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Speaker: The Honourable Anthony Rota



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HOUSE OF COMMONS

Wednesday, February 8, 2023

The House met at 2 p.m.

Prayer

• (1400)

[*English*]

The Speaker: The member for Sarnia—Lambton will lead us in the singing of the national anthem.

[*Members sang the national anthem*]

STATEMENTS BY MEMBERS

[*English*]

UKRAINIAN REFUGEES IN KITCHENER—CONESTOGA

Mr. Tim Louis (Kitchener—Conestoga, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, the resilience and courage of the Ukrainians have inspired the world. Canada is unwavering in its support for Ukraine and the democratic values that our countries share.

The capacity of Canadians to open their hearts and their homes is truly inspiring. We have seen an exceptional amount of goodwill coming from our community in Kitchener—Conestoga. I am proud of the many hosts who offer spare rooms and spaces to those in need.

Today, I want to acknowledge the temporary residence that has opened its doors for Ukrainian refugees coming to Woolwich Township. My friends Karen and Bob Martin have converted Hillside Residence, their former retirement residence in Maryhill, to open their doors to Ukrainian refugees, providing temporary housing for 22 Ukrainians. I also want to commend the organization Waterloo Region Grassroots Response, which has been instrumental in helping with the settlements. This is now the second residence in Woolwich to open its doors to Ukrainian refugees, the first being the former Jakobstettel Inn in St. Jacobs.

I thank Karen and Bob Martin and I thank Waterloo Region Grassroots Response for offering a place to live and for making a positive difference in our community.

HOSPICE DUFFERIN

Mr. Kyle Seeback (Dufferin—Caledon, CPC): Mr. Speaker, Hospice Dufferin is partnering with eight local restaurants and cafés during February to host the Hot Chocolate Festival. The purpose of this is to help support Hospice Dufferin, which is an amazing organization in my riding of Dufferin—Caledon.

Community support is absolutely critical, because Hospice Dufferin gets only about 60% of its funding from the government. It has to make up the rest in the community in order to offer the services to the people of Dufferin.

For all of February, eight local restaurants and cafés are going to have their own signature drink to support the Hot Chocolate Festival and Hospice Dufferin, with \$1 from each drink going to Hospice Dufferin. People can find out where they can get their special drink at hospicedufferin.com.

Come on, Dufferin—Caledon, let us go buy those drinks and support Hospice Dufferin.

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COPTIC CHURCHES REPRESENTATIVES

Mr. Paul Chiang (Markham—Unionville, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, today I am proud to rise in the House to welcome members of the Coptic churches from the great city of Markham to our nation's capital, and to thank them for their hard work and community services in my riding of Markham—Unionville.

I would like to specifically acknowledge His Grace Bishop Boulos, His Grace Bishop Archilides and Father Pishoy, and thank them for their service to the less fortunate and their support of local charities, as well as their efforts to bring the community together. It is an example for all of us. On behalf of the constituents of Markham—Unionville and the entire country, I would like to express my deepest appreciation for all of the work that they do. Their work serves as a reminder of the importance of serving others and of the powers of community to make a positive impact on the world.

I thank them for being with us today. May their visit to our capital city be a memorable one, and may their journey be filled with joy, peace and hope.

Statements by Members

● (1405)

*[Translation]***TRAGEDY AT LAVAL DAY CARE**

Mr. Yves-François Blanchet (Beloeil—Chambly, BQ): Mr. Speaker, today, when Quebec parents heard what had happened in Laval, their hearts stopped. Children are what we, as mothers and fathers, but also as a society, hold most dear.

We now know that a bus drove into a day care, taking the lives of two children and injuring six others. We know that the driver has been arrested, but now is not the time to speculate. Whatever the explanation may be, now is the time to express our sympathy and tell the parents, the people of Laval, but also all the children who will be affected by this tragedy, to stay strong.

On behalf of the Bloc Québécois, I offer my deepest condolences to the parents of the victims. We sincerely hope that there will be good news for the injured children and their families. Our hearts go out to all the parents, children and all the staff at the Garderie éducative Ste-Rose. We thank the first responders, the medical staff and all those who are mobilizing in support of the little ones.

Today, the Quebec nation is in mourning, and our hearts go out to the people of Laval.

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*[English]***BLACK HISTORY MONTH**

Mrs. Marie-France Lalonde (Orléans, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, February is internationally known and recognized as Black History Month. It gives us an opportunity to recognize the remarkable contributions of Black Canadians to the community of Orléans and to all of Canada.

[Translation]

This year's theme, "Ours to tell", invites us to engage in open dialogue and commit to learning more about the stories Black communities in Canada have to tell about their triumphs and experiences.

[English]

Whether it is in academia, health, sciences, business, sports or the arts, Black Canadians have made and continue to make an important impact on communities across our country.

[Translation]

I thank the entire Black community for its contributions, which helped to build a stronger Canada. I commend the Black community for its commitment and leadership, which contribute to the cultural mosaic that shapes our country and is the envy of many.

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*[English]***NORTHERN ONTARIO CURLING CHAMPIONSHIP**

Mr. Eric Melillo (Kenora, CPC): Mr. Speaker, just over a week ago, the City of Kenora played host to the top curlers from across northern Ontario for the regional playdowns. This is always an incredible opportunity to showcase the great talent we have across the

north, and I know that Kenora was honoured to once again host this important event.

I want to thank and congratulate all of the volunteers and organizers who put together a great week and a wonderful tournament. I also want to recognize the local athletes we had competing and representing the Kenora riding so well. We had Team Meadows from the Kenora Curling Club, as well as Team Szajewski representing Keewatin.

Of course, I must congratulate Team McCarville out of Thunder Bay and Team Horgan from Sudbury on their victories and wish them the best of luck as they represent northern Ontario proudly at the Scotties and the Brier respectively. We will all be cheering them on.

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WOMEN AND GIRLS IN SCIENCE

Ms. Iqra Khalid (Mississauga—Erin Mills, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, February 11 marks the International Day of Women and Girls in Science. It is a time to recognize the critical place for women and girls in science, technology, engineering and mathematics. It is a time to recognize that when women succeed, including in STEM, we all succeed.

I have had the honour of knowing and supporting some remarkable women in STEM. Zainab Azim, 21 years old, is Canada's youngest future astronaut with major contributions to space exploration. Shifa Hussain, 14 years old, is an ambassador for the Canadian Association for Girls in Science. Knowing and supporting women and girls like Zainab and Shifa is how we ensure that equality of opportunity exists in STEM for everyone.

I am proud to be part of a Liberal government that continues to stand with women, invest in women, and break down barriers so that girls worldwide can contribute to our collective progress.

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YUKON FIRST NATIONS

Mr. Brendan Hanley (Yukon, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, "we will tell you something about our past history; then something about the problems we have today; and finally our thoughts about the future." That is from the introduction to a document entitled "Together Today for our Children Tomorrow". Fifty years ago, Elijah Smith and a delegation of Yukon chiefs went to Ottawa to meet with Prime Minister Pierre Elliott Trudeau and present him with this historic document. The document claimed first nations' right to have their economic, social and cultural needs met through a settlement with Canada. That meeting was the first step in a long journey towards the Umbrella Final Agreement and some of Canada's first modern treaties.

Next week, I will be joining the 50th anniversary of “Together Today for our Children Tomorrow”, and I welcome any member to join me there. As Yukon’s Grand Chief Peter Johnston said, “These celebrations truly honour the journey and the stories of the leaders whose vision and determination have had an unprecedented and immeasurable impact on the lives of Yukon First Nations and Yukoners alike.”

Shāw nithān. Gunalchéesh, and see everyone there.

* * *

● (1410)

THE ECONOMY

Mr. Philip Lawrence (Northumberland—Peterborough South, CPC): Mr. Speaker, after eight years of the Liberal Prime Minister, Canadians can barely afford to feed themselves, with food inflation over 10%.

After eight years of the Liberal Prime Minister, Canadians can barely afford to fill up their gas tanks to go to work because of the punishing impact of the carbon tax.

After eight years of the Prime Minister, Canadians cannot even afford their own homes with mortgage payments and rent doubling.

After eight years of the Liberal Prime Minister, Canadians are struggling just to survive, with inflation at record 40-year highs.

After eight years, Canadians cannot afford the Prime Minister. Canadians need and deserve a prime minister who will put the people first, fight the affordability crisis and give people control of their lives back.

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SKI DAY ON THE HILL

Mr. Adam van Koevorden (Milton, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, yesterday was Ski Day on the Hill. It was perfect timing, as this week is Winter Health and Fitness Week. Cross-country skiers from as far as Salmon Arm, senators, fellow members, and even some Ukrainian newcomers strapped on our cross-country ski gear and raced laps around the west lawn.

I send a big thanks to groomer Dave of the Kichi Sibi trail for setting things up and making sure we had a smooth run. I especially thank my friend Marty Deacon from the other House, and fellow Olympian Sue Holloway. She is actually an Olympian in my two favourite sports: She is a cross-country skier and a medallist in kayaking.

Physical activity is absolutely essential for our physical and mental health, and for the strength of our communities. According to Ella from Nakkertok, whom I tried but failed to keep up to yesterday on my skis, sport helps her deal with stress and teaches her to overcome challenges and set goals.

These young people told me about how their physical and mental health are connected, and that the sense of teamwork and belonging they get is so important. They reminded me that despite it being hard to get up sometimes when it is early or get outside when it is cold in the winter, I have never regretted a bit of exercise.

Statements by Members

Let us listen to the kids, get outside this winter and stay active. Here, in this place, let us remember that quality sport and recreation programs require investments in infrastructure and programming, and that investments in sport and play are investments in our collective health, just as important as investments in health care.

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THE ECONOMY

Mr. Richard Bragdon (Tobique—Mactaquac, CPC): Mr. Speaker, after eight long years of the Liberal government, Canadians are realizing that elections have consequences and that they have walked to the far side of a disappointing decision.

After eight years, Canadians have seen their paycheques dwindle so that even the most basic necessities are out of reach. After eight years, seniors, especially those on fixed incomes, are having to choose between eating and heating. Conservatives would keep the heat on and take the tax off.

After eight years, food prices are at all-time highs, forcing families to make impossible choices. This has led to over 1.5 million Canadians visiting their local food banks in just one month.

After eight years, young people are seeing the dream of home ownership evaporate due to the government's runaway spending, which is causing sky-high inflation and ever-rising interest rates. After eight years, our farmers, transporters and small business owners have all experienced the devastating consequences of soaring input costs.

After eight years, Canadians are desperately needing their hopes restored and wanting back the country they know and love.

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CARBON TAX

Mrs. Laila Goodridge (Fort McMurray—Cold Lake, CPC): Mr. Speaker, the job-killing carbon tax is a tax plan, and after eight years it is making everything more expensive.

After eight years of a Liberal anti-energy agenda, Canadians have been deprived of economic prosperity, and the livelihoods of millions of workers in the energy, manufacturing and transportation sectors are on the unjust transition chopping block.

Statements by Members

After eight years, Canadians are struggling to cope with 40-year highs in inflation, and 1.5 million Canadians visited a food bank in a single month. Heating one's home in the winter is not a luxury, yet after eight years of the Liberals in charge, Canadians are being forced to choose between heating or eating. After eight years, Canadians are out of money and cannot afford to eat, heat or house themselves.

Canada's Conservatives are ready to turn the hurt into hope and help families get ahead, not just get by. We will clean up this disaster and ensure that Canadians can get their heat on by turning the carbon tax off.

* * *

● (1415)

BLACK HISTORY MONTH

Ms. Arielle Kayabaga (London West, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, as we continue to honour the legacies of Black Canadians, "Ours to tell" is the theme encouraging us to look within our own villages to find Black Canadian trailblazers in our ridings and celebrate them.

Many of us know a lot of first, second and third Black Canadians in many fields, but to quote Ben Okri:

There is no exhaustion where there is much
To be hoped for, much to work towards,
And where the dreams and sufferings
Of our ancestors
Have not been realized
Or redeemed.

I know that history is there to be made in the future, and I look forward to the day when we will celebrate the stories of the 20th, 30th, and 50th in their fields.

I welcome and look to our many stakeholders from across the country who are joining us in today's celebration. I thank them for being their ancestors' wildest dreams and for keeping the light in our communities.

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INTERNATIONAL DEVELOPMENT WEEK

Ms. Heather McPherson (Edmonton Strathcona, NDP): Mr. Speaker, I want to take an opportunity to thank Canada's international development sector for its fantastic work, particularly its efforts to build a better world for women and girls.

As we know, women and girls are particularly vulnerable to humanitarian crises, climate change and conflict, and while Canadian organizations continue to play a vital role around the world, the federal government has not lived up to its obligations.

Canada must be ambitious. The government must commit to strategic, predictable and significant increases in funding and remove barriers that prevent Canadian organizations from doing their vitally important work, barriers such as what we are seeing in Afghanistan, where we have no carve-out for humanitarian organizations.

Finally, Canada needs to ensure that we have a strong public foreign policy, a feminist foreign policy that puts women and girls at

the forefront of all of Canada's foreign policy decisions. Canadians are doing their part. It is time for the Canadian government to its.

I wish members a happy International Development Week.

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[*Translation*]

SUPPLY MANAGEMENT

Mr. Yves Perron (Berthier—Maskinongé, BQ): Mr. Speaker, in recent weeks, the Bloc Québécois travelled throughout Quebec to promote its Bill C-282, which seeks to protect supply-managed agricultural sectors by preventing future international agreements from having a negative impact on our farmers' share of the market and the income they earn from all of their hard work.

Supply management is a critical component of our regions' economies and helps feed families in Quebec and Canada. It must be protected.

Again today, many stakeholders from the agricultural community have come to Parliament Hill to show their staunch support for this bill. I want to recognize them and tell them how much I respect them.

I thank them for their work and especially for being here to remind parliamentarians of the importance of supporting this bill, which will help maintain our very effective and resilient agricultural model.

The message is clear. Parliamentarian friends, let us unite and pass Bill C-282 together.

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TRAGEDY AT LAVAL DAY CARE

Mrs. Dominique Vien (Bellechasse—Les Etchemins—Lévis, CPC): Mr. Speaker, this morning in Laval, an incomprehensible and shocking event happened. A bus crashed into a day care.

Over the past few hours we unfortunately received the worst news we could get. Two children are dead and several are seriously injured.

As a mother, I can well imagine the concern, dismay and pain weighing on the hearts of the families affected by this tragedy.

There is nothing more important to us than our children, and what happened this morning is absolutely chilling. We are all in shock.

We also want to thank all the police and emergency services that came to the scene.

Personally, and on behalf of our leader and our political party, I would like to send everyone affected by this terrible tragedy our warmest thoughts and prayers.

[English]

MISSISSAUGA—LAKESHORE

Mr. Charles Sousa (Mississauga—Lakeshore, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, I am honoured to be standing before the House as the newly elected representative of Mississauga—Lakeshore.

Our community has a rich history. We owe a debt of gratitude to the Mississaugas of the Credit First Nation. It is also my home, where my wife, Zenny, and I have raised our three children. We are blessed to be part of a vibrant and active community, engaged in revitalizing our waterfront and enhancing our villages. They are champions in protecting our conservation areas so future generations can thrive. I am humbled by the trust my neighbours have placed in me.

My constituents also want us to promote a prosperous Canada. My family sought freedom and opportunity in Canada years ago, and we are very grateful. Like many new Canadians, it became our duty to give back to ensure that others also reached their full potential. That means working to creating a strong economy that sustains social programs, such as universal health care, and supports businesses, which are the backbone of creating jobs.

Finally, I believe in standing up for the rights and freedoms of all Canadians. We must work together. As my father Antonio says, “There is room for everyone. There is room for everyone to compete and do business, room to learn, and more importantly, room to help each other.”

* * *

• (1420)

[Translation]

TRAGEDY AT LAVAL DAY CARE

The Speaker: Following discussions among representatives of all parties in the House, I understand there is an agreement to observe a moment of silence to acknowledge the tragic event that occurred today in Laval, Quebec.

I would now invite members to rise.

[A moment of silence observed]

ORAL QUESTIONS

[Translation]

PUBLIC SAFETY

Hon. Pierre Poilievre (Leader of the Opposition, CPC): Mr. Speaker, a bus crashed into a day care full of children. Unfortunately, we have learned that two children died and others are injured.

As a father, I can imagine the suffering of the families affected. We offer our support and our prayers to these families.

Can the Prime Minister update us on this tragic incident and tell us what the government will do to support the families and Quebecers?

Oral Questions

Right Hon. Justin Trudeau (Prime Minister, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, as my hon. colleague said, our hearts go out to the families affected by this senseless tragedy.

Nothing can erase the grief and the pain that these families and this community are experiencing. We will be there for them in the coming days, months and years as they endure unimaginable grief.

I also want to thank the first responders and all those who intervened to help and make the situation safe. We will continue to keep them in our thoughts and prayers.

* * *

THE ECONOMY

Hon. Pierre Poilievre (Leader of the Opposition, CPC): Mr. Speaker, after eight years under this Prime Minister, a study by the Bank of Canada has found that it now takes \$1.7 million for someone to retire, to be able to feed themselves for the rest of their life.

After eight years, we have the highest inflation rate in a generation. With mortgage costs going up, with the cost of rent and groceries going up as a result of this Prime Minister's inflationary policies, people can no longer afford to pay their bills.

Will the Prime Minister personally take responsibility for these problems, so we can fix what he broke?

• (1425)

Right Hon. Justin Trudeau (Prime Minister, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, we understand that many people, including seniors, are struggling, but it is not true that we have not been there for the past eight years, on the contrary.

We increased old age security by 10% for seniors aged 75 and over. We increased Canada pension plan benefits. We increased the guaranteed income supplement for single seniors. We made high-speed Internet more affordable for vulnerable seniors. We doubled the GST tax credit, which helped seniors.

We will continue to be there for seniors. We will continue to be there to support them through these difficult times. We know that is how we will get through them together.

[English]

Hon. Pierre Poilievre (Leader of the Opposition, CPC): Mr. Speaker, despite those talking points, after eight years, it now costs \$1.7 million for someone to retire, according to a Bank of Montreal study.

Oral Questions

One now has to be a millionaire to be able to retire in this country. After eight years of this Prime Minister's inflationary deficits and taxes, and after eight years of doubling the cost of home heating with his carbon tax, increasing food prices by burdening our farmers and increasing the cost of everything through a half-trillion dollars of inflationary deficits, why does the Prime Minister not personally take responsibility for what he broke so that we can fix it?

Right Hon. Justin Trudeau (Prime Minister, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, it is ironic that the member opposite speaks about fixing things. When we took office, one of the first things we had to do was reverse the cuts that the member had voted for that would have raised the age of retirement to 67 years old instead of 65.

We continued to step up with increasing GIS by 10% for our most vulnerable single seniors and, in the years following, we have consistently been there for seniors. Conservatives continue to call for more cuts and more austerity, while we have been there to support seniors, and we will continue to be there.

* * *

HOUSING

Hon. Pierre Poilievre (Leader of the Opposition, CPC): Mr. Speaker, what the Prime Minister has done is double the rent to \$2,200 a month as an average in the 10 biggest cities. He has doubled the home heating bills right across the country, and he has doubled the average mortgage payment to well over \$3,000 a month. No wonder nine out of 10 young people who do not own a home believe they never will.

This is after eight years of inflationary policies that have driven up the cost of housing and driven up interest rates to pay for it. Why will the Prime Minister not admit that these things are broken after eight years of his leadership so that we can fix them?

Right Hon. Justin Trudeau (Prime Minister, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, over the past eight years we have stepped up on investing in housing. We have invested in low-income rentals, and we have made sure that seniors have extra supports so they can retire with dignity. The previous Conservative government consistently nickelled and dimed seniors and veterans and refused to support young families. These are the kinds of things we have been working on, and yes, there is more to do. This is why we were so surprised that the Conservative Party stood against extra supports for low-income renters and supporting families to send their kids to dentists when they could not afford it.

These are things we will continue to do.

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PUBLIC SERVICES AND PROCUREMENT

Hon. Pierre Poilievre (Leader of the Opposition, CPC): Mr. Speaker, the Prime Minister said he was drawing the line to ban anyone from pointing out that things are broken after eight years of his leadership. His own Parliamentary Budget Officer has crossed the line, saying, "there is a system that is broken" and "anybody who has recently applied for a passport, Employment Insurance, Old Age Security and the list goes on" probably realizes very well that the "level of service Canadians are getting is not what one

would expect from a world-class public service." There is "room for enhanced leadership".

Will the Prime Minister call to the carpet this rogue parliamentary officer for saying that things are broken?

Right Hon. Justin Trudeau (Prime Minister, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, through a very difficult pandemic, yes, there have been challenges for service delivery. That is why this government has been stepping up. One area we are stepping up in is recognizing that our universal public health care system needs more support. That is why we are moving forward with investments worth \$198 billion in additional money to support provinces and territories in delivering better health care for Canadians.

Whether it is with more access to family doctors, better mental health supports, better support for frontline health workers or better data and information to underpin our system, we are there to invest as Conservatives continue to push cuts.

* * *

[Translation]

HEALTH

Mr. Yves-François Blanchet (Beloil—Chambly, BQ): Mr. Speaker, far be it from me to stick my nose in other people's business, but media reports suggest all is not well in the Liberal caucus. The Prime Minister is adding to an already long list of major problems.

Quebec and the provinces calculated they need \$300 billion in new money for health care. The government ponied up \$46 billion over 10 years, which nobody thinks is nearly enough.

Let us start at the beginning. Will the Prime Minister admit that this is not \$200 billion in new money, it is actually \$46 billion?

• (1430)

Right Hon. Justin Trudeau (Prime Minister, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, over the next 10 years, the federal government will invest an additional \$198 billion in health care systems across the country, and that includes \$46 billion in new money for the provinces and territories. The purpose of this money is to provide access to family doctors, provide access to better mental health services, especially for our youth, ensure that frontline health workers get appropriate support, and create better data and information systems for Canadians.

Mr. Yves-François Blanchet (Beloeil—Chambly, BQ): Mr. Speaker, this is progress. He is no longer pretending it is \$20 billion a year; it is \$4.6 billion a year. The provinces were asking for \$28 billion. This is a far cry from what is needed to care for people. This requires a proper assessment of what it takes to care for people.

Now we see that the government is indexing underfunding. It is publicly announcing that a problem that is real today is going to be just as real for the next 10 years.

Can the Prime Minister admit that this money is not enough and commit to improving his offer?

Right Hon. Justin Trudeau (Prime Minister, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, while my hon. colleague talks about what the provinces want, we are focused on what Canadians need.

Canadians need more family doctors. They need more mental health help. Canadians need to see that frontline workers in hospitals and other facilities are better paid and supported. Canadians need to know where their medical records are and they need better information to understand the system they rely on.

That is what we are doing in partnership with the provinces. We are going to improve health care systems for tomorrow.

[English]

Mr. Jagmeet Singh (Burnaby South, NDP): Mr. Speaker, yesterday in the Prime Minister's meeting with the premiers, he had a chance to tell premiers not to double down on for-profit care and poach from our hospitals. However, Premier Doug Ford confirms that this never came up in any conversation. The Prime Minister had a chance to stand up for public health care and increasing staffing levels. Instead, he stood down.

The Prime Minister used to believe in public health care. Why the flip-flop?

Right Hon. Justin Trudeau (Prime Minister, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, I am sure my hon. NDP colleague will be pleased to know that he has been misinformed.

One of the very first things I said when I sat down with the premiers yesterday was about respect for our universal public system and how the principles of the Canada Health Act are foundational for this government and for any money that we flow to the provinces and to health care systems across this country over the coming years.

On this side of the aisle, we will always stand up for universal public health care.

Oral Questions

[Translation]

Mr. Jagmeet Singh (Burnaby South, NDP): Mr. Speaker, during the last election, the Prime Minister spoke out against the for-profit privatization of our health care system. He said that would not be innovation, and I agree.

However, it has been confirmed that, yesterday, he did not raise this issue in his meeting with the premiers. He had the opportunity to defend our health care system and he rolled over.

Why this big flip-flop?

Right Hon. Justin Trudeau (Prime Minister, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, I will repeat my answer to make sure that my NDP colleague hears me properly.

The first thing I said when I sat down with the premiers yesterday to talk about health care and the investments that the federal government will make to help people is that we need to uphold the Canada Health Act and continue with our universal public system, which provides services to Canadians across the country.

That is a fundamental principle that we will always defend. We are always there to defend our public health care system.

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[English]

THE ECONOMY

Ms. Melissa Lantsman (Thornhill, CPC): Mr. Speaker, after eight years under the Liberal Prime Minister, Canadians cannot afford groceries, which are up 11%. They cannot afford rent; it has doubled. Nine out of 10 young people say that they will never be able to afford a home. To add insult to injury, he is tripling the carbon tax.

Will the Prime Minister take responsibility for the cost-of-living crisis that he created or at least get out of the way so we can fix it?

• (1435)

Right Hon. Justin Trudeau (Prime Minister, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, we recognize that Canadians are going through difficult times right now following the challenges of the global pandemic and global inflation. That is why we chose to step up to support Canadians last fall with a doubling of the GST credit, which has helped 11 million Canadians; moving forward on supporting lowest-income renters; and making sure that all families can send their kids to the dentist. Unfortunately, the Conservatives, despite their rhetoric, stood against those last two measures and refused to help Canadians who need it. They are abandoning the middle class in favour of cuts and austerity.

Oral Questions

Ms. Melissa Lantsman (Thornhill, CPC): Mr. Speaker, the Prime Minister has been in that chair for eight years, and for millions of Canadians, things have never been worse. Inflation is at the highest it has been in 40 years, interest rates are the highest in a generation and home prices and rents are the highest they have ever been.

The Prime Minister can try to deflect responsibility; he can try to blame someone or something else. Conservatives are fighting to keep the heat on and the taxes off. Will he at least do the same?

Right Hon. Justin Trudeau (Prime Minister, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, it is interesting to see the lengths to which Conservatives will go to pretend the pandemic never happened. It was a very difficult time for Conservative politicians at the federal level. They were not convinced about vaccines and did not like all the supports we were sending to Canadians, even though it not only ensured that millions of Canadians were kept safer during the pandemic but also allowed our economy to bounce back stronger than just about any of our fellow economies did.

In regard to supporting Canadians, our price on pollution puts more money back in the pockets of families. At the same time, we are investing \$500 million so that families can upgrade their home heating.

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SENIORS

Mr. Jasraj Singh Hallan (Calgary Forest Lawn, CPC): Mr. Speaker, after eight years of this woke Prime Minister's inflationary spending, seniors are going cold, hungry and broke.

Seventy-five-year-old Janet from Montreal says that she is completely out of money because Liberal inflation drove up the cost of her groceries, gas and rent. She is saying that now she cannot even retire.

This Prime Minister will pile-drive more seniors like Janet when he triples his failed carbon tax scam, further breaking seniors and Canada. Are these the sunny ways this Prime Minister was talking about? Will he take some responsibility, show some humility and take the tax off so seniors can keep the heat on?

Right Hon. Justin Trudeau (Prime Minister, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, while opposition members are simply focused on frightening seniors, what we actually saw 10 years ago was that they raised the age of retirement from 65 to 67 years, which we returned to 65 when we first took office. Then we moved forward with an increase in the guaranteed income supplement of 10% for the most vulnerable single seniors; that party voted against the increase.

We continue to step up in ways to support Canadian seniors right across the country and lift more of them out of poverty while Conservatives continue to argue against those investments.

* * *

THE ECONOMY

Mr. Jasraj Singh Hallan (Calgary Forest Lawn, CPC): Mr. Speaker, this guy must be great at dodgeball the way he ducks, dodges and deflects questions here. He sounds like a broken record,

although not as broken as Canada feels after eight years of his failures. He is completely out of touch.

Does he actually think that people are patting him on the back because he has raised the costs of gas, groceries and home heating with his out-of-control spending and his failed carbon tax? If he does not want to take the tax off so that Canadians can keep the heat on, why does he not just get out of the way so that we can fix everything he broke?

Right Hon. Justin Trudeau (Prime Minister, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, as a government we stepped up to support Canadians during the pandemic. As a government we continue to step up to support Canadians during these difficult times of high inflation and high interest rates. That is why we put forward initiatives to double the GST rebate for 11 million families. That is why we moved forward with rental support for the lowest-income renters and dental supports for families who cannot send their kids to the dentist.

Despite all the rhetoric from the Conservatives, they cannot dodge the fact that they voted against those initiatives.

* * *

[Translation]

GOVERNMENT PRIORITIES

Mr. Gérard Deltell (Louis-Saint-Laurent, CPC): Mr. Speaker, after eight years as Prime Minister, the member for Papineau is more out of touch with Canadians than ever, to say the least. Let us not forget that in December, the Prime Minister solemnly told 2,000 Liberal pals that "Canada is not broken".

On Saturday morning, he heard the truth from Canadians, loud and clear: Two out of three Canadians say that Canada is broken. That is what happens when the government is out of touch with Canadians.

When will the Prime Minister take full responsibility for the fact that Canada is broken because of him?

● (1440)

Right Hon. Justin Trudeau (Prime Minister, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, throughout our history, Canada and Canadians have faced some extremely difficult times.

We are going through a difficult time right now. Instead of throwing our hands up and saying that everything is broken, we know what Canadians are doing. They are there for one another. They are rolling up their sleeves to help one another. That is how we know that they appreciate the fact that we are investing in support for dental care and for low-income renters.

Our hon. colleague voted against these initiatives. We will continue to be there despite the Conservatives' opposition to investing.

Oral Questions

Mr. Gérard Deltell (Louis-Saint-Laurent, CPC): Mr. Speaker, unfortunately, after eight years of Liberal governance, not only is the Prime Minister out of touch with Canadians, he is also out of touch with his officers of Parliament.

Yesterday, before the Senate committee, the Parliamentary Budget Officer, Mr. Giroux, said, and I quote, “I think if you ask anybody who has asked recently for a passport, employment insurance, old age security and the list goes on, they are probably very well aware that the level of service Canadians are getting is not what one would expect from a world-class public service”.

In short, Canada is broken. The Conservatives are not the ones saying it. Two out of three Canadians are saying it, including the Parliamentary Budget Officer.

When is the Prime Minister going to take full responsibility—

The Speaker: The right hon. Prime Minister.

Right Hon. Justin Trudeau (Prime Minister, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, we are taking action to help Canadians who are facing difficult times. Yes, there have been challenges with service delivery in the wake of the pandemic this past year. We will continue to work to improve services and support Canadians. That is what Canadians expect.

Unfortunately, the Conservative Party voted against help for dental care and help for low-income renters. It has nothing to offer Canadians except recommendations like investing in cryptocurrencies to avoid the effects of inflation. That is ridiculous and irresponsible.

* * *

HEALTH

Mr. Yves-François Blanchet (Beloeil—Chambly, BQ): Mr. Speaker, we are making progress; the Prime Minister now understands that we need doctors, nurses, care, surgical procedures and mental health supports. That requires skills, which they do not have. It takes money, which they are holding back.

Could the Prime Minister forget yesterday's negotiation-free monologue and transfer funds to the provinces and Quebec?

Right Hon. Justin Trudeau (Prime Minister, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, Quebecers and all Canadians understand full well that it will take additional investments in our health care system. That is what we are doing.

They also know full well that money is not the only solution. We need more family doctors, more support for mental health care, more help for frontline workers, more data, more information to improve the quality of care. That is what we are working on, together with the provinces.

While the Bloc Québécois is looking to pick another fight, I am very eager to work with the provincial premiers to get results for Canadians.

Mr. Yves-François Blanchet (Beloeil—Chambly, BQ): Mr. Speaker, I cannot do it here, so let us imagine that I am speaking to someone from outside. I would ask him what he knows about this as someone who has never operated a health care system.

That kind of rhetoric pops up in every election campaign, but let us tell it like it is. Imagine if the NDP took an actual stand, which I believe is possible. Does the Prime Minister really think this kind of hogwash will get his budget passed?

Right Hon. Justin Trudeau (Prime Minister, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, during the pandemic, the federal government invested an extra \$72 billion to keep Canadians safe and secure. Yes, we are here to deliver services and help Canadians, especially those in the armed forces and on indigenous reserves.

We know we can deliver the best services to Canadians by working hand in hand with the provinces and territories. Canadians are counting on us, so that is what we are doing. We will work hand in hand, not constantly pick fights like the Bloc.

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[English]

JUSTICE

Ms. Raquel Dancho (Kildonan—St. Paul, CPC): Mr. Speaker, after eight years, there has been a 32% rise in violent crime, a doubling of gang murders, and police and innocent Canadians being murdered by violent repeat offenders getting bail and being back on our streets, day after day. This is Canada after eight years of the Prime Minister's broken Liberal bail system, and yet he voted against taking action on this issue.

What is it going to take for the Prime Minister to fix the bail system and keep repeat violent offenders off our streets?

● (1445)

Right Hon. Justin Trudeau (Prime Minister, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, our top priority on this side of the House is always the safety of our communities. That is why we have continued to make innovations and investments in bail reform and why we continue to work with the provinces and territories on these issues.

We will make sure we are keeping Canadians safe, but the Conservatives' so-called focus on community safety does not explain their opposition to stronger gun control laws. We are going to continue to step up to make sure there is a freeze on handgun ownership across this country and that we keep assault-style weapons banned across the country. The Conservatives continue to be in the pockets of the Canadian NRA.

Ms. Raquel Dancho (Kildonan—St. Paul, CPC): Mr. Speaker, after eight years, that answer is not good enough for victims of violent repeat offenders. It is not good enough for their families. They deserve results.

Oral Questions

All 13 premiers, the police and all big-city mayors in Ontario are united in saying this is the Prime Minister's issue to solve, and yet the Prime Minister refuses to lift a finger to keep violent repeat offenders out of our communities. To top it off, he is the one who broke the Liberal bail system.

Can we really trust that he is going to be the one to fix it when he is the one who broke it?

Right Hon. Justin Trudeau (Prime Minister, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, we will continue to be there for victims of crime. We will continue to ensure there is less violent crime so that fewer people are made victims.

When we moved forward on our bill, Bill C-75, we did not change the criteria for when accused persons can be released. The bill put in place a reverse onus for certain firearms offences, meaning it is up to the accused to prove they can be released. The law is clear that people should be detained if that is necessary to protect public safety.

I know the Minister of Justice will continue to work with his counterparts across the country to ensure we are keeping people safe.

Hon. Rob Moore (Fundy Royal, CPC): Mr. Speaker, after eight years, this bail crisis is a crisis of the Prime Minister's own making. What he is doing is not working. Violent crime in the last eight years is up 32%. The Liberal minister loves to stand up and say Canadians deserve to feel safe. What Canadians are saying is they deserve to be safe. Canadians do not have the privilege to travel with armed guards like the Prime Minister does.

After eight years, the Prime Minister is badly out of touch. Will he take responsibility today for his broken bail system and commit to changing it today?

Right Hon. Justin Trudeau (Prime Minister, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, the Minister of Justice will continue to work with his provincial counterparts to see what improvements can be made, but while the members opposite continue to attack the improvements that were made to the system, they are misinforming Canadians.

When we brought out, for example, the criteria for when accused persons can be released, they were not changed by Bill C-75. The law is clear that people should be detained if that is necessary to protect public safety. The bill also put in place a reverse onus for certain firearms offences, meaning it is up to the accused to prove they can be released.

We are going to continue to stand up for Canadians.

[*Translation*]

Mr. Pierre Paul-Hus (Charlesbourg—Haute-Saint-Charles, CPC): Mr. Speaker, the Prime Minister's Bill C-5 passed with the full support of the Bloc Québécois and the NDP. This legislation endangers the lives of Quebec women. Consider the case of Jonathan Gravel. He was convicted of aggravated sexual assault and yet will be allowed to serve his sentence in the comfort of his own home, thanks to the Prime Minister.

If a man can rape a woman, and the only consequence is that he has to stay home with Netflix and a cold beer, then this government is deluded if it thinks it is protecting women. Shame on the Prime

Minister. When will he do the right thing for victims and ensure that criminals stay behind bars?

Right Hon. Justin Trudeau (Prime Minister, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, we know that survivors of sexual assault deserve a justice system that treats them with respect and dignity, a system that they can trust.

We have made it very clear that serious crimes must carry serious penalties. It is important that our justice system include a mechanism that allows for decisions to be appealed and reviewed.

* * *

[*English*]

SENIORS

Mr. Jagmeet Singh (Burnaby South, NDP): Mr. Speaker, during the pandemic, we heard horrific reports from long-term care homes, stories of seniors crying out for food and water and seniors being left in soiled diapers and linens. The Prime Minister promised to change that and did the opposite. Families say things have not gotten better.

In the offer to the premiers, there is no mention of long-term care, no additional dollars and no help for seniors. Why?

● (1450)

Right Hon. Justin Trudeau (Prime Minister, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, we have seen first-hand the challenges seniors in long-term care faced across the pandemic, and all Canadians know we all need to act together. That is why we welcomed the release by the Health Standards Organization and the Canadian Standards Association, which is a good start to new standards.

We have also provided \$4 billion to support provinces and territories in their efforts to improve long-term care in their jurisdictions, because regardless of where they live, we will continue to ensure seniors receive the quality of care they deserve.

* * *

HOUSING

Mr. Jagmeet Singh (Burnaby South, NDP): Mr. Speaker, yesterday, Bank of Canada governor Tiff Macklem admitted that the government's approach to dealing with the inflation, rate hike after rate hike, has only made things worse for Canadians. Household debt and the cost of housing are through the roof. Now what we are dealing with is a Prime Minister who promised to make it more affordable for people to find homes to call their own but has done the opposite.

Why has the Prime Minister made it so expensive to find a home to call one's own?

Oral Questions

Right Hon. Justin Trudeau (Prime Minister, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, in our last budget, we moved forward with historic investments to support people buying their homes, whether it is by moving forward to eliminate some of the predatory practices in the real estate market, moving forward with \$4 billion for municipalities to accelerate the construction of new homes to create more opportunities for buyers and renters, or moving forward with a tax-free savings account for first-time homebuyers to help them buy their own homes. We know there is much more to do and we are going to continue doing it by working with all parliamentarians.

* * *

[Translation]

HEALTH

Mr. Peter Schiefke (Vaudreuil—Soulanges, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, many of my constituents depend on a functioning health care system.

Whether we are talking about emergency rooms, intensive care units or long-term care, they need their staff to have all the resources necessary to care for our children, our seniors and the most vulnerable.

Can the Prime Minister update the House on the recent progress made with his provincial and territorial counterparts toward ensuring that everyone has access to high-quality health care?

Right Hon. Justin Trudeau (Prime Minister, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, I agree with my colleague from Vaudreuil—Soulanges that our health care system is facing significant challenges. That is why we are working with the provinces and territories to ensure that all Canadians have access to a quality health care system.

As a result of this work, yesterday we announced \$198 billion in federal funding for health care over the next 10 years, including \$48 billion in new funding.

This will ensure that Canadians have access to more family doctors, shorter wait times, better mental health services and more.

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[English]

CARBON PRICING

Mr. John Barlow (Foothills, CPC): Mr. Speaker, after eight years of the Liberal Prime Minister, it has never been more expensive to grow or to buy food, and it is going to get worse. When the Liberal-NDP carbon tax coalition triples its tax, the typical farmer will pay \$150,000 a year in the carbon tax alone. There are consequences. Not only will this bankrupt farms; it will drive record-high food prices even higher.

Will the Prime Minister take responsibility for putting our food security at risk and axe his farm-killing carbon tax?

Right Hon. Justin Trudeau (Prime Minister, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, in my conversations with farmers over the years, I have heard directly from them how concerned they are about the long-term sustainability of their families, of their industries and of their ability to continue to deliver high-quality food to all Canadians. That is why they are focused on fighting climate change and doing so in a

way that is going to make sure we are building a stronger future for everyone.

We will continue to work with farmers across this country to make sure they are equipped for the changes that are coming while at the same time able to continue to thrive in their communities and in their families as they work hard to feed all Canadians.

Mr. John Barlow (Foothills, CPC): Mr. Speaker, the number one concern of Canadian farmers, the number one threat to their livelihood, is Liberal government policy. The Liberals have to understand there are consequences. Taxing Canadian food production is taxing Canadian families out of being able to put food on the table.

The consequences are that grocery prices are up 11%, the highest in 40 years. Let us put that specifically. Vegetables are up 13%, pasta is up more than 20% and margarine is up more than 30%. Canadian families cannot afford to put food on the table.

Yesterday I had a poultry farmer, Hessel, call me and say his carbon tax bill for the month of January is \$20,000. Will the Prime Minister cut the carbon—

● (1455)

The Speaker: The right hon. Prime Minister.

Right Hon. Justin Trudeau (Prime Minister, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, the farmers I speak to talk about the fact that flood, drought, fire and upheavals in our climate are the challenges they are most worried about for their kids and grandkids, and continuing—

Some hon. members: Oh, oh!

The Speaker: I am just going to interrupt. I am going to help the whip.

Please continue.

Right Hon. Justin Trudeau: Mr. Speaker, farmers are concerned about their futures, about their kids, about their next generations of farmers and their communities. That is why they know that fighting climate change is important, but they also know they should not be carrying that burden alone. That is why we are continuing to support them in innovation, transformation and success so that they are going to be able to continue to feed Canadians with pride for generations.

Ms. Michelle Ferreri (Peterborough—Kawartha, CPC): Mr. Speaker, in December 2019, Dan's heating bill was \$175. In January of this year, using the same amount of heat, it nearly tripled to almost \$400.

After eight years of the Prime Minister, the Liberals continue to take away what Canadians need to survive: heating, housing and food. There are no solutions, just more tax. How is this compassionate? How is this leadership?

Oral Questions

We know they are capable of backtracking. Will the Liberals do it? Will they keep the heat on and take the tax off?

Right Hon. Justin Trudeau (Prime Minister, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, the price on pollution that we brought in delivers, as well, a carbon incentive, a climate action rebate that gives more money back to average families than they pay, in the areas that have the carbon tax federal backstop applied.

These are things that are facts, that the Conservatives continue to deny. On top of that, Conservatives continue to pretend that we can have a plan for the future of the economy without having a plan to fight climate change, which is simply wrong.

We will be there to fight climate change and support Canadians.

Ms. Michelle Ferreri (Peterborough—Kawartha, CPC): Mr. Speaker, after eight years of the Prime Minister, Canadians are out of money.

The \$40 a month of carbon tax may not be anything to him, but in reality it is a lot to most Canadian families. It is the difference between giving their kids snacks or not. Read the room. Talk to real Canadians. Listen to them instead of listening to yourself.

Will you keep the heat on, Mr. Prime Minister, and take the tax off?

The Speaker: I just want to remind the hon. members to speak through the Speaker not directly to each other.

Right Hon. Justin Trudeau (Prime Minister, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, if the hon. member were listening to her constituents instead of Conservative misinformation, she would have heard that a family of four in her riding just received the first of four cheques for \$185 with the climate action incentive, just this past month.

We are there to invest in supporting Canadians, while at the same time we fight against the impacts of climate change. We are there putting more money in families' pockets with a plan to fight climate change, which is what people across Ontario and across the country need from their governments.

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[Translation]

OFFICIAL LANGUAGES

Mr. Mario Beaulieu (La Pointe-de-l'Île, BQ): Mr. Speaker, yesterday, the Standing Committee on Official Languages turned into a full-blown circus because some Liberal members refused to acknowledge French as the common language of Quebec. The Liberal government is even jeopardizing its own Bill C-13, which is unprecedented.

Yesterday, a Franco-Ontarian member had the courage to speak out against the appalling spectacle these members were putting on and the false information they are spreading about Bill 101. However, to date, not a single Liberal member from Quebec has shown this kind of courage and stood up for French.

Will the Prime Minister condemn the Liberal disinformation?

Right Hon. Justin Trudeau (Prime Minister, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, I am proud to be a member from Quebec and a proud Quebecker who stands up in the House today and every day—

Some hon. members: Oh, oh!

The Speaker: Order.

The right hon. Prime Minister can start over.

Right Hon. Justin Trudeau: Mr. Speaker, I am a proud Quebecker who stands up in the House every day to defend French in Quebec and across Canada.

Our government was the first to recognize in a throne speech that we must protect French, and not just as one of our country's official languages. We also need to do more to protect French in Quebec.

That is exactly what we are doing with Bill C-13, which seeks to protect linguistic minorities across the country and protect French in Quebec. We are here to protect French. We are here for our beautiful French language.

• (1500)

Mr. Mario Beaulieu (La Pointe-de-l'Île, BQ): Mr. Speaker, there has been a lot of talk about the Liberal members who have turned the Standing Committee on Official Languages into a circus. There has been less talk about the responsibility of the Prime Minister, who continued day after day to delegate these members despite their shameful missteps.

The Prime Minister sanctioned the disinformation that needlessly caused anxiety. Could he now do the right thing and reassure anglophones by confirming that neither Bill C-13 nor Bill 96 will prevent them from receiving health care in their language?

Right Hon. Justin Trudeau (Prime Minister, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, I would like to make a statement that I know will get a reaction out of the Bloc Québécois MPs. I fundamentally believe that the Bloc Québécois is not concerned one bit about the fate of French in Canada. The Bloc is concerned about the fate of French in Quebec, certainly. However, they do not give a damn about francophone minorities across the country.

It is the federal government's job to be there for francophones across the country, just like we are there for francophones in Quebec. We will continue to be there and we will always stand up for our official languages.

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[English]

HEALTH

Mr. Stephen Ellis (Cumberland—Colchester, CPC): Mr. Speaker, after eight years, the Liberal government has added more to the national debt than every other government combined. Wait times for health care are the longest they have been in three decades. Canadians cannot buy medicines for their sick children. Canadians do not have a family doctor. I bet many Canadians watching this today are in that group. Canadians are tragically dying in emergency rooms around this country. The cupboard has been spent bare.

Oral Questions

When will the Prime Minister take responsibility for the broken health care system and step aside so that we can fix what he broke?

Right Hon. Justin Trudeau (Prime Minister, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, I am pleased to inform the member opposite that yesterday we announced \$198 billion worth of additional funds in health care over the coming 10 years. This is money that the provinces will be investing to make sure that people have better access to family doctors, that there is better and more timely mental health care, that we are supporting our frontline workers and that we are grounding our systems in better data and better health information.

On top of that, for the emergency rooms that the member opposite is worried about, we are sending \$2 billion immediately to provinces and territories so they can deal with the important pressures facing them. We are here to help on health care.

* * *

THE ECONOMY

Mr. Stephen Ellis (Cumberland—Colchester, CPC): Mr. Speaker, I would like to inform the member for Papineau that after eight years of the Liberal government everything in Canada is broken. Canadians cannot get a passport, 1.5 million Canadians are visiting a food bank every month, five million Canadians do not have a family doctor and Canadians cannot afford rent or a mortgage. Canadians have to choose between heating their homes and eating. This is all under the watchful gaze of the member for Papineau.

Everything in Canada is broken. When will the Prime Minister take responsibility for these problems and step aside so that Conservatives can fix what he broke?

Right Hon. Justin Trudeau (Prime Minister, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, we fully recognize that Canadians are facing tough times right now, which is why we are stepping up to support them directly. However, Conservatives, other than telling them, “Oh, you can opt out of inflation by buying cryptocurrencies,” which would have been devastating for family savings and totally reckless advice, simply stand against support for low-income renters. They stand against making sure that 200,000 kids, so far, can access dental care that they were not able to access before. These are things that are helping Canadians.

It is the Conservatives who have to stop pushing for cuts and austerity.

[*Translation*]

Mr. Luc Berthold (Mégantic—L'Érable, CPC): Mr. Speaker, after eight years with this Prime Minister at the helm, Canadians are realizing that all his talk about helping the middle class was just grandstanding. As a result of his policies, ordinary Canadians are finding it increasingly difficult to pay their bills. After eight years of this Prime Minister, his inflationary spending has driven up interest rates, depriving young families of their right to dream of home ownership.

After eight years, will the Prime Minister finally take responsibility for the rising cost of groceries, rent and gas so we can finally fix what is broken?

• (1505)

Right Hon. Justin Trudeau (Prime Minister, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, let me set the record straight. In eight years, 2.7 million Canadians have been lifted out of poverty.

People are going through tough times right now. That is why we are investing to improve our health care system, to help low-income renters, to help seniors and to help pay for dental care for children under 12 whose families could not afford it. We are there to help Canadians.

The Conservatives continue to offer cuts, austerity and conspiracy theories.

* * *

[*English*]

HEALTH

Mr. Heath MacDonald (Malpeque, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, for weeks now, the Conservative leader has been saying the Liberal government helped Canadians too much during the pandemic. Let me be clear. The government supports included an additional \$72 billion for health care to the provinces and territories. My constituents are left to wonder: How much worse off would their hospitals and health care system have been if the leader of the Conservatives had been in charge?

Will the Prime Minister follow the Conservative leader's misguided advice on austerity and cuts to health care spending, or can the Prime Minister provide us with any policy alternatives?

Right Hon. Justin Trudeau (Prime Minister, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, I thank the member for Malpeque for his advocacy, and I reassure him that we will be taking no lessons on cuts and austerity from the Conservative Party. As Canadians, we place a lot of value in our universal public health system, but we know it has not been living up to expectations. That is why yesterday we brought forward a plan to increase health funding over the next decade. We know that the Conservative Party's approach is one of austerity and cuts, but let us be very clear. We do not hire any more doctors or reduce wait times with cuts. On our side, we are focused on making investments and delivering results for Canadians.

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PUBLIC SERVICES AND PROCUREMENT

Ms. Leslyn Lewis (Haldimand—Norfolk, CPC): Mr. Speaker, after eight years of the Prime Minister, we have billions of dollars of waste. The Canada Infrastructure Bank was created on the recommendation of former McKinsey CEO Dominic Barton. The current CEO of the bank was a partner at McKinsey. It is no surprise that McKinsey has received consulting contracts of \$1.5 million. This taxpayer-funded bank lacks integrity and transparency.

Oral Questions

Will the Prime Minister take responsibility and fix what he broke by cancelling the out-of-control Infrastructure Bank?

Right Hon. Justin Trudeau (Prime Minister, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, when we took office eight years ago, we made a commitment to Canadians that we would invest in the kinds of infrastructure that would grow our economy, would create good jobs and would create opportunities for all Canadians. That is exactly what we have been doing through various ways such as investing in public transit, investing in new trade corridors and investing in record amounts of housing.

We know that Canadians want to see a better future built, every single day, in this country. That is why we will take no lessons from the Conservatives on not spending and investing in infrastructure, other than a few doorknobs here and there. We will continue to move forward on infrastructure.

Mr. Michael Barrett (Leeds—Grenville—Thousand Islands and Rideau Lakes, CPC): Mr. Speaker, after eight years of the Prime Minister, Liberal insiders have been lining their pockets while Canadians have been lining up at food banks. McKinsey, one of those insiders, is the very same company that helped turbocharge opioid sales. It was involved in government corruption scandals the world over and, of course, helped the Government of Saudi Arabia track down and punish its opponents. That is the company that the Prime Minister gave \$120 million of taxpayer money to.

Will the Prime Minister finally take responsibility for giving Canadians' tax dollars to a corrupt company, or will he get out of the way so—

The Speaker: The right hon. Prime Minister.

Right Hon. Justin Trudeau (Prime Minister, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, over the past years, we have made significant investments to support Canadians, not only through the pandemic but also in the years before it, when we were investing and creating jobs. We were lifting Canadians out of poverty and preparing for a clean-energy future, which Canadians know is around the corner.

We will continue to be there to support Canadians, whether it is with rental investments, with dental care or by doubling the GST rebate for low- and middle-income Canadians. We are going to continue to be there to invest in and support Canadians. Unfortunately, the Conservatives continue to push for cuts and austerity.

[*Translation*]

Mr. Jacques Gourde (Lévis—Lotbinière, CPC): Mr. Speaker, after eight years under this Liberal Prime Minister, the close ties between McKinsey and the Infrastructure Bank of Canada are undeniable.

Led by former employees of the multinational McKinsey firm, the Infrastructure Bank of Canada awarded contracts to the firm that recommended its creation, all untendered. This is yet another scandal. Canada is broken.

Will the Prime Minister take responsibility for the loss of trust Canadians have in our institutions, so we can begin fixing everything he has broken?

• (1510)

Right Hon. Justin Trudeau (Prime Minister, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, Canadians are continuing to do what they have always done in difficult times, which is to be there for one another, to roll up their sleeves and work to help build a better future for everyone. Rather than throwing their hands in the air and saying everything is broken, Canadians are working hard together. We will continue to be there to help them do just that, with investments in dental care and rental assistance.

That member voted against those two initiatives in the House. We will continue to be there to help families with a better health care system. We know that investing in the future is the right way to help Canadians.

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[*English*]

CARBON PRICING

Ms. Joanne Thompson (St. John's East, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, this week, the Conservative leader launched radio attack ads across Atlantic Canada against carbon pollution pricing. That is preying on people's fears by spreading mistruths. The Conservatives know it, and they owe Atlantic Canadians an apology.

Can the Prime Minister update the House on what the government has been doing to support Atlantic Canadians?

Right Hon. Justin Trudeau (Prime Minister, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, I am happy to thank the member for St. John's East for her hard work and her leadership on this file.

What the Conservative Party still does not realize is that one cannot have a plan for the economy if one does not have a plan for the environment.

On this side, we are focused on creating good jobs, helping families with the cost of living and fighting climate change. We are doing so through our climate action incentive rebates, which are putting more money back in families' pockets. We are also helping households with retrofits and switching from oil furnaces to heat pumps, which are saving energy and money while protecting the planet.

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LABOUR

Mr. Matthew Green (Hamilton Centre, NDP): Mr. Speaker, workers across Canada and Quebec continue to be left out in the cold on picket lines, while their bosses replace them with non-contract scab workers. New Democrats fought to end these union-busting tactics.

[Translation]

The member for Rosemont—La Petite-Patrie has already introduced anti-scab legislation. The minister just has to pass it. There is no need to delay things any longer.

[English]

Why is this minister delaying the rights for workers to have the ability to collectively bargain?

Why?

Right Hon. Justin Trudeau (Prime Minister, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, we mandated the Minister of Labour to create a fairer collective bargaining process in federally regulated workplaces by putting forward legislation to further limit the use of replacement workers. We launched consultations, which have now wrapped up, and the results of those consultations will determine the legislation that will be tabled by the end of this year.

We support and we have faith in the collective bargaining process, because the best deals are always the ones that are made at the negotiating table.

* * *

HOUSING

Mr. Mike Morrice (Kitchener Centre, GP): Mr. Speaker, it has been almost a year since the governing party promised to bring in a homebuyers' bill of rights, to end blind bidding in home sales and to tackle large corporate investors in the housing market. All of those actions would help make housing more affordable, but the federal government has not implemented any of them yet.

What are they waiting for? We need urgent action on the housing crisis.

When will the Prime Minister finally deliver on these promises?

Right Hon. Justin Trudeau (Prime Minister, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, the government is committed to levelling the playing field for young and middle-class Canadians looking to buy a home.

That is why budget 2022 announced that we would work with provinces and territories to develop and implement a homebuyers' bill of rights and a national plan to end blind bidding. The homebuyers' bill of rights would tackle unfair practices in the real estate market, and it could include measures to ensure the right to an inspection and transparency in sales history.

We will not rest until we ensure that the dream of home ownership is protected.

* * *

• (1515)

PRESENCE IN GALLERY

The Speaker: I wish to draw the attention of members to the presence in the gallery of the Hon. Ato Tagesse Chaffo Dullo, Speaker of the House of Peoples' Representatives of the Federal Democratic Republic of Ethiopia.

Some hon. members: Hear, hear!

Business of Supply

EARTHQUAKES IN TURKEY AND SYRIA

The Speaker: Following discussions among representatives of all parties in the House, I understand that there is an agreement to observe a moment of silence in memory of the victims of the earthquakes in Turkey and Syria.

I now invite hon. members to rise.

[A moment of silence observed]

[Translation]

The Speaker: The hon. member for La Prairie on a point of order.

Mr. Alain Therrien: Mr. Speaker, in response to a question from the Bloc member from La Pointe-de-l'Île, the Prime Minister said about Bloc members that “they do not give a damn about francophone minorities across the country.”

I have to say that was unparliamentary language and, as everyone would agree, absolutely false. I therefore demand an apology from the Prime Minister.

The Speaker: I noticed that MPs in the House today were a little agitated and worked up.

I would remind all members to choose their words carefully. Members must use parliamentary language, in other words, language that will not cause offence. I urge members to be careful about what they say.

GOVERNMENT ORDERS

[English]

BUSINESS OF SUPPLY

OPPOSITION MOTION—CARBON TAX

The House resumed from February 7 consideration of the motion.

The Speaker: It being 3:18 p.m., pursuant to order made on Thursday, June 23, 2022, the House will now proceed to the taking of the deferred recorded division on the motion of the member for Carleton relating to the business of supply.

Call in the members.

• (1530)

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

(Division No. 253)

YEAS

Members

Aboultouf
Albas
Arnold
Barlow
Berthold
Bragdon
Brock
Caputo
Chambers

Aitchison
Allison
Baldinelli
Barrett
Bezan
Brassard
Calkins
Carrie
Chong

Business of Supply

Cooper	Dalton	Chiang	Collins (Hamilton East—Stoney Creek)
Dancho	Davidson	Collins (Victoria)	Cormier
Deltell	d'Entremont	Coteau	Dabrusin
Doherty	Dowdall	Damoff	Davies
Dreeschen	Duncan (Stormont—Dundas—South Glengarry)	DeBellefeuille	Desbiens
Ellis	Epp	Desilets	Desjarlais
Falk (Battlefords—Lloydminster)	Falk (Provencher)	Dhaliwal	Dhillon
Fast	Ferri	Diab	Dong
Findlay	Gallant	Drouin	Dubourg
Généreux	Genuis	Duclos	Duguid
Gladu	Godin	Dzerowicz	Ehsassi
Goodridge	Gourde	El-Khoury	Erskine-Smith
Gray	Hallan	Fergus	Fillmore
Hoback	Jeneroux	Fisher	Fonseca
Kelly	Kitchen	Fortier	Fortin
Kram	Kramp-Neuman	Fragiskatos	Fraser
Kurek	Kusie	Freeland	Fry
Lake	Lantsman	Gaheer	Garneau
Lawrence	Lehoux	Garon	Garrison
Lewis (Essex)	Lewis (Haldimand—Norfolk)	Gaudreau	Gazan
Liepert	Lloyd	Gerretsen	Gill
Lobb	Maguire	Gould	Green
Martel	Mazier	Guilbeault	Hajdu
McCauley (Edmonton West)	McLean	Hanley	Hardie
Melillo	Moore	Hepfner	Holland
Morantz	Morrison	Hughes	Hussen
Motz	Muys	Hutchings	Iacono
Nater	O'Toole	Idlout	Ien
Patzer	Paul-Hus	Jaczek	Johns
Perkins	Poilievre	Jowhari	Kayabaga
Rayes	Redekopp	Kelloway	Khalid
Reid	Rempel Garner	Khera	Koutrakis
Richards	Roberts	Kusmierczyk	Kwan
Rood	Ruff	Lalonde	Lambropoulos
Scheer	Schmale	Lametti	Lamoureux
Seeback	Shields	Lapointe	Larouche
Shiple	Small	Lattanzio	Lauzon
Soroka	Steinley	LeBlanc	Lebouthillier
Strahl	Stubbs	Lightbound	Long
Thomas	Tochor	Longfield	Louis (Kitchener—Conestoga)
Tolmie	Uppal	MacAulay (Cardigan)	MacDonald (Malpeque)
Van Popta	Vecchio	MacGregor	MacKinnon (Gatineau)
Vidal	Vien	Maloney	Martinez Ferrada
Viersen	Vis	Masse	Mathysen
Wagantall	Warkentin	May (Cambridge)	May (Saanic—Gulf Islands)
Waugh	Webber	McDonald (Avalon)	McGuinty
Williams	Williamson	McKinnon (Coquitlam—Port Coquitlam)	McLeod
Zimmer— 113		McPherson	Mendès
		Mendicino	Miao
		Michaud	Miller
		Morrice	Morrissey
		Murray	Naqvi
		Ng	Noormohamed
		Normandin	O'Connell
		O'Regan	Pauzé
		Perron	Petipas Taylor
		Plamondon	Powlowski
		Qualtrough	Robillard
		Rodriguez	Rogers
		Romanado	Sahota
		Sajjan	Saks
		Samson	Sarai
		Scarpaleggia	Schiefke
		Serré	Sgro
		Shanahan	Sheehan
		Sidhu (Brampton East)	Sidhu (Brampton South)
		Simard	Sinclair-Desgagné
		Singh	Sorbara
		Sousa	Ste-Marie
		St-Onge	Sudds
		Tassi	Taylor Roy
		Thériault	Therrien
		Thompson	Trudeau

NAYS

Members

Aldag	Alghabra
Ali	Anandasangaree
Angus	Arseneault
Arya	Ashton
Atwin	Bachrach
Badawey	Bains
Baker	Barron
Barsalou-Duval	Battiste
Beaulieu	Beech
Bendayan	Bennett
Bergeron	Bérubé
Bibeau	Bittle
Blaikie	Blair
Blanchette-Joncas	Blaney
Blois	Boissonnault
Boulerice	Bradford
Brière	Brunelle-Duceppe
Cannings	Casey
Chabot	Chagger
Chahal	Champoux
Chatel	Chen

Trudel	Turnbull
Valdez	Van Bynen
van Koeverden	Vandal
Vandenbeld	Vignola
Villemure	Virani
Weiler	Wilkinson
Yip	Zahid
Zarrillo	Zuberi— 204

PAIRED

Members

Champagne	Housefather
Kmiec	Lemire
McKay	Savard-Tremblay— 6

The Speaker: I declare the motion defeated.

PRIVATE MEMBERS' BUSINESS

[*English*]

NATIONAL STRATEGY RESPECTING ENVIRONMENTAL RACISM AND ENVIRONMENTAL JUSTICE ACT

The House resumed February 3 consideration of the motion that Bill C-226, An Act respecting the development of a national strategy to assess, prevent and address environmental racism and to advance environmental justice, as reported (without amendment) from the committee, be concurred in.

The Speaker: Pursuant to order made on Thursday, June 23, 2022, the House will now proceed to the taking of the deferred recorded division on the motion to concur in Bill C-226 at report stage under Private Members' Business.

• (1540)

[*Translation*]

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

(*Division No. 254*)

YEAS

Members

Aldag	Alghabra
Ali	Anandasangaree
Angus	Arseneault
Arya	Ashton
Atwin	Bachrach
Badawey	Bains
Baker	Barron
Battiste	Beech
Bendayan	Bennett
Bibeau	Bittle
Blaikie	Blair
Blaney	Blois
Boissonnault	Boulerice
Bradford	Brière
Cannings	Casey
Chagger	Chahal
Chatel	Chen
Chiang	Collins (Hamilton East—Stoney Creek)
Collins (Victoria)	Cormier
Coteau	Dabrusin
Damoff	Davies
Desjarlais	Dhaliwal
Dhillon	Diab
Dong	Drouin

Dubourg
Duguid
Ehsassi
Erskine-Smith
Fillmore
Fonseca
Fragiskatos
Freeland
Gaheer
Garrison
Gerretsen
Green
Hajdu
Hardie
Holland
Hussen
Iacono
Ien
Johns
Kayabaga
Khalid
Koutrakis
Kwan
Lambropoulos
Lamoureux
Lattanzio
LeBlanc
Lightbound
Longfield
MacAulay (Cardigan)
MacGregor
Maloney
Masse
May (Cambridge)
McDonald (Avalon)
McKinnon (Coquitlam—Port Coquitlam)
McPherson
Mencicino
Miller
Morrissey
Naqvi
Noormohamed
O'Regan
Powlowski
Rayes
Rodriguez
Romanado
Sajjan
Samson
Scarpaleggia
Serré
Shanahan
Sidhu (Brampton East)
Singh
Sousa
Sudds
Taylor Roy
Trudeau
Valdez
van Koeverden
Vandenbeld
Vuong
Yip
Zarrillo

Private Members' Business

Duclos
Dzerowicz
El-Khoury
Fergus
Fisher
Fortier
Fraser
Fry
Garneau
Gazan
Gould
Guilbeault
Hanley
Hepfner
Hughes
Hutchings
Idlout
Jaczek
Jowhari
Kelloway
Khera
Kusmierczyk
Lalonde
Lametti
Lapointe
Lauzon
Lebouthillier
Long
Louis (Kitchener—Conestoga)
MacDonald (Malpeque)
MacKinnon (Gatineau)
Martinez Ferrada
Mathysen
May (Saanich—Gulf Islands)
McGuinty
McLeod
Mendès
Miao
Morrice
Murray
Ng
O'Connell
Petipas Taylor
Qualtrough
Robillard
Rogers
Sahota
Saks
Sarai
Schieffe
Sgro
Sheehan
Sidhu (Brampton South)
Sorbara
St-Onge
Tassi
Thompson
Turnbull
Van Bynen
Vandal
Virani
Wilkinson
Zahid
Zuberi— 176

NAYS

Members

Abouttaif	Aitchison
Albas	Allison
Arnold	Baldinelli
Barlow	Barrett
Barsalou-Duval	Beaulieu

Private Members' Business

Bergeron	Berthold
Bérubé	Bezan
Blanchet	Blanchette-Joncas
Bragdon	Brassard
Brock	Brunelle-Duceppe
Calkins	Caputo
Carrie	Chabot
Chambers	Champoux
Chong	Cooper
Dalton	Dancho
Davidson	DeBellefeuille
Deltell	d'Entremont
Desbiens	Desilets
Doherty	Dowdall
Dreeshen	Duncan (Stormont—Dundas—South Glengarry)
Ellis	Epp
Falk (Battlefords—Lloydminster)	Falk (Provencher)
Fast	Ferreri
Findlay	Fortin
Gallant	Garon
Gaudreau	Généreux
Genius	Gill
Gladu	Godin
Goodridge	Gourde
Gray	Hallan
Hoback	Jeneroux
Kelly	Kitchen
Kram	Kramp-Neuman
Kurek	Kusie
Lake	Lantsman
Larouche	Lawrence
Lehoux	Lewis (Essex)
Lewis (Haldimand—Norfolk)	Liepert
Lloyd	Lobb
Maguire	Martel
Mazier	McCaulley (Edmonton West)
McLean	Melillo
Michaud	Moore
Morantz	Morrison
Motz	Muys
Nater	Normandin
O'Toole	Patzer
Paul-Hus	Pauzé
Perkins	Perron
Plamondon	Poilievre
Redekopp	Reid
Rempel Garner	Richards
Roberts	Rood
Ruff	Secheer
Schmale	Seeback
Shields	Shiple
Simard	Sinclair-Desgagné
Small	Soroka
Steinley	Ste-Marie
Strahl	Stubbs
Thériault	Therrien
Thomas	Tochor
Tolmie	Trudel
Uppal	Van Popta
Vecchio	Vidal
Vien	Viersen
Vignola	Villemure
Vis	Wagantall
Warkentin	Waugh
Webber	Williams
Williamson	Zimmer — 142

PAIRED

Members

Champagne	Housefather
Kmiec	Lemire
McKay	Savard-Tremblay — 6

The Speaker: I declare the motion carried.

* * *

[*English*]

PANDEMIC PREVENTION AND PREPAREDNESS ACT

The House resumed from February 6 consideration of the motion that Bill C-293, An Act respecting pandemic prevention and preparedness, be read the second time and referred to a committee.

The Speaker: Pursuant to order made on Thursday, June 23, 2022, the House will now proceed to the taking of the deferred recorded division on the motion at second reading stage of Bill C-293 under Private Members' Business.

● (1555)

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

(*Division No. 255*)

YEAS

Members

Aldag	Alghabra
Ali	Anandasangaree
Angus	Arseneault
Arya	Ashton
Atwin	Bachrach
Badaway	Bains
Baker	Barron
Battiste	Beech
Bendayan	Bennett
Bibeau	Bittle
Blaikie	Blair
Blaney	Blois
Boissonnault	Boulerice
Bradford	Brière
Cannings	Casey
Chagger	Chahal
Chatel	Chen
Chiang	Collins (Hamilton East—Stoney Creek)
Collins (Victoria)	Cormier
Coteau	Dabrusin
Damoff	Davies
Desjarlais	Dhaliwal
Dhillon	Diab
Dong	Drouin
Dubourg	Duclos
Duguid	Dzerowicz
Ehsassi	El-Khoury
Erskine-Smith	Fergus
Fillmore	Fisher
Fonseca	Fortier
Fragiskatos	Fraser
Freeland	Gaheer
Garneau	Garrison
Gazan	Gerretsen
Gould	Green
Guilbeault	Hajdu
Hanley	Hardie
Hepfner	Holland
Hughes	Hussen
Hutchings	Iacono
Idlout	Ien
Jaczek	Johns
Jowhari	Kayabaga
Kelloway	Khalid
Khera	Koutrakis
Kusmierczyk	Kwan
Lalonde	Lambropoulos

Private Members' Business

Lametti
Lapointe
Lauzon
Lebouthillier
Long
Louis (Kitchener—Conestoga)
MacDonald (Malpeque)
MacKinnon (Gatineau)
Martinez Ferrada
Mathysen
May (Saanich—Gulf Islands)
McGuinty
McLeod
Mendès
Miao
Morrice
Murray
Ng
O'Connell
Petitpas Taylor
Qualtrough
Robillard
Rogers
Sahota
Saks
Sarai
Schiefke
Sgro
Sheehan
Sidhu (Brampton South)
Sorbara
St-Onge
Tassi
Thompson
Turnbull
Van Bynen
Vandal
Virani
Weiler
Yip
Zarrillo

Lamoureux
Lattanzio
LeBlanc
Lightbound
Longfield
MacAulay (Cardigan)
MacGregor
Maloney
Masse
May (Cambridge)
McDonald (Avalon)
McKinnon (Coquitlam—Port Coquitlam)
McPherson
Mendicino
Miller
Morrissey
Naqvi
Noormohamed
O'Regan
Powlowski
Rayes
Rodriguez
Romanado
Sajjan
Samson
Scarpaleggia
Serré
Shanahan
Sidhu (Brampton East)
Singh
Sousa
Sudds
Taylor Roy
Trudeau
Valdez
van Koeverden
Vandenbeld
Vuong
Wilkinson
Zahid
Zuberi — 176

Goodridge
Gray
Hoback
Kelly
Kram
Kurek
Lake
Larouche
Lehoux
Lewis (Haldimand—Norfolk)
Lloyd
Maguire
Mazier
McLean
Michaud
Morantz
Motz
Nater
O'Toole
Paul-Hus
Perkins
Plamondon
Redekopp
Rempel Garner
Roberts
Ruff
Schmale
Shields
Simard
Small
Steinley
Strahl
Thériault
Thomas
Tolmie
Uppal
Vecchio
Vien
Vignola
Vis
Warkentin
Webber
Williamson

Gourde
Hallan
Jeneroux
Kitchen
Kram-Neuman
Kusie
Lantsman
Lawrence
Lewis (Essex)
Liepert
Lobb
Martel
McCauley (Edmonton West)
Melillo
Moore
Morrison
Muys
Normandin
Patzer
Pauzé
Perron
Poilievre
Reid
Richards
Rood
Scheer
Seeback
Shiple
Sinclair-Desgagné
Soroka
Ste-Marie
Stubbs
Therrien
Tochor
Trudel
Van Popta
Vidal
Viersen
Villemure
Wagantall
Waugh
Williams
Zimmer — 142

NAYS

Members

Aboultaif
Albas
Arnold
Barlow
Barsalou-Duval
Bergeron
Bérubé
Blanchet
Bragdon
Brock
Calkins
Carrie
Chambers
Chong
Dalton
Davidson
Deltell
Desbiens
Doherty
Dreesen
Ellis
Falk (Battlefords—Lloydminster)
Fast
Findlay
Gallant
Gaudreau
Genuis
Glada

Aitchison
Allison
Baldinelli
Barrett
Beaulieu
Berthold
Bezan
Blanchette-Joncas
Brassard
Brunelle-Duceppe
Caputo
Chabot
Champoux
Cooper
Dancho
DeBellefeuille
d'Entremont
Desilets
Dowdall
Duncan (Stormont—Dundas—South Glengarry)
Epp
Falk (Provencher)
Ferreri
Fortin
Garon
Généreux
Gill
Godin

PAIRED

Members

Champagne
Kmiec
McKay
Housefather
Lemire
Savard-Tremblay — 6

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

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

* * *

DEPARTMENT OF FOREIGN AFFAIRS, TRADE AND DEVELOPMENT ACT

The House resumed from February 7 consideration of the motion that Bill C-282, An Act to amend the Department of Foreign Affairs, Trade and Development Act (supply management), be read the second time and referred to a committee.

The Speaker: Pursuant to order made on Thursday, June 23, 2022, the House will now proceed to the taking of the deferred recorded division on the motion at second reading stage of Bill C-282 under Private Members' Business.

Private Members' Business

● (1610)

[*Translation*]

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

(Division No. 256)

YEAS

Members

Aboultaif	Albas	Guilbeault	Hajdu
Aldag	Alghabra	Hanley	Hardie
Ali	Allison	Hepfner	Holland
Anandasangaree	Angus	Hughes	Hussen
Arnold	Arseneault	Hutchings	Iacono
Arya	Ashton	Idlout	Ien
Atwin	Bachrach	Jaczek	Johns
Badawey	Bains	Jowhari	Kayabaga
Baker	Baldinelli	Kelloway	Khalid
Barrett	Barron	Khera	Koutrakis
Barsalou-Duval	Battiste	Kramp-Neuman	Kusmierczyk
Beaulieu	Beech	Kwan	Lake
Bendayan	Bennett	Lalonde	Lambropoulos
Bergeron	Berthold	Lametti	Lamoureux
Bérubé	Bezan	Lantsman	Lapointe
Bibeau	Bittle	Larouche	Lattanzio
Blaikie	Blair	Lauzon	Lawrence
Blanchet	Blanchette-Joncas	LeBlanc	Lebouthillier
Blaney	Blois	Lehoux	Lewis (Essex)
Boissonnault	Boulerice	Lewis (Haldimand—Norfolk)	Liepert
Bradford	Bragdon	Lightbound	Lloyd
Brassard	Brière	Lobb	Long
Brock	Brunelle-Duceppe	Longfield	Louis (Kitchener—Conestoga)
Calkins	Cannings	MacAulay (Cardigan)	MacDonald (Malpeque)
Caputo	Carrie	MacGregor	MacKinnon (Gatineau)
Casey	Chabot	Maguire	Maloney
Chagger	Chahal	Martel	Martinez Ferrada
Chambers	Champoux	Masse	Mathysen
Chatel	Chen	May (Cambridge)	May (Saenich—Gulf Islands)
Chiang	Chong	Mazier	McDonald (Avalon)
Collins (Hamilton East—Stoney Creek)	Collins (Victoria)	McGuinty	McKinnon (Coquitlam—Port Coquitlam)
Cooper	Cormier	McLeod	McPherson
Coteau	Dabrusin	Mendès	Medicino
Dalton	Damoff	Miao	Michaud
Dancho	Davidson	Miller	Moore
Davies	DeBellefeuille	Morrice	Morrison
Deltell	d'Entremont	Morrissey	Motz
Desbiens	Desilets	Murray	Muys
Desjarlais	Dhaliwal	Naqvi	Nater
Dhillon	Diab	Ng	Noormohamed
Doherty	Dong	Normandin	O'Connell
Dowdall	Drouin	O'Regan	Paul-Hus
Dubourg	Duclos	Pauzé	Perkins
Duguid	Duncan (Stormont—Dundas—South Glengarry)	Perron	Petitpas Taylor
Dzerowicz	Ehsassi	Plamondon	Poilievre
El-Khoury	Ellis	Powlowski	Qualtrough
Epp	Falk (Provencher)	Rayes	Richards
Fast	Fergus	Roberts	Robillard
Ferreri	Fillmore	Rodriguez	Rogers
Findlay	Fisher	Romanado	Rood
Fonseca	Fortier	Ruff	Sahota
Fortin	Fragiskatos	Sajjan	Saks
Fraser	Freeland	Samson	Sarai
Fry	Gaheer	Scarpaleggia	Scheer
Gallant	Garneau	Schiefke	Schmale
Garon	Garrison	Seeback	Serré
Gaudreau	Gazan	Sgro	Shanahan
Généreux	Genuis	Sheehan	Shields
Gerretsen	Gill	Shiple	Sidhu (Brampton East)
Gladu	Godin	Sidhu (Brampton South)	Simard
Goodridge	Gould	Sinclair-Desgagné	Singh
Gourde	Green	Small	Sorbara
		Soroka	Sousa
		Steinley	Ste-Marie
		St-Onge	Strahl
		Stubbs	Sudds
		Tassi	Taylor Roy
		Thériault	Therrien
		Thomas	Thompson
		Tochor	Tolmie
		Trudeau	Trudel
		Turnbull	Uppal
		Valdez	Van Bynen

van Koeverden
Vandal
Vecchio
Viersen
Villemure
Vis
Wagantall
Weiler
Williams
Yip
Zarrillo
Zuberi— 293

Van Popta
Vandenbeld
Vien
Vignola
Virani
Vuong
Webber
Wilkinson
Williamson
Zahid
Zimmer

NAYS

Members

Aitchison
Erskine-Smith
Gray
Hoback
Kelly
Kram
Kusie
Melillo
O'Toole
Redekopp
Vidal
Waugh— 23

Dreeshen
Falk (Battlefords—Lloydminster)
Hallan
Jeneroux
Kitchen
Kurek
McCauley (Edmonton West)
Morantz
Patzner
Reid
Warkentin

PAIRED

Members

Champagne
Kmiec
McKay

Housefather
Lemire
Savard-Tremblay— 6

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

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

* * *

[English]

PRIVILEGE

TECHNICAL DIFFICULTIES WITH INTERPRETATION SERVICES

Hon. Andrew Scheer (Regina—Qu'Appelle, CPC): Mr. Speaker, I am rising today on a question of privilege concerning the interpretation services provided to this morning's meeting of the official opposition caucus. To be clear, these were issues with the technical arrangements provided by the House of Commons administration, not the quality of the work provided by our great and hard-working interpreters.

[Translation]

Caucus meetings play a very special role in the work of members of Parliament here in Ottawa. It is where we gather to discuss the issues of the day that are dominating the national conversation as well as the business that needs to be addressed here in the House. These meetings are also where we learn about local and regional priorities in this vast and diverse country of ours.

Mr. Speaker, as a former chair of the national Liberal caucus yourself, I know I do not need to remind you of that. Our national caucuses engage in conversations about national issues in a truly national way, not least because they are conducted in our two official languages, English and French.

Privilege

[English]

Indeed, subsection 4(2) of the Official Languages Act requires that:

Facilities shall be made available for the simultaneous interpretation of the debates and other proceedings of Parliament from one official language into the other.

Today, those facilities were not available to the Conservative caucus here on Parliament Hill. Technical concerns at caucus meetings have, in the past, given rise to prima facie cases of privilege.

On October 17, 1973, at page 6942 of the Debates, Speaker Lamoureux found a prima facie case of privilege concerning the discovery of a bugging device in the NDP caucus room.

More recently, on March 25, 2004, at page 1711 of the Debates, Speaker Milliken found a prima facie case of privilege when the confidential proceedings of the Liberal Party's Ontario regional caucus had been inadvertently disclosed through the House's audio-visual system, which was installed in the meeting room. The Chair observed the pivotal nature of proceedings to MPs' work, stating the following: "The concept of caucus confidentiality is central to the operations of the House and to the work of all hon. members."

Subsequently, in its 22nd report, the Standing Committee on Procedure and House Affairs stated at paragraph 14:

To the extent that caucus confidentiality is breached by Members by disclosing what was said or went on to non-members of caucus, this is a matter to be dealt with by each party caucus. Any unauthorized recording of caucus meetings, however, is a matter for the House itself. Not only does this arguably impede Members in carrying out their parliamentary functions, but it also could constitute a contempt of the House of Commons.

Although both cases involved eavesdropping on confidential caucus meetings, I would respectfully submit that the rulings stand for two important propositions. First, caucus meetings form an essential component of an MP's parliamentary functions. When they are interfered with or impeded, this raises considerations of parliamentary privilege. Second, troubles arising from the technical facilities at caucus meetings become, in the words of the procedure and House affairs committee, a matter for the House itself.

On pages 111 and 112, *House of Commons Procedure and Practice* recalls for us:

A Member may also be obstructed or interfered with in the performance of his or her parliamentary functions by non-physical means. In ruling on such matters, the Speaker examines the effect the incident or event had on the Member's ability to fulfill his or her parliamentary responsibilities. If, in the Speaker's view, the Member was not obstructed in the performance of his or her parliamentary duties...then a [case] of privilege cannot be found.

It is impossible to codify all incidents which might be interpreted as matters of obstruction, interference, molestation or intimidation and, as such, constitute prima facie cases of privilege

Routine Proceedings

• (1615)

[*Translation*]

The inability of the Conservative caucus to conduct its affairs in both official languages has seriously undermined our ability to do our work, discuss issues at hand and prepare ourselves for another week of resistance in the face of a government that, after eight years, has so cruelly abandoned Canadians.

[*English*]

Should you agree with me that there is indeed a prima facie case of privilege here, I will be prepared to move the appropriate motion.

[*Translation*]

Mr. Luc Berthold (Mégantic—L'Érable, CPC): Mr. Speaker, I too wish to speak to this question of privilege, because I believe that my privileges as a parliamentarian were also breached during this morning's caucus meeting. My francophone colleagues in the Conservative caucus and I unfortunately did not have access to interpretation during the meeting.

The current situation on the Hill is no secret. Last October, Linda Ballantyne, president of the International Association of Conference Interpreters for the region of Canada, said the following to the Standing Committee on Procedure and House Affairs:

[*English*]

Canada did conduct a survey dating back to December 2021, I think it was. Measuring the amount of time spoken in Parliament by different parliamentarians of different languages, indeed we found that English has predominated and French has been snuffed out.

[*Translation*]

That is the reality in Parliament, because most of our colleagues use English as their primary language to communicate, share their opinions and make speeches. Unfortunately, when a group of colleagues get together, the discussions tend to occur mainly in English.

Unfortunately, that is what happened this morning in our caucus meeting. I want to commend the interpreters who were there for their offer. They came out of their booth and offered to provide interpretation services at the back of the room for those who wanted them. Unfortunately, that is not ideal. That is not the way to conduct a meeting, hold debates and have normal discussions. We cannot have a caucus meeting and make some of the members go to the back of the room so they can have access to interpretation services.

I therefore wholeheartedly support the question of privilege raised by the House leader for the official opposition. I want to raise the same question of privilege because I think that my privilege of being able to communicate with my colleagues was also breached by these technical difficulties. We need to have a plan B. Meetings must take place at the scheduled time and proceed normally with the possibility of access to interpretation services and interpreters and, especially, to the equipment that makes those services possible.

Mr. Speaker, I hope you will find that the question of privilege raised by my colleague is fair and you will side with him.

The Speaker: As members know, it is very important to me that every member in the House or on the Hill be able to participate in a debate or listen to a debate in the official language of their choice, because that is their right. It is very important. I would like to thank the hon. member for Mégantic—L'Érable.

[*English*]

I would like to thank the hon. member for Regina—Qu'Appelle for bringing that up. I will take it under advisement, dig in deeper and come back with an answer after the shortest delay. I want to thank all of you.

ROUTINE PROCEEDINGS

• (1620)

[*English*]

FEDERAL ELECTORAL BOUNDARIES COMMISSION

The Speaker: It is my duty to lay upon the table, pursuant to subsection 21(1) of the Electoral Boundaries Readjustment Act, a certified copy of the report of the Federal Electoral Boundaries Commission for the Province of British Columbia.

[*Translation*]

Pursuant to Standing Order 32(5), this report is deemed permanently referred to the Standing Committee on Procedure and House Affairs.

* * *

HEALTH CARE

Hon. Jean-Yves Duclos (Minister of Health, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, I rise today to describe an important step our government took just yesterday to strengthen our country's health care system.

As we all know, accessible, publicly funded, universal health care is a source of pride for many Canadians. Unfortunately, over the past several decades, and certainly in recent years, our health care system has faced unprecedented challenges.

Across the country, Canadians seeking care are finding their emergency rooms overwhelmed or even closed. Surgeries are being postponed or even cancelled. We have all heard heartbreaking stories of how the system has failed. Canadians deserve better. No one should lose a loved one because they could not get timely medical care.

After months of work, yesterday our government tabled a strong, reasonable and concrete offer to deliver real results for health care workers and all Canadians.

Routine Proceedings

First, we want to work together to improve essential access to family health care, especially in rural and remote regions and underserved communities. Right now, less than one-third of Canadians can see a health care provider within 48 hours. However, we know that better access to quality family health care helps us live healthier lives, reducing hospitalizations and ER visits. That is especially true for children, because prevention is key to avoiding long-term health problems. That means investing in family health teams, which may include doctors, physician assistants, nurse practitioners, dietitians, occupational therapists and other health care providers.

Second, we want to work together to support our health care workers and reduce surgical backlogs. As my colleagues from Yukon and Thunder Bay—Rainy River, who are both doctors, have told us time and time again, our health care workers suffered greatly during the pandemic. Many of them got sick or experienced burnout. Unfortunately, many of them left the profession. Those who remain are worried they will be forced to bear an additional burden. They took care of us, and we want to take care of them too. That means investing to improve support, retention, training and recruitment and to recognize the credentials of workers trained in Canada or abroad. It also means better planning and more investment in the future of our workers, which includes creating a centre of excellence to support their future.

Third, together we want to improve mental health and substance use services for Canadians. Currently, one in three Canadians report having mental health problems. As my colleague, the Minister of Mental Health and Addictions, so often says, mental health is health. Mental health is an integral part of overall health and how we function as a society, so it requires special attention. Our goal is to provide Canadians with a multidisciplinary care model that integrates mental health into all of our shared priorities. For example, with better access to a family health team, people who are suffering will be more easily referred to a psychologist or psychiatrist.

Fourth, we want to work together to modernize our health care system, because information saves lives. I have had this discussion with many people, including my colleague from St. John's East, and we know that improved access to health information will help patients take better care of their health. This is also essential to ensuring that health care workers can provide high-quality health care and make informed decisions. Imagine a nurse or physician in an emergency room trying to treat an unconscious patient in need of urgent care, without knowing what medication the patient is taking, what allergies they have, and what their medical history is.

Can members recall a time when they were referred by one health professional to another and felt frustrated at being asked to answer the same questions and take the same tests again because their medical records could not be shared?

• (1625)

That results in a duplication of efforts, a lot of stress for health care workers and increased costs. In 2023, it should be possible to share medical information securely in order to provide patients with quality health care while respecting their privacy.

[English]

Finally, helping Canadians age with dignity closer to home, with access to home care or safe long-term care, is another area of common priority. Many seniors want to remain in their family homes for as long as possible but lack supports to do so.

Collaborative work is fortunately already on its way with provinces and territories to support access to home care and safe long-term care through a joint investment of \$6 billion over five years.

Investing in these five key areas of common priorities will help repair the damage caused by COVID-19 and prepare for the future. The investment announced yesterday of \$198 billion over 10 years, of which \$48 billion is new funding, includes certain common commitments.

First, as per our shared responsibility under the Canada Health Act, governments must ensure that health care is provided based on need, not on the ability to pay. Governments must also ensure equitable access to health care services and that such access is supported by a strong public health care sector.

Second, agreements will reflect our joint commitment to health equity in reconciliation, so that indigenous peoples are able to access quality and culturally safe health services. Finally, we will also continue supporting better access for underserved and equity-deserving groups, including Canadians living in rural and remote areas, and those living in official language minority communities.

In summary, the major support that our government announced yesterday is aimed at helping Canadians live longer, healthier lives. To do that well, we need to act now and for the future. As time goes by, pressure on the health system will only increase as the demographic, social, health and environmental changes accelerate. Our aging population is straining the health care system just as health needs are growing. Experts also agree that we are facing increasing chronic and infectious diseases, growing costs for technology and drugs and the escalating impacts of climate change.

In conclusion, I want to thank my provincial and territorial health ministers for their strong collaborative work over the past year and assure them that our government will continue to be there to support them.

Routine Proceedings

Mr. Stephen Ellis (Cumberland—Colchester, CPC): Mr. Speaker, on this side of the aisle we know very clearly that, after eight years of the Liberal government, everything is broken, and sadly that includes the health care system. Having worked in that system for over a quarter of a century myself, it is very clear that my colleagues who continue to work there, as physicians, nurses, nurse practitioners, etc., experience unbelievable levels of burnout. It is over 50%. When we start to think about those folks and how we are going to continue to deliver care, what we feel is a sense of sadness. We feel a sense of crisis.

Dr. Katharine Smart, who is the former president of the Canadian Medical Association, states that we have a system on the brink of collapse. I guess what I would say is that this agreement, which in my mind was delivered by a Prime Minister who is out of touch with the realities as a *fait accompli*, is with the premiers of provinces, and when we watched those premiers walk very quickly by the microphones of the reporters yesterday, it is very easy to tell that they are not happy with this deal in any way, shape or form. What we know is that the Prime Minister has a habit of not wanting to discuss things with the premiers, or with anybody else who disagrees with his opinion. It would appear that he is out of touch once again with what is happening in the health care system.

For everyone out there in Canada who is listening, we know very clearly that the Liberal government has had almost eight years to improve the health care system. This Hail Mary pass it wants to throw is to a system that is crumbling in front of everybody's eyes. This is not a simple position of a Conservative opposition. It is very easy to see, as any Canadian does when they try to access a family doctor. As we know, over five million Canadians do not have access to a family physician. Many folks in the House do not have access to a family physician, and I know that Canadians out there watching today do not have access to a family physician.

That leaves us, sadly, with Canadians clamouring to receive care in settings such as emergency rooms. After eight years of the Liberal government, and it is almost hard to say that this is happening in Canada, people are dying in emergency rooms. People have died in an emergency room in my riding, and to have these things happening in a system that I cherish, both as a physician and as a Canadian, is unconscionable. For the Liberal government to have neglected health care over the past eight years is, once again, unconscionable.

What have the Liberals done with the money Canadians pay out of their pockets? What have they done with it? They have more than doubled the debt. They have added more to the debt than any other government in the history of Canada, and then when the premiers come to them and say there is a health care crisis out there, in case we did not know, the Liberals say that the cupboard is bare.

They talk about \$190-some billion, but when we really look at the mathematics of it all, it is again a bit of smoke and mirrors, because realistically what that is related to is an increase of \$4.6 billion, on average, year over year. Is \$4.6 billion a lot of money? I think it is a lot of money. That being said, it is nowhere near what the premiers, in their wisdom, realize they need to operate a safe, effective, efficient and modern health care system, which Canadians want to see, Canadian health care workers want to be a part of

and we, as Canadians, want to be proud of. Once again, the Liberal government has let Canadians down.

We know that at the current time the wait time for referrals from one's family physician for specialist treatment is the longest it has been in 30 years. It is over six months. It is unconscionable. There are over 1.228 million people waiting for procedures in this country. The backlog is enormous.

We also know very clearly that the Prime Minister chose not to meet with the premiers. We know he is not a collaborator. Once again, it is shameful. Also we know that the government in its platform in 2021 committed \$4.5 billion to the Canada mental health transfer, and absolutely none, that we know of, has been sent. We talk about a mental health crisis, and we have a government here, once again, that is out of touch with reality.

• (1630)

We have also spoken about medications for children. We have spoken about it in this House and at the health committee. We know there is a lack of availability of children's pain and fever medication, acetaminophen and ibuprofen, and that has not changed. The government has not given Canadians a satisfactory explanation as to why. We know that every primary children's oral antibiotic is short. We know that mothers who choose to use infant formula cannot get it in this country. Still, we have a government that is out of touch with reality.

When I look at all these things in totality, the final thing we need to really understand, as the government talks about preventive medicine, is that the government refuses to get clean water to indigenous nations in this country. It is shameful.

The budget is not giving the money required because the government spent it all. That is the reason. It spent it all in the way it chose to, even though the premiers have asked for it to be provided in a different way. This is unconscionable. This funding agreement that has been foisted upon the provinces is unacceptable in this country, and I know that Canadians will reject it.

The Prime Minister needs to take responsibility for the health care system that he has broken and allow us to fix it. Our solution for health care is to elect a Conservative government.

• (1635)

[*Translation*]

Mr. Luc Thériault (Montcalm, BQ): Mr. Speaker, before I begin my speech, I would like to say that my thoughts are with the friends and families of the children and adults who were the victims of the terrible tragedy at Garderie éducative Ste-Rose in Laval. I think we are all in shock following this terrible incident, and words fail us. I cannot imagine what the parents of the children who go to this day care are feeling. I want them to know that we are with them.

Routine Proceedings

I have had the privilege of representing the people of Montcalm since 2015. It is as much an honour for me today as it was the first day. During the first oral question period in which I participated, the member for Rivière-du-Nord asked for an increase in health transfers. Members will recall that, in 2011, the Harper government cut the health transfer escalator in half, reducing it from 6% to 3%. That was grossly insufficient to cover system costs. By 2015, we were feeling the repercussions of that decision. I have had the privilege of sitting in the House for almost eight years, and all that time, we have been constantly repeating that health transfers must increase.

Two years ago, Quebec and the provinces agreed to call for an increase in health transfers that would raise the federal government's share of health care funding from 22% to 35%. The way things are going, Quebec and the provinces will not be able to provide quality health care to the public.

If Ottawa underfunds health care, which is what it is doing, then there are three possible scenarios. Either health services decline, other government services decline because the governments of Quebec and the provinces have to use their own money to make up for Ottawa's cutbacks, or provincial debt spikes and the fiscal imbalance gets worse. Those are the three scenarios Quebec and the provinces are facing because of this lack of federal funding: deterioration of health services; underfunding of other government programs, including education, social services, roads and culture; or a growing fiscal imbalance. That is the choice that the federal government made by refusing to consider the premiers' legitimate and necessary demands. It has been putting the provinces on the road to austerity for 10 years.

Worse yet, the government is jeopardizing the quality of the services provided to the public. As the leader of the Bloc Québécois rightly said, the gap between the premiers' demand and this government's offer, which really ought to be called an ultimatum, should not be calculated in dollars. No, it should be calculated in terms of the number of people who will be abandoned. How many surgeries will be postponed? How many nurses and orderlies will be left to fend for themselves most of the time? What heartbreaking decisions will the health ministers in Quebec and the rest of Canada have to make in order to balance their budgets in a tight fiscal environment?

For years, my Bloc Québécois colleagues and I have been raising the matter by moving opposition motions, appearing with health care professionals, and tabling unanimous motions adopted by Quebec's National Assembly. We have asked questions relentlessly and reiterated the need to support exhausted and overworked health care workers. We have spoken about the tragedies unfolding in oncology and pediatric departments and the patients forced to wait months and months at the risk of their health, and sometimes even their lives.

The government said that our colleague was right and that that is why it was investing money, because it is so important. If it is that important, then it needs to invest the money because people are dying as we speak.

Yesterday, the government demonstrated that all it is capable of doing is saying the right thing, nothing more. The minister was also eloquent earlier.

• (1640)

Ottawa let its chequebook do the talking. It did not have much to say, other than that the provinces should just deal with it. Its offer is despicable. I say its offer, but when it is a take-it-or-leave-it situation, then it is more like an ultimatum. Its ultimatum is a 5% escalator for five years. I would remind the House that before the Harper era, it was 6%. They are not even going back to the Martin era. They are fixing the escalator issue, but only partly, because the cost of the system is now counted in sick people.

The aging population has put more pressure on the system, and the direct impact this has on health costs needs to be taken into consideration. We are talking about a 5% escalator for five years. The Prime Minister did not need to meet with the premiers of Quebec, the provinces and the territories to do that. He could have done it whenever he wanted to, unilaterally, just like when Stephen Harper unilaterally lowered the escalator from 6% to 3%. The Prime Minister could have announced this on his own, without an agreement.

The provinces were calling for an additional \$28 billion a year for health. The federal government's response was \$4.6 billion and that was its final offer. The government would have us believe that this is good news. Does the government have any mission more sacred than taking care of people? There are people who are sick, health care workers who are at the end of their rope. What is more important than being there for them? The Liberals would have us believe that they know more about health care needs than the health ministers for Quebec and the provinces and territories, that they know where to invest the money and how much is needed.

We are supposed to believe that the people who are not even capable of managing passports, managing borders and paying employees know how to fix the health care systems in Quebec and across the country. That is ridiculous. Quebec and the provinces needed a minimum of \$280 billion over ten years. That was the minimum. Ottawa responded with \$46 billion. That is a minimum shortfall of \$230 billion in the coming years.

Basically, the federal government announced yesterday that the underfunding of health care will continue for the next 10 years. That is it, and that is all. The Liberals promised us a big offer, but all we got was a big disappointment. Sick people in Quebec and Canada are the ones who will pay the price.

[*English*]

Mr. Don Davies (Vancouver Kingsway, NDP): Mr. Speaker, Canadians cherish public health care. It is part of our national identity, a social contract that ensures we will be cared for when we are vulnerable, regardless of the size of our bank account. It is an affirmation of our collective commitment to equality and justice.

However, our health care system is in crisis. Emergency rooms are overwhelmed; health care workers are burning out; millions of Canadians lack access to a primary care provider, and patients are facing massive backlogs for surgeries, diagnostics and other procedures.

Routine Proceedings

Although the COVID-19 pandemic has undeniably placed enormous strain on our health care system, it did not cause the current crisis; it exposed it. In fact, its roots can be traced back to decades of poor policy choices and underfunding by successive Conservative and Liberal governments.

When our health system was first created, it was based on a fifty-fifty cost-sharing partnership between Ottawa and the provinces, but over the years the federal government's contribution has declined far below that. This has profoundly shifted the fiscal burden for health care delivery and exacerbated pressures caused by an aging population, technology advances and increasingly expensive treatments and pharmaceutical drugs.

The results of this are clear to see on the front lines of care. Where Canada used to have 6.9 hospital beds per 1,000 people, we now have just 2.5. One in five Canadians cannot access a family doctor, the primary portal into our health care system, and Canada now ranks near the very bottom of the OECD in the number of physicians per 1,000 and wait times for essential care.

Tommy Douglas warned Canadians about the threat posed by this “subtle strangulation” strategy. He understood that opponents of public health care would attempt to starve our system of resources to lay the groundwork for private, for-profit care.

Unfortunately, his prediction appears dangerously accurate. Across Canada, Conservative premiers are exploiting the current crisis to pursue privatization, with the tacit approval of the federal government.

Alberta premier Danielle Smith has brazenly called for patients to fundraise for their own health care needs. Her government is implementing health spending accounts, a Trojan horse to inject user fees and private care into Alberta's health system.

In a recent throne speech, Manitoba premier Heather Stefanson announced her government's intention to expand private partnerships to deliver health care.

Ontario premier Doug Ford is planning to divert funding from his province's hospitals toward for-profit surgical clinics. This move is expected to benefit clinic owners with a windfall of over \$500 million.

We know this approach is a false solution that will exacerbate the current crisis. Just last year, in an exhaustive review of the evidence in the Cambie Surgeries case, the B.C. Court of Appeal unanimously ruled that allowing more private care in a parallel system is more expensive, fundamentally unfair and ultimately counterproductive. It found what experts and patients have long known: Privatization means line skipping for the rich, a drain on workers from a public system already short of staff and longer wait times for everyone else.

It is also poor economic policy. For-profit delivery drives up costs in the short term and make us dangerously vulnerable to corporate ransom in the long term. It is a frontal assault on our public health care system, and it must be stopped in its tracks.

Unfortunately, the government has demonstrated a troubling lack of concern in the face of this privatization agenda. The Prime Minister has even called Doug Ford's for-profit clinics scheme an ex-

ample of “innovation.” This should come as no surprise. While the Liberals may claim to defend public health care, their record demonstrates otherwise.

After promising to negotiate a new health accord in the 2015 election, the Liberal government instead adopted the very health transfer formula imposed by Stephen Harper. By unilaterally cutting annual federal transfer increases from 6% to 3%, when the need to tread water was 5.2%, Harper had baked in a recipe for systemic decay. The Liberals' decision to adopt that funding formula has deprived our health care system of over \$30 billion to date.

Now, after years of inaction in the face of a growing crisis, the Liberal government has come forward with the bare minimum needed to address this deliberate underfunding.

● (1645)

While initially indicating that it was offering nearly \$200 billion for health care over the next decade, a claim repeated by the Prime Minister today in this chamber, it turns out that three-quarters of that money is existing Canada health transfer funding that would have flowed to the provinces and territories without any new agreement. In reality, there is only \$4.6 billion per year in new federal spending on the table, and that has to be split among 10 provinces and three territories. To put this in perspective, total health care spending in Canada for 2022 was \$331 billion, according to the Canadian Institute for Health Information.

While this additional federal funding is urgently needed to help stabilize our health care system, it is far from sufficient to provide the generational fix that we need to the current crisis. It is a band-aid solution for a gaping wound. As Dr. Kevin Smith, president of Toronto's University Health Network, just noted, “If we look at the demands—the number of new Canadians we're expecting a year and the aging of the population—it'll come close to addressing inflation. It won't come close to addressing massive transformation.” Canada's nurses are already expressing discouragement.

Most troubling of all, the federal proposal leaves the door wide open for premiers who are pursuing private, for-profit health care schemes. New Democrats have strongly asserted the condition that additional public dollars must go to public care, and yet the Prime Minister did not raise a single concern with the premiers about their privatization plans at yesterday's summit, nor did he attach a single condition of his funding proposal to prevent it.

Canadians need their federal government to champion public health care, instead of standing back while Conservative premiers and others seek to systematically dismantle it. Real innovation is better support for health professionals, shorter wait times in hospitals and access to care based on need. It is expanded team-based care, preventative care and supports for aging at home. It is universal access to prescription drugs, dental care and mental health care.

New Democrats will never stop fighting to protect, strengthen and expand public health care across Canada. We know that we can deliver a public health care system that is world-class, timely and accessible for all, but this will not happen without national leadership, a full financial partnership and unwavering commitment to equity. The government's offer yesterday is but a start to what needs to be done.

New Democrats will continue to do our part to build the high-quality public health care system that Canadians want, need and deserve.

● (1650)

Ms. Elizabeth May: Mr. Speaker, I would ask for unanimous consent for the Green Party to be allowed to speak on the ministerial statement on the urgent need for health care protection in this country.

The Deputy Speaker: Is it agreed?

Some hon. members: No.

The Deputy Speaker: I wish to inform the House that because of the ministerial statement and the deferred recorded divisions, Government Orders will be extended by 82 minutes.

* * *

[Translation]

COMMITTEES OF THE HOUSE

PROCEDURE AND HOUSE AFFAIRS

Hon. Bardish Chagger (Waterloo, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, I have the honour to present, in both official languages, the following two reports of the Standing Committee on Procedure and House Affairs: the 22nd report entitled "Report of the Federal Electoral Boundaries Commission for Prince Edward Island 2022", and the 23rd report entitled "Report of the Federal Electoral Boundaries Commission for Newfoundland and Labrador 2022".

[English]

Pursuant to Standing Orders 104 and 114, I have the honour to present, in both official languages, the 24th report of the Standing Committee on Procedure and House Affairs regarding the membership of committees of the House.

If the House gives its consent, I move that the 24th report of the Standing Committee on Procedure and House Affairs be concurred in.

The Deputy Speaker: All those opposed to the hon. member's moving the motion will please say nay. Hearing no dissenting voice, it is agreed.

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

Routine Proceedings

(Motion agreed to)

* * *

PETITIONS

ELECTORAL REFORM

Ms. Elizabeth May (Saanich—Gulf Islands, GP): Mr. Speaker, it is an honour to rise today to present a petition of great concern to residents of my community with respect to electoral reform. The petitioners call for this Parliament to establish a national citizens assembly for electoral reform, to require the citizens assembly to complete its work within 12 months, and to adopt recommended changes before the next federal election so that Canadians can experience fair voting for the first time.

● (1655)

AHMADI MUSLIMS

Ms. Lindsay Mathyssen (London—Fanshawe, NDP): Madam Speaker, I am honoured to rise today to present a petition on behalf of Ahmadi Muslims living in Pakistan. Through section 48A of the Pakistan Elections Act of 2017, Ahmadi Muslims in Pakistan have been effectively denied the right to vote and essentially have been disenfranchised from the full and equal participation of a citizen's democratic right to vote because of their faith. In fact, they must renounce their faith in order to be placed on a separate electoral list.

Those who have signed this petition are asking for the government and the House of Commons to urge the Pakistani government to immediately repeal section 48A of the Elections Act and permit Ahmadi Muslims to vote alongside all other citizens of Pakistan as part of a joint electorate, and ask the federal government to urge the Pakistani government to create fair and democratic election processes for all Pakistanis without discrimination, prejudice or mention of anyone's religion.

OPIOIDS

Ms. Laurel Collins (Victoria, NDP): Madam Speaker, I am presenting three petitions today.

I am honoured to present a petition on behalf of constituents who remind us that the toxic drug supply and overdose crisis is one of the most deadly public health emergencies of our lifetime and that, on average, someone dies every two hours. The petitioners call on the government to declare a national public health emergency and develop a pan-Canadian overdose action plan. They talk about other reforms, including decriminalization, flawed drug policy and policing reforms, and the need for funding for programming and supports.

Government Orders

FIREWORKS

Ms. Laurel Collins (Victoria, NDP): Madam Speaker, I am presenting a petition from Canadians who note the harmful impacts of fireworks with respect to the environment, animal welfare and people who suffer from PTSD. The petitioners note there are amazing alternatives, such as visual light shows with drones, and call on the government to replace fireworks with these alternatives.

CORPORATE SOCIAL RESPONSIBILITY

Ms. Laurel Collins (Victoria, NDP): Madam Speaker, I am presenting a petition that focuses on the fact that Canadian companies are contributing to human rights abuses and environmental damage around the world. The petitioners call on the government to adopt due diligence legislation that would require companies to do due diligence to prevent human rights abuses and environmental damage throughout their global operations and supply chains, to have meaningful consequences for these companies and a legal right for people to seek justice in Canadian courts.

HEALTH CARE

Mr. Kevin Lamoureux (Winnipeg North, Lib.): Madam Speaker, for months now I have had residents of Winnipeg North sign a petition asking for the federal government to work with the provinces with respect to the issue of health care. Health care being the important issue that it is, and given the fact that the Prime Minister and the premiers had discussions yesterday and billions of dollars have followed, I thought it was most timely to present this petition, which calls on the federal government to provide the extra care necessary for mental health and long-term care, as well as additional financial commitments and support for health care workers. I am glad to see that many of the questions posed in the petition have actually been answered.

The Assistant Deputy Speaker (Mrs. Carol Hughes): I would remind the hon. member that he is to summarize what is in the petition, not to add to it through other means.

The hon. member for Kitchener Centre.

CLIMATE CHANGE

Mr. Mike Morrice (Kitchener Centre, GP): Madam Speaker, I rise to share a petition on behalf of petitioners who want to draw the attention of the House of Commons to the fact that Canada has signed the Paris Agreement and the signatories to the Paris Agreement are required to pursue efforts to limit the temperature increase to 1.5°C above pre-industrial levels. They call on the Government of Canada to take bold climate action, and that includes setting targets that align with lowering Canada's emissions in line with the 1.5°C target, working with provinces to phase out cold-fired electricity, ending thermal coal exports and investing in the transition to a prosperous decarbonized economy.

* * *

QUESTIONS ON THE ORDER PAPER

Mr. Kevin Lamoureux (Parliamentary Secretary to the Leader of the Government in the House of Commons, Lib.): Madam Speaker, I would ask that all questions be allowed to stand.

The Assistant Deputy Speaker (Mrs. Carol Hughes): Is that agreed?

Some hon. members: Agreed.

* * *

MOTIONS FOR PAPERS

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

The Assistant Deputy Speaker (Mrs. Carol Hughes): Is that agreed?

Some hon. members: Agreed.

GOVERNMENT ORDERS

• (1700)

[English]

**NATIONAL SECURITY REVIEW OF INVESTMENTS
MODERNIZATION ACT**

The House resumed from February 6 consideration of the motion that Bill C-34, An Act to amend the Investment Canada Act, be read the second time and referred to a committee.

Mr. Kevin Lamoureux (Parliamentary Secretary to the Leader of the Government in the House of Commons, Lib.): Madam Speaker, I wonder if my colleague can provide his thoughts in regard to the announcement with respect to the battery plant in the Kingston area.

Mr. Mark Gerretsen (Parliamentary Secretary to the Leader of the Government in the House of Commons (Senate), Lib.): Madam Speaker, first I just want to take the opportunity to welcome Duncan Venditti to Parliament Hill today. Duncan is a grade 6 student from Our Lady of Lourdes school in Kingston. There is no doubt, mark my words, that he will one day be sitting in the House. I am sure he will be on this side of the aisle, but the good news for my Conservative colleagues is that I am sure they will get along much better with Duncan than they do with me.

In terms of the battery manufacturing plant, this is a great example of how this piece of legislation would lend itself to the minister's being able to establish and bring new relationships to Canada, just like he has done by bringing to Canada the Umicore project, which will set up the largest electric-vehicle battery manufacturing plant in North America right outside of my riding in Hastings—Lennox and Addington.

Ms. Julie Dzerowicz (Davenport, Lib.): Madam Speaker, I am pleased to rise today to speak on behalf of the residents of Davenport in support of Bill C-34, an act to amend the Investment Canada Act.

Government Orders

The Investment Canada Act, for those who may not know, is designed to encourage investment, economic growth and employment in Canada. It is a very important act for our federal government, because as we continue to try to create a stronger culture of innovation in Canada, as our economy moves increasingly from tangible to intangible or non-physical assets, as intellectual property becomes more important, and as we work to define the freedom to operate rules in Canada, acts like the Investment Canada Act are very important.

It is also an act that provides mechanisms to review foreign investments in Canada to ensure that foreign investment is a net benefit to Canada and does not harm national security. The rules in the act are established to provide investor certainty while giving Canada the ability to block individual investments under specific circumstances. This act is critical to ensuring a prosperous economic future for Canada and to guiding the right type of investments in our country.

Let us review some of the key changes to the Investment Canada Act that are being proposed by Bill C-34. It is not first time we have made changes to this act, but it is probably the largest set of amendments we have proposed since 2009.

The first thing the bill would do is to introduce a preimplementation filing requirement for specific investments. This would give the Canadian government more tools to review any proposed investments in sensitive business sectors.

It would also give authority to our Minister of Innovation, Science and Industry, in consultation with our Minister of Public Safety, to order further national security reviews of investments.

It would update penalties to strengthen deterrence of any behaviours we may not want.

It would introduce the authority for the Minister of Industry, again in consultation with the Minister of Public Safety, to impose interim conditions on an investment to reduce the risk of national security injury taking place during the course of the review itself, such as through the possible transfer of assets, intellectual property or trade secrets before the review is complete.

The bill would provide greater flexibility in mitigating national security risks by allowing the Minister of Innovation, Science and Industry, in collaboration with the Minister of Public Safety, to impose binding undertakings on investors. These undertakings would have to demonstrate that they adequately mitigate the national security risk that would arise from the investment in question.

Finally, the bill would allow Canada to share case-specific information with international counterparts to help protect common security interests.

The Investment Canada Act not only sets out the rules that would encourage more investment and trade in Canada, but also includes a number of measures that would serve to protect any foreign-made investments in Canada as well.

The economy is changing, the global trade and investment environment is changing, and so must our rules, legislation and regulations change. This would ensure that Canada is able to attract the best foreign investments and trade that would encourage economic

growth, innovation and employment opportunities in Canada while also protecting Canada's national security and interests as they relate to trade and foreign investments.

As I mentioned earlier, this is not the first time that our Minister of Innovation, Science and Industry has updated the Investment Canada Act. He has done so at least three times in the last couple of years. The first time, in March 2021, he updated the national security guidelines in light of the then-evolving national security concerns to include investments involving sensitive personal data, sensitive technologies and critical minerals, as well as investments by state-owned or state-influenced investors.

The second time, we adjusted our federal government act to begin in February 2022, when Russia began its unprovoked and illegal attacks against Ukraine, creating an environment of heightened national security and economic risk. At that time, we put out a policy advising clearly that any investment with ties to Russia would only be found to be of net benefit to Canada on an exceptional basis. Moreover, any foreign investments with ties to the Russian state would also be viewed as potentially harmful to Canada's national security.

● (1705)

Finally, the third time we updated the Investment Canada Act was when the federal government announced a new policy related to foreign investment in Canadian critical mineral sectors. The policy advised that any investment in the critical mineral sector by state-influenced investors would only be approved as being a net benefit to Canada on an exceptional basis. Then we took quick action to block transactions that would be injurious to Canada's national security, and the government ordered the divestiture of investments by three foreign companies in Canadian critical mineral companies.

This announcement was a change in procedure, and it is also part of our efforts to modernize and improve the administration of Canada's investment review regime. Despite previously having the authority to announce decisions of this nature, the Government of Canada had traditionally not done so.

Again, it is not the first time updating the Investment Canada Act. Indeed, this bill is the latest in a series of actions our government has taken to ensure that we have the right tools and flexibility to protect Canada's national security interests. In turn, I believe that this would ensure an investment climate in Canada that is positive for economic growth both now and in the future.

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Let me take a moment to relay some of the great investments we have already made in the area of innovation, science and technology with an eye to the future. For me, these are the types of investments that absolutely set Canada up for success both now and in the future.

In late January, the Minister of Innovation, Science and Industry announced an investment of \$100 million through the strategic—

The Assistant Deputy Speaker (Mrs. Carol Hughes): On a point of order, the hon. member for South Shore—St. Margarets.

Mr. Rick Perkins: Madam Speaker, this bill is about foreign direct investment in Canada. It is not about providing subsidies to foreign companies to operate battery plants. I would ask the member if she would—

The Assistant Deputy Speaker (Mrs. Carol Hughes): I would remind the hon. member that there is some latitude during speeches. I am sure that the hon. member will come back to the original bill that is before the House.

The hon. member for Davenport.

Ms. Julie Dzerowicz: Madam Speaker, I was highlighting some of the great investments we have already made, which are innovative and very much set Canada and Canadians up for success.

At the end of January, the Minister of Innovation, Science and Industry announced an investment of \$100 million through the strategic innovation fund to support Saskatchewan's BHP's \$7.5-billion project to develop its world-leading, low-emissions potash fund. To me, this innovation is one of the many investments we are making that are going to help make sure we will be reaching our net-zero targets by 2050.

In mid-January, our Minister of Innovation, Science and Industry announced the launch of Canada's national quantum strategy, which will shape the future of quantum technologies in Canada and help create thousands of jobs. It is an investment of \$360 million, and the strategy will amplify Canada's existing quantum research and grow quantum technologies, companies and talent.

Here are another couple of other things I am really proud that we have done.

Our Minister of Innovation has also signed MOUs with Volkswagen to investigate opportunities for Canada to contribute to Volkswagen's global and regional battery supply chains, which will be of mutual benefit to both of our countries and will advance our respective EV and energy agendas. Another great MOU I want to point out is the one we signed with Mercedes-Benz to look at opportunities to promote co-operation and to explore ways to advance opportunities across Canada's electric vehicle supply chain, including, but not limited to, securing sustainable sources of raw materials moving forward.

I will mention one more thing I am very proud of.

In 2019, we set up the innovation asset collective, which is a \$30-million pilot that very much helps Canadian clean-tech companies harness the power of IP to maximize the value of their intangible assets and set the stage—

• (1710)

The Assistant Deputy Speaker (Mrs. Carol Hughes): On a point of order, the hon. member for Calgary Rocky Ridge.

Mr. Pat Kelly: Madam Speaker, I hate to have to do this, but in the time since you ruled on the previous point of order, we have not had any connection yet to the bill.

Perhaps, through you, Madam Speaker, we could remind the member to tie this to the bill, because we are actually talking about Bill C-34 and not a laundry list of funding announcements by the government that have nothing to do with the bill.

The Assistant Deputy Speaker (Mrs. Carol Hughes): Again, there is a bit of latitude, but the hon. member is correct. I would remind those who are giving speeches today and speaking on this that they should be referencing the bill and maybe mentioning the bill during their allocations.

The hon. member for Davenport has 30 seconds to continue.

Ms. Julie Dzerowicz: Madam Speaker, I thought I had a minute left, but I just want to say to everyone who stood on a point of order that I very much outlined exactly what the bill is meant to do, why it is important to be part of the Investment Canada Act and why it is so important for both current and future economic success for Canada.

As we create a culture around intellectual property, as we work to translate inventions and innovation, as we work to educate and protect IP generated from R and D investment, and as we continue to encourage and need foreign investment and trade in Canada, it is important to modernize our Investment Canada Act for the good of our economy, for jobs, for current and future prosperity and to protect our national security interests.

I am thankful for the opportunity to speak—

The Assistant Deputy Speaker (Mrs. Carol Hughes): The hon. member for South Shore—St. Margarets.

Mr. Rick Perkins (South Shore—St. Margarets, CPC): Madam Speaker, the first half of the member's speech was a bit about this bill. The last half, obviously, was not.

She is a member of the government, and in 2017, it sent a letter to a company in B.C. that said it is okay to be bought by a state-owned enterprise from China. The former minister of industry said that. The company in China was called Hytera. In 2019, the government did not even do a national security review of this, nor of the acquisition of our only lithium mine, Tanco, in Manitoba.

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Can the member enlighten this House, with her extensive reading of the bill, by telling us which clause in the bill will stop that from happening in the future?

The Assistant Deputy Speaker (Mrs. Carol Hughes): It is my duty, pursuant to Standing Order 38, to inform the House that the questions to be raised tonight at the time of adjournment are as follows: the hon. member for Victoria, Climate Change; the hon. member for Kitchener Centre, Health; and the hon. member for Nunavut, Indigenous Affairs.

Ms. Julie Dzerowicz: Madam Speaker, the changes that are being proposed to the Investment Canada Act would provide more flexibility and agility for our minister to make these types of decisions in the future. My understanding is that he is always advised by our national security advisers. We will always take direction from those who provide us advice.

There is a reason we are here: We are constantly modernizing our act to make sure that the national security interests of Canada continue to be protected.

[*Translation*]

Mr. Xavier Barsalou-Duval (Pierre-Boucher—Les Patriotes—Verchères, BQ): Madam Speaker, I would like to thank the member for her interesting speech. What is unfortunate is that there is a major problem in Bill C-34. I do not understand why the government has not addressed it.

It had the opportunity to modernize the Investment Canada Act. It addressed national security. That is a good thing. However, there is another aspect, the net benefit review, which has an extremely high threshold. At this time, the threshold for the review of an investment is between \$1.3 billion and \$9 billion.

Does my colleague not find this threshold to be too high, and that it makes no sense to not examine investments that fall below that very high threshold?

• (1715)

[*English*]

Ms. Julie Dzerowicz: Madam Speaker, as I mentioned before, the Investment Canada Act provides for net benefit and national security reviews of foreign investments in Canada. We have proposed a number of changes in this particular act. Assuming the bill passes second reading in the House and goes to committee, there will be many opportunities to consider amendments that might strengthen it.

Mr. Richard Cannings (South Okanagan—West Kootenay, NDP): Madam Speaker, one of the concerns the NDP and I have about this bill is that we should be looking more closely at transactions where a company is being taken over by a state-owned enterprise. The member for South Shore—St. Margarets mentioned Chinese investments. In British Columbia, we had a case where Anbang Insurance bought Retirement Concepts, a local British Columbia company that operates long-term care facilities in B.C. That company was then taken over by the Chinese government, yet there was no automatic trigger for an analysis there. We should have that in this bill for when there is a takeover by a foreign state-owned enterprise.

Ms. Julie Dzerowicz: Madam Speaker, I want to thank the hon. member for his important work on this file.

As I mentioned, it is not the first time we have updated the Investment Canada Act. We have taken a number of actions to ensure that we have the right tools and flexibility to protect Canada's national security interests. Assuming the bill passes second reading in this House, it will go to committee, and there will be many opportunities there for us to have a debate and talk about what additional elements we might want to see in it.

[*Translation*]

Mr. Xavier Barsalou-Duval (Pierre-Boucher—Les Patriotes—Verchères, BQ): Madam Speaker, I would like to mention that I will be sharing my time with the member for Rimouski-Neigette—Témiscouata—Les Basques.

We are here today to talk about Bill C-34. To date, there has been a great deal of discussion about national security, which is the main part of the bill. This bill seeks to reinforce the powers the minister has to take action to protect national security. This is not a bad thing; it is even a very good thing, but decidedly, it does not go far enough.

I also want to talk about one of my concerns relating to another aspect of the Investment Canada Act, which, unfortunately, the bill under consideration does not address.

In fact, there are a number of things in the Investment Canada Act. First, people abroad who want, for example, to purchase a company, invest in a mine, start a research firm or make any significant investment whatsoever have to fill out a form and give notice of their investment indicating their intention.

Then, the federal government must determine whether it wants to review the actual investment. It can review it based on national security criteria, which is what this bill is about. The bill seeks to give the minister more power and to tighten the review criteria.

The other review criterion has to do with the net benefit for Canada. That is something that is a little more vague and that is not very clearly defined. I would even go so far as to say that there is not much on the subject in the current act. That gives the minister a lot of latitude in determining what constitutes a net benefit for Canada. In some unforeseen circumstances, it might be good for the minister to have the latitude to use their judgment. However, it would be good to have a bit more accountability and proactivity on the part of the government with regard to the use of the act.

I would like to talk about where the review threshold was when I was first elected in 2015. I would note that the minister is not obligated to conduct a review. Reviews are mandatory only beyond a certain threshold. When I was elected in 2015, the review threshold was \$369 million. What is it now? Better be sitting down for this. It has been indexed, but let us just say it is indexing on steroids. Today, in 2023, the threshold ranges from \$1.3 billion to \$1.9 billion. That means not all transactions go through a net benefit review if they are below that threshold.

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The \$1.3-billion threshold is for businesses with which Canada does not have a trade agreement, while the \$1.9-billion threshold is for those with which it has agreements, such as the U.K., the U.S., the EU and so on.

This means that some Quebec companies are not protected by the current review threshold. These companies are very important to Quebec's economy, which is very different from Canada's economy. The Canadian economy relies heavily on subsidiaries of U.S. companies, but Quebec's economy is more about small and medium-sized businesses. Slowly but surely, some small businesses grow by dint of hard work and even end up getting listed on the stock exchange.

Some of these major Quebec corporations that are publicly traded and are not protected under the current review threshold include Héroux-Devtek, which has a market value of \$560 million, Lassonde Industries, which has a market value of \$805 million, Cascades, which has a market value of \$909 million, TC Transcontinental, which has a market value of \$1.3 billion, and Resolute Forest Products, which has a market value of \$1.6 billion.

All of these companies could disappear overnight. Any big shot from the U.S. or any other country on the planet could come in and take them over. The minister would not even look at it. It would be rubber-stamped. Thank you, good night, goodbye to that company. These are major, strategic corporations in terms of Quebec's national interest, and the federal government will not even look at them. It could not be bothered to take the time to analyze the transaction. It is unbelievable.

Worse, in some situations, a review is conducted, but it is not always very rigorous. Let me give an example. My riding was home to a company called Rona. Everyone in Quebec knows Rona. It is a major hardware store that sells all the building materials used in homes. In 2016, the company was sold for \$3.2 billion to the American company Lowe's, a company in the same sector.

• (1720)

What happened? A review was supposed to take place because, at that time, the threshold was set at \$369 million and it was exceeded. However, immediately after the transaction, some potential wrongdoing came to light. The former board of directors was fired, as was its president, Robert Dutton. Complicit in this was the president of the Caisse de dépôt et placement du Québec, who allegedly planned his exit in order to facilitate the sale of Rona, since it was blocked the first time around, in 2012. This former president of the Caisse de dépôt et placement du Québec is now working for the Liberals. His name is Michael Sabia.

What is interesting is that when we learned about this, we immediately wrote to Minister Bains. We asked him to take a look at what was happening before authorizing the transaction. We just wanted to put it on hold to see if it was a good idea for Quebec or not. What happened? The minister rubber-stamped it. He did not ask any questions. Before we knew it, the company was gone. That is sad. The company was re-sold for \$400 million U.S. when it was originally purchased for \$3.2 billion. That loss of value signals an abysmal failure. It was sold for a pittance to another U.S. company after Lowe's fell flat on its face in Quebec.

Well, after the minister approved the transaction, we wondered why he made that decision and what his thought process was. There should have been a net benefit to Canada review. We submitted an ATIP request to see what documents and analyses helped the minister make his decision. The answer we got was surreal. Here is what it said: We carried out a comprehensive search and regret to inform you that we found no documents corresponding to your request.

There are no documents. The minister referred to zero documents and zero analyses to make his decision about net benefit to Canada. That is what passes for rigorous analysis by the Liberals for a company worth \$3.2 billion, a massive company of strategic value to Quebec. What do people buy at hardware stores? They buy building materials. Building materials are made from raw materials. What do we produce here? We produce wood, nails, shovels and so on. The products that end up on the shelves in those stores are products we make in Quebec.

What happens when a foreign company buys that company? The foreign company has its own suppliers already. For example, an American company will use American suppliers because it already does business with them. Quebec suppliers get kicked to the curb. That is what happened, unfortunately. Many Quebec suppliers lost their orders.

Now Rona will have a second chance with its new owner. We hope things will improve, but it is sad. What happened was the Liberals could not be bothered to review the transaction to see whether it was beneficial or whether it was even over the threshold. That is a big problem. I find that really odd. When a company comes here from overseas and takes a heavy-handed approach, often our first instinct is to assume that they are much better than us, that they are much bigger and therefore unbeatable. We think we have no choice but to sell, so we immediately roll over.

Companies like Target come to mind. When Target came along, the owners of Zellers sold all their stores. It was a fire sale. Run for your lives. Target was going to come in and kill everyone. What happened to Target? It did not last a year before it shut down. Another example is Provigo. Provigo was a Quebec company, a large grocery store chain that created competition. Now we have Loblaws, which exists in the market and is up against Metro, but there used to be other players, too. Unfortunately, when Provigo disappeared, there was less competition, which resulted in higher prices in grocery stores. Today, there are no longer any Loblaws grocery stores in Quebec. Loblaws put the Provigo signs back up. They realized that the Loblaws stores were not working.

Just because a foreign company comes here does not mean that it will succeed. We too have good, solid companies. We should be proud of them. We should ask questions before rubber-stamping any old transaction. Unfortunately, it seems that this government does not understand that. There was an opportunity with Bill C-34 to do more to defend our companies, and it did not do so. I am really disappointed.

• (1725)

[English]

Mr. Kevin Lamoureux (Parliamentary Secretary to the Leader of the Government in the House of Commons, Lib.): Madam Speaker, when I look at the legislation, what I see is a modernization that would in essence enable the ministers to continue what I believe is a healthy history. Canada has been perceived as, and has been in real terms, an attraction or magnet for foreign investment. What we are talking about here is ensuring there is more transparency and accountability and the ability to protect and provide security in a better way going forward.

The principles of the legislation are worthy of supporting, no matter what side of the House one comes from. I wonder if the member from the Bloc would concur that, at the very least, this legislation should be going to committee. Hopefully it happens relatively soon.

[Translation]

Mr. Xavier Barsalou-Duval: Madam Speaker, the member opposite is pretty much telling us that they are going to modernize Bill C-34, that it is a good thing and that we should be pleased.

I am pleased that Bill C-34 will be updated somewhat; what is sad is that that requires rigour. The problem is that there is no rigour.

Is there a way to come up with a more rigorous bill, one that would require rigour? That is what I would find more interesting and make me happier.

Let us look at an example. In 2021-22, there were 1,255 notices of foreign investment. That is a lot. How many were examined? How many were reviewed?

Not even 1% of investments were reviewed. That is absolutely crazy, but that is what the government considers to be rigorous. It approves everything and has lost control.

[English]

Mr. Rick Perkins (South Shore—St. Margarets, CPC): Madam Speaker, I found the member's speech very interesting, particularly with regard to whether there are any documents to support the minister's decision on the acquisition laws.

In the last Parliament, recommendation number one of the unanimous report by the industry committee was that a state-owned enterprise's financial ceiling for review by the government be lowered from \$415 million, from a hostile country like China, to zero. This bill, Bill C-34, does not propose any changes to that limit, which means that state-owned enterprises can buy up anything they like in this country under \$415 million.

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I would like the member's views on whether he would like to see amendments to this bill in that area.

• (1730)

[Translation]

Mr. Xavier Barsalou-Duval: Madam Speaker, I totally agree with what the Conservative member said.

It does not make any sense for an enterprise owned by foreign interests, not just private interests, but state-owned foreign interests, to be able to buy anything under the threshold he mentioned without any oversight. The government is not even bothering to look at whether it is a good thing or not. A review should be automatic when a state-owned enterprise buys a company here.

That does not mean blocking the transaction. The idea is not to block every purchase that might happen here. The same goes for private interests. The idea is for the government to at least review the purchase and ask questions rather than just letting everything go forward. Right now, the government is sticking its head in the sand and not seeing what is happening. It is blind.

[English]

Ms. Laurel Collins (Victoria, NDP): Madam Speaker, the government allowed a Chinese insurance giant and bank to take over operations of seniors' living facilities. This company was then seized by the Chinese government, which now holds a 98% ownership stake. There are no provisions in the Investment Canada Act that allow for a review of subsequent acquisitions by state-owned companies.

Does the member support closing this loophole?

[Translation]

Mr. Xavier Barsalou-Duval: Madam Speaker, obviously I agree with my NDP colleague, who raises a really good point.

I would add one thing: out of sight, out of mind. That is true in general. It means that the more distanced the executives are from the company's operations, the less interested they are in the company's well-being and results. It means that the further away the owner of a company is geographically from what is happening here, the less accountability there is and the less likely the company owner is to take our national interests into account in their daily business decisions.

That is something the government needs to keep in mind when deciding whether to authorize transactions.

Mr. Maxime Blanchette-Joncas (Rimouski-Neigette—Témiscouata—Les Basques, BQ): Madam Speaker, Bill C-34, an act to amend the Investment Canada Act, has good intentions. It seeks to improve controls and give the Minister of Innovation, Science and Industry more authority over foreign investments in Canada. The Bloc Québécois fully supports this commitment to better protecting the economy of Quebec and Canada from foreign interests that may be harmful to us.

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The new review process is essentially the same as the one used in the United States. Adopting it increases the chances that the U.S. will continue to see us as a reliable partner. That is a condition for being a preferred supplier that is well integrated into their supply chains. At a time when protectionism is on the rise among our neighbours to the south, a trend that could seriously disrupt our economy, that is an important asset, and the Bloc Québécois applauds it.

Bill C-34 is in addition to the new critical minerals guidelines that the government adopted in October 2022, and that apply to 31 minerals that are critical for the long-term economic prosperity of Canada and its allies. Bill C-34 and Canada's new critical minerals strategy should help stop Chinese companies, among others, from taking over our resources.

All these developments are positive, but they are only half-measures. That is why the Bloc Québécois is asking the government to go much further in controlling foreign investments in general. The bill under consideration is limited to investments affecting national security. This category of investment is extremely sensitive, so focusing on it is justified. However, it represents only a small fraction of all foreign investments made in Canada. It is clear that the safety net provided for in the new system created by these proposed amendments to the Investment Canada Act is inadequate.

Here are some figures. Of the 1,255 investment projects filed last year, under the new rules being proposed in Bill C-34, only 24 would be subject to review. Clearly, this is like a grain of sand on a beach. This bill would affect only 2% of all investment projects filed last year. The other 1,221 projects from last year would remain subject to the new rules. Those rules provide for a review to determine whether a project will truly provide a net economic benefit to Canada.

There are six criteria then used to assess whether a transaction is beneficial. That said, I would draw the attention of my colleagues to the fact that a review is only triggered when a project exceeds a certain monetary threshold, as my colleague from Pierre-Boucher—Les Patriotes—Verchères explained.

That is where the problem lies. Over the years, the threshold at which the government must assess whether an investment is economically beneficial has been significantly increased. It has more than tripled in the last 10 years. At the same time, the number of investment projects is increasing every year, and that must be taken into consideration.

The consequence of this aberration is that virtually all projects are rubber-stamped without additional review. Last year, of the 1,255 projects submitted, only eight were subject to a review under the Investment Canada Act. That is less than 1%.

The member for Winnipeg North says that the law is being amended, so it must be good. The Liberals have created a bill that does not affect even 1% of the projects. That is not very ambitious. It reminds me of yesterday's smoke show on health transfers.

The review rate was 10% as recently as about 10 years ago, in 2009. In reality, this measure has become essentially ineffective over time. It might as well not exist; it would not make much difference. The situation is such that foreign investments are rubber-

stamped without analysis, save for exceptional cases. Understandably, less than 1% certainly qualifies as exceptional.

● (1735)

Everyone knows how much I love history, how passionate I am about it, and I believe that building our future depends on having a good understanding of the past so we can learn from our successes and avoid repeating mistakes. I would like to share some snippets of history to illustrate why we need to do more to control foreign investment.

Since the Quiet Revolution, the Government of Quebec has established some important economic and financial levers. These tools enable it to pursue a policy of economic nationalism designed to give Quebecers more control over their economy. That does not mean Quebec is not open to foreign investment. We are open to it because it can drive growth and development. However, we believe the priority is supporting our own businesses to help them grow so we can protect the significant decision-making power of our own corporate headquarters.

In 1988, former Parti Québécois premier Bernard Landry lobbied for the North American Free Trade Agreement, better known as NAFTA, which was signed with the U.S. and Mexico in the early 1990s. Quebec's strategy worked. Quebec's decision to invest in its businesses paid off, and many flagship companies headquartered on Quebec soil grew.

As the figures show, the presence of head offices is important. There are currently close to 578 head offices in Quebec. This represents approximately 50,000 jobs that pay twice as much as the Quebec average. On top of that, head offices provide nearly 20,000 other jobs for specialized suppliers such as accounting, legal, financial and computer firms, and so on. Structurally, companies headquartered in Quebec also tend to favour procurement from local suppliers, which creates a positive economic circle. Finally, companies tend to concentrate their strategic activities, such as scientific research and technological development, where their head office is located.

As the Bloc Québécois science and innovation critic, I have to emphasize how important this characteristic is, since Canada ranks last in the G7 when it comes to corporate investments in research and development. This statistic can probably be traced to the fact that the Canadian economy has always been recognized as a subsidiary economy. One might think of the automotive sector, with Ford Canada and GM Canada, or the oil sector, with the Shell Canadas and the Imperial Oils of the world.

There is no shortage of examples of the harmful effects that ill-advised foreign investments can have on our economy and even our prosperity. Here are just a few.

First, there is the loss of decision-making powers and head offices, which condemns us to being a subsidiary economy, where foreigners decide for us. Second, there is the weakening of Montreal's financial sector as a global finance hub. Third, there is the total dependence of our businesses on foreign suppliers and supply chains that are more fragile than ever. We saw that during difficult times, such as the COVID-19 pandemic. Fourth, there is the possible land grab by rich foreigners who do not care about our social and economic priorities. That is a concrete example. Fifth, there is the loss of control over our natural resources, which are our country's greatest asset.

By focusing exclusively on national security, Bill C-34 does not address Quebecers' and Canadians' gradual loss of control over their own economy. I want to reiterate that we invite the government to amend its bill to make it much more bold and ambitious and to modernize the entire Investment Canada Act and not just the part on national security.

As always, the Bloc Québécois strives to be a constructive partner, and as such it is recommending three types of amendments. The first is to lower the review threshold to prevent most foreign investments from being approved without review. The second is to pay special attention to strategic sectors of the economy. The third is to develop a tighter process for transactions involving control over intellectual property patents.

• (1740)

I hope the government will listen to our practical proposals and modernize this bill.

[*English*]

Mr. Kevin Lamoureux (Parliamentary Secretary to the Leader of the Government in the House of Commons, Lib.): Madam Speaker, I am encouraged that, toward the tail end, the member referred to the idea that there could be room for improving the legislation. This is a reason that I am hopeful the member would share those thoughts with the minister. Let us ultimately see the legislation go to committee.

At the beginning of his speech, the member referred to this whole one per cent factor. We also need to recognize that some industries need more attention than others. Information technology is an example of this, and I think that is another area that the committee could be looking at.

Could the member provide some additional thoughts in regard to those industries he would think offhand, and I do not expect a list, that there should be more attention given to?

[*Translation*]

Mr. Maxime Blanchette-Joncas: Madam Speaker, I thank my colleague from Winnipeg North for that good question. I like these concise questions that are on topic and are neither provocative nor arrogant.

To answer my colleague's question, there are indeed several sectors. I am thinking about the biopharmaceutical sector in particular.

In the early 2000s, there were a lot of pharmaceutical companies in Canada, primarily in Quebec. They are all gone now because of

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the underinvestment in research and development and the underinvestment in programs to develop them.

I think that we need to focus on our own expertise and protect what we have. We are in a globalized economy, and competition is fierce. I encourage my colleague from Winnipeg North to realize that Canada is the only G7 country that cut its investments in research and development. That is too bad. As I said, Canada is the only G7 country that is still unable to stimulate the private enterprise economy.

There is a parallel to be drawn. As I explained very clearly in my speech, when we have fewer head offices, we have fewer means of intervention. This creates jobs in parallel, including with partners in nearby supply chains. Understand this: If we allow others to make decisions for us, people overseas will not take us into consideration as much.

• (1745)

[*English*]

Mr. Rick Perkins (South Shore—St. Margarets, CPC): Madam Speaker, in response to the member for Winnipeg North, I will add food as one of the industries that should be on the list.

However, my question is around the issue of assets. The Investment Canada Act focuses on companies, but more and more, we are seeing Canadian companies selling their strategic assets, sometimes to countries that are not favourable to us. A company could remain Canadian but sell off a mine; a technology; or in our intangible asset world, even data.

Could the member speak to the issue that, if the bill goes to committee, which I believe it will, we should be looking at it in terms of the areas of assets in addition to just companies?

[*Translation*]

Mr. Maxime Blanchette-Joncas: Madam Speaker, this is a very interesting subject. We have to avoid the intellectual shortcuts that people sometimes take in the House.

I sure appreciate the opportunity my colleague gave me. My colleague from Pierre-Boucher—Les Patriotes—Verchères gave us a very good example. Rona was purchased by foreign interests, a company called Lowe's, not to name names. It was then resold for a pittance. The company the government had invested in was originally valued at over \$3 billion, but it was sold for \$400 million.

Our constituents are watching us. They placed their trust in us, and they want us to manage their investment with great care. In this case, it was a total failure.

*Government Orders**[English]*

Ms. Rachel Blaney (North Island—Powell River, NDP): Madam Speaker, of course, coming from British Columbia, my concern is that we saw a Chinese company come in and buy a lot of seniors' homes. When I look at the piece of legislation, there is still a significant loophole. If something were taken over by the Government of China, as it was before, there would be no process for investment Canada or the minister to be able to review the next acquisition.

Is this something the member would support the NDP to look at in the committee?

[Translation]

Mr. Maxime Blanchette-Joncas: Madam Speaker, I thank my colleague for her question. I touched on this subject briefly in my speech. People with foreign interests or economic interests coming to invest here do not always have our social investments at heart.

She mentioned seniors' homes. I fully agree that we need to pay close attention in modernizing the bill, and we must consider that the interests of foreign investors will not always align with ours.

She makes an interesting point. I gave the example of land grabs. Everyone here needs to eat, just like the general population. It is the same thing. The Bloc Québécois will certainly be able to work with my colleague.

Mr. Francesco Sorbara (Vaughan—Woodbridge, Lib.): Madam Speaker, I rise today to speak to Bill C-34, an act to amend the Investment Canada Act.

Today, our government is proposing important amendments to modernize this legislation. We will never hesitate to act swiftly and decisively when there is a threat to our national security, and these amendments are at the heart of that effort.

The purpose of this bill is to modernize the Investment Canada Act. The proposed amendments will help make Canada more agile in addressing any threats that may arise from foreign investment, thereby maintaining Canada's position as a top destination for doing business.

Today I want to talk specifically about increasing foreign investment across the entire economy and in certain key sectors of Canada's economy over the past few years. More than ever, we know and recognize the importance of ensuring that we are doing everything we can to promote and foster a strong, innovative green economy. A clear and predictable regulatory regime in Canada is essential for businesses and investors.

As we know, Canada is one of the best places in the world to do business. Businesses that invest here benefit from favourable economic conditions, a stable political climate, safe infrastructure and an innovation-friendly environment. Canada's advantageous position makes companies that do business here more competitive and increases prosperity for all Canadians.

Over the past few years, more and more foreign investors have chosen Canada for its business-friendly environment. The flow of foreign direct investment in Canada has nearly doubled over the past five years.

● (1750)

[English]

I will be sharing my time with my hon. colleague and esteemed friend from Halifax.

[Translation]

According to the United Nations, in 2021, Canada had the second-largest ratio of foreign direct investment stock to GDP among G20 countries. However, this increase in the volume of foreign investment also comes with certain risks. For example, the number of investments reviewed under the Investment Canada Act also doubled over the past five years. There are also more and more investments related to sensitive technologies, critical minerals and sensitive information.

It is also important to point out the recent increase in national security reviews under the Investment Canada Act. There have been more national security reviews since 2020 than in the previous 10 years. This upward trend is expected to continue, given that Canada is an attractive destination for foreign investors.

The reality is that today's geopolitical dynamic is evolving quickly. Hostile actors could seek to disrupt Canada's economic security through our open market economy. Threats to Canada are changing all the time, and the government must ensure that Canada's foreign investment review regime strikes a good balance between promoting foreign direct investment and protecting Canada's interests and security.

We are all proud that Canada is an open economy and a trading nation. Our country is one of the most attractive destinations for the foreign investments that are necessary to our economic prosperity. In order to ensure that Canada remains an attractive destination for foreign investment, we must have a clear and predictable regulatory regime. That is why this new bill, which modernizes Canada's foreign investment review regime by amending the Investment Canada Act, or ICA, is so important.

The amendments to the ICA will make the investment review process more effective and transparent, while ensuring that the interests and security of all Canadians are better protected. This new Bill C-34 represents the most significant update of the Investment Canada Act since 2009.

Together, these legislative amendments will help ensure that Canada is able to enjoy the economic benefits of foreign investments in all sectors, while strengthening its ability to act quickly and decisively to defend against threats to our national and economic security.

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• (1755)

[*English*]

Mr. Rick Perkins (South Shore—St. Margarets, CPC): Madam Speaker, I listened intently to the member's speech. I would like to ask the hon. member what he thinks is contained in this bill that would improve the government's performance from the last eight years and the issue of national security reviews of companies bought by Chinese state-owned enterprises in Canada.

Essentially, those powers would not be changing in this act, and the government continues to send notices to Chinese state-owned enterprises that they can buy our companies and our assets without any national security review.

What does the member see in the bill that would change that?

Mr. Francesco Sorbara: Madam Speaker, what I would say is that the direction of the bill is so important. I have risen many times in the House to talk about corporate concentration and foreign ownership. Especially, when foreign owners attempt to purchase an asset in Canada, whether it is a holding company, an operating company or straight asset, and they are backed by, say, a fund that is backed by the government, we need to have the tools and resources to block those types of acquisitions.

If this is going on that track, the bill will hopefully be sent to committee for further studies, further recommendations and more in-depth questions.

I appreciate the hon. member's question. I share those concerns.

We need to make sure that we protect our assets and our companies from national security threats from wherever they may arise throughout the world.

[*Translation*]

Mr. Xavier Barsalou-Duval (Pierre-Boucher—Les Patriotes—Verchères, BQ): Madam Speaker, if I am not mistaken, the member across the way is an accountant by training. So am I, as it happens.

He has been an MP in the Liberal government for a few years now. If I am not mistaken, he, like me, was elected in 2015. In 2015, the net benefit review threshold was \$369 million. Today, the threshold is \$1.9 billion. There is quite a gap between \$1.9 billion and \$369 million. However, it was the member's government that raised the threshold year after year. In any case, it does not even review 1% of investments.

My question is the following. As an accountant, does he think that \$1.9 billion is pocket change?

[*English*]

Mr. Francesco Sorbara: Madam Speaker, I am actually an economist by training, but I have about half my accounting designation as well, along with my CFA charter. Therefore, I am well versed on the finance issues.

I will say that on any sort of net benefit test, the test should not be on the value of the transaction. It should actually be, in my opinion, on the strategic asset that is being looked at or being purchased by a foreign entity or an entity that we would consider injurious to Canada's national security interests and national economic interests.

Ms. Leah Gazan (Winnipeg Centre, NDP): Madam Speaker, Chinese insurance agent giant Anbang took over B.C.-based Retirement Concepts, a Canadian company that operates senior living facilities.

At the time of acquisition, Anbang was a privately owned corporation. After a review by industry Canada, the takeover was approved, and relatively shortly afterwards, the company was seized by the Chinese government, which now holds 98% ownership. At present, there are no provisions in the ICA that would allow industry Canada or the minister to be able to review this subsequent acquisition by a state-owned enterprise of an ICA approved takeover or merger by a foreign private company.

Does the member opposite not think that this is an issue? Does he agree that amendments are required?

Mr. Francesco Sorbara: Madam Speaker, the care of our seniors in long-term care facilities throughout this country, whoever they may be owned by, is of paramount concern to me and the residents of my riding, as is making sure that we maintain that commitment and promise to take care of our seniors at whatever age they are, so they can have a secure and dignified retirement. That is a solemn promise I made to my constituents. We need to uphold that promise.

• (1800)

Mr. Andy Fillmore (Parliamentary Secretary to the Minister of Innovation, Science and Industry, Lib.): Madam Speaker, it is a privilege to rise today to speak to Bill C-34, legislation that represents the most significant update to the Investment Canada Act since 2009. In those 15 years, thanks to Canadian hard work and ingenuity and, for the last seven and a half years, a government that has been willing to invest in our future, Canada has become increasingly attractive to foreign investors who want what Canada has to offer, be that clean technologies, critical minerals, batteries or our skilled workforce.

I have the great pleasure of serving as the Parliamentary Secretary to the Minister of Innovation, Science and Industry. In this role, I have seen first-hand how Canadian innovators are getting attention from investors around the world.

I also have the great privilege of being the member of Parliament for Halifax, and in the riding of Halifax we are proud to claim Dalhousie University professor Jeff Dahn as one of our own. Dr. Dahn is one of the world's leading researchers on lithium ion batteries, whose work has received significant industry investment, including from Tesla.

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Nova Scotia is also home to Novonix, known for producing the best and most accurate lithium ion battery testing technology in the world. I was present at the grand opening of its new facility in Dartmouth just last November, which was made possible with help from our government.

Another Nova Scotia example, CarbonCure Technologies, is the winner of the 2021 Carbon XPrize. CarbonCure has gained international attention for its technology, which introduces recycled CO₂ into concrete to drastically reduce its carbon footprint and make the concrete substantially stronger. Canada has much to offer in today's world as we together tackle issues of global concern.

There is, of course, another important asset this country has going for it as we seek to position Canada as an investment destination. That is the tireless Minister of Innovation, Science and Industry himself, who has been remarkably prolific and successful in the last several years in bringing together foreign investment into Canada. That is because our government understands that attracting investment to Canada means creating jobs for Canadians and growing the Canadian economy.

At the same time, we recognize that the evolving national security landscape means that Canada's approach to foreign investment must also evolve. To be sure, Canada must remain an open economy, but we cannot ignore that we are increasingly being targeted by hostile actors. This threatens not just our national security, but also our prosperity, and we must always remember that economic security is national security.

Over the last number of years, we have already undertaken a number of measures to modernize the Investment Canada Act, or ICA, by updating our policies to improve transparency and provide certainty to investors. For example, in 2021, we updated guidelines on the national security review of foreign investments. In 2022, in response to the unprovoked and unjustifiable invasion of Ukraine, we set out a new policy on the review of foreign investments from Russia. We also introduced a voluntary filing mechanism for investors seeking regulatory certainty, triggering the same legal deadlines as a mandatory filing. That means investors can gain certainty about their plans while the government gains valuable insights into those plans. This past fall, we introduced a policy regarding foreign investment from state-owned enterprises in critical minerals under the ICA.

Bill C-34 is the next step forward. This legislation would protect the Canadian marketplace by evolving our tools to better defend against current and future threats. By equipping ourselves today for tomorrow's threats, Canada will remain a destination of choice for foreign investment.

With that framing, I would now like to touch on the amendments to the ICA that we are proposing, which all together would improve Canada's visibility into proposed investments, enhance transparency and investor confidence, and further empower Canada to act decisively on potential threats to our national security. There are seven proposed amendments to the ICA contained in Bill C-34.

The first is the introduction of a pre-implementation filing requirement for specified investments. This means that Canada would have oversight of investments made in certain sensitive business

sectors, allowing a review of these transactions to be undertaken to prevent potential harm to our national security. This is a targeted approach designed to reduce unnecessary burden while bolstering transparency and certainty for investors.

The second amendment would introduce a new ministerial authority to order further national security reviews of investments. This means that the Minister of Innovation, Science and Industry would have the ability to order further reviews more efficiently, whereas previously a Governor in Council order was required.

• (1805)

The third amendment in Bill C-34 would increase penalties to strengthen deterrence. This means that penalties for non-compliance, which have not been updated in several decades, would reflect current financial realities, while also providing the authority to update penalties again as needed in the future.

The fourth would be the new authority provided to the Minister of Innovation, in consultation with the Minister of Public Safety, to impose interim conditions on parties to an investment. This means that during the review itself, we would better protect against national security threats that could come from the transfer of assets, IP or trade secrets.

The fifth amendment would provide the minister with the authority to accept mitigation undertakings. This means there would be more flexibility to improve or amend mitigation agreements at the ministerial level, where again, previously, the very rigid Governor in Council order was necessary to impose conditions on transactions to mitigate risks.

The sixth amendment in Bill C-34 would improve information sharing with international counterparts. We know that in the evolving geopolitical landscape that we inhabit, our co-operation with international allies is important for our collective security. This amendment would mean smoother consultations with our international partners and would allow Canada to share case-specific information, where appropriate, to support national security assessments.

The seventh and final amendment in the bill would bring new rules to protect information in the course of judicial review proceedings. This means sensitive information could be used in these proceedings while protecting it from disclosure, allowing judges to consider this information as part of their deliberations while allowing the applicants to fully participate in the judicial review.

Canada has a global reputation as a welcoming investment destination and ranks second among G20 countries in foreign investment. This is good news. In fact, last year we celebrated a new all-time high in the total number of filings. It is a job well done by the Minister of Innovation, Science and Industry. As a result of this success, Canada's foreign investment regime must adapt to the speed of innovation.

Under the leadership of the minister and this government, Canada's evolving policies and guidance have been addressing these developments as they arise, and we have taken clear and decisive action on transactions whenever necessary to protect Canada's national security, but more must be done to ensure our ability to move quickly and decisively in the future. The guidance and decisions issued over the past several years make clear that some transactions, particularly those by state-owned or state-influenced investors, may be motivated by non-commercial imperatives that could harm Canada's national security.

Ultimately, the volume and complexity of foreign investment reviews is increasing and this significant change provides a strong rationale for supporting ICA modernization. The time now is right to pursue modernization of the Investment Canada Act through Bill C-34 before the House today. Fundamentally, our government believes that an effective review regime must be robust, transparent and flexible to adapt to a changing world. We are making important moves now to review and modernize key aspects of the act, while ensuring that the overarching framework to support needed foreign investment to grow our economy remains strong and open.

Our record as a government makes it abundantly clear that where national security is concerned, we will not shy away from decisive action, and our assessment of risk keeps pace with evolving economic and geopolitical circumstances. While the ICA gives us much of the authorities we need to intercede and address national security risks that can arise in foreign investment, these amendments build on that strong foundation and improve the mechanics of the national security review of investments.

Taken together, these legislative amendments would ensure Canada is able to continue to gain the economic benefits of investments while strengthening our ability to address threats to our country and its future prosperity. For these reasons, I hope all members of the House will vote in favour of Bill C-34.

Mr. Rick Perkins (South Shore—St. Margarets, CPC): Madam Speaker, I listened intently to the speech by my friend from Halifax, the parliamentary secretary, and it is interesting to note that the Minister of Industry did not do a security review on the purchase by Hytera, a state-owned enterprise of China, a telecommunications business. He did not do a security review of China's takeover of our only producing lithium mine. He did not do any security checks on the RCMP buying telecommunications equipment from a Chinese state-owned enterprise. This bill would remove the cabinet from any discussion and involvement in making those decisions at the beginning. Only at the end, and only if the minister decides to take it there, does this bill actually involve the cabinet.

When the Minister of Industry has made such poor decisions on our national security over the last eight years, why does the mem-

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ber think it would be great to remove the cabinet and just leave it up to a minister who clearly does not get it?

• (1810)

Mr. Andy Fillmore: Madam Speaker, I thank my industry committee colleague for his hard work on that committee. I will have to take a disagreeing stance on his characterization of the minister's performance. On the contrary, Canada's national security and economic concerns have been very well protected and championed by this minister. In fact, he has taken changes and issued guidance to the public service based on some of the cases that the member has mentioned.

There is one other difference I would mention from the member's statement. Every case is analyzed individually to determine which level of review will happen. Every case is reviewed. Whether it gets to the final full review, of course, is the decision of the minister. Every case is reviewed, but not all go to the full review.

[*Translation*]

Mr. Maxime Blanchette-Joncas (Rimouski-Neigette—Témiscouata—Les Basques, BQ): Madam Speaker, I want to acknowledge my colleague, the member for Halifax, who is also the Parliamentary Secretary to the Minister of Innovation, Science and Industry. It is all well and good to use figures that suit the government. We are used to that with the Liberal government.

My colleague mentioned that Canada is ranked second among G20 countries for foreign investment. That is excellent. We attract companies, but we do not invest. Canada is ranked last among G20 countries for investment in business research and development. I also want to remind my colleague that Canada is the only G7 country that has reduced its investment in research and development in the past 20 years.

It is fine to present figures that look good. However, does he agree that Canada has one of the worst records when it comes to investment in business? Even the magazine *Science* says that researchers do not want to come to Canada because the scientific ecosystem is lacking and there is not enough funding.

What does my colleague have to say about that?

Mr. Andy Fillmore: Madam Speaker, I want to thank my colleague for his good question.

[*English*]

We have conflated two issues in this question. One is the issue of domestic investment in research. I agree with my colleague that we can always do better by investing more in Canadian research. That is a very serious pet project of mine, and I work on it weekly.

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Coming back to the question of foreign investment, the ranking in the G20 is, in fact, a global ranking. That is something that the government has managed to shift and bring us from the back of the pack up to a very promising place. These seeds that are being planted by the minister through his work will grow and bloom. We will see tremendous foreign investment that will elevate research and productivity, it will create jobs in manufacturing and help us into a just transition.

Ms. Lindsay Mathyssen (London—Fanshawe, NDP): Madam Speaker, New Democrats support the modernization and improvements to the Investment Canada Act. One of the things we are looking for, of course, is the prevention and loss of publicly funded research dollars and development dollars when that money is transferred out of the country.

I reference specifically a case in London, Ontario, where the Conservative government, in 2008, provided funds not only through tax cuts but also research and development dollars to Electro-Motive Canada. Caterpillar bought out the company, moved it to the States and took all that money with it. There was no repayment. There were no consequences, and many Londoners lost their good-paying jobs.

I ask the parliamentary secretary if—

The Assistant Deputy Speaker (Mrs. Carol Hughes): We have really run out of time.

The hon. parliamentary secretary, give a brief answer, please.

Mr. Andy Fillmore: Madam Speaker, I will repeat something I said during my remarks. Economic security is national security. The purpose of Bill C-34 and modernizing the ICA is to not only protect Canada's national security but to ensure that any foreign investments bring a net economic benefit into the country.

That answer with my previous answer, I hope, would satisfy the member.

● (1815)

Mr. Pat Kelly (Calgary Rocky Ridge, CPC): Madam Speaker, I am going to share my time with the member for Abbotsford.

Conservatives have been calling for changes to this act for years. For nearly eight years, the government has ignored the growing role of state-owned and state-controlled enterprises in Canada's economy. For nearly eight years, the government has failed to take seriously the threat posed by the government of Beijing.

For nearly eight years, the government has sat back passively while Beijing has used ostensibly private corporations as proxies to project its government's power and influence into the Canadian economy. After eight years, the government has finally tabled legislation to strengthen the Investment Canada Act, which is a good thing, but it is something that should have been done years ago.

To assess the government's credibility on the issue, it is important that we examine its track record on protecting Canadians from investment by authoritarian regimes in the Canadian economy. This is a government that, in 2017, failed to conduct a national security review when Beijing-owned Hytera Communications bought Norsat.

The former minister Navdeep Bains and the Prime Minister falsely claimed that a review was done, obfuscating the mandatory 45-day waiting period for approval with an actual, fulsome national security review as defined in the existing act. Even Tom Mulcair, the former leader of the NDP, criticized the government for rubber stamping the Hytera deal.

This takeover had serious consequences for Canada's credibility with our allies. Norsat was an American defence contractor, and Canada allowed this takeover without a proper security review. Such a review was an option, and is an option, for the government under the existing Investment Canada Act, and that option was not undertaken on the Hytera deal.

Since then, Hytera has been banned from doing business in the United States and faces 21 espionage charges. This is the company that the government let into Canada without a national security review on the Norsat deal. The same company then received a contract to supply radio communications work to the RCMP. The same company had a contract with the Canada Border Services Agency for X-ray equipment.

This is the same government that also failed to stop Anbang from buying a chain of seniors homes, as we heard earlier from the NDP. Anbang also bought other buildings, which raised concerns not only about the substandard care that subsequently occurred in the seniors homes it took over, but also about corporate espionage in other buildings that were part of that deal.

This is a government that contracted with a company, whose founder was connected to the very top echelons of the PRC, to supply X-ray equipment to 170 embassies. This is a government that took years to finally ban Huawei from being a supplier of infrastructure to Canada's 5G network, despite the obvious national security concerns. This reluctance has compromised Canada's credibility with our Five Eyes intelligence partners. The government's current industry minister approved the Neo Lithium takeover without a national security review.

The opposition has spent years raising important questions about cracks and loopholes in existing laws, while the government claimed that there was no need to change the law until now, and it falsely claimed that it was using the tools available to it to help keep Canadians safe. It did this with such arrogance. It claimed that the opposition was simply playing politics whenever we raised a question about national security.

This is what the Liberals do. They dig in, when they find themselves on the wrong side of an issue, then finally flip while ignoring their past intransigence. This sudden flip, like what we are seeing right now with Bill C-34, on the need to address investment by autocratic, state-owned enterprises, is just like last week's flip on Bill C-21 when they attempted to ban hunting rifles and shotguns.

Did they admit that the opposition was right all along? No. Did they thank the opposition for raising a point that they made a mistake that needed to be fixed? Did they admit that they were misleading Canadians for months? Did they admit that they were falsely claiming that the opposition was lying about the consequences of their amendment? Did the Minister of Public Safety admit that he was wrong and that he had misled Canadians? Did he apologize for attacking the opposition's motives? No, of course not. That is not what they do.

• (1820)

What they do is attack the motives of those who criticize them. When it becomes absolutely clear, like it is on this issue today of investment by autocratic state-owned enterprises, they might backpedal, but they do not take responsibility. They do not apologize or admit they were wrong.

As the opposition, we are just doing our job when we raise questions about public policy concerns, identify mistakes the government has made and identify shortcomings in existing laws or potential consequences of new laws or policies. The opposition has an ancient and sacred obligation to force the government to try to be better, and I just wish that it would listen from time to time, especially when it comes to national security.

Liberals and Conservatives are probably not very far apart from each other on the role of government when it comes to national security. I would hope that we are not far apart. This is not an ideological difference. We all care about our national security. With that in mind, I have some suggestions and points for Parliament to consider and hopefully also for the government to consider.

The bill would give the minister significantly more power but not necessarily a pathway to the best decisions. One thing this bill would do is shift power from cabinet, from order in council, to direct ministerial decision-making. This may result in faster decision-making but not necessarily better decisions.

I am concerned that the lack of a clear, strong definition of a state-owned enterprise may harm foreign investment in Canada overall without protecting Canadians from hostile foreign governments. The Canadian economy relies on direct foreign investment, and the parliamentary secretary talked about that. We need foreign, private capital from reciprocating open economies, and we have to be careful about what signals the bill sends to global capital markets.

I am disappointed that the bill does not simply allow the government to ban governments of autocratic and hostile regimes, such as Russia, Iran, North Korea or the People's Republic of China, through a simple list. This might be the easiest way to deal with the small number of countries seeking to exert power and influence within the Canadian economy through state-owned enterprises.

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I am concerned that the bill does not appear to capture transactions where, rather than shares, a Canadian company sells assets, such as mines, farms, intellectual property and data, to a foreign state-owned enterprise.

I am especially concerned that maintaining the existing \$400-million threshold for a mandatory government approval of a foreign takeover leaves the door wide open for the growing concern of Beijing-affiliated entities buying up farms, fishing enterprises, wharves and airport cargo facilities. These enterprises may have diverse ownership, but in aggregate, they have the potential to distort markets for important commodities, such as food. If the buyer of a Canadian company is the Government of China, the threshold for a national security review should be zero dollars, and every transaction of the foreign enterprises owned by the state should be captured.

In short, I do agree that the bill is an attempt to address serious and important policy concerns, and I will support the motion that is before the House to send the bill to committee. My opposition colleagues and I are committed to working with other parliamentarians to make the bill better.

No party has a monopoly on good ideas. This is a great opportunity to show Canadians that parliamentarians can work together and that the result of Parliament's adversarial process is that the best ideas will prevail through debate. As we debate the bill and study it at committee, we can co-operate, get beyond past mistakes and get serious about protecting Canadians from property theft, espionage, intellectual property theft, market distortions and other harms that result when foreign governments that are hostile to Canada's way of life take advantage of our open society and open economy. We are talking about transactions that are not fuelled by the market but by the raw power of a state to exert its influence on the Canadian economy.

Therefore, I will vote for the bill, but it is weak and needs a lot of work.

• (1825)

Ms. Ruby Sahota (Brampton North, Lib.): Madam Speaker, I need further clarification of some of the comments made later in the member's speech about there being a zero threshold. I think that might not be the most effective use of everyone's time if we are chasing every dollar investment that is made in Canada. Does the member find that would be time well spent in our system?

Mr. Pat Kelly: Madam Speaker, I think I was quite careful and precise in what I said, but I will repeat it. I said that if the foreign buyer is a Chinese state-owned enterprise, the threshold should be zero. The threshold for the dollar amount of a transaction by a Chinese state-owned enterprise should be zero.

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[Translation]

Mr. Xavier Barsalou-Duval (Pierre-Boucher—Les Patriotes—Verchères, BQ): Madam Speaker, I found my Conservative colleague's speech very enlightening. I find it interesting that he pointed out that there have been cases in the past, which were investigated after the fact, where there was an obligation to conduct a national security review. The government does not seem to have done the work it was required to do and analyze whether the investment was a good idea or not.

The bill under consideration, Bill C-34, is intended to provide a bit more authority. At the end of the day, if the requirement is the same, if the government is not doing its job any more than it is now, does my colleague think that anything will change?

I find it peculiar because he talked about a case. In my riding, there was a case where there was also an obligation to review. Thanks to an access to information request, it was discovered that there had been no review. It seems that the government is systematically delinquent when it comes to its own obligations. How does that happen?

Does that not worry my colleague?

[English]

Mr. Pat Kelly: Madam Speaker, that is an excellent point, which I did touch on, but it bears repeating. The government failed to use the existing tools under this act in the past, so here we are, debating the creation of new tools and stronger tools with a government that would not use the tools that already existed. Its credibility on this issue is a problem, and we need to get really serious about this, not just through new laws but also through implementation of laws, both existing and new, as contemplated in Bill C-34.

Ms. Leah Gazan (Winnipeg Centre, NDP): Madam Speaker, the Harper government increased the threshold above which foreign takeover of a Canadian firm is reviewed from \$330 million to \$1 billion. I am wondering if the member stands by that decision or if he supports reducing the current threshold to zero so every prospective transaction by either state-owned or state-controlled enterprises triggers a review.

Mr. Pat Kelly: Madam Speaker, as I said both in my speech and in my remarks to the government deputy whip, if the buyer is a state-owned enterprise of an autocratic regime like the People's Republic of China, the threshold should be zero.

With respect to the preamble to her question regarding the increase to the threshold in general, I think that was made to be compliant with regulation under the WTO. I was not a member of that government, but that is my understanding of why that decision was made quite a number of years ago.

Mr. Rick Perkins (South Shore—St. Margarets, CPC): Madam Speaker, there seems to be some confusion on the Liberal side about this issue of zero state-owned enterprises. In the last quarter, four lobster-buying businesses in my riding were acquired by a Chinese state-owned enterprise. It controls the price at the dock. It paid five times the value of the business. It is taking that over. That is why, from my view, I support what the member said, but I wonder if the member could expand on that a little more to

educate the folks on the government side so they will accept some amendments.

Mr. Pat Kelly: Madam Speaker, that is what this is all about: debate to get the best ideas out there. That is why it is important to go to a zero-dollar threshold when we are talking about a state-owned enterprise from the People's Republic of China. They buy a series of small businesses that in aggregate can actually distort markets. Buying a single fishing boat or buying a single wharf is perhaps not going to distort the market, but when a whole series of transactions below a threshold are combined, it will have the effect of a much larger transaction.

• (1830)

Hon. Ed Fast (Abbotsford, CPC): Madam Speaker, it is a pleasure to talk about foreign investment, because as members may recall, in a past life in the Harper government, when we had a robust trade and investment agenda, I had the opportunity to be the trade minister. I travelled around the world to many different countries promoting Canadian investment. That is a two-way street, of course. We can talk about Canadians investing abroad, which we do, but there are also foreign companies—

Some hon. members: Oh, oh!

The Assistant Deputy Speaker (Mrs. Carol Hughes): I do not know if there is a cross-debate or if members are having conversations, but I would ask them to take their conversations outside.

The hon. member for Abbotsford.

Hon. Ed Fast: Madam Speaker, as I was saying, foreign investment, whether it is investments coming into Canada or Canadians investing abroad, can contribute markedly to our national prosperity. I have travelled all around the world promoting Canadian investment, because there was a time when Canada was a great place to invest. Sadly, over the last few years under the Liberal government there has been a decline in foreign investment. Why is foreign investment abandoning Canada? It is because of high taxes and regulatory uncertainty. This should concern all Canadians, because when foreign investment comes to Canada, for the most part it drives job creation if it is done right and contributes to our overall prosperity as a country.

However, as we welcome foreign investment into our country, we also have to be very judicious, making sure that those investments, first, represent a net benefit to Canadians and, second, do not represent a national security threat to our country. That is where the Investment Canada Act comes in. It was created to ensure that as foreigners invest in Canada, we have mechanisms and tools available to review those investments, to welcome those who are going to contribute to the overall good of the country and to reject those who are not good for our country.

Government Orders

The bill before us is seeking to introduce some amendments to the Investment Canada Act that purportedly will really improve the robustness of this regime. Unfortunately, if we dig down into the seven main amendments being proposed, they are mostly tinkering around the edges. Why do I say that? I do not believe they will markedly reduce the influence of foreign corporations and their ability to invest in Canada, especially when they come from increasingly hostile regimes around the world.

When we look around the world, I think all of us can agree that investments coming from a country like Russia require special diligence. Investments that come from places like Iran and China require a special degree of vigilance to make sure they serve our national interest. More and more often, we have seen under the Liberal government that investments have come from abroad from the more hostile regimes around the world, which engage in espionage and make investments that are not necessarily for the good of our country but promote a foreign country's economic interests. My colleague from Calgary Rocky Ridge has already articulated some of the cases where the Minister of Industry has failed to subject investments to the kind of rigorous review that Canadians would expect of its government.

For example, we had a situation where an RCMP contract was awarded for the supply of sensitive hardware for communications to a company that had earlier been purchased by a China-based company beholden to the communist regime in Beijing. How can that be? It is because the minister refused to do a national security review of that foreign investment into Canada. It was also revealed that the Canada Border Services Agency has used communications equipment and technology from the same company.

Canadians need to know that this very same company was charged with 21 counts of espionage in the United States. Would we trust this company not to conduct espionage in our country? Of course not. The reality is that I could go through the same list of foreign transactions my colleague from Calgary Rocky Ridge listed, to which the minister refused to apply the kind of rigour to reviewing these foreign investments that Canadians would expect.

• (1835)

We also have to understand that the geopolitical and security landscape around the world has changed dramatically and the risks Canada faces are that much more acute. We look around the world at countries like China, Russia and Iran that are flexing their muscles economically and militarily in the field of cyber-espionage, and we are incredibly vulnerable, so we have to pay attention to this.

I would also mention that, as we look at investments from abroad, there are some who have said we should be very cautious about welcoming investments of state-owned enterprises from a country like China into our country because of the allegiance of those corporations to the communist regime in Beijing. However, the reality is that, not long ago, China passed a national intelligence law, under which all Chinese corporations and citizens, whether at home or abroad, are required to act as agents of the government and hand over any information the Chinese communist authorities demand.

Therefore, any company from that country, and any citizen from that country, is expected to be an agent of the government, so as we look abroad for investment, it behooves us, as legislators and decision-makers, to make sure we are prudent in whom we welcome to our country to invest.

The largest majority of investments come from countries we would gladly welcome investment from. Obviously, if the United States has a corporation that wants to invest in Canada, we would say we welcome that investment, generally speaking. If it is a huge investment, we may want to put a special spotlight on that investment to make sure there is a net economic benefit to Canada, but by and large, the investments we attract to Canada, we welcome.

As such, the Investment Canada Act is targeted and makes sure that the investments that are problematic are reviewed by our federal government. The legislation before us, unfortunately, had the opportunity to implement the nine recommendations an earlier report from the industry committee had brought forward. Sadly, only two of those recommendations have actually been adopted by the government in its amendments to the Investment Canada Act. What a lost opportunity.

We, as a country, can do so much better, and the reality is that we, as Conservatives, have long had a robust approach to foreign investment. When we were in government, we made major reforms to the Investment Canada Act. We said “no” to investments. We required a number of foreign investments to be qualified and conditional before they could be invested in Canada.

I have just outlined very briefly what it is we are debating here, the Investment Canada Act amendments. Let us make sure we get it right.

• (1840)

Mr. Mark Gerretsen (Parliamentary Secretary to the Leader of the Government in the House of Commons (Senate), Lib.): Madam Speaker, the member started off by talking about how, in the last few years, Canada has performed horribly in terms of investment, and how nobody wants to invest in Canada. We do not have to dig far into the Internet to find a United Nations Conference on Trade and Development from 2021 that specifically says that Canada, in the last five years, has ranked among the top two in the G20 for doing business; is the third-easiest in the G7 to start a business; is the fourth among the G20 for being the least complex to start a business; and had the second-largest foreign and direct investment-to-GDP ratio in the G20 between 2016 and 2020.

Where is the member getting his information that would suggest Canada is not a place that is open for business?

Hon. Ed Fast: Madam Speaker, the Liberals have yet to learn that they should never ask a former international trade minister a question they do not know the answer to.

Government Orders

Here is the answer. I get my information from the International Monetary Fund. Members will notice that the member did not actually address investment. He talked about GDP, economic performance and regulation, but he did not talk about Canada being a destination for investment.

The IMF said, “According to the latest results...the world’s top ten recipients of foreign direct investment...[are] the United States, the Netherlands, Luxembourg, China, the United Kingdom, Hong Kong SAR, Singapore, Switzerland, Ireland, and Germany.” Canada is not even in the top 10. Shame on us, that we would be so far down the list.

Let me suggest that the member go back to the drawing board, get his statistics right, and then come back to the House and start debating.

Some hon. members: Oh, oh!

The Assistant Deputy Speaker (Mrs. Carol Hughes): Order. I want to remind the hon. parliamentary secretary that he had an opportunity to ask a question, and I want to remind the hon. member for South Shore—St. Margarets that it was not his turn to speak either.

We will continue with questions and comments. The hon. member for South Okanagan—West Kootenay has the floor.

Mr. Richard Cannings (South Okanagan—West Kootenay, NDP): Madam Speaker, I want to ask my colleague whether the Conservatives would be willing to agree with the NDP that a good amendment to this bill would be to ensure including any investment in a Canadian company made by a foreign investor that goes through, and later that company is bought by a state-owned enterprise.

The example I gave was Anbang Insurance Group in British Columbia and Retirement Concepts. I think we need to make an amendment so we drop the requirements to zero so all those investment proposals would be examined by industry Canada.

Hon. Ed Fast: Madam Speaker, I do thank the member for that very good question. He has not yet provided us with a copy of the amendment that he would like to propose. We will look at it very carefully.

Quite frankly, it sounds like it makes sense. We, as Conservatives, strongly believe that the Investment Canada Act must be made more robust. I believe the member knows that we will be bringing forward our own amendments at committee to make sure we get that outcome. We do, in principle, support the legislation. It is just that it is a bill that is so lacking in substance when we have an opportunity now to get this right.

Hon. Michael Chong (Wellington—Halton Hills, CPC): Madam Speaker, I wonder if the member would comment on the following.

He has said that foreign investment has plummeted during the time of government, while at the same time acquisitions by state-owned and state-controlled enterprises have gone through without review. That has resulted in something that was best captured in last week's Globe and Mail article titled, “The growing threat of a low-

wage future for Canadians”. I just want to quote two lines from that editorial.

The Organization for Economic Co-operation and Development ranks this country last in potential economic growth over the next 40 years.

If that OECD forecast becomes reality, the Canada of 2060 will be a relatively poorer country, falling further and further behind other advanced economies into second-tier status.

Would the member comment on that?

● (1845)

Hon. Ed Fast: Madam Speaker, I am familiar with that article. I am familiar with those statistics, and they are damning of the Liberal government because we could do so much better as a country. We are so rich in human resources and in natural resources. We are high-tech leaders, yet somehow, we are falling further and further behind when it comes to our economic performance. Part of that is the fact that we are no longer an attractive place to invest in.

We can do better.

Ms. Ruby Sahota (Brampton North, Lib.): Madam Speaker, I will start off by saying that I will be sharing my time.

I am pleased to appear before us today to speak in favour of Bill C-34, an act to amend the Investment Canada Act, and in particular, the context that led us to undertake these amendments.

Canadians know that our government will always act quickly and decisively to respond to threats to our national security. They also know that a nuanced approach is necessary to ensure that we do not impede the flow of capital that is so important to our continued prosperity.

Indeed, Canada remains a destination of choice for foreign investment. This investment helps businesses prosper and grow, creates well-paying jobs and ensures strong economic growth that benefits all Canadians. Canada has a long-standing reputation for welcoming foreign investment and a strong framework to promote trade while advancing Canadian interests. In fact, Canada has one of the earliest and most robust screening processes for FDI.

The Investment Canada Act was enacted 38 years ago in 1985. The act allowed the government to review foreign investments to ensure that these benefits exist, and it was updated in 2009 to include a framework for a national security review of foreign direct investments.

The world in which Canada now operates is increasingly characterized by the complexity of linkages between economic competition and geostrategic clashes. Globalization has brought new threats to Canada's national and economic security. By exploiting access routes to the Canadian economy through investment, potentially hostile foreign actors can appropriate technologies, data and infrastructure, which are critical to Canada's national security. We also know that some foreign states seek to inhibit Canada's economic growth and to exercise economic coercion against Canada.

Such activities pose a threat not only to Canada's national security but also to its long-term economic prosperity. Canada must have the tools and resources to protect its assets from economic threats to national security. The Investment Canada Act must therefore also continually adapt to these considerations. The complexity of these dynamics can be seen in the increased volume of activity under the act in recent years.

Indeed, there have been more national security reviews since 2020 than in an entire previous decade. The review process is also increasingly complex, as international transactions and ownership structures are also becoming more complicated. The proposed modernization of the Investment Canada Act is designed to make this review process more efficient and more transparent.

Economic-based threats to national security are an area of increasing concern not just for Canada but for our allies as well. Other international jurisdictions are moving in response to shifting geopolitical threats, either by amending or putting in place investment screening regimes. Our action is needed to bring Canada into greater alignment with our international partners and allies.

We will recall that the Investment Canada Act played an important role in Canada's response to the Russian invasion of Ukraine. As early as March 2022, we issued a policy statement that any investment controlled or influenced by the Russian state will also support a determination by the minister that there are reasonable grounds to believe that such an investment could be injurious to Canada's national security, regardless of its value.

This statement sends a clear message about our commitment to protecting Canada's economic security from unwanted investment. Moreover, Canada's Indo-Pacific strategy is clear that this region will play a critical role in Canada's future over the next half century.

The significant opportunities for economic growth in this region are also accompanied by challenges related to the objectives of certain world powers that do not share our democratic and liberal principles. We must respond to this reality in a number of ways, including in the way foreign investment is assessed.

• (1850)

In short, the Investment Canada Act plays a key role in protecting Canada's economic interests from hostile foreign actors. It is broad in scope and allows Canada to respond to changing threats that may arise from foreign investment while protecting Canada's openness to beneficial international investment.

The package of amendments proposed in this bill is designed to assure businesses and investors that Canada has a clear and predictable regulatory regime. Today, we are taking bold steps to modernize key aspects of the Investment Canada Act to ensure that our review regime continues to be effective, rigorous, transparent and flexible to adapt to a changing world.

I thank—

The Assistant Deputy Speaker (Mrs. Carol Hughes): Unfortunately, I do have to stop the hon. member there. She will have four and a half minutes the next time this matter is before the House.

Private Members' Business

PRIVATE MEMBERS' BUSINESS

[*English*]

CANADA NATIONAL PARKS ACT

The House proceeded to the consideration of Bill C-248, An Act to amend the Canada National Parks Act (Ojibway National Urban Park of Canada), as reported (without amendment) from the committee.

The Assistant Deputy Speaker (Mrs. Carol Hughes): There being no motion at report stage, the House will now proceed, without debate, to the putting of the question on the motion to concur in the bill at report stage.

Mr. Brian Masse (Windsor West, NDP) moved that the bill be concurred in.

[*Translation*]

The Assistant Deputy Speaker (Mrs. Carol Hughes): If a member of a recognized party present in the House wishes that the motion be carried or carried on division or wishes to request a recorded division, I would invite them to rise and indicate it to the Chair.

[*English*]

An hon. member: On division.

(Motion agreed to)

Mr. Brian Masse moved that the bill be read the third time and passed.

He said: Madam Speaker, it is a pleasure to rise here on Bill C-248. I thank all the members in the House for getting it here. In particular, I thank the Conservative Party, the Bloc Québécois, the Green Party and also two Liberal members who supported it.

We have tried to work with the government on this, and I will get into that later. Unfortunately, to date, it has not joined us, but we shall see. I have tried to use this place as constructively as possible, especially given the fact that Canadians have shown they want us to work together. Unfortunately, the government has not done so at this time.

I will reference a quote on the Parks Canada website, which I think dismantles some of the government's objections to this private member's bill. It is key to our democracy. When one thinks about the work that goes into private member's business, it does not matter where one is from and what the legislation is about. It is our right to be heard, and it is our right to change our Canada outside of the partisan envelope.

Private Members' Business

I got lucky in being picked to be put up high on the Order Paper for this bill. I could not think of something stronger to put forward. I have been trying to push for a new border crossing in Windsor. My first public meeting as a city councillor was for a new public border in 1998 at Marlborough Public School. The proposed legislation that I have today is for a property next to it that goes along that entire border process that would create a national urban park for all of Canada. It would protect 200 of Canada's 500 endangered species. It is supported universally by groups.

I will read from a Facebook post by the government's own Department of Environment. On June 23, 2022, the Parliament of Canada posted the following on its Facebook page:

Did you know that national parks are created through Acts of Parliament?

On this day in 1887, Parliament passed the Rocky Mountain Parks Act, which established what is now Banff as the first national park in Canada.

Today, there are 48 national parks. They are found in every Canadian province and territory.

The Parliament of Canada acknowledged in its post, on the anniversary of this law for Banff, that national parks are created by acts of Parliament. It is very helpful today, because now the government insists it wants to go through some process that is still being drafted to deal with this issue. However, what we have done is a responsible, accountable, transparent and inclusive process for this legislation. This legislation is going to amend the Canada National Parks Act.

That is how every single national park has been created. This is how we could go about fixing a situation in Windsor. It is an opportunity to provide some restoration with regard to reconciliation. One of the most important partners that we have in this process is Caldwell First Nation.

I will help citizens picture this area. Where I am from, in southern Ontario, the Detroit River runs right through our city, but there is also a connection of the lake system for the Great Lakes.

What has happened is that, unfortunately, we have done what a lot of places have done. We chopped, milled and cut down all the trees. We moved in with agriculture and manufacturing. It has left very little green space. However, because of our location and our temperate environment, we have Carolinian forests that provide a refuge for species at risk. That includes trees and fauna, amphibians, the Massasauga rattler and others that are endangered. Similar to many other places in the country, we are fighting to get these green spaces back.

There is a unique element of this process that needs to be put to the test. This is all public land. There is no private land. The government will say now, out of desperation, that some of it is private property, but it has not provided any geographical evidence about those locations. We would want to get those things out anyway.

It is important to note that we are unifying public lands through this process. There is no position whatsoever that we want, other than to be able to work with the City of Windsor, which supports this bill, and to be able to work with Caldwell First Nation, which supports this bill. The Province of Ontario just passed a motion in the legislature about this bill. On top of that, we have several environmental groups that have all shown support for this bill. It is truly

grassroots. It comes from the fact that we have these endangered species that need a better level of protection than they get through the hodgepodge system we have now.

● (1855)

One thing we did fight for along this area of the Detroit River, as it extends into other parts of the city along that front, is the shoreline that the Windsor Port Authority still has not transferred over. I want to remind all members of Parliament that port authorities are the creations of Parliament under the Marine Transportation Security Act and are no different from Canada Post or anything else. They operate through regulation, but it is the people's land.

It was that area that some developers tried to bulldoze and clear-cut. Fortunately, I was working with one of the developers in the area who tried to get involved in the project. I called the person up and said, "Do you realize what is happening? Do you realize what you are going to be part of?" That person took out their position in support of the project at their own cost, and the property has now been saved for the future. It is supposed to be transferred, but we are still waiting for that to happen.

There is no time to wait when we think about the property I am talking about. When the Gordie Howe bridge, which is next to it, is built, 40,000 vehicles per day could potentially traverse it, with up to 10,000 transport trucks per day, and we do not have environmental assessments on how that is going to take place. The Gordie Howe bridge is a large piece of infrastructure that crosses two and a half kilometres of the Detroit River and onto the territory of the Caldwell First Nation. Chief Duckworth, who has been to Ottawa with me several times, has appeared at press conferences and is basically a mentor in many respects.

Caldwell First Nation is part of the restitution with this country. When it fought with the British, it was promised the Point Pelee area. After that, its members were burned out of their properties, went through a long process and finally have a good settlement now. They are setting up a proper reserve and are doing very well with other types of initiatives. They are the land stewards of this area. This is one of the good-news stories.

Members of the Caldwell First Nation have stood shoulder to shoulder with us during this process. In fact, they were the first group I brought down here when I was trying to save Ojibway Shores to see if they had interest in the property. At that time, they did not because they wanted to go toward Leamington, which is next to Point Pelee, and they have that land now. The beautiful part of this story is that despite being forced out in the past, they are now co-managers of Point Pelee National Park. They will also be co-managers of the park that we are proposing here. This story highlights what we should be doing right.

Private Members' Business

Chief Duckworth, who has been very good on this, said this at committee: “We know that we need a legislative framework in order to make this national park happen, and I am here to support the hard work that's been done and the hard work going forward.” Members of the Caldwell First Nation sent several letters, which have gone to all members in this chamber. Again, they have showed a path forward.

Across the Detroit River, the Wyandot community is also supporting this bill, and I will get into this a bit because it is international. The Wyandot community, another aboriginal organization, has sent in a letter of support for this.

I want to point out that a private member's bill can be done in a non-partisan way. The member for Essex has been terrific on this and has been supportive in the past. We have seen members come and go, and one of the previous members, Jeff Watson, whom I used to work with and who was from the Conservative Party, supported this. Even though we may not have always seen things the same, we knew how to work on local interests.

The current member for Essex said this:

This is a very unique opportunity for the folks of Essex. I've said it before and I'll say it again. We are somewhat landlocked in Windsor-Essex, in that we're surrounded by three bodies of water. I've spoken extensively with Mayor Dilkens, the mayor of Windsor; Mayor Bondy, the mayor of LaSalle; and Mr. Watson, the previous member of Parliament. We've done our due diligence. Everybody says this is a fantastic thing to do.

The member has also brought up an issue that I think gets under-reported, which is about mental health and getting out to other spaces. I want to thank the member for Essex for that, because sometimes we lose some of the other lenses we view things through. That is why it has been important for me to have this type of support.

I also want to thank the Bloc Québécois for making sure that this is understood as a very unique project that really defines our area. What many people do not know is that Sandwich Town, which is right next to this area, is the oldest European settlement west of Montreal with a francophone culture that is still part of its rich vibrancy. In fact, the Detroit River, with its first nations and the French settlements, had a seigneurial system where farming came up. We have a number of French names throughout the city system, which run north to south, and after the British came, British names ran east to west. We have this combination, but the francophone culture is very strong. In fact, a new hub centre is a couple of blocks from my house, so the language is going strong with some of our new Canadians who are by this area.

● (1900)

This is a social justice issue in many respects, because if we amend the National Parks Act as we want to, it will give it the same stature as Point Pelee and other parks, and it deserves it because of the hundreds of endangered species. On top of that, the area it is next to, as I referenced, Sandwich Towne, has been one of the poorest places in Canada in many respects with child poverty and single mothers. We have dealt with a series of different poverty issues over the years because the international border and Matty Moroun, a private American billionaire who passed away and whose son owns the property now, caused a lot of interesting and very difficult

problems over a number of years, including buying and boarding up homes. Why this is important is that we need to do this right.

When we fought to get the Gordie Howe bridge, there were those who said we should twin the Ambassador Bridge. Even the Prime Minister gave them an order in council to do that a few years ago and let a billionaire family have its way with Canada. We said “no” to that. OMERS, one of the largest pension funds, wanted to run a truck route through my riding. We said “no” to that.

What did we do? We fought for the right thing, which is a brand new public crossing. It was a compromise we got, which is now the Gordie Howe bridge, that will provide economic security for all of us, as well as environmental advantages. The same battle is happening right here.

We said we were open to amendments. I worked with the minister after the Liberals voted against it. We had meetings and several different things. They went to committee with those amendments, and one of their own Liberal members ruled the minister's amendments out of order. I was asked by the Liberals in the morning what happened. I said that, first, their parliamentary secretary and others were not there and, second, I did not know, and that they have to figure out what is going on in their own party. In 20 years, I have never seen a minister's own amendments ruled out by a member of the minister's own party. That was something I cannot explain.

We want Liberals to be there. That is why I agreed with the amendments and we worked with them. I want to put that in the past because this is so important for our future. Time is of the essence. What clearly came out of the committee hearings with the different departments is that they admitted that eventually they might have to adopt my process because theirs is still in draft and they do not know what they are doing.

We are not going on about the other urban parks out there. They are being proposed as a rubber-stamp way of going about the different areas. What we are saying is that, as they are figuring that out, we have a unique thing in the Windsor-Detroit region on the environment and the land that we are looking to consolidate that is crystal clear and can move forward. We have limited time because of the Gordie Howe bridge coming in and there have been no environmental assessments for this.

The importance of this is clear and evident. I have a letter from John Hartig, one of the primary environmental people in the Michigan area. He wrote, “Benefits of a National Urban Park in Windsor”. Another title was, “Detroit's Benefits of a National Urban Park in Windsor”. It talks about the park. It talks about how it will celebrate history, enhance cross-border trail tourism, become a destination of choice, reap economic benefits, strengthen transboundary conservation benefits and help change the perception of our area.

Private Members' Business

There are many benefits to this park system. I want to revisit the fact that the way to legally create national urban parks right now in Canada is through changing the Parliament of Canada Act. Why the Liberals would want us to have something less than that, I do not know, but these endangered species and the people need this type of protection, and we are following that due process.

As I have noted, the City of Windsor supports this, the mayor and city council. Councillor Fred Francis appeared at committee and talked about it, as did the Wildlands League. Thank goodness for its work, which is CPAWS. It has done amazing work. Unifor was at the environment committee so we had the unions involved, as well as Wildlife Preservation Canada; Citizens Environment Alliance; Essex County Field Naturalists' Club; Green Unmah, a youth activist group; Friends of Ojibway Prairie; and Save Ojibway. Local residents have put in thousands of petitions.

The area that we propose is part of the traditional territory of the Three Fires Confederacy of first nations. That includes the Ojibway, Odawa and Potawatomi. They did everything right for our community in what they were asked for back in the War of 1812. Now they are part of this partnership and the full consultation and respect for consultation is in the Canada National Parks Act. That is why Bill C-248 goes forward with solidarity, because it is the right thing, for the right place, for the right people.

• (1905)

Mr. Kevin Lamoureux (Parliamentary Secretary to the Leader of the Government in the House of Commons, Lib.): Madam Speaker, Parks Canada does have a process. Can the member provide assurances to the House today that Caldwell First Nation, in particular, does not want to follow the Parks Canada process, but, rather, to support the member's legislation? Is it fully supportive of the legislation or does it want to follow process that has been established by Parks Canada? Can the member specifically tell us what Walpole Island First Nation is saying about the legislation?

The member has talked about the importance of reconciliation and doing the consultation with indigenous people. I am wondering if he could provide his comments on both of those points.

Mr. Brian Masse: Madam Speaker, I wish the member would read the packages he gets, because Caldwell First Nation has provided him and his office, a number of times, a letter of support for this and they are unequivocally behind it. Chief Mary Duckworth has been here several times with me, including appearing at the environment committee in front of members saying she supports the legislation.

I can keep quoting all those things and providing letters. They are the ones who actually have the treaty rights of the area. We are letting them work with Walpole Island First Nation, which is also part of the consultation program.

Most importantly, there is no higher level of consultation than the National Parks Act itself, as opposed to the Liberal plan right now, which is a draft and is made up with no meanings in terms of accountability and no public access to some of the things they are doing, and it does not have the regular money for financing the proper stewardship that is necessary for the future.

We are doing it the right way. They are doing it the short way.

• (1910)

[*Translation*]

Ms. Kristina Michaud (Avignon—La Mitis—Matane—Matapédia, BQ): Madam Speaker, I thank my hon. colleague for his speech and I congratulate him on his efforts. It is always very rewarding to see a private member's bill reach third reading. It has gone through a very thorough process. He went out and got the support of his community, which is great.

I was a bit surprised by the question we just heard from the Liberal member, who was wondering why my colleague did not go through the regular Parks Canada process. I am sure the hon. member can assure us that the process he went through is probably even more thorough than the current Parks Canada process.

At this point, is my colleague confident that he has the support of the other parties in the House to finally get his bill passed?

[*English*]

Mr. Brian Masse: Madam Speaker, I appreciate the member's contributions and question.

On June 23 of last year, the Parliament of Canada, on its Facebook page, posted the following: "Did you know that national parks are created through Acts of Parliament? On this day in 1887, Parliament passed the Rocky Mountain Parks Act, which established what is now Banff as the first national park in Canada."

I actually read something from the Parks Canada site. They have a draft process for these urban parks they are doing right now where they do not have any public notifications of meetings, timelines or time frames. It is on their website as a draft process.

We are not going to wait around for them to act as we watch all these endangered species in our communities suffer. We want to go forward with accountability and create what is richly deserved as a proper national urban park for everybody with the highest degree of accountability and consultation, with Caldwell First Nation and others, like the City of Windsor. All the owners of this land want it to move forward.

The only problem has been with the federal government. It still cannot even transfer a piece of property from the port to Environment Canada. I have been going on about this for four years, and it will not even transfer that one environmentally sensitive property. We need to do it now. We cannot wait any longer.

Private Members' Business

Mr. Richard Cannings (South Okanagan—West Kootenay, NDP): Madam Speaker, I would like to thank the member for Windsor West not only for this bill, but for the hard work he has put in over 10 years. We heard the passion in that speech. He has worked to bring communities together and to notify groups what was going on. I would also like to thank him for inviting me down there a couple of years ago. I toured the area and heard the stories of how these pieces of land were saved. We saw the community using the area and its beautiful trails.

I would like him to comment on that aspect. What will this bring for the community of people there?

Mr. Brian Masse: Madam Speaker, I want to thank my colleague for coming to Windsor. As an ornithologist, he has a really great knowledge of the species at risk that we have. What is exciting about this is that it creates ecotourism, for sure, but it also creates a confidence in young people that we can actually, in our own backyards, affect climate change. That is the most important thing about this. When young people try to make a difference, they can see right in their own community what they can build together, with their own hands. We need to get this done so we can pass it on to them so they have the projects, the work and the things they need to save their environment and community and contribute to the planet.

Mr. Kevin Lamoureux (Parliamentary Secretary to the Leader of the Government in the House of Commons, Lib.): Madam Speaker, as one can tell, when we talk about how our communities benefit and thrive because of national parks, it can be a very emotional issue. Many members of Parliament take a great sense of pride in how we might achieve having more national parks.

For example, there is The Forks National Historic Site. It is not necessarily a park, but for that site, I can recall the way in which people came together from many different sectors and ultimately developed this beautiful treasure in the city of Winnipeg. Today, it attracts more tourists than any other site in Winnipeg and arguably the province of Manitoba.

There is also Riding Mountain National Park, which has had an impact not only on the people who live in and around it but also those who use it.

I would absolutely agree that these are important issues for the House of Commons. The government is definitely interested in and wants to see continuing progress with the Ojibway National Urban Park or Windsor National Urban Park.

My understanding of the legislation, and I look to the member, is that it is more about coordinates. It is about where the park is going to be. To what degree did the member actually have a formal process that incorporated a wide spectrum of opinions and did the work Parks Canada is obligated to do by law?

I am eager about national parks too. I want to see more. I would like to see a national park in the city of Winnipeg, but I do not think it is just up to me to be able to say what the boundaries are, to say what it is I want and then just go out and solicit support for it. There needs to be a process that considers a wide spectrum of things.

The Province of Ontario might look at the bill and say that it is nice legislation, but my understanding is it wants to continue with

the process Parks Canada has in place. If that is true, I would suggest members should be advised before they vote on the legislation to confirm that.

I raised the question about Caldwell First Nation. I applaud the chief and council and those individuals who have provided the remarks to the member.

Mr. Brian Masse: You are trying to speak on their behalf.

Mr. Kevin Lamoureux: Madam Speaker, he says that he is speaking on their behalf.

Mr. Brian Masse: No, I said you are trying to speak on their behalf.

Mr. Kevin Lamoureux: Madam Speaker, for me, it is important to have consultation and work in progress with Parks Canada, the City of Windsor, indigenous communities and the Province of Ontario.

The member has told us about all the people who support it, but where was the process to ensure there was an actual consultation equivalent to what Parks Canada would have provided? I have not seen that. I was here during second reading also.

There might have been a lot of talk about the park. I can assure members that I have had many talks. I have talked, for example, about how I would love to see some sort of a management system for Winnipeg's waterways that would involve the different levels of government and the indigenous community.

There are four or five rivers in Manitoba: the Red River or the "Mighty Red", the Assiniboine River, the Seine River and a couple of others. We believe there is great potential for a national park. I could list some people and organizations I have talked to that have shown substantial support, and I suspect my list is relatively small. I suspect we would find many members of the chamber on both sides of the House who have ideas on national parks and projects they would like to see.

● (1915)

We know for a fact that the government has been working with stakeholders, and they incorporate the ones I have mentioned. We know that back in 2021 there were formal agreements being put into place. There are ongoing consultations. There is indeed a process that ensures there has been appropriate consultation with the many groups out there that have a vested interest, whether they are the leadership of indigenous communities, the provincial or national governments, or community members who live in Windsor, the surrounding areas, or anywhere along where the park is being proposed. There are also other stakeholders, including environmentalists, who have concerns about wildlife and endangered species in general.

They all have a role to play. That is why we established the process. It is not to say that this particular member from Windsor is the one who has to acquire credit by bringing forward the legislation and saying it was their idea. No one owns the idea. This has been talked about for a great length of time. There are many individuals who have dedicated resources, whether financial or personal time and effort. It all needs to be taken into consideration.

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That is not to say that this particular member is not passionate about it. I listened to him speak, not only this time but I believe also during second reading on this legislation. I will give him that. He is passionate. I will say that he has talked to a good number of people. Unfortunately, I was not able to attend the standing committee. I do know that at the standing committee there was an attempt to make some changes. The member kind of mocked the government, in its moving amendments and this and that.

It is because it does not matter what side of the House one is on, we recognize true value. If there are things that could be done to further this along in the process, which could provide the assurances that Parks Canada has put into place, I suspect there would be greater support.

My concern is that it is not government versus opposition members. It is about whether or not, if members genuinely believe in issues like reconciliation, if they genuinely believe in the importance of having adequate and proper processes, then I would question why it is they might be voting in favour of this legislation.

If members vote for this, that would tell me that anyone who comes before the House and says they have consulted with 25, 30 or whatever stakeholders, and have built up some good letters of support and so forth, but they have not followed the formal process that has been established through legislation or regulation, we should trust them. Even if goes to committee, and it is not to devalue the opinions, advice and recommendations of so many who have already contributed to the debate, it is a vote of confidence in the people who work at Parks Canada, the people who are obligated to do what we have asked them to do, and establish that process to ensure that there is free and open a consultation that ensures that those vested parties are in fact being consulted in the most appropriate way.

This legislation does not deal with the issue of process. I think members need to be aware of that. If they want to believe in the institution of Parks Canada, and the process, I would suggest they should vote against the legislation.

● (1920)

[*Translation*]

Mr. Gérard Deltell (Louis-Saint-Laurent, CPC): Mr. Speaker, I am very glad to be taking part in the debate on this bill, which calls for some legislative work. The bill seeks national recognition for an important place that is historically significant for our country. I will say more about that later.

First, I want to acknowledge the member for Windsor West's passion and determination. I have been in the House of Commons for eight years now, and I have had the pleasure of knowing my colleague that whole time. I have a lot of respect for him because he is so dedicated. More often than not, we do not share the same vision for Canada's future and how to achieve it, but I do admire his dedication and his passion for the causes he believes in, such as this one.

As the shadow minister for environment and climate change, I am privileged to be a member of the committee that studied this bill, but I know the study started quite a while ago. The member

has been working on this for over 10 years and has been working on the bill for four years.

He and I both witnessed something of an about-face on the ministers' part. I will keep it civil because we are in Parliament. Initially, there seemed to be a willingness to go ahead, and departmental officials supported the initiative and were working hand in hand with the government.

● (1925)

[*English*]

Suddenly we have noticed in our committee that there has been a big switch coming from the ministerial bench. People have said one thing before and then switched their point of view to one that is more cautious. I want to raise the fact that it is not the first time we have seen this. Recently, while studying a bill in the official languages committee, we saw that there had been a big shift in the current government when it started to talk about certain issues.

[*Translation*]

I would like to see a little more discipline from the government side. We understand that the work we are doing is exceedingly serious. Since the Liberals have been in office for eight years now, we expect more consistency and coordination between the public service, which objectively analyzes the situation, and the government's political and partisan point of view. It is only natural for the government to have a political perspective, but the public service and the government need to work together.

If, three-quarters of the way into a job, it becomes clear that things are not working, then changes need to be made. Most importantly, the stakeholders need to be informed. We saw this happen with this bill. Unfortunately, we also saw this happen with the bill to overhaul the Official Languages Act. We witnessed a kind of mutiny within the government, which was sending members to committee who were basically saying the opposite of the government. I therefore urge the government to be a little more disciplined.

Let us come back to the crux of the debate on this bill. I very much appreciated the historical aspect mentioned by my colleague from Windsor West. This is part of our heritage. Obviously, when we talk about national parks, we are reflecting on our roots and the history of our country. We are reflecting on the presence of first nations and the colonial era, either in New France or under British rule. It is part of a whole.

As my colleague said, in 1749, the French established a farming system, traces of which can still be seen in geographic features. There are streets and neighbourhoods in Windsor with very French-sounding names. That makes us very happy. This concerns that area.

As the member also mentioned, it is not so far from the Gordie Howe International Bridge either. I want to remind the House that this bridge, which connects Canada and the United States, is one of the biggest projects in Canada. This area sees the most trade in the country. I remember that the member mentioned the percentage.

[English]

I do not remember exactly how much money, but billions of dollars go from us to the U.S., and from the U.S. to us, via this bridge and the communities around it. That is very important to us.

I respect that this member praises his area, like I am quite sure all members do. I can assure members that I am very proud to be from Louis-Saint-Laurent, and I recognize when members are also proud of their ridings.

[Translation]

Yes, the Gordie Howe bridge is very important. I want to honourably confess that I have a conflict of interest in this matter. I am bringing it up because I want to acknowledge the extraordinary achievement of the Hon. Denis Lebel. He was the infrastructure minister at the time and the man behind this bridge.

We know that there were difficulties. Our partner, our neighbour, had some reservations. There were also reservations on the Canadian side, which is quite normal in infrastructure projects. That said, under the co-operative leadership of the Hon. Denis Lebel, we succeeded in building this bridge, and we look forward to seeing it open soon.

I just wanted to salute this extraordinary contribution. It is one of the Conservative government's great achievements, and it came about under the leadership of the Hon. Denis Lebel. I wanted to mention that.

I think there is currently some disagreement with departmental authorities about how to proceed. It is worth noting that the purpose of national parks is, first and foremost, to determine the cultural importance of this kind of proposal. It has to respect biodiversity. The landscape also needs to be considered. Would establishing a national park in the proposed area enhance the landscape? New parks also have to complement our other national parks.

Quebec has three national parks, including one in the Mauricie region. I am not big into the recreational and tourism activities there, but everyone tells me Mauricie is absolutely amazing. I would like to take a moment to salute one of Mauricie's great native sons, the Right Hon. Jean Chrétien, who was the instigator for that national park. Yes, he is a Liberal—nobody is perfect—but I recognize the Right Hon. Jean Chrétien's contribution, and I say that with tremendous respect, of course.

Yes, it has to be connected to the landscape. It has to complement the existing national park system, and essentially, it has to have the support of the first nations, the surrounding communities, the people who live in the area, and, of course, the municipal, provincial and ultimately federal governments.

There are five steps to establishing a national park: identify the general area; select the specific area; assess the feasibility; negotiate the necessary agreements, and finally, establish the park by amending the Canada National Parks Act. That is where we are right now, and we need to get it right. Obviously, the concerns expressed by the government will have to be evaluated.

Once again, I cannot help but notice that the government has waited until the last minute. The hon. member has been working on

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this for over 10 years and has spent over four years going through all the parliamentary steps needed to move forward. Now, just as we are about to pass the bill, the government is pulling back and asking if everything has been done correctly, because there are plenty of areas in Winnipeg where there could be beautiful parks.

With all due respect, my friends should perhaps have thought of this before, because this matter did not come out of nowhere. They have been talking about it for years. The act has been around forever, or almost, and it is very clear. Maybe they should have checked for problems before we got to this stage.

In closing, I also want to remind members that national historic sites can be evaluated without necessarily becoming national parks. I want to give a nod to my part of the country, Quebec City, where there is a historic site that includes three buildings at 57 and 63 Rue Saint-Louis in Quebec City. It is probably the most modest historic site around. As an aviation enthusiast and history buff, I also want to salute the Alexander Graham Bell National Historic Site in Nova Scotia. It commemorates the first heavier-than-air controlled airplane flight, which took place in Baddeck on February 23, 1909. We salute the fact that it has become a historic site.

There is a difference between national parks and historic sites. We should be proud of our heritage. Let us designate new national parks properly and ensure that it is all done according to the rules.

● (1930)

[English]

Mr. Richard Cannings (South Okanagan—West Kootenay, NDP): Mr. Speaker, first of all, I would like to thank the member for Louis-Saint-Laurent for his speech because at the very end he mentioned Alexander Graham Bell and Baddeck. That is the historic site from which the plane took off in February 1909. I just have to say it was my grandmother's cousin who was piloting that plane. His name was J.A.D. McCurdy. I wanted to get that in there, as I am proud of that heritage, and I am glad the member brought it up here in the House.

I am also proud to rise to speak to Bill C-248 here this evening. It is a bill that would create Ojibway national urban park near Windsor, Ontario, and it was put forward by the wonderful member for Windsor West, who has been working so hard and passionately on this for a decade now. I did speak to this bill when it was at second reading some time ago, but I would like to go over that ground again and really dive into why the bill is so important and why Ojibway national urban park is such an important initiative that we need to get done.

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This proposal would combine lands that are owned by all levels of government, the federal government, the provincial government and the City of Windsor, and combine them into a really priceless package that would protect an endangered ecosystem that is unique in Canada. That is why this should be a national park. It is a small area. It is only 900 acres, or something like that, but it is so important from the national perspective and from the environmental perspective, that it would really be a fabulous addition to our national park system.

I would also like to thank the member for Windsor West, as I mentioned before, for inviting me down to Windsor a few years ago to visit this area. I had never been to Windsor. It was great to tour around the city and see the urban sprawl of Detroit right there across the river. It is such a vibrant place.

I toured the Ojibway Shores area, where the member told me all these stories, and each story was about the battles he had been through to protect this important area from various plans for development. He brought the community together, and he brought Caldwell first nation, other community groups, naturalist groups, biologists and even developers together to say it would be such a wonderful addition to not just the local area, but also to Canada.

We were there on a beautiful day in September. We hiked along some of the trails through beautiful grasslands. The big bluestem grass was full of the late summer flowers, such as asters and other beautiful flowers. There were birds, of course. That is my thing. I am always looking for rare birds, and there are a lot of birds there. We walked through the groves of oaks. This is kind of a savannah habitat. We saw a lot of people enjoying these trails. It was clear that this was a popular place for the locals to come on the weekends, get out of the urban habitats and enjoy nature.

I think that has even amplified since the pandemic. We have seen a huge increase. I have not been back to Ojibway Shores, but around my home, there has been a tremendous increase in the number of people getting out on trails and enjoying nature, just because people have discovered that. They had nowhere else to go during the pandemic, and suddenly they have discovered that here in Canada we all live in beautiful places. Ojibway Shores is one of those places, and this area would protect three really important ecosystems: the tallgrass prairie; the oak savannah, as I mentioned; and the Carolinian forest.

• (1935)

In my previous life, as some members know, I was a biologist, and a lot of the work I did in that career was centred around endangered ecosystems and species at risk.

There are four ecosystems in this country that are consistently listed as the most endangered. There are the Garry oak savannahs of southern Vancouver Island and the Gulf Islands in British Columbia. We have the desert grasslands in the South Okanagan area of British Columbia, which is where I come from, my home habitat. There is the Carolinian forest of southern Ontario, which is a deciduous forest. They are found throughout the eastern United States and squeak into Canada in southern Ontario. There is the tall grass prairie in southern Manitoba and parts of southern Ontario as well. The Ojibway national urban park would protect two of these

important ecosystems, the tall grass prairie and the Carolinian forest.

We do not often think of Ontario as a prairie province, but it once had extensive tall grass prairies. Those have been largely wiped out over the last two centuries through agriculture and urban development. Only about 1% of these habitats still exist. In Ontario, there are only three areas larger than a few acres that represent this habitat. One of those is Ojibway Shores.

Endangered ecosystems, almost by definition, are home to a lot of species at risk. That is what makes them species at risk: Their ecosystems are endangered. There are almost 200 rare and endangered species in Ojibway Shores. There is no other area in Ontario that would come close to that length of a list for endangered and rare species, and only one or two areas in Canada would come close. One, as I mentioned before, is my home habitat in the desert grasslands of the Okanagan.

There are endangered plant communities. There are endangered insect communities. We do not know a lot about some of these things. I would just say in passing that one thing the government could do is spend a bit of money doing an inventory and a survey of some of our endangered species. We might find them in a lot more places or we might find that they are truly endangered. It would be a good investment.

In a previous speech, I mentioned the beautiful damselfly, the giant spreadwing, which is found in Canada only in Ojibway Shores. That is the only place it is known. There are also endangered reptiles, like the Massasauga rattlesnake. In my hometown, we have rattlesnakes that are threatened as well. Here, the Massasauga rattlesnake is found in a small population that is 300 kilometres away from the next population. It is isolated and endangered. There is the bobwhite quail, a really iconic species of small game bird that is found in Canada only in extreme southwestern Ontario. It used to be in Ojibway Shores. Now it is found only in Walpole Island, which is nearby. If we protect these areas, then we can talk about bringing some of these species back, but we need to protect them first.

This is not an area like Banff, Jasper, Kluane or Ivavik, which are big, wild parks. This is an urban national park that is special. It is built in a mosaic of properties that are close to Windsor. It would be an integral part of that urban population. We have to make sure those properties connect habitats correctly so these species can thrive even in the small areas. We have a similar proposal in the South Okanagan to create a national park in a similar area, a mosaic of different lands.

Once again, I want to thank the member for Windsor West for his work on this. I congratulate him for all his effort and I hope everyone here joins us in voting for this very important bill.

Private Members' Business

• (1940)

Mr. Irek Kusmierczyk (Parliamentary Secretary to the Minister of Employment, Workforce Development and Disability Inclusion, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, I rise to speak to Bill C-248, an act to amend the Canada National Parks Act. I want to begin by acknowledging that the land I represent is the ancestral and unceded territory of the Three Fires Confederacy of first nations, the Ojibwa, the Odawa, and the Potawatomi.

I share my colleague's enthusiasm for the creation of an Ojibway national urban park, and I recognize his long-standing advocacy. Both of us recognize that Ojibway is a precious gem, unlike any other. Compared to, say, Rouge National Urban Park in Toronto, Ojibway is a postage stamp of land, but in its 300 hectares, Ojibway contains rare Carolinian forest and tall-grass prairie, and it has the most biodiversity in all of Canada, including hundreds of plants, reptiles, insects and wildlife.

When I first got elected in 2019, my first meeting with the Prime Minister's Office on Parliament Hill was about the creation of an Ojibway national urban park. Not quite two years later, I joined the Minister of Families, Children and Social Development at Ojibway, in addition to dozens and dozens of local community partners, to announce our government's commitment to create seven new national urban parks, among them Ojibway. It was a historic day. Parks Canada was put in charge of creating an Ojibway national urban park, which makes sense, since Parks Canada has over 100 years of experience building national parks. We trust the experts. Since that day, Parks Canada has been busy putting in the work to make Ojibway national urban park a reality.

I will walk members through the Parks Canada process, which I support, and the real measurable progress we have already made to building an Ojibway national urban park.

Last year, we established a local partnership committee to oversee the process of creating an Ojibway national urban park. Parks Canada provided the City of Windsor with \$600,000 to begin consultations and the groundwork to carry out a joint work plan with Parks Canada. Windsor's city council voted unanimously in favour of this process. We brokered an agreement between the Windsor Port Authority, Transport Canada, and Environment and Climate Change Canada to transfer Ojibway Shores to Parks Canada for inclusion into an Ojibway national urban park.

I am proud to say that we will have some even better news to share with our community in short order on the transfer of Ojibway Shores. Ojibway Shores is the last piece of natural habitat on the shores of the Detroit River. It is priceless. It is beyond value, and our community fought tooth and nail to keep it safe from bulldozers. Now, through the Parks Canada process that is under way, we will protect Ojibway Shores forever.

In December, Parks Canada began a series of open houses and pop-up workshops to engage residents of our community, listen to our community members and get local feedback on the design of an Ojibway national urban park. What I mean by that is the design of not just the footprint of Ojibway national urban park, but the design of how Ojibway national urban park would be managed.

Most important, we are in the process as we speak of working toward a collaboration agreement with our indigenous partners, Caldwell first nation and Walpole Island first nation. Two weeks ago, I had a chance to meet with Chief Mary Duckworth and members of Caldwell first nation to talk about the Parks Canada process of building an Ojibway national urban park. What I heard is support for a Parks Canada process that envisions Caldwell first nation being not only co-designers of an Ojibway national urban park, but also co-managers and co-stewards. In that way, the Parks Canada process is not just about creating an Ojibway national urban park, it is also about taking concrete steps on the path to reconciliation with our indigenous partners.

The work of building an Ojibway national urban park is already being done. Ojibway national urban park is already being constructed, much like we see the construction of the Gordie Howe international bridge, right next door, moving forward. The Parks Canada process is the best path forward for one major reason, and that is that it prioritizes, from the very start, community consultation with our community and with indigenous communities such as Caldwell—

• (1945)

The Deputy Speaker: The hon. member for Winnipeg Centre is rising on a point of order.

Ms. Leah Gazan: Mr. Speaker, I have raised this several times in the House before, to refrain from using the words “our indigenous people”. We are not owned. We are independent individuals. We are human beings and we are not owned by anybody.

I would like to remind the member not to use the word “our”.

• (1950)

The Deputy Speaker: That is not really a point of order but a good suggestion for all of us who speak in the House of Commons.

I will also remind the hon. member who is speaking.

The hon. member for Windsor—Tecumseh.

Mr. Irek Kusmierczyk: Mr. Speaker, that is an excellent point of order and well taken.

The Parks Canada process is the best path forward for one major reason. It prioritizes, from the very start, community consultation with our community and also with indigenous communities like Caldwell and Walpole Island, which have historic ties to Ojibway.

Consultation with first nations from the start on the design of the Ojibway national urban park is especially important, not only because Canada has a constitutional duty to consult with indigenous communities on the creation of national parks, but because Ojibway provides a genuine opportunity to strengthen our relationship with indigenous peoples and advance reconciliation.

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Imagine an innovative made-in-Windsor model where Indigenous communities and environmental groups co-design an Ojibway national urban park and share stewardship of an Ojibway national urban park. Imagine a process that allows other community groups to have a real voice in the design of an Ojibway national urban park. In the spirit of Black History Month, we want to hear from the Amherstburg Freedom Museum or the Essex County Black Historical Research Society, to connect Ojibway to the story of the Underground Railroad.

Again, I want to recognize my colleague, the MP for Windsor West, for being a passionate champion of Ojibway all these years. His contribution to this work cannot be overstated.

However, Bill C-248 bypasses community consultation, falls short of our duty to consult with first nations and creates a duplicate process that could jeopardize the progress and partnerships already developed by Parks Canada.

Here are some of the most significant concerns I have with Bill C-248—

The Deputy Speaker: The time provided for the consideration of Private Members' Business has now expired, and the order is dropped to the bottom of the order of precedence on the Order Paper.

ADJOURNMENT PROCEEDINGS

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

[*English*]

CLIMATE CHANGE

Ms. Laurel Collins (Victoria, NDP): Mr. Speaker, I want to start by taking a moment to express my heartbreak and condolences to the parents, the day care staff and the children, and to everyone who is impacted by the tragedy in Laval. It is hard to find words to express the depth of loss that these families are facing. We are grieving with them.

Every year, more people across Canada are forced to face the devastating reality of the climate crisis: increasingly severe hurricanes on the east coast, and forest fires, extreme flooding and heat domes on the west coast. We are in a climate emergency, and it is impacting everything that we hold dear. People have lost their homes and their jobs, and hundreds of Canadians have lost their lives.

It has been four years since the government declared a climate emergency, and yet it still refuses to take climate action at the scale or speed required. Why would the Liberal government say it believes there is a climate emergency but then refuse to treat it like an emergency? Why would it continue to hand out billions of dollars in fossil fuel subsidies? Why would it buy the Trans Mountain pipeline? Why would it approve Bay du Nord? Why is it openly planning to increase oil and gas production?

We are in a climate emergency. These are not the actions of a government responding to an emergency. These are the actions of a government that is captured by the oil and gas lobby.

This past year was the most profitable year ever for the five biggest oil companies. Take that in. Big oil and gas made more profit than they ever have before. While they rake in these record profits, profiting off the backs of Canadians who are struggling just to make ends meet, these companies are also announcing that they are scaling down their climate commitments, lowering their emission reduction targets and walking back their pledges to climate action.

Instead, they are upping their spending on new oil and gas. Just two weeks ago, Canadian oil and gas executives claimed they could not invest any more in clean energy and renewable projects, that they want to but there is no place to invest these billions in. If that is true, why would the federal government give them billions of dollars in fossil fuel subsidies? These companies are making more money than ever before, and they claim they want to spend it on climate action. Why would the government not require that they pay for their own pollution, regulate them, force them to reduce their emissions, and make big oil and gas put their exorbitant money where their mouth is?

Instead, the government decided to give the oil and gas sector billions more for carbon capture technology. Not only is carbon capture an unproven technology, which according to the IPCC, according to the world's top climate scientists, is one of the costliest and least effective options out there, but this \$2.6-billion carbon capture tax credit is money that the government could have invested in renewable technology that is readily available, that is proven. The government could have excluded oil and gas companies from this handout. It could have forced these companies to pay for their own carbon capture projects.

Instead, the Liberals keep footing the bill for the oil and gas industry. What that actually means is that the Liberals are making Canadians foot the bill. Among the G20 countries, Canada has the worst track record when it comes to public financing of the oil and gas sector. These are choices about how we spend our public money. Profitable oil and gas companies should be paying to clean up their own pollution.

If the Liberals truly believe that we are in a climate emergency, they could implement a windfall profits tax on oil and gas companies. Other countries have done it. We could use that money to invest in climate solutions, in making life more affordable for Canadians, in making communities more climate-resilient.

Why is the government so focused on protecting the profits of big oil and gas instead of protecting Canadians and our communities from the climate crisis?

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• (1955)

Mrs. Élisabeth Brière (Parliamentary Secretary to the Minister of Mental Health and Addictions and Associate Minister of Health, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, we know two things. We know that energy profits are at record levels, and we know that emissions have to come down.

We are investing \$9.1 billion in an emissions reduction plan. We have put our money on the table. Oil and gas companies have to come to the plate. They have to put their shoulder to the wheel. They have to work with us to get those emissions down and to realize the ambitious targets we have set for our emissions reduction plan.

[*Translation*]

Our government understands that Canada is facing an increasing number of extreme events, such as floods, hurricanes and forest fires.

[*English*]

Our climate is changing and it is necessary to take strong action now to make our future greener. Now, more than ever, climate action is an economic necessity. The reality is that this government is taking meaningful actions to fight pollution and promote cleaner air for everyone.

I know the member for Victoria also believes in the importance of fighting climate change and I hope that she supports our efforts.

[*Translation*]

For example, we established a national minimum price on carbon pollution across Canada in 2019. Not only is it no longer free to pollute, it is more and more expensive to do so. Our approach is working.

We are encouraging industries to become more efficient and use cleaner technologies. In doing so, we are encouraging the development of innovative new approaches to reducing greenhouse gas emissions and using energy more efficiently.

[*English*]

That being said, we also know that we need to work with the industry on decarbonization measures.

Our government is also committed to phasing out or rationalizing inefficient fossil fuel subsidies that give fossil fuels an unfair advantage over clean air solutions. We have accelerated the previous timeline for doing so from 2025 to this year.

In budget 2022, the government committed to eliminating the flow-through share regime for fossil fuel activities. This will be done by no longer allowing expenditures related to oil, gas and coal exploration and development to be renounced to flow-through share investors for flow-through share agreements entered into after March 31, 2023.

[*Translation*]

That is less than two months away.

[*English*]

I am also proud of our government's work on carbon capture, utilization and storage, or CCUS. It is an important tool for reducing emissions in high-emitting sectors, especially if other pathways to reduce emissions are limited or even unavailable. It uses advanced technologies to capture carbon dioxide emissions from fuel combustion, industrial processes or directly from the air.

• (2000)

[*Translation*]

The captured carbon can then be stored deep underground or used to create new, innovative products.

In last year's budget, we announced a refundable investment tax credit for businesses that incur eligible expenses.

[*English*]

This tool will be available to CCUS projects to the extent that they permanently store captured CO₂ through an eligible use. From 2022 through 2030, the investment tax credit rates will be set at 60% for investment in equipment to capture CO₂ in direct air capture projects, 50% for investment in equipment to capture CO₂ in all other CCUS projects, and 37.5% for investment in equipment for transportation, storage and use.

[*Translation*]

To encourage industry to act quickly to reduce emissions, these rates will be reduced by 50% starting in 2031.

[*English*]

Ms. Laurel Collins: Mr. Speaker, I want to thank the member for her comments, but she did not answer the question.

All the strongly worded statements about the oil and gas industry needing to come to the plate will not make big oil and gas do the right thing.

It is hard to take any of these Liberal comments seriously when they have been in power for seven years and have increased fossil fuel subsidies year after year.

Oil and gas companies are making record profits while fuelling the climate crisis. The devastating impacts of the climate emergency are costing billions of dollars and communities are struggling. Fighting the climate crisis should not come at the expense of everyday Canadians who are paying record prices at the pump and struggling to make ends meet, all while oil and gas companies are making record profits. They should be paying what they owe. Will the government make them? Will the government implement a windfall profits tax on oil and gas?

Mrs. Élisabeth Brière: Mr. Speaker, our government is taking meaningful actions to fight pollution and make Canada's future greener.

Adjournment Proceedings

Our government understands that climate action is now an economic necessity and Canadians can count on us to continue the work. For example, Canada is taking significant steps toward reducing our emissions by 40% to 45% below 2005 levels by 2030, and reaching net zero by 2050.

[Translation]

Last fall at COP27 in Egypt, Canadian representatives also fought hard to prevent other countries from backing down on phasing out subsidies for fossil fuels and coal, which remain the largest sources of CO₂ emissions. We are also on track to eliminate coal-fired power here in Canada by 2030.

In the months ahead, as we prepare for the 2023 budget, Canadians can count on this government to continue to work hard to build an economy that works for everyone, to create good jobs and to make life more affordable.

[English]

HEALTH

Mr. Mike Morrice (Kitchener Centre, GP): Mr. Speaker, just before the holidays, I pressed the Prime Minister to follow through on a critical election promise, which was to fund a new \$4.5-billion mental health transfer to the provinces and territories with the Canada mental health transfer. At the time I was pushing for it to be in budget 2023.

That echoed the call of 65 organizations across the country that were similarly calling for the acceleration of the implementation of this transfer and for it to be in budget 2023. They included the Canadian Mental Health Association, the Canadian Association of Community Health Centres, the Canadian Psychological Association, the Canadian Federation of Students, the Alzheimer Society and the Canadian Centre for Policy Alternatives. The list goes on and on, so I appreciate the chance to come back to this question because at the time the question was not answered and I have not had clarification since.

I have two points I would like to leave with the parliamentary secretary for her to comment on.

First, mental health is health. It deserves dedicated funding. Mental illnesses and substance use disorders will affect one in three people in their lifetime. We know that the pandemic has only made this worse. Of these folks, one in three cannot get the care that they need. That adds up to almost 4,000 people in my community waiting for mental health and addictions care.

I have had the chance to speak with some of these folks myself. Last summer, I was speaking with a mom on her doorstep while she was in tears, describing her teenaged daughter and the mental health challenges she was facing. I spoke with a nurse this past summer who told me about the number of people that she is seeing at Grand River Hospital's emergency department who should have seen a psychiatrist or a mental health professional months before.

That is why dedicated funding for mental health is so important. It would also, of course, take pressure off of other areas in our health care system. It would take pressure off of emergency departments, doctors, social services and the millions of people who are

suffering. It is, of course, why the 65 organizations I mentioned earlier are pushing for this promise to be followed through on.

My second point is that election promises matter. The Liberal 2021 campaign platform indicates a comprehensive plan for mental health care across Canada. The plan goes on to say that they would, "Commit to permanent, ongoing funding for mental health services under the Canada Mental Health Transfer".

Call me a radical, but I believe it is important that political parties and their leaders follow through on the promises they make. I think it is important for our democracy that this is the case and for our Parliament to keep them accountable to it.

I expect the parliamentary secretary will make mention of an important announcement made just yesterday in health care. I have read the announcement multiple times but, as I parse through it, there is no mention of the mental health transfer specifically and nothing about dedicated funds for mental health.

My question for the parliamentary secretary tonight is this: Can she make it clear whether the governing party continues to be committed to the Canada mental health transfer, and whether the \$4.5 billion will be included in budget 2023?

• (2005)

Mrs. Élisabeth Brière (Parliamentary Secretary to the Minister of Mental Health and Addictions and Associate Minister of Health, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, as my colleague said, there is no health without mental health. That is why access to mental health and substance use supports, including at the community level, is a fundamental piece of work that we want to undertake with the provinces and territories.

[Translation]

I think we all know our health system is facing major challenges, made worse by the pandemic. As we work with the provinces to fix it, we have to make sure that mental health and substance use care is integrated transparently as an integral and equal part of our universal health care system.

[English]

I believe the proposal we put forward to the premiers yesterday provides both the resources and the mechanism to get us there.

[Translation]

We are keeping our commitment to transfer billions of dollars to the provinces and territories in the coming years to support mental health, but we are doing so by increasing the Canada health transfer, which includes mental health, and by providing \$25 billion over 10 years under long-term integrated bilateral agreements.

At the working meeting with the provincial premiers, the federal government announced that it will increase health funding to the provinces and territories by \$196.1 billion over 10 years, including \$46.2 billion in new funding.

This funding includes an immediate, unconditional \$2 billion Canada health transfer top-up to address immediate pressures on the health care system. A 5% CHT guarantee for the next five years will be provided through annual top-up payments as required. This measure is projected to provide an additional \$17.3 billion over 10 years in new support.

The last top-up payment will be rolled into the CHT base at the end of the five years to ensure a permanent funding increase, providing certainty and sustainability to provinces and territories. With this guarantee, the CHT is projected to grow by 33% over the next five years, and 61% over the next 10 years.

[English]

We are also providing \$25 billion over 10 years to advance shared health priorities through tailored bilateral agreements that will support the needs of people in each province and territory in four areas of shared priority: family health services, health workers and backlogs, mental health and substance use, and a modernized health system.

We believe these bilateral agreements are the most effective way to incorporate shared priorities into this funding, to reflect the unique needs of each province and territory, and to support mental health as part of an integrated patient-centred approach. The goal of this collaborative work and these bilateral agreements is to provide Canadians with a multidisciplinary system of care.

• (2010)

[Translation]

This approach integrates mental health into all the shared priorities, from improving access to mental health through primary care, to improving data and sharing information on health between the professionals that are consulted, or the approach to address the labour shortage in the health and mental health care sectors and to provide better mental health support to prevent burnout.

[English]

These are results that will improve access to the supports Canadians need when they need it.

Mr. Mike Morrice: Mr. Speaker, there is a really important question for the parliamentary secretary to clarify in response. I would agree with her the announcement made yesterday is an important one for health care, but it is not what was committed in the 2021 election campaign. Specifically, what I would like to understand better is that there was a promise and a commitment for dedicated mental health funds. It was to be called the Canada mental health transfer. Yesterday, as the parliamentary secretary shared, new dollars have been set aside for health care, which is good, but we need dedicated funds for mental health, as the governing party promised and ran an entire election campaign on, which they won. My question remains this. Is the governing party still committed to the mental health transfer, and if so, will it be in budget 2023?

Adjournment Proceedings

Mrs. Élisabeth Brière: Mr. Speaker, the significant increases to the Canada health transfer will give the provinces and territories essential resources to support health care, including mental health care. The additional \$25 billion for tailor-made agreements with provinces and territories will also help expand the delivery of timely, high quality, integrated and accessible mental health and substance use services in Canada. Through the proposed bilateral agreement, we will be working to integrate mental health and substance use care priorities as a full and equal part of our universal health care system.

[Translation]

This will ensure transparency and accountability by the provinces and territories in access to mental health and substance abuse services. We will build on the \$5 billion over five years that we have been providing for mental health and substance abuse support since 2017, which currently provides \$600 million annually to the provinces and territories until 2027.

[English]

INDIGENOUS AFFAIRS

Ms. Lori Idlout (Nunavut, NDP): *Uqaqtittiji*, Inuit elders have the right to access home care in their home communities. Elders in Nunavut have had to endure many atrocities in their lifetimes, including residential schools, forced religious conversion and the slaughter of their sled dogs. Being forced to leave their families to get care is unacceptable.

Most Canadian seniors who need care can get it close to their homes. With the lack of investments within my territory, Inuit elders are forced to move thousands of kilometres south to access care. There are no facilities in my territory for persons who have advanced dementia. Enough is enough. Real investments must be made into Nunavut's health care.

Many elders fear dying alone in a place that is not their home and without their families. Many facilities, like the ones found in Ottawa, might not have staff who speak Inuktitut. This limits the quality of care that can be offered.

This separation of culture and the family impacts elders' mental and physical health. The lack of infrastructure funding investments in health care and trained health care workers perpetuates reliance on southern health care. Nunavut has the fewest hospital beds per capita of any province or territory, with one for every 1,100 residents compared to a national average of one per 409 from a 2022 report.

Adjournment Proceedings

The first nations and Inuit home and community care program is coming to the end of its 10-year anniversary. The government needs to examine the program and make real changes to offer better care.

Will the government stop funding elders to be exiled to the south in budget 2023?

• (2015)

Mr. Vance Badawey (Parliamentary Secretary to the Minister of Indigenous Services, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, I thank my hon. colleague from Nunavut for raising this very important issue. I would like to acknowledge, first of all, that I am speaking from the traditional and unceded territory of the Algonquin and Anishinabe people.

We understand that historic wrongs have harmed Inuit elders. We are working extremely hard to build a new type of relationship with all indigenous peoples across this great nation, one that is built on recognition of rights, respect and partnership.

The Government of Nunavut holds jurisdiction over health care and this includes long-term and continuing care. The federal department, Indigenous Services Canada, works very closely with Nunavut officials to ensure that they have the resources to address the health care needs of Nunavut.

The government supported Nunavut in managing health care costs during the COVID-19 pandemic by providing \$238 million in funding. This included funding to help the health care system as a whole and funding to directly support Inuit communities. Transitioning into the postpandemic period, this government is committed to continuing to provide health support to the Government of Nunavut and its people. For the year 2022-23, the federal government has allocated \$47 million to health care funding for Nunavut.

The federal government also provides funding that directly helps elder Inuit through a program called first nations and Inuit home and community care. Indigenous Services Canada has a 10-year Nunavut wellness agreement in place with the Government of Nunavut that provides over \$87 million to support home and community care services. This includes special enhancements funding that supported the response during the COVID-19 pandemic.

The program was co-developed with Inuit and first nations partners. It provides services on reserve and is based in the community. It supports people with complex care requirements, inclusive of palliative and end-of-life care, and their caregivers. This allows them to stay in their homes and their communities for as long as possible. Through the program, first nations and Inuit people of all ages are provided essential health care services. This includes vulnerable seniors and those living with disabilities and acute or chronic illness.

On top of the home and community care program, officials in my department will be working with Nunavut partners to co-develop a distinctions-based indigenous long-term and continuing care framework to ensure that residents can receive services closer to home. This is part of an overall effort to improve health care for indigenous people by providing culturally relevant programs and by working to eliminate racism against indigenous people in the health

care system. The goal is to ensure that health care is culturally safe and inclusive across the country.

The federal government also provides support for mental health programming and services in the north. For example, for 2021-22, we allocated \$24.6 million toward mental health in Nunavut.

This government is responding to the health care needs of elder Inuit and other indigenous people in the north. We know that there are difficulties, and we want to avoid the need for elders to leave home to receive the care they need. We are working closely with indigenous and territorial partners to improve health care in the communities of Nunavut in order to better meet the needs of each and every community.

Ms. Lori Idlout: *Uqaqtittiji*, investing in long-term and continuing care must be a priority. Health care is at a crisis point across the country. What seniors experienced during COVID-19 is what Inuit elders have been experiencing for years. Elders have the right to age in their communities and stay connected with their loved ones without fear of being sent away.

In every community that I have visited since I have been elected, I have been told by elders that their biggest fear is to be sent south, to be exiled from their communities. Forcing and exiling elders to southern communities shows that the government does not take reconciliation seriously. Nunavummiut deserve better.

Will the government commit to investing more in health care in the 2023 budget?

• (2020)

Mr. Vance Badawey: Mr. Speaker, this issue is very serious.

No one likes to imagine an older member of their family having to travel a long distance for proper medical care. This government recognizes the problem, and we know of the stress and harm it inflicts on Inuit families and their communities, so we have been working hard to improve health care in Nunavut. We are constantly working with indigenous partners and territorial officials to design culturally relevant health care that will meet the needs of the community.

Adjournment Proceedings

We have supported the health care needs of Nunavut, and the other territories, during the pandemic and postpandemic, and we will continue to support the territorial governments and the people of Nunavut, so that their health and well-being are a priority.

[*Translation*]

The Deputy Speaker: The motion that the House do now adjourn is deemed to have been adopted. Accordingly, the House

stands adjourned until tomorrow at 10 a.m., pursuant to Standing Order 24(1).

(The House adjourned at 8:22 p.m.)

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