sorbara
Spengemann	Stetski
Tabbara	Tassi
Thériault	Tootoo
Trudel	Vandal
Vandenbeld	Vaughan
Weir	Whalen
Wilkinson	Wilson-Raybould
Wrzesnewskyj	Yip
Young	Zahid — 198

Government Orders

NAYS

Members

Albas
Alleslev
Anderson
Barrett
Bergen
Berthold
Blaney (Bellechasse—Les Etchemins—Lévis)
Boucher
Chong
Clement
Diotte
Eglinski
Finley
Gladu
Harder
Jeneroux
Kent
Kmiec
Lake
Liepert
Lukiwski
Martel
McColeman
Miller (Bruce—Grey—Owen Sound)
Nater
Nuttall
Poillievre
Reid
Saroya
Shields
Sopuck
Stanton

Government Orders

Strahl
Sweet
Trost
Vecchio
Wagantall
Waugh
Wong

Stubbs
Tilson
Van Kesteren
Viersen
Warkentin
Webber
Yurdiga— 78

Viersen
Warkentin
Webber
Yurdiga— 77

Wagantall
Waugh
Wong

PAIRED

Members

Beaulieu

LeBlanc— 2

The Speaker: I declare the motion carried.
(Bill read the third time and passed)

* * *

[English]

FISHERIES ACT

The House resumed from June 14 consideration of the motion in relation to the amendments made by the Senate to Bill C-68, An Act to amend the Fisheries Act and other Acts in consequence, and of the amendment.

The Speaker: Pursuant to order made on Tuesday, May 28, 2019, the House will now proceed to the taking of the deferred recorded division on the amendment to the motion to concur in the Senate amendments to Bill C-68.

The question is on the amendment.

• (1525)

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

(Division No. 1362)

YEAS

Members

Aboultatif
Albrecht
Allison
Arnold
Benzen
Bernier
Bezan
Block
Carrie
Clarke
Deltell
Dreeshen
Fast
Gallant
Gourde
Hoback
Kelly
Kitchen
Lake
Liepert
Lukiwski
Martel
McColeman
Miller (Bruce—Grey—Owen Sound)
Nater
Nuttall
Poilievre
Reid
Saroya
Shields
Sopuck
Stanton
Stubbs
Tilson
Van Kesteren

Albas
Alleslev
Anderson
Barrett
Bergen
Berthold
Blaney (Bellechasse—Les Etchemins—Lévis)
Boucher
Chong
Clement
Diotte
Eglinski
Finley
Gladu
Harder
Jeneroux
Kent
Kusie
Lauzon (Stormont—Dundas—South Glengarry)
Lloyd
Maguire
McCaughey (Edmonton West)
McLeod (Kamloops—Thompson—Cariboo)
Motz
Nicholson
Paul-Hus
Rayes
Rempel
Schmale
Shipley
Sorenson
Strahl
Sweet
Trost
Vecchio

Aldag
Amos
Angus
Ashton
Badawey
Baylis
Bendayan
Benson
Bittle
Blair
Boissonnault
Boutin-Sweet
Breton
Cannings
Carr
Casey (Charlottetown)
Champagne
Choquette
Cullen
Dabrusin
DeCoursey
Dhillon
Dubé
Duguid
Duncan (Edmonton Strathcona)
Duvall
Easter
Ellis
Eyking
Fergus
Finnigan
Fonseca
Fortin
Fraser (West Nova)
Freeland
Gerretsen
Goldsmith-Jones
Gould
Hardcastle
Harvey
Hogg
Housefather
Hutchings
Johns
Joly
Jordan
Julian
Khalid
Kwan
Lametti
Lapointe
Laverdière
Lefebvre
Levitt
Lockhart
Longfield
MacAulay (Cardigan)
MacKinnon (Gatineau)
Manly
Mathysen
McCrimmon
McGuinity
McKenna
Mendès
Mihychuk
Morneau
Murray
Nassif
O'Connell
Oliver
Ouellette
Pauzé
Peterson
Picard
Poissant

NAYS

Members

Alghabra
Anandasangaree
Arya
Ayoub
Bagnell
Beech
Bennett
Bibeau
Blaikie
Blaney (North Island—Powell River)
Bossio
Bratina
Brosseau
Caron
Casey (Cumberland—Colchester)
Chagger
Chen
Christopherson
Cuzner
Damoff
Dhaliwal
Drouin
Dubourg
Duncan (Etobicoke North)
Dusseau
Dzerowicz
Ehsassi
Erskine-Smith
Eyolfson
Fillmore
Fisher
Fortier
Fragiskatos
Fraser (Central Nova)
Fuhr
Gill
Goodale
Graham
Hardie
Hehr
Holland
Hussen
Iacono
Jolibois
Jones
Jowhari
Kang
Khera
Lambropoulos
Lamoureux
Lauzon (Argenteuil—La Petite-Nation)
Lebouthillier
Leslie
Lightbound
Long
Ludwig
MacGregor
Maloney
Massé (Avignon—La Mitis—Matane—Matapédia)
May (Cambridge)
McDonald
McKay
McLeod (Northwest Territories)
Mendicino
Monsef
Morrissey
Nantel
Ng
Oliphant
O'Regan
Paradis
Pescholido
Petitpas Taylor
Plamondon
Quach

Government Orders

Qualtrough	Ramsey
Rankin	Ratansi
Rioux	Robillard
Rogers	Romanado
Rota	Rudd
Ruimy	Rusnak
Sahota	Saini
Sajjan	Samson
Sangha	Sansoucy
Sarai	Schiefke
Schulte	Serré
Sgro	Shanahan
Sheehan	Sidhu (Mission—Matsqui—Fraser Canyon)
Sidhu (Brampton South)	Simms
Sohi	Sorbara
Spengemann	Stetski
Tabbara	Tassi
Thériault	Tootoo
Trudel	Vandal
Vandenbeld	Vaughan
Weir	Whalen
Wilkinson	Wilson-Raybould
Wrzesnewskyj	Yip
Young	Zahid — 198

PAIRED

Members

Beaulieu	LeBlanc — 2
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The Speaker: I declare the amendment defeated.

[*Translation*]

The next question is on the main motion. Is it the pleasure of the House to adopt the motion?

Some hon. members: Agreed.

Some hon. members: No.

The Speaker: All those in favour of the motion will please say yea.

Some hon. members: Yea.

The Speaker: All those opposed will please say nay.

Some hon. members: Nay.

The Speaker: In my opinion the yeas have it.

And five or more members having risen:

• (1530)

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

(*Division No. 1363*)

YEAS

Members

Aldag	Alghabra
Amos	Anandasangaree
Angus	Arya
Ashton	Ayoub
Badawey	Bagnell
Baylis	Beech
Bendayan	Bennett
Benson	Bibeau
Bittle	Blaikie
Blair	Blaney (North Island—Powell River)
Boissonnault	Bossio
Boutin-Sweet	Bratina
Breton	Brosseau
Cannings	Caron
Carr	Casey (Cumberland—Colchester)

Casey (Charlottetown)
Champagne
Choquette
Cullen
Dabrusin
DeCoursey
Dhillon
Dubé
Duguid
Duncan (Edmonton Strathcona)
Duvall
East
Ellis
Eyking
Fergus
Finnigan
Fonseca
Fragiskatos
Fraser (Central Nova)
Fuhr
Goldsmith-Jones
Gould
Hardcastle
Harvey
Hogg
Housefather
Hutchings
Johns
Joly
Jordan
Julian
Khalid
Kwan
Lametti
Lapointe
Laverdière
Lefebvre
Levitt
Lockhart
Longfield
MacAulay (Cardigan)
MacKinnon (Gatineau)
Manly
Mathysen
McCrimmon
McGuinty
McKenna
Mendès
Mihychuk
Morneau
Murray
Nassif
O'Connell
Oliver
Ouellette
Peschisolido
Petitpas Taylor
Poissant
Qualtrough
Rankin
Rioux
Rogers
Rota
Ruimy
Sahota
Sajjan
Sangha
Sarai
Schulte
Sgro
Sheehan
Sidhu (Brampton South)
Sohi
Spengemann
Tabbara
Tootoo
Vandal
Vaughan
Whalen
Wilson-Raybould
Yip
Zahid — 193

Chagger
Chen
Christopherson
Cuzner
Damoff
Dhalival
Drouin
Dubourg
Duncan (Etobicoke North)
Dusseault
Dzerowicz
Ehsassi
Erskine-Smith
Eyolfson
Fillmore
Fisher
Fortier
Fraser (West Nova)
Freeland
Gerretsen
Goodale
Graham
Hardie
Hehr
Holland
Hussen
Iacono
Jolibois
Jones
Jowhari
Kang
Khera
Lambropoulos
Lamoureux
Lauzon (Argenteuil—La Petite-Nation)
Lebouthillier
Leslie
Lightbound
Long
Ludwig
MacGregor
Maloney
Massé (Avignon—La Mitis—Matane—Matapédia)
May (Cambridge)
McDonald
McKay
McLeod (Northwest Territories)
Mendicino
Monsef
Morrissey
Nantel
Ng
Oliphant
O'Regan
Paradis
Peterson
Picard
Quach
Ramsey
Ratansi
Robillard
Romanado
Rudd
Rusnak
Saini
Samson
Sansoucy
Schiefke
Serré
Shanahan
Sidhu (Mission—Matsqui—Fraser Canyon)
Simms
Sorbara
Stetski
Tassi
Trudel
Vandenbeld
Weir
Wilkinson
Wrzesnewskyj
Young

Routine Proceedings

NAYS

Members

Aboultaif	Albas
Albrecht	Alleslev
Allison	Anderson
Arnold	Barrett
Benzen	Bergen
Berthold	Bezan
Blaney (Bellechasse—Les Etchemins—Lévis)	Block
Carrie	Chong
Clarke	Clement
Deltell	Diotte
Dreeshen	Eglinski
Fast	Finley
Fortin	Gallant
Gill	Gladu
Gourde	Harder
Hoback	Jeneroux
Kelly	Kent
Kitchen	Kmiec
Kusie	Lake
Lauzon (Stormont—Dundas—South Glengarry)	Liepert
Lloyd	Lukiwski
Maguire	Martel
McCauley (Edmonton West)	McColeman
McLeod (Kamloops—Thompson—Cariboo)	Miller (Bruce—Grey—Owen Sound)
Motz	Nater
Nicholson	Nuttall
Paul-Hus	Pauzé
Plamondon	Poilievre
Rayes	Reid
Rempel	Saroya
Schmale	Shields
Shipley	Sopuck
Sorenson	Stanton
Strahl	Stubbs
Sweet	Thériault
Tilson	Trost
Van Kesteren	Vecchio
Viersen	Wagantall
Warkentin	Waugh
Webber	Wong
Yurdiga— 81	

PAIRED

Members

Beaulieu LeBlanc— 2

The Speaker: I declare the motion carried.

(Motion agreed to)

ROUTINE PROCEEDINGS

[English]

WAYS AND MEANS

NOTICE OF MOTION

Hon. Bill Morneau (Minister of Finance, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, pursuant to Standing Order 83(1), I wish to table a notice of a ways and means motion to amend the Income Tax Act.

Pursuant to Standing Order 83(2), I ask that an order of the day be designated for consideration of the motion.

* * *

● (1535)

GOVERNMENT RESPONSE TO PETITIONS

Mr. Kevin Lamoureux (Parliamentary Secretary to the Leader of the Government in the House of Commons, Lib.):

Mr. Speaker, pursuant to Standing Order 36(8), I have the honour to table, in both official languages, the government's responses to nine petitions.

* * *

INTERPARLIAMENTARY DELEGATIONS

Mr. Scott Simms (Coast of Bays—Central—Notre Dame, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, pursuant to Standing Order 34(1) I have the honour to present in the House, in both official languages, a report of the Canada-Europe Parliamentary Association reflecting its participation at the 40th annual interparliamentary meeting between the European Parliament and the Parliament of Canada in Brussels, Belgium and Strasbourg, France from March 12 to 14, 2019.

* * *

COMMITTEES OF THE HOUSE

CITIZENSHIP AND IMMIGRATION

Mr. Nick Whalen (St. John's East, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, I have the honour today to present, in both official languages, the 25th report of the Standing Committee on Citizenship and Immigration, entitled "Adapting Canada's Immigration Policies to Today's Realities". Pursuant to Standing Order 109, the committee requests that the government table a comprehensive response to this report.

I would also like to thank the member for Don Valley West, the parliamentary secretary, for his work chairing this committee to help develop this report; and all the members, including the vice-chairs from the Conservative Party and the NDP, who travelled to Tanzania and Uganda in order to obtain witness testimony for this comprehensive report.

Hon. Michelle Rempel (Calgary Nose Hill, CPC): Mr. Speaker, the Conservatives find this response to be wholly inadequate. We have appended a supplementary report, given the government's failures to manage a fair, orderly and compassionate immigration system during the course of this Parliament.

INDUSTRY, SCIENCE AND TECHNOLOGY

Mr. Dan Ruimy (Pitt Meadows—Maple Ridge, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, I have the honour to present, in both official languages, the 18th report of the Standing Committee on Industry, Science and Technology, entitled "Rural Wireless Digital Infrastructure: A Critical Role".

Pursuant to Standing Order 109, the committee requests that the government table a comprehensive response to the report.

FISHERIES AND OCEANS

Mr. Ken McDonald (Avalon, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, I have the honour to present, in both official languages, the following two reports of the Standing Committee on Fisheries and Oceans.

The first is the 25th report, entitled "Aquatic Invasive Species: A National Priority". I want to recognize the member who put this forward for study, the member for North Okanagan—Shuswap and thank him for that.

The second is the 26th report, entitled "In Hot Water—Lobster and Snow Crab in Eastern Canada". I want to thank the members for West Nova and Egmont for putting that study forward.

Routine Proceedings

Pursuant to Standing Order 109, the committee requests that the government table a comprehensive response to each of these two reports.

I will take this opportunity to thank all the members for their work over the past few months as we get ready to rise for the summer. I also want to thank the table staff, translators and everybody involved in making the committee work so efficiently.

FOREIGN AFFAIRS AND INTERNATIONAL DEVELOPMENT

Mr. Michael Levitt (York Centre, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, I have the honour to present, in both official languages, the 28th report of the Standing Committee on Foreign Affairs and International Development, entitled “Renewing Canada's Role in International Support for Democratic Development”.

Pursuant to Standing Order 109, the committee requests that the government table a comprehensive response to this report.

JUSTICE AND HUMAN RIGHTS

Mr. Anthony Housefather (Mount Royal, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, I have two reports to present.

[*Translation*]

I have the honour to present, in both official languages, the 28th report of the Standing Committee on Justice and Human Rights, entitled “The Criminalization of HIV Non-Disclosure in Canada”.

[*English*]

Pursuant to Standing Order 109, the committee requests that the government table a comprehensive response to this report. However, notwithstanding the deadline of 120 days stipulated in Standing Order 109, the committee requests that the comprehensive response be tabled within 60 days of the presentation of the report to the House.

I also have the honour to present, in both official languages, the 29th report of the Standing Committee on Justice and Human Rights, entitled “Taking Action to End Online Hate”.

[*Translation*]

Pursuant to Standing Order 109, the committee requests that the government table a comprehensive response to the report; however, notwithstanding the deadline of 120 days stipulated in Standing Order 109, the committee requests that the comprehensive response to this report be tabled within 60 days of the presentation of the report to the House.

• (1540)

[*English*]

Mr. Michael Barrett (Leeds—Grenville—Thousand Islands and Rideau Lakes, CPC): Mr. Speaker, while Conservatives accept testimony that although deliberately attempting to infect one's partner is infrequent, it still occurs. Victims must have recourse and law enforcement must have tools in these situations. Repealing criminal consequences for the deliberate, negligent or reckless attempts to spread HIV is not something that we can support. I am pleased to table our dissenting report and recommendations.

While I am on my feet, I would like to thank all those who appeared before the committee to give a wide range of diverse views

on the important topic of online hate. While tackling the proliferation of extremist violence is of the utmost importance, it cannot come at the expense of fundamental freedoms of Canadians. The report tabled by the Liberal majority on this committee does not strike an appropriate balance. Measures like the restoration of section 13 of the Canadian Human Rights Act are an unacceptable violation of the freedom of speech of Canadians. Therefore, I am proud to table the Conservative Party's dissenting report and recommendations.

HEALTH

Mr. Bill Casey (Cumberland—Colchester, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, I have the honour to present, in both official languages, the following two reports of the Standing Committee on Health.

The first is the 27th report, entitled “Get Canada's Youth Moving!”

Pursuant to Standing Order 109, the committee requests that the government table a comprehensive response to this report.

The second is the 28th report, entitled “The Health of LGBTQIA2 Communities in Canada”.

Pursuant to Standing Order 109, the committee requests that the government table a comprehensive response to this report. However, notwithstanding the deadline of 120 days stipulated in Standing Order 109, the committee requests that the comprehensive response to this report be tabled within 60 days of the presentation of the report to the House.

With respect to the report entitled “The Health of the LGBTQIA2 Communities in Canada”, I would like to thank the member for Coquitlam—Port Coquitlam for bringing this critically important study forward. It is also quite appropriate that we are tabling this historic report in the middle of Pride Month. We had very comprehensive and emotional testimony throughout that was very educational.

On Motion No. 206 on physical activity of youth, I want to thank the member for Newmarket—Aurora for his tireless work over the last four years to make this study possible. We have heard from experts in the field of physical activity, including Participaction and the Boys and Girls Clubs of Canada.

PUBLIC ACCOUNTS

Hon. Kevin Sorenson (Battle River—Crowfoot, CPC): Mr. Speaker, I have the honour to present, in both official languages, the following two reports of the Standing Committee on Public Accounts: the 67th report, entitled “Report 5, Equipping Officers of the Royal Canadian Mounted Police, of the 2019 Spring Reports of the Auditor General of Canada”; and the 68th report, entitled “Do Service Well: the Standing Committee on Public Accounts of the Forty-Second Parliament”.

Pursuant to Standing Order 109, the committee requests that the government table a comprehensive response to these two reports.

Routine Proceedings

GOVERNMENT OPERATIONS AND ESTIMATES

Mr. Tom Lukiwski (Moose Jaw—Lake Centre—Lanigan, CPC): Mr. Speaker, I have the honour to present, in both official languages, the 18th report of the Standing Committee on Government Operations and Estimates, entitled “An Even Greener Government: Improving the Greening Government Strategy to Maximize its Impact”.

Pursuant to Standing Order 109, the committee requests that the government table a comprehensive response to this report.

Also, since this may be my last opportunity in this Parliament to say a few words on behalf of our committee, I want to congratulate and thank all our clerks, analysts, interpreters and translators, who helped our committee achieve, I think, some very worthy and laudatory work on a number of reports. I also want to thank all the members of the committee. As members know, many times in committee, discussions can get quite heated and quite partisan. I was fortunate enough to chair a committee on which all the members acted with great professionalism and respect for one another. I look forward to once again returning to Parliament in the fall, hopefully to have the same response from future committees.

Mr. Kelly McCauley (Edmonton West, CPC): Mr. Speaker, the Conservatives are pleased to present a supplementary report on a green government.

While the OGGO report highlighted many failures of the Liberal government in greening government, the biggest oversight was that we did not, in this report, look at national defence emissions, which account for 50% of the entire government's emissions. It is because of this, unfortunately, that the report issued by OGGO has little value.

• (1545)

INDIGENOUS AND NORTHERN AFFAIRS

Hon. MaryAnn Mihychuk (Kildonan—St. Paul, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, I have the honour to present, in both official languages, the 22nd report of the Standing Committee on Indigenous and Northern Affairs, entitled “Summary of Evidence of Capacity Building on Reserves”.

I take this opportunity to recognize my colleague, Kevin Waugh, a former school trustee, who understands education and carried the passion of that to this study.

However, it is a study that we did not have an opportunity to complete. All members of our committee would encourage the next government and the next INAN committee to consider continuing this important work, which deals with the training and employment of indigenous people on reserve.

NATURAL RESOURCES

Mr. James Maloney (Etobicoke—Lakeshore, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, I have the honour to present, in both official languages, two reports of the Standing Committee on Natural Resources: the 12th report, entitled “Energy Efficiency Benefits in Canada: Maximizing Opportunities for a Competitive Economy”; and the 13th report, entitled “International Best Practices for Indigenous Engagement in Major Energy Projects: Building Partnerships on the Path to Reconciliation”.

Pursuant to Standing Order 109, the committee requests that the government table a comprehensive response to both reports.

I would like to take this opportunity to thank my fellow committee members, some of whom are here today. I have been working with them for four years now, and they have made the committee run incredibly smoothly. It has been a pleasure working with these individuals. I would especially like to thank our clerk and analysts, who have made working with the committee particularly smooth. Everything ran incredibly well, and it is because of them that this was able to happen.

STATUS OF WOMEN

Mrs. Karen Vecchio (Elgin—Middlesex—London, CPC): Mr. Speaker, I have the honour to present, in both official languages, two reports of the Standing Committee on the Status of Women. The first is the 17th report, entitled “A Lifetime of Dedication: Helping Senior Women Benefit from their Lifelong Contributions to Canadian Society today”. The committee was able to hear from 54 witnesses, including 11 from departments, 10 individuals and 18 organizations. Pursuant to Standing Order 109, the committee requests that the government table a comprehensive response to the report.

The second is the 18th report, entitled “A Force for Change: Creating a Culture of Equality for Women in the Canadian Armed Forces”. The committee heard from nine independent witnesses, four organizations and seven individuals from DND. This was a fantastic opportunity for us to do the work. I want to mention the work done by our analysts, Dominique and Clare, and our fantastic clerk, Kenza, who were able to get all of this done in the last few weeks. We were able to get a report done and tabled.

Pursuant to Standing Order 109, the committee requests that the government table a comprehensive response to this report.

Ms. Rachael Harder (Lethbridge, CPC): Mr. Speaker, we submitted two dissenting reports, the first having to do with seniors. The focus was seniors who find themselves in financially vulnerable situations. Interestingly, under the Liberal government, there are more seniors who live in poverty now than there were up to 15 years ago, according to Statistics Canada data that came out within the last couple of weeks. When Conservatives were in power, the rate of female seniors living in poverty was about 11%. Under the current government, it is over 16%, so that number has increased drastically.

The reason I raise this is that one of the concerns we heard from women who appeared at committee was that not enough is being done to support them, in particular those who choose to spend part or all of their working years at home looking after children and the well-being of the home as a whole. The government does not respect that choice, so in our report, we call on it to respect a woman's autonomy and economic choice in life.

Routine Proceedings

The other dissenting report I am tabling has to do with women in the Canadian Armed Forces. The reason this study was initiated was that the government promised that 25% of those in the Canadian Armed Forces would be women. It has not reached that target. It has also failed to respond to problems taking place within Operation Honour. Liberals also made a campaign promise that they would not take veterans to court, but they have. It is important for us to highlight the places where they have failed to meet their promises to Canadians and to make sure that we act as a voice advocating for these women who are part of the Canadian Armed Forces.

* * *

● (1550)

CONTROLLED DRUGS AND SUBSTANCES ACT

Mr. Nathaniel Erskine-Smith (Beaches—East York, Lib.) moved for leave to introduce Bill C-460, an act to amend the Controlled Drugs and Substances Act and to make consequential amendments to other acts.

He said: Mr. Speaker, thousands of Canadians continue to die because of the ongoing opioid crisis. According to the Public Health Agency of Canada, its most recent numbers indicate that since January 2016, over 11,000 Canadians have died. For the first time in decades, our life expectancy in Canada has stalled, and it is because of the opioid crisis. It is a public health crisis, and public health experts across the country are unanimous in calling for drug use to be treated as a health issue. That means expanding harm reduction and treatment options, which this government has done, but it also means removing the criminal sanction for low-level possession, because we know that the number one stigma associated with seeking treatment is the criminal sanction.

It does not mean removing the criminal sanction for producing or trafficking, but for personal use by the very people we want to help, it means treating patients as patients and not as criminals. That is exactly what this bill seeks to do by removing the criminal sanction for low-level possession. It is a necessary next step in following the evidence to save lives. If I am re-elected, it will be the first bill I reintroduce.

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

* * *

CRIMINAL CODE

Mr. Colin Carrie (Oshawa, CPC) moved for leave to introduce Bill C-461, an act to amend the Criminal Code and the Judges Act (trafficking in persons).

He said: Mr. Speaker, I would like to start by thanking the many advocates and community partners that helped us in the creation of this bill. The issue was brought to my attention by a constituent of mine, Darla, who, as a survivor of human trafficking herself, notes how dire the situation is. As my colleague, the member for Peace River—Westlock, has stated before, human trafficking is happening within 10 blocks of where one lives.

This private member's bill is a product of meaningful consultation with many of our community partners from Oshawa, including the Durham Region Human Trafficking Coalition, Durham Regional

Police and its human trafficking unit, Victim Services of Durham Region and many more.

I want to introduce this to my fellow colleagues as a non-partisan issue. Many ridings along the border and our highways are facing a rise in human trafficking. This is an issue on which we all agree we can do better as a country. Human trafficking does not discriminate, and as a father, I want to ensure that our country is a safer place for our children.

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

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PETITIONS**HUMAN RIGHTS**

Mr. Mark Gerretsen (Kingston and the Islands, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, I have four petitions to present today. I will keep them brief.

The first petition is signed by 67 members of my community from the Christian Cultural Association of South Asians and the community at large. The petitioners are bringing to the attention of the government minority groups from Pakistan who have been subjected to human rights violations, discrimination and fear of prosecution. These asylum seekers are living in miserable conditions, including children, who are deprived of education and treatment. Further, these members of the Christian Cultural Association of South Asians are willing to help. They are calling on the Government of Canada to show compassion and bring these asylum seekers to Canada.

● (1555)

ANIMAL WELFARE

Mr. Mark Gerretsen (Kingston and the Islands, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, the next petition is signed by 25 members of my community. The petitioners are bringing to the attention of the government the need for Canada's animal cruelty laws to be addressed due to an incident that happened to Ms. Krista Brown, of Kingston, when she suffered the loss of two dogs who were killed by her partner. She is requesting that the legislation be changed so that here is a differentiation between pets and farm animals.

AGRICULTURE

Mr. Mark Gerretsen (Kingston and the Islands, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, the third petition is signed by 42 members of my community who are calling on the Government of Canada to recognize and enshrine the rights of farmers and other Canadians to freely save, reuse, select, exchange, condition, store and sell seeds. The petitioners are further calling on the government to refrain from making any regulations under the Plant Breeders' Rights Act.

Routine Proceedings

CYCLING

Mr. Mark Gerretsen (Kingston and the Islands, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, the final petition is signed by 75 members of my community who are calling to the attention of the government the fact that public health and safety, traffic flow, air quality and CO2 emissions are all improved by the greater use of bicycles and that bicycle use is encouraged by bicycle boulevards. They are asking the House of Commons and Parliament to assemble the appropriate funds to subsidize the cost of creating bicycle boulevards in Canadian cities and municipalities, dependent on local assessment needs and feasibility.

PHYSICIAN-ASSISTED DYING

Mrs. Kelly Block (Carlton Trail—Eagle Creek, CPC): Mr. Speaker, I have the privilege of presenting two petitions today.

The first petition is on behalf of hundreds of Canadians who believe that the conscience rights of health care workers are not being protected when they are forced or coerced to become parties in assisted suicide. Section 2 of the Charter of Rights and Freedoms protects the freedom of conscience and freedom of religion, yet the current government has done nothing to defend these rights in its euthanasia legislation. These citizens are calling on the Government of Canada to enshrine in the Criminal Code protection of conscience for physicians and health care workers. I trust that the government will urgently deal with these concerns and defend the Charter of Rights and Freedoms.

CANADA SUMMER JOBS PROGRAM

Mrs. Kelly Block (Carlton Trail—Eagle Creek, CPC): Mr. Speaker, the second petition is on behalf of hundreds of Saskatchewan residents who believe that the Government of Canada must defend the rights of all Canadians, regardless of whether the Liberal Party of Canada agrees with their individual views. Section 2 of the Canadian Charter of Rights and Freedoms identifies freedom of conscience, freedom of thought and freedom of belief as fundamental freedoms. These citizens believe that the current government requiring Canada summer jobs program applicants to hold the same views as the Liberal government is in contravention of the Canadian Charter of Rights and Freedoms. The petitioners call upon the Prime Minister to defend the charter and withdraw this requirement from the Canada summer jobs program. I hope the government will deal with the concerns of these citizens.

PENSIONS

Mr. Peter Julian (New Westminster—Burnaby, NDP): Mr. Speaker, I am proud to present a petition on behalf of many residents of Toronto, Hamilton, Guelph and Brantford, Ontario, joining their voices to the thousands of Canadians who have signed similar petitions. I would like to thank the B.C. Retired Teachers Association and the National Association of Federal Retirees for their advocacy in this work. All these petitioners point out that before the 2015 federal election, Canadians were clearly promised, in writing, that defined benefit plans would not be retroactively changed to target benefit plans. As the House knows, Bill C-27, tabled by the Minister of Finance, precisely permits this change. Therefore, the petitioners are calling on the Government of Canada to withdraw Bill C-27, an act to amend the Pension Benefits Standards Act of 1985.

CARBON PRICING

Mr. John Oliver (Oakville, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, I am pleased to present two petitions today.

The first is signed by Canadians requesting that Parliament collaborate with all provincial and territorial governments to reduce climate change through putting a price on pollution. The petitioners support the adoption of a price on carbon as the focal point of a Canadian climate action plan and urge the implementation of carbon reduction strategies from around the world.

PHARMACARE

Mr. John Oliver (Oakville, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, the second petition is signed by Canadians who request that the federal, provincial and territorial governments work together to deliver a publicly funded and financially sustainable drug plan that would cover all medically necessary prescription drugs for all Canadians. The current patchwork of providing prescription drugs to Canadians is neither adequate nor sustainable. Canadians should not be denied access to essential medicines because they cannot afford them.

EQUALIZATION

Hon. Michelle Rempel (Calgary Nose Hill, CPC): Mr. Speaker, there is frustration among members of my community who have watched the government present draconian legislation against the energy sector. Members of my community are calling upon the government to immediately scrap Bill C-69, as well as to examine the equalization formula, which petitioners believe has been made untenable and unfair given the Prime Minister's ideological opposition to jobs in our community.

• (1600)

HEALTH

Mr. Terry Sheehan (Sault Ste. Marie, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, I rise to present e-petition 2046 on behalf of my constituent Mandy Fowler and her son Kayge. The petition has been signed by 8,712 Canadians from coast to coast to coast.

The petitioners are asking that May 25 be declared as national DIPG day of awareness. It would help to educate the public about the prevalence and severity of this disease, encourage funding to support ongoing research, increase dialogue in the professional medical community, further publicize and promote Canada's involvement in the fight against DIPG and honour the victims of this terrible disease.

TRANSPORTATION SAFETY

Ms. Rachael Harder (Lethbridge, CPC): Mr. Speaker, many Canadians from coast to coast are calling on the government to put the safety and well-being of children first and foremost. They call on the federal government to consider the placement of three-point seat belts within school buses across the country. I am tabling a petition on this today.

Routine Proceedings

GENETICALLY MODIFIED FOODS

Mr. Lloyd Longfield (Guelph, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, I have three petitions that were signed at the Guelph Farmers' Market by local advocates.

The first one is signed by 312 Canadians and calls for an immediate moratorium on the licensing and release of new GMOs and for an independent review of existing GMOs already released in the market.

AGRICULTURE

Mr. Lloyd Longfield (Guelph, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, the second petition, signed by 540 Canadians, calls on Parliament to enshrine in legislation the inalienable rights of farmers and other Canadians to save, reuse, select, exchange and sell seeds.

GENETICALLY MODIFIED ALFALFA

Mr. Lloyd Longfield (Guelph, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, the final petition, signed by 300 Canadians, calls for a moratorium on the release of genetically modified alfalfa in order to allow proper review of its impact on farmers in Canada.

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QUESTIONS ON THE ORDER PAPER

Mr. Kevin Lamoureux (Parliamentary Secretary to the Leader of the Government in the House of Commons, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, the following questions will be answered today: Questions Nos. 2458, 2469 and 2470.

[Text]

Question No. 2458—**Mr. Colin Carrie:**

With regard to Health Canada's regulation of natural health products and non-prescription drugs: (a) what specific regulatory changes have been proposed or are currently under consideration by Health Canada; (b) for each proposed change, what is the stage, status, and timeline of the proposed change; and (c) is Health Canada proposing or considering bringing natural health products under direct regulation and, if so, what are the details, including timeline of such a proposal?

Ms. Pam Damoff (Parliamentary Secretary to the Minister of Health, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, in response to parts (a), (b) and (c), natural health products have been regulated under the natural health products regulations since 2004, and Canadians now have access to more than 150,000 licensed natural health products. The government is committed to preserving access to a wide range of health products, while making sure that Canadians have the information they need on the product labels to make informed health choices. Health Canada is dedicated to being reasonable, thoughtful and deliberate in how it develops its policy proposals and how it implements any changes.

Since fall 2016, departmental officials have conducted extensive consultations with a diverse range of stakeholders to gain their perspectives and concerns on proposed changes to the natural health products regulations to improve the labelling of natural health products, and the food and drug regulations to modernize the oversight approach for non-prescription drugs. Health Canada has received input from over 4,500 consumers, industry, health care professionals, academia and many other interested stakeholders. This engagement will continue as proposals advance over the coming months to further seek stakeholders' perspectives and collaboratively work with them on potential solutions.

With regard to the natural health products regulations, Health Canada is proposing changes to improve the labelling of natural health products to make labels easier to read and understand, help consumers make informed decisions about their health and the health of their families, and reduce avoidable harms associated with confusing or illegible labels. Under this new proposal, labels would require a standardized product facts table, a minimum font size and appropriate colour contrast. This proposal is targeting spring 2020 for pre-publication in the Canada Gazette, part I. To support this proposal and its implementation, Health Canada has been engaging stakeholders extensively and has been meeting individual companies representing tens of thousands of natural health products on the Canadian market, to identify any challenges with implementing the proposed labelling changes and working in collaboration with stakeholders to identify potential solutions. Furthermore, Health Canada will publish its proposed guidance on labelling changes in June 2019 to seek additional feedback on the proposed changes prior to formal consultation in Canada Gazette, part I.

In April 2019, Health Canada published its findings from public opinion research on improving self-care product labelling during in-person public consultations held across Canada in 2018: "Consulting Consumers on Self-Care Product Labelling: A Report on What We Heard", <https://www.canada.ca/en/health-canada/topics/self-care-products/what-we-heard-product-labelling.html>.

With regard to the food and drug regulations, Health Canada is proposing changes to modernize the oversight approach for non-prescription drugs, which range from cosmetic-like topical products to higher-risk products such as non-steroidal anti-inflammatories. This proposal would introduce simplified market access pathways for lower-risk products and reduce regulatory burden for industry. This proposal is targeting spring 2020 for pre-publication in Canada Gazette, part I.

The regulatory modernization proposals, as described above, are outlined in Health Canada's "Forward Regulatory Plan 2019-2021": <https://www.canada.ca/en/health-canada/corporate/about-health-canada/legislation-guidelines/acts-regulations/forward-regulatory-plan/plan/self-care-framework.html>.

More information on the proposed regulatory changes and how stakeholders can get involved can be found in "Next steps on the self-care products initiative", at <https://www.canada.ca/en/health-canada/services/self-care-framework.html>.

Health Canada remains committed to continue to engage stakeholders throughout the regulatory modernization process.

Question No. 2469—**Mr. Tom Kmiec:**

With regard to the Asian Infrastructure Investment Bank, since January 1, 2016: (a) how many Canadian businesses are investing in projects in the Asian Infrastructure Investment Bank, broken down by year; (b) how much Canadian money is spent on projects in the Asian Infrastructure Investment Bank, broken down by year; and (c) of the projects listed in (a), how many of these businesses are operating through, either directly or indirectly, the Canadian government?

Routine Proceedings

Mr. Joël Lightbound (Parliamentary Secretary to the Minister of Finance, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, in response to part (a), the Department of Finance has been informed that one Canadian firm, Hatch, is providing consulting services on an AIIB-financed project. In addition, the Department of Finance understands that Canadian firms and consultants are engaged with core functions of the bank. For example, TD Securities helped manage AIIB's first bond issuance in May 2019, among other financial services firms.

The AIIB publishes details of investors who invest alongside the AIIB in a project. This information can be found on the AIIB website in project documents of both proposed and approved projects, at the following links: <https://www.aiib.org/en/projects/approved/index.html> and <https://www.aiib.org/en/projects/proposed/index.html>.

In response to part (b), Canada purchased a 0.995% shareholding in the Asian Infrastructure Investment Bank at a cost of \$199 million U.S. This amount, which is payable over a five-year period in equal proportions, starting in 2017-18, is pooled with that of other member countries and used to finance AIIB projects over multiple years.

In response to part (c), businesses win procurement contracts independently and do not operate through the Government of Canada.

Question No. 2470—Ms. Lisa Raitt:

With regard to the 2016 compliance agreement signed by SNC-Lavalin and Elections Canada: did Elections Canada receive any communication from the government, including from any minister's office, about SNC-Lavalin since November 4, 2015, and, if so, what are the details of all communication, including (i) date, (ii) sender, (iii) recipient, (iv) form (email, letter, telephone, etc.), (v) subject matter, (vi) summary of contents?

Mr. Arif Virani (Parliamentary Secretary to the Minister of Justice and Attorney General of Canada and to the Minister of Democratic Institutions, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, the Office of the Chief Electoral Officer of Canada has not received any communication from the government, including from any minister's office, about the 2016 compliance agreement signed by SNC-Lavalin Group Inc. and the Commissioner of Canada Elections, CCE.

The CCE is responsible to ensure that the Canada Elections Act and the Referendum Act are complied with and enforced, including the negotiation of compliance agreements. In the exercise of that role, he acts independently of the Chief Electoral Officer.

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[English]

QUESTIONS PASSED AS ORDERS FOR RETURNS

Mr. Kevin Lamoureux (Parliamentary Secretary to the Leader of the Government in the House of Commons, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, if the government's responses to Questions Nos. 2454 to 2457, 2459 to 2468 and 2471 to 2476 could be made orders for returns, these returns would be tabled immediately.

The Deputy Speaker: Is that agreed?

Some hon. members: Agreed.

[Text]

Question No. 2454—Mr. Murray Rankin:

With regard to the case of Abousfian Abdelrazik and his claims that Canada violated his rights under the Canadian Charter of Rights and Freedoms, since June 1, 2018: how much has it cost the government to litigate the case, broken down by (i) the value of all legal services, (ii) disbursements and costs awards for Federal Court file numbers T-727-08 and T-1580-09?

(Return tabled)

Question No. 2455—Mr. Todd Doherty:

With regard to the restrictions announced in April 2019 by the Department of Fisheries and Oceans on Chinook salmon fishing in British Columbia: (a) did the government do an economic analysis of the impact of the recreational fishery restrictions on the fishing tourism industry for 2019, and, if so, what were the findings of the analysis; and (b) did the government do an economic analysis of the impact of the restrictions, both recreational and commercial, on the various communities and regions of British Columbia impacted by the restrictions and, if so, what were the findings of the analysis?

(Return tabled)

Question No. 2456—Mr. Larry Maguire:

With regard to the procurement, deployment, usage and maintenance of all new and existing information and communications technologies (ICT) and all related costs incurred by the government in fiscal year 2018-19: (a) what was the total level of overall spending by each federal department, agency, Crown corporation, and other government entities; (b) what are the details of all these expenditures and related costs, including salaries and commercial purchases; (c) how many full-time employees, part-time employees, indeterminate appointments, term employees, contractors and consultants were employed to manage, maintain and improve ICT systems and infrastructure in each federal department, agency, Crown corporation or other government entities; and (d) what is the ratio of all ICT support workers (full-time, part-time, indeterminate, term employees, contractors and consultants) to non-ICT employees in each federal department, agency, Crown corporation, and other government entities?

(Return tabled)

Question No. 2457—Mr. Todd Doherty:

With regard to the caribou recovery agreements negotiated, proposed, or entered into by the government since November 4, 2015, including those currently under negotiation or consultation: (a) for each agreement, has an economic impact study been conducted and, if so, what are the details, including findings of each study; (b) for each agreement, what is the total projected economic impact, broken down by (i) industry (tourism, logging, transportation, etc.), (ii) region or municipality; and (c) what are the details of all organizations consulted in relation to the economic impact of such agreements, including (i) name of organization, (ii) date, (iii) form of consultation?

(Return tabled)

Question No. 2459—Mr. Pierre-Luc Dusseault:

With regard to the Canada Infrastructure Bank, since its creation: (a) what is the number of meetings held with Canadian and foreign investors, broken down by (i) month, (ii) country, (iii) investor class; (b) what is the complete list of investors met; (c) what are the details of the contracts awarded by the Canada Infrastructure Bank, including (i) date of contract, (ii) value of contract, (iii) vendor name, (iv) file number, (v) description of services provided; (d) what are the details of all travel expenses incurred, including for each expenditure the (i) traveller's name, (ii) purpose of the travel, (iii) travel dates, (iv) airfare, (v) other transportation costs, (vi) accommodation costs, (vii) meals and incidentals, (viii) other expenses, (ix) total amount; and (e) what are the details of all hospitality expenses incurred by the Bank, including for each expenditure the (i) guest's name, (ii) event location, (iii) service vendor, (iv) total amount, (v) event description, (vi) date, (vii) number of attendees, (viii) number of government employees in attendance, (ix) number of guests?

(Return tabled)

*Routine Proceedings***Question No. 2460—Mr. Guy Lauzon:**

With regard to ongoing or planned government IT projects over \$1 million: (a) what is the list of each project, including a brief description; and (b) for each project listed in (a), what is the (i) total budget, (ii) estimated completion date?

(Return tabled)

Question No. 2461—Mr. Guy Lauzon:

With regard to international trips taken by the Prime Minister since January 1, 2016: (a) what are the details of each trip, including (i) dates, (ii) destination, (iii) purpose; (b) for each trip in (a), how many guests who were not members of the Prime Minister's family, employees of the government, or elected officials, were on each trip; and (c) what are the details of each guest in (b), including (i) name, (ii) title, (iii) reason for being on the trip, (iv) dates individual was on the trip?

(Return tabled)

Question No. 2462—Mr. Guy Lauzon:

With regard to government expenditures on gala, concert or sporting event tickets since January 1, 2018: what was the (i) date, (ii) location, (iii) total cost, (iv) cost per ticket, (v) number of tickets, (vi) title of persons using the tickets, (vii) name or title of event for tickets purchased by, or billed to, any department, agency, Crown corporation, or other government entity?

(Return tabled)

Question No. 2463—Mr. Dave Van Kesteren:

With regard to Minister's regional offices (MROs): (a) what are the current locations of each MRO; (b) how many government employees, excluding Ministerial exempt staff, are currently working in each office; and (c) how many Ministerial exempt staff are currently working in each office?

(Return tabled)

Question No. 2464—Mrs. Cathy McLeod:

With regard to the statement by the Minister of Indigenous Services on April 30, 2019, that "Kashechewan will be relocated": (a) where will the community be located; and (b) what is the projected timeline for the relocation?

(Return tabled)

Question No. 2465—Mr. Luc Berthold:

With regard to the government's response to the outbreak of African Swine Fever (ASF) in certain parts of the world: (a) what specific new measures has the government taken since January 1, 2019, in order to prevent ASF from coming to Canada; and (b) what new restrictions have been put in place on imports in order to prevent ASF from coming to Canada, broken down by country?

(Return tabled)

Question No. 2466—Mr. Dean Allison:

With regard to usage of the government's fleet of Challenger aircraft, since January 1, 2019: what are the details of the legs of each flight, including (i) date, (ii) point of departure, (iii) destination, (iv) number of passengers, (v) names and titles of passengers, excluding security or Canadian Armed Forces members, (vi) total catering bill related to the flight?

(Return tabled)

Question No. 2467—Mr. Dave MacKenzie:

With regard to all government contracts awarded for public relation services since January 1, 2018, broken down by department, agency, Crown corporation, or other government entity: what are the details of these contracts, including (i) date of contract, (ii) value of contract, (iii) vendor name, (iv) file number, (v) description of services provided, (vi) start and end dates of services provided?

(Return tabled)

Question No. 2468—Mr. Tom Lukiwski:

With regard to Service Canada's national in-person service delivery network, for each Service Canada Centre: (a) how many centres were operational as of November 4, 2015; (b) what were the locations and number of full-time employees (FTEs) at each location, as of November 4, 2015; (c) how many centres are currently operational; (d) what are the current locations and number of FTEs at each location; (e) which offices have changed their hours of service between November 4, 2015, and present; and (f) for each office which has changed their hours, what were the hours of service as of (i) November 4, 2015, (ii) May 1, 2019?

(Return tabled)

Question No. 2471—Mr. Dan Albas:

With regard to the government's Connect to Innovate Program first announced in the 2016 Budget: (a) what is the total of all expenditures to date under the program; (b) what are the details of all projects funded to date under the program, including (i) recipient of funding, (ii) name of the project, (iii) location, (iv) project start date, (v) projected completion date, (vi) amount of funding pledged, (vii) amount of funding actually provided to date, (viii) description of the project; (c) which of the projected listed in (b) have agreements signed, and which ones do not yet have a signed agreement; and (d) which of the details in (a) through (c) are available on the Connect to Innovate section of Industry Canada's website and what is the specific website location where each such detail is located, broken down by detail requested in (a) through (c), including the subparts of each question?

(Return tabled)

Question No. 2472—Mr. Dan Albas:

With regard to concerns that infrastructure funding has been announced, but not delivered, in Kelowna, British Columbia, since November 4, 2015: (a) what is the total amount of funding committed in Kelowna; (b) what is the total amount of funding paid out in relation to the funding committed in (a); and (c) what are the details of all projects, including (i) date of announcement, (ii) amount committed, (iii) amount actually paid out to date, (iv) project description?

(Return tabled)

Question No. 2473—Mr. Dan Albas:

With regard to the Connect to Innovate Program and specifically the project to close the Canadian North Fibre Loop between Dawson City and Inuvik: (a) what is the current status of the project; (b) what are the details of any contracts signed in relation to the project, including the date each contract was signed; (c) what amount has the government committed to the project; (d) of the funding commitment in (c), what amount has been delivered; (e) what is the start date of the project; (f) what is the projected completion date of the project; (g) what are the details of any tender issued in relation to the project; (h) has a contractor been selected for the project and, if so, which contractor was selected and when was the selection made; and (i) which of the details in (a) through (h) are available on the Connect to Innovate section of Industry Canada's website and what is the specific website location where each such detail is located, broken down by detail requested in (a) through (h)?

(Return tabled)

Question No. 2474—Mr. Kerry Diotte:

With regard to all expenditures on hospitality since January 1, 2019, broken down by department or agency: what are the details of all expenditures, including (i) vendor, (ii) amount, (iii) date of expenditure, (iv) start and end date of contract, (v) description of goods or services provided, including quantity, if applicable, (vi) file number, (vii) number of government employees in attendance, (viii) number of other attendees, (ix) location?

(Return tabled)

S. O. 57

Question No. 2475—**Ms. Sheri Benson:**

With regard to the Non-Insured Health Benefit (NIHB) Program, and the provision of medical transportation benefits in Saskatchewan for each fiscal year from 2012-13 to the current : (a) what is the number of clients served; (b) what is the number of approved trips; (c) what were the approved transportation service providers and the number of trips approved for each; (d) what were the approved modes of transportation and the number of trips per mode; (e) what was the average wait time for approval of applications; (f) what was the number of trips that required lodging, accommodations, or other expenses unrelated to the provision of the treatment being sought; (g) what were the reasons why additional expenses in (f) were approved and the number of applications or trips approved for each; and (h) what was the number of appeals launched as a result of rejected applications, the average length of the appeals process, and the aggregate results?

(Return tabled)

Question No. 2476—**Ms. Sheri Benson:**

With regard to the 2019-20 federal budget presentation of March 19, 2019, and issues related to the Phoenix pay system for public servants, as of today: (a) what is the total number of affected clients; and (b) what is the total number of affected clients in each electoral district?

(Return tabled)

[*English*]

Mr. Kevin Lamoureux: Mr. Speaker, I ask that all remaining questions be allowed to stand.

The Deputy Speaker: Is that agreed?

Some hon. members: Agreed.

GOVERNMENT ORDERS

[*English*]

THE ENVIRONMENT

MOTION THAT DEBATE BE NOT FURTHER ADJOURNED

Hon. Bardish Chagger (Leader of the Government in the House of Commons, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, in relation to the consideration of Government Business No. 29, I move:

That the debate be not further adjourned.

•(1605)

The Deputy Speaker: In accordance with Standing Order 67.1, we will now proceed to a 30-minute question period.

Members will recall that the preference for questions during the 30 minutes is provided to the opposition, but not to the exclusion of some members from the government side. I ask all members who wish to participate in the 30 minutes to now rise, to indicate how much time will be afforded.

If members could keep their interventions to approximately one and a half minutes, that will get through the members who wish to participate.

A final reminder is that members can speak more than once, should the need arise or it be necessary in the course of the 30 minutes.

We will now proceed to questions, with the hon. member for Calgary Nose Hill.

Hon. Michelle Rempel (Calgary Nose Hill, CPC): Mr. Speaker, I want to take note of the fact that the government introduced this motion over a month ago. The government House leader has not put this back on the agenda, which, for one, kind of belies what the Liberal government actually thinks constitutes an emergency.

Two, the Parliamentary Budget Officer this week panned the government's carbon tax, saying that it would not work. Then the environment minister said that the Liberals were not going to increase the price of carbon, so they admitted that their carbon tax is a cash grab. She is responsible for dumping millions of litres of raw sewage into the St. Lawrence. As well, the Prime Minister could not even answer to Canadians what he was doing to reduce plastics use.

If it is such an emergency, why is the Prime Minister jetting back and forth today from the Raptors parade, creating a big carbon footprint?

Hon. Catherine McKenna (Minister of Environment and Climate Change, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, it is really important that the House come together to vote on the increasing climate emergency that we are seeing here in Canada and around the world.

Scientists did a report on the science behind climate change here in Canada. It found that Canada is warming at twice the global average, and three times or more in our north. We know we need to take action on climate change. We know that the science is clear, including the science around extreme weather and the links we have seen already this year, with floods in the Ottawa-Gatineau region. They were supposed to be once in a hundred-year floods and are now happening every several years. That is having a real impact on people's lives, property and on the economy.

When it comes to Alberta, we are already seeing wildfires. We know the science behind climate change. The changing climate report shows we can expect that wildfires will start earlier, will burn longer and will have a greater impact. We need to take action on climate change. I am hoping that the whole House comes together to show Canadians from coast to coast to coast that we understand there is an increasing climate emergency. We understand the science behind climate change, and we understand the need to do work here at home to meet our international obligations.

Mr. Peter Julian (New Westminster—Burnaby, NDP): Mr. Speaker, that is exactly the point. The science says that pushing through TMX, the Trans Mountain pipeline expansion, will massively increase greenhouse gas emissions for Canada. The science says, as well, that if we continue to massively subsidize billions of dollars a year to the fossil fuel industry, we are going to simply accelerate climate change. The science says all of those things.

The NDP brought forward a climate emergency motion over a month ago. The Liberals voted it down, because we called for what science calls for exactly, which is stopping the fossil fuel subsidies that the Liberals love to lavish on the Canadian Association of Petroleum Producers and stopping the Trans Mountain pipeline.

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A month later, after this motion simply languishing, all of sudden, on the eve of the Trans Mountain rubber-stamp, the Liberals are bringing it back. They are bringing it back with a vicious type of closure that basically shuts down debate completely. Is the reason that they are bringing in this toxic type of closure today, after letting this motion languish for weeks, not because tomorrow they are going to rubber-stamp and ram through Trans Mountain and they are embarrassed about the consequences on climate change?

Hon. Catherine McKenna: Mr. Speaker, I hope the member opposite and his party will support our motion that we have an increasing climate emergency.

I know the NDP cares greatly about taking action on climate change, but we also have to make sure we grow the economy and create good jobs. That has always been our focus. Affordability is something that Canadians care about. That is why we put a price on pollution. However, we are giving the money back to people, such that 80% of people will be better off, especially low- and middle-income people.

That is why we are also making investments in clean innovation. That is creating jobs across the country. I have been in British Columbia and have seen amazing companies, like Carbon Engineering, in Squamish, B.C. They are taking CO₂ out of the air and then using it to create clean fuels. That is the kind of innovation that is going to create good jobs.

We have made historic investments in public transportation so that people can get around cheaper, faster, cleaner. We are working across the board. We understand that we need to tackle climate change; we need to protect to environment. We can do that at the same time as growing the economy and making sure that life is affordable for Canadians.

Ms. Rachael Harder (Lethbridge, CPC): Mr. Speaker, as has been mentioned, this motion was first introduced just over a week ago. Here we are today, and it is being pushed through.

There is some hypocrisy entangled within the motion that is being brought forward by the Liberals. I will comment a little on that. The government says that its so-called climate action plan is to impose a carbon tax on Canadians, but then it is allowing the largest emitters in Canada to get off scot-free. They are off the hook. Meanwhile, everyday Canadians, small business owners, moms and dads who are driving their kids around to sports games, are paying top dollar on the fuel that they use as well as the natural gas they use to heat their homes in Canada. That is not really an option, especially for those in my constituency, Lethbridge, where our winters are -30°C or -35°C.

The idea of a carbon tax is a theory, but it does not work in reality. Instead, we should be focusing on looking after our rivers and waterways, on conserving our land and making sure that wildlife is protected. We should be making sure that we are making investments in green technologies.

Let us talk about the hypocrisy with regard to the St. Lawrence River, the waste that is being dumped in it and the government having done absolutely nothing to stop that.

If we are going to talk about the environment, then let us have a real conversation about the environment, and let us make real

changes for it, rather than speaking out of one side of our mouth and doing something different, which is exactly what the Liberals are doing.

• (1610)

Hon. Catherine McKenna: Mr. Speaker, I was very pleased to see last week that Pope Francis met with major energy companies. He said that carbon pricing was essential to combatting climate change. He appealed to climate change deniers to listen to the science. He said, “For too long we have collectively failed to listen to the fruits of scientific analysis and “doomsday predictions can no longer be met with irony or disdain”.

Pope Francis is so focused on this, because the most vulnerable, the poorest among us are the most impacted by climate change. We need to take action. He was very clear that there needs to be price on pollution, that it can no longer be free to pollute, because we are paying the price. The people who are paying the price are the most vulnerable among us. That is a basic teaching of the church, that we need to be standing up for the most vulnerable, that we need to be working together to protect what he has called “our common home”.

Laudato Si, the encyclical of the Pope, is very clear about the need for us all to come together, which I hope this House will do. We need to come together to tackle climate change, to realize it can no longer be free to pollute, to understand that we need to do the hard work at home to meet our international obligations. We are all going to need to do more.

Mrs. Deborah Schulte (Parliamentary Secretary to the Minister of National Revenue, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, some people in my riding are questioning why we need to declare a climate emergency.

While climate impacts are being felt around the globe, in my riding, we are seeing impacts, with irregular weather, hotter summers, invasive species killing our trees, and affecting our health, for instance with Lyme disease and the West Nile virus.

However, there are those who are questioning the need to declare this a climate emergency. Can the Minister of Environment and Climate Change please share with the House the purpose of declaring a climate emergency?

Hon. Catherine McKenna: Mr. Speaker, I want to thank my hon. colleague for all the work that she has done to protect the environment, to tackle climate change, including previously as head of the House of Commons committee on the environment.

The reason we need to recognize that we have an increasing climate emergency is because that is what the science tells us. The science says that Canada is warming at twice the global average, three times more in our north. If we are to take serious action on climate change, we need to understand the science, we need to recognize the science and we need to act on the science.

We hope that everyone in the House will come together and we will show Canadians from coast to coast to coast that we understand the science behind climate change, including the impacts that the member spoke about in her own riding.

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We recognize that extreme weather is linked to climate change. We recognize that we need to take action and we need to take it now. We recognize that we need to take action at home to meet our international obligations. We all need to do more.

It is important to show Canadians and the world that Canada understands. It is time for us to act. It is good for our economy, it is good for our environment and we owe it to our kids.

Hon. Michelle Rempel: Mr. Speaker, I think we can all agree that when it comes to addressing climate change, we need policy that is based on fact and scientific evidence. When we hear the Parliamentary Budget Officer say that the \$40 per tonne price on carbon is not going to allow the government to meet its Paris targets, that is something we should digest, internalize and perhaps change course on.

For the minister to now go from saying we need a scientific-based approach to making this about religion, is hypocritical. Is she going to quote religion on other areas of policy? We have to get away from zealotry and dogma, which is what the minister has made her whole career on. It is the church of climate change and policies that will not reduce greenhouse gas emissions.

If the minister really cares about climate, why is she making this about religious dogma as opposed to putting forward a plan that would actually reduce greenhouse gas emissions? Why is the government invoking closure on a debate where we could be discussing these exact things and sussing out a policy that would reduce greenhouse gas emissions and address climate change in a meaningful way?

• (1615)

Hon. Catherine McKenna: Mr. Speaker, my point was that people around the world, including the Pope, understood that climate change was having an impact and that we needed to act. In fact, that meeting was between the Pope and major energy companies.

The member opposite cares greatly about jobs and about getting our resources to market. Those companies met with the Pope to say that a price needed to be put on pollution.

Let us talk about our climate plan. We have a climate plan and we are committed to meeting our targets. We have noted that we are not just doing a price on pollution, but we have other measures.

What are we doing as part of our climate plan? We are making historic investments in public transportation. We are phasing out coal and investing in renewable energy and a just transition for workers, because we need to ensure people are at the heart of it. We are investing in clean innovation and energy efficiency. We are working with provinces on electric vehicles to ensure people have more affordable and cleaner options. We are making investments in affordable housing, but ensuring that those investments are the most energy efficient, so that people with the least amount of money can save money.

We are going to continue acting on climate change. I hope the party opposite is going to present its climate plan. We really hope it will show how the Conservatives will meet the target right in Canada through clear action.

Mr. Richard Cannings (South Okanagan—West Kootenay, NDP): Mr. Speaker, I find it very troubling that we are talking about moving closure on a motion to declare the climate issue in Canada a crisis. As the minister said, Canadians are concerned, above anything else, about climate change. All I hear is about the forest fires and the floods.

Yesterday I was in my home in Penticton and at one o'clock in the morning, my neighbour banged on my door to tell me to get out of the house because there was a big forest brush fire 200 metres from our houses. We had to get out. Luckily, three fire departments came and put the fire out.

People are very concerned about this, yet the Liberal government tries to stand behind its targets, which the IPCC says are inadequate. Climate action tracking websites say that our actions are highly insufficient. We should be debating this in the House for as long as it takes to get across to everybody here. We have to work across party lines and across provincial borders to get this done. Moving closure on this sends a very bad signal to the Canadian people.

Hon. Catherine McKenna: Mr. Speaker, I know how much my hon. colleague cares about taking action on the environment. It sounds like it was a terrible situation last night. This is, unfortunately, what we are seeing across the country. Wildfires are now starting earlier in the season because it is much drier. They are burning longer and they are more destructive. We see clear links to climate change and we will continue to see this.

The reason we need to have this discussion and the reason it is important that we have this vote before the session ends is because Canadians deserve to see whether everyone in the House understands the science behind climate change, understands that we increasingly are in a climate emergency and understands that we need to do our part at home. We need to meet our international obligations and then, like everyone in the world, we need to do more. This is a critical discussion. I am very hopeful. I believe the NDP will support this motion.

However, the big question is this. Will the Conservatives support the motion? Do they understand that Canadians expect us to act right here at home? Do they understand that we need to take the measures to reduce emissions, that we can do it in a way that makes life affordable the same way we have done with putting a price on pollution and giving the money back to Canadians, that we need to move forward as a country, that we should not be fighting in court, that we should not be having sticker campaigns like Premier Ford and that we should be taking serious action on climate change?

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•(1620)

Mr. John Nater (Perth—Wellington, CPC): Mr. Speaker, according to the Prime Minister's itinerary today, he started the morning in Ottawa. He then flew to Toronto. He will then fly to Ottawa. After that, he will fly to Montreal. After he is done in Montreal, he will fly back to Ottawa for the climate emergency vote tonight.

What does the Challenger jet fly on? Does it fly on good intentions or is it just that the Prime Minister is a high-carbon hypocrite?

The Deputy Speaker: Order, please. I would ask the hon. member for Perth—Wellington to consider the use of those kinds of characterizations. As the members have seen, they lead to disorder. I really ask hon. members to think about how they phrase things, especially when they are talking about characterizing or assigning adjectives to other hon. members in the House.

The hon. Minister of Environment and Climate Change.

Hon. Catherine McKenna: Mr. Speaker, what Canadians want to know is whether Conservative politicians understand that climate change is an increasing emergency. There is a real question out there. There have been a number of cases where the Conservatives have openly questioned the links between extreme weather and climate change.

Jason Kenney, the Premier of Alberta, says that climate change is like the flavour of the month. There are forest fires burning such that he cannot do a press conference to talk about how he killed a price on pollution, because it is so smoky in the legislative building.

Doug Ford is cutting programs for flood management and forest fire management, while there are floods and forest fires. He is funding sticker campaigns so small-business owners will have to pay fines if they do not mislead Ontarians about the cost of a price on pollution and the money that goes directly back to people, that this is shameful that we need to take action on climate change.

Young people are striking every Friday. They are looking for leadership from everyone in the House to stand and say that we have an increasing climate emergency. We need to take action, we need to make decisions based on science and we need to come together to meet our international obligations and then, like the world, we all need to do more.

Mr. Lloyd Longfield (Guelph, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, a few weeks ago, the students in Guelph from the community environmental leadership program and the Headwater Group had a town hall where they had the mayor, the MPP and me, as the MP, being challenged to recognize the climate emergency.

At the beginning of the session, I was not sure what they meant by that. By the end of the session, it was very clear that they were asking us to look at our policies, look at our budgeting and look at how we were protecting the natural environment as an emergency, as something that needed to have action now. They also asked about our alignment with international partners and what Canada was doing to lead in the international stadium. I had a follow-up meeting last week on Skype with those same students, who were calling on us to take action as a federal government.

Could the minister update us on our international obligations as well as how we develop policy, budgets and protection of natural habitat with respect to managing this crisis and emergency we are facing?

Hon. Catherine McKenna: Mr. Speaker, I have had a chance to visit the member's riding to see what the university is doing, to see what local businesses are doing in the community and how much they care about the environment and are taking action on climate change.

We started in Paris with the Paris Agreement. We played an active role at the negotiating table. People were happy that Canada was there saying that we recognized the science, that we needed an ambitious agreement. For the first time ever, the whole world came together and agreed that we all needed to take action on climate change.

Then we came home. We did the hard work. We developed a national climate plan that has over 50 measures, from phasing out coal, to putting a price on pollution, to making historic investments in public transportation and clean innovation. However, we have not stopped. We are doubling the amount of nature we are protecting because that is natural sinks. It is also good for species at risk, which I know are a concern in the member's riding as well. We just announced incentives for zero-emission vehicles. We are tackling plastic pollution. We are not going to stop because we know we have an opportunity to do a lot better.

We did not get it out of the stone age because we ran out of stones. We got smarter. This is progress and we will continue to move forward for Canadians.

•(1625)

Mr. Alistair MacGregor (Cowichan—Malahat—Langford, NDP): Mr. Speaker, the debate in the House of Commons does not do justice to the crisis we are in. For my Conservatives friends, when we arguing over the costs of the carbon tax, the costs of unmitigated climate change are going to completely dwarf anything we are arguing about now in future generations.

With respect to the minister, I know her heart is in the right place and I know many of my Liberal colleagues are as well. However, with respect to this motion, I look at what the government has done, spending \$4.5 billion of our tax dollars on an export pipeline. Is this the economic future in which we want to be investing? How long is the pipeline going to operate for, another 10 years, maybe 20 years or 30 years? In 2050, are we still going to be exporting three times as much bitumen as we are presently? Is that where we want to be?

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To use an analogy, the reason Wayne Gretzky was such a great hockey player was because he was always going to be where the puck was going to be, not where it was currently. That is what we need to do as a country. We have to look at where we want to be in 2050, 2060 and put ourselves on a projection toward that. It does not involve purchasing an oil pipeline, tripling its capacity and investing in fossil fuels that rightly belong in the past.

We have to do the just transition. We have to be faithful to our workers, use their skill sets and get them in the new energy economy of the future. I do not see actions with respect to the government paying attention to the seriousness of the motion before us today.

Hon. Catherine McKenna: Mr. Speaker, I totally agree. We need to move to the economy of the future. That does not happen overnight, but we are working extraordinarily hard. We have invested over \$40 billion in everything from public transportation, to green infrastructure, to clean innovation to investments in science and research. That is critically important, but it is also critically important we still create jobs.

When we look at the LNG Canada, it is the largest foreign direct investment in Canada's history that will create tens of thousands of jobs. The NDP members initially supported this project, which is supported by the NDP government in British Columbia, but now they have flip-flopped and are against this project. That is not how we will transition to a cleaner future. We need to figure this out.

Transitions take time. They require thoughtfulness and they require a great ambition. That is what we are doing. We are doing what we need to on climate change at the same time ensuring that when we phase out coal, there is a just transition for workers and communities. We put a price on pollution to give the money back to people so life is more affordable for 80% of families, especially low and middle-income.

We are going to continue to do that because we need to figure this out together. When I talk to Canadians, they want us to take serious action on climate change. They also want good jobs and they want life to be affordable.

Mr. Arnold Viersen (Peace River—Westlock, CPC): Mr. Speaker, talking about thoughtful transitioning, it would be interesting to see if the Prime Minister would show some leadership on this issue. It is interesting to note his itinerary for today. He started out his morning in Ottawa. He is now in Toronto and he is coming back to Ottawa. He is going to end his day in Montreal and we expect him to be back in Ottawa for tomorrow. How does he propose to tour around the country in this manner without a carbon economy?

Hon. Catherine McKenna: Mr. Speaker, sometimes I really wonder about the debate. Is this really the biggest issue? We are talking about a climate emergency.

I noted that the Leader of the Opposition was also celebrating the Raptors. That is a great thing. We the North. I am really happy the Raptors won. I bet probably everyone in the House is happy the Raptors won, but they still want a serious climate plan. That is what we have. We have a serious climate plan, a plan that will phase out coal, that will invest in clean innovation, that will invest in energy efficiency, that will make sure we are looking at biofuels for planes and that we are investing in the economy of the future, but we

continue to hear things from Conservatives that are not in the big picture.

We need to take action on the climate change, we need to figure out this transition, and I really hope Conservatives will show Canadians that they are serious about climate change. I hope they will vote for this motion, recognizing we have an increasing climate emergency, that we need to meet our international obligations through actions right here at home, and that the science between climate change and extreme weather is clear. I hope they will have a serious climate plan.

● (1630)

Mr. Mark Gerretsen (Kingston and the Islands, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, we have heard from Conservatives on the other side of the House on a number of occasions talking about the Prime Minister flying from here to there and his carbon footprint. The reality of the situation is that every member in this House has a larger carbon footprint than probably the average person in our communities based on the fact that we have to travel to get here. They say it as though any one particular individual has the ability to change everything, as though if only one person wanted to drive an electric car, suddenly the entire industry would boom.

What they are missing, and I want the minister to comment on this, is how this is a solution that can only be achieved if we work together toward a common goal. Calling individual people out is not going to help us move in the right direction. How do we do this collectively in a way that moves societies forward when it comes to real change for our carbon footprint?

Hon. Catherine McKenna: Mr. Speaker, that is an excellent point. This is about how we all move together collectively. There are so many things we can do and that is why we are making investments. We can help and work with Canadians so they get around faster, cleaner and cheaper by investing in public transportation. Light rail transit in Ottawa will be the largest greenhouse gas reduction in the city's history, but it is also good for families. They can get around faster and cheaper. When we invest in affordable housing, that is great because we have a shortage of affordable housing, but we can also make sure it is energy efficient so folks can save money, so that people who can least afford it pay the least. This is the point.

The problem with Conservatives is that they do not even seem to understand the \$26-trillion economic opportunity. We have the opportunity to provide the solutions that the world so greatly needs, and we are already doing that. Let us take CarbonCure out of Dartmouth, Nova Scotia. It is injecting CO₂ emissions into concrete, so there is cheaper, stronger concrete. These are the solutions the world needs. This is about bringing everyone together and I really hope that everyone will support the climate emergency motion today.

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Mr. David Yurdiga (Fort McMurray—Cold Lake, CPC): Mr. Speaker, it was interesting to hear the minister mention that she wants to phase out coal. Does that include our exports? As she is aware, Vancouver exports 36.8 million tonnes of coal a year. Are we going to phase out coal exports also?

Hon. Catherine McKenna: Mr. Speaker, we are phasing out coal here and we are working with communities. We know that we need to phase out coal. In fact, the whole world needs to phase out coal, because right now we have a challenge that is called climate change, and coal is the most polluting. When we talk about how we heat our homes, there are ways we could do this a lot better. We know that. Renewables are now cost-competitive in many cases, but, of course, we are focused on communities and workers, so we need to ensure a just transition for workers and communities. We have been working with labour and business to do exactly that.

I guess the question is this: Will the Conservative Party put out a serious climate plan? Will they say that they are committed to phasing out coal? Will they recognize that a price on pollution is the most efficient way to tackle climate change and that it can be done in a way that makes life affordable?

Hon. Kevin Sorenson (Battle River—Crowfoot, CPC): Mr. Speaker, there are really two points we are looking at, the environment package and the closure motion. This is the second time I have been up. The first time was for time allocation. Here we go again. The government is saying it is going to shut down debate on a very important topic.

However, over and over, the minister slams the Conservatives by saying she hopes we do this and she hopes we do that. Then she says that the Liberals have a very serious environmental plan. We know their plan. It is the Kathleen Wynne plan. It is the plan that saw much of our manufacturing leave Canada. It is the plan that saw high energy prices here in Ontario going through the roof so that jobs were lost. That is the plan.

Who else did the minister attack? She attacked the premiers of Ontario, Alberta and Saskatchewan. She has attacked everyone who does not believe in her points as she sees them. That is why we need more debate, but the government is closing it down again.

It is unfortunate that we have a minister who lives in her own little bubble, in her own little circle, and everyone else is demonized. She brings in the Pope's comments to support her, but she demonizes everybody else.

• (1635)

Hon. Catherine McKenna: Mr. Speaker, I am here speaking on behalf of Canadians. I talk to Canadians every day. What do they say to me? They say we need to take action on climate change and we need to do it in a way that is affordable and grows the economy.

I know how much the member cares about growing the economy, so let me tell him some facts. We have created over a million jobs with Canadians. We have the lowest unemployment rate in four decades. We have raised over 800,000 Canadians and 300,000 children out of poverty. We have done that at the same time we are taking action on climate change, because we can do both, because we need to do both.

Let us talk about the costs we are paying, because the Conservatives seem to care so much about costs. We are paying 500% more than over a decade ago when it comes to the costs of insurance related to climate change. That is only going to go up. I would encourage them to read our Canada's changing climate report, which was written by scientists in Canada. It talks about what we can expect if we do not take serious action on climate change. Whether or not we take action, we are going to see the impacts, but we have a choice right now. I am hoping everyone in the House chooses serious climate action, chooses for us to make decisions based on science and chooses that we will meet our international obligations by doing the hard work at home.

[Translation]

The Deputy Speaker: It is my duty to interrupt the proceedings and put forthwith every question necessary to dispose of the motion before the House.

[English]

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

Some hon. members: Agreed.

Some hon. members: No.

The Deputy Speaker: All those in favour of the motion will please say yea.

Some hon. members: Yea.

The Deputy Speaker: All those opposed will please say nay.

Some hon. members: Nay.

The Deputy Speaker: In my opinion the yeas have it.

And five or more members having risen:

The Deputy Speaker: Call in the members.

• (1715)

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

(Division No. 1364)

YEAS

Members

Aldag	Alghabra
Amos	Anandasangaree
Arya	Ayoub
Badawey	Bagnell
Baylis	Beech
Bendayan	Bennett
Bernier	Bibeau
Bittle	Blair
Boissonnault	Bossio
Bratina	Breton
Carr	Casey (Cumberland—Colchester)
Casey (Charlottetown)	Chagger
Champagne	Chen
Cuzner	Dabrusin
Damoff	DeCoursey
Dhaliwal	Dhillon
Drouin	Dubourg
Duguid	Duncan (Etobicoke North)
Dzerowicz	Easter
Ehsassi	Ellis
Eyolfson	Fergus
Fillmore	Finnigan

Government Orders

Fisher
Fortier
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Freeland
Gerretsen
Goodale
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Joly
Jordan
Kang
Khera
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Lapointe
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Leslie
Lighthouse
Long
Ludwig
MacKinnon (Gatineau)
May (Cambridge)
McDonald
McKay
McLeod (Northwest Territories)
Medicino
Morneau
Murray
Ng
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O'Regan
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Khalid
Lambropoulos
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Lauzon (Argenteuil—La Petite-Nation)
Lefebvre
Levitt
Lockhart
Longfield
MacAulay (Cardigan)
Maloney
McCrimmon
McGuinty
McKenna
Mendès
Mihychuk
Morrissey
Nassif
O'Connell
Oliver
Ouellette
Peschisolido
Petitpas Taylor
Poissant
Ratansi
Robillard
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Saini
Samson
Sarai
Serré
Shanahan
Sidhu (Mission—Matsqui—Fraser Canyon)
Simms
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Tabbara
Vandal
Vaughan
Whalen
Wrzesnewskyj
Young

Julian
Kitchen
Kusie
Laverdière
Lukiwski
Maguire
Martel
McCauley (Edmonton West)
McLeod (Kamloops—Thompson—Cariboo)
Moore
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Nicholson
Paul-Hus
Plamondon
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Reid
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Manly
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PAIRED

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The Speaker: I declare the motion carried.

RESUMPTION OF DEBATE

The House resumed from May 27 consideration of the motion, and of the amendment.

Mr. Sean Fraser (Parliamentary Secretary to the Minister of Environment and Climate Change, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, climate change is real. It is primarily driven by human activity, and we are experiencing very serious consequences as a result today.

There is no doubt in my mind that the challenge relating to climate change constitutes an emergency here in Canada. I am so proud to lend my support to the motion on the floor of the House of Commons to declare an emergency in respect of climate change in our country. We need not panic, because we can be optimistic. We know that the solutions to this existential threat are before us, if we can simply muster the political will to implement the solutions that we know very well exist today.

Over the course of my remarks, I hope to offer some insight into the nature of the consequences we are experiencing, to give some of my insights on the opportunity that could be garnered if we embrace climate change as an economic growth strategy, and to perhaps provide some additional insight, for any of those listening, into the political dynamic that we are facing today as we approach the next election with climate change being a central issue of importance to the campaign.

To begin, I do want to address some of the consequences that we are facing, but perhaps before, although it seems trite to say so, it is important to explain the science behind how we know climate change is real. The recent report from Environment Canada, “Canada's Changing Climate Report”, signals that Canada is experiencing warming at twice the rate of the global average. In some parts of our country, it is five times that rate.

NAYS

Members

Abouttaif
Alleslev
Anderson
Barrett
Benzen
Berthold
Blaney (North Island—Powell River)
Block
Boudrias
Brosseau
Caron
Chong
Clarke
Deltell
Dreeshen
Duncan (Edmonton Strathcona)
Duvall
Fast
Fortin
Gill
Gourde
Harder
Jeneroux

Albas
Allison
Arnold
Benson
Bergen
Bezan
Blaney (Bellechasse—Les Etchemins—Lévis)
Boucher
Boutin-Sweet
Cannings
Carrie
Choquette
Cooper
Diotte
Dubé
Dusseault
Egliniski
Finley
Gallant
Gladu
Hardcastle
Hoback
Johns

Government Orders

The consequences that we are seeing are apparent in our communities. This science has been corroborated for decades by groups like the Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change. A majority of the world scientists who are studying climate change acknowledge not only that it is happening, but a primary driver of what is happening is human industrial activity. It is incumbent upon us to take action if we are going to avoid some of the worst consequences of climate change that we are seeing.

Though I probably do not have to explain to many in this room, we can observe these consequences in our community. If we look at my home province of Nova Scotia, we deal with increased storm surges and hurricanes. The report I mentioned, "Canada's Changing Climate Report", flags that the city of Halifax in my home province of Nova Scotia in the next few decades is going to experience floods at four times the rate it does today.

We look at our colleagues from New Brunswick, who I have had numerous conversations with about the floods that their province has been experiencing. We have seen pictures circulating on social media of highway signs that are completely submerged under water. We can look at a few years ago in Quebec and Ontario, and we see the heat waves that took dozens of lives. We can see the forest fires in western Canada. We can see the melting of our glaciers in northern Canada. There is not a community in our country that has not been impacted by the environmental consequences of climate change.

It is important to acknowledge that it is not just environmental consequences that we are experiencing as a result of climate change, there are social, health and economic consequences as well. When I see communities next to coal plants, we can observe a higher rate of childhood asthma. There is increased lung and heart disease in communities. In fact, there is a physical threat to many folks, like those who had to flee the fires in Fort McMurray.

The fact is we know that these consequences are having an impact. In addition, we can point to the changing patterns and migration of infectious diseases. I know ticks have become a much bigger problem in Nova Scotia. They were not when I was a kid. With them, we are seeing a similarly rising level of Lyme disease in my home province.

The fact is, we can observe these changes. There are social consequences, like communities physically being displaced, the impact on wildlife that communities have traditionally hunted, indigenous and non-indigenous alike. We are seeing consequences that are changing our weather patterns, our climate systems that are changing the way that we have to live and forcing us out of the habits and traditions we have practised for generations.

If the environmental, social or health consequences are not enough to inspire action, we can see the economic losses that we are experiencing today. If we look at the data from the insurance sector in Canada, we see that they are starting to change the way that they assess the risk of climate change. I take it that most people here would accept that the insurance sector is doing what it is in the best interests of its bottom line.

From the time of the mid-1980s until 2008 or so, the average payout in the insurance sector for severe weather events in Canada

was between \$250 million and \$450 million. Since that time, the average has climbed to about \$1.8 billion, exceeding \$2 billion most recently. That number is projected to grow. This is having an impact on the cost of insurance.

There are some homes that simply will not be able to be insured. There are provinces and communities in Canada that are spending taxpayer dollars to help relocate families from homes that are no longer in a safe area, places that used to have 100-year floods once every 100 years are now having them every few years.

The fact is there is something happening, and those who are watching their pocketbooks very closely are changing their behaviour. They are reflecting a new reality.

● (1720)

It is not just the insurance sector. Members should look at the costs to municipalities paid for by local ratepayers of building out flood mitigation infrastructure, for example. That cost is borne by taxpayers. The cost of inaction is simply too great to ignore.

However, it is not all bad news because we actually see an enormous opportunity to invest in the measures that are going to help deal with the consequences of climate change. Canada's Building Trades' projection is that as many as four million jobs for the Canadian economy could be added if we embrace new building codes that would actually bring us up to a standard that can help us reduce our emissions.

I have companies in my own community like the Trinity Group of Companies that have embraced energy efficiency as an economic growth strategy. It started out with a couple of great guys from home who were pretty handy and were able to do some local contracting work. Due to investments of successive provincial governments, we have actually seen energy efficiency take hold and homeowners who want to save on their power bills hire a company to come in, conduct an energy audit and make their home more efficient. It has grown from an operation with just a couple of guys into an organization that has dozens of employees and is present across the entire Atlantic region.

There are incredible world-leading companies like CarbonCure in Dartmouth that are delivering incredible products when it comes to carbon sequestration, pulling the carbon emissions out of our atmosphere and using it to strengthen products we need like concrete. Another company, just five minutes from where I live today, is MacKay Meters. It has secured a patent to build electric vehicle charging stations into their parking meters. This is truly innovative stuff that is going to help change the world that we live in.

Of course, the value that we gain from researchers who are working in our communities, researchers like Dr. David Risk at the FluxLab at StFX University in Antigonish, is actually developing instrumentation that can help detect gas and methane leaks in oil and gas infrastructure across Canada. He is commercializing this technology, not only to make a profit but to continue doing more research, keeping young people employed in a rural community that has a university that I represent.

Government Orders

There is also a missed economic opportunity if we do not address the worst consequences of climate change. I represent a province that relies heavily on the fishery in order to sustain the smaller communities that dot the coast of Nova Scotia. What we have seen take place in Maine over the past few years, a loss of 22 million pounds in their lobster catch, would be devastating if and when it comes to Nova Scotia, and if we continue to see the acidification and warming of our oceans off Nova Scotia. We can only expect that the lobsters will either move or suffocate inside the waters where they traditionally live and sustain a local economy.

In western Canada, we saw an enormous dip in production in the energy sector when forest fires that are linked to climate change ravaged parts of western Canada. The fact is that we can look at any province and see that.

In the Prairie region, the agricultural sector is under threat. I met with a young researcher, who did a master's thesis on the impact of climate change on agriculture in the Prairie provinces, recognizing that the Prairies are in the rain shadow of the Rockies and do not benefit from some of the weather that helps make our soil fertile, essentially large amounts of rain. They rely heavily instead on the spring melt that comes from our glaciers. When they finally disappear, there may be insufficient water and increased droughts that prevent our agricultural sector from growing.

These are very real and obvious risks, if we just take the time to speak with people who have been studying them. Frankly, we need to take this opportunity because the governor of the Bank of England, Mark Carney, a Canadian, has identified that there is a \$26-trillion opportunity in clean growth and Canada should be on the front end of that wave so that we can capitalize on not just the growth but the jobs that come with that growth. We can do the right thing and do the smart thing at the same time.

However, it is difficult to have discussions in this chamber and in Ottawa when it comes to climate policy, because the starting point is not only that we need to address the problem and do something about it. Sometimes we have to turn back the clock and prove the science to one another before we can have a meaningful debate. To me this is completely unacceptable.

What Canadians are going to face come October is a choice between a Liberal government that is advancing an ambitious agenda, trying their best to fight climate change and making a meaningful difference, not only to reduce our emissions but to capitalize on clean growth opportunities, and a Conservative Party that has refused to put forward a plan on climate change to date, despite their leader saying more than a year ago that he was going to find a plan that would comply with the Paris Agreement targets.

With respect, the Conservative Party has said it is going to be releasing their plan later this week. I do not have much hope that it will be worth the paper that it is written on. When I look at some of the Conservative members who would have informed that plan, it gives me great trepidation. We have seen members identify piles of snow in western Canada in February to suggest that that is evidence that global warming is not taking place.

● (1725)

Some Conservatives have indicated that the phenomenon of rising global temperatures is simply like folks walking into a room and their bodies giving off heat. We have seen other members suggest to school children in Alberta that CO₂ is not pollution but plant food. Just recently, one of the caucus member sitting in the Senate indicated that a recent power outage was due to the Prime Minister of Canada's anti-energy policies.

The Conservatives are saying we should retreat from the global conversation on climate change by withdrawing from the Paris agreement. Even the the leader of the Conservatives and deputy leader have recently tweeted articles, suggesting that the link between climate change and severe weather events has not been proven.

If this is the kind of information feeding into the plans that are developing, I have great disappointment in advance of the plan being released if these are the kinds of conversations that are taking place behind the scenes.

We know that the Conservatives' provincial counterparts are pushing forward the same kind of laissez-faire attitude when it comes to climate change. The Premier of Ontario, Doug Ford, has advanced a policy dismantling flood protection and then has shown up at flood zones and said, "I wonder what could possibly be going on." He has set aside \$30 million to fight climate action, rather than take action on climate change. That money could make a difference. He has launched a frivolous campaign to post stickers on gas stations. At the same time, he purports to support free speech. This makes no sense.

The climate economists who have been covering this issue are suggesting that his plan is not only going to slow down our reduction in emissions, but it is going to be more expensive for households as well.

With respect to my NDP colleagues, I have a lot time for their ideas, because I know they care about climate change and protecting the environment. However, I do have reservations about the policy suggestions they have advanced. I think we can work together to accomplish certain ideas, but others have very serious problems that need to be addressed.

In some of the commentary I have heard around our plan to put a price on pollution, NDP members have indicated that big emitters are exempt. This demonstrates a fundamental misunderstanding of what is going on. The NDP has advanced a plan that would put a price on big emitters, but, as the Ecofiscal Commission has pointed out, it would not lead to a reduction in emissions globally, because it would simply encourage polluters to leave Canada and pollute elsewhere even more. This would hurt the Canadian economy and would not contribute to our emissions reduction efforts.

Other examples from the NDP include the declaration that we need to immediately end all fossil fuel subsidies. We need to take action on fossil fuel subsidies, do not get me wrong. In fact, to date, we have phased out eight that were embedded in the tax code. However, the blanket ban the NDP proposed on this specific issue would lead to fundamental consequences, which are certainly unintended, because the plan was not very well thought through.

Government Orders

Examples include the denial of subsidies that support diesel to northern and remote indigenous communities, which rely on diesel for electricity, and the denial of subsidies for the potential research I mentioned at the flux lab at St. Francis Xavier University in Antigonish. Some of the products being developed with those research funds are going to reduce emissions in the oil and gas sector. Similarly, the NDP plans would deny the opportunity for us to invest in certain infrastructure that is helping us transition from gas and diesel-powered vehicles toward alternative fuelled vehicles.

I am happy to work with my colleagues in different parties to advance ideas that make sense. However, we cannot make statements that they will work before we have actually thought them through.

I would like to take some time to mention some of the actions we have taken to date.

We are facing a climate emergency, and a lot of attention has been given to our plan in this place with respect to putting a price on pollution. However, we are not a one-trick pony. Our plan has over 50 measures that would help to bring emissions down.

I want to take a moment to discuss our plan to put a price on pollution to educate the public on how it works. It is pretty simple. If something is more expensive, people buy less of it. When it comes to carbon pricing, every penny generated from revenues related to the price on pollution is kept within the province where the pollution is generated. Those revenues are directly returned to residents living within those provinces.

The Parliamentary Budget Officer has stated in a public report that because of the structure of this kind of a plan, eight out of 10 families can expect to be better off. They will receive more money than the price on pollution costs them. The number of families that will be out of pocket will be a modest amount, but they will be among the 20% wealthiest Canadians living in provinces where our plan applies.

• (1730)

This is not some hare-brained idea born simply out of the Liberal caucus in Ottawa. It has broad-based support among anyone who has any expertise in the conversation about climate change and economics. In fact, last year's Nobel Prize winner in economics won the Nobel Prize for developing an approach to climate change that would do exactly what the federal government's plan is doing: put a price on pollution and return the rebates directly to households so the majority of folks are left better off.

It is not just Nobel laureates and Liberal politicians who support this plan. Mark Cameron, the former director of policy for Prime Minister Harper, is behind this kind of an approach. In fact, Doug Ford's chief budget adviser testified in the Senate in this Parliament that the number one thing we could do to transition to a low-carbon economy was to put a price on pollution.

Most recently, the Pope made statements, just this last weekend, indicating that carbon pricing was essential. He said, "For too long we have collectively failed to listen to the fruits of scientific analysis, and doomsday predictions can no longer be met with irony or disdain."

When I talk to people in my community, particularly young people, I see them advocating for the kind of change that all of these different folks have been suggesting we should be taking for so long.

Let us look at the Saskatchewan Court of Appeal case that recently dealt with the constitutionality of the federal government's backstop that implemented a price on pollution. The court said that carbon pricing was not just part and parcel of an effective plan to reduce emissions; it said it was "an *essential* aspect...of the global effort to limit GHG emissions." It put the word "essential" in italics so folks like us who are sitting in this chamber would pay extra close attention to the importance of advancing this important mechanism, which we know to be the most effective thing we can do to bring down our emissions.

However, we are not a one-trick pony. We are advancing measures to phase out coal. By 2030, 90% of the electricity in our country will be generated from non-emitting resources. We are making the single largest investment in the history of public transit. We are making record investments in energy efficiency to support companies that are advancing green technology. We are changing methane regulations to reduce the fastest-growing sources of GHG emissions that are driving climate change today. We have adopted new vehicle emissions standards. We are working on a clean fuel standard.

We are also taking steps to protect nature. I know Canadians, the ones who I represent in Central Nova, have demanded that we take action to protect nature and to eliminate plastics from our marine environment. We put forward a \$1.5-billion oceans protection plan early in our mandate.

More recent, we announced that we were moving forward with a ban on harmful single-use plastics. We are putting the responsibility to deal with the life cycle of those plastic products on the manufacturers rather than on the end user. We expect that this is going to create economic opportunities in the plastics industry. At the same time, we prevent the discharge of harmful materials into our environment and in particular into our marine environment.

I want to spend a minute of the few I have left talking briefly about the impact that climate change and human activity have had on nature.

Since the 1970s, the earth has lost about 60% of its wildlife. This should shock the conscience of every Canadian. Let us look at the largest countries in the world. Canada is one of five countries that represents about three-quarters of the world's remaining wilderness. We have an opportunity and an obligation to address this issue. We are seeing the impacts today with some of our most iconic species.

Caribou herds across Canada are suffering because of immense deforestation. We have seen the southern resident killer whale population dwindle in recent history. We have a number of other species at risk. Globally, it is expected that one million of eight million species in the world are at serious threat of extinction if we do not change direction.

Government Orders

I have spent a lot of time dealing with the southern mountain caribou. In British Columbia right now, there are population units that have just a handful of animals left. They have been there for thousands of years but will disappear. We have made the single largest investment in the history of Canada to protect nature by more than doubling our protected spaces.

However, we know that it is not enough and we know we need help to get there. We need every Canadian to be pulling in the same direction. The time to come together is now. People who are living in a community that has a solar co-op can figure out how they can take part. If they want to take part in a community cleanup, they are doing something. Through collective global action, we can make a difference. Quite frankly, we do not have a choice. It is the smart thing to do and it is in our self-interest.

I am proud to speak in favour of this motion to recognize that we face a climate emergency. I am even prouder to work as part of a government that is doing its best to do something about it.

• (1735)

Mr. Dan Albas (Central Okanagan—Similkameen—Nicola, CPC): Mr. Speaker, the member's government in its first two years exempted places like Nova Scotia from having to phase out coal. The government exempted it a full 10 years further into the future and then it brought in its carbon tax.

The member talked about needing to understand something before acting upon it. The Premier of Nunavut said at finance committee that 80% of the diesel fuel that was burned in his communities for home heating and whatnot was subsidized by the government. The national carbon tax the Liberal government has implemented basically increases the price of living.

I would like the member to explain to us how does a community innovate using the so-called price on carbon when 80% of it is being paid for by the same taxpayer? How does that work?

Mr. Sean Fraser: Mr. Speaker, the member's question gives me the opportunity to point out that where regional realities differ, we have to take those realities into account.

In my home province of Nova Scotia, the member quite rightly pointed out that there has been work toward equivalence agreements because we have traditionally relied so heavily on coal. I am going to be meeting with groups from my province to talk about how we can accelerate the phase out of coal.

We simply do not give a pass to provinces that just want to continue on with the way they have always continued on. It comes with a commitment to change their behaviour in other ways to achieve at least an equivalent amount of emissions reductions through other mechanisms.

In Nova Scotia, for example, by partnering with the province and federal government, we have been able to advance a serious agenda that will result in major efficiency upgrades for homeowners.

On the issue of folks living in the territories that rely heavily on diesel, the pricing mechanism can still make a difference even if the cost is being borne by the same taxpayer. People can make their homes more efficient and have savings. There is a rebate for

everyone who pays into this that is greater than the cost of the plan itself.

Mr. Gord Johns (Courtenay—Alberni, NDP): Mr. Speaker, I want to thank my colleague for bringing this motion forward. We have worked together. I have a lot of respect for him. We are friends.

I have some concerns. Here we are, debating the issue of the government declaring a climate emergency, but we are on the eve of it deciding about the largest fossil fuel investment in Canadian history. It just does not make sense.

The government has already bought a pipeline for \$4.5 billion and if the government twins it, we are looking at a cost of \$15 billion. The Liberals talk about balancing the environment and the economy. What did they do? They invested \$300 million in a home energy retrofit program, something we called for. However, spending \$15 billion and \$300 million is not balancing the environment and the economy. We need real action.

I hope the government will make the right decision tomorrow and not expand tanker traffic in the Strait of Georgia by sevenfold, going against what it is doing here by calling it a climate crisis.

• (1740)

Mr. Sean Fraser: Mr. Speaker, the hon. member and I are friends. I want to thank him in particular for his advocacy on the reduction of plastic pollution in our environment through his private member's motion, Motion No. 151.

With respect to the decision on the Trans Mountain pipeline, I do not want to prejudice the outcome of the process. I have no information suggesting it is going to go in one direction or the other. We took seriously the advice of the Federal Court, insisting that the environmental assessment be done in the right way, particularly that we consider the potential impacts on the marine environment and do a better job of bringing the voices of indigenous peoples into the process.

We have sought to correct some of the shortcomings that existed with the previous process by implementing a new form of environmental assessment through Bill C-69, which would do a better job on the front end to air out these concerns.

We have to turn our mind to the fact that we live in a country that has traditionally been heavily dependent on the energy sector for its economic growth. As we grow our economy, we have to rely less on traditional sectors that continue to use fossil fuels and move toward clean energy.

I expect the decision will be a reasoned one based on science, facts and evidence. If the member has questions about investments in major energy products, I encourage him to clarify the position of his own leader on the LNG Canada project, which is the largest private sector investment in the history of Canada.

Government Orders

Ms. Elizabeth May (Saanich—Gulf Islands, GP): Mr. Speaker, this is a moment of extreme cognitive dissonance. We have before us a motion that there is a climate emergency that was tabled on May 16 and then adjourned for a month. For an emergency, we should not be adjourning debate, nor should we have closure on debate.

I think the hon. parliamentary secretary will probably try to find some way to agree with me on this. The motion calls for us to declare a climate emergency, and then the motion calls for us to ignore it. The motion says we should commit to meeting the national emissions target tabled under the Paris Agreement, which is the one left behind by Stephen Harper, which was developed in a complete void. It had nothing to do with the negotiations, which had not yet happened.

If we are going to hold to 1.5°C, I would ask the parliamentary secretary to please explain and put on record when his party and his government will update the Harper target under which we are still operating, such that it can be consistent with what the Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change warned us in October last year must be done, which is approximately doubling current efforts.

Mr. Sean Fraser: Mr. Speaker, with respect, I do not think that we are seeking to ignore the nature of the emergency that we are declaring by virtue of this motion. In fact, we tried to use broad-based language that removed most of the politics from it by avoiding discussions of our specific efforts in the hope that we could just address the issue.

The target that is most important to me is the one that would get us to 1.5°C. We know that is where we need to be. With respect to the target the hon. member referred to, the target the government has used, it is a starting point, in my mind, that was negotiated with the provinces and territories as we were arriving at the pan-Canadian framework.

We know we need to continue to aim for deeper and deeper reductions to get where we need to be, and I look forward to the upcoming campaign, when we are going to be not only canvassing the ideas that we have already implemented, but identifying a path forward so Canadians can see how we can get there to avoid the worst consequences of climate change.

Mr. Robert-Falcon Ouellette (Winnipeg Centre, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, we all love Pope Francis because he is such a defender of social justice. I would like to quote from the National Post:

Pope Francis said on Friday that carbon pricing is “essential” to stem global warming—his clearest statement yet in support of penalizing polluters—and appealed to climate change deniers to listen to science.

This is extremely important, because we actually have a credible plan, which is before Parliament and before the Canadian public, and we need to do something. I call on good Catholics and on all Canadians to get behind the Pope and get behind this plan to make sure that we actually do something so we have a good environment for future generations.

Is this plan really the only plan that we have before Canadians? It is a very good plan, but we need to get started and not wait and wait and wait and listen to those deniers who would deny us the opportunity, like Doug Ford, or those in Alberta, or those across the country who deny continually, those Conservatives—

• (1745)

The Deputy Speaker: The hon. Parliamentary Secretary to the Minister of Environment.

Mr. Sean Fraser: Mr. Speaker, of course, the Pope's comments over the weekend have come up a number of times today, including in my remarks. They are significant, not just because of who they come from, but because of the content of the message that was being delivered.

He quite correctly highlighted that climate change disproportionately impacts the world's poor and leaves future generations worse off than the generations that are alive today. There is a sense of injustice about it that we all need to recognize. The fact is that the call to obey science is just common sense. We need to be implementing the solutions that we do know exist. It is the right thing to do.

We have perspectives, including some that are represented in this chamber, of folks who will not start the debate on what solutions we need to implement, but on whether the problem is real in the first place and whether people can do anything about it. It is not a healthy starting point.

We are going to continue to implement a plan that is going to get us where we need to be, whether we have to bring folks with us or leave them behind.

[*Translation*]

Mr. Pierre Nantel (Longueuil—Saint-Hubert, NDP): Mr. Speaker, about six months ago, on December 6, on behalf of the NDP, I joined forces with a group of about 50 MPs from the Green Party, the Bloc Québécois and the NDP to call on this government to work with all parties and hold a kind of summit where everyone could agree on the importance of meeting these targets.

Sadly, six months on, I have yet to receive an answer from either the Conservatives or the Liberals.

How can that be, when my colleague just said we all need to work together?

He was perfectly right in saying that, but the government has a responsibility to bring people together to tackle a crisis that is like a major war.

[*English*]

Mr. Sean Fraser: Mr. Speaker, when it comes to climate change, my view is that the primary responsibility of the government is to implement measures we know exist that will get us where we need to be. To the extent that we can find common ground among different parties, that is a wonderful thing, but quite honestly it is an incredibly frustrating experience.

There are members from every party in this House who care deeply about this issue. However, bringing all parties together, when some so staunchly oppose every environmental measure we have advanced to date, is going to be a task that gets in the way of winning the war.

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What we need to do is move forward with solutions like putting a price on pollution. We cannot even have a conversation about it that does not turn into a yelling match in this chamber. We need to implement solutions like this.

With respect to my hon. colleague, I would be pleased to have conversations with him about what ideas he and his party have to help inform our agenda. However, I expect that getting the unanimous consent of members of this House, and even all parties of this House, is a task that one would spend more energy pursuing when one could put that energy toward implementing solutions.

Mr. Richard Cannings (South Okanagan—West Kootenay, NDP): Mr. Speaker, I will be sharing my time with the member for the beautiful riding of Kootenay—Columbia.

I am happy to rise today to talk about government business no. 29. This is the third time we have debated climate emergency in the House since October. I share the feelings of the member for Saanich—Gulf Islands that if this is an emergency, we should actually be doing something instead of just talking about it.

The motion begins by asking, “That the House recognize that: (a) climate change is a real and urgent crisis, driven by human activity, that impacts the environment, biodiversity, Canadians' health, and the Canadian economy; (b) Canadians are feeling the impacts of climate change today, from flooding, wildfires, heat waves and other extreme weather events which are projected to intensify in the future”.

Right off the top, I want to comment on the fact that Canadians are really feeling the effects of climate change. This year, B.C. is experiencing a very hot and dry June. Usually, it is the wettest month of the year in my region, but this year the hot, dry weather we normally experience in late July and August has come a month early.

Yesterday morning, I was awoken at 1 a.m. by a loud banging on my door in Penticton. I threw on my robe and stumbled to the door to find my neighbour there, who was shouting that there was a big fire across the fence and I should get ready to leave. I grabbed the big box of important papers and photos that we keep on hand in case of sudden evacuation, as do many British Columbians now, because of all the evacuations that have been happening. I threw on some clothes and headed out the door.

I live on the edge of a big area of grassland, sagebrush and pines, and there was a big fire only 200 metres away, with towering flames headed uphill toward my house. Fortunately, there was no wind and three fire halls responded quickly. Over the next hour, we were relieved to see the flames shrink and the crackling roar of the full-tilt forest fire change to the hissing sound of fire hoses and steam. This fire was not lit by climate change, but its rapid spread was fuelled by the grasses and dry brush, dried by weeks of unseasonably hot weather.

We are seeing this all across the country and around the world. Canada is warming faster than the rest of the world, and the Arctic is warming faster than the rest of the country.

This year, the Bering Sea was virtually ice-free in March. That is a time of year when the Bering Sea is supposed to be gaining ice, not losing it all. This loss continues, particularly in the western Arctic waters of the Chukchi and Beaufort seas. It is quite possible, and

even likely, that 2019 will represent another year of record loss of Arctic sea ice, topping the record set in 2012. This loss of ice will disrupt weather systems across the northern parts of the world, and once that white ice is gone, ice that reflects heat and light, it is replaced by dark water that absorbs heat. Wind patterns change, delaying the freezing of the oceans in autumn. Ocean currents that mediate the climate of continents can dramatically fail or intensify.

Rick Thoman of the University of Alaska recently stated, “The Arctic is a regulator of Northern Hemisphere climate, and while the ice that is melting now isn't going to affect whether you get a thunderstorm tomorrow, in the long term, these are going to have profound effects on your weather and climate down the road”. We are heading for a cliff with our foot on the accelerator.

I would point out that this motion appeared magically the day after we debated an NDP motion on exactly the same subject, and the Liberals and the Conservatives voted against that motion. Why? It actually called for meaningful action, like taking our foot off the accelerator.

The motion before us today implies that current targets set out by the Liberal government are adequate. Climate scientists around the world tell us that they are not adequate. Not only that, the government's action will not allow us to meet even those inadequate targets.

On the Climate Action Tracker website, which assesses all countries of the world, Canada's actions and commitments are listed as “highly insufficient”, on par with China and behind India. Scientists tell us that we have already added 1°C to the world's mean temperature and we must keep that increase below 1.5°C. Based on Canada's progress to date, we are headed for more than a 4°C rise. If members think that forest fires and floods are catastrophic at 1°C increase, we can imagine what we are going to face at 4°C.

● (1750)

The NDP motion called for an accountability office to keep track of the government's actions toward its international commitments. Jack Layton called for this years ago in his climate accountability private member's bill. Other countries, such as the U.K., have legislated accountability as a central part of their climate action and have actually shown meaningful improvements because of it. The Liberals and Conservatives voted against this accountability. The Liberals did not include it in their motion, so I can only assume that they do not like it.

Government Orders

The NDP motion also called for an end to fossil fuel subsidies. This is a promise Canada made to the G20 years ago under the Harper government, and it still has not happened. We give billions of dollars to the fossil fuel sector every year, \$10 billion through Export Development Canada alone. We should be spending that money on renewable energy and the electrification of the energy sector, including infrastructure and incentives for the shift to electric vehicles, which are meaningful incentives and meaningful investments. Instead, we bought an old pipeline, and tomorrow, the government will officially okay the permits for the Trans Mountain expansion, despite the fact that the oil sands expansion, which the pipeline depends on, is anathema to reducing our carbon emissions.

If we are serious about reducing our emissions and the world is serious about reducing its emissions, then adding long-term, multi-billion-dollar fossil fuel infrastructure is an exercise in abject failure. The Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change report tells us that we are at a critical moment. We must act now, and we must act boldly. Again, we debated this when that report came out in October. Here we are talking about it again.

We cannot talk about a generations-long period of transition. We have to cut our emissions by 40% in the next decade. We have to cut them to zero by 2050, which is in 30 years. The good news is that we can do this while creating hundreds of thousands of good jobs. The NDP's plan, power to change, would meet the climate targets set out by the IPCC. It would promote indigenous reconciliation, and it would create 300,000 jobs over the next four years.

There are already more people working in good jobs in the clean-tech sector than there are working in the fossil fuel sector. I was just at a Clean Energy BC conference in Trail, British Columbia, and part of that conference dealt with the good jobs a clean energy plan would produce, such as battery recycling.

Retriev Technologies, in Trail, is the only company in the world that will recycle any kind of battery, and it is the only one that recycles large pure lithium batteries. If we hear complaints that the nickel hydride batteries used in hybrid cars or the lithium ion batteries used in electric vehicles will pollute the planet, look no further than Trail, B.C., for how we can create jobs, reduce pollution and help the world reduce carbon emissions at the same time. Also located in Trail is Fenix Advanced Materials, world leaders in the purification of rare metals used in solar panels and other modern electronics.

The electrification of our energy systems would mean an increased demand for copper, so there would be good jobs created in our mining sector, thanks to the plentiful deposits of copper across this country.

We can do this together. However, it is disappointing when the government's answer to our reasonable motion for meaningful action in the face of a climate emergency is to vote against our motion and present this one, which praises the status quo. This is no time for the status quo. It is a time when we all have to face the climate crisis for what it is, a crisis, and work together across party lines and across provincial borders to ensure that Canada does its share of the hard work the world must do to tackle this issue. It is the issue of our time.

It is getting close to midnight for action on climate change. Climate scientists, like good neighbours, are banging on our door. We should wake up and take action right now before it is too late.

● (1755)

Mr. Kevin Lamoureux (Parliamentary Secretary to the Leader of the Government in the House of Commons, Lib.):

Mr. Speaker, if we were to take a look at what has taken place over the last couple of years, we would see a very clear indication of a government that understands that we need to have the environment working hand in hand with the economy. That is the expectation a vast majority of Canadians have of government. On the one hand, we have the Conservatives saying that we are not doing enough on the economy side, and on the other, we have the New Democrats saying that we are not doing enough on the environment side.

I think this is a healthy debate. We want to move forward. We recognize the emergency nature of our environment. In particular, it has been encouraging to hear the parliamentary secretary and the minister responsible for Canada's environment file enunciate some of the policies we have.

With respect to much of NDP policy, and I will use the TMX pipeline as an example, it seems that the NDP is in opposition to any sort of pipeline expansion whatsoever. I wonder if my colleague across the way can make that very clear statement on behalf of the New Democrats regarding their position today. Does the NDP support any form of pipeline expansion?

Mr. Richard Cannings: Mr. Speaker, the mantra of the current government has always been that the economy and the environment go together. However, it seems to take that to mean that if it puts a price on carbon, it can okay three pipelines, and that will be okay. That is not how it works. I think the mantra should be that we cannot have a healthy economy without a healthy environment. The healthy environment has to come first. I think the Liberals have it all wrong. They seem to think that if they can do this one thing, they can do one or two of those things.

As for pipelines, these are expansion projects. These are pipelines that are being used to expand the output of the oil sands in Alberta. We are at a time when we have to think the other way. We have to move away from that expansion and move to a different world of energy.

Government Orders

•(1800)

Ms. Elizabeth May (Saanich—Gulf Islands, GP): Mr. Speaker, I put this question to my friend from South Okanagan—West Kootenay, recognizing the depth of his commitment and the depth of his understanding of the science. I would like to focus on what we can do together by recognizing that it is a climate emergency. My hon. colleague just used a figure that is close to what the IPCC said. Its report released on October 8 of last year said that to avoid going above a 1.5°C global average temperature increase, and it identified that going above that represented extreme danger, with catastrophic impacts that could wipe out human civilization, we really have no choice but to try to hold to 1.5°C. It said that the world, overall, must reduce emissions by 45% of 2010 levels by 2030.

When I crunch the numbers and look at Canada, because we are so far behind everyone else and are still dealing with people who think it is okay to build new pipelines and expand the emission of greenhouse gases, we should be reducing to 60% below 2005 levels by 2030. We have to get our target right and our trajectory right, or we will never achieve what must be done.

I wonder if the member has any thoughts on what the appropriate target is for Canada, given, as the hon. member said, quite rightly, that we are running out of time.

Mr. Richard Cannings: Mr. Speaker, I would like to thank the member for Saanich—Gulf Islands for that question and for her commitment to this issue.

On the issue of what is the right target, I think the really important target is that we have to get to net zero, and if we have to get there by the middle of the century, then we have to do that. Right now, I think the government has said that we would be at 80% by then. However, that is the important target. Whether we get the targets of 40% by 2030, 60% by 2040 or 100% by 2050 exactly right I do not think it so important. However, if we are not going to get to the target we are going for right now of 30% by 2030, that is where I think the big failure is. That is where I think the current government has to change its targets to better targets and then change its plan to meet these targets to make a difference.

Mr. Wayne Stetski (Kootenay—Columbia, NDP): Mr. Speaker, I am pleased to rise to speak to this motion, as the climate crisis is the greatest challenge of our time.

We recognize it as an emergency and accept that we have an imperative to act. The most recent report by the international Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change says that we have about 11 years to dramatically reduce fossil fuel consumption or face catastrophic climate change.

A recent report commissioned by Environment and Climate Change Canada found that Canada is warming at twice the global average. Another recent report found that one million species of plants and animals around the world are at risk, and one of the reasons is climate change. We heard from some excellent witnesses this afternoon at the environment committee on this really important but distressing topic.

It is clear that we are facing an urgent ecological crisis. For too long, governments and corporations have delayed taking meaningful action on climate change, and now we find ourselves with the floods

and fires at our door. We have a moral responsibility to take rapid, ambitious action that will set us down the path to a more sustainable and equitable future.

This spring, many students in my riding of Kootenay—Columbia participated in school strikes as part of a global movement started by 16-year-old Swedish climate activist Greta Thunberg. At the World Economic Forum, Ms. Thunberg said:

I often hear adults say: ‘We need to give the next generation hope’. But I don’t want your hope. I want you to panic. I want you to feel the fear I do. Every day. And want you to act. I want you to behave like our house is on fire. Because it is.

I know that in my riding, many young people share this fear for the future. I have received passionate letters from grades 5 and 6 Ktunaxa students worried about polar bears and the environment. My granddaughter, Lalita, who is graduating from high school this month, at times worries about whether her generation will have a future at all.

In addition to these fears, I have also heard from young people that they are confused and frustrated by the lack of action to address climate change. They feel let down by adults who have ignored the problem for decades. I recently attended a panel on climate change at Salmo Elementary School, where two students played an original song, part of which goes like this:

Why can't we just do it right, change the way we live our lives?
People always say we're fine. Why can't they just see the signs?

It is not just young people who are recognizing that there is an urgent need to act. Local governments are on the front lines and recognize the need to make our communities more resilient to a changing climate. Many local governments have already had discussions on the climate emergency, but we need all levels of government to recognize the scale of the problem and to commit to acting collaboratively.

In my riding of Kootenay-Columbia, Nelson city councillor Rik Logtenberg established the Climate Leadership Caucus to join local councillors and mayors across the country together to advance climate change mitigation and adaptation efforts at the municipal level.

While there are many solutions that can be implemented by local governments, from waste to transportation, municipalities often lack adequate funding to do so. It is critical that the federal government work with municipal partners so that they have the capacity to be climate leaders. I want to thank Rik for his leadership. He is truly making a difference in convincing mayors and councillors across the country that everyone must play a part in fighting the climate change war.

Government Orders

Also in my riding of Kootenay-Columbia, the Regional District of Central Kootenay has recognized the urgent need for action and collaboration on climate change. The RDCK is a collection of mayors and rural representatives who come together on important issues. Recently, they put forward a motion recognizing that climate change is “an urgent reality requiring rapid decarbonisation of energy” and that “[p]reparing for increased resilience and adaptability is critical.” They went on to say that the RDCK “recognizes that the world is in a global state of climate crisis” and requires an imperative that all orders of government undertake “rapid and far-reaching’ changes to building construction, energy systems, land use, and transportation.”

While the Liberals have brought this motion to recognize climate change as an emergency, over the course of this Parliament, they have failed to treat it as such. The Liberal climate change plan shelters the biggest polluters and fails to meet even Stephen Harper’s weak targets. Earlier this month, the Liberal member for Beaches—East York tabled a private member’s bill that acknowledges that the Liberal’s targets are not enough. The member stated, “greater ambition is now required to meet our national, intergenerational and our moral obligations. Science demands greater action”.

● (1805)

Recent media reports suggest that the Minister of Environment and Climate Change has said that the upcoming election is a chance to toughen Canada’s climate change targets. While I welcome more ambitious GHG targets, the government has had the chance for nearly four years to adopt them. Further, the government has taken actions over the course of this Parliament that actively hinder effective climate action, such as the continued subsidization of the fossil fuel industry.

This spring, the commissioner of the environment and sustainable development found that the government failed to do a fulsome inventory of fossil fuel subsidies and did not consider long-term environmental and social impacts on an equal basis with economic factors in evaluating subsidies. The NDP is calling to immediately end all fossil fuel subsidies, so we can focus investment on renewable energy, public transit and energy efficiency, as well as ensuring a just transition for affected workers and communities.

While today we are debating the Liberals’ motion to declare climate change an emergency, tomorrow the government will quite likely announce its approval of the Trans Mountain pipeline expansion, despite the National Energy Board’s failure to consider the project’s climate change impacts. This is not climate leadership. Quite frankly, it is climate hypocrisy. It is unconscionable that the Liberal government spent \$4.5 billion of taxpayers’ money on an old pipeline, with plans for expansion, at a time when we need to get serious about a rapid transition off of fossil fuels.

This bailout was a bad investment for Canadians, and the government should not pour more money into this project. Earlier this month, the hon. David Anderson, a former federal Liberal minister of the environment, wrote to members of cabinet, arguing that there is no economic justification for the project. He said that building a new pipeline will not change the market.

Instead of spending taxpayers’ money on a pipeline expansion in the face of a climate emergency, we need a bold plan that reduces

emissions while creating sustainable jobs for workers. The NDP’s “Power to Change: A New Deal for Climate Action and Good Jobs” is a plan to do just that, by investing in priorities like renewable energy, public transit, energy efficiency and research and development. The United Steelworkers has said that this plan protects the planet and jobs, and I encourage all parties to have a close look at it.

As a vice-chair of the Standing Committee on Environment and Sustainable Development, I am also pleased that the committee tabled two reports this spring, one entitled “Clean Growth and Climate Change: How Canada Can Lead Internationally”, along with a second report on forestry, agriculture and waste, with a total of 34 recommendations on how the government can and must do better in addressing climate change. Instead of partisan bickering over carbon pricing, we need all parties to agree to work together on implementing comprehensive solutions.

I look forward to reviewing the Conservatives’ environment plan this week, and I hope it will acknowledge the serious imperative we have to act on climate change. One of the largest motivators I had to becoming a member of this House was the gutting of environmental regulations by the Harper government and its inaction on climate change. I sincerely hope that the Conservatives realize it is time for a new path forward. It is critical that fighting climate change becomes a non-political, non-partisan issue.

With increasingly urgent warnings from experts and more frequent and severe extreme weather events, it is clear that climate change is no longer a distant threat and that the cost of inaction is too great. I look forward to engaging with my constituents this summer in a series of town halls regarding climate change, as I know that addressing this challenge will require everyone getting on board. We must accept that climate change is an emergency for our planet and begin to act with a sense of urgency. Our children and grandchildren deserve no less.

● (1810)

Mr. Ken McDonald (Avalon, Lib.): Madam Speaker, I thank my colleague across the way for his commitment to getting it right. I listened to his speech quite intently, and he was talking about the continued investment in the fossil fuel industry.

Government Orders

Let us say that we stop production on any fossil fuels within the next year, two years or five years. What would the member say to all of the workers involved in that industry? I am not saying that it should not be looked at, but there are thousands and thousands of people across the country employed in that industry, who maybe cannot be retrained into a tech or green type of industry.

What does the member say to those tradespeople? For me in Newfoundland and Labrador, my riding is a large riding. We talk about using electric cars. I use a gas vehicle. An electric car is no good to me; I have too far to go and nowhere to plug it in.

How do you justify saying that you have to do better? End all these subsidies right away. Let us get away from fossil fuels.

The Assistant Deputy Speaker (Mrs. Carol Hughes): I remind the member that he is to address all his questions and comments to the Chair.

The hon. member for Kootenay—Columbia.

Mr. Wayne Stetski: Madam Speaker, the member's question is absolutely fair.

Two or three years ago, there was an oil and gas convention here in Ottawa. I stayed afterward and met with an executive for Suncor and asked her how difficult it was to transition their engineers from oil and gas into renewable energy. She said that some of them can do it fairly easily while other ones require a bit more effort and training. Then just before Christmas, I heard a statistic for the first time, that 37% of the oil and gas workers have no post-secondary education. We absolutely need to have a transition that respects the jobs of all of the people who are currently working in the oil and gas industry, while moving to a new future.

When I speak with classes about pipelines, for example, I tell all of them that the pipe is not the problem; pipe is not bad in itself. However, when building a pipeline, it must be filled with something, and then it must be kept going for decades to pay for itself.

The question is, what kind of future do we want to see in Canada? The future that I see is a green energy future, not an oil and gas future. The pipe is not a bad thing, but it sets up a future that I do not think most Canadians would support in the long run.

Ms. Elizabeth May (Saanich—Gulf Islands, GP): Madam Speaker, to my hon. friend from Kootenay—Columbia, I think that those of us who understand the climate science, which I know he does, have something of a sense of despair when we are debating the climate emergency motion from the government. If we take seriously that this is an emergency and we understand the science, then the inevitable consequence is that we must plan a carbon budget in which we systematically reduce and ultimately stop using fossil fuels altogether. We must, in that process, include a transition for the skills of workers.

One great example that I will give are the orphan oil wells. There are thousands of them throughout Alberta and northern B.C., which have tremendous potential for geothermal energy production. The biggest cost for geothermal is drilling down deep below the earth's surface. The same people who drill an oil well can help manage it as a geothermal facility. However, we are paralyzed by the notion that if we want to save ourselves, someone might be out of work. Saving

ourselves and ensuring that our children have a liveable world must be our number one consideration.

I ask the hon. member for his sense of this disconnect in which we find ourselves.

• (1815)

Mr. Wayne Stetski: Madam Speaker, there is a sense of urgency among our youth. I have to give all credit to the youth who are really driving this question and making all politicians around the world pay attention to climate change. They are concerned about their future.

The member is absolutely right about the opportunity around green energy. Looking at the possibilities for geothermal, solar and wind and, in the ocean areas, tidal energy, it is amazing. What it means is that people do not have to travel from Newfoundland or other parts of the country, like from my riding of Kootenay—Columbia, to Alberta for gainful employment.

If we move to a green energy economy, those jobs will stay right at home. A person would not have to leave home, but could have a good job and a better future for their family, as well as for the economy. It is there; we just have to make sure that we do the transition properly.

Mr. Darren Fisher (Dartmouth—Cole Harbour, Lib.): Madam Speaker, I will be sharing my time with my good friend, the hon. member for Saanich—Gulf Islands.

I am pleased to rise in the House today to tell members more about what the Department of National Defence and the Canadian Armed Forces are doing to address the growing threats posed by a changing climate.

Last October, the Pentagon released a report, stating unequivocally that climate change effects are a national security issue, with potential impacts to U.S. Department of Defense missions, operational plans and installations. We are well aware that, in Canada, those same effects also impact our own national security.

That is why this government has prioritized Canada's response to climate change. All departments are working to advance our federal sustainable development strategy. Canada's defence policy, "Strong, Secure, Engaged", goes a long way to supporting those sustainability goals and mitigating emerging security risks posed by climate change.

The defence team understands that the impact of a changing environment and their impact on it should not be underestimated. By building environment and climate change considerations into all of their planning, procurement and operations, the defence team ensures they are doing their part to safeguard the environment and citizens of the planet. There can be no doubt that climate change poses a real threat to security, whether national, hemispheric or global.

Government Orders

The Americas are also seeing an increase in the severity of natural disasters, and this is something that Canada is working with regional partners to address. Last year, the defence minister hosted a working group on environmental protection and climate resilience in advance of the biennial Conference of Defense Ministers of the Americas. CDMA is the only forum that brings together defence ministers from across the hemispheres to discuss regional security issues at a strategic level. In fact, climate has been on that agenda for several years now.

At the same conference in 2014, then U.S. defense secretary, Chuck Hagel, said: “Climate change is a ‘threat multiplier’ because it has the potential to exacerbate many of the challenges we already confront today—from infectious disease to armed insurgencies—and to produce new challenges in the future.” That is exactly what we have been seeing.

Over the past few years, the Canadian Armed Force's role in domestic disaster response has increased dramatically. Last December, the chief of defence staff, General Vance, told reporter Mercedes Stephenson that there are very few large military threats to Canada. By contrast, he said this of Canada's disaster response, “We face a significant threat almost every year now with natural disasters, forest fires and floods and so on that affect Canadians. So in our role to defend Canada and protect Canadians, that's been significant.”

Climate change has resulted in more extreme weather, which in turn produces more severe storms and natural disasters. The Canadian Armed Forces tracks these storms, floods and fires carefully to ensure they are ready to help Canadians whenever they are called upon, through Operation LENTUS. The reserve units play an important role in this and have responded rapidly in their local communities on many occasions.

● (1820)

In 2018 alone, the Canadian Armed Forces were called in to assist provincial partners in responding to six natural disasters, including floods, forest fires and winter storms. More pointedly, in the last five years, the Canadian Armed Forces responded to 20 natural disasters in contrast to the four years prior when they were called upon only to help out with five. The recent flooding in Ontario, Quebec and New Brunswick saw another 2,500 sailors, soldiers and aviators step in once more to help protect people, homes and critical infrastructure in those communities. In other words, at the peak of these floods, the number of Canadian Armed Forces personnel deployed on Operation LENTUS actually surpassed the number of Canadian Armed Forces members currently deployed around the world.

Looking to the north, climate change has made the Arctic more accessible, and it is being increasingly used for transit. The region also holds vast natural resources, which give it great strategic value for Canada and a number of international actors. All this translates into the risk of sovereignty challenges, environmental problems, accidents giving rise to search and rescue requirements, and possibly criminal activity. The Canadian Rangers are Canada's eyes and ears of the north. Their presence in communities across the north is instrumental in the conduct of Arctic sovereignty operations, as well as search and rescue activities.

As climate change continues to influence the Canadian Armed Forces' operating space, the defence team is acutely aware of the

need to mitigate the causes of environmental degradation. The Department of National Defence has already reduced greenhouse gas emissions from its buildings and the commercial vehicle fleet by 31% from 2005 levels. The department is on track to reduce its emissions by 40% by 2030 and is moving toward meeting the new federal target of 80% by 2050. As the largest infrastructure portfolio with over 20,000 buildings, the Department of National Defence produces nearly half of the federal government's greenhouse gas emissions, so it knows it has an important role to play in enabling Canada to meet its climate objectives.

In terms of powering the military fleet, reliable, low-carbon and renewable fuels are not broadly available. Fighter jets and other aircraft, ships and armoured vehicles rely on carbon-intensive fuels for power and using those fuels produces a significant amount of greenhouse gases. This equipment is essential to military operations and keeping Canadians safe. That is why the military fleet remains exempt from federal GHG emissions reduction targets, but the defence team does not interpret this as a free pass from achieving a more sustainable fleet. On the contrary, the department is tracking fleet emissions and partnering with industry on research into the sustainable fuels of the future. More importantly, it is testing sustainable energy solutions and new technologies in the field, working to limit energy use at deployed camps.

Since 2017, the Department of National Defence has also invested more than \$165 million in infrastructure projects aimed at reducing its carbon footprint. In the past year alone, the department has built armouries at Halifax, Saint-Hubert and Sainte-Foy to ensure Canadian Armed Forces members have the modern, green facilities they need. All new construction and major recapitalization projects must meet industry-recognized standards for high-performing buildings, such as the LEED silver standard or equivalent.

The Department of National Defence also uses energy performance contracts to improve energy efficiency and awarded four new contracts at bases and wings across Canada since 2018. These kinds of investments have a significant impact. DND and the Canadian Armed Forces have made progress in minimizing the environmental impact of defence activities and will continue to act as responsible stewards of Canada's land, air and sea.

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We cannot deny that climate change has become a daily reality for all of us. Each day, we see more evidence of its impact on our collective safety and security. As I mentioned earlier, the Canadian Armed Forces have responded to nearly four times as many natural disasters since 2014 as they had in the previous four years. That is why they are working so hard to contribute to a greener world. Like most Canadians, they know that our efforts must start now, so that in 50 years our children and grandchildren can enjoy a cleaner and brighter future.

• (1825)

Mr. Lloyd Longfield (Guelph, Lib.): Madam Speaker, I would like to thank the hon. member down the way for bringing in a different part of the discussion that has to do with the military and the effects of climate change on people who are in drought-stricken areas. We have deployed people across Canada. Guelph's 11th Field Regiment has been out combatting floods across Canada. However, we are also in Mali and other parts of the world where people have to leave due to droughts.

Today, June 17, is the United Nations world day to combat desertification, which looks at how we can combat deserts being created. It really is a war against climate change. It is a war against people losing the land where they grow their food, live and raise their families.

Could the hon. member comment on the social impacts of climate change on developing worlds?

Mr. Darren Fisher: Madam Speaker, the speech, as it pertains to what the Department of National Defence and the Canadian Armed Forces are doing to green their fleets, is to realize and understand they are big contributors to the greenhouse gas emissions of our country. Militaries around the world are huge contributors to the greenhouse gas emissions of the entire world. The recognition, through “Strong, Secure, Engaged”, is that they have to play an important part and a very important role in ensuring they take part in this global desire to reduce greenhouse gas emissions by understanding that it is absolutely necessary and imperative in the climate crisis that we take this action. I commend the Canadian Armed Forces for understanding and recognizing the importance of having to take those steps and having to green their fleets.

Ms. Marilyn Gladu (Sarnia—Lambton, CPC): Madam Speaker, the Liberals have said that climate change is an emergency. Therefore, I am wondering why, in the dying days of this Parliament, we have not heard anything about the specific and immediate actions the government is going to take if it thinks it is an emergency. Perhaps the member could elaborate.

Mr. Darren Fisher: Madam Speaker, since before we formed government, we talked about the environment in our platform. We have been doing climate action since we started campaigning and knocking on doors in 2015. With the conversations we have had in this House on a price on pollution, one of the only 50 or so measures we are enabling in order to impact the mitigation effects of climate change, it is ludicrous to think that we are doing this in the dying days. We have been in a major fight with the opposition because we want to go here and they push back. Every single day it is a push-back, with misinformation, when we want to move forward on climate change. It is very frustrating when we are in this House each

day and we know where we need to get to and we have somebody pushing us in the wrong direction every day.

Mr. Vance Badawey (Niagara Centre, Lib.): Madam Speaker, throughout the past years, the current and well-into-the-future local governments, as well as the property taxpayers and water and waste water ratepayers have been experiencing higher rates in taxes due to climate change. With that, the government has taken on a very disciplined approach to look through a triple bottom-line lens that takes into consideration environment as well as economic and social issues. The question to the presenter is this. In his opinion, does this lens determine the discipline, ultimately, of all the decisions that we are taking with respect to climate change and the effects that climate change has on local government?

• (1830)

Mr. Darren Fisher: Madam Speaker, what is really interesting is this. Whether it be planning, procurement or operations, our government is looking at every move and every decision we make through a climate lens. That is absolutely imperative. We must do that and continue to do that. As a government, we cannot make a decision from this point forward without looking at how it positively or negatively impacts the environment. We talked about transition in this House a lot. I think it is very important, and others may disagree, that we consider the jobs of today while we are transitioning to the jobs of tomorrow. It is important that we get there quickly, but we have to find that balance.

Ms. Elizabeth May (Saanich—Gulf Islands, GP): Madam Speaker, I want to thank my hon. colleague from Dartmouth—Cole Harbour for graciously sharing his time with me.

This emergency debate is now under time allocation. It started over a month ago and this is my first occasion to be able to speak to the various reasons that I want to support both the Liberal motion that this is a climate emergency and the Conservative amendment that would require that we do something more rigorous about it. I have already voted in favour of the NDP motion to similar effect that called this a climate emergency.

I want to back up and set this in a context that is indeed global. I am going to attempt to do this in as non-partisan a fashion as possible.

[*Translation*]

Clearly, we are in a global climate emergency. The greatest threat to our future comes not from some foreign foe but from our very own human nature. The problem is that partisan politics in every democracy stand in the way of the scientific community, which knows without a doubt that we must take action.

[*English*]

In every country around the world the same circumstance prevails that there is a very large obstacle for people in elected office to do what needs to be done, because in one country after another they face domestic obstacles of what is politically possible.

Government Orders

We are in a very serious crisis now. The words “climate emergency” apply because we have been told by the Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change that we have, at most, 10 years and likely less to ensure that we hit the required target for 2030, and to ensure that we can hit the targets required by 2050.

I want to underscore that these are not political targets. They are non-negotiable. Political targets can be missed, though we can try. Goodness knows how often Canada has missed targets to end child poverty. It is not a good thing, not at all. We have missed targets to provide safe drinking water on first nations reserves. We take targets in this place and we name them.

The targets around climate action in a climate emergency are essentially scientists telling us as elected people that we only have one chance. I have been working on this issue, by the way, since 1986, when I was in the former minister of environment's office. We had a lot of chances then.

Procrastination has left us where we are right now. There is no time for incrementalism any more. We have run out of time for small tweaks. We actually are in a place where, if we are going to ensure our children have a livable world and human civilization does not break down in their lifetimes, and nothing is more serious than that, we have to accept that we are in a climate emergency that means status quo behaviour is over.

That also means, in our political context, that we have to do things differently. We are on the verge of an election in Canada. I look around this room. How likely is it that we can set aside partisanship to do the right thing?

Currently, the term “climate emergency” has been accepted by two countries. The U.K. and Ireland have accepted that this is a climate emergency. I think it is very important and historic that Canada do the same. We need mobilization and increased effort from all countries on earth. I should also say that the level of government in Canada that has already done the most is the municipal order of government where we have seen many cities and towns declare climate emergencies, from Ottawa to Vancouver, Victoria and Halifax. We are seeing many communities stand up and say that this is a climate emergency.

The point of this is not just to hear ourselves talk. The point of it is to say, and I repeat, that status quo behaviour is over. We cannot continue to talk about whether a carbon tax is a good wedge issue in politics. We cannot have people talking about this election campaign as if we are just going to duke it out over whether the Liberal carbon tax plan is a good or a bad idea. That is not a relevant question, honestly. In a climate emergency, the only question that matters is if the plans we have in place avoid climate breakdown and preserve human civilization.

● (1835)

The answer to that is, tragically, no. We know the target we are currently operating under as a country, what is called a nationally determined contribution at the United Nations, is wholly inadequate to hold to 1.5°C.

This is a climate emergency. What if every party and leader in this place understood what it meant? First, we would have to agree that we would go off fossil fuels as quickly as possible. We would start

where we need to be. By 2050, we need to have zero emissions globally. Then we need to respond to global calls for action.

I want to put on the table that this is a place where we could really co-operate as parties. UN Secretary-General António Guterres has called for an emergency gathering to face the climate crisis and to call on countries around the world to improve their targets and respond appropriately. This emergency climate summit is scheduled for September 23 of this year, in conjunction with the annual meeting of the UN General Assembly. The next climate negotiations, COP25, begin in Santiago, Chile, in December.

All elected members here are thinking that on September 23, they will be in the middle of a campaign. What if we decided to take a page out of Greta Thunberg's, who is from Sweden, actions for a climate strike? What if we decided that the climate emergency was so serious, we would have a campaign strike, that we would all go to New York. We would tell the Prime Minister it really mattered that he be there, that we knew we were in an election campaign, but he should not worry, the Conservative leader, the New Democrat leader, the Green Party leader, the Bloc leader and the People's Party leader would go to New York together to a UN summit, where we would declare that Canada was committed to going off fossil fuels 100% by 2050, that this was the timeline by which we would do it and that we would cut our emissions in Canada by 60% below 2005 levels by 2030.

If we do not set an ambitious target, we cannot get to it ever. It is like saying our current target is as if we had a four-storey building on fire and we say we have meaningful action because we have erected a step ladder that gets to the first storey. We have to get to four storeys and rescue people who are on the roof surrounded by flames. In that context, incrementalism is not enough. The climate emergency is just such a context in which more is required of us. Even in this election year, I put before members that we need to stop our status quo behaviour.

Central to the Green Party's “Mission: Possible” is that we put ourselves on war-like footing, which, again, is not an external enemy but our conduct and behaviour, and we have the opportunity to save our children from an unthinkable world. The opportunity to achieve that, the window of opportunity, will close on us before the 2023 election. The trajectory to get to where we need to be by 2030 needs to begin rather quickly, rather sharply. Canada right now has a poorer record than the rest of the world.

Government Orders

Most of the countries that signed onto the Kyoto protocol are well below 1990 levels of emissions by now. Scotland is at 40% below 1990 levels. In Canada, we are still well above 1990 levels. If we hit the Harper target under which we are still functioning, we would be a bit below 1990 levels. However, as we have heard recently from anyone who studies it, the cumulative actions yet announced by the current government fall far short of that target. However, that target itself is the one-storey ladder when we need to get to the four storeys and rescue people from the roof.

I want to emphasize that if it is an emergency, then we change the way we behave. If it is an emergency, we set aside the partisanship and say we have to do this together as Canadians. We have to tell Canadians from coast to coast to coast that this is something we do together, all hands on deck.

● (1840)

[*Translation*]

Let us get on with it. This is an emergency, and we must work together.

[*English*]

It is in that hope, despite all the obvious nastiness of partisan politics, that I ask us not to think about poll results and seat counts, but our children's future. We need to work together.

Mr. Kevin Lamoureux (Parliamentary Secretary to the Leader of the Government in the House of Commons, Lib.): Madam Speaker, I always appreciate the comments of the leader of the Green Party on a variety of different issues, particularly those that deal with the environment.

We have seen some significant budgetary and legislative measures on how we can improve the conditions in Canada, whether it is the price on pollution, which is a fairly significant program that originated out of the Paris agreement, to some of the incentives that are provided through the budget to try to get individuals to purchase more electric vehicles, to many of the different departments, like the Department of National Defence, about which the previous speaker talked, a small but important one, going from a C-130 for search and rescue to a C-295, which is healthy on the environment.

I wonder if the leader of the Green Party would provide some thoughts on it not only being important for us to look at the bigger picture, but for all ministers to look at ways in which they can also make a difference from within their departments.

Ms. Elizabeth May: Madam Speaker, there is a list of things that can be done and should be done by every minister and every citizen. The list is long because our opportunities are endless.

As long as we keep operating in the status quo world with blinders on, where we can say the Liberals' climate policy is that they are way better than the Conservatives, and we will see what the Conservatives offer later this week, and until and unless we accept our responsibilities to have the right targets to mobilize action with the cumulative small efforts, we still lose our chances for human survival a bit more slowly than with parties that say climate change does not exist.

It is really going to be harder for politicians on this issue than on most because the issue is unforgiving and there is no negotiating with the atmosphere.

Ms. Marilyn Gladu (Sarnia—Lambton, CPC): Madam Speaker, I want to be clear on what the Green Party would do in this light.

My understanding is that the Green Party is opposed to fossil fuels, that it would oppose building additional pipelines, that it is in favour of the carbon tax and against the use of plastics. Is that correct?

Ms. Elizabeth May: That is correct up to a point, Madam Speaker. My hon. friend from Sarnia will find our policies both in "Vision Green", which is on our website in deep detail, and "Mission: Possible", which is intended to be that ambitious rally call for Canadians to go off fossil fuels. Any fossil fuel infrastructure expansion is inconsistent with our own planetary survival and continuation of human civilization.

We are not against the use of all plastics. That is the one place where I would disagree with my colleague. We think that bitumen production can be changed from fossil fuel production to feedstock for petrochemicals, particularly for durable plastics, not single-use plastics.

● (1845)

Mr. Alistair MacGregor (Cowichan—Malahat—Langford, NDP): Madam Speaker, I share many of the concerns of the member for Saanich—Gulf Islands on this file.

One of the things I find troubling in the current atmosphere is that we seem to be debating the current costs of the carbon tax. I am just wondering if the member could illuminate for the House what the future projections are for the costs of unmitigated climate change and how those will absolutely dwarf any kind of figure we are talking about presently.

Ms. Elizabeth May: Madam Speaker, one of the frustrating things about this debate is that it is not about what it costs to take action on climate, but what it saves, and what it saves is human life and our communities. We are looking at a situation within Canada where people died from a heat wave in Montreal.

[*Translation*]

Last year in Montreal, the heat wave killed seven people, I believe. That happened because of climate change.

[*English*]

Canadians are threatened with respect to infrastructure loss in the many billions of dollars. That is where we are now, at 1°C global average temperature increase.

If even holding to 1.5°C as hard as it is, will imply billions of dollars more loss every year, then developing countries will need our help. There will be environmental refugees coming here. The costs of inaction far exceed the opportunities that are created to actually revitalize and modernize our economy.

Government Orders

Mr. Michael Barrett (Leeds—Grenville—Thousand Islands and Rideau Lakes, CPC): Madam Speaker, I will be sharing my time with the member for Bellechasse—Les Etchemins—Lévis.

“It is an emergency”, the government realized on May 6, the day the member for Nanaimo—Ladysmith was elected, doubling the Green Party caucus. “It is an emergency”, the Liberal government said on May 16, over a month ago. In that month, have all the business items the House has dealt with been an emergency? Suddenly, it is an emergency today. The Liberals have moved closure on it and we will vote on the emergency motion introduced four years into their mandate. Only now do they suddenly realize this is an emergency.

If there is an emergency, is it that the Liberals did not realize they would not meet their Paris targets? Is it that they are not in a position to be calling for more ambitious targets?

I remember very well that in 2015, the Liberal government said that the targets of the Conservatives were the floor, not the ceiling, and they were not even on the same story of the building; they were in the basement. The Liberals have declared a climate emergency, but the Conservatives see it for what it is. It is a cynical ploy by the Liberals, who are desperate to distract from not only their own climate failures, but from their many scandals.

This spring has been a rough one for Canadians and for the trust and confidence we have in our institutions. We have the SNC-Lavalin scandal. We have the coordinated and sustained attempt to interfere in the judicial process in Canada. We have the undermining of the rule of law with the concerted effort to destroy Vice-Admiral Mark Norman and his reputation as a way to protect Liberal insiders, which is a trend in both the SNC and the shipbuilding gerrymandering we have seen.

There are a lot of emergencies the Liberals are faced with, but the climate is not one. Certainly their actions demonstrate that to us. We know that real efforts need to be made. We know we need an environmental plan. However, that is not what we got from the Liberal government. We got a tax plan from it.

We know the Liberals will put an unmanageable burden on Canadians. We know from the Parliamentary Budget Officer that this burden is going to increase greatly. We know that the price of gas we see at pumps today, which Canadians are struggling to pay, will need to go up almost another 25¢ a litre for the Liberals to hit the Paris targets, which they said were the floor not the ceiling, even though they cannot even come close to them.

There is a lot of flailing coming from the government side of the House, but Canadians should fear not, as help is on the way. A credible environmental plan will be put forward by the Leader of the Opposition this Wednesday. We are very excited. Canadians will be able to see what a credible plan on the environment looks like. They will be able to see what real leadership looks like, not virtue signalling and jet setting. It is an emergency.

The Toronto Raptors won the NBA finals. Carbon footprint aside, the Prime Minister is going to address the emergency in person this very day while we debate the emergency motion? He flew by chartered aircraft to Toronto. Then he flew back. I think he is also flying to Montreal today and then he is going to fly back.

I hear from the government side—

● (1850)

Mr. Kevin Lamoureux: Madam Speaker, I rise on a point of order. The Prime Minister is a busy man, connecting with Canadians and doing all sorts of wonderful things. However, the member opposite should know that he is not to make reference to the presence of a member inside the House.

The Assistant Deputy Speaker (Mrs. Carol Hughes): The hon. member cannot say indirectly what he cannot say directly, so I want to remind him to be mindful as he is giving his speech to ensure that he is not indicating who is or is not in the House.

The hon. member for Leeds—Grenville—Thousand Islands and Rideau Lakes.

Mr. Michael Barrett: Madam Speaker, it is very unfortunate that the parliamentary secretary to the government House leader drew to your attention that the Prime Minister was absent. I was in my riding this morning and not here, but here I am now.

The Assistant Deputy Speaker (Mrs. Carol Hughes): Once again, I remind the member to go back to his points and ensure that he does not do indirectly what he should not be doing directly.

The hon. member for Leeds—Grenville—Thousand Islands and Rideau Lakes.

Mr. Michael Barrett: Madam Speaker, as I said, I was in my riding this morning; I am back. We can be in more than one place over the course of a day.

Let us talk about a different day for the parliamentary secretary to the government House leader. Let us talk about the Prime Minister's famed trip, his illegal vacation to the island of the Aga Khan. The Prime Minister travelled there by private aircraft, and if that was not enough, he took a private helicopter too. I am pretty sure he is not allowed to do that. It might be more egregious than a frivolous point of order in the House. It is actually against the law.

We have a Prime Minister who, in one vacation, emitted more CO₂ and his carbon footprint was bigger than that of the average Canadian in a whole year. We have two sets of rules with the Prime Minister. We have one set of rules for him, and we have one set of rules for everybody else. We have a Prime Minister who took a vacation, which is great, because who does not deserve a vacation? However, instead of enjoying something a little closer to home and doing his part to reduce his carbon footprint, he flew to Florida. That is great, beautiful, and I hope the weather was nice. However, there was a photo op in Ottawa, so he flew back by private aircraft. When the photo op was complete, he flew back to Florida. What does one do at the end of a trip? One flies back home again.

He is entitled to one vacation a year. However, I hear the waves were pretty gnarly in B.C., so off to Tofino the Prime Minister goes, on a surfing vacation across the country, and then he flies back to Ottawa. We have two sets of rules, and we deserve better than that.

Government Orders

As I mentioned, Canadians can look forward to the credible plan that our Conservative leader will put forward this Wednesday, one that does not have two sets of rules, one that Canadians can count on and one where Canadians know they are not going to be taxed for heating their homes and driving their kids to soccer. It is a plan where Canadians who are within \$200 of insolvency are not going to have to look at tax after successive tax after tax, as they do with the current government.

Now, the Liberals have said they are not going to raise the carbon tax. However, this is from the same government that promised, when the Prime Minister looked Canadians right in the eye, that the government was going to balance the budget in 2019. The government's own documents now say that the budget will not be balanced until after 2040.

Canadians deserve better, and they will get that. They will get a credible plan from the Conservatives, and they will be able to see real leadership in action when they elect a Conservative government in October. Action is required, but we do not have an emergency, except the political emergency that has come from the failures of the Liberal government.

• (1855)

[*Translation*]

Ms. Linda Lapointe (Rivière-des-Mille-Îles, Lib.): Madam Speaker, I listened carefully to my colleague.

I wonder how the Conservatives plan to combat climate change and when they will release this plan. It has been more than 400 days since their leader said he would release it.

Do the member for Leeds—Grenville—Thousand Islands and Rideau Lakes and his Conservative colleagues believe that we are in a climate emergency?

Will you support the motion?

The Assistant Deputy Speaker (Mrs. Carol Hughes): I remind the member that she must address the Chair and not the member himself.

The hon. member for Leeds—Grenville—Thousand Islands and Rideau Lakes.

[*English*]

Mr. Michael Barrett: Madam Speaker, my hon. colleague will note that, as I mentioned more than once in my speech, on Wednesday of this week we are going to hear the plan that a Conservative government will implement to protect our environment. It will be real vision and real leadership.

Will I support a motion that there is an emergency? If the motion were that there is a political emergency that the government is facing, I could agree with that. That is what I will say.

Mr. Alistair MacGregor (Cowichan—Malahat—Langford, NDP): Madam Speaker, I was curious about the part of the speech where the member for Leeds—Grenville—Thousand Islands and Rideau Lakes was talking about the carbon tax. I do acknowledge that, by itself, it is not going to produce results and that it has to be part of a whole suite of options.

However, it seems to me that the Conservative position is based on the premise that people's behaviour will not change, when in my own riding I am seeing a lot more electric vehicles come out. If we have those eco-energy retrofits of homes and if we electrify our energy grid, we are going to create opportunities for people to use less carbon and therefore pay less of a price on pollution.

I say this with the greatest respect. I am simply curious. People's behaviour is going to change. Would the member not agree that eventually this is going to lead them to pay less of a price on pollution in the future?

Mr. Michael Barrett: Madam Speaker, members will recall that it was a Conservative government that put forward great incentives for Canadians to be able to make changes in their life, invest in their home and use more sustainable and innovative ways of heating their homes, for example. I owned a home that had a geothermal system in it, and it was fantastic. It was the best heat. On the Internet, we see charts of which type of heat is hottest in a house. The most consistent heat we had in our home was geothermal.

The Conservatives were able to put forward this plan through which Canadians were able to invest and receive a rebate from government, but they did not get taxed, and we saw a positive outcome as a result of it.

• (1900)

Mr. Peter Schiefke (Parliamentary Secretary to the Prime Minister (Youth) and to the Minister of Border Security and Organized Crime Reduction, Lib.): Madam Speaker, first I would like to clarify one thing for my hon. colleague. It was the Conservative prime minister, Stephen Harper, who came into power and cut subsidies for hybrid vehicles and electric vehicles. I remember that because I bought one of those vehicles and was not able to benefit.

During the member's speech, he mentioned many times that this is not a climate emergency. He did not speak about the fact that his party has no plan. I understand that, so he had nothing really to talk about.

However, if he is not going to read the literature around the world that proves climate change is happening and is having an effect on us all, then perhaps the hon. member would like to come to my riding, where, in the last two years, we have seen two once-in-a-century storms. Perhaps, he would even come and help me fill some sandbags to help protect the people in my community. Maybe that will help to convince him that climate change is real and it is an emergency.

Mr. Michael Barrett: Madam Speaker, I would love the opportunity to knock on some doors for a strong Conservative candidate in the member opposite's riding, where we can share with residents the strong Conservative vision on how we can protect our environment without taxing Canadians. I would love the opportunity to do just that.

Government Orders

[*Translation*]

Hon. Steven Blaney (Bellechasse—Les Etchemins—Lévis, CPC): Madam Speaker, I want to take this opportunity to commend my colleague from Ontario, who embraced the “think globally, act locally” movement by installing a geothermal system in his home. That is an excellent way to heat a home and reduce our carbon footprint. He took advantage of financial support from the previous government through the eco-energy retrofit program.

I will have a hard time staying within my speaking time for such an important and critical issue that affects the environment, sustainable development and, of course, climate change.

I want to tell those watching that in 2015, Canada made a commitment to reduce its greenhouse gas emissions by 30%, relative to 2005 levels, by 2030.

I will start with some very good news. Between 2005 and 2015, Canada reduced its greenhouse gas emissions by 2.2%. This shows that when the provinces, federal government, municipalities and citizens work together, we can achieve real results and make progress towards achieving our target.

Indeed, this target was reached back then by Stephen Harper's government. I have a story about this that I would like to share. When I was elected in 2006, the previous environment minister, Stéphane Dion—I would like to say hello to him, if he is listening—and the provincial environment minister at the time, Thomas Mulcair, were at loggerheads. Quebec was unable to get federal money to implement its green plan. What did our Conservative government do? It put in place the EcoTrust fund. Not only did Quebec receive the money it requested, but \$1.5 billion was allocated to the provinces so they could implement their green plans. The result was, as I mentioned earlier, a 2.2% reduction in greenhouse gas emissions during that decade.

This work requires collaboration, partnerships and investments in technologies.

I would remind my colleague who spoke about measures earlier, that it was a Conservative government that gradually brought to an end the accelerated capital cost allowance for the oil sands. It also encouraged natural resource businesses by giving them tax incentives to operate in an environmentally friendly way and to reduce their carbon footprint.

That is just one example among many others. Unfortunately, this stands in sharp contrast to our situation since 2015.

According to all the experts, including Mr. Suzuki, the commissioner of the environment and the Parliamentary Budget Officer, Canada is going to miss the targets. What is unfortunate is that the Liberals currently have no structure or tools in place to reach our targets. On the contrary, there are mechanisms in place to make it look like the targets will be met. What is the best way of making it look like you are doing something? Obviously, it is to tax the middle class. That is exactly what the Liberals are doing.

Whenever we ask them about the repercussions of the tax they are going to impose on taxpayers, the carbon tax, as they call it, they refuse to answer. They are incapable of telling us how effective their

tax will be. They cannot even tell us how much it will contribute to reducing greenhouse gas emissions.

What we do know, however, and what all the experts are saying, is that they are off the mark. It is unfortunate, because the people listening to us want effective action.

Before they get even more depressed over the disaster that the Liberals are steering us into, I want to talk about an initiative in my riding called the Coop FA. For those who like a little more background, I can add that the full name of this well-known organization is Coopérative Forêt d'Arden. This social economy enterprise won a Pléiades award of excellence in 2018. I want to commend this organization for realizing that what was needed was local action. This co-operative carries out environmental outreach with students, members of the public and organizations to inspire environmentally responsible behaviour.

● (1905)

To date, it has educated over 5,000 young people on the importance of being environmentally responsible and shrinking their carbon footprint. Statistics show that actions taken by children aged six to nine can be equivalent to taking several hundred cars off the road. That shows that the Coop FA is planting the right seed, because the next generation will be keenly aware of these issues and the importance of individual and collective action.

I also want to note that the Paris Agreement is based on targets that were set by our government. We could even go back as far as the first Rio Summit, in 1992, where we were represented by former Conservative minister Jean Charest. I think it has been clearly demonstrated that the Liberals' record is abysmal. The carbon tax is a failure. They are going to miss the targets and the middle class is going to pay the price. The Parliamentary Budget Officer says that 92% of the total revenue from the carbon tax will come from middle-class families, leaving just 8% for big polluters, who also have access to mechanisms for reducing their taxes.

I would like to quote something Mr. Charest said at the Rio summit. At the time, Mr. Mulroney's Conservative government was in power and the Progressive Conservatives had a very good environmental record, just as we do. In retrospect, Mr. Charest realized we needed to act faster because climate phenomena were intensifying. Here is what he said:

I think we have made major progress, but we have not reached the goal we set for ourselves in 1992, which was to help the economy shift toward truly sustainable development.... That's the kind of development we want, development that will enable us to construct policies that really push us toward better choices. Plus, that work has to be sustained for many years.

There is no denying the climate emergency has been around for decades. As far back as 1972, the Club of Rome and the Brundtland report sounded the alarm. This issue is too important to let politicians use it as a bargaining chip. That is why we plan to keep going in the same direction, which means implementing concrete, proven measures that have enabled Canada to reduce its greenhouse gas emissions without burdening the middle class. That is the plan we will put forward, and it will have three pillars.

Government Orders

First, we need to reduce our greenhouse gas emissions. Second, we need to adapt to climate change and implement mitigation measures. Third, we need to make our communities more resilient to potential disasters, which we did when I was public safety minister. We made investments in that regard.

In closing, I want to say that we have a responsible approach to climate change, unlike some political parties that are hiding their heads in the sand. We need oil to make the transition to renewable energy. We believe that it is better to use Canadian energy sources ethically and responsibly than to use foreign energy sources that are not developed safely and responsibly from countries whose values are often the complete opposite of Canada's.

• (1910)

Ms. Linda Lapointe (Rivière-des-Mille-Îles, Lib.): Madam Speaker, on Wednesday, the Conservatives are finally supposed to table the environmental plan that they promised to provide over 400 days ago. I would like to know whether the member for Bellechasse—Les Etchemins—Lévis and his Conservative colleagues believe that there is a climate emergency.

If so, will they support our motion?

Hon. Steven Blaney: Madam Speaker, I thank my colleague for the question.

The issue is so important that we cannot allow the Liberals to squander Canada's opportunities to take a leadership role in reducing global greenhouse gas emissions. Canada's emissions represent less than 2% of global emissions. That is why it is important to be a leader by taking an international approach. The Liberals, however, are failing miserably, both on the domestic and international fronts.

I would tell my colleague to stay tuned because the plan is coming. I can assure her that it will be based on our many success stories. She need only look at the Conservatives' budgets during the Harper decade. She will see many measures that were put in place and were successful in reducing greenhouse gas emissions.

[*English*]

Mr. Wayne Stetski (Kootenay—Columbia, NDP): Madam Speaker, I am the vice-chair on the environment committee, and last week we heard from the Parliamentary Budget Officer on the relationship between carbon taxes and the reduction of GHG and also the backstop plan, as it is called, that is being put forward by the federal government. The PBO said there is a direct relationship between having a carbon tax and reducing greenhouse gas emissions, and he said that very clearly.

Second, I believe it is important to not always park truth at the door here. I do not often support what the Liberals are saying, but the PBO also said that 80% of Canadians would get a bigger rebate than the price in carbon tax was going to cost them. The wealthiest 20% would probably pay more than they would get in a rebate.

I would like to hear the member's comments on what the PBO presented at the environment committee last week on those two aspects.

[*Translation*]

Hon. Steven Blaney: Madam Speaker, I thank my colleague for the question. As the saying goes, the proof is in the pudding.

[*English*]

The carbon tax has been tried, and it is not working. Actually, it is a tax grab. The only one to benefit is the government, which gets more money in its pocket. Unfortunately, in a province like mine, we see some of the initiatives being put forward with this tax grab as a total failure, and the Liberals have just given us an example. They were subsidizing fridges for a national company, while our small grocery retailers have to pay for this themselves and have to pay the same carbon tax.

We agree on the goal. Obviously, the Liberal plan is a failure. It has been demonstrated in the past that we can get there without a tax grab. That is what we have done in the past and what we intend to continue to do.

• (1915)

[*Translation*]

Ms. Monique Pauzé (Repentigny, BQ): Madam Speaker, at the beginning of his speech, my colleague talked about young people being environmentally responsible, saying that that is the way to go. I would just remind him that a network called the Établissements verts Brundtland, comprising several green schools in Quebec, was created in the 1990s. People have already started adopting environmentally responsible behaviour. However, that is not going to solve the climate crisis. The elephant in the room is oil and gas, fossil fuels, the oil sands.

What could the Conservatives propose when they want to develop the oil sands at all costs? What could a Conservative government propose to resolve the climate crisis or, at least, to start working on it?

Hon. Steven Blaney: Madam Speaker, I want to congratulate my colleague for having a fully electric vehicle. Based on my recent conversations with her, it is working really well.

Unfortunately, we still need oil. The best-selling vehicle in Quebec is the Ford F-150. It is all well and good to attack the oil sands, but gas use is the primary source of greenhouse gas emissions. I prefer to use Canadian oil rather than unethical oil from another country. This allows us to reinvest in our social services and in our community.

Ms. Linda Lapointe (Rivière-des-Mille-Îles, Lib.): Madam Speaker, I will be sharing my time with my colleague from Abitibi—Témiscamingue.

Climate change and its impacts are global in nature and complex. Advancing our understanding of climate change in Canada is a key priority for our government, and we believe that a rigorous evidence base is foundational to make sound policy decisions and to take action on climate change.

Government Orders

This past April, we released Canada's Changing Climate Report, which lays out a comprehensive look into how Canada's climate has changed in the past and how it may change in the future. The assessment confirms, through overwhelming evidence, that Canada's climate has warmed in the past and will continue to warm in the future as a result of carbon emissions from human activity. On average, this warming has been double the global rate, with even faster rates of warming in the Arctic.

The effects of this rapid warming are widespread and alarming. Extreme weather events, such as flooding, are expected to become more frequent and intense in the future. In 2017, Rivière-des-Mille-Îles experienced the flood of the century. In 2019, flooding hit Sainte-Marthe-sur-le-Lac, which is right next to my riding. Everyone could see what was happening on the news. These extreme events will be increasingly common in the future.

The availability of fresh water is changing, leading to increased risk of droughts in the summer. Sea level rise will put our coastal communities at risk. We are already seeing profound impacts in Canada on human health and well-being, the environment and all sectors of the economy. Recent extreme weather events, like the 2019 floods in Ontario and Quebec I just mentioned, wildfires in British Columbia in 2017 and the Fort McMurray wildfires in 2016, underscore this urgent need for action to better prepare Canadians to adapt to climate change.

The emotional and financial shock of losing homes and businesses to fire, flooding and storm surges is having lasting impacts on Canadians' lives and well-being.

Through the findings of Canada's Changing Climate Report, we know that the need to act is undeniable. Mobilizing action on adaptation will help protect Canadians from climate change risks, build resilience and ensure that society continues to thrive in a changing climate. The scope of the challenge we are facing requires co-operation, leadership, creativity and commitment.

To meet this challenge, the pan-Canadian framework on clean growth and climate change, adopted on December 9, 2016, sets out our national plan for meeting Canada's GHG emissions reduction target, building resilience to the impacts of climate change and enabling clean growth and jobs through investments in technology, innovation and infrastructure.

Recognizing that climate resilience is a long-term challenge, adaptation and climate resilience is one of the four pillars of the pan-Canadian framework on clean growth and climate change.

Under the adaptation and climate resilience pillar of the pan-Canadian framework, federal, provincial and territorial governments made commitments to address the significant risks posed by climate change, particularly in Canada's northern and coastal regions and for indigenous peoples.

It represents the first time that federal, provincial, and territorial governments have identified priority areas for collaboration to build resilience to a changing climate across the country. To support the pan-Canadian framework, the federal government has launched a broad suite of adaptation programming.

In Budget 2017, our government announced \$260 million for federal adaptation programs related to information and capacity, climate-resilient infrastructure, human health and well-being, vulnerable regions and climate-related hazards and disaster risks.

Building on these commitments, we are also investing \$22 billion in green and resilient infrastructure to both boost economic growth and build resilient communities.

• (1920)

These investments include \$9.2 billion for bilateral agreements with the provinces and territories, with funding specifically allocated for adaptation and climate-resilient infrastructure.

This also includes \$2 billion for a disaster mitigation and adaptation fund for built and natural, large-scale infrastructure projects that build the resilience of our infrastructure to natural disasters, extreme weather events and climate change.

This \$2-billion fund is very important, as it will help us to adapt. This is particularly important in the Mille-Îles and Montreal regions, where we have experienced significant climate change resulting in the recent flooding.

Since the disaster mitigation and adaptation fund launched in 2018, our government has announced funding for 26 projects that will help communities across the country cope, adapt to, prepare for and withstand extreme storms, flooding and fire.

We are also ensuring that our future infrastructure investments are taking climate change and its impacts into account. Under Canada's infrastructure plan, applicants who seek federal funding for major infrastructure projects, from transit projects to community centres, are asked to assess the risks they face as a result of climate change and how these risks can be mitigated. This initiative is helping us build climate-smart infrastructure and ensuring that we are not locking in climate risks for decades to come.

Adaptation is not just about building the biggest and strongest infrastructure. It is also about how we build communities that are sustainable and resilient in every sense. It is about the decisions we make on where and how to live, how we run our businesses, and how we support our neighbours. Promoting social resilience means that we support vulnerable populations through times of change.

Government Orders

We also strongly believe that adaptation decisions should be based on the best available science and information. Again, it is very important to have the scientific data available, and this science has to be available to the people making adaptation decisions in a format that they can use.

This is why our government established the Canadian Centre for Climate Services, which was launched last year. This new and innovative service has consolidated data, tools and information onto an interactive website that supports Canadians in understanding and adapting to the impacts of climate change.

From globally accepted models, the Centre has derived an interactive map of climate conditions. Canadians can find out how the climate is changing in their city. For example, how much hotter will my summers be over the next 20 years? Will there be more rain, more or less snow?

If Canadians cannot find the information they are looking for, or need help to understand it, they can call or email to reach a climate expert.

As the federal government, we play a crucial role. We generate climate change information, guidance and tools to help Canadians adapt at all levels. We help build capacity in other orders of government, in communities and in the private sector to assess and respond to risks. We can also lead by example, by building resilience into federal assets, programs and services against the impacts of climate change.

While we continue to do great work at home, it is also important to recognize that Canada is not alone. Climate change is a global challenge that requires global solutions. This is why Canada has joined together with the Netherlands and other nations to show leadership on climate change and the environment through the work of the Global Commission on Adaptation.

The Global Commission on Adaptation was convened to elevate the visibility of climate change adaptation with a focus on identifying and encouraging solutions. Adapting to climate change is a challenge, but also an opportunity, an opportunity to create and expand into new markets with Canadian technologies and know-how, like growing food in cold climates.

• (1925)

There is so much to say about climate change and everything we are doing to tackle it.

[English]

Mr. Harold Albrecht (Kitchener—Conestoga, CPC): Madam Speaker, at the beginning of my colleague's speech she talked about preserving our water. In my riding, we have great programs, a very small incentive, to help farmers and agricultural workers preserve our streams. By putting a buffer alongside the streams, keeping cattle and other livestock out of the streams, the streams are now being unbelievably renewed. We have trees starting to grow in the buffer stream, shading and cooling the water, and now we have fish stocks returning to streams that were empty for years.

However, it is very discouraging when farmers in my area and other areas of Canada are taking these initiatives on their own to improve our water quality and at the same time to have the Liberal

government authorize the dumping of billions of litres of raw sewage into the St. Lawrence River. In November 2015, just shortly after the government was elected, it authorized the dumping of eight billion litres of raw sewage into the St. Lawrence. That is very discouraging to individual Canadians who are trying to do their part.

Here we have what the Liberals are calling an environmental plan and all it is is a tax plan. It sounds great, a price on pollution, it is a catchy phrase, it is a great sound bite, but it is not doing anything to preserve the environment.

Does my colleague not agree—

The Assistant Deputy Speaker (Mrs. Carol Hughes): I have to allow for other questions.

The hon. member for Rivière-des-Mille-Îles.

[Translation]

Ms. Linda Lapointe: Madam Speaker, I thank my colleague for his question.

He was talking about water. We are investing in infrastructure to make sure we have clean drinking water. Infrastructure is needed to protect against flooding. Investments are needed to save Canada's coastlines. That all relates to water.

All polluters are contributing to the drought in the Prairies and the flooding in Quebec and Ontario. They have to pay for polluting. It is not free. We need to ensure that all Canadians realize that pollution has a price. Quebec realized that a long time ago.

[English]

Mr. Wayne Stetski (Kootenay—Columbia, NDP): Madam Speaker, for months now, youth around the world have been marching on climate change and really leading the way for many leaders and many people in many countries. I am trying to understand, if this has been of such significance and so important to the Liberal government, why is it just now that we are debating this with two days left in the 42nd Parliament? How does that constitute a climate change emergency?

[Translation]

Ms. Linda Lapointe: Madam Speaker, I am pleased to answer that question.

We on this side are working very hard on this. It is very urgent. In my riding, people are very aware of climate change, and not just because of the flooding we had in 2017 and 2019. It is an ever-increasing problem because of climate change.

Yes, we are working hard. More than 50 measures have been developed by Canadians and by our government, including investments in renewable energy to reach the target of 90% clean energy. We are investing in electricity. We are helping schools, hospitals and businesses save money. We are supporting more than 1,000 public transit projects across the country, which means more public transit and clean energy.

Government Orders

In my riding, Nova Bus manufactures electric and hybrid buses. That is one of the solutions that will help us reach all of our greenhouse gas reduction objectives.

• (1930)

Mrs. Sylvie Boucher (Beauport—Côte-de-Beaupré—Île d'Orléans—Charlevoix, CPC): Madam Speaker, I have a very simple question for my colleague, who just gave a wonderful campaign speech.

The Liberals have been in power for four years. They have been here for four years, and all of sudden, there is an urgent need to talk about climate change. We have been talking about it for 25 years.

Did the Liberals just wake up?

Ms. Linda Lapointe: Madam Speaker, if it was so urgent and we have been talking about it for 25 years, why did the Conservatives do nothing for 10 years?

Ms. Christine Moore (Abitibi—Témiscamingue, NDP): Madam Speaker, this is probably one of the last times I will rise in the House, and I want to take the time to thank the people of Abitibi—Témiscamingue for allowing me to represent them. My constituents are brilliant, creative people who are full of ideas. The ideas are sometimes crazy, but that is what makes my riding a great one to represent. We become involved in these crazy projects and ideas.

The people working for organizations in Abitibi—Témiscamingue are extremely creative, motivated and passionate about the region. One example is Randa Napky, an ambassador for Abitibi—Témiscamingue. I cannot think of anyone better to represent our tourism association. All of these people make coming to work a pleasure, and it is truly wonderful to have this opportunity, as a member of Parliament. People are welcoming, they open their doors to us and they are always there to help.

I had three children during my time as an MP. When I attended events, people would take my babies from me and look after them. I was comfortable with that. So many times I felt as though I was visiting family, no matter where I went. It was like always attending a family party where people took care of each other, asked questions and asked how I was doing. They did not just do it out of politeness, but acted as though I were really a member of their family. Those were some really great moments, and I absolutely loved representing those people.

There are also my employees, who did a wonderful job. They became my close friends. There is Alain, who has been with me from the start and who got to know me extremely well. Now, when he has to write anything, it sounds as though I wrote it myself. We now finish each other's sentences. Over time, I got to know his wife, who is a nurse like me. I think Alain hates it when his wife and I talk because, when two nurses get to talking, the stories can get kind of gross. Chantal is a wonderful woman. I loved getting to know her, and I hope we will remain friends for a long time.

Yves also joined my team. He came from Service Canada, and according to his resume he was a very skilled and competent public servant. He also has a very crazy side, which I saw at one of the murder mystery events. This theatrical side may go unnoticed, but it is fun to see. He is also extremely dedicated to people. With his help we managed on a number of occasions to do things that the media

never report on and we never talk about. Several times we were able to recover \$20,000 in family benefits that were not paid because the CRA continued to ask for paperwork. No one reports these types of stories, but I can say that when we manage to do this for people, it really improves their lives.

There is also Ghislain, who is very intellectual and passionate about history and archeology. He cares so deeply about indigenous peoples that his master's thesis was about the role of traditional dance in the healing of indigenous people. It is a highly specialized topic, but this shows how much he cares about indigenous peoples.

Then there is Daniel, who seems unflappable. He has an incredible desire to learn, a thirst for knowledge and a great sense of calm. I am also lucky to know his wife, Maude, who has a truly unique personality and is very vivacious. They are outstanding people. I am very pleased to have met them.

Nicolas has been part of my Ottawa team for a long time. Even before he came to work for me, we were both candidates in a few of the same elections. Nicolas is always upbeat. He is the type of person who never gets discouraged and you cannot knock down.

• (1935)

Then there is Jean-François, who left for Iceland, where he is also a citizen, this spring. He was a down-to-earth guy I liked talking to, and I could talk to him about the politics of pretty much any country in the world. These people have been extremely important in my my life. There are also people from the whip's office, like Christian and Anthony, who know every detail of our lives. We have no choice; we have to tell them everything. Their job is to reassure and comfort us. They know all kinds of things about us.

Many of my colleagues have also changed my life. Lots of people think everything started with the orange wave, but plenty of other things happened before that. I myself was in the forces and a member of the NDP. Eventually, I decided to leave the army, and it just so happened there was an election around that time. I spent my last enlisted years under the Liberal government. The cuts were disastrous. We even had to train with snowballs a lot of the time. I made up my mind to leave the army.

Since I was no longer part of a system where I could not be politically active, I decided to get involved. At 22, I made the crazy decision to participate in the NDP electoral campaign. I also decided to move back to Abitibi—Témiscamingue. I talked to a young woman, Rebecca Blaikie. We spoke for an hour. Finally, she said that the party was looking for a candidate like me. She asked if I felt like getting into politics. The party was prepared to give me a chance.

Government Orders

I talked to my parents about it and decided to run for the first time. I was 22 at the time, in 2006. I was a candidate in 2008, but it was finally in 2011 that I was elected as part of Jack Layton's team. After 2006, I started getting involved. I also attended conventions. I remember spending time with Thomas Mulcair and the member for Rimouski-Neigette—Témiscouata—Les Basques. We spent evenings having discussions with Mr. Mulcair's wife, Catherine. She became a friend.

I also met the member for New Westminster—Burnaby. I doubt he would remember this, but we shared a taxi. He gave me his business card and said he was available to answer any questions I might have. That stayed with me. At the time, I had not been elected yet, but he was there for me.

Then I was elected. I became a mom while serving as an MP. I also remember Lysane Blanchette-Lamothe, Rosane Doré Lefebvre, Alexandrine Latendresse, the member for Churchill—Keewatinook Aski and the member for Salaberry—Suroît. We became moms around the same time. Former MP Alexandrine Latendresse had a baby shortly before I did, and she became a close friend, even officiating at my wedding.

I have been lucky enough to work with some amazing people, like the Assistant Deputy Speaker and member for Algoma—Manitoulin—Kapusking, who is basically my kids' third grandmother.

I have gotten to meet some incredible people. I want to thank them for being part of this adventure.

Before I leave, I just want to tell people to be bold. If I had not made that call, I probably would never have experienced this adventure. Members need to have the courage to stand up, to show some backbone and think for themselves. Canadians expect us to be honest. They want us to say what we really think.

Canadians are sick of canned speeches. I urge members to stand up, say what they think and stop parroting talking points. I think that advice applies to many members of the House. They need to reconnect with the public. The parties need to stop telling their members what to say. In my view, we did not go through 150 years of feminism for women in Parliament to just say and think as they are told.

I urge everyone to be brave. I sincerely hope that the next elected members will have the courage of their convictions and the will to stand up, as Canadians expect them to do.

● (1940)

[*English*]

Mr. Lloyd Longfield (Guelph, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, it is great to hear from the member for Abitibi—Témiscamingue. I know Abitibi has a great hockey team. We had some laughs over that during the Memorial Cup.

The member mentioned how important relationships are. Whether it is the relationships between us and our staff or between us and our community, really they are the relationships that bind us and bring us forward to be better members of Parliament and better citizens of Canada. Could she tell us a bit about the different flavour of relationships beyond what she has said so far? I am enjoying her story. She is a great storyteller.

[*Translation*]

Ms. Christine Moore: Mr. Speaker, I had the opportunity to develop quite a few extraordinary relationships, even with members of other parties. During this Parliament, I worked alongside MPs who served their country in the Canadian Armed Forces, including Conservative MPs, people who served during the Afghanistan war in the 2000s. Those relationships gave me a chance to get to know people I might never have gotten to know so well and to swap stories with them about our time in uniform.

It is important to get to know people, to hear about their experiences and find out who they really are beneath the surface. I have learned surprising tidbits about the private lives of many MPs. I have also learned to see their potential. That takes sincerity and openness. It is hard to get to know people when you are always trying to fit into a mould. I think people are at their best when they can be themselves. That makes politics so much more human and so much more interesting.

Mrs. Sylvie Boucher (Beauport—Côte-de-Beaupré—Île d'Orléans—Charlevoix, CPC): Mr. Speaker, I thank my NDP colleague for her heartfelt speech. Although I am much older than her, I am very proud to see that, despite her youth, she has the courage to be herself even though we do not always agree. We sometimes do disagree, but, even so, I was very touched when she said we must have the courage of our convictions. She has that courage, and I certainly hope that all the women and all the young women who run in the next election will not try to fit into a mould. We should be loud and proud about who we are and about standing for what we believe in.

I thank the member for her friendship. I had a chance to get to know her, woman to woman, and it was a pleasure serving with her, despite our differences of opinion. I will miss this sparkling and truly unique young woman very much.

● (1945)

Ms. Christine Moore: Mr. Speaker, I thank my colleague. I am going to miss her, but I know that my babies are also going to miss her. I am not sure how many babies stopped crying thanks to her. She is a magical grandmother, and I know that her grandchildren are in good hands.

No matter what party we represent, as women, we must help one another. I did not take up the fight to have the whole issue of parenting recognized in Parliament for my own sake or for my party alone. I took up this fight for all female parliamentarians, regardless of the party they represent. I did it to ensure that every woman who wants to become a parliamentarian, even if she is Conservative and her opinions go totally against mine, is able to be a mother while serving in Parliament and feel comfortable doing it.

[*English*]

Mr. Randy Boissonnault (Edmonton Centre, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, I welcome the opportunity to rise today to discuss this very important motion from a public safety perspective. I would like to thank the hon. Minister of Environment and Climate Change for putting forward the motion we are debating this evening.

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Our government is taking the actions necessary to address climate change and position Canada as a leader in the clean growth economy. We are focused on helping Canadians and different orders of government to deal with the devastating effects of climate change. As well, we are working hard with stakeholders from all orders of government and from all industries on how best to prevent the devastating effects of climate change.

[*Translation*]

That is what Canadians expect from us. That is why we were elected and that is what we will do.

[*English*]

Canadians do not want over-the-top rhetoric, political games or denials on this critical issue. Climate change is real. It is happening, and we are already feeling its impacts.

Over the past few years, with this year being no exception, many communities have been hit hard by severe floods, unprecedented wildfires and destructive storms. We know that these natural disasters are happening with greater frequency and ferocity than ever before. Already this summer, we have seen climate change in action in Alberta with smoke from forest fires blanketing our province, blocking out the sun in my city, and leaving us in such pitch-black darkness that the streetlights came on in the middle of the day in Edmonton.

Two weeks ago, on May 31, among thousands of cities and 85 countries around the world, Edmonton had the worst air quality in the world. Spending an entire day outside, as many Edmontonians have to do, was equivalent to smoking at least 40 packs of cigarettes. If they were stacked up, it would be quite a stack of smokes, and that is what people were breathing in.

Mike Flannigan, a professor with the department of renewable resources at the University of Alberta, said that the smoke from wildfires “is like a ‘chemical soup’ that can be trapped in the lungs and cause a number of health issues.” This is a chemical soup that some children in Edmonton have been consuming every single summer that they have been alive.

Meanwhile, as Alberta burned, causing thousands of innocent people to flee from their homes, Jason Kenney, Premier of Alberta, repealed the carbon tax stating, “We’ve always had...fires.” He said that climate change had nothing to do with what was happening in our province.

Let me go back to what I said earlier. On the same day that the smoke from the wildfires was so thick that people could not see a car in front of their car on the road, they could not see across the street, and at midday the street lights came on in Edmonton because of the smoke, the premier of our province said, “We’ve always had...fires.”

I wonder if Nero said the same thing while Rome burned. That is a good question. Canadians and Albertans might want to know the answer.

It simply is not true that Alberta has always had fires. We have had fires, but not to this severity, not the frequency and not causing the kind of devastation that we have seen over the last five years. Climate records already show an increase of 2.4°C in annual temperature over the last 100 years, for Edmonton. Not to mention

the fact that Alberta's violent summer weather causes more damage now than it has caused in decades. As of 2017, 61% of all of Canada's insured damages have been in Alberta, amounting to over \$5 billion in insurance paid between 2010 and 2017, and that is just damages related to wind, hail and flooding. Without action, this is not going to get any better.

We can no longer afford blissful ignorance. It is time for Conservative politicians, like Premier Kenney and the Leader of the Opposition here in this place to understand, accept and recognize the devastating effects of climate change for what they are, and to stop burying their heads in the sand when it comes to protecting Canadians.

It is no laughing matter, as we can hear outside the chamber right now. Climate change is serious. It has a real effect on our lives and on our economy.

• (1950)

It is time for Conservative governments and would-be Conservative oppositions to stop playing games with Canadians' lives for the sake of petty politics and decades-old ideological principles.

Under the former Conservative government, Canada won the Colossal Fossil award five years in a row. What is that? This award is given to the country doing the most damage to the climate in a given year. In 2013, Canada had the great dishonour of receiving the lifetime achievement award for the Harper government's continuous lack of action on climate change. The Conservatives received five dinosaur awards in a row. I do not need the country to get dinosaur awards. All I have to do is look across the way to see the dinosaurs on climate change. They somehow think that climate change is going to go away by putting their heads in the sand. That is not the case.

While the inaction continues on the other side, as we have waited well over 400 days for a Conservative plan, we are taking action. This Liberal government will continue to do what we need to do to make sure we can grow the economy, protect the environment and put our energy resources to good use for people in Canada and around the world.

We know that relief, recovery and rebuilding costs continue to climb year after year due to devastating climate change activities. We also know that our planet's changing climate has a lot to do with our new reality. By 2020, climate change could cost Canada's economy \$5 billion a year. By 2050, estimates suggest that number could be more like \$43 billion a year.

Thankfully, our government has a strong system in place to provide support to communities that are already affected. Emergencies happen locally, and when needs outweigh local capacity, the federal government steps up to the plate.

Government Orders

I saw that action first-hand with the Fort McMurray fires. I worked very closely with the Minister of Public Safety on that matter. In fact, the provincial and federal response operation centre is located in my riding of Edmonton Centre. I marvel at the work of the provincial and federal governments, the Department of National Defence and the RCMP, and partners like the Canadian Red Cross, when it comes to responding to Canadians in need.

As we have seen increasingly, provinces often require federal assistance when disaster strikes, and that includes helping to cover the costs. The Government of Canada's priority is ensuring that Canadians are safe and supported. This means working closely with provincial and territorial partners to coordinate the response efforts to natural disasters by ensuring that provinces and territories have the resources they need.

With respect to this year's record flooding, the federal government responded immediately. This included the deployment of the Canadian Armed Forces and coordination support from the Government of Canada's operations centre. As well, on May 3, we also announced a \$2.5-million grant to the Canadian Red Cross to support recovery efforts in flood-affected communities.

• (1955)

[*Translation*]

It is very important that the Government of Canada continue to act with its provincial and territorial partners, as well as with the NGOs and agencies that Canadians can contribute to, to care for Canadians.

[*English*]

The federal government is also supporting provincial governments through the disaster financial assistance arrangements, or DFAA, to cover the costs associated with long-term recovery and rebuilding in the affected communities.

Remarkably, the upward trend of climate change events is evident in recent payments through this fund. Since the inception of the DFAA program in 1970, more than \$5.1 billion has been paid out to provinces. I know this timeline very well, because it tracks my life here on the planet. Over the past six years, DFAA payments to provinces have totalled \$2.8 billion. That is striking. It means that the program has paid out more in the last six years than it did in the previous 40 years combined. The growing unpredictability, number and severity of disasters have only increased federal liability under the DFAA, with an estimated outstanding federal liability at roughly \$2.4 billion.

The DFAA is a federal commitment to providing early financial assistance via an advance payment to provinces. After the recent flooding, the Minister of Public Safety and Emergency Preparedness encouraged his colleagues to use the innovative recovery provisions under the DFAA. However, we should always remember that these are costs to taxpayers. It is not technically the federal government that has paid \$2.8 billion in just six years because of inaction on climate change; it is Canadian families from coast to coast to coast who are collectively bearing this responsibility because of inaction and the lack of a plan on the part of the previous government. It is not just the tens of thousands who have been directly affected by natural disasters, but taxpaying Canadians across this country.

To mitigate those damages, federal support does not end with the DFAA. The national disaster mitigation program, or NDMP, has provided funding for 363 flood mitigation projects across Canada. I was very pleased to see in budget 2019 that \$1 million was allocated to Western Economic Diversification Canada for water expertise, flood mitigation and planning and making sure that we can use the existing watersheds to mitigate future flood times. This is now in the budget and will be coordinated by Western Economic Diversification Canada. The national disaster mitigation program has helped to address rising flood risks and costs, and has built the foundation for informed mitigation investments to reduce or even negate the effects of flood events and climate change.

The disaster mitigation and adaptation fund, or DMAF, also provides provinces and territories with funding for large-scale infrastructure projects to help reduce the impacts of future disasters. The DMAF is a \$2-billion, 10-year fund, making investments in provincial and community projects. That will mean more resilient public infrastructure that is better able to withstand the damaging and deepening cycles of storms, floods, droughts and wildfires.

Writ large, our commitments to Canadians are clearly outlined in the recently released emergency management strategy for Canada, entitled "Toward a Resilient 2030". This strategy, released in January of this year, is the culmination of more than two years of work. It reflects strong engagement between federal, provincial and territorial partners and stakeholders. It supports a whole-of-society approach to emergency management, outlines key priority areas to building a more resilient Canadian society by 2030 and aligns very closely with the United Nations Sendai Framework for Disaster Risk Reduction.

Ultimately, it provides a road map to strengthen Canada's ability to better prevent, prepare for, respond to and recover from disasters. I point out that all provinces and territories, including Ontario, Saskatchewan and Alberta, supported the strategy.

I would like to take a moment to read a paragraph from page 1 of the emergency management strategy for Canada that all provinces and territories supported with the federal government. It reads:

The impacts of climate change are already being felt across Canada increasing the frequency and intensity of hazards such as floods, wildfires, drought, extreme heat, tropical storms, melting permafrost, coastal erosion, and, in Northern Canada, damage to seasonal ice roads. These hazards pose significant risks to communities, individual health and well-being, the economy, and the natural environment.

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• (2000)

The Assistant Deputy Speaker (Mr. Anthony Rota): It being 8 p.m., it is my duty to interrupt the proceedings and put forth every question necessary to dispose of government business No. 29 now before the House.

The question is on the amendment. Is it the pleasure of the House to adopt the amendment?

Some hon. members: Agreed.

Some hon. members: No.

The Assistant Deputy Speaker (Mr. Anthony Rota): All those in favour of the amendment will please say yea.

Some hon. members: Yea.

The Assistant Deputy Speaker (Mr. Anthony Rota): All those opposed will please say nay.

Some hon. members: Nay.

The Assistant Deputy Speaker (Mr. Anthony Rota): In my opinion the nays have it.

And five or more members having risen:

The Assistant Deputy Speaker (Mr. Anthony Rota): Call in the members.

• (2025)

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

(Division No. 1365)

YEAS

Members

Abouttaif	Albas
Albrecht	Alleslev
Arnold	Barrett
Benzen	Bergen
Berthold	Blaney (Bellechasse—Les Etchemins—Lévis)
Block	Boucher
Brassard	Clarke
Cooper	Davidson
Deltell	Diotte
Dreeshen	Fast
Gallant	Gladu
Gourde	Harder
Hoback	Jeneroux
Kelly	Kent
Kitchen	Kmiec
Lake	Liepert
Lloyd	Maguire
Manly	Martel
May (Saanich—Gulf Islands)	McCauley (Edmonton West)
McColeman	McLeod (Kamloops—Thompson—Cariboo)
Motz	Nater
Paul-Hus	Poilievre
Rayes	Reid
Rempel	Saroya
Schmale	Shields
Stanton	Strahl
Stubbs	Sweet
Tilson	Viersen
Wagantall	Warkentin
Waugh	Webber
Weir	Wong
Yurdiga	Zimmer — 64

NAYS

Members

Aldag	Alghabra
Amos	Anandasangaree
Ayoub	Badawey
Bagnell	Baylis
Beech	Bendayan
Bennett	Benson
Bernier	Bibeau
Bittle	Blaikie
Blair	Blaney (North Island—Powell River)
Boissonnault	Bossio
Boudrias	Boutin-Sweet
Bratina	Breton
Brosseau	Cannings
Caron	Carr
Casey (Cumberland—Colchester)	Casey (Charlottetown)
Chagger	Champagne
Chen	Choquette
Dabrusin	Damoff
DeCoursey	Dhaliwal
Dhillon	Drouin
Dubé	Dubourg
Duguid	Duncan (Etobicoke North)
Dusseault	Duvall
Dzerowicz	Easter
Ehsassi	Ellis
Erskine-Smith	Eyking
Eyolfson	Fergus
Fillmore	Finnigan
Fisher	Fonseca
Fortier	Fortin
Fragiskatos	Fraser (West Nova)
Fraser (Central Nova)	Freeland
Fuhr	Gerretsen
Goldsmith-Jones	Goodale
Gould	Graham
Hajdu	Hardcastle
Hardie	Harvey
Hehr	Hogg
Holland	Housefather
Hughes	Husson
Iacono	Johns
Joly	Jones
Jordan	Jowhari
Julian	Khalid
Khera	Kwan
Lambropoulos	Lametti
Lamoureux	Lapointe
Lauzon (Argenteuil—La Petite-Nation)	Lebouthillier
Lefebvre	Leslie
Levitt	Lightbound
Lockhart	Long
Longfield	Ludwig
MacAulay (Cardigan)	MacGregor
Maloney	Mathysen
May (Cambridge)	McCrimmon
McDonald	McGuinty
McKay	McKenna
McLeod (Northwest Territories)	Mendès
Medicino	Mihychuk
Monsef	Moore
Morneau	Morrissey
Murray	Nantel
Nassif	Ng
O'Connell	Oliphant
O'Regan	Quellette
Paradis	Pauzé
Peschisolido	Peterson
Petitpas Taylor	Picard
Plamondon	Poissant
Quach	Qualtrough
Ramsey	Rankin
Ratansi	Rioux
Robillard	Rogers
Romanado	Rota
Rudd	Ruimy
Rusnak	Sahota
Saini	Sajjan
Samson	Sangha
Sarai	Schieffe
Schulte	Serré

Government Orders

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Sheehan
Sidhu (Brampton South)
Sohi
Spengemann
Tabbara
Thériault
Vandenbeld
Virani
Wilkinson
Yip
Zahid— 183

Shanahan
Sidhu (Mission—Matsqui—Fraser Canyon)
Simms
Sorbara
Stetski
Tassi
Vandal
Vaughan
Whalen
Wrzesnewskyj
Young

Finnigan
Fonseca
Fortin
Fraser (West Nova)
Freeland
Gerretsen
Goodale
Graham
Hardcastle
Harvey
Hogg
Housefather
Hussen
Johns
Jones
Jowhari
Khalid
Kwan
Lametti
Lapointe
Laverdière
Lefebvre
Levitt
Lockhart
Longfield
MacAulay (Cardigan)
Maloney
Mathysen
May (Saenich—Gulf Islands)
McDonald
McKay
McLeod (Northwest Territories)
Mendicino
Monsef
Morneau
Murray
Nassif
O'Connell
O'Regan
Paradis
Peschisolido
Petipas Taylor
Plamondon
Quach
Ramsey
Ratansi
Robillard
Romanado
Rudd
Rusnak
Saini
Samson
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Ouellette
Pauzé
Peterson
Picard
Poissant
Qualtrough
Rankin
Rioux
Rogers
Rota
Ruimy
Sahota
Sajjan
Sangha
Schieffe
Serré
Shanahan
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PAIRED

Members

Beaulieu

LeBlanc— 2

The Speaker: I declare the amendment defeated.[*Translation*]

The next question is on the main motion. Is it the pleasure of the House to adopt the motion?

Some hon. members: Agreed.**Some hon. members:** No.

The Speaker: All those in favour of the motion will please say yea.

Some hon. members: Yea.**The Speaker:** All those opposed will please say nay.**Some hon. members:** Nay.**The Speaker:** In my opinion the yeas have it.*And five or more members having risen:*

● (2035)

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

*(Division No. 1366)***YEAS**

Members

Aldag
Amos
Ayoub
Bagnell
Beech
Bennett
Bibeau
Blaikie
Blaney (North Island—Powell River)
Bossio
Boutin-Sweet
Breton
Cannings
Carr
Casey (Charlottetown)
Champagne
Choquette
Damoff
Dhalival
Drouin
Dubourg
Duncan (Etobicoke North)
Duvall
Easter
Ellis
Eyking
Fergus

Alghabra
Anandasangaree
Badawey
Baylis
Bendayan
Benson
Bittle
Blair
Boissonnault
Boudrias
Bratina
Brosseau
Caron
Casey (Cumberland—Colchester)
Chagger
Chen
Dabrusin
DeCoursey
Dhillon
Dubé
Duguid
Dusseault
Dzerowicz
Ehsassi
Erskine-Smith
Eyolfson
Fillmore

NAYS

Members

Abouttaif
Albrecht
Arnold
Benzen
Bernier
Blaney (Bellechasse—Les Etchemins—Lévis)
Boucher
Clarke
Davidson
Diotte
Fast
Gladu
Harder

Albas
Alleslev
Barrett
Bergen
Berthold
Block
Brassard
Cooper
Deltell
Dreeschen
Gallant
Gourde
Hoback

Jeneroux
 Kent
 Kmiec
 Liepert
 Maguire
 McCauley (Edmonton West)
 McLeod (Kamloops—Thompson—Cariboo)
 Nater
 Poilievre
 Reid
 Saroya
 Shields
 Strahl
 Sweet
 Trost
 Wagantall
 Waugh
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Kelly
 Kitchen
 Lake
 Lloyd
 Martel
 McColeman
 Motz
 Paul-Hus
 Rayes
 Rempel
 Schmale
 Stanton
 Stubbs
 Tilson
 Viersen
 Warkentin
 Webber
 Yurdiga

PAIRED

Members

Beaulieu

LeBlanc— 2

The Speaker: I declare the motion carried.

* * *

[English]

ACCESS TO INFORMATION ACT

The House resumed from June 13 consideration of the motion in relation to the amendments made by the Senate to Bill C-58, An Act to amend the Access to Information Act and the Privacy Act and to make consequential amendments to other Acts.

The Speaker: The hon. member for New Westminster—Burnaby has 12 minutes remaining in his speech.

Mr. Peter Julian (New Westminster—Burnaby, NDP): Mr. Speaker, I have to comment on what just transpired. The Liberals are slapping each other on the back because they passed a motion that is meaningless. Tomorrow they are going to rubber-stamp the Trans Mountain pipeline, which will dramatically increase greenhouse gas production in the country. The hypocrisy is beyond belief.

That is extremely appropriate when we see the hypocrisy contained in Bill C-58, which should be called “another Liberal broken promise act”, because, again, the Liberals are breaking the solemn commitments they made back in 2015.

Members will recall that back in 2015, the Prime Minister made a whole series of commitments, including that he was going to work with all members of the House of Commons. Instead what we have seen is a new tool, never used in parliamentary history before, gag closure.

It is a particular motion that does not allow opposition members, once the gag closure motion is moved, to even utter one word on government policy, to offer any amendments, to ask any questions, to, in any way at all, intervene on the bill, the legislation, the business before the House. It has been moved several times already in the last couple of weeks. So much for the solemn commitment to improve the functioning of Parliament.

The Liberals also promised they would do away with omnibus legislation. The Harper government was renowned for that, throwing a whole bunch of different bills into one piece of legislation and throwing at the House of Commons. It was profoundly disrespectful

Government Orders

to members of Parliament and profoundly disrespectful to Canadians.

However, the Liberals have doubled down over the last four years. They have now presented more pieces of massive omnibus legislation than in any other Parliament in our history.

Members will recall that Liberals and the Prime Minister talked about bringing in democratic reform, actually reforming our election process so every vote would count. That would make a lot of sense. Canadians voted for that. The Liberals only got 39% of the vote and yet they have 100% of the power in the House of Commons. They bring in gag closure, they bring in omnibus bills and that promise, that solemn commitment to bring forward democratic reform has been thrown away.

The Liberals also talked about dealing with climate change. Tomorrow they will be rubber-stamping a pipeline that will destroy any opportunity for Canada to meet any commitments that have been made internationally.

The member for Rosemont—La Petite-Patrie estimated that even before the pipeline, it would take Liberals 200 years to meet the Paris commitments. The planet will not exist at that time if Canada continues to be as irresponsible as the government has been, both under the Conservative government and the Liberal government.

The Prime Minister solemnly promised he would address the massive housing crisis in the country. Tragically, we know that is not the case. The Liberals said that they would address the health care crisis and promised, yet again, that they would bring in pharmacare. I think it is the third time, with a Liberal majority government, that Liberals promised to bring in pharmacare and yet have failed.

After four years, we have a litany of broken promises. Perhaps one of the most significant promises, even though this bill has not attracted a lot of interest, is the broken promise on information being provided to the Canadian public. That is why I call Bill C-58 the “another Liberal broken promise” bill.

The Liberals committed back in 2015 to provide information to the Canadian public. That makes a lot of sense. Canadians have a right to information from the government. It does not belong to the Harper government. It certainly does not belong to the Liberal government. That information belongs to Canadians.

Putting in place an effective information regime that allows people to access information, important government information, important information that should be available to the public, was a commitment the Liberals made back in 2015. Like so many other commitments, it has ended up on the scrap heap.

The Information Commissioner called Bill C-58, the “another Liberal broken promise” bill, regressive and went so far as to say that the access to information regime would be better under the status quo than under Bill C-58.

Government Orders

Is that not a sad commentary, that a Liberal government, four years later, has so little to show for itself except for a litany of broken promises solemnly delivered in 2015? Canadians believed them. I certainly thought, and I think most Canadians believed, that when the Prime Minister made those solemn commitments that he had at least the intention of keeping them. However, the Liberals have not. As the Access to Information Commissioner reminds us, the bill that the Liberals have brought forward is worse than what currently exists.

● (2040)

How did the Liberals fall so short? Despite committing to so many things, discarding their promises on the scrap heap of broken Liberal promises history, how did they even get the access to information wrong? Four points need to be brought to bear regarding why the Liberals failed so lamentably on access to information.

To be sure, the Conservatives did the same thing when they were in power. They said they would enhance access to information for the public, recognizing that Canadians felt they should have a right to access the information that was available to the federal government. It is a fundamental tenet of democracy, that information available to the federal government is available to Canadians. When we do things in the House of Commons and speak in public, that information is available. When government ministers do things in private, that should also be available through access to information.

It is the Canadians' government. It is Canadians who choose their parliamentarians. It is Canadians who ultimately decide who governs them. Because of this, it is fundamental that Canadians have access to information.

Bill C-58, which is worse than the existing access to information law, has a number of key exemptions or shortcomings, deliberate attempts to undercut the access to information regime that the Liberals planted in the legislation. It has essentially put poison pills in the legislation. They have a beautiful title about enhancing access to information, but we must look at the details, as New Democrats do. We always do our homework and always pore through legislation to ensure there is at least a semblance of reality in what is written in the legislation, as opposed to the political spin that comes from the Liberal government.

First, there was a recommendation that the coverage of access to information include ministers' offices and the Prime Minister's Office. This is another key commitment from the 2015 election that has been broken. Given the incredible scandal regarding SNC-Lavalin, it is absolutely fundamental that Canadians can access information related to what transpires in the Prime Minister's Office and in ministerial offices. It is a no-brainer. So many democracies around the world have already incorporated into their access to information regimes that ministers' decisions and decisions of the prime minister's office, that type of correspondence, are subject to access to information rules. Unlike in so many other democracies, the Liberals deliberately exempted the Prime Minister's Office and ministerial offices.

Second, as the Information Commissioner has long recommended, there has to be appropriate sanctions for non-compliance. If the government or government members try to get around access to

information rules, there should be sanctions for that. However, that is absent from the bill as well.

The Information Commissioner was critical of what the Liberals offered in access to information, because it would do nothing to reduce delays or extensions. This means the Liberal government can basically rag the puck and ensure that information is not available to the Canadian public.

In the last Parliament, when the New Democrats were the official opposition, we spoke out repeatedly about the Harper government doing this. It simply delayed things beyond belief to ensure that for all practical purposes, access to information was simply not available. Again, the bill would do nothing to address this.

The bill would also do nothing to narrow exemptions for ministerial advice or cabinet confidence, ensuring that, with a broad brush, the Liberals could simply stop the access to information system to which Canadians have a right.

● (2045)

This is the fundamental point I need to make. Yes, Liberals made a whole series of commitments that they have ripped up with complete disregard to the solemn commitments made to the Canadian public. They basically threw them out the window.

However, in terms of access to information, this is one of the most egregious broken promises. The Liberals could have approached this in an open way. They could have said that they actually do want to make sure Canadians have access to information from their government and that this is a fundamental aspect of democracy. They could have said that they would work with the NDP, because we have always been the number one champions in this House of Commons for access to information. We believe fundamentally in it, and, as in so many other areas, we and members in the past have always championed the most effective approach possible on access to information, including the member for Timmins—James Bay, who has felt very strongly about this and has worked in this regard for years.

The Liberals could have done that, but instead they rejected the NDP amendments and refused to improve this. We now have a bill before us that can only be chalked up as another Liberal broken promise. As the Information Commissioner said, the status quo is actually better than what the Liberals have produced. That is a shame, and we are voting against it.

● (2050)

Mr. Greg Fergus (Parliamentary Secretary to the President of the Treasury Board and Minister of Digital Government, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, the member is certainly a model of constancy. He will say on Wednesday the exact same thing he said on Monday, regardless of what happened on Tuesday. It is as if his criticisms of this bill are in a time warp.

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When the bill was introduced, there was a lot of commentary on that. The hon. member's party made a number of amendments. A number of those amendments were accepted when the bill went to committee. It was improved on the House side. It was further improved on the Senate side. The government has accepted many of the amendments that were introduced by the Senate. Indeed, the current Information Commissioner said that a lot of the issues that were raised by the former information commissioner were addressed in this bill. The Information Commissioner said that this bill should pass and that it is an important improvement on the existing legislation, which, I might add, has not been changed since the 1980s.

Would the member at least do us a favour and recognize the number of improvements that have been made to this legislation, and also the comments of the current Information Commissioner, who called upon Parliament to pass this bill into law because it is an improvement over the existing situation?

Mr. Peter Julian: Mr. Speaker, I have worked with the member in the finance committee, and I like the member very much. It is clear to Canadians that when he says that he thinks there is support from the Information Commissioner, he is hedging his bets. He knows full well why. The reality is that this simply does not pass the test.

The member also mentioned that the Liberals did accept an amendment or two. The reality is that the NDP, as the member well knows, gave notice of three dozen amendments. These are carefully considered. We took the bill and said that there are a whole range of shortcomings and the Information Commissioner believes the status quo is actually better than this bad bill, so we would go to work, as we are renowned right across the country for being the worker bees in the House of Commons. We offered 36 ways the bill could be improved, 36 ways that would strike to the heart of all the shortcomings that were offered.

If the Liberals had actually been sincere in their willingness to improve this legislation, they would have taken the vast majority, if not all, of the 36 amendments that were tabled. The record stands for itself. They did not accept any of them. That is the problem. We have a Liberal government that wants to be patted on the back for having put forward the effort but does not actually want to get to the heart of improving legislation.

After October 21, I believe there will be an NDP government, and we will make sure that legislation brought forward in the House of Commons is actually improved. Canadians should expect nothing less than very strong work on behalf of their government to make sure that the legislation brought forward does what it purports to do. That is why I think Canadians will have a surprise for both of the old parties on October 21.

• (2055)

[*Translation*]

Mr. Matthew Dubé (Beloeil—Chambly, NDP): Mr. Speaker, I thank my colleague for his speech. He did a good job explaining the flaws in the access to information bill currently before us, but I would like to take this opportunity to say that we need to look even further. As he mentioned in his speech, the government came on the scene saying that it would be the most transparent government in the history of the universe. The Liberals talked about being open by

default. However, my colleague pointed to various things that have thwarted those efforts. One example is omnibus bills, which my colleague mentioned.

How can we properly scrutinize bills when the details that will have the greatest impact on Canadians's lives are presented over dozens of pages in a bill that is 100-pages long? Ultimately, that approach means that there is very little transparency and not enough consultation on the part of the government. It is ironic that the government is always going on about consultation, since it only seems to consult Canadians when it does not want to do something. When consultation is needed to improve a bill, there is no consultation. My colleague could talk a little more about that.

Why does my colleague think the government did not adequately consult people, particularly the Information Commissioner? If the government had done its job properly, it would have produced a better bill. In the end, we did not get the intended results.

Mr. Peter Julian: Mr. Speaker, I would like to thank my colleague from Beloeil—Chambly. I have been here for 15 years and I have never seen a more dedicated member of Parliament. He is a good representative for his region, which I know very well from going door to door in the Chambly area. He is always here and he asks questions that get to the heart of his constituents' concerns. Like many other members, I continue to be very impressed by his work, his dedication, his discipline and his way of addressing people's concerns. I thank him for his excellent work. He just asked an excellent question.

Transparency and access to information are not rocket science. Witnesses told us what to do. They said that Bill C-58 was inadequate. The Information Commissioner said that he preferred to keep the status quo rather than seeing this bill pass. The Liberals refused to listen and include in the bill all the solutions, amendments and recommendations that were proposed by witnesses and the NDP. We proposed three dozen amendments.

The Liberals had all the solutions they needed in hand. We were not asking them to do the work. We were simply asking them to agree to let the NDP do it for them, because we were chosen to be the watchdog of Canadians in the House of Commons. We are always seeking to improve legislation. All the Liberals had to do was accept the work that we did for them and for all Canadians. Unfortunately, they refused to do so. They said that they would not accept the amendments or the testimony and that they were going to do as they pleased. That is why we have here a bill that is just a tiny step forward when we could have made some real progress. That goes against everything the Liberals promised in 2015.

As the member mentioned, in 2015 the Liberals promised democratic reform. They promised to put an end to omnibus bills, which are undemocratic. They also promised to work with the opposition parties and all members. Instead, they are imposing gag orders, a bit like in the 1950s, when the opposition was prevented from saying one more word about bills once a closure motion was adopted.

For all those reasons, I would say that this is yet another missed opportunity on the part of the Liberals.

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• (2100)

Mr. Greg Fergus: Mr. Speaker, I have a question for my colleague.

He said a few things that do not match up with current facts. That is what I found a little disappointing about his speech in this debate on the changes proposed by the Senate. First, he said this did not go far enough, that it was insufficient and that it was actually worse than the status quo.

I would like to know what he thinks about the fact that this bill gives the Conflict of Interest and Ethics Commissioner the power to ensure that institutions take her advice.

[*English*]

They have to issue orders to institutions, including ordering institutions to release information. It also eliminates all fees, like the \$5 fee, which were pretty much an annoyance for access to information requests. It requires government institutions to provide requesters with a written explanation that provides a rationale for each exclusion or exemption.

The Information Commissioner sent a letter to the committee saying that of the three things she asked for, two were given. The one that was not was because we honestly disagree that she has the order to do so.

What does the hon. member think of those specific changes to the bill?

The Speaker: Apparently, we are actually over the time for questions. Of course, I will allow the member to reply, but I ask him to do so as briefly as possible.

[*Translation*]

Mr. Peter Julian: Mr. Speaker, I will need a few minutes, because I have a lot to say about the government's lack of action.

I think it is self-evident. When the Information Commissioner says that this bill is worse than the status quo, I think that comment should spur the Liberals into action. I am looking at all the rejected amendments. If the Liberals had accepted the 36 amendments suggested by the NDP, we would surely have had a healthier debate on access to information issues.

Sadly, the Liberals once again broke their 2015 promises and brought out a bill that failed to do what it was supposed to do.

[*English*]

Mr. Daniel Blaikie (Elmwood—Transcona, NDP): Mr. Speaker, it is a pleasure to rise tonight and speak to the government's motion concerning the Senate amendments to the access to information proposal by the current government which, as my colleague previously stated, was a pretty major disappointment for a lot of people in the access to information community who watch this closely, including journalists. There has been some debate in the House recently about the importance of journalism and government attempts to try to buttress the industry. Whether the Liberals are doing that the right way or the wrong way, that is another debate for another day and one that we have had already.

I do not think there is any dispute that the access to information laws of a country are one of the most important tools in journalists'

tool kit who cover government. It is under the access to information laws, often in the absence of an informant or someone who is willing to leak information who is on the inside, that journalists are able to get information that is the beginning of a story about something that is going on that the government does not want Canadians to know about. That is why it is important that we have a good access to information regime.

I heard members on the other side tonight mention quite rightly that Canada has not had any kind of amendment to its access to information regime since it was brought into force in 1983. That is why there was a fair bit of excitement around the idea that Canada would get an update to its access to information regime. It is why people were disappointed when, in the view of the Information Commissioner, when this legislation was first presented, she said the status quo from 1983 is actually better than what the government has proposed.

In fact, we heard at committee not only in light of the event referred to in this quote, but the Duffy scandal of the next government and the SNC-Lavalin scandal that we bore witness to here in the House this spring, the former Information Commissioner Suzanne Legault, said:

When I was preparing for this committee, I went back to the request that was made by Daniel LeBlanc, the journalist who uncovered the sponsorship scandal. That request would not have met the new requirement under Bill C-58. That's a perfect example of how new section 6, as it is currently worded in Bill C-58, would amount to a massive regression.

What is interesting about that is the extent to which it shows that the rhetoric by the government around the Liberals' intentions to reform the access to information regime in a way that actually improves it did not match up with their effort in the bill. When we look at the efforts that were made at committee by my colleagues in the NDP to amend this legislation and to have those amendments summarily rejected by the government was another sign, frankly, of bad faith when it came to amending the access regime.

I was on the Standing Committee on Access to Information, Privacy and Ethics at the beginning of Parliament. We heard often from Minister Brison at the time who was the lead on the file for the government, about how great this would be, that we were now going to get reform for the bill after waiting decades and decades. This was going to be the government to do it. It was going to be wonderful, great and Canadians were going to have unprecedented access to government and information about government.

When the bill was finally tabled after a long wait and a lot of pressing in the House and at committee, about when the government was finally going to get around to it, it looked nothing like the promises in the Liberal platform. It looked nothing like the Prime Minister's own ideas for access to information reform that he presented in a private member's bill in the previous Parliament. One does wonder what happened in the interim to get a bill that was such a hodgepodge.

Government Orders

A lot of the selling of the bill is traded on a couple of distinctions that have been abused in order to obfuscate what is truly wrong with this legislation. Example number one would be the distinction between proactive disclosure of information on the part of government and access to information by Canadians who want to access information that the government may not want them to access because it may not be in the political interests of the government of the day to have Canadians access that information. I referred earlier to the sponsorship scandal, the Duffy scandal and the SNC-Lavalin scandal, all cases where government had an interest in having Canadians not be able to access certain information.

● (2105)

What we heard from Minister Brison at the time and his successors is that Canadians should be happy that the government is going to voluntarily publish more information on its own terms, information that it selects and in a format that it selects. There is nothing wrong with that. It is not that Canadians should not be happy that the government is interested in making some more information available in particular ways, but that is not the point of the access to information laws.

The access to information regime is not about patting the government on the back for making certain things accessible because it wants to and is presenting it in a certain format. We do not need legislation for proactive disclosure at all. A legislative framework is for Canadians who want access to certain information that the government does not want them to have. That is the purpose of an access to information regime and it is exactly there that the criticisms of the Information Commissioner and other stakeholders, like journalists, really hit the nail on the head. It is not that there will not be more information under some other definition available, it is that journalists and others who demand certain information of the government will be in a worse position to do so, including certain amendments that have to do with the way requests for information are filed in the first place.

The fact of the matter is that the government's idea was that people should already know a lot, not about the subject they are asking about but about the specific document they are asking about, despite never having seen that document or necessarily knowing which documents exist and which ones do not. Therefore, limiting the requirements of government departments to publish information about what documents exist and expecting that the person asking is going to have to know that, would know that or could know that is an unreasonable threshold for Canadians wanting to understand more about how their government works.

Another important distinction that has been equivocated upon in order to defend this legislation that is not very helpful is the difference between exclusions and exemptions. The committee heard the importance from the Information Commissioner's point of view, but also that of many stakeholders, of moving away from an exclusion regime. When things are excluded, that means the government says information falls under an exclusion, like cabinet confidence. There is no oversight of that. There is no independent person to look at that document and say it is not something that should be protected under cabinet confidence because it is not advice to government, it was a background document or something else.

One of the examples given at committee was putting all of the relatively less sensitive information that may be inconvenient for government to have Canadians know about on a cart, roll it through the cabinet room during a cabinet meeting and then say it was in the cabinet room so it is protected under an exclusion for cabinet confidence. That would be quite disingenuous. That would be a terrible thing to do, but some of us believe that kind of disingenuity would not be unprecedented in politics. If some members on the other side are not willing to believe it of their own government, they might believe it of other governments.

An access to information regime ought to create circumstances where that is not possible and Canadians can have confidence that unscrupulous governments are not doing that. The problem with exclusion-based regimes is that they do not give Canadians that confidence. The belief of New Democrats and many Canadians concerned with these issues is that it would be reasonable to have, instead of an exclusion, an exemption where the government could say something is a cabinet confidence, it was advice to government and it ought not be released. The Information Commissioner would then have the ability to look at those documents, as someone who deals with sensitive information all the time. There are civil servants and officers of Parliament who deal with confidential documents. We are not asking for something unprecedented. In that role, the Information Commissioner would be able to review those documents and determine whether in fact it is something that ought not be released because it is a genuine cabinet confidence or something that could be released because the government of the day was abusing that exemption. That was not addressed.

In fact, New Democrats wanted the Information Commissioner to have order-making power. The Information Commissioner has a kind of order-making power under this legislation, but what the Senate foresaw, as we did in our recommendations, was that order-making power should have the force of Federal Court. One of the virtues of giving the Information Commissioner order-making power was predicated upon the idea that those orders would have the force of Federal Court. It was meant to remove one of the things that causes massive delay, which is judicial appeal of denials of access to information requests.

● (2110)

If the Information Commissioner is going to be able to make an order, but it does not have the same force in court, that means people are going to have to go to the Federal Court to get it to back up that order and give it the force it should have had in the first place. That is certainly a missed opportunity there. The government motion today takes out the Senate amendment that would give that authority to the Information Commissioner's order, thereby undercutting one of the important benefits of giving the Information Commissioner order-making power in the first place.

Government Orders

Of course, one of the features of the PMO's private member's bill in the last Parliament and a commitment in the Liberal platform was to apply the act to the Prime Minister's Office and ministers' offices. I know that was something that Minister Brison was quite verbose about in the early days of the Parliament, and then it kind of fell out. It is funny that he should come up. It is funny that he should be the person in charge of access to information reform, because Mr. Brison, in another life in this place, was the minister responsible for defending the previous Liberal government for the sponsorship scandal. In fact, I am preceded by another member for Elmwood—Transcona, who called him the “clown prince of spin”, I believe, in relation to his performance on that file. He was, in the same form, defending the current government's reforms of the access to information laws, which really do not cut the mustard, but were being spun a good yarn by Mr. Brison. That was an obvious omission with respect to a clear promise in the Liberal platform that the access to information laws would apply to the PMO and ministers' offices. We had a very good example this spring as to why Canadians would want that to be the case.

We did see an instance around the SNC-Lavalin scandal of the importance of good note-taking when it comes to conversations between ministers and senior political staff in some cases or between ministers or between political senior staff. That is why the access to information all-party committee recommended that there also be a duty to document. Not only did we see instances where notes were decisive in testimony this spring here in Ottawa, but we know that in other jurisdictions there have been serious scandals about governments that deliberately set out to communicate among their senior political staff and ministers in such a way as to create a vacuum of documentation.

That is a problem for journalists and interested Canadians who want to use an access to information regime in order to keep their finger on the pulse of what is happening in government today. However, I would say, as somebody who has made a study of history, that it is also a real loss for people in the future who are trying to understand why governments of the past made certain decisions. Therefore, it is a problem if we do not have an enforceable expectation that people in government who are responsible for making decisions about serious government resources, whether they are financial or other resources, and bringing the power of government to bear through regulation and legislation, are not required to ever document the reasons for their decision-making. How then do people understand the decision-making of that government, whether it is the government of the day or a government of the past? That is why there have been clear and consistent recommendations for a duty to document. It is a disappointment that we do not have that in this legislation.

Those are some of my thoughts that I want to put on the record. For me, the conclusion is obvious, which is that, for as much as people have waited a long time for these changes and there was a lot of hype around what these changes would mean, they do not meet the bar.

I was reading in my notes that, currently, Canada is ranked somewhere around 49th in the world for its access to information regime and if we were to pass this legislation in its current form we would ascend all the way to 46th. I submit that a once-in-a-

generation reform to the access to information regime ought to move the needle a heck of a lot more than that. That is why I think it is fair for people to view this legislation as a serious disappointment.

• (2115)

Ms. Elizabeth May (Saanich—Gulf Islands, GP): Mr. Speaker, as we debate Bill C-58 tonight, I cannot help but share the disappointment of my colleagues on the NDP benches. We were promised that this access to information legislation would create information available essentially by default, with more transparency.

I recall that when I used to practise environmental law, the joke among all of us at the time was that Canada's access to information legislation constituted freedom from information.

Now, we know that quite a lot of amendments were made in the Senate, and I know that the hon. parliamentary secretary wants to make sure that we are not caught in a time warp where we miss them. It is important to note that a lot of those amendments came from the government side. Amendments tightened up some of the language around vexatious questions being used as an excuse to reject access to information requests. However, I still find that this legislation falls far below the bar of what was promised. We did try, as Greens, to improve this legislation. I had 18 amendments come before the committee. Lots of us, as parliamentarians, tried to improve this legislation.

Given that there were some improvements, some significant ones from first reading, is there any temptation on the NDP benches to pass it as marginally better, or is it better to defeat it because it falls so far below the mark?

Mr. Daniel Blaikie: Mr. Speaker, my concern is that we are talking about a piece of legislation that has not been changed since 1983. I was born in 1984, so in my lifetime, this legislation has not been amended. It has not been changed. We can easily communicate the extent to which this act just does not pass muster by talking about the period of time during which it has not had reform. It would be unfortunate if these changes were passed and we could no longer communicate the absolute deficiency of Canada's access to information regime in a point as succinct and powerful as the fact that it has not been amended in such a long time.

There are certain benefits, perhaps, and certain improvements, but they just do not do it. There is no reason Canada should not be an example in the world of a good access to information regime. We want to pride ourselves on democracy. Of course, we still have a completely unelected and unaccountable Senate, so one wonders how one can with any real sense of consistency. That is harder to change.

One thing we can change a lot more easily is our access to information regime. I am inclined to say that there is a proper signal in the fact that changes have not been made for so long, and when we do finally make them, they ought to be the right ones, and they ought to make Canada a leader. We should not pass second best.

Government Orders

● (2120)

Mr. Greg Fergus (Parliamentary Secretary to the President of the Treasury Board and Minister of Digital Government, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, we all recognize that it has been 35 years since this legislation was updated and that at various times, different governments have tried to update it. One thing I like about this bill is that the proposed changes are supported by the Information Commissioner, who sees this bill as an improvement and would like to see it pass.

There are two elements I like a lot about this bill, and I would like to get the hon. member's opinion on them. One is that one year after royal assent, this bill would come up for revision again. What is built into the bill is that every five years, there would be a full review of this bill so that we could avoid this situation of having a piece of legislation that was last updated before the World Wide Web existed.

What does the member think of having something of that sort to make sure that this bill always stays fresh and that we have opportunities to improve it, especially given the context of the times, as information and technology change?

Mr. Daniel Blaikie: Mr. Speaker, I am going by memory here, but when the access to information, privacy and ethics committee undertook a review of the legislation at the beginning of this Parliament, there was some fanfare about the fact that we were, after somewhere between seven and 12 years, getting to the mandatory five-year statutory review. There have been mandatory statutory reviews of the access to information regime in the past. My understanding is that this is not new, but if there are no sanctions for not conducting those reviews, we get into a situation where committees have other priorities, particularly if they are led by a government that may not have a serious interest in substantially changing the access to information law.

My understanding, when we undertook our review at the beginning of this Parliament, was that we were actually, finally, conducting a mandatory five-year review and that it had been much longer than five years. It is not that I do not think it serves a purpose, but it made me a lot more skeptical about the force of a mandatory review. I do not think it is a bad thing, but there is the question of how we actually make sure that a mandatory review takes place and whether there is any consequence if it does not.

As we talk about other mandatory reviews, my understanding is that we are not talking about any kind of enforcement regime that would ensure that those reviews were undertaken. The member knows well that committees are masters of their own domain, short of an order from the House requiring them to do this, which apparently the legislation did not do, or we would have been doing a lot more mandatory statutory reviews around here than we have.

Ms. Marilyn Gladu (Sarnia—Lambton, CPC): Mr. Speaker, I fail to see how this legislation is going to improve the existing situation, which is that many of the access to information requests are not being completed within the specified timeline and that the government has put any number of gag orders on government employees to prevent them from ever releasing information. I wonder if the member could comment on what would actually be helpful to add to this legislation to address the gap that exists today.

● (2125)

Mr. Daniel Blaikie: Mr. Speaker, as a matter of fact, one of the things that might be done was in Senate amendment 3, which was a recommendation from the former information commissioner. I do not know if it was a recommendation of the current Information Commissioner. If I have it right, this was an amendment that spoke to the Information Commissioner reviewing extensions. Right now, departments can effectively grant themselves extensions for requests. If requests ought to be answered in 30 or 60 days, a department can write back and say that it is going to be 200 days or three years or whatever the department figures is adequate, and they are not under any requirement to justify that to anyone.

Part of the idea was that if they were asking for an extension that exceeded 30 days, they would have to go to the Information Commissioner and make a case as to why they were not able to satisfy that request within the normal period. There might even have been some negotiation with the Information Commissioner about what was an adequate extension. Therefore, we would not just take the department's word for it. However, that amendment did not survive, in my understanding, in the government motion.

It is quite right that one of the big frustrations with the current regime, not the only one but a big one, is the massive extensions that are self-granted by government, essentially without any third-party review. I think a pretty clear way of solving that problem would be to kick the extraordinary extensions over to the Information Commissioner to ensure that they really were required. However, my understanding is that we are not going to see that here. This is another example of where we are setting the bar too low for a once-in-generation reform of our access to information laws.

Ms. Rachel Blaney (North Island—Powell River, NDP): Mr. Speaker, one of the issues I deal with as a politician every day in my riding is an increasing sense of cynicism. A lot of the cynicism I see among many Canadians, and in fact worldwide, is based on the fact that everyday Canadians cannot get access to information. They do not understand how decisions are made. They see things happening behind closed doors, and they are very concerned.

I wonder if the member could speak to the fact that we are still not there in this country. What is the impact on the government and on the people who represent their constituents of this lack of action?

Mr. Daniel Blaikie: Mr. Speaker, I think that is one of the fundamental debates about access to information. I would tend to agree with those who argue that if we allow more access to information and provide more information publicly about what considerations are informing public policy decisions by government, we will end up with better public policy. We will have less of the private interests of political actors playing a role in government decision-making if people know that this is going to become public and that they may then suffer political consequences for it.

Government Orders

The other side of the argument, which seems to be the side of the argument ultimately backed by the government, is that somehow, by keeping the reasons for government decisions private, we will end up with better decisions in the public interest. I think that is demonstrably false.

Ms. Rachel Blaney (North Island—Powell River, NDP): Mr. Speaker, I am here today to speak to the government motion on the Senate amendments to Bill C-58.

Before I do that, though, I also want to take this opportunity to congratulate my brother Toron and his wife Jacqui. Today is their wedding anniversary, and I know that they are spending the day with my nieces and nephew, Abby, Malcolm, Josie and Zylia. I just wanted to acknowledge that this is another day, as many of us know in this House, that we do not get to be with family. I wanted to make sure that they know that I am thinking about them today.

Today we are talking about something that is fundamentally important, which is access to information, the tools we have to access information as parliamentarians representing everyday Canadians, and how that information can be accessed by journalists and reporters in this country.

I have been in this place for almost four years. I have worked really closely with my constituents on these issues. I have talked to them about the different tools I have as a parliamentarian and where they need to go to get information. They need to feel more connected to the government and to the people who represent it here in this place. I am very passionate about this issue.

Today we are talking about Senate amendments that would improve what I felt was a bad bill by making sure that the Information Commissioner would have real teeth, real power, to address some of the issues that come up in this place.

One of the things I have found very distressing, and the member who spoke before me also addressed this issue, is how often folks request information and are given a letter from a department authorizing itself to delay. Someone asks a question and now is told that the wait will be another 200 days for that information.

One of the most startling examples was that *The Globe and Mail* reported in April 2018 that it took one year to receive RCMP statistics for its well-received investigative series “Unfounded”, which revealed that police have been dismissing one in five sexual assault claims as baseless. This is really important information. When we see these kinds of startling facts, we know that there is something happening in this place and in this country that we need to address. These important investigations need to happen so that we know that something in the system is not working that we need to see addressed in multiple ways. If that information is not released, how are we supposed to do our work, and how do Canadians trust us?

I asked a question earlier about cynicism. I see that growing. I see it growing all the time. I talk to people who are frustrated with the government. They feel that when they want information, they have no way of knowing it. The automatic response is that something sneaky is happening and that they cannot trust those people.

I think we need to discuss what happens to democracy when we have everyday Canadians feeling that every politician is sketchy. We

have an oath in this country. We sit in these seats and represent thousands of our constituents. We have the honour, as I do, to represent hard-working people who do everything in their power to live a good life, look after each other and look after their community. If they cannot trust the people who represent them, that should concern every single one of us.

If information cannot be uncovered to understand how things work, and, when something seems unfair, why it happened, how do we build that relationship, and how do we improve democracy?

I just want to take a moment to acknowledge the member for Vancouver Granville, who used to be the justice minister. I have a deep respect for her. I have known her for many years. I am very proud to represent the nation she comes from. I am very proud to represent the people of her traditional territory.

● (2130)

When that happened with SNC-Lavalin, it sent shock waves through my riding. It was very personal. I had constituents from my riding calling me and saying that she was in their class, that they know who she is, that she was from their family. They could not believe what was happening. They asked, do Liberals not know who she is, because they know who she is? Constituents were frustrated by the lack of information. They were frustrated by the process that unfolded. It was very troubling to them.

When I think about that and look at that happen, it takes away that sense of trust and connectivity. It brings all of these issues to the forefront when they are not addressed in a good way, and, in my opinion, these issues were not addressed in a good way. A lot of constituents contact me and say that they still do not know what happened, but that what happened was not right.

We look at the systems, and that is important. As legislators in this place, what we look at, debate and discuss is the process, how something is going to happen. Right now, we know that the Information Commissioner still will not have the ability to review whether in some cases like that one cabinet confidence is being claimed and whether it should be claimed.

I think about this a lot. I want to see a better democracy. I was very frustrated when the government campaigned to have electoral reform. It was very meaningful. I did multiple town halls in my riding. It was really interesting. People came forward. They were not sure and they did not know if they wanted to move to a different system, but they wanted to talk to me about it. They wanted to hear information. We tried to bring people in who were non-partisan to talk about different systems and how they would work. We had a lot of intelligent questions.

I will admit, people walked out the door saying that they were not sure; they were not sure if that was the right way to go forward. However, when they were told that it was no longer a discussion, when the Prime Minister stood up and said that Canadians do not want electoral reform, people were upset. They felt that they did not get to be a part of the decision-making process. That is really important.

Government Orders

Sometimes people get frustrated in this House, and they let us know by their heckling. However, we need to look at these systems. We need to make sure that everyday Canadians are part of the decision-making process. When that does not happen, we should have systems in place for them to be able to find out why it did not happen that way.

Again, we are seeing a failed piece of legislation. I am really disappointed. It is another broken promise. One of the things that was talked about in the last election was making sure that the PMO and the ministers were subject to these acts. That was one of the promises of transparency, that Liberals were going to do it differently and that Canadians would see a more open, transparent government.

Unfortunately, what we are seeing, again, is that the PMO is still blocked off. It is something to really think about. When everyday Canadians cannot get access; when journalists cannot get information from these particular departments, these ministries, what are we telling people? We are telling people that their voice does not belong in those places. However, they do belong in those places. In fact, we are here to represent those very voices.

I am really disappointed in this legislation. I think we could have gone so much farther. It is time for daringness. When I listen to constituents in my riding, what they want to see is honesty, openness and an authentic touch. They do not want to hear lines repeated. Some people think that if they just keep saying the same thing over and over that people will believe them.

However, when we look at democracy, the invigoration of democracy, and when we talk about why people do not get out to vote, it is because we are allowing cynicism to grow. We are not making sure that we open these doors and allow things to go forward.

Toby Mendel, the executive director of the Centre for Law and Democracy, said, in response to this bill, “The proposed reforms are just not good enough. At this point, we need root and branch reform, not incremental tinkering.”

I am a person who stands in this House, who looks at a lot of legislation. Most recently, in my role as vice-chair of the indigenous and northern affairs committee, we looked at Bill C-92, which talked about indigenous children in care. One of the things that was really heartbreaking for me is what I see happening again and again, which is this: “We will do a little better. It will not be enough. It is not going to save people's lives in a profound way. It is not going to look at the very foundation of the things that are broken. But we are going to make it a little prettier on the surface, and hopefully that will fix it.”

• (2135)

A little bit better is not good enough. It is not good enough for democracy, and it certainly is not good enough for indigenous children in this country who are struggling in profound ways every single day.

We were told very clearly that the new score for Canada would be 92 out of a possible 150 with this legislation. That means we would get bumped up from 49th to 46th.

I do not like our country to be in the middle. I want our country to be challenged to do better, because I want Canada to be at the top. I

want other countries in the world to see the work we are doing in this place and think they have to aim higher because of what Canada is doing. I want them to look at how accountable we are to our constituents, to the Canadian public, to our reporters, and that we are not afraid to have these discussions, even if they are really painful and really hard.

We have to talk about really painful things in the House. If we are not brave enough to do that, if we do not allow people to have the information they need to make decisions for themselves, it is like saying that we are separate. However, we are all one.

I remember one of the elders in my community, Alberta Billy, telling me that a long time ago the cedar trees were so big that they would go into the forest and pick one to build a canoe for the community. They would respect that tree and then they would make a canoe out of it to be used by the community.

We do not have those big trees anymore. We have to find two trees now and find a way for them to come together. Finding two trees that are going to fit seamlessly together is a lot of work. That is the world we live in now. We do not have those big trees.

If we look at that canoe as if we were all in this together, then we know we have a western world that came here as colonizers and we have an indigenous world and we are trying to build a canoe together.

Let us look at the fact that indigenous communities around this whole country had great systems in place. Let us look at how we can do better, be more accountable to the people we serve. That is what a leader is. It is the person who follows behind, who serves from behind. This legislation fails to do that.

• (2140)

Mr. Greg Fergus (Hull—Aylmer, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, I disagree with the member for North Island—Powell River's characterization of this legislation. This is not merely a slightly incrementally important bill. The member is not doing justice to some of the very important elements in the bill.

The proposed legislation would give the Information Commissioner the authority to make sure that government information is released. The bill would, for the first time, require ministers' offices and the Prime Minister's Office to proactively disclose information. This is the first legislated system of proactive disclosures.

Most importantly, not only did we listen to the comments from the hon. member and from members of her party and of our government, but we also listened to members of the the Senate. Of 20 amendments that came from the Senate, this government accepted all but four of them, and they are very important ones. Where we did not accept them, there was genuine disagreement as to whether or not some elements were already included in the bill.

Government Orders

Before we get to the stage where we want to throw out the baby with the bathwater, would the member agree that these are important and significant changes? Would she agree with the current Information Commissioner, who said that the bill should be passed, that it is an improvement, and that the bill has taken into consideration the criticisms that the previous information commissioner had about the shortcomings of the bill when it was introduced at first reading?

Ms. Rachel Blaney: Mr. Speaker, I am happy to answer the member's question. I have had multiple interesting conversations with that member, and I respect the fact that he is doing his job. His job is to always find a way to make his government look like it is doing some good work, and sometimes a bit of good work is done.

However, this really does not speak to the core issue. When we look at our relationship with constituents and Canadians, with reporters and the masses of people we are here to represent, there is still a sense of distress. This bill, in its form, is not going to take it to the next level. I appreciate that some of the Senate amendments have been accepted. I want to remind the member that there were multiple amendments made by the NDP, by the Green Party and so forth, and those amendments in committee were not followed through on, which was unfortunate.

One of the things that I talk to constituents about all the time is that this place should be a place of vigorous debate. It should be a place where we can listen to one another and not play so many partisan games. Unfortunately, I do not feel that we are at that place yet.

When the departments have the ability to give themselves continuous extensions, I do not know how accountable that is. They can say that they are just going to be really great.

One of the things I find interesting is that systems are important. They give us a box that we can operate in, and it leads to more accountability. When we suggest nicely that maybe something will happen, usually those things do not happen. Therefore, let us get a little more teeth in it for the Information Commissioner.

• (2145)

Mr. Kevin Lamoureux (Parliamentary Secretary to the Leader of the Government in the House of Commons, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, the NDP House leader provided comments about the New Democrats being like busy bees. That is not what I think of in terms of the analogy, because bees are kind of sweet and they provide some good things. I see it more as a mosquito sucking the life out of things. At the end of the day—

The Speaker: I would ask the hon. member for Winnipeg North to be judicious in his language. It is usually not helpful when we compare colleagues to animals, etc. I would ask him to be conscious of that.

Mr. Kevin Lamoureux: Mr. Speaker, the member was very critical of the Access to Information Act. She was very critical of Bill C-91 and Bill C-92, all of these wonderful pieces of historical legislation that have moved the bar significantly forward.

The other day, we talked about national pharmacare, and the New Democrats asked, what about hearing and all of these other things? We talk about a national housing strategy, and they say we need to

have more houses. We could never, ever please the New Democratic Party here. There is no legislation before the House that they would say they agree with it in its entirety and that we have done a good job on.

Does the member opposite not recognize that within this legislation, where there are significant reforms that have been long overdue, over 30 years overdue, along with other pieces of legislation, there are a lot of good things happening? They can say some positive things. Even when I was in opposition, I said positive things at times to the government. It is okay to agree that the legislation is good at times. Would the member not agree?

Ms. Rachel Blaney: Mr. Speaker, it has been an interesting evening. We are all maybe getting a bit tired in this place. It is unfortunate that the member does not understand the role I have in this House, which is to be a voice for the people of North Island—Powell River.

Although I have a lot of mosquitoes in my region, I certainly have never thought that I was one. That actually is part of the issue. Cynicism in this country is growing, because we are seeing this in the House instead of honest debate. As a person who has spent my life working very hard in my communities for different issues that I passionately believe in, I do not say things lightly. I do not say things just because I want to be partisan or negative. I say them because, in my gut, that is what I believe. I will stand behind everything that I have said. Every day that I am here, I take very seriously my role, and I will never, ever speak out of turn. I hope the member will reflect on that himself.

[Translation]

Mr. Matthew Dubé (Beloeil—Chambly, NDP): Mr. Speaker, I thank my colleague for her speech. She eloquently explained our role here.

We are debating a bill on access to information. The term privileged information is often thrown around. What I find interesting is that information is considered a privilege. In Ottawa, only a select few, such as the government agencies that respond to our requests or the ministers, have access to certain information. The idea is to protect the privilege, or information, that we have.

Information has an impact on people's lives, mostly thanks to the media. Journalists use privileged information to uncover stories or report on the government's actions, for example.

While my colleague was giving her speech, I was looking through the requests received by departments. The Minister of Health has not yet responded to an access to information request regarding her department's response to the opioid crisis.

The purpose of the bill is to make information more accessible to the public. Could my colleague explain why the bill does not meet this objective?

If we are supposed to look at the glass as half full instead of half empty, how can we make information more accessible, in accordance with the law, instead of hiding it?

I do not think the bill meets these objectives.

Government Orders

• (2150)

[English]

Ms. Rachel Blaney: Mr. Speaker, I mentioned earlier in my speech the fact that The Globe and Mail did a story about how the government delayed and delayed information, which unveiled the fact that one in five sexual assault claims was dismissed as baseless. That is what the RCMP and the police are saying. We know there is something fundamentally broken.

The member talked about information on the opioid crisis. A lot of people in my riding have died from opioid overdose. It is devastating to our communities, and knowing what is happening would make a big difference. When the government is selective about what people get to hear or what they do not get to hear, it creates a real problem with democracy, because it separates us from our constituents, and that needs to stop.

The Speaker: Resuming debate.

Is the House ready for the question?

Some hon. members: Question.

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

Some hon. members: Agreed.

Some hon. members: No.

The Speaker: All those in favour of the motion will please say yea.

Some hon. members: Yea.

The Speaker: All those opposed will please say nay.

Some hon. members: Nay.

The Speaker: In my opinion the yeas have it.

And five or more members having risen:

The Speaker: Pursuant to order made on Tuesday, May 28, the division stands deferred until Tuesday, June 18, at the expiry of the time provided for Oral Questions.

* * *

[Translation]

CRIMINAL CODE

Hon. David Lametti (Minister of Justice and Attorney General of Canada, Lib.) moved:

That a Message be sent to the Senate to acquaint Their Honours that, in relation to Bill C-75, An Act to amend the Criminal Code, the Youth Criminal Justice Act and other Acts and to make consequential amendments to other Acts, the House:

agrees with amendments 1, 2, 5, 7, 8, 9, 11, 12(b), 13 and 14 made by the Senate; proposes that amendment 3 be amended to read as follows:

“3. Clause 239, pages 90 and 91:

(a) on page 90, replace lines 2 and 3 with the following:

“dictable offence that is punishable by 14 years or more of imprisonment, other than an offence listed in section 469, the justice”;

(b) on page 90, replace lines 18 and 19 with the following:

able by 14 years or more of imprisonment, an offence listed in section 469 that is not punishable by 14 years or more of imprisonment or an”;

(c) on page 90, replace line 44 with the following:

“section 469 that is punishable by 14 years or more of imprisonment,”;

(d) on page 91, replace lines 20 and 21 with the following:

“offence listed in section 469 that is punishable by 14 years or more of imprisonment, the justice shall endorse on the informa-”;

proposes that amendment 4 be amended to read as follows:

“4. Clause 240, pages 92 and 93:

(a) on page 92, replace line 11 with the following:

“14 years or more of imprisonment, other than an offence mentioned”;

(b) on page 92, replace lines 25 to 27 with the following:

“offence that is punishable by 14 years or more of imprisonment, an offence listed in section 469 that is not punishable by 14 years or more of imprisonment or an offence mentioned in section”;

(c) on page 92, replace line 41 with the following:

“section 469 that is punishable by 14 years or more of imprisonment,”;

(d) on page 93, replace line 20 with the following:

“is punishable by 14 years or more of imprisonment, the justice or”;

proposes that, as a consequence of Senate amendments 3 and 4, the following amendment be added:

1. Clause 238, page 89: replace line 33 with the following

“fence that is punishable by 14 years or more of imprisonment is be-”;

proposes that amendment 6 be amended by replacing the words “an intimate partner – and, in particular, a partner” with the words “a person” and by replacing the words “on the basis of sex or is an Aboriginal person” with the words “because of personal circumstances – including because the person is Aboriginal and female”;

respectfully disagrees with amendment 10 made by the Senate because the Bill already provides flexibility to the provinces and territories with respect to agent representation while also recognizing regional diversity in respect of how legal representation is regulated across Canada, and because the amendment could have unintended repercussions for the provinces and territories; and, the Government continues to work with the provinces and territories to support the effective implementation of these reforms.

proposes that amendment 12(a) in the English version be amended by replacing the words “apply in Bill C-45” with the words “apply if Bill C-45”.

He said: Mr. Speaker, I am very pleased to be here today to speak to the amendments made by the other chamber to Bill C-75, an act to amend the Criminal Code, the Youth Criminal Justice Act and other acts and to make consequential amendments to other acts.

• (2155)

After being examined and given thoughtful deliberation in the Senate, the bill has returned to the House of Commons so that we can review the 14 amendments that have been made.

I would first like to thank all members and senators, particularly the members of the committees of both chambers, for their work to reduce the delays in the criminal justice system.

[English]

In particular, I would like to thank the chair of the justice committee, as well as the member for West Nova, both of whom gave me critical advice at appropriate moments.

Government Orders

• (2200)

[*Translation*]

I would also like to thank all of the witnesses who took the time to submit briefs and to appear before the committee, since they expressed very useful views about their experience with the criminal justice system, whether from the perspective of a professional, an accused, a victim or a family member.

[*English*]

Many of these witnesses echoed the concerns expressed by the Supreme Court of Canada in the 2016 Jordan decision.

We all know that delays in the criminal justice system are destructive, and particularly so to some of the most vulnerable members of our society: victims of crime and their loved ones. Delays also impact accused from groups that are overrepresented in the criminal justice system. Of course, the cost of inefficiencies is also borne by taxpayers.

I learned this lesson very early when I was fortunate enough to be a clerk to Justice Peter Cory of the Supreme Court of Canada. At that time, the Askov decision was heard, which was the predecessor to Jordan.

Bill C-75 presents an important opportunity to take concrete action to reduce these delays and respond directly to my mandate. It is the product of significant consultation over many years, and it would modernize the criminal justice system in ways that provinces and territories, which are responsible for the administration of the system, have agreed would improve the efficiency and effectiveness of this system.

All of the proposed amendments have been crafted with a view to the impact they would have on the incarceration rates of indigenous persons and persons who are vulnerable to being overrepresented in the criminal justice system in Canada. Bill C-75 seeks equally to improve the safety of our communities by implementing our government's commitments to toughen criminal laws and bail conditions in cases of intimate partner violence, or IPV, with the goal of keeping women and children safe.

As members will no doubt recall from when the bill passed through this place the first time, it is bold and transformative and contains many much-needed improvements to the criminal justice system. Today I will provide a general overview of the key areas of criminal law reform contained in Bill C-75, as well as some details on the amendments proposed by the other place.

[*Translation*]

First, I want to talk about the modernization and simplification of the bail provisions.

All stakeholders support the bill's proposal to modernize and simplify the interim release provisions. Everyone agrees that these reforms need to be made right away. This critical modernization of the interim release provisions will be the most comprehensive reform in 45 years. It will strengthen the key principles of interim release, which the Supreme Court of Canada has outlined many times, particularly just recently in 2017 in *R. v. Antic*.

Moreover, these changes are needed to reduce the overrepresentation of indigenous people and individuals from vulnerable populations in the criminal justice system. I look forward to the addition to the Criminal Code of the proposed requirement that particular attention be given to the circumstances of aboriginal accused in interim release decisions.

The other place proposed a slight change to the interim release provisions in the bill in response to the March 2019 Supreme Court ruling in *R. v. Myers*. The Court stated that the detention review under section 525 of the Criminal Code must be an automatic procedure whether the delay was unreasonable or not. This ruling raised some concerns in Quebec over the court of competent jurisdiction to hear these cases, given the unique way the term "judge" is defined for Quebec for the purposes of these interim release hearings.

Amendment 2 would uphold the current definition of this term for Quebec, but will add that only a judge from the Court of Québec may conduct a detention review, except in the case of a decision on the detention issued by the Superior Court of Quebec.

I urge all hon. members to support amendment 2 from the other place since it gives Quebec greater discretion to guarantee more effective use of judicial resources.

• (2205)

[*English*]

The bill amendments are also instrumental in increasing the safety of all women and girls, including indigenous women and girls. Specifically, they would require a justice to consider whether an accused would be charged with an offence involving IPV against an intimate partner when determining whether to release or detain the accused.

The amendments would also require courts to consider the criminal record of the accused, including prior convictions and the context of the offence. In cases where an accused who had a prior conviction for violence against an intimate partner is facing new charges for IPV, a reverse onus would be imposed on the accused at bail, meaning that the burden would shift to the accused to justify why the accused should not be detained pending trial.

Bill C-75 proposes other amendments in relation to ensuring that convictions for violence against intimate partners are taken seriously at the sentencing stage.

As passed by this place, Bill C-75 would modernize the current aggravating sentencing factor in the Criminal Code to ensure it would concur with our current understanding of IPV and would specify that it would apply to both current and former intimate partners, as well as the more modern conception of intimate partnerships, including dating partnerships. It would also allow for the possibility of seeking a higher maximum penalty in cases involving a repeat IPV offender.

Government Orders

Informed by the testimony of the commissioners of the National Inquiry into Missing and Murdered Indigenous Women and Girls, the other place's amendments 6 and 7 would strengthen these amendments to ensure that violence against indigenous women and girls would be treated all the more seriously at sentencing. The other place's amendment 6 would create a new sentencing objective in the Criminal Code that would direct a court to give primary consideration to the objectives of denunciation and deterrence for an IPV offence, in particular where the victim is vulnerable on the basis of sex or is an indigenous person.

The other place's amendment 7 would expand Bill C-75's aggravating factor to include IPV committed against a member of the offender's or the victim's family and would create a new sentencing principle that would require a court imposing a sentence for an IPV offence to consider the increased vulnerability of female victims, giving particular attention to the circumstances of aboriginal female victims.

I support these amendments, with a minor modification to the other place's amendment 6 to remove the concept of IPV and replace the reference to a person's sex with reference to personal circumstances and to specifically refer to aboriginal women. This would assist in ensuring judges take into account the increased vulnerability of indigenous women as victims for all offences.

It is also timely in that it would address some of the recommendations in the recently released missing and murdered indigenous women and girls report, recommendations 5.17 and 5.18. Moreover, these amendments would address some of the concerns noted by the Supreme Court of Canada in its recent Barton decision, where the court noted that indigenous women faced injustices in all areas of the criminal justice system as well as extremely high rates of violence.

I acknowledge that some may question these two amendments, given that the House did not support Bill S-215 at second reading. Bill S-215's proposed aggravating factors would have applied to only a few offences. This other place's amendment also differs from Bill S-215 in that it would apply to a broader group of victims. It would directly call on the court to consider the vulnerability of female victims, with particular attention to the circumstances of aboriginal female victims. In contrast, Bill S-215 was limited to the fact that the victim was a female person who was Indian, Inuit or Métis.

[*Translation*]

The second element is enhancing the existing approach to administration of justice offences, including for offences committed by youth. The judicial referral hearing procedure proposed in Bill C-75 is another positive reform aimed at diverting less serious, non-violent cases from the courts so that they may be dealt with more efficiently. This approach will also help reduce the overrepresentation of indigenous people and other marginalized groups in the criminal justice system, who are overrepresented among those accused of administration of justice offences.

This area of reform was recommended in the Standing Senate Committee on Legal and Constitutional Affairs' final report entitled "Delaying Justice is Denying Justice: An Urgent Need to Address Lengthy Court Delays in Canada", given the significant number of

cases involving administration of justice offences in the system and the pressure they cause. It is harder for the accused to break the cycle of crime because of these offences.

The bill gives police officers and prosecutors a new tool that allows them to ask judges to review all bail conditions that apply to the accused. This allows for an assessment of the reasonableness of the conditions and helps promote a culture change encouraging criminal justice professionals to play an active role in reversing the upward trend in the number of charges related to administration of justice offences, when other kinds of offences are declining.

• (2210)

[*English*]

The third point is on restricting the availability of preliminary inquiries to the most serious offences. As introduced, Bill C-75 proposed to restrict the availability of preliminary inquiries to indictable offences punishable by life imprisonment, roughly 70 offences. The other place agreed that these offences should automatically include a preliminary inquiry.

However, it also expanded their availability on a discretionary basis to all other indictable offences with a maximum penalty of less than life imprisonment, which would have been an additional 393 offences. As per the other place's amendment, preliminary inquiries would be available in two circumstances: first, where one or both parties requested one; and, second, a justice was satisfied that certain criteria were met, namely that appropriate measures were taken to mitigate the impacts on victims for both approaches and, where it was on the request of one party, that it was also in the best interest of the administration of justice.

The amendment responded to concerns that preliminary inquiries were not available for more and serious offences. However, the expansion of their availability, combined with the new complex criteria, would lead, in our view, to further delays and unnecessary litigation; for example, to interpret the proper application of the criteria.

Recognizing, however, that the other place's amendment was motivated by continuing concerns by the legal community and others, I proposed to not accept the other place's amendments 3 and 4 as drafted, but to revise the bill's original approach to make preliminary inquiries also available for offences with a maximum penalty of 14 years, for example, sexual assault with a weapon.

Government Orders

Although this would expand the availability of preliminary inquiries for 86 more offences, the proposal is consistent with the 2017 FPT ministers of justice's consensus to restrict them to offences carrying the most serious terms of imprisonment. A 14-year threshold will still provide certainty and will avoid the delays inherent in the other place's amendment.

I hope you will all will join me in supporting this amendment, as it strikes an important balance in what is a long-standing, contentious debate regarding preliminary inquiries.

The Speaker: I would ask the hon. minister to direct his comments to the Chair. When one says "you" in this place, of course, one is usually referring to the Chair. I would ask him to keep that in mind.

Hon. David Lametti: Mr. Speaker, I hope that everyone in this House will join me.

[*Translation*]

The fourth element is on reclassification of offences. Reclassification of offences is another key element of Bill C-75 that will modernize and streamline the Criminal Code and promote a more efficient and economical use of judicial resources.

Hybridizing offences that are punishable by a maximum penalty of two, five and 10 years' imprisonment gives the provinces and territories greater flexibility to match their resources to the cases based on the offender's circumstances and the gravity of the case.

However, this reclassification would not change the fundamental sentencing principles. The classification reforms do not reduce penalties. Serious offences will continue to be treated seriously by the courts.

The other place's amendments 1, 10, 11, 13 and 14 are about the reclassification of offences and touch on areas for which witnesses expressed concerns about amendments potentially having unintended consequences.

Amendment 1 would allow a court to order DNA sampling for offences punishable by five and 10 years' imprisonment. Bill C-75 would hybridize those offences, and DNA orders are already issued for them. This amendment is consistent with the objectives of the bill, and I urge the House to join me in supporting it.

I would also urge the House to join me in supporting amendment 11, which would amend the Identification of Criminals Act to state that a person accused of a hybrid offence can be fingerprinted even if the prosecutor opts to proceed by way of summary conviction.

Amendments 13 and 14 are consequential amendments relating to the coming-into-force date of the specified provision if amendment 12 is agreed to.

• (2215)

[*English*]

The other place's amendment 10 attempts to respond to concerns that a number of stakeholders made regarding the unintended impact of Bill C-75's proposed amendments to increase the maximum penalty for most Criminal Code offences with a summary conviction penalty to two years less a day.

Currently section 802.1 makes clear that agents, including law students, articling students, paralegals and others, cannot appear in summary conviction proceedings where the maximum term of imprisonment is greater than six months, unless the agent is authorized under a program approved by the lieutenant governor in council of the province or the accused is an organization.

The Standing Committee on Justice and Human Rights amended section 802.1 to allow provinces and territories to establish criteria in addition to their existing authority to approve programs, authorizing agents to appear in summary conviction proceedings where the maximum penalty was more than six months and to allow agents to attend court in place of the accused to seek an adjournment of the proceeding on all summary conviction matters without prior authorization.

These amendments maintain jurisdictional flexibility in this area of criminal procedure while also recognizing regional diversity and how legal representation is regulated across Canada.

The proposed other place's amendment would add a provision that would also allow agents to appear where they are authorized to do so under the law of a province. We are concerned that there might be unintended results to this amendment. As I stated earlier, this bill is the product of considerable consultation with provinces and territories and there has not been sufficient time to analyze and ascertain what the effect of this amendment would be under existing provincial and territorial laws.

Moreover, provinces and territories already have flexibility to quickly address any consequences of the reclassification scheme on agents through the amendments made to the bill in this place last December. Using the proposed new power to do this through criteria or a program established by the lieutenant governor in council is a much faster process than legislative reform.

For these reasons, we do not support the other place's amendment 10.

[*Translation*]

The fifth element is about strengthening case management. Bill C-75 will strengthen Criminal Code provisions to improve case management.

The sixth element is about improving the jury selection process. Bill C-75 will also improve the jury selection process by eliminating the potentially discriminatory use of peremptory challenges, making the selection process more transparent, promoting fairness and impartiality and making jury trials more efficient in general.

[*English*]

The seventh key area was implementing other additional efficiencies. One of the most widely supported aspects of the bill is the promotion of additional efficiencies, including through the use of technology where available to facilitate remote appearances.

Government Orders

Bill C-75 also includes reforms proposed in three bills that were previously introduced as separate bills: Bill C-28, victim surcharge; Bill C-38, exploitation and trafficking in persons, and Bill C-39, repeal of provisions ruled unconstitutional.

The other place's amendments 5, 8 and 9 respond to the December 14, 2018, decision of the Supreme Court of Canada in *R. v. Boudreault*, which struck down the provisions in the Criminal Code related to the federal victim surcharge, used by provinces and territories to partially fund their victim services.

The other place's amendments re-enact a new victim surcharge regime that requires the imposition of a surcharge in all cases, but provides greater judicial discretion to depart from imposing the surcharge in appropriate cases, in order to address the concerns of the Supreme Court decision.

I believe the victim surcharge amendments will restore the necessary judicial discretion to ensure that the sentence imposed in each case is fit and proportionate. I urge this House to join me in supporting these amendments. These are changes that I know my provincial and territorial colleagues are awaiting.

• (2220)

[*Translation*]

In conclusion, as we can see, this bill contains a number of crucial measures to reduce delays in the criminal justice system. These measures will help modernize and simplify the system, while at the same time providing additional safeguards for vulnerable victims and restoring the ability to collect the federal victim surcharge.

Last, but not least, these amendments represent an important step towards reversing the historically disproportionate impact of the criminal justice system on indigenous peoples and marginalized peoples.

We must work together to ensure that this bill is passed before we adjourn for the summer.

[*English*]

Mr. Murray Rankin (Victoria, NDP): Mr. Speaker, I would like to congratulate the minister on his speech. I agree, on behalf of the NDP, with the thrust of his remarks with respect to the Senate amendments made to Bill C-75, certainly with respect to intimate partner violence and the bail reform provisions and, in particular, the section 802.1 where law students and agents will again be able to represent people fully in summary conviction matters. I think these are all really important matters and I agree with him.

However, surely, if the issue is about the Askov and Jordan delay principles, the elephant in the room would be the fact that the government has failed to follow up on the Prime Minister's commitment to address to the minister, in the mandate letter, the minimum mandatory sentences provisions. I agree with him that we have a crisis in the over-incarceration of indigenous people, eight times as many indigenous men per capita, 12 times as many women.

Jonathan Rudin and others who work with Aboriginal Legal Services, say that there has to be a change in the mandatory minimum provisions if we are going to change that. Why does the government not get that?

Hon. David Lametti: Mr. Speaker, I thank the hon. member for his work on the justice committee on this bill and other bills.

With great deference, I took over the bill at a certain stage at which the point on mandatory minimums had already been settled for the time being. I have committed publicly in front of the justice committee, as well as publicly in other places and I am willing to do so in this House, hopefully remaining in this position moving forward, that I will make the study of mandatory minimum penalties a priority for myself.

That being said, we have taken on other provisions in this reform, particularly the reforms we are making to the administration of justice, which can be a revolving door for indigenous persons in Canada. By regulating those administrative law offences, I think we have addressed a great deal of the question for indigenous peoples. Certainly, we will monitor the situation, the *mise en oeuvre* of this bill on the ground, once it gets enacted into legislation and we will be open to future reform.

Mr. Randy Hoback (Prince Albert, CPC): Mr. Speaker, one thing about the Conservatives is we stand for the rights and concerns of the victims over the concerns of the criminals. I would ask the minister this. How can he justify the watering-down of offences such as impaired driving that causes bodily harm, the use of the date-rape drug or human trafficking? How can he justify the changes in these areas that make it less offensive or less of a consequence for people to participate in these types of crimes?

• (2225)

Hon. David Lametti: Mr. Speaker, I thank the hon. member for his question. It is good to interact with him again after our first year in trade.

I would reject the premise of the question in the sense that we have created a number of hybrid offences that could be prosecuted either by way of summary procedure or indictable offence. We leave that discretion up to the Crown prosecutors as they move forward, but that is not to say that we are treating any of these offences any more lightly. Serious offences will be treated seriously. Depending on the facts of the case, the prosecutor will decide whether to proceed by way of indictment or by way of summary offence. The option to use the summary offence is there to accelerate the system to make it more efficient where the nature of the facts are such that the offence perhaps is not as serious. However, serious criminality will always be taken seriously under this and the procedure by way of indictment still remains.

Ms. Elizabeth May (Saanich—Gulf Islands, GP): Mr. Speaker, I share the concerns of the hon. member for Victoria. We are still hampered in our criminal justice system by a series of mandatory minimums that we know have been found, by any criminology or empirical evidence, to absolutely not be effective and are a burden on the justice system. In this reform, we had hoped to see that.

Government Orders

I have a private member's bill, should the Minister of Justice want to look at it, which enumerates all of the mandatory minimums brought in in the 41st Parliament so that, in one piece of legislation, we could remove them all. Since the Minister of Justice has undertaken to study the matter, I wanted to draw to his attention the existence of my private member's bill and I hope that we can do more.

Also, I put forward about 46 or 47 amendments at committee around certain aspects of vulnerable populations. I know the Senate has made a number of helpful amendments. I think the bill could still be much improved, although some of the Senate amendments go some distance toward what I was trying to do in clause-by-clause. Therefore, I would appreciate any comments from the Minister of Justice.

Hon. David Lametti: Mr. Speaker, I was not the person shepherding the bill during the proceedings in front of the justice committee in this place. That being said, I did work with the Senate committee quite closely with respect to the amendments proposed on IPV and vulnerable victims, in particular, indigenous women.

I will take the member's suggestion on minimum mandatory penalties and undertake to look at whatever she proposes.

Mr. Lloyd Longfield (Guelph, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, I thank the hon. Minister of Justice. He has done a tremendous job on not only this but also the judicial appointments, and looking at improving efficiency and effectiveness in our judicial system.

During his presentation, when talking about the Senate amendments, the minister made comments about expanding preliminary inquiries to 14 years, which used to only be for more serious offences. Could he comment on how he has taken the amendment from the Senate and made a suggestion toward 14 years and how he came to that?

Hon. David Lametti: Mr. Speaker, the hon. member's question is a good one. The bill as it went to the other place reserved preliminary inquiries or the right to preliminary inquiry for only offences that carry the potential of a life sentence. We heard from senators. We heard from criminal defence lawyers and others that perhaps this was too stringent a criterion, that in fact, in many complex cases, a preliminary inquiry actually helped to make the case run in a more efficient manner perhaps by identifying the kinds of evidence and whether or not certain kinds of evidence would be heard.

The other place recommended a change that would have allowed for a preliminary inquiry to be expanded to all sorts of serious offences, but with a discretionary criterion that would have created extra burdens on the system, particularly in the early years as we were sorting out the criteria. I will not go into the detail again, as I mentioned it in my speech.

We have tried to achieve a middle balance, expanding the number of offences by roughly 100, by saying a preliminary inquiry will be automatically possible where the penalty is 14 years or greater, including the life sentence but expanding the number. We feel this is an appropriate and efficient compromise without the discretion. Again, we will monitor the application of the law on the ground to see how the amendment plays out in practice.

● (2230)

Ms. Marilyn Gladu (Sarnia—Lambton, CPC): Mr. Speaker, it is a pleasure to rise in the House to speak. This could quite possibly be the last speech I make in the 42nd Parliament. I certainly have a number of things to say about Bill C-75.

Bill C-75 amends criminal law. It is a justice bill. When we look at bills that fall into this area, it is important to remember what we are trying to achieve with bills in the criminal justice system. The first thing we are trying to do is define for Canadians what unacceptable behaviour is. Once we have set that standard, then we are trying to assign penalties suitable to deter people from committing that crime. In Canadian federal prisons, we do not do a lot of rehabilitation, so really the main part of the criminal justice system is to assign a penalty that both is commensurate with the crime that was committed and also is a deterrent to keep people from committing that crime, and then to prosecute that charge in court with a fair and due process.

I would like to look at Bill C-75 and compare it to those criteria to see how it measures up.

First, I will talk about defining unacceptable behaviour. I am not sure that the Liberals understand what unacceptable behaviour is. I say that because we are talking about a Prime Minister who is the first prime minister to break a law, which he did when he took a private helicopter to billionaire island. The member for Brampton East was involved in allegations of money laundering. We are currently seeing the member for Steveston—Richmond East in several instances of money laundering, as well as being disbarred. There have been multiple ethical lapses and cases of sexual harassment that caused some members to be out of the caucus, but I would argue there are still some members within the caucus. There is a tolerance for things that, in the minds of Canadians, shows that maybe there is not a good moral compass in the Liberal Party to define what unacceptable behaviour is.

With respect to assigning penalties suitable to deter people from committing the crime, one of the most egregious things about the changes in Bill C-75 is that the Liberals have taken a number of crimes that Canadians would consider to be very heinous and reduced them to a summary conviction of two years or a fine. It is important to look at the list of the kinds of crimes we are talking about, so that people can convince themselves whether this is appropriate.

The most heinous crime on the list has to be the forcible confinement of a minor. In the minds of all Canadians, we value our children and we want to protect our children. If somebody kidnapped and forcibly confined a child, I do not think most Canadians would think it is okay to get off with a fine for doing that. That is unacceptable.

Government Orders

Also on the list is forced marriage and forced marriage of children. I am not sure this should be allowed at all in Canada, but I know one thing. If we are talking about forced marriage and marriage for people who are under 16, that is rape. It is clear that it is rape. Therefore, to put that as a summary conviction of less than two years or a fine is unacceptable. We can see in this country that rape is on the increase. One in three women will experience sexual violence in her lifetime. Therefore, it is clear that we do not have the right deterrent to reduce the crime that is happening.

I was the chair of the status of women committee when we studied violence against women and girls in Canada. We had testimony from quite a number of countries, and I was interested to look around and see which countries were doing a better job in the area of rape. There are countries that do not have a big issue with rape. I asked the witnesses why that was, and they said the penalty for the crime was 10 to 15 years in prison, so they have a deterrent for people not to commit that crime. There is also an awareness of the fact that it is illegal. We have a lot of people coming to Canada from places that have a different culture in many cases and have a different tolerance for things like rape. It is important that we educate people who come to this country about those issues. We should be setting punishment for this crime that is commensurate with it, and a fine is not acceptable.

● (2235)

Assault with a weapon is on the list. We sadly saw what happened today at the Raptors parade with people getting shot. This seems to be an event that is on the rise. I think about the Danforth shooting. I think about a number of shootings that have happened. Assault with a weapon should not be less than two years in prison or a fine. That is not acceptable. That is not a deterrent, and I think most Canadians would agree with that.

Originally, there were a number of items on the list that had to do with participating in terrorism activities, or leaving Canada to participate in the activities of terrorist groups. There was some walk-back within Bill C-75 on that issue, but we are still not in the place we need to be on that.

Canadians are concerned about terrorism. A number of events happen but we do not receive any information. I am thinking about the two fellows in Ontario who were caught with explosives and the FBI was investigating. Everyone says there is nothing to see here; all is fine. There is the Danforth shooting, the guy who drove a van and killed multiple people in Toronto. There is the return of ISIS fighters and people not knowing what is happening with them. Are they walking around? How do we know that the public is safe? There is a concern among Canadians that we should take a hard line on terrorism. I am glad to see some walk-back on that, but I want to keep an eye on it.

Another thing on the list is municipal corruption. Corruption in government of any kind is not something that should ever be reduced to a fine. We have seen lots of corruption in the existing Liberal government, lots of scandal. The fact that the Liberals have reduced the severity of the crimes on this list is indicative of the lack of moral compass on the other side.

Maybe “assisting prisoner of war to escape” is not a current issue, but how about “obstructing or violence to or arrest of an officiating

clergyman”? This one is particularly egregious to me. I remember when Bill C-51 came from the Liberal government and tried to take what is today considered a crime, to attack or threaten a clergyperson, and remove that altogether. I remember the concern from churches in Sarnia—Lambton and across the country. They wondered why the Liberals wanted to take a protection away from the clergy, especially when cases of that nature had been prosecuted.

As a result of the public outcry and a swing in the polls, the Liberals backed off that, but here it is, showing up again, and this should be a flag to people who are watching tonight. What we see with the Liberals again and again is that they try something and when there is a public outcry, they back off, but as soon as they get another chance to sneak it in, it comes back.

A number of things have been like that. I am thinking of the tax that the Liberals were going to put on dental and health care. They backed off, but I bet it will reappear. It is the same thing with the small business tax on passive assets. As soon as there was an outcry, the Liberals backed off, but this is something to watch for if they get another chance.

Impaired driving causing bodily harm is on the list. This is quite concerning as well. We can think about the amount of work that organizations like Mothers Against Drunk Driving have done to raise awareness, to try to get stiffer penalties for impaired driving causing bodily harm. We can think of the tragedy of many parents who have lost children or loved ones who have been killed by somebody driving impaired. To reduce this to a conviction of less than two years or a fine is totally unacceptable, especially from a government that legalized marijuana, knowing that Colorado and Washington saw a doubling of traffic deaths due to impaired driving. This is a step in the wrong direction and should be reconsidered.

● (2240)

There is another one in the bill that talks about polygamy, and I am not sure why this one made the list. Polygamy has been illegal in Canada for quite some time and culturally, we would like to preserve that. I am not sure why we would want to lessen the severity of the crime for that.

There is arson for fraudulent purposes. These acts are clearly serious crimes. If I go back to the original premise that says the reason we have a criminal justice system is to assign penalties suitable to deter people from committing a crime, I think we could admit that diluting the penalty in the way Bill C-75 does is not going to help us move forward or deter crime in this country.

Government Orders

I want to read quotes of what people have said about Bill C-75. Ms. Markita Kaulius, the president of Families for Justice, said, “Bill C-75 is a terrible bill for victims and for public safety.” Stephanie DiGiuseppe, a litigation lawyer in Toronto specializing in criminal and constitutional law, said, “Bill C-75 is a massive step backwards for justice reform in Canada.” Christian Leuprecht, a professor at the Royal Military College of Canada, said, “the signal that [Bill C-75 is] sending is that these offences are no longer as serious as they were before.” It has been recognized across the country that this bill is not going to be good for the criminal justice system and it is not going to accomplish what we need to accomplish.

If I were a criminal in Canada, I would be saying it is a great time to be a criminal with the Liberal government in place because it always protects the rights of criminals instead of the rights of victims. There is a move to decrease punishments. We talk about some of the things that Bill C-75 was hoping to accomplish. One was that the court system is overloaded right now. One way of offloading the courts is to get rid of all the people in line by fining them instead of making them go through the court process. One way to prevent the courts from being clogged up is to hire enough judges to adjudicate the cases.

In the four years the Liberal government has been in place, the court is missing about 60 judges, at last count. That never happened under the previous Conservative government. There was always an adequate number of judges to process the cases in the courts. Therefore, reducing sentences and letting everybody off the hook is not the answer. We do not say that since there are too many people in line, we should allow the murderers and rapists go free, but that is essentially what is happening now because there are cases are waiting too long. According to Jordan's principle, after two years, those cases are thrown out of court. During the reign of the Liberals, murderers and rapists have gone free in Canada. Clearly, understaffing the judiciary is part of the problem and part of the solution is replacing them.

When it comes to enforcing punishments, there has been a bit of a lackadaisical attitude. I remember when we first heard that Terri-Lynne McClintic had been sent to a healing lodge that had no security. She had been convicted of brutally murdering a child and was supposed to be imprisoned with a lot of security until 2030. When we raised the issue, those on the other side did not understand why we were raising it because they thought it was no big deal. It took a public outcry for the government to recognize that this was a big mistake and people who commit serious crimes, like murdering a child, need to be behind bars. The punishment needs to fit the crime. Again, there is lack of a moral compass on the other side.

However, there are lots of protections for people in prison. Mental health supports were announced in the budget for folks in prison. I am not saying that criminals do not deserve mental health supports. I am just saying that since mental health supports are very much lacking for the rest of Canadians, why are we putting prisoners first? There is a program to provide free needles and we are moving to providing free illegal drugs to prisoners. I am not sure why the government is in the business of doling out illegal drugs; we do not provide free syringes and drugs to people with diabetes or everyone who has cancer.

● (2245)

I would certainly argue that when it comes to priorities, the government appears to be putting a priority on criminals, instead of victims and the rest of Canadians. I do not think that is the right priority, and the government should re-evaluate it.

The current Minister of Justice talked about the Senate amendments and the ones that should be included. He talked about the victim surcharge in one of the amendments. The victims surcharge was put in place because victims services were expensive. This was a way of recouping some of the costs, people who had done the harm had to do some remediation of the harm.

I am not sure, then, why the government would remove the requirement to have this victims service charge and to leave it to the discretion of judges. First, they have to remember that they can apply a victims surcharge. Then we leave it to their discretion as to whether they will apply it.

My experience has always been that when it is left to the discretion of judges, we see sentences becoming smaller and smaller over time. It is heartbreaking to me. I think about some of the stories I have heard of rape and been involved with them. In Sarnia—Lambton, for example, there was a case recently, where a 13-year-old girl was gang raped by two men who received prison sentences of months. We absolutely cannot have this kind of thing.

I think of Rehtaeh Parsons who was raped by multiple people. As a result of the ensuing shame that was put on her for over a year and a half, she took her life. It was a wrist slap for the people who were involved in that crime.

We do not have the right balance, and Bill C-75 does nothing to address it.

I want to talk about the previous Conservative government and its record on crime. The Conservatives are known, in general, to uphold criminal justice, to take the rights of the victim, rather than the rights of the criminal, and to try to impose stiff penalties for violent and heinous crimes. People will have a choice in the fall election. They will have a choice to move away from protecting the criminals' rights and move into the space of protecting the victims' rights. That will be important.

One of the interesting parts of the Senate amendments was the Senate trying to add different offences. The Senate decided it would add neglect or interference with a dead body to the list of things we might want to give a fine for or a summary conviction. The Senate wanted to make infanticide, killing a baby, a less than two years sentence or a fine. I do not think that is where Canadians are.

Setting traps, obtaining credit from false pretense, stock manipulation, gaming, fraud, falsification of documents, dealing in counterfeit money, on all of these things, the everyday Canadian would say they are crimes and people should go to prison when they do these things. They should not be given a fine or a summary conviction. I do not think it is right.

Government Orders

The government promised to uphold the rights of Canadians and to protect them. This is another example of where the government has not kept its promise to Canadians. It promised a lot of things. The Liberals promised small deficits. They promised to balance the budget by 2019, and here we are in 2019. They promised open and transparent government, but we have seen gag orders and cover-ups. The privacy legislation, which we just talked about, clearly is not hitting the mark.

We were told 2015 would be the last election under first past the post, another broken promise. We were told there would be no omnibus bills, another broken promise. We were told they would restore home mail delivery. The Liberals have broken 75% of their promises. When people are listening to what Liberals are promising this year, they should keep that in mind, that three-quarters of what is going to be said is never going to happen. We have seen that with the pharmacare promise. The Liberals promised that in 1997, 2004 election and again in the last election.

● (2250)

Then there is the wrong approach to guns. Assault with a weapon has been added to the list in Bill C-75 that will get a slap on the wrist. However, we see an increasing number of crimes involving guns. In fact, 95% of the gun crime in Canada is caused by illegal guns or guns used illegally. The government has not come up with a plan to address that. Our leader has come with a comprehensive plan that will address the real problem, which is guns used illegally by gangs, and bring the right penalties to deter bad behaviour. However, the Liberals are not on that page. They are as always taking the side of the criminals on these things, and we see a further move to decriminalize other behaviours.

I know there is a real push on for the Liberals to decriminalize all drugs. We just did a study at the health committee on the meth problem. We visited across the country. When we went to Winnipeg, we saw the problem with methamphetamine addiction. The response of the Liberals was to decriminalize it and give people free methamphetamine. Police officers are saying that these people are committing a lot of crimes, they are breaking into people's houses and there are all kinds of violent acts going on. Therefore, we have to be doing something that balances the protection of Canadians with the care that we have for folks who are addicted. However, that has not been addressed.

On Bill C-75, I received numerous petitions. I know people across the country are paying attention to this. I received a lot of information from the member for Niagara Falls, who was a former justice minister, as well as the member for Milton, who is very educated in these areas.

I heard the current Minister of Justice talk about indigenous people being overrepresented in the criminal justice system, and that is true. We need to get to the root cause of that, but I do not think reducing penalties for serious crime is the way to go about it.

I looked at some of the points that were made on reducing intimate partner violence. It is a great thing to reduce intimate partner violence, but forced marriage is intimate partner violence, especially when it is a child. There is a bit of hypocrisy in the way the bill was brought forward.

I did not hear a lot of conversation from the Minister of Justice on the modernization and simplification of the bail system and I would like to hear more. There is definitely room for improvement, but, again, modernization and simplification cannot mean abdication of responsibility in the criminal justice system.

On allowing a preliminary inquiry, which originally was allowed for serious crimes that carried life imprisonment, and I believe 70 infractions would meet that criteria, the bill would open that up to another 393 that could have access to a preliminary inquiry if one party or the other demanded it. Again, this will take more court resources. If the whole purpose of Bill C-75 is to try to help offload the courts and if the Liberals would let some more serious crimes go with a less than two-year conviction or a fine but then load up the court system again with a bunch of preliminary inquiries for a greater realm of offences, I am not sure that would achieve what they want to achieve.

Overall, when I look back to what we want to do in the criminal justice system, we want to define unacceptable behaviour, and certainly there is a good list, but we also want to assign penalties suitable to deter people from committing the crime. The Liberals missed the mark on that with Bill C-75.

We want to prosecute in court with a fair and due process. I do not think Bill C-75 would do that. I do not think it is fair to the victims to have these very serious crimes punished with a slap on the wrist, which is essentially what a fine or a less than two year summary conviction is. I do not think we will increase the cycle time through the courts, because, again, judges are still missing, which is a key part of it. Now the bill would increase the number of preliminary inquiries. Therefore, I do not believe Bill C-75 will hit the target.

The bill should not go forward. I know the government is rushing it through in the dying days of the 42nd Parliament, but I will not support Bill C-75 and I know my constituents and those across the country will not support the bill or the government.

● (2255)

Mr. Arif Virani (Parliamentary Secretary to the Minister of Justice and Attorney General of Canada and to the Minister of Democratic Institutions, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, the notion that due process is somehow an erosion of democracy development is categorically false and it betrays the development that has occurred in the country and every other western democracy in the last 50 years. The notion that it is a great time to be a criminal, a quote from the member's statement, is insulting to all members in the chamber. The notion that when a Supreme Court ruling comes out that a government seeks to respond to is the fault of the government in question is categorically false.

Government Orders

If the member listened to the speech of the Minister of Justice, he talked about the Askov decision, which came out in 1990 when Brian Mulroney was the prime minister. The fault is not of a government in session with respect to any judgment like that is rendered that results in 50 or 100,000 cases being found void and resulting in people being innocent. The fault of the government is not responding to constitutional jurisprudence.

What we are doing in this case is responding to the Jordan decision. The member has some concerns, which she has attempted to articulate. She questioned whether we had a moral compass. I will tell her exactly where the moral compass is on this side of the House. It sits in chilling inequalities. How? In the bill, the inequalities are cured insofar as the LGBT couples are treated the same way as heterosexual couples. The moral compass is in ensuring that there is not an overrepresentation of indigenous or racialized accused. The moral compass is in ensuring the bill reflects an initiative to ensure there is not overrepresentation.

Would the member opposite agree that when we make changes to intimate partner violence and changes to resurrecting a victim's surcharge, are we doing justice to the victims of gender-based violence, about which she spoke, and the victims who deserve compensatory assistance through the criminal justice system?

Ms. Marilyn Gladu: Mr. Speaker, there was quite a bit to that question.

With respect to it being a great time to be a criminal under the Liberals, I am sure many people have seen on Facebook the comparison that says would it not be great if we put seniors in prison because then they would receive the medical care, the food, the shelter and the attention they need. In some cases, we are treating criminals better than we are treating seniors.

This move to focus on less punishment for the criminals and to ignore the victims rights or to take away the funding for victims services is a disservice.

With respect to equality under the law, I absolutely believe in equality under the law and we need to do what we can, but we need to address the root causes of why we have overrepresentation from some groups in prison.

On intimate partner violence, although I want to see intimate partner violence reduced, we see this increasing. Many people coming into the country are coming from places where intimate partner violence is very common and considered part of everyday life. We need to educate those people so we can prevent this from happening. However, we need to recognize that in Bill C-75 there is a total discrepancy between working on intimate partner violence, but allowing forced marriage, especially forced marriage of children.

• (2300)

Mr. Colin Fraser (West Nova, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, I respect my colleague opposite, but when I listen to the statements she has made, I cannot help but think that Rebel Media must be awfully proud of her comments in the House tonight. There is so much misinformation in the statements and allegations she has made against the government and its attempts to reconcile appropriately matters in our justice system that I cannot come to any other conclusion than it is

from a misunderstanding of how the criminal justice system in Canada works.

For example, there are already many hybrid offences on the books, including sexual assault. It does not mean people will be getting off for a serious offence with a mere fine or an unreasonably lenient sentence. In fact, most of the offences, if not all of the ones she talked about and listed, already have a fine available as a possible sentence if it is preceded by indictment. It is sheer hogwash for her to talk about making the sentences more lenient.

In the circumstances she describes, those sentences would be unfit for those types of circumstances. Section 718 of the Criminal Code is exactly where we find the principles of sentencing based on the circumstances of the offence and the circumstances of the offender. Has my colleague actually read section 718 of the Criminal Code? I would like to hear her answer on that.

Ms. Marilyn Gladu: Mr. Speaker, when it comes to the sentencing, I can only see what comes out in different cases in the news and what we have studied. I will give the member an example from the study we did on violence against women and girls. We found out that 40% of women who present themselves to the police department and claim they have been raped are not taken seriously and no report is written. Of the 60% who had a report written, of 1,000 different complaints, there is a very small percentage, less than 5%, that make it to court. From that, there is a very small percentage that get a conviction, and the prison sentences are measured in months, not years. That is not equity. While the member is probably more experienced in the area of law, and I understand he is returning to that practice, what I see is not justice for the crimes that are being committed in our country.

Mr. Randy Hoback (Prince Albert, CPC): Mr. Speaker, it is interesting when we start comparing the Liberals and the Conservatives. The Liberals tend to come in here and say they know best. They will do what they think is best and what people should understand is best. The Conservatives talk to people. We talk to them about what they would like to see in regard to legislation, how criminals are treated and how victims are treated. Could the member inform this House on the difference between how the Conservatives approach this versus the Liberals? The reality is, they are preaching and we are listening.

Ms. Marilyn Gladu: Mr. Speaker, I find that the Liberals are always consulting but never listening, where the Conservatives are consulting and listening to what people are saying. As I posted the information on Bill C-75, I saw huge activity on social media. There were a huge number of petitions and letters and emails from Canadians saying that was not what they wanted. When people have committed serious crimes, they need them to be put in jail and kept there. They want the prison sentence to fit the crime. They do not want murderers and rapists walking away because their case has been before the court for too long. Therefore, I think Canadians recognize there is a problem. This bill does not address the problem. That is the point I was making tonight.

Mr. Anthony Housefather (Mount Royal, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, my hon. colleague knows how much I respect her.

Government Orders

To come back to the previous comment, I think the great difference is that the Liberals tend to believe that judges should have the discretion to deal with each and every case as is appropriate to that individual case. From what I hear, the hon. member and the Conservatives are suggesting that the Parliament of Canada should create a uniform rule that would apply to each and every case, which is not possible. Therefore, I would like to ask the hon. member this. Given what my friend from West Nova said, does she concur that the Criminal Code, as set out, suggests to judges, based on the individual facts of each and every case, what the appropriate sentence is, and that judges in Canada are highly trained, intelligent people who render the right sentences?

● (2305)

Ms. Marilyn Gladu: Mr. Speaker, I thank the member opposite for his question. He knows, as well, how much I respect the work he has done, especially at the justice committee.

The proof is always in the pudding. I do not think Canadians look at the decisions that judges have made and think that criminals are getting an adequate punishment for the crime. While not every single crime is identical, and I am not opposed to judges having some leeway, it looks to me that the leeway is so big that, in many cases, we are coming to the minimum sentence instead of something that is more standard. Keep in mind that when people receive their sentence and have gone to prison, that sentence is often reduced for good behaviour or a lot of other reasons. They end up getting a much shorter sentence anyway.

Mr. Murray Rankin (Victoria, NDP): Mr. Speaker, it is a pleasure to rise, albeit at this hour, to discuss Bill C-75 and the Senate amendments that have been brought to this place from there.

I agree with the thrust of the Senate amendments on behalf of the New Democratic Party, which supports the thrust of those amendments, but reluctantly have to say that, as amended, we must oppose this bill for the reasons I will describe.

I agree with the Minister of Justice, who spoke earlier, about some of the positive changes in this initiative. The bail reform provisions are exemplary. The intimate partner violence provisions are also very good. I am pleased that the Senate had the opportunity to deal with some of the recommendations by Judge Marion Buller, who, of course, chaired the inquiry into murdered and missing indigenous women and girls. She had the benefit of testifying before the Senate committee and, in turn, it had the ability to reflect her wisdom. That finds its way into the amendments before us tonight.

This improves the bill quite significantly, as I will describe, but there are some very significant issues that remain. I want to commend our colleagues in the other place for the work they have done to improve this flawed bill. We need to thank them for some of the work they had the opportunity to do.

We too, on the NDP side, have done an enormous amount of research and consultation, with people from the criminal defence bar, academics, prosecutors, former deputy attorneys general and others. We have done our homework on Bill C-75. After all, it is a mammoth initiative, the most significant criminal justice reform bill in a very long time. Regrettably, as a result of those consultations, we concluded that we must continue to oppose the bill, for reasons I will describe in a moment.

To be clear, we are in support of the amendments made by the Senate, yet decry the government's inadequate response to those amendments and ultimately have to therefore oppose the final bill as amended.

To begin with, why was Bill C-75 initiated? The Minister of Justice was clear about that in his remarks earlier. He alluded to the Askov case in the Supreme Court of Canada, and then, of course, the Jordan decision. The court said that there has to be a trial within a timely period, and it set down very specific limits for both indictable and summary conviction cases.

The objective was one of efficiency. It was to try to make our courts more efficient to deal with the enormous and, quite frankly, embarrassing backlog we have with our court cases, and to deal with the consequence of the Jordan case. As we know, often people who are guilty of offences walk free because the courts are not able to give them a trial within a reasonable period. That has to be an embarrassment to all Canadians.

Efficiency was the goal of this bill. However, after the consultation I just described, the debate in the House, and the work I was part of on the justice committee, where we heard a great variety of presentations, we concluded it is simply not an adequate response to the Jordan problem.

As I alluded to earlier, there are some good things in this bill, which I will also refer to later. However, sadly some of the deeply problematic things continue in the bill. I want to talk, by way of giving illustrations, of the general concerns that the criminal justice bar has had with this bill. I will start Ms. Sayeh Hassan, who is a Toronto-based criminal defence lawyer. By way of summary, she said, "While there are parts of Bill C-75 that have the potential for improving the criminal justice system, many other parts will not only be unhelpful when it comes to reducing delay but will also wipe out numerous rights currently afforded to an accused person."

The big ugly elephant in the room is the fact that the government chose to completely ignore what so many people have talked about, which is the need to get rid of mandatory minimum sentencing. We had a reasonable hope that it would do so. After all, the Prime Minister told the former minister of justice that it was part of her mandate. Nothing happened.

● (2310)

Sean Fine, of The Globe and Mail, wrote:

As far back as October, 2016, the [former attorney general] told the Criminal Lawyers' Association in a speech that she would change the minimum sentencing laws "in the near future." Days later, she told The Globe that new legislation would be coming soon, "certainly in the early part of next year."

It never happened.

Our colleagues in the other place made a similar observation. It is the fourth item on their list of formal observations. I think it is worth repeating what they summarized. Under "Mandatory Minimum Sentences", it says:

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In its *Delaying Justice is Denying Justice* report, the Committee recommended that the Minister of Justice undertake a thorough review of existing mandatory minimum sentences in order to: ensure a reasonable, evidence-based approach to when they are appropriate; and consider whether persons with mental health issues should be considered for alternative sentencing options or treatment when faced with mandatory minimum sentences.

During its study of Bill C-75, some witnesses expressed significant disappointment that it does not include any reforms to the mandatory minimum sentencing provisions in the Criminal Code. In the Mandate Letter to the Minister of Justice...of 12 November 2015, [the Prime Minister] stated that the Minister...was to “conduct a review of the changes in our criminal justice system and sentencing reforms over the past decade.” In the Minister’s letter to the Chair of the committee, he stated that the Government “is committed to advancing sentencing reform” and that it is “committed to reviewing the mandatory minimum penalties in the Criminal Code with an eye to eliminating many of them and restoring judicial discretion.”

The committee [of the Senate] observes that the Government of Canada has had four years to bring forward amendments to these provisions in the Criminal Code and that, to date, no legislative action has been taken.

I join with my colleagues in the other place in noting that the government's failure to address the often unconstitutional mandatory minimums cannot be understated. It is a serious problem.

This led the Criminal Lawyers' Association to write in its position paper that “[m]andatory minimum sentences frustrate the process of resolving cases by limiting the Crown’s discretion to offer a penalty that will limit the Crown's ability”—

The Deputy Speaker: Order. I can hear a device somewhere making a lot of background noise. I would ask hon. members who have a device, computer or otherwise, with the volume on to switch to headphones or to turn it down.

Sorry to interrupt the hon. member for Victoria. If he could pick up where he left off, that would be great.

Mr. Murray Rankin: Mr. Speaker, I was just making the point that the Criminal Lawyers' Association has made, about why mandatory minimum sentences are important. It is because if a criminal lawyer has the possibility, a zero-sum game, that his or her client will get the minimum sentence that is there with no discretion of the judges to forge a penalty that is appropriate in the circumstances, the lawyer is not going to cut any deals. There will be no plea bargaining. There will be no efficiency. Therefore, the greatest single efficiency gain would have been what the Prime Minister promised us would happen, which is that mandatory minimum sentences, the way the Conservatives did it, would be eliminated. That was the promise that Canadians received over and over again, only to be completely thrown out in this bill.

It is a gigantic reform initiative. To be fair, it is all pertaining to criminal law but is a gigantic effort with this gigantic problem completely ignored. It is not a problem that I alone identify as an obstacle to efficiency gains and to addressing the crisis that Jordan represents, of people walking free from very serious crimes because we cannot get a trial in a reasonable amount of time. For reasons that escape me, the Liberals completely ignored that and did a number of other things, some of which are commendable but do not do what the objective of the bill was to be, which was to address the issue of inefficiency. That is the problem that the Criminal Lawyers' Association pointed out.

The courts have been reduced to simply being, as some people call them, slot machines of justice. They have no discretion at all. If the facts are made out, the penalty is there. It is push a button. Some

judges have complained to me privately that they feel like they are simply automatons. That is not what judges historically have done. The Conservatives rendered them in this position that is invidious and, frankly, embarrassing to many judges. What they thought they had the power to do, which was to render an appropriate sentence to fit the crime, was thrown out the window when mandatory minimums were imposed on so many of the sentences in the Criminal Code.

We also have a crisis in Canada with the overrepresentation of indigenous women in particular. To his credit, the Minister of Justice referred to this problem. We all are aware of it. It is another national disgrace. Jonathan Rudin testified to the justice committee. He is a very memorable witness. He is a lawyer with the Aboriginal Legal Services in Toronto. He highlighted the government's inaction with regard to abolishing mandatory minimum sentences and its particular effect on indigenous women. Here is what he said:

[w]e have to look at the fact that there are still mandatory minimum sentences that take away from judges the ability to sentence indigenous women the way [judges] would like [them] to be sentenced. There are still provisions that restrict judges from using conditional sentences, which can keep women out of prison.

The first thing he urged the committee to recommend was to bring into legislation that judges have sentencing discretion, which the Liberals promised to do and did not.

I suspect the problem is much worse now, but in 2015 the proportion of indigenous adults in custody relative to their percentage of the population was eight times higher for indigenous men and a staggering 12 times higher for indigenous women. Any measure that could address this problem head-on has to be looked at seriously. The government's failure to address what the mandate letter from the Prime Minister told us it would do is a serious missed opportunity.

I would like to turn to preliminary inquiries, which the minister also referred to and was the subject of some of the reform proposals that the Senate brought forward. The Senate legal and constitutional affairs committee passed an amendment to Bill C-75 that would bring back the option for preliminary inquiries for hundreds of criminal offences. Since Bill C-75 was first introduced in the House, the NDP has been advocating that preliminary hearings be retained in criminal proceedings. The Senate is attempting to reverse the government's move to eliminate preliminary inquiries for all offences, except for offences carrying a sentence of life imprisonment.

Senator Pierre Dalphond, a former judge, passed an amendment to bring back the option of preliminary inquiries for most indictable offences, as long as the judge ensures that the impact on complainants is mitigated.

● (2315)

The Liberals argue that this will cost court time, but we heard at the justice committee over and over again testimony that, if we got rid of preliminary inquiries, time saving would actually be marginal and the potential for miscarriage of justice would be great.

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While the government has accepted many of the Senate amendments, it is using its motion to continue to severely limit the use of preliminary hearings. We have opposed this measure since Bill C-75 was brought to the House, and our stance, I am confident, remains the correct one.

The Liberals at the House justice committee voted to allow preliminary inquiries only when the maximum sentence is life imprisonment. The other place amended this provision to allow far more judicial discretion, increasing the number of offences that could have a preliminary inquiry from 70 to 463. The minister pointed out that they tried to find some middle ground on this issue.

Overwhelmingly, we heard from witnesses at the justice committee that restricting the use of preliminary inquiries will not address court delays sufficiently and will sacrifice or could sacrifice the rights of the accused. For example, Ottawa criminal defence lawyer Michael Spratt said at the committee that preliminary inquiries occupy a very small percentage of court time but “deliver huge savings to the system. Preliminary inquiries deliver these efficiencies in a number of different ways.” They focus issues for trial, reducing trial length; they identify evidentiary or legal problems in a case at an early stage so the parties can ensure that these problems don't arise during the trial; and they can facilitate the resolution of charges.

He was not alone. Time does not allow me to list all the people who agreed with Mr. Spratt, but they include the Canadian Bar Association; the Criminal Lawyers' Association; the Alberta Crown Attorneys' Association, the prosecution side; various defence lawyers, such as Sarah Leamon, a criminal lawyer; Professor Lisa Silver of the University of Calgary, and on and on, yet the government did not want to go there. I cannot, for the life of me, understand why.

There is also a huge possibility that with taking preliminary inquiries away, there could be a risk that people will be wrongfully convicted. That is what Bill Trudell, the chair of the Canadian Council of Criminal Defence Lawyers, said. The government says we do not need them because we now have what are called Stinchcombe disclosure provisions, Stinchcombe being a famous case requiring the Crown to provide all the evidence available to the defence witnesses. The government says that, as a result, we do not need preliminary inquiries. That certainly is not what these people have said, and on a risk-benefit analysis they think it is just not right. The possibility of a wrongful conviction seems to be something we should all be worried about.

I know that time is running out quickly, but I said I would comment on some of the positive things in the bill, and I would like to do so.

First, there is the elimination of what are called “zombie” provisions of the Criminal Code, which criminalize things that are no longer illegal. These provisions have been found to be unconstitutional and have no place in the Criminal Code.

The bill would restore the discretion of judges to impose fewer victim fine surcharges or not impose them at all. I commend the government for that step as well.

I said in my question for the Minister of Justice earlier that I commend the government for broadening the definition of intimate partner violence. That is a good step. Creating an alternative process for dealing with breaches of bail is another good step. Codifying the so-called ladder principle, which requires that the least onerous form of release be imposed, is a good thing as well.

I agree with the government, and I confess not everybody does, that abolishing peremptory challenges is a positive step. Also, the routine police evidence provision has been amended for the good.

For the LGBTQ2+ community, the vagrancy and bawdy house provisions that were often used in the past to criminalize gay men have been rightly repealed. I am proud of the role that I played at the justice committee in moving those amendments, and I commend the government for finally repealing these discriminatory provisions.

• (2320)

I wish to be on record as saying that there is much in this bill that is commendable. It is the fact of the missed opportunity that is so disturbing.

I still have concerns about the many hybrid offences created in Bill C-75, because contrary to what the hon. Conservative member for Sarnia—Lambton said earlier, all this does is to push them down to the already overburdened criminal courts at the provincial level. The more hybrid offences, which proceed by way of summary rather than indictment, go to the provincial courts, where 95% of all criminal matters already take place. I have talked to people in my province of British Columbia who are very concerned about the impact of this on the administration of justice in that province. Jordan is perhaps not as much of a problem in the superior courts, but is a bigger problem in the provincial courts. Surely, that was not the intent.

I know that I have little time left, but I want to complete the point I made earlier about Madam Justice Marion Buller, the chief commissioner for the National Inquiry into Missing and Murdered Indigenous Women and Girls. She had the opportunity to go to the Senate committee with her report. A number of suggestions were made for reform in the other place and are now in the amendments before this House. I am very happy that that has happened. However, there are still serious problems with some of the legacies of residential schools and the sixties scoop that still need to be addressed.

I believe my time is almost at an end, so let me just say this. I wish we could support this bill. There is much in it that is worthwhile, but the failure to do what the Prime Minister told us they would do, deal with the mandatory minimums, and the inability to address the preliminary inquiries in a more manageable way, are the reasons we must respectfully oppose this bill.

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• (2325)

Mr. Arif Virani (Parliamentary Secretary to the Minister of Justice and Attorney General of Canada and to the Minister of Democratic Institutions, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, I want to start by saying to the member for Victoria how refreshing it is to have him contribute to this evening's debate, especially hot on the heels of the contribution from the Conservative member who preceded him. His erudite analysis is a welcome contribution, and I will freely admit to him that we miss those kinds of interventions at the justice committee. I will just leave it at that.

I would agree wholeheartedly with the statement he has made about judges needing to use their discretion and, importantly, their own life experience in terms of informing their judicial decision-making function. That is why we have not only appointed over 200 judges, but sought to appoint a diverse group of judges.

I am glad that the member mentioned, at the tail end of his speech, the issue about the overrepresentation and some of the features of this bill that he agrees with. The things that he mentioned are changing the principles of restraint on bail, changing the way we select jurors, but also the administration of justice offences, which are important, because we are trying to reduce the over-criminalization of particular groups, including indigenous people.

The question I would ask him is in respect to indigenous women. In terms of his experience as a parliamentarian, which is longer than mine, is it encouraging for him to see, in such rapid succession, the tabling of the report on MMIW and, hot on the heels of those calls to justice, the head of that inquiry appearing before the Senate, incorporating calls to justice that then found their way into Senate amendments that we are agreeing to, and also the fact that 13 of the 14 amendments are being agreed to? Is that the path forward to not only reconciliation, but addressing the important issue of gender-based violence, particularly against women who are indigenous?

Mr. Murray Rankin: Mr. Speaker, I would like to thank the parliamentary secretary for his thoughtful question.

I agree with him that we have to find a better way to get more discretion to judges. Again, that was the thrust of my comments about mandatory minimums. It is sad that we do not have the opportunity for judges to look at aboriginal offenders as people rather than simply checking a box, saying that this is the penalty for that offence and that is the end of the story.

However, I do agree with the parliamentary secretary that it is refreshing and positive that Judge Buller was able to talk to the Senate. We did not have that opportunity at the justice committee. To have the Senate instantly put into this bill some of the insights that the commissioner generated, I think is very positive. Whether they will go as far as we would like in dealing with the outrageous overrepresentation of indigenous women in our prisons, I do not think so, but it certainly is a positive step.

Hon. Alice Wong (Richmond Centre, CPC): Mr. Speaker, I thank my colleague for his input and for analyzing the bill that is under debate right now into the late evening, and pretty soon to be early morning.

Elder abuse is on the rise. Seniors are being physically, mentally and sexually abused. Could the member comment on how this bill

could help to deter those criminals, as well as how it could protect our vulnerable seniors?

• (2330)

Mr. Murray Rankin: Mr. Speaker, I acknowledge the member for Richmond Centre's advocacy on behalf of seniors and the elder abuse issue. I am very familiar with it in my riding of Victoria, as members might imagine.

The possibilities of fitting the punishment to the crime have to be taken seriously. It was the Conservatives, sadly, who visited upon Canadians the mandatory minimums, which took away the discretion courts would have to do just that. However, the possibilities in this bill, through better administration of justice reforms, better bail provisions and, interestingly, contrary to the Conservatives' analysis, allowing more hybrid offences to go to the provincial court on summary conviction would encourage more prosecutors to go forward with cases. They might have been hesitant in the past to do that because they were serious indictable assaults and the like and now perhaps they would be more willing to do so when they are preceded by a summary conviction. That can be a positive step in the right direction as well.

Mr. Daniel Blaikie (Elmwood—Transcona, NDP): Mr. Speaker, I thank my colleague from Victoria for bringing us back to the original intention of the bill, which was to address the consequences of the Jordan decision and, particularly, the very serious problem of people committing serious crimes getting off scot-free because they are not getting to trial in a timely manner. My colleague did a good job of elucidating how the mandatory minimum sentence regime contributed to those delays, the problems they represent and the fact that it is not represented in the bill.

Near the end of his remarks, my colleague also made mention of how it is the case that the hybridization of certain offences may well end up meaning that we download the delays that currently are in Federal Court to provincial courts. It seems to me that is an important aspect to consider. Some people will recall a different kind of problem in the 1990s, when the federal government balanced its budget by offloading the financial issues on the provision of health services to provinces. I am concerned about the possibility of a similar problem, where the federal government is seeking to claim a victory on an important issue by passing the problem down to provinces, seeing those same problems recur, but in a different place, and the federal government saying it is not its responsibility and it did its job, even though it was really just a downloading.

The member did not have time in his remarks to elaborate on that and I am wondering if he could do that now.

Standing Order 57

Mr. Murray Rankin: Mr. Speaker, when the government speaks to this, it claims it has had conversations at federal, provincial and territorial meetings with their counterparts in the provinces and territories. The people I talked to were very worried about the downloading. The claim is that is not an issue, but I cannot see why it would not be when so many of these offences are being hybridized and then, of course, will be dealt with in provincial courts.

The problem is that not only are 95% of criminal cases in provincial courts, but the people are often unrepresented, whom the courts bend over backward to help. They have mental health issues frequently and are involved in the drug world and that is what clogs the courts. We are not doing much about that and there is a crisis in legal aid. Everyone knows we do not fund legal aid enough, the federal or provincial governments, so there are unrepresented litigants who are themselves taking a great deal of time.

Thankfully, there are some reforms in places like British Columbia drug courts and the like that deal with these things in a much more focused way, which hopefully will make a difference, but the problem of downloading has to be taken seriously. I just hope at the next federal-provincial-territorial meetings we can address this issue more specifically.

Mr. Colin Fraser (West Nova, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, I too would like to thank my friend from Victoria for his contributions to the justice committee and all of the work he does in the House. He ably advances arguments that make a lot of sense.

I want to put to him the issue of downloading to the provinces that he mentioned and was just asked a question on that a moment ago. He is right, there has been considerable discussion between the provinces and territories on this issue of hybridizing. In fact, the provinces and territories wanted this hybridization to come into effect. They have certainly had many conversations with the Minister of Justice and other stakeholders who consulted on this.

When we talk about downloading to the provincial courts and the fact that the vast majority of cases proceed through provincial courts, the reforms made in this bill with respect to the administration of justice offences, bail reform and other measures would help alleviate some of the clogging of the provincial courts so that we can deal with the matters on a more expeditious basis.

• (2335)

Mr. Murray Rankin: Mr. Speaker, I would like to thank my friend for West Nova, who has been an excellent member of the justice committee and with whom I have enjoyed working a great deal.

I have been told more than once that hybridization was sought by the provinces. That might be the old adage of be careful what you wish for, because while I completely agree that the reforms to administration of justice matters and bail will help a great deal, I think we need to do root and branch work if we are ever going to address the burden the Jordan case will impose on provincial governments. I mentioned, for example, drug courts. I mentioned some of the more positive reforms that are taking place in some jurisdictions, British Columbia and Quebec among them. However, unless we do that, it is just impossible for me to understand, when we add all the additional offences that will be dealt with at the

provincial court level, how this additional burden will not clog the system.

I would be interested to know what the provincial ministers with whom the member has been speaking have to say, because those with whom I have spoken are very concerned.

BILL C-75—NOTICE OF TIME ALLOCATION MOTION

Hon. Bardish Chagger (Leader of the Government in the House of Commons, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, I would like to advise that an agreement could not be reached under the provisions of Standing Order 78(1) or 78(2) with respect to the consideration of the motion in relation to the amendments made by the Senate to Bill C-75, An Act to amend the Criminal Code, the Youth Criminal Justice Act and other Acts and to make consequential amendments to other Acts.

Under the provisions of Standing Order 78(3), I give notice that a minister of the Crown will propose at the next sitting a motion to allot a specific number of days or hours for the consideration and disposal of proceedings of the bill.

* * *

OIL TANKER MORATORIUM ACT

BILL C-48—NOTICE OF TIME ALLOCATION MOTION

Hon. Bardish Chagger (Leader of the Government in the House of Commons, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, I would like to advise that an agreement could not be reached under the provisions of Standing Order 78(1) or 78(2) with respect to the consideration of the motion in relation to the amendments made by the Senate to Bill C-48, An Act respecting the regulation of vessels that transport crude oil or persistent oil to or from ports or marine installations located along British Columbia's north coast.

Under the provisions of Standing Order 78(3), I give notice that a minister of the Crown will propose at the next sitting a motion to allot a specific number of days or hours for the consideration and disposal of proceedings of the bill.

[*Translation*]

BILL C-48—NOTICE OF CLOSURE MOTION

Hon. Bardish Chagger (Leader of the Government in the House of Commons, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, I wish to give notice that with respect to consideration of the Senate amendments to Bill C-48, An Act respecting the regulation of vessels that transport crude oil or persistent oil to or from ports or marine installations located along British Columbia's north coast, at the next sitting of the House a minister of the Crown shall move, pursuant to Standing Order 57, that the debate be not further adjourned.

*Government Orders***CRIMINAL CODE**

BILL C-75—NOTICE OF CLOSURE MOTION

Hon. Bardish Chagger (Leader of the Government in the House of Commons, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, I wish to give notice that, with respect to the consideration of the Senate amendments to Bill C-75, an act to amend the Criminal Code, the Youth Criminal Justice Act and other acts and to make consequential amendments to other acts, at the next sitting of the House a minister of the Crown shall move, pursuant to Standing Order 57, that the debate be not further adjourned.

[*English*]

If there is a desire to find a better way forward, I look forward to those opportunities, but until then, it is with regret that I provide this notice.

MOTION IN RELATION TO SENATE AMENDMENTS

The House resumed consideration of the motion in relation to the amendments made by the Senate to Bill C-75, An Act to amend the Criminal Code, the Youth Criminal Justice Act and other Acts and to make consequential amendments to other Acts

Mr. Colin Fraser (West Nova, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, I am pleased to join the debate considering the Senate amendments to Bill C-75, an act to amend the Criminal Code, the Youth Criminal Justice Act and other acts and to make consequential amendments to other acts.

Bill C-75 represents the government's legislative response to reduce delays, modernize the criminal justice system and facilitate the administration of justice by the provinces and territories.

The Senate proposed amendments to the bail, reclassification of offences, victim surcharge and preliminary inquiries provisions of the bill.

I would like to focus my remarks tonight on some of the amendments relating to the reclassification of offences, or hybridization as it is sometimes called.

The reclassification amendments are a key part of the legislative reforms identified by federal, provincial and territorial ministers of justice to reduce delays in the criminal justice system. They would also modernize and streamline the scheme for classifying offences in the Criminal Code.

There are two types of offences in the Criminal Code, those that proceed by summary conviction or by indictment. Some offences can be either. Summary conviction offences deal with less serious conduct, for example, causing a disturbance or trespassing at night, for which the current maximum penalty is normally up to six months imprisonment and/or a \$5,000 fine. Indictable offences tend to be for more serious actions, for example, aggravated assault, robbery or murder for which maximum penalties range from two years to life imprisonment.

I failed to inform you, Mr. Speaker, that I will be splitting my time with the member for Mount Royal.

A hybrid offence allows the Crown to choose whether to proceed by indictment or summary conviction, recognizing that the severity of the conduct covered by the offence can vary greatly depending on

the circumstances, for example, uttering threats, assault, dangerous operation of a motor vehicle.

Bill C-75 would hybridize 118 straight indictable offences that currently would be punishable by maximum penalties of two, five and 10 years imprisonment. It would also amend the Criminal Code to increase the maximum penalty for most criminal offences with a summary conviction penalty to two years less a day. The maximum penalties are being increased for summary conviction offences. The bill would also increase the current limitation period for all summary conviction offences from six to 12 months.

Indictable offences are often heard in Superior Court and generally take longer to process because of their associated procedural requirements, such as jury trials and preliminary inquiries, which can significantly lengthen the time it takes to complete a case. The reason for the availability of more procedural safeguards for indictable offences is that they carry the risk of much lengthier periods of incarceration.

However, there continues to be many straight indictable offences for which, depending on the circumstances, sentences in the summary conviction range are often appropriate and are in fact being imposed.

Cases involving straight indictable offences where the Crown is seeking sentences in the summary conviction range add unnecessary strain to Superior Courts because though they end up with a summary range sentence, they have been eligible for and have used complicated and time consuming processes to get there.

When an offence is hybrid, the prosecutor can elect to have the case heard either by summary conviction or indictment, based on the severity of the case, the circumstances of the offender and the best resources that fit that case. For this reason, provinces and territories have asked for many more straight indictable offences to be hybridized.

More cases being heard in provincial court would leave Superior Courts with more resources to consider more serious cases, thus speeding up the processing times.

Also, other proposed reforms in Bill C-75, such as restricting the availability of preliminary inquiries to only the most serious offences, will offset any additional workload on provincial courts that might result.

These proposals are not about downloading to the provinces and territories, as some have suggested. They are about providing provinces and territories with the additional flexibility they have asked for so Crown attorneys can choose the process that best aligns with the facts and circumstances of each case.

Some have claimed that changing the classification of offences will change how seriously these crimes will be taken by the system. This is simply not true.

Government Orders

The best indicia of the seriousness of an offence is its maximum available penalty. The hybridization amendments would not change any of the maximum penalties on indictment.

• (2340)

It is already a feature of our criminal justice system that prosecutors assess the facts of the case and the circumstances of the offender to determine which type of sentence to seek from the court. They can already ask for fines and low or no jail time for most of the indictable offences that Bill C-75 proposes to hybridize. As I have already explained, they often avail themselves of summary range sentences.

I have full faith in our prosecutors to continue to seek appropriate sentences. At the end of the day, it will be the judge who decides. Nothing in Bill C-75 proposes to lower the sentences that would be imposed under the law as it is now. These reforms will not change the fundamental principles of sentencing outlined in section 718 of the Criminal Code, which requires proportionality.

The Senate made three types of amendments to address concerns about possible unintended consequences of the reclassification proposals. One of these further amended section 802.1, to also allow agent representation as authorized by the law of the province. However, this is problematic because we do not have any information about how this amendment would operate with existing provincial and territorial laws. As a result, I am not comfortable supporting this amendment.

I am satisfied that the amendment this chamber supported last December to address this issue gives the provinces and territories sufficient flexibility to quickly address any consequences of the reclassification scheme on agents.

I am pleased to be able to support the other two amendments that the Senate made to the reclassification provisions. These are technical and would amount to maintaining the status quo for the collection of DNA samples of convicted offenders and of fingerprints of accused persons. Discretionary DNA orders are currently available for Criminal Code offences with maximum penalties of five years or more when the Crown proceeds by indictment.

Police have expressed concerns that fewer DNA samples will be collected once the reclassification amendments of Bill C-75 come into force. Senate amendment 1 will maintain the availability of DNA orders for those five- and 10-year indictable offences that Bill C-75 proposes to hybridize.

A similar amendment was moved when the bill was before the justice committee, however, that proposal had been much broader and would have expanded the current availability of DNA orders. Senate amendments 11, 13 and 14 respond to police concerns that the hybridization in Bill C-75 will result in police being able to collect fewer fingerprints.

These amendments change the Identification of Criminals Act, to clarify that fingerprints can be taken for an accused who has been charged with a hybrid offence, even where the Crown has elected to proceed by summary conviction. As we can see, Bill C-75 includes many significant tools to reduce delays in the criminal justice system

and to better equip its stakeholders and participants to meet the Jordan time frame.

I support the majority of the Senate amendments and I urge my colleagues to support the government's proposed approach to ensure that this much needed bill is passed before the summer recess.

• (2345)

Mr. David Anderson (Cypress Hills—Grasslands, CPC): Mr. Speaker, I am not sure I will be getting up again in Parliament. We are coming to the end of this time and I will not be back in the fall, so I want to take a moment to recognize the staff members who spend so much of their time trying to get us ready so that we can come into the House and do our job. I want to particularly acknowledge my present staff, Anita Hindley, Anna-Marie Young, Joycelin Mosey and Tristan McLaughlin, for the work that they do.

In the House we often find ourselves at odds in terms of perspectives on issues and certainly that has been the case with the bill. Liberals have failed in so many areas in terms of justice bills. I think of Bill C-45, when they were told they were going to end up in court over their drunk driving provisions. That certainly is happening.

This bill lessens sentences for dozens of different offences in spite of what the Liberals are saying tonight. I am wondering if the member opposite could tell us why all of their conversation about justice issues is focused basically on giving criminals a break and so little of it is focused on protecting the public and victims of those crimes.

Mr. Colin Fraser: Mr. Speaker, although I must reject the premise of the question, I can say a couple of things.

The member mentioned Bill C-45, and Bill C-46 being the companion piece, dealing with impaired driving. Earlier today, a Conservative member talked about MADD Canada. In fact, it supported Bill C-46 and the impaired driving regime that was put in place as a result of Bill C-45 coming into force. Giving police officers the tools they need to keep our roads safe was important. That is why MADD Canada supported this government's proposal in Bill C-46.

As it relates to other initiatives dealing with the criminal justice system, there is a fundamental misunderstanding on the part of those who suggest that, as I dealt with in my speech, giving the Crown more flexibility in determining which procedure to use somehow minimizes the impact of the penalties that would be imposed by the courts. That is simply not true. It is a fundamental misunderstanding of the criminal justice system. I invite my friend to read section 718 of the Criminal Code, which clearly identifies the principles of sentencing, based on the circumstances of the offence and of the offender.

Government Orders

• (2350)

Mr. Arif Virani (Parliamentary Secretary to the Minister of Justice and Attorney General of Canada and to the Minister of Democratic Institutions, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, I want to compliment the member for West Nova for his work in contributing today and his contributions at the justice committee, which we will significantly miss as he goes back to practice in the fall. However, I want to draw on that legal experience and ask the member two questions that relate to the same feature. He talked about hybridization in his speech. I want to know if the member for West Nova could elaborate on the extent of hybridization currently under the Criminal Code. Also, could he elaborate a bit about the fact that he articulated support at committee for ensuring that, as an exception, terrorism and genocide would remain as straight indictable offences? What qualitatively distinguishes those two types of offences in this discussion?

Mr. Colin Fraser: Mr. Speaker, when we are talking about the category of offences, there are already many hybrid offences in the Criminal Code, including things that can be done in various circumstances, from the less serious up to the most serious. We are talking about offences such as sexual assault. That does not impact at all on the sentencing. They are still dealt with in the same way, with the same principles of sentencing, whether or not the Crown proceeds by indictment or summary conviction. The Crown attorneys use this every day. We trust them to make those decisions based on the circumstances of the offence and of the offender.

With respect to the terrorism-related offences and those advocating genocide, which initially were contemplated to possibly be hybridized, at committee, and after hearing from community groups and organizations that could be impacted by this, our committee advanced that those be taken out. They are distinct from the other types of offences that were being hybridized, because they constitute offences against a community. It was felt that it was extremely unlikely that they would ever proceed by way of summary indictment in any event, so they were removed.

The Deputy Speaker: Before we go to resuming debate and the hon. member for Mount Royal, I will let him know that we do not have quite enough time for his 10 minutes, but we probably have around eight minutes. Of course, he will have his remaining time when the House next gets back to debate on the question.

The hon. member for Mount Royal.

Mr. Anthony Housefather (Mount Royal, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, it is an honour and a pleasure to follow the remarks from the hon. member for Victoria and the hon. member for West Nova, both of whom have been outstanding members of the justice committee and will be missed in this place for their wisdom, sincerity, honesty and integrity. I will very much miss both of my colleagues.

I am pleased to rise to talk about the amendments adopted by the Senate at third reading on June 13, 2019.

First and foremost, I would like to thank all members of the other place for their thoughtful consideration of Bill C-75. In particular, I want to thank the Senate Standing Committee on Legal and Constitutional Affairs for its diligent and comprehensive examination of the bill.

[Translation]

This bill proposes major reforms to reduce delays by modernizing the criminal justice system and enhancing the effectiveness and efficiency of procedures, while ensuring the safety of Canadians and seeking to reduce the overrepresentation of indigenous people in the system.

The provinces and territories, along with many members and many stakeholders in the criminal justice system, are looking forward to the enactment of this legislation.

[English]

Bill C-75 introduced reforms in seven key areas: modernizing and streamlining bail; enhancing the existing approach to administration of justice offences, including for youth; restricting the availability of preliminary inquiries to offences with penalties of life imprisonment; reclassifying offences; strengthening judicial case management; improving the jury selection process; and implementing other additional efficiencies.

The other place has proposed amendments to the bill related to bail, reclassification of offences, the victim surcharge and preliminary inquiries.

Although the focus of my remarks will be on the other place's amendments related to the preliminary inquiry provisions of the bill, I would like to preface these by highlighting a few other areas that, cumulatively, will improve efficiencies and reduce delays.

• (2355)

[Translation]

Bill C-75 includes widely supported changes to bail provisions. They seek to enact a principle of restraint for the police and the courts to ensure that the earliest possible release of the accused is favoured over detention, while providing additional guidance to the police on how to impose the appropriate conditions.

The bill would improve the approach used for administration of justice offences, such as breach of bail conditions.

[English]

These offences represent a significant volume of Canadian criminal court processing. The creation of a judicial referral hearing would result in fewer charges for these offences being laid, given that the hearing would serve as an alternative for bail breaches and failures to attend court in cases where there has been no physical, emotional or financial harm to a victim.

I would now like to turn to the amendments proposed by the other place to the preliminary inquiry reforms in Bill C-75.

Government Orders

As introduced, the bill would have restricted the availability of preliminary inquiries to adults accused of the 70 offences in the Criminal Code for which they could be liable to life imprisonment. The government's objective has been clear from the beginning on this matter: to reduce the number of preliminary inquiries held in Canada to create efficiencies and limit the impact on those who would have to testify twice. In the jurisdictions that hold the majority of these hearings, the improved efficiencies in the criminal justice process could be significant.

Our committee, the House of Commons Standing Committee on Justice and Human Rights, and the Senate Standing Committee on Legal and Constitutional Affairs heard from many stakeholders from the legal community, including the defence bar and Crown attorney associations, such as the Canadian Bar Association and the Barreau du Québec, that opposed such a significant restriction on the availability of preliminary inquiries, arguing that they are vital in providing important evidence to the accused of the case against them.

As a result of these concerns, the committee in the other place moved an amendment that would expand the availability of preliminary inquiries, on a discretionary basis, to all other indictable offences, an additional 393 offences, in two situations. The first would be where one or both parties requested one and a justice was satisfied that appropriate measures were taken to mitigate the impact on victims. The second situation would be where only one party requested a preliminary inquiry, a justice was satisfied that it was in the best interest of the administration of justice that one be held and appropriate measures were taken to mitigate the impact on victims.

As proposed, the amendment would add a step in the criminal justice process to justify holding a preliminary inquiry. It could generate uncertainty for the parties as to whether a preliminary inquiry would be held and would likely result in litigation on the interpretation of the new complex criteria, ultimately leading to additional delays.

Even witnesses who came before our committee who believed that the proposals contained in Bill C-75 were too restrictive agreed that they could add to delays. For example, in her testimony before the Standing Committee on Justice and Human Rights, one of our most incredible witnesses, lawyer Sarah Leamon, from British Columbia, stated:

Now, we know that when a person does decide to go ahead with a preliminary inquiry, the matter will take significantly longer to conclude and is likely to use more judicial resources. That is supported by statistics from Statistics Canada, as well as The Canadian Bar Association....

Given that the amendment was driven by concerns, which were also echoed by members across party lines in this chamber, that the availability of preliminary inquiries was being too severely curtailed by Bill C-75, and I must note that there were many members of our committee who wanted to try to find a way to amend the bill to expand the scope of preliminary inquiries, I am very pleased that the Senate proposed something. The government, in response, is offering a constructive alternative approach. This would involve making preliminary inquiries available for offences carrying a maximum penalty of 14 years or more of imprisonment.

Although this would expand the availability of preliminary inquiries to an additional 86 offences, it would be consistent with the objective of Bill C-75 as introduced as well as with the 2017 federal-provincial consensus to restrict them to offences carrying the most serious terms of imprisonment. This approach would be palatable to jurisdictions that would have further restricted their availability to the most serious offences in the Criminal Code, such as murder and high treason. It would also provide certainty as to which offences would be eligible for a preliminary inquiry and would avoid the risk of litigation inherent in the Senate amendment.

This proposal strikes an artful compromise and a good balance, and I strongly support it.

[*Translation*]

Overall, this important bill responds to the systemic problem of delays in the criminal justice system, while introducing innovative measures for driving a shift in culture, as noted by the Supreme Court in Jordan.

● (2400)

[*English*]

I ask all my colleagues to support this very good bill and the constructive approach of the government and the Minister of Justice, whom I strongly support, to the amendments from the Senate.

The Deputy Speaker: The hon. member for Mount Royal will have two minutes remaining for his remarks when the House next gets back to debate on the question, and the usual five minutes for questions and comments following that.

It being 12 a.m., pursuant to an order made on Tuesday, May 28, the House stands adjourned until later this day at 10 a.m pursuant to Standing Order 24(1).

(The House adjourned at 12 a.m.)

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