



HOUSE OF COMMONS  
CHAMBRE DES COMMUNES  
CANADA

44th PARLIAMENT, 1st SESSION

---

# House of Commons Debates

Official Report  
(Hansard)

Volume 151 No. 142  
Tuesday, December 6, 2022

---

Speaker: The Honourable Anthony Rota



## **CONTENTS**

(Table of Contents appears at back of this issue.)

# HOUSE OF COMMONS

Tuesday, December 6, 2022

The House met at 10 a.m.

---

*Prayer*

---

## ROUTINE PROCEEDINGS

• (1000)

[*English*]

### AUDITOR GENERAL OF CANADA

**The Speaker:** It is my duty to lay upon the table, pursuant to subsection 8(2) of the Auditor General Act, a special report of the Auditor General of Canada.

[*Translation*]

Pursuant to Standing Order 108(3)(g), this report is deemed to have been permanently referred to the Standing Committee on Public Accounts.

It is my duty to lay upon the table, pursuant to subsection 19.1(2) of An Act to provide further support in response to COVID-19, a report of the Auditor General of Canada.

[*English*]

Pursuant to Standing Order 108(3)(g), this report is deemed to have been permanently referred to the Standing Committee on Public Accounts.

\* \* \*

### 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, certified copies of the reports of the Federal Electoral Boundaries Commission of Manitoba and of Saskatchewan.

[*Translation*]

Pursuant to Standing Order 32(5), these reports are deemed permanently referred to the Standing Committee on Procedure and House Affairs.

[*English*]

### ÉCOLE POLYTECHNIQUE DE MONTRÉAL

**Hon. Marci Ien (Minister for Women and Gender Equality and Youth, Lib.):** Mr. Speaker, I rise today because 33 years ago on this day a horrific act of violence changed our country forever. On December 6, 1989, 14 women were murdered at École Polytechnique de Montréal when a gunman walked in, separated the women from the men and opened fire.

[*Translation*]

They were murdered simply because they were women.

[*English*]

As a member of this place, as a member of cabinet, as a mother, as a sister and as a daughter, I stand here to say that the Government of Canada will not tolerate gender-based violence anywhere in any way in this country.

[*Translation*]

Today, on the National Day of Remembrance and Action on Violence Against Women, we remember Geneviève Bergeron, Hélène Colgan, Nathalie Croteau, Barbara Daigneault, Anne-Marie Edward, Maud Haviernick, Maryse Laganière, Maryse Leclair, Anne-Marie Lemay, Sonia Pelletier, Michèle Richard, Annie St-Arneault, Annie Turcotte and Barbara Klucznik-Widajewicz.

[*English*]

We also honour everyone who has been killed as a result of gender-based violence. Last year, 173 women and girls in Canada lost their lives in this way. This amounts to one woman or girl every two days.

We stand in solidarity today and every day with victims and survivors of gender-based violence and their families. We bring attention to those most at risk: women and girls; indigenous women and girls; members of the 2SLGBTQI+ communities; women and gender-diverse people with disabilities; and women living in northern, rural and remote communities. We honour and remember the women taken from us: Morgan Harris, Mercedes Myran, Rebecca Connois and Mashkode Bizhiki'ikwe. We will not forget them.

• (1005)

[*Translation*]

Gender-based violence has long-term effects on individuals, families and communities. It can happen at work, in families and between acquaintances.

*Routine Proceedings**[English]*

It is a form of abuse that costs lives, and it must not be tolerated in Canada. These acts are part of a continuum of hate that needs to be disrupted, and each one of us has the power to help break that cycle.

As my hon. colleagues know, we are currently commemorating the annual 16 days of activism against gender-based violence. Our theme is “It’s Not Just”, a double meaning that reminds us of both the injustice of gender-based violence and how society perpetuates it by excusing less violent and less obvious forms.

I want to take a minute to talk about the lives impacted by these heinous acts.

In 2021, 90 homicide victims were killed by an intimate partner. Three-quarters, or 76%, of these victims were women and girls. The number of victims of intimate-partner homicide in 2021 was higher than in 2020, with 84 victims, and in 2019, there were 77 victims. This means mothers, daughters, sisters, aunts, cousins and friends. Women and girls from all walks of life were killed at the hands of their intimate partners.

Think of the children left behind when a mother is killed by her partner. Think of the mother left to carry on when her child is killed by their partner. Think of the communities left with a hole that cannot be filled when they lose an integral member. At a time when the gun lobby is using the memory of this horrendous anniversary to promote its own agenda, we must stand firm and defend the memories and legacies of those gone too soon.

There is so much to be done, and we must all be part of the solution. In the past seven years, we have shown leadership in the efforts to end gender-based violence. I would like now to speak a bit about the progress we have made so far.

Since 2015, the Government of Canada has taken a wide-ranging approach to combat gender-based violence, including but not limited to introducing the first-ever federal strategy to address gender-based violence, dedicating 25% of the national housing strategy to support women, banning assault-style weapon and putting a freeze on the sale and transfer of handguns within Canada, listing coercive control as a form of family violence in the Divorce Act, dedicating up to \$30 million over five years for crisis hotlines, and working with provinces and territories to deliver a national action plan to end gender-based violence and support survivors.

On November 9, the forum of federal-provincial-territorial ministers responsible for the status of women endorsed the national action plan to end gender-based violence. Over the next 10 years, the national action plan will enable federal, provincial and territorial governments to continue working with victims and survivors, indigenous partners, direct service providers, experts, advocates, municipalities, the private sector and researchers to prevent and address gender-based violence in Canada. This work is historic, and we look forward to moving ahead with our provincial and territorial colleagues to put the plan into action.

We continue this important work in the memory of every person killed as a result of gender-based violence. We must not relent or

feel defeated by the enormity of this issue. We must keep moving forward in our efforts to make Canada safer for everyone.

*[Translation]*

I want to close by addressing those who are hearing this message and who are currently experiencing gender-based violence. I urge them to talk to someone they trust and ask for help. I want to tell them that they are not alone.

● (1010)

*[English]*

**Ms. Marilyn Gladu (Sarnia—Lambton, CPC):** Madam Speaker, today I rise to honour and remember the victims of the tragic massacre at École Polytechnique 33 years ago. As the first female engineer here in the House of Commons, I will tell members that these women were my sisters.

*[Translation]*

On December 6, 1989, an armed man entered a mechanical engineering class at École Polytechnique where he ordered the men to leave. Telling the nine other women that he was fighting against feminism, he opened fire, killing six. Clearing a path through the school, he mainly targeted women during a 20-minute shooting spree before turning the gun on himself. In the end, 14 women were dead.

*[English]*

I will name them now to respect them for the strong women they were.

*[Translation]*

Those women are Geneviève Bergeron, 21, mechanical engineering student; Hélène Colgan, 23, mechanical engineering student; Nathalie Croteau, 23, mechanical engineering student; Barbara Daigneault, 22, mechanical engineering student; Anne-Marie Edward, 21, chemical engineering student; Maud Haviernick, 29, metallurgical engineering student; Barbara Klucznik-Widajewicz, 31, nursing student at the University of Montreal; Maryse Laganière, 25, employee at Polytechnique; Maryse Leclair, metallurgical engineering student; Anne-Marie Lemay, mechanical engineering student; Sonia Pelletier, mechanical engineering student; Michèle Richard, metallurgical engineering student; Annie St-Arneault, 23, mechanical engineering student; Annie Turcotte, metallurgical engineering student, only 20.

*[English]*

As a female engineer, I have experienced the kind of misplaced anger from men that seeks to remove us from the workforce. We must do more to prevent such acts of violence in our country, especially those that specifically target women.

We have banned the gun that was used in these tragic murders, but we have not eradicated the hatred of men against women. Violent crime is up 32% in the country. Handguns were banned months ago, but we continue to hear of shootings every day in the country because the bottom line is that criminals do not obey the law and we cannot legislate morality. We need to try to address the gender-based violent attitudes that lead to the kind of awful deaths that happened at École Polytechnique.

In 2016, I was part of a study at the status of women committee to eliminate violence against women and girls. I am disheartened to see that the violent deaths of women continue to rise. We must address the root cause of misogynistic attitudes toward women.

[*Translation*]

That is the work we should be doing to give meaning to incidents like this one that happened 33 years ago today. That is a way for us to honour their memory.

These young women were bright and intelligent. Maybe some of them would have been elected to the House.

[*English*]

May we never forget them and may we work together to ensure this never happens again.

• (1015)

[*Translation*]

**Ms. Andréanne Larouche (Shefford, BQ):** Madam Speaker, 33 years ago, on December 6, 1989, a man entered the École Polytechnique in Montreal and murdered 14 women simply because they were women.

We have not forgotten Geneviève Bergeron, Hélène Colgan, Nathalie Croteau, Barbara Daigneault, Anne-Marie Edward, Maud Haviernick, Barbara Klucznik-Widajewicz, Maryse Laganière, Maryse Leclair, Anne-Marie Lemay, Sonia Pelletier, Michèle Richard, Annie St-Arneault and Annie Turcotte.

All of us who are old enough remember where we were, who we were with and what we were doing when we heard of the massacre. In our hearts remain those feelings of confusion, horror, incomprehension, incredulity, sadness and shame that we felt after the events of December 6.

We carry in our hearts the memory of these women who died needlessly. The tragedy of the Polytechnique now carries a duty of remembrance. We must be aware of the mistakes and tragedies of the past in order to prevent them from happening again. The duty of remembrance requires words, because we must name misogyny, femicide, mass murder, armed violence. These are ugly, dark and dirty words. Unfortunately, though, they are words we continue to hear.

They continue to strike, humiliate and destroy. I would like new words to associate with the women at the Polytechnique. We need new words: love, hope, solidarity, determination.

The duty of remembrance requires us to name things, take action and live in hope. Equality is making headway, we are becoming more and more aware of misogyny, and we can win. We will never

### *Routine Proceedings*

entirely win the battle against violence. There will always be tragedies.

However, I am convinced, and I want to be convinced, that we are moving in the right direction. We have no other choice. We owe it to all those who lost their lives because they were women. We owe it to the young women of the Polytechnique, to our sisters recently murdered in Manitoba and to all those who have disappeared or been murdered across Canada, to the hundreds and thousands of women killed in the past 33 years because they were women.

We need to move in the right direction. The duty of remembrance also comes with the duty to act. Better gun control laws, the prohibition of assault weapons and the firearms registry in Quebec are steps in the right direction.

I will not say that Bill C-21 is perfect, or that the government is doing things the way it should, but I will say that we need to limit access to assault weapons and that that is also a step in the right direction.

Raising the collective awareness of sexual assault cases and of sexual crimes in general is a step in the right direction. It gives us hope.

The École Polytechnique women might have been mothers and even grandmothers today.

• (1020)

For 33 years, some of the survivors have gone to candlelight vigils on their own, then they brought their sons and daughters, and, this evening, we may see some grandchildren. These successive generations that share the memory of those who were lost demonstrate that we have not forgotten this tragedy, the loss, the responsibility to take action, and that we have not lost hope.

Geneviève, Hélène, Nathalie, Barbara Daigneault, Anne-Marie Edward, Maud, Barbara Klucznik-Widajewicz, Maryse Laganière, Maryse Leclair, Anne-Marie Lemay, Sonia, Michèle, Annie St-Arneault and Annie Turcotte. We acknowledge our debt and we shall not forget.

[*English*]

**Ms. Leah Gazan (Winnipeg Centre, NDP):** Madam Speaker, I rise on this solemn occasion to commemorate a horrific tragedy, the memory of the École Polytechnique massacre, which took place on this day 33 years ago. It is still etched in the minds of millions of people who will never forget this act of femicide.

Let me begin by paying tribute to the women who were murdered on December 6, 1989: Geneviève Bergeron, Hélène Colgan, Nathalie Croteau, Barbara Daigneault, Anne-Marie Edward, Maud Haviernick, Maryse Laganière, Maryse Leclair, Anne-Marie Lemay, Sonia Pelletier, Michèle Richard, Annie St-Arneault, Annie Turcotte and Barbara Klucznik-Widajewicz.

*Routine Proceedings*

These women had big dreams. They dreamt of becoming engineers, a male-dominated profession, especially at that time. Their dreams and their lives were stolen by a man poisoned by misogynistic hate, a man who, as he opened fire, shouted, “You are all feminists”. They were killed because they were women. They were killed because they dared to pursue a career in an overwhelmingly male field.

They were killed by an act of violent misogyny. Thirty years later, violence born of misogyny, toxic masculinity and racism is still killing women and gender-diverse people across the country. Every six days, a woman in Canada is killed by her intimate partner. In 2021, 173 women and girls were killed by violence, up from 160 the year before. Indigenous women, girls and two-spirit people continue to go missing or be murdered at alarming rates.

Five days before the National Day of Remembrance and Action on Violence Against Women, we received news about another unspeakable femicide.

Three more indigenous women, Morgan Harris, Mercedes Myran and a third woman, whom the elders have asked us to call Buffalo Woman until her family can be found, were murdered by an alleged serial killer in Winnipeg who was also charged with the murder of Rebecca Contois in May 2022.

It is part of what the National Inquiry into Missing and Murdered Indigenous Women and Girls and the Prime Minister have described as an ongoing genocide.

As with the perpetrator of the Polytechnique massacre, what we know about this alleged serial killer is that he too was poisoned by hatred. A review of his social media activity revealed posts that promoted violence, misogyny, anti-Semitism and white supremacy.

Once again we were witnessing the fatal consequences of a growing far-right extremism.

While our country reels from this enormous loss, the Winnipeg Police Service declared that it would not undertake a search for the remains of the three precious sisters believed to be located in the Brady landfill.

I understand this might not be feasible but, at the very least, they need to stop dumping trash in the landfill so our loved ones can rest in peace and undisturbed.

What message does that callous decision send to indigenous women, to survivors, to the families of victims? It says that we are less than, that our lives have been deemed not valuable, that our ongoing genocide has been normalized and that it has been so normalized that it is not even considered an emergency in the House.

● (1025)

We should not have to plead for our safety, to be taken seriously or for our families to be given the closure they deserve. We need to be provided with resources because we deserve closure. The federal government must heed the calls of survivors, advocates and community leaders by providing immediate funding to stop this genocide, and provide the resources to search for the remains of our precious sisters, wherever they may be.

This is a human rights crisis. When faced with a crisis, we do not ignore it. We must act. While today is a day of remembrance, it is also a day of action. I urge the federal government and all governments in Canada to heed this call to action by taking urgent steps to stop this violence.

We will never forget the 14 women whose lives were taken 33 years ago. We will never forget the four indigenous women, and all the indigenous women, girls and two-spirit people whose lives were taken earlier this year and in past decades. In their cherished memory, we will renew our efforts to end gender-based violence once and for all.

**The Assistant Deputy Speaker (Mrs. Alexandra Mendès):** I believe the hon. member for Saanich—Gulf Islands is seeking the unanimous consent of the House to speak. Does she have unanimous consent?

**Some hon. members:** Agreed.

[*Translation*]

**Ms. Elizabeth May (Saanich—Gulf Islands, GP):** Madam Speaker, I want to sincerely thank all my colleagues for giving me your consent. I also thank them for their support; we are all united at this time.

I want to warmly thank my colleague, the member for Toronto Centre and the Minister for Women and Gender Equality and Youth.

I would also like to thank my dear colleague, the member for Sarnia—Lambton, who is an engineer. Her message touched me.

Finally, I thank my colleagues, the member for Shefford and the member for Winnipeg Centre.

[*English*]

All of us here, as women in this place, do work in an environment that is traditionally male dominated. All of our society is dominated by the notion of patriarchy. Men are usually in charge.

[*Translation*]

On this day of remembrance, it is especially difficult to think about the events of December 6, 1989, a day I remember as though it were yesterday.

[*English*]

For all of us women who were alive, conscious and politically aware, there was the deliberate killing of 16 women who were so young. Their only crime was being in a classroom to study to become an engineer. Their only crime was to be a woman. Margaret Atwood said that men are afraid that women will laugh at them, and women are afraid that men will kill them.

We are in a time, as many of my colleagues have mentioned, where violence against women is on the rise. Women who are intimate partners are at risk. There is no question that the words of the member for Winnipeg Centre should ring out clearly across Canada that women are particularly at risk when they have two crimes: They are women, and they are indigenous.

The recent charges brought against a serial killer in Winnipeg for those deaths must again wake us up to misogyny, racism and the crimes of a toxic culture in which patriarchy is the accepted default position. We have to ask ourselves what more we can do. There is no question that every member of every party in this place is saying it is time that we must end violence against women. Here we are 33 years on, and violence against women continues.

What we can say is that we need our allies. On this day, when so many women turn to each other in sisterhood and solidarity, we embrace especially our male colleagues. They are the men who will stand and say that they are a feminist, the men who will stand up and say that patriarchy belongs in the dark ages of history.

We must speak out against femicide. We must stand with those women still in Afghanistan and help them to survive. We must stand with all indigenous women and girls across this country, and stand with the families of those who still do not know where their fallen mommies, aunties, sisters and daughters are. We must say that it is time to end violence, violence against women, violence against each other and the violence we carry in our hearts.

The killing of the 16 women on December 6, 1989, must never be forgotten. It is of them we think of this day. We also say we know that ending violence is a job for us all. It does not just fall on women, and it does not just fall on governments. It requires that all of us, heart to heart and neighbour to neighbour, pay attention and protect anyone we see as vulnerable. We must step up in the moment when we hear hatred spoken, because words of hate can turn into acts of hate.

We must, especially in this place, because we are here and we know each other, try harder to take the violence out of our language and to take polarization out of our politics. Then we can say to Canadians that we are a country that takes care of each other, we love each other and, in memory of the 16 women who were killed on this day 33 years ago, we banish hate from our hearts.

• (1030)

[*Translation*]

**The Assistant Deputy Speaker (Mrs. Alexandra Mendès):** Following discussions among representatives of all parties in the House, I understand there is an agreement to observe a moment of silence.

[*English*]

I would now invite the House to rise and observe a minute of silence in memory of the victims of the tragic event that happened 33 years ago at École polytechnique de Montréal.

[*A moment of silence observed*]

### *Routine Proceedings*

[*Translation*]

**The Assistant Deputy Speaker (Mrs. Alexandra Mendès):** I wish to inform the House that, because of the ministerial statement, Government Orders will be extended by 30 minutes.

\* \* \*

• (1035)

[*English*]

## COMMITTEES OF THE HOUSE

### JUSTICE AND HUMAN RIGHTS

**Mr. Randeep Sarai (Surrey Centre, Lib.):** Madam Speaker, I have the honour to present, in both official languages, the sixth report of the Standing Committee on Justice and Human Rights in relation to Bill C-9, an act to amend the Judges Act.

The committee has studied the bill and has decided to report the bill back to the House with amendments.

### GOVERNMENT OPERATIONS AND ESTIMATES

**Mr. Kelly McCauley (Edmonton West, CPC):** Madam Speaker, I have the honour to present, in both official languages, the fourth report of the Standing Committee on Government Operations and Estimates, entitled “Supplementary Estimates (B), 2022-23”.

### FINANCE

**Mr. Peter Fonseca (Mississauga East—Cooksville, Lib.):** Madam Speaker, I have the honour to present, in both official languages, the ninth report of the Standing Committee on Finance in relation to Bill C-241, an act to amend the Income Tax Act (deduction of travel expenses for tradespersons).

I would like to thank the finance committee clerks, Alexandre Roger and Carine Grand-Jean; legislative clerk, Marie-Hélène Sauvé; analysts, Joëlle Malo and Michaël Lambert-Racine; committee assistant, Lynda Gaudreault; all committee staff; interpreter services; and all members of the finance committee.

\* \* \*

## PETITIONS

### MEDICAL ASSISTANCE IN DYING

**Mrs. Rosemarie Falk (Battlefords—Lloydminster, CPC):** Madam Speaker, I am rising to table a petition.

Dr. Louis Roy, from the Quebec college of physicians, recommended expanding euthanasia to babies. This is children ages zero to one. Euthanizing them was suggested because they may have been born with disabilities or very serious syndromes. Recently, the college sent another witness to somewhat double down on this, because there was outrage and concern from Canadians across the country.

The petitioners want the House to know that this proposal for the legalized killing of infants is disturbing and unacceptable in Canadian society. The petitioners believe that killing of children is always wrong.

*Routine Proceedings*

The petitioners call on the House to block all attempts to legalize infanticide.

**Mr. Garnett Genuis (Sherwood Park—Fort Saskatchewan, CPC):** Madam Speaker, I have a number of petitions I want to present. The first is similar to that presented by my colleague.

The petitioners highlight, with horror, proposals from the Quebec college of physicians to legalize euthanasia for babies. They find this proposal deeply disturbing. Infants cannot consent. Killing children is always wrong. Infanticide is always wrong. There is no justification for proposing to legalize the killing of children.

The petitioners call on the Government of Canada to block any attempt to allow the killing of children for any reason.

## HUMAN ORGAN TRAFFICKING

**Mr. Garnett Genuis (Sherwood Park—Fort Saskatchewan, CPC):** Madam Speaker, the next petition I am tabling is in support of Bill S-223, a private member's bill seeking to ban forced organ harvesting and trafficking. This bill proceeds to its second hour of debate at third reading stage tomorrow and a final vote next week.

The petitioners want to see this bill passed, making it a criminal offence for a person to go abroad and receive an organ taken without consent.

- (1040)

## MILITARY CHAPLAINCY

**Mr. Garnett Genuis (Sherwood Park—Fort Saskatchewan, CPC):** Madam Speaker, the next petition I am tabling responds to recommendations from the Minister of National Defence's advisory panel on systemic racism and discrimination that published its final report earlier this year.

The petitioners are concerned about the fact that this report calls for the exclusion of chaplains on the basis of the views of their faith community on issues of gender and sexuality. They say it is unacceptable, and it is a violation of religious freedom to require or promote the firing of religious clergy from chaplaincy roles on the basis of the views that their denominations hold on various issues.

The petitioners call on the government and the House to oppose this kind of religious discrimination; to reject the recommendations on chaplaincy in the Canadian Armed Forces in the final report of the Minister of National Defence's advisory panel on systemic racism and discrimination; and to affirm the right of all Canadians, including Canadian Armed Forces chaplains, to freedom of religion.

## HAZARAS

**Mr. Garnett Genuis (Sherwood Park—Fort Saskatchewan, CPC):** Madam Speaker, the next petition I am tabling highlights the horrific human rights abuses that have been inflicted on the Hazara community in Afghanistan over generations. They are abuses that have been ongoing but have significantly worsened since the Taliban takeover of Afghanistan.

The petitioners call on the government to recognize the violence and the genocide the Hazaras have faced, and to designate September 25 as Hazaras genocide memorial day.

## CHARITABLE ORGANIZATIONS

**Mr. Garnett Genuis (Sherwood Park—Fort Saskatchewan, CPC):** Finally, Madam Speaker, I am tabling a petition from people who are concerned about the government's intention to bring in another values test associated with charitable status, to use charitable status determinations to discriminate against organizations that hold different views from the government on the issue of abortion.

The petitioners call on the government to preserve and protect the application of charitable status rules on a politically and ideologically neutral basis without discrimination on the basis of political or religious values, without the imposition of another values test, and to affirm the Charter right of all Canadians to freedom of expression.

## MEDICAL ASSISTANCE IN DYING

**Ms. Leslyn Lewis (Haldimand—Norfolk, CPC):** Madam Speaker, I am presenting a petition this morning on behalf of concerned Canadians.

I would like to draw the attention of the House to the fact that Louis Roy of the Quebec College of Physicians has recommended expanding euthanasia to babies, from birth to one year of age, who come into the world with severe deformities and very serious syndromes.

Recently, the college also sent another witness to AMAD to double down, claiming further that this was not a moral issue and that society had evolved past ethical considerations. The petitioners find this proposal to be very disturbing and very troubling, and they find that the legalized killing of infants is deeply disturbing and unacceptable in Canadian society. They believe that the killing of children is always wrong.

The petitioners call on the House to block all attempts to legalize infanticide.

[*Translation*]

## ELECTORAL REPRESENTATION

**Ms. Elizabeth May (Saanich—Gulf Islands, GP):** Madam Speaker, it is an honour to rise today to present this petition.

From its very inception, Canada's electoral system has always been a first-past-the-post system.

[*English*]

The petitioners point out that this first past the post system leads to distortions. The popular vote is not represented. In these seats in the chamber, we are not here in the proportions for which Canadians have voted.

The petitioners call on the government to move toward a system of proportional representation, as recommended by the Special Committee on Electoral Reform in 2016, to bring credible representation to Canadians.



## CHILDREN

**Mrs. Anna Roberts (King—Vaughan, CPC):** Madam Speaker, I rise today to present a petition about our children. Children are our future and the killing of children is always wrong. Without our children, we have no future.

I stand here on behalf of my constituents today to demand that we stop the killing of our children. It is always wrong.

\* \* \*

## 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 ask that all questions be allowed to stand.

**The Assistant Deputy Speaker (Mrs. Alexandra Mendès):** Is that agreed?

**Some hon. members:** Agreed.

---

**GOVERNMENT ORDERS**

[*English*]

**FALL ECONOMIC STATEMENT IMPLEMENTATION ACT, 2022**

## BILL C-32—TIME ALLOCATION MOTION

**Hon. Mark Holland (Leader of the Government in the House of Commons, Lib.):** Madam Speaker, I move:

That in relation to Bill C-32, An Act to implement certain provisions of the fall economic statement tabled in Parliament on November 3, 2022 and certain provisions of the budget tabled in Parliament on April 7, 2022, not more than one further sitting day shall be allotted to the consideration of the report stage and not more than one sitting day shall be allotted to the consideration of the third reading stage of the said bill; and

That fifteen minutes before the expiry of the time provided for Government Orders on the day allotted to the consideration at report stage and on the day allotted to the consideration at the third reading stage of the said bill, any proceedings before the House shall be interrupted, if required for the purpose of this order, and in turn every question necessary for the disposal of the stage of the bill then under consideration shall be put forthwith and successively without further debate or amendment.

● (1045)

[*Translation*]

**The Assistant Deputy Speaker (Mrs. Alexandra Mendès):** Pursuant to Standing Order 67(1), there will now be a 30-minute question period. I invite hon. members who wish to ask questions to rise in their places or use the “raise hand” function so the Chair has some idea of the number of members who wish to participate in the question period.

The hon. member for Louis-Saint-Laurent.

**Mr. Gérard Deltell (Louis-Saint-Laurent, CPC):** Madam Speaker, unfortunately, we must once again rise in the House to condemn the fact that the government is using a gag order to get its bills passed. This type of approach should be used only in extreme situations and as a last recourse. Gag orders should be used parsimoniously, but they have now become the government’s modus operandi. Unfortunately, we must acknowledge that, in the past sev-

*Government Orders*

en years, it has used closure far too often, and that is an attack on democracy.

We do not need gag orders, especially since this is a minority government. We should keep in mind that the government received fewer votes than the official opposition. We should keep in mind that we must all work together for the good of Canadians. We should keep in mind that we are 338 duly elected representatives and that we have the right to express our opinion about every bill introduced by the government. The government grants the right to speak to the same few individuals—with whom I always enjoy debating, incidentally. These few people have virtually a monopoly on the right to speak, but that is not how we work in the official opposition.

Why is the government once again imposing closure on a bill that affects every Canadian’s wallet?

**Hon. Randy Boissonnault (Minister of Tourism and Associate Minister of Finance, Lib.):** Madam Speaker, I have enormous respect for my hon. colleague.

Before answering his question, I would like to mention that this is a sad day that marks a tragedy motivated by hate and misogyny. The École Polytechnique massacre will always be seared into our collective memory. My heart and my thoughts go out to the families of the victims who died 33 years ago, as well as to the families of all women who suffered a violent death. The minister and all of my colleagues in the House have my full support in the fight against misogyny. We need to put an end to violence against women and against those who identify as women.

We know that times are hard for Canadians, and Bill C-32 will provide them with essential support. We will eliminate interest on student loans, help families purchase their first home and reduce income tax for growing small and medium-size businesses. These are concrete measures that form the basis of our bill.

Rather than supporting Canadians who need the measures set out in Bill C-32, the Conservatives continue to vote against the bill and are now using delay tactics. I understand that there can be some back and forth in the House, but when the issue is the title of the bill, enough is enough, and we should move on to a vote.

● (1050)

**Mr. Alain Therrien (La Prairie, BQ):** Madam Speaker, when I was a child, there were stories on TV. They all used to end with “they got married and had many children”. The NDP and the Liberals got married and had many closure motions. They impose closure on themselves. They impose closure on the House of Commons. We have never seen an opposition party so eager to keep quiet. Sometimes, when we hear them talk, we can understand them.

Seriously, the government has negotiated 20 closure motions with the NDP. There was a motion that said the government could extend sittings until midnight up to June 23, if it so desired.

Let us look at the legislative agenda: Today we are studying Bill C-32; tomorrow, Bill C-32; Thursday, Bill C-32; Friday, Bill C-32. That is what is on the agenda.

*Government Orders*

They can extend the sittings until midnight, but that is not enough for them. They are in a hurry. Their bill is urgent. What do they do? They decide. My colleague, the Minister of Tourism, said that they are fed up. I would like to remind them that they are in Parliament. This is a democracy. I know that the Prime Minister once said he admired China and China's dictatorship, but at some point he will have to learn to listen to the opposition, because the opposition parties often have important and relevant things to say. It might inspire them not to introduce bills like Bill C-31. That is why the NDP is on its knees licking the Liberals' shoes; it is all for Bill C-31.

I have been a member of the House for 10 years, and I have never seen such a rotten bill. It is not me saying that, it is Mario Dumont, when he wrote about dental insurance and Bill C-31 in his column. The bill was so badly put together that they must have been hanging their heads in shame as they drafted it. That is why the NDP supported 20 gag orders. It is a little embarrassing.

My question is for the NDP. Are members of the NDP not ashamed of having supported 20 gag orders and not saying anything?

**Hon. Randy Boissonnault:** Madam Speaker, I have great respect for my colleague from La Prairie, and I know that—

**Mr. Alexandre Boulerice:** That would be nice—

**Mr. Alain Therrien:** Clown.

**The Assistant Deputy Speaker (Mrs. Alexandra Mendès):** Order. Can we please hear the minister's response?

**Hon. Randy Boissonnault:** Madam Speaker, in response to the question from the member for La Prairie, this is not a question of muzzling the House. It is a matter of delivering—

**The Assistant Deputy Speaker (Mrs. Alexandra Mendès):** The hon. member for Rosemont—La Petite-Patrie is rising on a point of order.

\* \* \*

**POINTS OF ORDER**

## ALLEGED USE OF UNPARLIAMENTARY LANGUAGE

**Mr. Alexandre Boulerice (Rosemont—La Petite-Patrie, NDP):** Madam Speaker, it is unfortunate to hear such language in the House, but the member for La Prairie used unparliamentary and insulting language as a personal attack against me. I would very much like the member for La Prairie to apologize to the House.

**The Assistant Deputy Speaker (Mrs. Alexandra Mendès):** It is noted.

\* \* \*

**FALL ECONOMIC STATEMENT IMPLEMENTATION ACT, 2022**

## BILL C-32—TIME ALLOCATION MOTION

The House resumed consideration of the motion.

**Hon. Randy Boissonnault:** Madam Speaker, the support measures in Bill C-32 will help Quebecers and Canadians across the country. It is time that the government rolled out these support measures. We need to act and vote, because Canadians are counting on

the measures in Bill C-32. These measures include strengthening our economy and positioning ourselves as the G7 country with the lowest deficit. Now is the time to act. That is why we are here today. We want to vote.

[English]

**Ms. Elizabeth May (Saanich—Gulf Islands, GP):** Madam Speaker, it will not surprise anyone here to know that I cannot support a motion to have time allocation even on a bill on which I plan to vote yes. We are far too often, almost 100% of the time, falling into the practice of time allocating bills. The New Democrats and the Liberals decried it, just as much as I did, when it was happening to us under the previous Harper government.

Now that it is happening to people we are prepared to support in general on bills sometimes, we somehow think it does not matter to have full debate in this place. Could we please revisit the traditions of this place to ensure time is not used in debate by members who read a speech aloud? If we were not reading speeches, we would have far fewer speakers. Returning to our rules in all things will help the House work better and help House leaders organize the work. I sympathize with the reasons, but we now seem to use time allocation every time. Two wrongs do not make a right.

• (1055)

**Hon. Randy Boissonnault:** Madam Speaker, I too would like to see this place be a place of fulsome and focused debate, but we are talking about an objection by the Conservatives, who are using the dilatory tactic of opposing the short title of the bill. That is like having a new medicine ready to go out to people and stopping production because they do not like the name of the medicine. It is absurd.

We are talking about 27 hours of debate, 140 interventions and \$1 billion that needs to get to Atlantic Canadians to help them recover from Fiona, on top of the \$300 million already put into the system for Atlantic Canadians. I am for fulsome debate, but not for dilatory tactics. Canadians need these supports. That is why we need to get to a vote.

**Mr. Mark Gerretsen (Parliamentary Secretary to the Leader of the Government in the House of Commons (Senate), Lib.):** Madam Speaker, I actually emphasize with the comments made by the leader of the Green Party, but the reality is that I am old enough to remember the last fall economic statement, which the Conservatives would not let us vote on until well into the spring, almost the summer of this year. It was the fall economic statement of 2021 that we could not get to vote on until almost the end of the session last spring.

The reality is that we are seeing game after game being played by the Conservatives, and it is all being done at the expense not of members of the House who are sitting here having to debate them, but of those who will benefit the most, those who are struggling the most right now and who will benefit from these supports that will roll out.

I am wondering if the minister could comment on who is really suffering the most due to the delay tactics that are being caused by the Conservatives.

*Government Orders*

**Hon. Randy Boissonnault:** Madam Speaker, quite frankly there are small businesses in the member's riding, in my riding and in the ridings of the Conservatives, the Bloc, the Greens and the New Democrats that want to keep growing and want to make sure they are going to get some tax relief when they do.

There are families looking forward to saving money so they can put it into a new savings account for their first home, but they cannot do that unless we vote and pass this law on to the next stage, unless we get to vote on Bill C-32.

We are talking about making sure that hydrogen investments, clean-tech investments and the good labour agreements we need to build the economy for the future get passed into law. We are talking about billions of dollars of investment into our country. That is what is at stake. That is why we need to get to a vote.

**Mr. Blake Desjarlais (Edmonton Griesbach, NDP):** Madam Speaker, there is no question that Canadians are suffering right now. There is no question that people are having to use what little they have in their savings accounts just to make ends meet.

Since New Democrats have been elected to this place, we have always been steadfast in our mission of ensuring that we continue to deliver the promises we made to Canadians. Many of those promises are included in this fall economic statement and within Bill C-32. It is imperative that we get these supports to Canadians now.

This House is a place where traditions of debate live. Yes, that is an important thing, but in our condition of democracy today, what we are seeing is the Bloc Québécois do what it has done traditionally, which is to blame, blame, blame everybody else, and then we have the other block party, the Conservative block, which blocks everything else.

We really need to get this legislation passed. We need to get the support to Canadians. We are here to support Canadians, and that is what this bill does.

**Hon. Randy Boissonnault:** Madam Speaker, not only are we talking about growing the economy, but we are also going to pay down our deficit. We will have the lowest deficit in the G7. We have the lowest debt-to-GDP ratio.

The supports that are in here are real supports to help people to buy their first home, to make sure businesses can save money and to make sure we speed up the benefits for workers. We are also going to make sure that if companies have enough wealth that they think they can buy their shares back, they are going to pay a 2% tax to the country. If they do not want to do that, they can invest in the economy and grow the economy, which would be good for my colleague's riding, for my riding and for ridings across this country.

• (1100)

**Mr. Garnett Genuis (Sherwood Park—Fort Saskatchewan, CPC):** Madam Speaker, while today the government is asking the House to expedite its spending, we have the Auditor General revealing tens of billions of dollars in inflationary waste associated with the government's past spending. Tens of billions of dollars went out the door to people with clearly identified risk factors for not actually being eligible for the programs they were receiving money for: There were no spending controls before the money was

spent and no spending controls afterwards. Essentially the government is handing out money through its programs on the basis of an honour system. If one says one is eligible, one gets the money, and there is no checking before or after. Over \$30 billion in spending was identified, associated with very likely risk factors in the Auditor General's report.

I have a simple question for the minister with respect to the Auditor General's report. The Auditor General has come up with clear recommendations to try to address this problem of tens of billions of dollars of inflationary waste. Will the government accept and implement all the recommendations of the Auditor General, yes or no?

**Hon. Randy Boissonnault:** Madam Speaker, I wonder if the member for Sherwood Park—Fort Saskatchewan would like to talk to all the people in his riding who got CERB benefits or CEBA loans and were able to get through the pandemic, and if he would then say it was irresponsible spending. I wonder if he would be prepared to do that.

Quite frankly, we are seeing a primary contrast in this House. When we support Canadians, the Conservatives say it is a waste of money. We are investing in Canadians. We got them through the pandemic. We did the right thing. We got supports to people who needed them the most.

If we are talking about getting to the fall economic statement, and if the Conservatives would actually have substantive debate on the issue, perhaps we could continue, but their number one objection is to the short title of the bill. It is absurd; it is dilatory, and we need to move on and get supports to Canadians.

[*Translation*]

**Mrs. Claude DeBellefeuille (Salaberry—Suroît, BQ):** Madam Speaker, I want to speak because I am a bit amazed by everything I am hearing from both sides of the House.

I do not understand the idea of imposing closure on Bill C-32. In every speech we made, we said that the Bloc Québécois supported Bill C-32. I also heard the NDP say that it supported the bill. The government therefore has everything it needs to move Bill C-32 forward, properly and in a reasonable manner. It also has the option of having us sit later to accelerate the process. Why would it impose closure? I really do not understand.

I would also like to say that I completely disagree with the allegation made by my colleague in the NDP that the Bloc Québécois is obstructing proceedings. That is not true. That is misinformation. On the contrary, we have given our support to many bills. We work seriously and thoroughly on the bills. Members can say anything they want in the House, but they should not say things that make no sense. As whip, I can say that Bloc members are thorough, that they work hard, that they contribute and that they do not obstruct proceedings to block the legislative agenda. In fact, the opposite is true.

*Government Orders*

With respect to Bill C-32, I will say it again and tell the minister that we support it. The government has the support of a majority to move Bill C-32 forward properly. Why impose closure? I am sorry to say that I truly feel that closure is an abuse of power when used to pass a bill that the government already has majority support for. Compared with other minority governments, this government has managed to have a record number of bills passed. More bills have been passed under this minority government than under previous ones.

I do not know what they are complaining about. It seems that the Liberals are worn out, that they are basically fed up with managing our institution, Parliament, our debates. It is true that it takes a certain amount of effort. They need to listen, negotiate and be open. I really feel that this government is worn out.

• (1105)

**Hon. Randy Boissonnault:** Madam Speaker, with all due respect to the Bloc Québécois whip, I have never been accused of being worn out or lacking energy. The same is true of our government. It is not a question of managing the House. It is a question of providing Canadians with the support they need.

When the Conservatives obstruct proceedings with a dilatory motion to oppose the short title of a bill because there are no other objections they can make to this bill that will provide support to Canadians, rebuild the economy and reduce deficits, I think it is time to move on.

We are grateful for the co-operation of the Bloc Québécois and the NDP. It is time to put an end to dilatory motions and to vote on the bill.

[*English*]

**Hon. Gudie Hutchings (Minister of Rural Economic Development, Lib.):** Madam Speaker, we all remember sadly the events of 30-odd years ago, and our hearts and prayers go out to the families of the young women whose lives were tragically taken.

There is also another tragedy in my riding of a different scale, which is of course due to climate change. We all saw the impact of hurricane Fiona, the largest hurricane to hit Canada and wallop eastern Canada, and I would love to know my colleague's response regarding the supports we are giving in the fall economic statement to help these communities rebuild and get back on their feet after this terrible climate action.

**Hon. Randy Boissonnault:** Madam Speaker, I thank the minister for rural development for her passion and her work on restoring the livelihoods and the infrastructure in her home province of Newfoundland and Labrador and across the region. Having been in Charlottetown and Halifax just last week, I can tell members the scale of the rebuild is like nothing we have ever seen before, and it is going to take us as a country and businesses from across the country to help people to rebuild.

How are they going to get the financing? We have the disaster finance agreement in place, with \$300 million we have already put on the table, but the reason we need to get this bill passed is that we put \$1 billion in. The people I spoke to are counting on that financing so that they can be ready not just for the tourism season this summer, but to rebuild their lives. We need this money to go out.

We need the supports to be in place. That is why we need to get to a vote.

**Mr. John Barlow (Foothills, CPC):** Madam Speaker, my colleague, the minister, was unable to or did not want to answer the question from my colleague from Sherwood Park—Fort Saskatchewan, but the Auditor General's report today is quite clear that more than 10% of the \$200 billion the Liberal government put out as COVID relief programs is unaccounted for and very likely went to people who were ineligible for those programs.

I find it quite interesting that the minister is complaining that the opposition is doing its job of scrutinizing spending that is being proposed by the government. I was elected by my constituents in southern Alberta to do just that, to make sure every single taxpayer dollar is being used wisely and efficiently and going to the programs it was intended for. As the opposition, we voted in support of many of those COVID-19 relief programs. However, we did not vote in support of wasting more than \$30 billion that the Auditor General is saying in her report today will very likely be unrecovered.

Despite the programs the minister is talking about, when \$30 billion of taxpayers' money is being wasted we want to ensure there is some accountability there.

Is the opposition not doing its job? Why should my constituents trust the minister now, when he obviously did not earn that trust with the COVID-19 program?

**Hon. Randy Boissonnault:** Madam Speaker, I respect my colleague from Foothills. We were both attending Agribition and related events in Regina this past weekend to make sure rural Canadians know they have our support, both from the government side and also from the opposition side. Of course the opposition should oppose. That is its function, and as a democrat and as a parliamentarian I respect the work of all the opposition parties.

What is perplexing to me is why the opposition would hold up a bill that is so important to the functioning of our economy and to getting help to the Canadians who need it the most, over the issue of the short title of the bill. Certainly there is more substance, and to the substantive question my colleague from Foothills and my colleague from Sherwood Park—Fort Saskatchewan asked, we are going to read the Auditor General's report in detail. We will respond and take the advice from the Auditor General, but I know that what this government did during the pandemic kept 60,000 people working in the energy sector alone. It helped millions of people.

Yes, the Conservatives supported us; they also voted against some of the measures. We prevented a depression on the scale of the one in the 1930s. It was the right thing to do, and we will take the Auditor General's advice very seriously.

*Government Orders*

• (1110)

[*Translation*]

**Mr. Alexandre Boulerice (Rosemont—La Petite-Patrie, NDP):** Madam Speaker, I am pleased to rise in the House to remind everyone that, in this minority government, the NDP is acting responsibly and forcing the Liberal government to do things that matter to people, such as introducing dental care and increasing the GST credit.

Bill C-32 is not perfect, but it contains concrete measures that will help students, first-time homebuyers and our small and medium-sized businesses. In addition, this bill will make big Canadian banks pay a little more of their fair share—not enough, in our opinion, but it is a step in the right direction. We think it is important to pass this bill so we can help Quebeckers and Canadians as quickly as possible.

**Hon. Randy Boissonnault:** Madam Speaker, I respect the NDP members and thank them for supporting this bill.

My colleague is absolutely right. This bill will help growing companies lower their tax bill. We will eliminate interest on student and apprentice loans. We will also help Canadians buy their first home. We are going to make significant investments in the economy akin to those in the U.S. Inflation Reduction Act.

It is time to take action. The game plan is consistent across the continent. That is why we need to take action and vote in favour of Bill C-32.

**Ms. Andréanne Larouche (Shefford, BQ):** Madam Speaker, we are here to debate a record number of gag orders for a minority government. That is a big deal.

We all recall how Parliament was prorogued in the summer of 2020. The election that was called in the midst of the pandemic did not change anything. We traded four quarters for a dollar. Voters gave the government another minority mandate, in other words, voters did not give the government a blank cheque to do whatever it wants. It has to work with the other parties.

Is democracy a secondary issue for this government? As my whip said so well, we all agreed on this bill anyway. Why impose these mega closure motions? Why not work with the opposition parties? We are here to work with the government on this bill.

I do not understand it, and it is worrisome to see that the government did not understand the message it was sent by voters, namely that it is leading a minority government not a majority one.

**Hon. Randy Boissonnault:** Madam Speaker, I would like to begin by telling my colleague from Shefford just how deeply I was touched by her observations this morning. I thank her for her comments.

Regarding Bill C-32, we need to focus on democracy and meeting Canadians' needs when it comes to building the economy, putting Canada in a very strong fiscal position and providing support to Canadians who need it.

We have already had 27 hours of debate and 140 speeches on Bill C-32. We will be spending more time on it and hearing more speeches about it today and throughout the week. Implementing the

support measures in this bill is essential to the economy, to our fiscal position and to Canadians.

With that, we are here because we are ready to vote.

[*English*]

**Mr. Marty Morantz (Charleswood—St. James—Assiniboia—Headingley, CPC):** Madam Speaker, I wonder if the member could answer a question for me. The Parliamentary Budget Officer identified \$14.2 billion in what he called unannounced spending in the fall economic statement.

Can the member tell us what it will be spent on before we vote to approve it?

**Hon. Randy Boissonnault:** Madam Speaker, what is important in Bill C-32, the fall economic statement, is the fact that we have put money down on our deficit to have the lowest deficit in the G7. We are investing billions of dollars to make sure that we have a clean tech sector, a hydrogen sector and good labour provisions to make sure there are good-paying jobs.

We are talking about making sure that people can buy their first homes, eliminating the interest on student loans and apprentice debts, and making sure that small businesses in the member's riding, in my riding and ridings across this country can grow and have their taxes reduced, so we do not see them pack up and go to another country.

This is an important piece of legislation. The Conservatives are objecting to the short title of the bill. That is a very clear signal that it is time for us to move to the vote.

• (1115)

**Mr. Kevin Lamoureux (Parliamentary Secretary to the Leader of the Government in the House of Commons, Lib.):** Madam Speaker, we have a worldwide pandemic, a war in Europe and inflation around the world. When we look at this from that perspective, Canada's inflation rate is doing quite well compared to that in countries such as the United States, England and those in the European Union. Even though we are doing relatively well in comparison to the rest of the world, inflation is hurting.

Could the member provide his thoughts on what is in the legislation to support Canadians during this inflation situation?

**Hon. Randy Boissonnault:** Madam Speaker, I thank the hon. member for his insights and his comments because he is absolutely right. Canada's inflation rate is lower than that in the United States, Germany, the United Kingdom, the EU as a whole and other countries around the world. However, that does not make a difference to Canadians at home because they are feeling the pinch.

*Government Orders*

We have Russia's illegal war on Ukraine. We still have a zero-COVID policy in China, and supply chains still have not fully opened up from the pandemic. All of this means that prices are going up everywhere. That is why we have very targeted, calibrated supports in this fall economic statement to help people buy their first home, eliminate student loan interest for students and apprentices, and make sure that small businesses are going to get a tax break when they need it the most.

This is a smart investment in Canadians at the right time. That is why we need to move to the vote.

[*Translation*]

**Mr. Sébastien Lemire (Abitibi—Témiscamingue, BQ):** Madam Speaker, I would like to point out that I am very uneasy about the gag order that is being imposed.

It is a little late to propose amendments to Bill C-32, but a budget will be tabled soon enough. Can my colleague commit to making sure that there is real EI reform? I think it is time. We must use the months ahead to take appropriate action to rebuild our social safety net. Six out of 10 people do not have access to EI, and that includes people who pay into it.

Can my colleague commit to that?

**Hon. Randy Boissonnault:** Madam Speaker, we are in the midst of consultations on budget 2023. I know that my colleague who is responsible for EI is currently looking at a new version, at modernizing EI. I invite my colleague to submit his proposals to the minister responsible and to me because it is time to modernize our EI system. For today, we need to vote on Bill C-32.

**The Assistant Deputy Speaker (Mrs. Alexandra Mendès):** It is my duty to interrupt the proceedings at this time and put forth with the question on the motion now before the House.

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*]

The hon. parliamentary secretary to the government House leader.

**Mr. Kevin Lamoureux:** Madam Speaker, we would request a recorded vote.

**The Assistant Deputy Speaker (Mrs. Alexandra Mendès):** Call in the members.

• (1205)

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

(*Division No. 231*)

## YEAS

## Members

Aldag	Alghabra
Ali	Anand
Anandasangaree	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	Duclos
Duguid	Duncan (Etobicoke North)
Ehsassi	El-Khoury
Erskine-Smith	Fergus
Fillmore	Fisher
Fonseca	Fortier
Fragiskatos	Fraser
Fry	Gaheer
Garneau	Garrison
Gazan	Gerretsen
Gould	Green
Guilbeault	Hajdu
Hanley	Hardie
Hepfner	Holland
Housefather	Hughes
Hussen	Hutchings
Iacono	Idlout
Jen	Jaczek
Johns	Joly
Jowhari	Kayabaga
Kelloway	Khalid
Khera	Kusmierczyk
Kwan	Lalonde
Lambropoulos	Lametti
Lamoureux	Lapointe
Lattanzio	Lauzon
Lebouthillier	Lightbound
Long	Longfield
Louis (Kitchener—Conestoga)	MacAulay (Cardigan)
MacDonald (Malpeque)	MacGregor
MacKinnon (Gatineau)	Maloney
Martinez Ferrada	Masse
Mathysen	May (Cambridge)
McDonald (Avalon)	McGuinty
McLeod	McPherson
Mendès	Mendicino
Miao	Miller
Morrissey	Murray
Naqvi	Noormohamed
O'Connell	Oliphant
O'Regan	Petitpas Taylor
Powlowski	Qualtrough
Robillard	Rodriguez
Rogers	Romanado
Sahota	Sajjan
Saks	Samson
Sarai	Scarpaleggia
Schiefke	Serré
Sgro	Shanahan
Sheehan	Sidhu (Brampton East)
Sidhu (Brampton South)	Singh
Sorbara	St-Onge
Sudds	Tassi
Taylor Roy	Thompson

*Government Orders*

Trudeau  
Valdez  
van Koeverden  
Vandenbeld  
Weiler  
Yip  
Zarrillo

Turnbull  
Van Bynen  
Vandal  
Virani  
Wilkinson  
Zahid  
Zuberi — 170

Vidal  
Vignola  
Vis  
Wagantall  
Waugh  
Williamson

Vien  
Villemure  
Vuong  
Warkentin  
Webber  
Zimmer — 136

**NAYS**

## Members

Aitchison  
Allison  
Baldinelli  
Barrett  
Beaulieu  
Bergeron  
Bezan  
Blanchette-Joncas  
Bragdon  
Brock  
Calkins  
Carrie  
Chambers  
Cooper  
Dancho  
DeBellefeuille  
Desbiens  
Doherty  
Dreeshen  
Epp  
Falk (Provencher)  
Ferreri  
Fortin  
Garon  
Généreux  
Gill  
Godin  
Gourde  
Hallan  
Kelly  
Kmiec  
Kurek  
Lake  
Larouche  
Lehoux  
Lewis (Essex)  
Liepert  
Lobb  
Martel  
Mazier  
McLean  
Michaud  
Morantz  
Morrison  
Muys  
Patzner  
Pauzé  
Perron  
Poilievre  
Reid  
Richards  
Rood  
Scheer  
Seeback  
Simard  
Small  
Steinley  
Stewart  
Therrien  
Tochor  
Trudel  
Van Popta

Albas  
Arnold  
Barlow  
Barsalou-Duval  
Bergen  
Berthold  
Blanchet  
Block  
Brassard  
Brunelle-Duceppe  
Caputo  
Chabot  
Champoux  
Dalton  
Davidson  
Deltell  
Desilets  
Dowdall  
Ellis  
Falk (Battlefords—Lloydminster)  
Fast  
Findlay  
Gallant  
Gaudreau  
Genuis  
Gladu  
Goodridge  
Gray  
Jeneroux  
Kitchen  
Krampp-Neuman  
Kusie  
Lantsman  
Lawrence  
Lemire  
Lewis (Haldimand—Norfolk)  
Lloyd  
Maguire  
May (Saanich—Gulf Islands)  
McCauley (Edmonton West)  
Melillo  
Moore  
Morrice  
Motz  
Nater  
Paul-Hus  
Perkins  
Plamondon  
Rayes  
Rempel Garner  
Roberts  
Ruff  
Schmale  
Shiple  
Sinclair-Desgagné  
Soroka  
Ste-Marie  
Strahl  
Thomas  
Tolmie  
Uppal  
Vecchio

**PAIRED**

## Members

Aboultaif  
Champagne  
Koutrakis  
McKay  
Normandin  
Shields

Carr  
Dzerowicz  
MacKenzie  
Ng  
Redekopp  
Williams — 12

**The Deputy Speaker:** I declare the motion carried.

I wish to inform the House that because of the proceedings on the time allocation motion, Government Orders will be extended by 30 minutes.

## REPORT STAGE

The House resumed from December 5 consideration of Bill C-32, An Act to implement certain provisions of the fall economic statement tabled in Parliament on November 3, 2022 and certain provisions of the budget tabled in Parliament on April 7, 2022, as reported (without amendment) from the committee, and of Motion No. 1.

**Mr. Warren Steinley (Regina—Lewvan, CPC):** Mr. Speaker, it is my pleasure to join the discussion today on the fall economic statement.

What we wanted to see is a plan for the future of all Canadians, but what we received from the Liberals in this fall economic statement is more reckless spending. We laid out two requests before the statement was delivered. One was no new taxes. The second was that if the government brought in more spending, it should find savings in the budget. That was not possible for the reckless Liberal-NDP coalition.

What we see right now is more spending and less money in the pockets of Canadians. We even heard the Governor of the Bank of Canada, Tiff Macklem, say that there is a made-in-Canada inflation problem. That is as a result of the reckless spending by the costly NDP-Liberal coalition.

I will go through a few of the spending items that we see as possibly unnecessary.

For one of them, the finance minister could not even answer a question. When asked about the \$14.2-billion spend in the economic statement that is unaccounted for, she could not answer what it was earmarked for. As the finance minister of a G7 country, she should really have a better handle on where the money is going.

To add to the idea that the government right now is not in control of its spending, the Auditor General released a report today, and there are some very concerning things in it. A few of the numbers we saw today gave us a second to pause and wonder where the government is taking Canadians. One has to do with “overpayments to ineligible recipients” regarding COVID-19 spending. There was \$4.6 billion in overpayments to ineligible recipients that the taxpayers of this country will never get back.

*Government Orders*

Let us not stop there. There is another one about “payments that should be investigated further” by the Auditor General. This was just released today, and there is \$27.4 billion for further programs that we need to look into. One of my questions here, and I hope one of my Liberal counterparts will ask me about it, is whether the Liberals believe this needs to be investigated as well. Are they curious about where that \$24.7 billion is that they said was necessary for COVID spending? I ask because we all remember the solemn hand-on-heart moment when Canadians were told by the Prime Minister that he has their backs.

Do members remember one of the last fall economic statements delivered by the current minister and the government? There was a famous line that will go down as one of my favourite quotes from the Prime Minister. He said the Liberals were going to take on debt so Canadians did not have to. How is that working for the government now?

I think Canadians across the country are wondering when exactly that is going to happen, because they have seen the government take on massive debt, more debt than all other governments combined. What I am seeing and hearing from Canadians across the country is they feel that this debt is now being passed on to them. That is how they feel. Where is this solemn pledge by the Prime Minister that the government is going to take on debt so Canadians do not have to? That is not a thing and Canadians are falling further and further behind.

I have a few examples of some of the discussions I have had.

This past weekend, I had the opportunity to speak with the Association of Canadian Custom Harvesters in Saskatoon. People from all over the country do custom harvesting. By the way, in question period, the associate minister of finance, who is from Alberta, keeps saying that there have been massive crop failures across the country, yet I did not hear that from the people who actually harvest crops. That is another one of the fabricated stories the Liberals continue to tell to make sure they have a compelling narrative to keep shovelling out dollars.

At this conference in Saskatoon, it was great to hear about some of the innovations and new technologies these custom harvesters are using to lower emissions. There were questions they kept coming back to ask me: How much is enough? For the carbon tax, what level will make the government happy? I was dumbfounded. I did not know how to answer that because I do not think it will ever be enough.

● (1210)

One of the custom harvesters actually does work across the border in Montana and the Midwestern states, and then comes back up. I asked him what the difference in his fuel bill is when he is harvesting down south across the border compared to when he is harvesting in Canada. He said it is between \$15,000 and \$20,000 a week. Could members imagine doing business in a different jurisdiction where it costs an extra \$15,000 to \$20,000 a week on something they have no control over? They have to fuel their vehicles. They have to fuel their harvesters and trucks. I asked him how it makes sense to keep going back and forth across the border. He said it does not. Then and there it just hit me that this is why we are becoming so uncompetitive. That is why the jobs are going south. It

is because the current government is taxing businesses out of existence.

Then I remembered a quote I heard from one of the Liberal backbenchers, the member for Whitby. It all made sense when he stood in his spot and said to Canadians that they will have to go through pain. Can members imagine a government member standing up and saying that it is going to get worse? Can members imagine him saying he is not sure it is ever going to get better, but that Canadians can be sure that, as long as the Liberals are in government, it is going to continue to get worse for them, with more pain and suffering? I say “kudos” to that member because that is probably one of the first honest statements I have heard from a member of the Liberal Party in being honest with Canadians and saying that under the Liberals it will continue to get worse.

We see that situation across the country. One of the biggest things that hits me when I look at some of the statistics here is that 1.5 million Canadians are using a food bank every month in our country when we are supposed to be the breadbasket of the world. We have the food, fuel and fertilizer the world needs and we cannot feed our own people.

I opened the mail the other day when I was at home and my wife brought a letter to me. We are both U of R alumni. It was from the University of Regina. Usually people get these fundraising letters when it is for a capital project or some kind of infrastructure project. My wife said, “You will never believe this is coming from the University of Regina.” I read the fundraising letter and it was literally to feed students. It was an anonymous letter from one of the students saying that they go to bed hungry almost every night. There are 58.6% of university students at the U of R who are going to bed hungry. This is in our country now and it is shameful. From where we were to where we are now as a country, the food bank usages are up. Students are living in hostels and going to bed hungry, and they were looking for a vision from this economic statement. The government cannot spend itself out of inflation.

We are getting to another point where, if there are two more interest rate rises in this country, we are going to see a rash of bankruptcies. What is the Liberals' plan for that? Times are getting tough. I know people on variable mortgages whose mortgages have gone up \$600 or \$700 a month. Now it has come out that grocery bills are going to go up \$1,000 to \$1,500 per month. Eventually, there is nothing left.



*Government Orders*

In our country, under the current Liberal government, taxes now exceed take-home pay for people who are going to work every day. This is unsustainable in our country. We need a vision and we need a plan. We need to start making paycheques pay again. We need to make it so that people who are going to work have the ability to support their families and do not have to put water in their milk so they can make it go further for the kids. Parents are literally now scared to take their kids to the grocery store. I have constituents who have sent pictures to me of what \$100 in groceries is buying for their family now, and it is sad. It is a couple of loaves of bread, maybe a jug of milk, some pasta and some pasta sauce. That is not good enough.

I will leave members with a quote. It is something Premier Wall always said when we were in government. He said that the best thing a government can and should do is leave things better than it found them. The current government has failed on that miserably.

• (1215)

**Mr. Kody Blois (Kings—Hants, Lib.):** Mr. Speaker, I had the opportunity to read through the fall economic statement that we are here debating today, and I just want to correct the record. Canada has the lowest net debt-to-GDP ratio in the G7. We have the lowest deficit as it relates to GDP in the G7. We have seen some of the highest economic growth among our comparator countries in that category as well.

I do not disagree with the member's assertion that government needs to be mindful of spending. The Minister of Finance has alluded to that herself. However, as he talks about other members being real or candid with Canadians on screen, will the member at least acknowledge the statistics that the Department of Finance has provided, that are before us here as parliamentarians today, about Canada's true fiscal and economic record?

**Mr. Warren Steinley:** Mr. Speaker, if we are being honest, I would also like that member to be honest with his constituents when they are not getting as much back from the carbon tax as they are paying. Every day in question period, we ask straightforward questions of this government, and the government members get on their feet and say that eight out of 10 Canadians are better off under their system and their carbon tax scheme, which is a tax scheme not an environmental plan. It is simply untrue.

If we are going to be honest, we should talk about controlling spending and where the \$14.2 billion in this economic statement is actually going. If we are going to be honest, I would like the Liberal member to be honest with his constituents and say with hand over heart, "We have your back, but \$200 billion out of the \$500 billion that we spent on COVID spending, we do not know where it went."

[*Translation*]

**Mr. Maxime Blanchette-Joncas (Rimouski-Neigette—Témiscouata—Les Basques, BQ):** Mr. Speaker, I congratulate my colleague for his speech.

Some important people were overlooked in the government's economic statement. I am referring mainly to seniors. The worst inflation crisis in 40 years has left them vulnerable.

According to a study released last week by the Association québécoise de défense des droits des personnes retraitées et pré-retraitées, an organization that advocates for the rights of retired and pre-retired people, in collaboration with the Observatoire québécois des inégalités, an organization that monitors inequality in Quebec, one in two seniors in Quebec do not have a livable income. These people do not have enough financial support to age with dignity.

I would like my colleague to talk about this matter, because the federal government is neglecting people aged 65 to 74. It increased old age security for people aged 75 and over, but inflation does not discriminate among seniors based on age. Groceries cost the same whether the customer is 63 or 76.

I would like to hear my colleague present the Conservative Party's vision and tell us whether he is in favour of increasing old age security for people aged 65 and over.

[*English*]

**Mr. Warren Steinley:** Mr. Speaker, I agree with the statement that seniors are falling further behind. It is happening in my riding as well, especially, as the member brought up, the stories of going to the grocery stores and having to choose between paying for medications or their food.

One of the things seniors also depend on is their retirement savings plans and savings they use through retirement. One thing those are based on is the fiscal viability and health of the country and the economy. What we would like to see is getting our financial house in order, so those retirement savings actually grow instead of dwindle and inflation gets under control, especially when it comes to rental prices and the inflation on groceries. Those all go down when spending is under control and one's financial house is in order. What the Conservative Party would do, which would start to make the value of the dollar grow more in order to be able to afford more, is get our spending under control, get our fiscal house in order and make sure that our seniors who helped build this country are taken care of the way they should be.

• (1220)

**Mr. Matthew Green (Hamilton Centre, NDP):** Mr. Speaker, we have heard Conservatives time and again stand up and, quite rightly, talk about the cost of everything. I had the opportunity to visit the hon. member's riding in Regina a few weeks back and spoke to workers on the ground. The one thing they talk about, when they talk about the cost of everything, is the symptoms of capitalism, but they never talk about the structures.

I would like the hon. member to reflect for a moment. He likes to talk about taxation. Will he have the courage today to talk about the out-of-control corporate greed that is ultimately driving up the cost of living for people from Regina all the way to Hamilton Centre? Does the hon. member have the courage to do that? Does he have the guts to actually take on big corporate greed today, or is he simply going to continue to protect the corporate class?

*Government Orders*

**Mr. Warren Steinley:** Mr. Speaker, I am shocked the member was in my riding and did not give me a call. I would have given him a tour of some of the food banks and union halls I get to visit. He would have been able to meet some of the hard-working members of Regina—Lewvan who are strong Conservative supporters.

However, I wish this member would stop trying to play class warfare. I wish this member would realize employees work for some of these big companies, and they are good-paying jobs. I wish this member would stop trying to pit Canadian against Canadian and being as divisive as his Liberal counterparts.

I would ask the member to go back home, talk about how he can get good-paying jobs and get hard-working union people back to work, support the oil and gas industry and make sure that all the guys at USW 5890 can continue to work at the steel plant and the guys at Unifor can keep working at the refinery. They are good-paying jobs in Regina, and I wish he would support them.

**Mr. Ryan Turnbull (Whitby, Lib.):** Mr. Speaker, it gives me great pleasure to rise today in the House to speak to the fall economic statement. I appreciated the accolades from my colleague across the way, the member of Parliament for Regina—Lewvan. He gave me a shout-out for being authentic and real with Canadians, and I appreciate that. Although I disagree with most of the sentiments he shared, I appreciate the accolades from him. It is great when we can stand and be honest and authentic in this place.

In terms of the vision the member opposite claimed our government does not have, I would say the Conservative Party today seems to bring nothing to the table but angst and austerity, fear and division, and empty rhetoric and catchphrases. There are no solutions and no plan. I will argue in my speech today that we do have a vision, there is a plan and it is represented in the fall economic statement.

We know the challenges all too well that this country is facing and we have to understand those challenges in context. Coming out of the global pandemic, we have averted a sort of second coming of the Great Depression. It has been the worst public health crisis in 100 years. That is the context in which we need to understand our recovery and the fall economic statement. Canada has fared much better than almost any other country in the world. There have been fewer deaths per capita, higher vaccination rates and a stronger economic recovery than pretty much every peer country we could compare ourselves to.

Our real GDP recovery from the pandemic is strong and Canada is leading G7 countries. Our labour market is strong and has come back stronger than ever. Just yesterday there was a report saying that Canada has improved and has one of the highest participation rates among women in the economy at this point, due to some of the measures our government put in place. We have also seen what we call a V-shaped recovery, documented in the fall economic statement, which shows that our economy dipped drastically during the pandemic and then recovered quite quickly, which is exactly what the government had said multiple times would be the optimum scenario.

As another member pointed out recently in his question, we have the lowest net debt-to-GDP ratio in the G7, we are forecasted to have the lowest deficit as a percentage of GDP and we have also

maintained a AAA credit rating. That sounds pretty good to me. I do not know if other members in the House really pay attention to those fact-based details, but it certainly seems to me like that is a strong recovery.

Now we have global inflation that is the top issue Canadians care about today, although I will note that health care is trending and really overtaking inflation as the top issue. We know inflation is the direct result of pandemic-related supply chain disruptions, extreme weather due to climate change and geopolitical instability due to Russia's illegal invasion of Ukraine. We all know these, as we have heard them many times in the House.

Coming out of the pandemic, demand for many goods and services has exceeded supply, and that has led to global inflation of course. There are inflationary pressures, and we know that. Even when we look at inflation in comparable countries, Canada has lower consumer price inflation compared to other economies. If we compare Canada to Italy, Sweden, Germany, the U.K., Europe, the G20 average, the U.S., Australia, New Zealand, Norway, the list goes on, we have lower consumer price inflation in Canada.

Global supply chain pressures have started to subside after their pandemic peak, and commodity price fluctuations are still quite volatile, which we have seen, so tackling inflation is obviously one of the key challenges. A key measure that the Bank of Canada and all central banks around the world are taking is raising interest rates, with Canada doing so quite aggressively, to cool down and slow down the economy until supply starts to catch up to demand.

The postpandemic economic growth will slow as a result and Canadians are feeling the pinch. We all know this. It is tricky to get this right. Of course we have to have debates and be really thoughtful about how we approach this because there are lots of unknowns.

● (1225)

Global financial markets are not something within the federal government's control. We have to remain agile. We have to be careful not to add fuel to the fire. I think we have all heard these things. They are quite clearly outlined in the fall economic statement.

We must do what we can to alleviate the inflationary pressures, while we work toward preparing the conditions for growth. In my view, and in our government's view, it is to build an economy that works for all Canadians. What does that mean? It is an economy that is more equitable, fair, just and sustainable; that is more resilient; that addresses long-standing inequities that we experienced during the pandemic; that continues to fight climate change; and that we do not let up from the fight against climate change just because some of the members opposite do not agree that climate change is real.

We on this side of the House understand that climate change is real. There is ample evidence to suggest that we all need to be concerned about global warming and that Canada experiences even more than many other places in the world.

We have also provided immediate targeted supports for those who need it the most. We can think of the doubling of the GST tax credit, the rental top-up support of \$500 and dental care as well for lower-income families and kids.

If I were to summarize all of this, we have a pretty good track record. We have had a strong recovery and we have dealt with the pandemic quite well. Now we are moving into a period of global inflation. The fall economic statement outlines three main areas we are addressing.

We have supply chains. We are strengthening the resiliency of our supply chains. That is very clearly laid out. That means those supply chains can withstand shocks in the future. There is the national trade corridors fund, which launched in 2017. There are \$4.6 billion, \$2.8 million allocated to over 130 projects, including the Oshawa port authority, right next door to my riding, which will be making major updates to the port so its infrastructure can accommodate more shipments coming in and out. The national supply chain task force is another initiative, which has already achieved some great recommendations that are being implemented.

People and their talents, skills and labour is another major theme in the fall economic statement. We are investing in the skills for a net-zero economy. There is the sustainable jobs training centre, a new sustainable jobs stream under the union training and innovation program, and a sustainable jobs secretariat. All of these are designed to help retrain people to take on the jobs in a net-zero economy.

The immigration levels plan has also been increased, which is great news for our labour market constraints.

My favourite portion has to do with sustainable finance. We are launching the innovation and investment agency, \$1 billion over five years, modelled after the Business Finland and Israel innovation authority. The objective is to work to help new and established Canadian firms innovate, commercialize, research and create new economic opportunities for workers and businesses in Canada.

We are also launching the Canada growth fund, which is designed to attract substantial private investment in Canadian businesses and projects to help seize the opportunities provided by a net-zero economy. The policy goals are very clearly outlined in the fall economic statement. We will be able to capitalize on an abundance of natural resources and strengthen critical supply chains to secure Canada's economic environmental well-being.

Fifteen billion dollars of public capital will have a three time multiplier effect with respect to leveraging private capital. Think about how much that \$60 billion will help build the economy of tomorrow. We saw an example of that just yesterday at the GM Ingersoll plant, which is producing Canada's first-ever electric cargo vans. This is great news for our country.

There have been substantive investments through the net-zero accelerator and some of the other government initiatives. We want to

### *Government Orders*

build that even stronger, so that in clean hydrogen and clean technology, Canada can be a world leader. Using the new financial tools, while using the government's leverage to basically de-risk some of those investments, is a key strategy in how we can move forward.

• (1230)

**Mr. Warren Steinley (Regina—Lewvan, CPC):** Mr. Speaker, I listened intently to the speech of the member for Whitby. He is a member of the Standing Committee on Agriculture and Agri-Food, and we have worked together on some things. He talked about the innovation fund. He said that it would add \$60 billion and create investments. I hope it does a lot better than the Infrastructure Bank, which did nothing for Canadians but build pipelines in China.

In the 2019 campaign, the Liberals promised not to raise the carbon tax over \$50 a tonne. They broke that promise and blew by that cap. By 2030, the carbon tax is supposed to be \$170 a tonne, which increases the cost of everything from food to fertilizer to fuel. Everything people buy will be more expensive because of the carbon tax.

Therefore, how high is high enough? With the tax currently at \$170 a tonne, the Liberals will break that promise as well. How high is the carbon tax going to go before they realize it is going to bankrupt Canadians?

**Mr. Ryan Turnbull:** Mr. Speaker, I will start with the first part of the question of the member for Regina—Lewvan, in which he asserts that the Canada Infrastructure Bank has done nothing. My riding of Whitby, and across Durham region, has come up with a memorandum of understanding with the Regional Municipality of Durham to finance over 100 electric buses across the region over the next seven to eight years. To me, that is not insignificant. It is a huge investment, a \$68 million investment. There will be loans that will be repaid. The Canada Infrastructure Bank is doing a lot of really good work, so I will take issue with that first off.

On the price on pollution, in every jurisdiction in the world that has implemented a price on pollution, the evidence shows that it is by far the most effective market-based mechanism for fighting climate change. We disincentivize the wrong type of behaviour, the behaviour in our industries that pollute, and incentivize innovation and the uptake of technology that will help us get to net zero.

[*Translation*]

**Mr. Denis Trudel (Longueuil—Saint-Hubert, BQ):** Mr. Speaker, my colleague seems very pleased with his government's record on fighting climate change.

I do not know what world he is living in exactly, but it was pretty pathetic to see the Minister of Environment and Climate Change walk into COP27 with a retinue of oil company executives. It would have been entertaining, if not for his government's feeble track record.

*Government Orders*

Canada is the only G7 country to have increased its emissions since 2007, since the Liberals took office. It is the second-worst G20 country on average in terms of public investment in fossil fuels. I cannot believe the government is still patting itself on the back. I want to know what the plan is now.

We were talking about the carbon tax. At \$50, the current price, it is not effective. It would have to be tripled immediately to achieve concrete results. What is the government's plan for dealing with the problems of climate change?

• (1235)

[English]

**Mr. Ryan Turnbull:** Mr. Speaker, I take issue with the member opposite's assertion that somehow our government has a poor track record when it comes to fighting climate change. In fact, we inherited over a decade of inaction from the Stephen Harper era, which was a dark shadow on our country—

**Some hon. members:** Oh, oh!

**The Deputy Speaker:** Order, please. The hon. member for Whitby has the floor.

**Mr. Ryan Turnbull:** Mr. Speaker, I take issue with the assertion from my hon. colleague that somehow our government's track record on fighting climate change is not superb.

**Some hon. members:** Oh, oh!

**Mr. Ryan Turnbull:** Mr. Speaker, I am glad this elicits the same response from my colleagues, because it shows just how little they know about climate change and how they do not really take it seriously, which we have seen time and time again. Even at their national convention, they voted to say that climate change was not real. Who, in their right mind, these days could deny climate change is real?

I will go back to my point, which is our government entrenched our climate commitments in the Canadian Net-Zero Emissions Accountability Act to hold our government and every future government accountable. We have the strongest emissions reduction plan. We have implemented all kinds of initiatives that are making changes right across our economy. Every industry is fighting climate change at the same time. It is a big task to transform our economy to net zero and move people's behaviours over to a sustainable lifestyle. It is going to take time, but I am very proud of our record.

**Mrs. Anna Roberts (King—Vaughan, CPC):** Mr. Speaker, the Liberals' fall economic statement outlines an agenda on how to support Canadians struggling with the cost of living, where, theoretically, no one is left behind. Guess what. Canadian seniors were left behind.

In a document with almost 40,000 words, seniors were only mentioned 16 times. Statistics Canada indicates that the population of seniors is expanding six times faster than that of children ages zero to 14. The number of Canadians age 85 and older has increased by 100% since 2001, reaching 861,000 in 2021. The number could triple by 2046 according to the current population.

Accordingly to Bill VanGorder, chief policy officer of CARP, Canada's largest advocacy association for seniors, the needs of older Canadians are increasingly relevant and significant as the popu-

lation ages. Based on the numbers from Statistics Canada I just shared, I whole heartedly agree.

Despite this urgent need for greater attention to seniors, the 2022 fall economic statement does not adequately address the current struggles of seniors. Nor does it implement any of the recommendations put forward by CARP.

The fall economic statement promises that the government will boost old age security by 10%. A 10% increase will amount to \$69, which will do little to help the soaring expenses due to tax hikes, inflation, heating and housing costs. With the tripling of the tax on home heating, gas and groceries, how does this help many seniors living on a fixed income? The 10% increase will not cover the cost of heating their homes. In Canada, we love our seasons, but this could be deadly for seniors.

In Atlantic Canada, seniors are worried about having to heat their homes this winter. I would like to share a quote from the Liberal Minister of Labour. He said, "I am sick and tired of people talking about the cold winter." The Liberal Minister of Labour has shown a lack of compassion for our seniors and this quote underscores his denial of the significant debt we owe our seniors. They raised us, provided for us, worked hard for us and now they cannot even enjoy the fruits of their labour.

Sharon Callahan, executive director of Newfoundland and Labrador Public Sector Pensioners' Association and chairperson of the seniors' coalition said recently that seniors were experiencing extreme difficulty with the cost of living. If the price of fuel keeps going up over the winter and continues onto next winter, how will they survive? Ms. Callahan is concerned that many seniors will be forced to make choices between food, medication and heat. Seniors will be forced out of their homes.

In Canada, natural gas is also a form of energy used to heat our homes. Over six million homeowners use natural gas to heat their homes and their water. Using the Ontario Energy Board calculator, for a single detached home, approximately \$22.03 would be added to the monthly heating bill due to the federal carbon tax. This is something for which even saving \$13.99 on a monthly Disney subscription does not account.

What about gas for their cars so they can buy groceries? Food bank usage is at an all-time high. Food banks reported 1.5 million visits to the food bank in just one month. That is a 35% increase. While food banks are increasing their supplies to accommodate, the Prime Minister spends \$6,000 a night in a hotel room. That money could have helped the homeless. That money could have helped our seniors. That money could have gone a long way.

The ArriveCAN app cost Canadians \$54 million. What did it accomplish? Nothing. The money could have helped support seniors and all vulnerable adults and children. There are numerous examples of the waste.

● (1240)

The cost of housing is another pressing issue affecting Canadians and seniors that is not properly addressed in the fall economic statement. Canada has the second-most inflated housing bubble in the world. Interest rates are increasing at the fastest rates in a decade. A family that bought a home five years ago will now see, after renewal, their mortgage payments going up \$7,000 a year. Canada cannot afford this, and Canadians have had enough.

What about the homeless? The recent report from the Auditor General highlights that, even though five years have gone by since the federal government first launched the national housing strategy to reduce homelessness, no organization in the federal government is taking the lead. Even though about half of the \$9 billion has been spent, it is unknown whether this has benefited anyone. Where is the accountability? What happened? Where is the money? Who did it help? We have no answers.

According to CMHC, in 2016, of the 3.4 million senior households, close to 480,000 were in need of affordable housing. The national housing co-investment fund aims to create 7,000 new homes by 2027-28. That is 1.5%. How is this going to solve our housing crisis?

A CBC report on October 8, 2022, told the story of Lynn from Toronto, who never imagined herself being homeless when she retired. About four years ago she found herself living out of her car. She started working at the age of 15 and no longer has a home. She had a condo and had to sell it. At first she tried living with her sister, but that did not help. She slept in her car. She finally got into a shelter. The struggles are still there.

According to Homes First, an organization that helps people get off the streets and into supportive housing, Lynn's story is becoming increasingly common, and Toronto's seniors are struggling. It said, "That's due to the city's aging population, rising inflation and an increasingly expensive housing market".

The other thing I want to talk about is the Canada pension survivor benefit for seniors. In the fall economic statement, nothing was mentioned. Why are we punishing spouses who decided to stay home and raise their children while their spouse continued to work? These seniors came here from other countries, like my grandparents and those of many of us here in this room. Most of the time the responsibility of raising the children fell to the mothers. Once the spouse has passed, his pension is gone. The wife has to endure the fact and make some choices, either go back to work or lose her home.

There is a shortage of long-term care facilities right across this country. Due to the lack of staffing, we are going to hit a crisis. We are going to find ourselves with seniors having no choice but to live on the streets. Recently a senior wrote to me about her financial struggles while she was caring for her disabled son. She is working three jobs to support him. This fall economic statement would not help her at all.

### *Government Orders*

We have a major issue in this country, and the Liberal government needs to respect our seniors and understand the cost of inflation. The tripling of the carbon tax will see more and more families struggle to survive. Is this the Canada we want to reside in? Many individuals immigrated to this country in search of opportunities for themselves and their families, but this inflation is out of control. The spending by the government has proven deadly for all of us.

Therefore, when we look at hard-working Canadians, our seniors and the vulnerable in our communities, what is the government going to do to help them? The fall economic statement shows no respect for the people who raised us and nurtured us, and who paid their taxes.

● (1245)

**Mr. Kody Blois (Kings—Hants, Lib.):** Mr. Speaker, I took particular issue with the member opposite's remarks as they relate to Atlantic Canada and her mischaracterization of the Minister of Labour's comments

The Minister of Labour was very clear that he is sick and tired of hearing Conservative politicians misinform the public about carbon pricing as it relates to home heating in Atlantic Canada. There will be no carbon price on home heating in Atlantic Canada, and that member did not even acknowledge that today.

We have put money on the table to help homes transition, \$250 million, including money for seniors in my riding and in parts of Newfoundland and Labrador. There was no recognition of that, but when we talk about seniors, will that member recognize that it was her party, under the last prime minister, who actually brought old age security back up to 67 and was going to try to take that away from seniors?

It was our government that brought that back, increased the guaranteed income supplement and brought 250,000 seniors out of poverty over the last term of our government. There was no recognition of that. The Conservatives have a terrible record on seniors, and it is despicable to hear the member opposite say that somehow Conservatives are the heroes for seniors in this country.

**Mrs. Anna Roberts:** Mr. Speaker, what is despicable is the fact that the Liberals decided that being a senior starts at the age of 75. How would he explain to seniors between the ages of 65 and 74 why they are not getting the benefits—

**Mr. Kody Blois:** We did not take anything away like you did.

**Mrs. Anna Roberts:** Mr. Speaker, I think it is my turn.

**The Deputy Speaker:** Order.

The hon. member for King—Vaughan has the floor.

*Government Orders*

**Mrs. Anna Roberts:** Mr. Speaker, heating is important in this country. We live in a country where winter is the predominant season. Whether the increase happens this year or next year, it is going to happen, and the people in Newfoundland and Labrador cannot afford it.

[Translation]

**Mr. René Villemure (Trois-Rivières, BQ):** Mr. Speaker, I would like to ask my hon. colleague how much confidence she has in the government to actually implement measures that will satisfy Canadians, including when it comes to helping seniors 65 and older.

[English]

**Mrs. Anna Roberts:** Mr. Speaker, I have an easy response to that. I have no confidence in the government, because as a senior, I see there is no responsibility taken by the government to ensure seniors can live their retirement as they planned.

**Mr. Matthew Green (Hamilton Centre, NDP):** Mr. Speaker, it is a rare day I get to rise in the House and find common ground with my Conservative colleagues, but I think I may have found it. The Conservative member spoke about the inadequate rates for seniors in their pensions and retirements, and I completely agree.

She talked about how inadequate the Liberal government's increases were to it, so I would like to find some common ground with the hon. Conservative member and ask her to reflect on what she thinks would be a fair and adequate rate to allow seniors to retire with dignity in this country.

• (1250)

**Mrs. Anna Roberts:** Mr. Speaker, I think what we need to do is go back to understand what our parents raised us with. They always expressed to us that we cannot make a dollar and spend a hundred. It does not work that way. We have to plan for the future.

For our seniors, what is important is that they did work. They raised their four or five children. They should not be penalized. They should have the opportunity to live a comfortable life, and I think that we have to look at the fact that when their partner passes, we need to compensate them for it.

[Translation]

**Mrs. Sophie Chatel (Pontiac, Lib.):** Mr. Speaker, I would like to ask my hon. colleague whether she is against us helping people 65 and older and whether she wants us to cut these benefits.

[English]

**Mrs. Anna Roberts:** Mr. Speaker, I am a little confused. I do not understand the question. I did not speak about cutting at 65. I spoke about the fact that the Liberals have implemented that seniors get that extra bonus at the age of 75. When is the retirement age? Is it 65 or 75?

**Mr. Matthew Green:** Mr. Speaker, I gave the hon. member the opportunity to advocate for seniors and talk about what a living wage would look like in retirement, and she chose not to answer the question, so I want to put the question back to the hon. member. What is the rate and how far would she be willing to go on seniors' pension rates to help lift them out of poverty? I ask the member to give me numbers.

**Mrs. Anna Roberts:** Mr. Speaker, I think what we have to do is understand that there is a point where seniors require that minimum amount. What is that minimum amount? It is going to depend on the individual and their lifestyle, but what is important is that, when a partner is gone, that pension is lost. It should be retained.

**Ms. Lianne Rood (Lambton—Kent—Middlesex, CPC):** Mr. Speaker, the Liberals' spending is out of control. They are completely out of touch and do not have a clue about how the vast majority of people in Canada live.

Unlike their elite friends, whom they so fondly dole out tax dollars to in scandal after scandal, most people in this country work hard for what little money they have. The government is spending billions upon billions of hard-earned taxpayer dollars on frivolous vanity projects, on initiatives that no one other than their seatmate at the World Economic Forum would really care about. All the while the government is raising payroll taxes, tripling the carbon tax and implementing inflationary policies that weaken the dollar, which prices essential goods out of reach.

The callousness on display, the elitist attitude of cancelling one's Disney+ subscription to save money coming from the people who are not hurting and who do not struggle to keep food on their tables or heat their homes, has to stop.

After seeing another load of spending and learning about Canada's national debt of over a trillion dollars, one constituent of mine, Chris, wrote in to say, "I'd like to see them in our shoes that is the middle class or low-income households, with our wages. With high inflation for food, gas, heating, rising Bank of Canada interest rates, the soon to be tripling of the carbon tax, pay our bills, our mortgage, our debts, and see if the budget balances itself. I don't need a handout of my own taxpayer dollars. I need a government that will fix the real issues behind Canada's problems."

My message to this resident of Lambton—Kent—Middlesex, and to all Canadians who share this view, is that if we want to see change, we need to vote Conservative in the next election.

Our leader, the member for Carleton, knows the same simple fact that nearly everyone but our Prime Minister understands, that budgets do not balance themselves and that more spending, like what was announced in this fall economic statement, only adds inflationary fuel to the fire.

This is not the only feedback that I have received about waste and misplaced priorities. Recently, a 12-year-old wrote to me with a message that has more common sense in it than this government has displayed in years. This is from Everett.

Everett says, "I have been thinking about why the Prime Minister wants to further tax our hard-working farmers and their families. This tax will dramatically increase the cost of food to the consumer.

*Government Orders*

"Here is what I would say in Parliament and to the politicians: 'Mr. Speaker, if the federal government continues to enforce laws that control our farmers, there will be widespread criticism to the Liberal government, which has already spent billions of wasted tax dollars. Canadians have already faced difficulties in the beginning of the decade. Forcing our farmers to pay a tax on livestock methane will only lead to farmers who can barely get enough money to pay the ever-increasing carbon tax! It will lead to more bankruptcies in the country. Canadians are fed up!'

"They had already said it in the beginning of 2022. The government silenced them. With inflation, it will make it harder for Canadians to get past this winter. Canadians will be starving and this government will have caused another famine and caused people to starve.

"When will the federal government end the mandates against Canadian farmers?"

Well said, Everett. I thank him for sending that in. I agree. It is true. The government cannot see the forest through the trees, which is funny because they have committed to planting so many of them. I think it was two million trees, and they have planted zero. Is that not another Liberal commitment that has flown by the wayside, just like their promises for accountability and transparency?

It is no wonder that they have to resort to using Conservative ideas to give their fall economic statement any substance.

What ideas could those be? Well, investing in Canadian-made, clean, green technology. That is something we on this side of the House, Conservatives, have been calling for for years.

In fact, making investments in and growing Canadian capacity to be a global leader in clean green tech is exactly what we put forward in our last two platforms. It is an idea, I should add, that creates jobs and helps the environment, which was opposed by the Liberals before.

After learning that their current war against the Canadian energy sector had cost 170,000 Canadian workers' jobs without a credible plan to back up their big assumptions and magical thinking, it is about time that they saw the light.

We should also note that the first figure is on top of the 180,000 energy jobs that were already destroyed under the Liberal government. That is 350,000 jobs, and counting, killed to satisfy the Liberal government's imagination. While these Canadians look for work, the government buys the oil and gas we need from dictators instead.

• (1255)

Canadians need more common-sense initiatives, and it should be obvious that it is Conservatives who will give them that. It is Conservatives who will support our domestic resource industries and make positive changes that benefit all, even if the government tries to hide its mistakes and take credit for our ideas.

Do members know that the average before-tax income of a millennial in Canada is under \$50,000? Do they know that the average Canadian family pays \$39,000 in taxes? For Canadians aged 25 to 40, that means it is nearly impossible to get ahead. It means they

will not be able to afford a home until retirement age, and that is if they get to retire. It means every dollar recklessly wasted by this government to grow inflation only puts them further behind. Tripling the carbon tax and increasing payroll taxes so the government can keep spending taxes does not give them hope.

This situation is surprisingly similar to what Canadian seniors currently face. They have sacrificed to save their money. After years of working hard, they gave it all to grow our nation, to make it successful and a great place to live. However, many are telling me they are feeling left behind and abandoned, forgotten by a government that no longer sees them as useful, a Liberal regime that would rather offer them death than sufficient medical or mental health care. They see no hope coming from spending announcements. They only see their bills piling up, groceries getting more expensive and becoming unaffordable, and a winter ahead of them with not enough money to keep the heat on. This is all thanks to the Liberal government's spending and mismanagement of Canada's finances.

From our millennials to our seniors, Canadians are saddened to see this once-prosperous, thriving country with an incredible reputation on the global stage become what it has become today under the government: a tax-and-spend nation that is driving people into poverty and is quickly becoming the laughing stock of the world.

I can see from the faces of those opposite that they do not believe me, but they should pay attention to this next bit of testimony.

A senior from my riding, from Wallaceburg, wrote that they are on ODSP and their cheque has been cut by \$500. It's winter right now, they said, and they need that because of the price of heating oil. The senior said it cost \$1,800 to fill the tank, and that is what they now get from ODSP.

This Canadian has nothing to live on and no other options.

What do members think about this heartbreaking story from another young mother? She wrote that she had spent the whole day consoling two brothers aged one and three, sick with a bad virus. If she could have given them Tylenol or Advil, she said, they would have had a bad day but they would have survived. Instead, these two very active boys cried and moaned, threw up and begged to be carried. They slept in her arms and were miserable all day.

Instead of acting quickly to see that Canadian children have the medicine they need, the government waited. Instead of working to make certain Canada never faces a similar shortage, it announces boutique spending policies that help no one.

*Government Orders*

This economic statement does not address the cost of living crisis that the costly NDP-Liberal coalition government has created. Its reckless spending and mounting national debt is simply not fair to future generations.

I have also been hearing from young people that with inflation and the cost of housing, they will be living in their parents' basements until at least the age of 30 and they have given up on their dream of owning a home for their family to live in.

To afford food, to be warm this winter and to give hope to the next generation of Canadians, Conservatives will always stand strong against the Liberal government's reckless spending and fight for common-sense policies.

Finally, here are some questions from average Canadians that no one has been able to answer yet: Where is this carbon tax going? Who gets it? What is it being spent on? No one believes that it is coming back to them, like the Liberals claim. Since the inception of the carbon tax, many have been asking how paying money to the government stops the global temperature from rising. How does money going from their bank account to a slush fund for the Prime Minister's self-glorification clean up the atmosphere, especially when China is the world's biggest polluter by far? How does paying a tax stabilize the weather, when the sun is the biggest influencer of the earth's climate? How does my handing money over to the least transparent, least democratic, most expensive government in our nation's history stop a hurricane from hitting the east coast? It is time to scrap the carbon tax.

Liberal spending is out of control. For the reasons outlined, I cannot support this economic statement.

• (1300)

**Mr. Kevin Lamoureux (Parliamentary Secretary to the Leader of the Government in the House of Commons, Lib.):** Mr. Speaker, whether it is this member or members in general from the Conservative Party, once again they demonstrate just how much they are out of touch with reality in terms of what the fiscal update budget is all about in the legislation the member is debating.

The member talked about seniors. Never in the last 50 years or so have we seen a government commit so much to seniors, whether it is literally lifting tens of thousands out of poverty or the increase of 10% for those aged 75 and over, which was an election commitment that was made by this government. That is not to mention the one-time payments that have been made over the years for seniors, and that everyone is getting a doubling of the GST credit over the next six months. There is a litany of things in this budget document.

The member continues to want to take the Conservatives' spin lines as to her opposition. Has she really gone through the fall economic statement? If so, how could she possibly say what she has said on the record today?

**Ms. Lianne Rood:** Mr. Speaker, the government's lack of attention to monetary policy is just letting too many Canadians fall through the cracks, especially our seniors. I am going to read for members an example from Martin, who sent me this letter. He says that he and his wife are pensioners. They live below the poverty line. At ages 73 and 68, they still work two to three days a week to make ends meet. He sent me a copy of his monthly budget and not-

ed that after paying their bills they have no choice. They have to choose between buying clothing and putting gas in their car, and they have to save up to have some entertainment. He says, "We helped get this country to where we are today. Now, even at our age, retirement is not our future."

Where is the help for Canadian seniors?

[*Translation*]

**Mr. Sébastien Lemire (Abitibi—Témiscamingue, BQ):** Mr. Speaker, I listened to my colleague's speech with interest, and the issue of energy certainly came up a lot.

I have before me a statistic that shows that since the Paris Agreement was signed in 2015, Canada's big five banks have invested \$694 billion in fossil fuels. Although much of it was in the form of loans, that does not change matters. Should we be doing something about the banks?

I have another concern, one I know the Conservatives share. How can we make our economy greener so that jobs in the energy sector are more sustainable? How can we raise awareness about oil's carbon footprint?

We are seeing a lot of innovation going on. Should we be investing more in that? How can we make the economy more resilient in the prairie provinces?

• (1305)

[*English*]

**Ms. Lianne Rood:** Mr. Speaker, I want to talk about how the government is so out of touch with Canadians and how life is getting so much more expensive for Canadians. One of my constituents said they were sure I was aware that everything is going up. Gas is up where they live. It is up to \$1.83 a litre. Groceries are skyrocketing. Housing prices are becoming impossible and with the government's carbon tax increase, it is only going to get worse. People have suffered enough hardship over these last two years with the pandemic and need some kind of reprieve.

People like my constituent, who live in rural areas, do not have access to public transit. They say it is unfair of the Prime Minister to continually punish them for something that is completely beyond their control. My constituent also needs to heat their home during the winter months. Heat is a necessity, not a luxury, and my constituent respectfully requested that I bring this to the attention of the House of Commons and plead with the Liberal government to help them, saying that this is unsustainable and wrong.

I agree with my constituent.



*Government Orders*

**Mr. Randall Garrison (Esquimalt—Saanich—Sooke, NDP):** Mr. Speaker, I listened with interest to the hon. member's speech expressing concern about seniors. However, I think she wants us to forget that it was the Conservative Party that tried to raise the age of retirement under the Harper government, and that had to be reversed. People would not be collecting OAS until age 67 if the Conservatives had their way.

On the other side, the member talks about young people trying to get a start. One of the main reasons I am supporting this fall economic statement is that it would take away the interest on student loans, which would go a great way toward helping people get a start in life.

**Ms. Lianne Rood:** Mr. Speaker, another senior in my riding emailed me who has a real concern about this winter because of the cost of living and what it is going to cost to heat his home. He said he just received his oil delivery yesterday for 415.4 litres of furnace oil at a cost of \$885.82. He asks for somebody to please explain to him how he is paying more for furnace oil than for the price of diesel. He attached his receipt.

It is a very real issue for seniors. They are wondering how they are going to pay their bills and heat their homes this winter, and the tripling of the carbon tax is not going to help. We need to axe the tax.

[*Translation*]

**Mr. Gérard Deltell (Louis-Saint-Laurent, CPC):** Mr. Speaker, I am very pleased to speak today.

We are currently in a closure period imposed by the government, with the support and co-operation of the NDP, to limit the debate on the economic update. It is hard to consider this anything but unfortunate. As my Bloc Québécois colleague mentioned earlier, this is the twentieth time that the government has called upon its new NDP friends to stifle debate in the House. This is completely unacceptable and unfortunate and we must denounce it.

We are here to debate the economic update. We Conservatives are always very attentive to the government's reckless spending and mismanagement. Clearly, we have had a lot to say on the subject today, which is unfortunate for Canadian taxpayers.

Just today, the Auditor General released an initial report regarding the management of public funds during COVID-19. The least that can be said is that it is quite disastrous for people who believe in the sound management of public funds.

The Auditor General “found that Employment and Social Development Canada established performance standards by focusing solely on the speed of payment” and identified at least \$32 billion in overpayments and suspicious payments that require a thorough investigation. In short, to paraphrase the Auditor General, it was sloppy. This has been exactly the trademark of this government over the last seven years.

When the government indicated that the Deputy Prime Minister and the Minister of Finance would be tabling an economic update, which happened barely a few weeks ago, we made two very simple requests that were motivated not by ideology but by an acknowledgement of reality.

What do we do when we know that there are tough times ahead? Just like a good mother who has a family budget to manage, we need to stop the taxes, and above all, stop spending. If we have to make additional expenditures, it must be with caution and in a very specific and focused manner. Those were the two requests that we made; they were entirely logical and responsible, but sadly, the government did not heed them.

Should we be surprised that the government has continued in its seven-year-long tradition of spending recklessly? To hell with the expenses, as we say around here.

Let us not forget that, in 2015, those people stood for election and had the audacity to say that they were going to be bold, but responsible. They said they were going to run three small deficits in the first few years to stimulate the economy and then achieve a zero deficit in 2019.

• (1310)

[*English*]

That is the truth about that situation. After four years of the government's being in office under the Prime Minister, there were three huge deficits and another huge deficit in 2019. Liberals were elected saying there would be a very small deficit, but the truth is there are huge deficits, while, when the economy was reeling all around the world in 2008 when the Conservatives were in office, we were the first country in the G7 to get out of the crisis because we were serious in our administration.

[*Translation*]

Unfortunately, in their first term, the Liberals spent recklessly when, by rights, they should have been setting money aside for a rainy day.

Now, they are obviously going to tell us that, when they ran deficits, it was not their fault, it was because of COVID-19.

Well, we will play along. Sometimes, in a crisis, it is necessary to spend more. We recognize that. In 2008, 2009 and 2010, when we were in government, we ran deficits. The difference is that we brought them under control and then paid the money back and returned to a balanced budget.

However, since COVID-19 and since the Liberals have been in government, there has been a cumulative deficit of \$500 billion. The deficit is like a bill we are leaving for our children, our grandchildren and our great-grandchildren to pay, because we are living beyond our means. That is the reality.

Some will say it is not their fault that COVID-19 happened, but the Auditor General found that over 40% of this deficit has absolutely nothing to do with COVID-19, so that argument should be taken with a grain of salt.

The confirmation that the Liberals spend recklessly is that they are currently spending 30% more than before the pandemic. That is because they have been unable to control spending.

As for the excessive spending, we know these people have no shame.

*Government Orders*

About a year ago, the government decided to implement the sadly notorious ArriveCAN app for people arriving in Canada or those travelling abroad and returning to Canada. Travellers had to fill out a very complicated form. It made no sense. Worst of all, it cost taxpayers \$54 million, when one IT company said that it was the type of job that would have taken them a weekend at most and cost a quarter of a million dollars. In short, instead of spending \$54 million on something that did not work very well, and sometimes did not work at all, the government could have spent \$250,000 and gotten the same thing done at a lower cost and more efficiently. Instead, this government overspent.

It was the same during the pandemic. Money was no issue, as they say. A \$237-million contract was awarded to Frank Baylis, a former Liberal MP, to manufacture 10,000 ventilators. Also, need I remind the House that CERB cheques were sent to prisoners and members of organized crime? It is a bit embarrassing, but it is a fact.

It is understandable that, in an emergency, processes are sometimes sped up. However, the Auditor General's assessment was scathing. The government mismanaged \$32 billion during the pandemic. It makes no sense in this type of situation.

Also, as the member for Carleton, who is now the leader of the official opposition, said in April 2020, government should never punish or limit work.

All my life, I will remember going through the first summer of COVID-19 as an MP. Every day, I met business owners who were angry and upset.

• (1315)

[*English*]

They were angry, because they were upset to see young people staying at home instead of working. That is the reality of what we faced the first summer, when young women and young men decided to stay at home and pick up the \$2,000 from the CERB instead of going back to work.

[*Translation*]

I will never forget meeting the manager of a restaurant in Val-Bélair. I will not name the restaurant because he may not want me to tell this story. He came to see me and was very angry. He told me that it did not make sense and that it had to stop because it was not right. He said that a 17-year-old young man had come to see him and laughed as he told him that it was great because he would not be working over the summer.

That is not how a government should be run. That is not the right message to send our young people. When people are 16, 17 or 18 and working their first summer job, they are proud to get up in the morning and enthusiastic about working and earning their first three-figure paycheque.

We had the courage to identify the problem, but the Liberals went on as though nothing were wrong. Now we are dealing with inflation, the worst inflation crisis in 40 years. It is hurting everyone, particularly the most fragile and most essential sector of all: food.

As I noted yesterday during question period, the next few years are not looking any better. Four universities conducted a study and found that food inflation will remain above 10% inflation in the coming year. It is not a good sign when food banks report increasing demand and people who were donating to the food bank last year are now knocking on the door of that same food bank for goods and food. I see it in my riding.

That is why we will be voting against Bill C-32. We believe that the government has not done its job properly in terms of sound management of public funds. It has spent recklessly. It has absolutely no control over its spending, but that has not tempered its ambition and desire to raise taxes.

The Liberals can say what they will, but raising taxes during a period of inflation is the worst-case scenario.

[*English*]

**Mr. Kevin Lamoureux (Parliamentary Secretary to the Leader of the Government in the House of Commons, Lib.):** Mr. Speaker, I would like to deal with the issue of inflation. My friend has brought that up, and it is important that we put it in the proper perspective. Let us take a look at what is happening around the world. Whether we compare ourselves to the United States of America, England or many of the European countries, Canada is, at the very least, below the inflation rates of all those countries.

We understand it still hurts here in Canada. That is one of the reasons we have taken a number of measures to support Canadians directly. For example, we are doubling the GST credit for the next six months. That will put some cash in the pockets of people.

Would my colleague not agree that, in comparison to other countries, Canada is doing well? In fact, even though that is the case, we are doing more to support Canadians by bringing in good legislation such as the doubling of the GST tax credit.

**Mr. Gérard Deltell:** Mr. Speaker, let me answer this question clearly. For sure, we see inflation all around the world. We also see, all around the world, serious governments lowering taxes. All the countries in the G7 reduced their taxation system except one country. Which one is it? It is Canada under the Liberal government. It not only decided to not lower taxes as every other country in the G7 has done, but also it plans to raise taxes with the carbon tax in 2023.

I cannot believe this gentleman, who I appreciate very much, is proud to say his government will raise taxes at a time of inflation.

• (1320)

[*Translation*]

**Mr. Maxime Blanchette-Joncas (Rimouski-Neigette—Témiscouata—Les Basques, BQ):** Mr. Speaker, I listened to my colleague from Louis-Saint-Laurent's speech, and we disagree on some things.

First, I think he is generalizing when he says that only young people benefited from the CERB. That is not true. I want to see his data. I do not agree with him.

Second, my colleague talked about government spending. We agree on that, but I think he has forgotten about one expenditure, namely the wage subsidy for businesses. The Conservative Party received nearly \$1 million through that taxpayer-funded subsidy, which was intended to help businesses stave off bankruptcy and keep the lights on. The former leader of the Conservative Party, the hon. member for Durham, talked about that before the election campaign.

The Bloc Québécois demanded that the parties pay back that money, which came from honest taxpayers and was not intended to fill the coffers of political parties. I would like my colleague to tell me whether the Conservative Party has begun paying back the wage subsidy that was intended for businesses.

**Mr. Gérard Deltell:** Mr. Speaker, I hold my colleague from Rimouski-Neigette—Témiscouata—Les Basques in high regard and I thank him for his question.

To start, I am going to have to go back and read what I said. If, by any chance, I indicated that only young people benefited from CERB, I apologize. However, I do not believe that is what I said.

I still hear stories about the situation that occurred and that left a strong impression on many entrepreneurs and young people as well. Unfortunately, they did not have the pleasure and pride of working their first summer job and earning a living. No, they stayed home and received CERB. While it is true that some young people benefited from this money, they were not the only ones. Honestly, I do not think I went that far, but if I said they were the only ones, I apologize.

[English]

**Ms. Lori Idlout (Nunavut, NDP):** *Uqaqtittiji*, the Parliamentary Budget Officer said at the finance committee that, “the \$4 billion or \$5 billion in this assistance for lower-income Canadians doesn't have a meaningful inflationary impact”.

Does the member agree that the windfall tax and the Canada recovery dividend are absolutely necessary so that these lower-income families that the Conservatives keep talking about can get the assistance they need from this bill?

**Mr. Gérard Deltell:** Mr. Speaker, I think the best way is to let people live out their ambitions. Nobody wants to spend all their life in troubled times. That is why we have to help everybody. The best way to help them is by not raising taxes and by leaving more money in the pockets of the people. Do not print more money and give it to everybody. We can be sure that by lowering taxes people will keep more money in their pockets, and they could have a good future with that.

[Translation]

**Ms. Louise Chabot (Thérèse-De Blainville, BQ):** Mr. Speaker, I would first like to join in today's commemoration of the 14 women killed at École Polytechnique on December 6, 1989. The first shots were fired at exactly 5:10 p.m. We must remember, but above all, we must say, “Not one more woman”. We can truly make a difference by taking action together. I want to acknowledge all the shelter workers who are helping women flee violence. They can count on our support.

### Government Orders

I will be speaking about the economic statement, Bill C-32, even though closure was once again invoked on the economic statement just a few hours ago. That is one time too many, because closure should be the exception in the House. It should only be used in genuine emergencies that require us to stop debate, for democratic reasons, for instance. That is not the case here, and it was not the case for many other bills. With the NDP's complicity, the government has once again missed an opportunity to take the time to make the debate fully relevant. That is what I hope to do with my speech.

The Bloc has already announced that it will be supporting the economic statement. The NDP is going to support it, and the Liberal Party wants to speed up debate. However, I hope the government will listen to our concerns about the economic statement. I hope it will listen and realize that it is never too late to act.

The Bloc Québécois asked for three things in the economic statement and Bill C-32.

First, we asked the government to support health workers and sick patients by increasing health transfers. The government said no.

Second, we asked the government to provide proper support to our seniors aged 65 and older, most of whom are women. Seniors are being hit hard by the current economic conditions. They need appropriate support, which means ensuring that the increase to old age security starts at age 65. Seniors must not be discriminated against. That request was also denied.

Third, we asked for an urgent reform of EI, which is a federal program, a support program, a social safety net. At least, that was what it was supposed to be when it was created. It is the best economic stabilizer in difficult economic times. Again, we got no response, just radio silence.

The government rejected those proposals. We can only see this as a missed opportunity to help Quebecers and Canadians cope with the difficult times they are already experiencing or may face in the coming months.

As the Minister of Finance said many times in her speech on the economic statement, a crisis is coming and we need to be vigilant. I would say that we need to be bold. As I was saying, EI is the ultimate economic stabilizer during a recession, and a recession may be just around the corner. Times like these may offer the best opportunity to reform the program. Perhaps we should avoid waiting until we are in the midst of a crisis. EI is also a tool for social justice that protects workers from the ups and downs of the market economy.

• (1325)

While a growing number of analysts are concerned about the possibility of a recession as early as 2023, the Canadian government seems to be going back on the comprehensive EI reform it promised in the summer.

*Government Orders*

On June 6, we asked the Minister of Employment a question here in the House about when we could expect the EI reform to happen. The minister responded as follows, and I quote:

Mr. Speaker, we are working very hard to modernize employment insurance. Quickly, when we got into the pandemic, we recognized that the EI system had not kept up with the way Canadians work. That is exactly why we are working to improve the system in terms of adequacy, in terms of access and in terms of the individuals who pay in and who do not yet have access.

What we do know, however, is that the system, which has not been reformed in 15 years, is so broken that six out of 10 workers who lose their job are not entitled to EI. It is shameful.

The government has been promising to reform the EI system for seven years. It made that promise in its 2015, 2019 and 2021 campaign platforms, but nothing has been done and time is short. We definitely need to avoid a scenario where we are forced to improvise a new CERB to offset the shortcomings of the system if a recession hits. During the pandemic, we saw that improvised programs cost more and are less effective. However, the government's financial forecasts prove that it does not anticipate accepting more workers' claims.

With respect to the 26 weeks of sick leave announced recently, this was a measure included in Bill C-30 to update budget 2021, passed 18 months ago. The minister finally announced the measure, which will take effect on December 18 and only for new claimants. That is too little too late. We again decry the government's lack of ambition. It is happy with a half-measure, and one that should have been in place last July.

According to the Canadian Cancer Society, 1 in 24 people have been diagnosed with cancer in Canada over the last 25 years. The Parliamentary Budget Officer says that claimants with a serious illness need an average of at least 41 weeks of benefits to recover. Therefore, even with an increase to 26 weeks, the government is leaving claimants with a deficit of 15 weeks without income. They will not be able to recover with dignity.

It is insulting, quite frankly, especially since a motion was adopted and two bills have been introduced here in the House in that regard. The Bloc Québécois introduced the *Émilie Sansfaçon* bill to increase EI sickness benefits from 15 to 50 weeks, and the official opposition party introduced a bill to increase sickness benefits to 52 weeks. Although a motion was adopted in the House, some parliamentarians still refuse to listen. The government has deliberately chosen to ignore the very well researched and careful advice of parliamentarians, experts and witnesses we have heard from.

As for EI reform, we are still waiting for the minister to come forward with a proposal for comprehensive reform. The temporary measures that were in place but were abolished in September would have been a good basis for reform. We still do not understand why the government eliminated them, only to go back to the status quo and the outdated system we have now.

This is despite the fact that the minister's mandate letter is quite clear. It says, and I quote:

...by Summer 2022, bring forward and begin implementing a plan to modernize the EI system for the 21st century, building a stronger and more inclusive system that covers all workers, including workers in seasonal employment and persons employed by digital platforms, ensuring the system is simpler and more responsive for workers and employers.

Let us just say we are a long way off. Ever heard of the winter gap?

• (1330)

I see that my time is up.

[*English*]

**Mr. Kevin Lamoureux (Parliamentary Secretary to the Leader of the Government in the House of Commons, Lib.):** Mr. Speaker, I would like to raise the issue of what the civil service has been able to put together over the last couple of years. At a time when we had a worldwide pandemic, the development of the CERB program came from virtually nowhere, as we all know. When we take a look at issues such as employment insurance, we have seen a number of modifications to support Canadians to get them through our current situation. The minister herself has already indicated that we are looking at ways to make some additional changes to EI.

Would the member not agree that at the very least we have seen significant changes to date and that new programs have been there to support Canadians in a very real and tangible way? The CERB program helped over nine million Canadians.

[*Translation*]

**Ms. Louise Chabot:** Mr. Speaker, seriously, with respect to EI reform, apart from nice words and good intentions, nothing is happening. The government had promised it seven years ago. Now, we are hearing nice words about how EI needs to be reformed and adapted, but nothing has been done. The government has had to cobble together some measures from scratch because there are gaps in the system.

It eliminated measures that existed in September and that could have made a big difference for workers in the seasonal industry. This for me is the winter gap. The government will leave workers in limbo for periods of 15 to 17 weeks with no income and no work because it changed the eligibility criteria.

Is that what the Liberal government wants?

• (1335)

[*English*]

**Mr. Blake Desjarlais (Edmonton Griesbach, NDP):** Mr. Speaker, Canadians are experiencing a state of emergency. From indigenous communities to Quebec, it is no secret that violence against women is increasing in Canada. This is a critical issue, especially as everyone in the House just this morning marked the importance of understanding that action is greater than words. Women have passed away in the last few weeks in Winnipeg, and today we are marking the tragic memory of many women in Quebec who have passed away due to misogyny and violence against women.

*Government Orders*

I know the member has spoken passionately in the past about ensuring that we create equity, opportunity and resources for women, including women who are survivors of domestic violence and women who are survivors of many more kinds of tragedies.

The fall economic statement bill, Bill C-32, fails to acknowledge the fact that women are experiencing this national emergency. Could the member speak about the importance of ensuring that the government provides real resources to tackle misogyny in Canada?

[*Translation*]

**Ms. Louise Chabot:** Mr. Speaker, I agree with what my colleague has just said.

More must always be done to support women and ensure that equal rights translate to equality in fact. When we talk about supporting women in cases of violence, we must also consider women in the workplace. They constitute over half of humanity, whether they are seniors or health workers. They must also be provided support through strong programs.

What I deplore is that the current government is more concerned with telling us what to do in programs that belong to the provinces than with enhancing its own programs, such as old age security, the issue of health transfers and EI reform. That is the problem.

We are losing time here trying to pass bills, like the one for dental care, for example, that infringe on provincial jurisdictions, instead of tackling EI reform, among other things.

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

I think that we agree that on this December 6, we have to work on addressing violence against women.

Listening to my colleague talk reminds me that there is a direct link between poverty and violence against women. To help women escape the cycle of violence, we need to make sure that they have a bit more money in their pockets.

How can the government claim to have a feminist agenda while maintaining an EI system that is more discriminatory toward women? The same goes for refusing to increase old age security benefits. We know that this has a greater impact on women.

In what way do these two programs affect women more?

**Ms. Louise Chabot:** Mr. Speaker, I thank my dear colleague for her question, and I would like to acknowledge her very moving speech.

The employment insurance system discriminates against women in several ways.

First, it is often women who work in non-standard jobs. Because of the current EI rules surrounding eligibility criteria, it is very difficult to qualify for employment insurance when you work in a non-standard job.

Second, pregnant women who lose their jobs while on maternity leave or upon return from maternity leave are no longer eligible for EI. That is another way that EI rules discriminate against women.

Women won a court battle, yet the government has not even corrected this. What a disgrace.

**Mrs. Maril ne Gill (Manicouagan, BQ):** Mr. Speaker, I would like to thank my colleague from Th r se-De Blainville for her speech. Members will see that the spirit of my speech is somewhat similar to hers. Perhaps it is because we wear the same colours in the House.

As a human being, as a woman and in good conscience, I cannot help but bring up the three points raised by my colleague. These are the Bloc Qu b cois's demands. In short, the government has come up with an update that leaves us wanting more. We always expect more from the government, but in this case we were expecting at least a little something. These measures were already announced but not implemented last spring or, as has been said several times, are simply minor legislative adjustments. Basically, this is an update, but it is not something that required vision. It is not something that requires that attention be paid to what is going on around us right now.

We go to our ridings and we know what is happening. People stop us to talk about bread, butter and health. This bill is not really something that will go down in history. It is very unremarkable. The Bloc Qu b cois will be voting for the bill not because we are particularly enthusiastic about it, but simply because we cannot oppose a bill that does so little. The legislative adjustments needed to be done. That is the first thing I wanted to raise.

I talked about the Bloc Qu b cois's three priorities, which we mentioned several times recently, just before the update. I am here to represent the Bloc Qu b cois, but I would also like to talk about my riding. I sometimes feel like the government does not realize that, for residents in my region, the north shore, the issues of health transfers, EI reform and old age security for seniors aged 65 to 75 are intrinsically linked. First, there is the issue of money, and then the issue of health. I represent an ageing population of 100,000 people who live in an area where jobs are precarious, even for seniors. Sometimes, there are very good jobs in the mining industry. However, work in forestry, fishing or tourism is really seasonal. The workers are not seasonal, the industry is. Also, the region is vast. My riding spans two time zones. That says it all.

Residents are struggling with these issues, but the government does not seem to notice. It does not even mention them in its economic statement, even though the opposition keeps raising the issue of inflation and the amount of groceries people can afford keeps shrinking from week to week. In short, these issues went totally unmentioned, yet they are crucial for my constituents. For them, it is a matter of being able to keep a roof over their heads and put food on the table. I believe I have said this in the past. In Maslow's hierarchy of needs, these are basic needs. People need to be healthy, they need to eat, and they need shelter. That is what we are talking about.

*Government Orders*

I would also like to come back to the issue of old age security. I talked about conscience at the beginning of my speech. I honestly cannot imagine what the government was thinking when it decided to divide retirees who have the same needs into two groups, seemingly arbitrarily. I think they all need three meals a day, whether they are 62 or 73. The government divided them in two and is doing nothing to change that. It is not doing the right thing. It is not saying that it was in fact a huge mistake, that it did not realize this would be a problem, but it could do that now, which would do it credit.

• (1340)

Instead, the government is leaving things that way out of pride. My constituents cannot live on pride, unfortunately.

I also wanted to come back to EI reform. My colleague mentioned the winter gap, which makes winters a time of great hardship for seasonal workers. I am referring to the seasonal gap, the period when workers in seasonal industries are left in limbo. This is happening at a time when people, including many of my constituents, are no longer employed in the seasonal industry and live in an area where there are not 28 other jobs available. It is not necessarily consistent over time.

It is not a labour shortage, it is simply that there are no jobs. These people have no income. However, industries and communities need workers, and the workers themselves need to work, of course. These people are not even getting any help.

As an aside, I read an interview recently with the Minister of National Revenue and member for Gaspésie—Les Îles-de-la-Madeleine concerning EI. I must say that I was stunned, and my colleague from Thérèse-De Blainville was probably stunned as well, to read that she wanted EI reform. However, it was not to honour the Liberal government's promise from 2015, but to address the labour shortage.

Right now, six in 10 people are not eligible for EI, and precarious workers and seasonal workers, which include women, students and youth, are struggling to make ends meet at the end of the year. In addition, our villages are experiencing an exodus. Now the Minister of National Revenue and member for Gaspésie—Les Îles-de-la-Madeleine, who is sort of my neighbour on the other side of the Gulf of St. Lawrence, comes along saying that EI will fix the labour shortage.

We have been hearing it for 20 years. There has even been talk of it since 1996 and the Axworthy reform. There are reforms going on. What we are being told is that it will be more generous and fix the holes in the safety net. However, the Minister of National Revenue and member for Gaspésie—Les Îles-de-la-Madeleine says that the criteria will simply be made even more restrictive, that people will be forced to travel 200 kilometres or 300 kilometres from home, rent an apartment and leave their family in order to work. At least, it seems it will be that way in my riding.

I would love to see the minister visit the fishing villages on the Lower North Shore. Fishers from Newfoundland came to settle in Quebec, and they now live there in communities of 200 or 300 people, where the economy is based on the processing industry in the village, on fishing. I would love to watch her to tell them that they

will end up having to go work in Sept-Îles and Baie Comeau, 700 kilometres away, because hotels need workers in the winter.

• (1345)

That is not going to work, and it is frankly ridiculous. More than that, to me, it is an insult to my constituents, to the workers in my riding who contribute to the Quebec economy and the Canadian economy just as much as other workers. I have a lot to say about this topic, because I am deeply concerned about it. I am not even hearing good news. Not only is the government not talking about it, but worse still, we are getting bad news. That is really what the member for Gaspésie—Les Îles-de-la-Madeleine is saying. She is a bearer of bad news.

Finally, I would like to talk about health transfers. I mentioned how big my riding is. Imagine having to travel four, five or six hours from home for dialysis. Dialysis is not a yearly treatment. It is administered several times a week. That means choices have to be made, choices that are heartbreaking, because services are not available. They are not necessarily available in the cities, either. We have seen what is happening in the hospitals, which are overflowing right now. As we have seen, the Red Cross was called in to help out at CHEO. What is happening right now is very serious.

The provinces want health transfers. This is essential. We have talked about health care, and it is once again beyond me why the government is so determined not to meet people's needs. This is what the premiers of Quebec and the provinces are asking for.

As I have said before, this is about lack of vision and will. I believe I have talked about this in other legislative assemblies, but this trend is worsening. It is becoming increasingly apparent; there is no denying it. The government has no desire to undertake anything and would rather do the bare minimum. It avoids making waves. It takes shortcuts. Then it takes measures nobody is keen on and tries to ram them through.

The Bloc Québécois will reluctantly vote in favour of Bill C-32 even though we think it completely lacks substance.

• (1350)

[English]

**Mr. Mark Gerretsen (Parliamentary Secretary to the Leader of the Government in the House of Commons (Senate), Lib.):** Mr. Speaker, I have heard the Bloc, on a number of occasions, bring up what the member and some other members of the House have brought up. It is the presumption that the federal government arbitrarily decided that those who are over 75 would get more supports than those between 65 and 75. In reality, when we look at the data, it shows that once people hit the age of 75, their costs increase, their savings decline and their pensions are no longer indexed to inflation at the same rate.

The data shows that seniors over the age of 75 need more supports. It is not the first program we have developed in this country that is based on need. What we did when we brought in this program was look at where the need was and deliver it to those Canadians.

*Government Orders*

Why is it so difficult for the Bloc to accept the fact that the data shows people over 75 need more supports?

[*Translation*]

**Mrs. Marilène Gill:** Mr. Speaker, I think that my hon. colleague may be confusing certain age groups.

There are also those aged 64 to 75, of course. I understand the idea of need. We completely agree on that. Perhaps I should also repeat it. The problem is that this is not about information, or data, as he said, but about people.

In my riding, the main groups that represent seniors and defend seniors' rights are calling for the elimination of discrimination. What seniors are receiving is already too little. The government must not tell us that it is enough for those 75 and older. It is not enough.

There is still discrimination, and I would like to say that the government should not kid itself. It should not think that depriving a certain group of seniors of adequate income will make them get a job, if the idea is to get them to support themselves even though they worked their whole lives for a decent retirement.

That is what the Bloc Québécois has to say.

**Ms. Marilyn Gladu (Sarnia—Lambton, CPC):** Mr. Speaker, I thank the member for her speech. I would like to ask her a question.

There is not much in this bill about health and health care funding. Could the member comment on that?

**Mrs. Marilène Gill:** Mr. Speaker, I would be happy to. I thank my colleague from Sarnia—Lambton for her question. I would like to mention an anecdote that comes to mind whenever I hear the term “health transfers”.

Mr. Chrétien, the former prime minister, once said that cutting health transfers was really good because he got to keep something in his pocket and the government that would get blamed was the one that had jurisdiction over health care, meaning Quebec.

In other words, he got to keep the cash, and the problem stayed in Quebec and the other provinces, which had to make up the difference because the needs were still there. People did not stop getting cancer just because Chrétien decided to cut health transfers.

That is one of the first comments I would make. We should get the monkey off our back and put it back where it belongs, on the government's back.

[*English*]

**Ms. Lori Idlout (Nunavut, NDP):** *Uqaqtittiji*, I would like to thank the member for her intervention. I enjoy working with her at the indigenous and northern affairs committee. I have similar constituents. My riding has three time zones and is much larger, so I connect with her intervention, clearly.

The NDP supports this bill because it provides for the Canada recovery dividend, which will tax for-profit corporations such as the banks and insurers that are showing major profits. I wonder if the member agrees that the Canada recovery dividend needs to be extended to the big box stores, which are clearly contributing to the hardships of our constituents.

[*Translation*]

**Mrs. Marilène Gill:** Mr. Speaker, I listened to the question in English. I hope I understood it correctly.

I thank my colleague from Nunavut, with whom I have a lot in common. I could talk to her about going to stores in my riding in the north. I think there are Northern stores in her riding as well. I have nothing against the chain itself, but the issue of the exorbitant costs for residents is something that must be addressed.

Here is another anecdote that illustrates what is happening in my riding. In grocery stores in the north, a can of Maxwell House coffee costs \$55. Coffee is considered a luxury. Generally speaking, one of the issues that is very important to me is having programs to lower costs so it goes directly into the pockets of people in my riding.

● (1355)

[*English*]

**The Deputy Speaker:** As much as I enjoy the energy of the next member, I will have to cut him off in about four minutes.

The hon. parliamentary secretary to the government House leader.

**Mr. Mark Gerretsen (Parliamentary Secretary to the Leader of the Government in the House of Commons (Senate), Lib.):**

Mr. Speaker, I recognize that when you said you were going to cut me off, a number of Conservatives clapped, so I will try to make the four minutes worth their while.

It is unfortunate that, once again, we are in a situation where the government has had to bring in time allocation on very important legislation to serve Canadians and to bring resources to them, in particular those who are in the most need. I will reflect on the fact that 38 members of the Conservative Party have spoken to the bill. Twenty-six Liberal members, six NDP members, 10 Bloc members and one Green member have also spoken to it. The bill, now back to the House at report stage, has had a number of interventions at the various different times. To somehow suggest that democracy is not in full effect as it relates to the bill would be extremely disingenuous.

We all know what happened to the fall economic statement of 2021. When we tried to act in good faith with the Conservatives to continually bring that bill forward so they could have more and more discussion on it, we never ended getting to vote on it until May or June of 2022. It is entirely fair to assume that the same thing would probably happen again this time, and therefore bringing in time allocation was certainly a requirement.

### Statements by Members

I want to talk specifically about something I am hearing quite a bit in the House, particularly on this legislation. This is the discussion about inflation. There is no doubt that inflation is real, that it is hurting Canadians and that it is difficult. It is creating a lot of uncertainties in the lives of people and in the marketplace. However, the problem is that Conservatives want to talk about inflation as though this is a problem that is isolated only to Canada. The reality of the situation is that inflation is happening globally right now.

We could try to accredit a number of things to it. We could say that it was the various attempts of G7 or OECD countries to support their constituents during the very difficult times of the pandemic. We could say it is about the war in Ukraine. There are a lot of different contributing factors to it.

However, it is happening throughout the world. In fact, in the G7 countries, Canada has the third-lowest inflation rate. The only two countries lower than Canada are Japan and France. Every other country has a higher inflationary rate. Of course that brings little comfort to those who are trying to deal with inflation, but it is important to reflect on the fact that this is a global issue and something that citizens throughout the world are trying to tackle.

This bill is specifically about that. It is about trying to make life more affordable for Canadians, in particular those who are struggling the most. When we think about things like the Canada housing benefit, or the dental benefit that was previously adopted, or the GST credit or some of the various other measures that the government has brought in specifically to help low-income people, we know those measures will have very little impact on inflation. We know they are right measures to take right now to support constituents throughout Canada.

I look forward to continuing afterward question period, and taking some questions at that time as well.

---

## STATEMENTS BY MEMBERS

• (1400)

[English]

### BIRTHDAY CONGRATULATIONS

**Mr. Irek Kusmierczyk (Windsor—Tecumseh, Lib.):** Mr. Speaker, today I rise in the House of Commons to tell members a bit about a special constituent named Marta.

Marta is a remarkable person. Born in a small town in eastern Poland, she dreamed of becoming a dancer, but studied administration instead and worked with her husband in a large factory to help raise a family, including two boys, the youngest of which was a steady source of mischief.

To give her boys a bright future, Marta and her family immigrated to Canada as political refugees. She worked full time at the Polonia Centre and later the Polish credit union, all the while making sure her boys had home cooked soup and did not miss soccer practice. She volunteered in community theatre, in the Carrousel of the Nations, the Holy Trinity Choir and many fundraisers.

Everyone back home knows her as Marta, but I just call her mom. Today, I hope members will join me in wishing her a happy birthday and *sto lat*. I love my Mamo. *Kocham cie*.

\* \* \*

[Translation]

### FOOD BANKS

**Mr. Richard Lehoux (Beauce, CPC):** Mr. Speaker, this year, families can finally get together to celebrate over a nice Christmas dinner. However, during this time of celebration, we must not forget that some people, for all sorts of reasons, cannot afford a nice meal, period.

This is the time of year to give generously. Food banks need our help now more than ever. According to the Moisson Beauce website, in my riding alone, one-third of the 12,500 monthly requests for food aid filled by its network of organizations are for children. I invite all those who can to give to these food banks. That is the real spirit of Christmas.

I would like to say a big thank you to the volunteers at these many organizations who take the time to collect food donations, prepare food, and make up food hampers. In Beauce, food donations can be made through some 50 organizations, including the Comité d'aide de Beauceville, the Source de Sainte-Marie, the Society of Saint Vincent de Paul and, of course, Moisson Beauce.

I hope that everyone will be able to sit down to a nice meal this holiday season. Merry Christmas and happy new year to everyone.

\* \* \*

[English]

### GENDER-BASED VIOLENCE

**Ms. Pam Damoff (Oakville North—Burlington, Lib.):** Mr. Speaker, 33 years ago, 14 young women were murdered at École Polytechnique. This act of violent misogyny shook our country and led our government to designate December 6 as The National Day of Remembrance and Action on Violence Against Women. Sadly, women continue to be subject to violence and misogyny today. We must stop gender-based violence.

I invite all members of the House to join me this evening for a panel event and critical discussion in partnership with Actua to raise awareness and advance solutions on how to effectively protect and empower women online. Following the panel, we will be screening *Backlash: Misogyny in the Digital Age*, a film showcasing the stories of four women and one man whose lives have been negatively impacted by online violence.

Gender-based violence is never “just one time” or “just words”. It is never “just” anything; it is violence.



*Statements by Members*

[Translation]

**NATIONAL GALLERY OF CANADA**

**Mr. Martin Champoux (Drummond, BQ):** Mr. Speaker, what is happening at the National Gallery of Canada is outrageous. Art is being sacrificed to an ideological agenda that no longer has anything to do with the purpose of a museum.

In the words of Marc Mayer, former director of the National Gallery of Canada, “it is literally a coup”. It has gotten to the point where Jean Paul Riopelle—Riopelle is no joke—is considered by the gallery's new administration as an “old white man artist”. No one thinks it is necessary to mark his 100th birthday. At this point, this is far from a national art gallery.

This is the same reasoning behind Radio-Canada having to apologize for inappropriate comments made by the people it interviews, or a director from the National Film Board applauding when copies of *Astérix* are burned.

From now on, art no longer serves art. From now on, art is a propaganda tool this government uses to impose its ideological vision. It is scary. It is a dangerous direction, falsely progressive, that gives off a vile whiff of disreputable regimes.

The government and its Crown corporations need to get their act together.

\* \* \*

[English]

**BHIMRAO AMBEDKAR**

**Mr. Randeep Sarai (Surrey Centre, Lib.):** Mr. Speaker, today marks 66 years since the death of Dr. Bhimrao Ambedkar, who was an Indian economist, politician, social reformer and jurist. A leader in India's path toward independence, Dr. Ambedkar has been widely recognized as the principal architect in the drafting of the Constitution of India.

A champion of civil rights, Dr. Ambedkar strongly campaigned against social discrimination, choosing to step down from his position as India's first minister of law when cabinet refused to pass the women's rights bill.

As a lifelong scholar, Dr. Ambedkar earned his masters degree at the London School of Economics before being awarded his Ph.D. from Columbia University. In 1952, Columbia University presented him with an honorary doctorate for his service as “a great social reformer and a valiant upholder of human rights.”

Today we recognize and honour his legacy and praise those who continue his work both here and in India, promoting social equality and justice.

\* \* \*

● (1405)

**CHILDREN**

**Mr. Philip Lawrence (Northumberland—Peterborough South, CPC):** Mr. Speaker, children represent the best part of humanity. They are imaginative, resilient and inquisitive. They bring joy to even the most difficult of circumstances. They give us hope

in the face of the biggest challenges. The responsibility of the rest of us is to ensure they live up to their potential.

Unfortunately, far too often we have not lived up to that halloved responsibility. We must never again allow the government to violate that sacrosanct relationship between parent and child, as we have seen in the devastating consequences of the residential school program.

However, in spite of all these challenges, I remain incredibly optimistic because of the blessing that children bring.

It would be incredibly inappropriate for me to acknowledge my children in the gallery, Margaret and James. It would be even more inappropriate to say that I love those guys, so I will not do that.

\* \* \*

**RETIREMENT CONGRATULATIONS**

**Ms. Lisa Hepfner (Hamilton Mountain, Lib.):** Mr. Speaker, I rise today to pay tribute to Mary Long, the founder of Hamilton Tax Help, a free low-barrier tax clinic that has helped Hamiltonians access almost \$7.2 million in critical federal benefits last year alone, \$1.6 million in my riding of Hamilton Mountain.

Mary is set to retire at the end of this month after an inspiring career. Whether it was through her 17 years at Family Services Hamilton, as president of her OPSEU local, as a former director of labour services at the United Way of Hamilton & Halton or as the first woman to be elected president of the Hamilton and District Labour Council, Mary has consistently sought out opportunities to respond to the needs of the community.

At age 55, she returned to school to study social service work. She is a Mohawk College Alumnus of Distinction, as well as a fellow Women of Distinction Award winner.

I wish Mary a wonderful and well-deserved retirement. I thank Mary for her commitment and service.

\* \* \*

[Translation]

**HUNTERS' DONATION PROGRAM**

**Mrs. Sophie Chatel (Pontiac, Lib.):** Mr. Speaker, I visited some food banks in my riding and met Amélie, a passionate volunteer. She showed me large freezers full of wild game meat.

Are my colleagues familiar with the Chasseurs généreux program organized by Food Banks of Quebec and the Fédération québécoise des chasseurs et pêcheurs? Through this program, hunters donate a portion of their wild game meat for those most in need in our communities right across Quebec.

I want to thank all the hunters in the Gatineau Valley. I would also like to acknowledge the butchers' contribution. Thanks to them, families in need will be able to celebrate Christmas with a traditional meal.

*Statements by Members*

[English]

**CHRISTMAS POEM****Mr. Garnett Genuis (Sherwood Park—Fort Saskatchewan, CPC):** Mr. Speaker,

'Twas the night before Christmas and no one could afford a house. Some people were blaming a fellow named Klaus.

The Prime Minister said he would have people's backs. But it turned out his real plan was to triple the tax.

The holidays are here. There is a gift shopping tradition. But things are more expensive, thanks to the costly coalition.

So instead just rest, stay home and take a nap. Try to forget about the Arrive-CAN app.

If you hear the sound of a reindeer's hoof, then it is Santa, not Stephen, up on the roof.

Santa reaches down inside of his sack. He knows what the people want is to have their freedoms back.

But if you hear the sound of a convoy truck, then the message for Liberals is: end the mandates.

Jesus was born with a hope to save every sinner even the ones who attend the press gallery dinner.

At Christmas we celebrate the joy that we find and proclaim peace and love to all "peoplekind".

This might be not as a good as Cuzner's last riff. I just hope it will not get me shot by journo Dale Smith.

'Twas the night before Christmas. Inflation is the worst. The Conservatives have a leader who will put the people first.

\* \* \*

● (1410)

**HOLIDAY SEASON**

**Ms. Joanne Thompson (St. John's East, Lib.):** Mr. Speaker, the holiday season is upon us, and back in St. John's East many will celebrate together and welcome home loved ones, celebrate the annual mummers festival and have a little fun on Tibb's eve.

This is also a time to reflect on the true meaning of the season. We can welcome an international student away from home for dinner. We can reach out to friends and neighbours who might be alone and find this season hard, or volunteer or donate to local charities and not-for-profits to ensure that Santa does not miss any households this year, or thank our essential workers and those working away from home or connect with our diverse communities and understand their own unique traditions.

During this time of year, however we choose to celebrate, this is a time, I am sure we can all agree, that should be full of kindness and compassion

\* \* \*

**HALIFAX EXPLOSION**

**Mr. Stephen Ellis (Cumberland—Colchester, CPC):** Mr. Speaker, 105 years ago today, two ships collided in the narrows of Halifax Harbour. The collision between the French munitions ship, the *Mont-Blanc*, and the Norwegian ship, the *Imo*, resulted in the largest human-made explosion at that time. There were 1,782 people killed and an estimated 9,000 injured. Relief efforts came from across Canada and the northeastern United States. To make matters worse, these heroic rescue efforts were also hampered by a snow-storm.

The community of Richmond was devastated, as was the long-standing Mi'kmaq community of Turtle Grove. Lives of countless

Haligonians were changed forever. Railway dispatcher Vince Coleman's heroic effort to stop incoming trains stands out. I quote, "Hold up the train. Ammunition ship afire in harbor making for Pier 6 and will explode. Guess this will be my last message. Good-bye boys." He died at his post.

To this day, we send an annual Christmas tree to Boston as a token of our appreciation in our rebuilding efforts.

\* \* \*

[Translation]

**ÉCOLE POLYTECHNIQUE TRAGEDY**

**Mr. Gérard Deltell (Louis-Saint-Laurent, CPC):** Mr. Speaker, 33 years ago, on December 6, 1989, 14 women were murdered. They were murdered because they were women. They were murdered because they were at university. They were murdered because they were studying engineering. It was the ugliest form of cruelty. The words "Poly" and "Polytechnique" will always and forever be associated with this tragedy.

This tragedy concerns us all and serves to remind us how fragile life is. How many times have we looked the other way? How many times have we pretended not to hear? How many times have we let out a nervous laugh?

We have a duty to stop pretending and start taking direct and concrete action. We have to start approaching people, to guide them towards help, or to report them. We cannot sit back and do nothing. We owe it to the 14 victims of École Polytechnique.

We must never forget.

\* \* \*

**ÉCOLE POLYTECHNIQUE TRAGEDY**

**Mrs. Brenda Shanahan (Châteauguay—Lacolle, Lib.):** Mr. Speaker, every December 6 for the past 33 years has served as a sorrowful reminder that violence against women happens every day. The Polytechnique tragedy shook our collective conscience and brought the lives of 14 brilliant young women to an abrupt end. It is our duty, one and all, to remember this shocking event.

Violence against women is not always obvious, but it is always devastating. I would like to take this opportunity to salute organizations such as Re-Source, Quartier des Femmes, and the CALACS, the sexual assault centre, along with many other organizations in Châteauguay—Lacolle that do such essential work in our communities to counter violence against women. I thank them for their engagement and their conviction.

As a society, we must keep working to make sure that tragedies like what happened at the Polytechnique never happen again and that the lives of thousands of women in Canada do not turn tragic.

I remember.

• (1415)

### ÉCOLE POLYTECHNIQUE TRAGEDY

**Mr. Alexandre Boulerice (Rosemont—La Petite-Patrie, NDP):** Mr. Speaker, on December 6, 1989, a man entered a classroom at École Polytechnique with a semi-automatic rifle. He separated the men from the women and killed 14 female students. These 14 bright young women were cowardly murdered because they were women. It is a horrible, misogynistic, sexist and hate-filled crime.

Hate continues to kill, even today. We see evidence of this violence and toxic masculinity every day. Recently, four indigenous women were murdered in Manitoba. Last year, there were 26 femicides in Quebec; that is 26 women who were murdered. This year there have already been 14 femicides. We have seen the equivalent of another Polytechnique this year alone.

Not only must we change our culture, we must also work together to better protect women who are victims of violence. Chronic underfunding forces shelters to turn away thousands of women because they have no room. The memory of these 14 students whose lives were taken must motivate us to do better for all women.

\* \* \*

### ÉCOLE POLYTECHNIQUE TRAGEDY

**Ms. Kristina Michaud (Avignon—La Mitis—Matane—Matapédia, BQ):** Mr. Speaker, I was not yet born when tragedy struck at the Polytechnique. I did not know the women who fell in the hail of bullets fired by a misogynistic gunman. However, like the women and men of my generation, I am an heir to this event. It is a legacy that comes with a certain responsibility.

We have a duty to do everything in our power to ensure that Quebec never again experiences such a tragedy. That is why we are strongly in favour of tighter gun control. That is why we strongly support banning assault weapons. It will not solve everything. It will not guarantee that there will be no more tragedies, but it will reduce the risk. We need to take steps in the right direction. Banning assault weapons is a step in the right direction.

Above all, we must fight misogyny and violence against women and normalize equality for all. Today is December 6, 2022. Thirty-three years after the Polytechnique massacre, we must remember and we must take action.

\* \* \*

[English]

### THE ECONOMY

**Mrs. Tracy Gray (Kelowna—Lake Country, CPC):** Mr. Speaker, the difference between what I am hearing from my residents in Kelowna—Lake Country and from the Liberal government could not be more far apart. While local seniors tell me they are choosing between gas and groceries, a Liberal minister said he is “sick and tired” of people complaining about heating their homes in cold weather.

Canadians are sick and tired of a carbon tax plan that has missed every target and left Canada as 58th out of 64 countries on climate performance. People are worried with the latest “Canada's Food

### Oral Questions

Price Report”, which says a family of four will pay more than \$1,000 extra in 2023.

A Conservative government will axe the tax to lower the costs of basic essentials like food, gas and home heating. We will end wasteful government spending to stop the Liberals' made-in-Canada inflation. We will invest in Canadian innovation, mineral exploration and electric infrastructure to build the cleaner, greener and affordable future that we all want.

\* \* \*

### CANADIAN ASSOCIATION OF FIRE CHIEFS

**Mrs. Sherry Romanado (Longueuil—Charles-LeMoine, Lib.):** Mr. Speaker, I am pleased to welcome members of the Canadian Association of Fire Chiefs, who are here as part of their annual fire chiefs on the Hill days.

[Translation]

Over the coming days, many of us will have the opportunity to talk to these fire chiefs about the main issues fire departments across the country are facing, including challenges around recruiting and retaining firefighters when climate and health crises are on the rise. Another issue that is of particular importance to me is the risk of cancer among firefighters.

• (1420)

[English]

I am proud to have the support of the CAFC and other stakeholders for my private member's bill, Bill C-224, an act that would establish a national framework for the prevention and treatment of cancers linked to firefighting. This, as members know, was referred to the Standing Committee on Health last June. It is my hope that all members will work together to ensure this legislation is passed soon, and send a clear message to our firefighters that their health and safety is a top priority for all of us.

---

## ORAL QUESTIONS

[Translation]

### GENDER-BASED VIOLENCE

**Hon. Pierre Poilievre (Leader of the Opposition, CPC):** Mr. Speaker, today our thoughts are with the victims of the terrible École Polytechnique tragedy. Women lost their lives just because they were women. We remember their lives. We remember how talented they were. We remember how tragic this is for their families. We are working to make sure nothing like this ever happens again.

Would the government like to share its thoughts on this subject?

*Oral Questions*

**Hon. Pascale St-Onge (Minister of Sport and Minister responsible for the Economic Development Agency of Canada for the Regions of Quebec, Lib.):** Mr. Speaker, I thank the Leader of the Opposition for his question.

Obviously, today, everyone's thoughts are with the families of the victims, the 14 women who were murdered in the École Polytechnique massacre. Obviously, our government wants to do more to better protect women. That is why we have a very important bill to get more assault weapons off the streets.

We invite all parliamentarians to work with us to strengthen this bill and better protect women across the country.

\* \* \*

**COVID-19 EMERGENCY RESPONSE**

**Hon. Pierre Poilievre (Leader of the Opposition, CPC):** Mr. Speaker, today the Auditor General showed that there was terrible waste. According to her, the government wasted at least \$4.6 billion. Moreover, it is believed that another \$27 billion was wasted, and that should be investigated. The government even paid 1,500 inmates with CERB money.

Why did the government waste that money and cause massive inflation on the backs of Canadians?

**Hon. Diane Lebouthillier (Minister of National Revenue, Lib.):** Mr. Speaker, the government did not hesitate to take action to help Canadians during the COVID-19 pandemic and we made the right choices. We thank the Auditor General for her work and we thank her for confirming that our COVID-19 benefits were well targeted and effective. The report clearly indicates that these benefits helped the economy bounce back quickly and contributed to fighting poverty. Canadians know that we had their backs and will continue to be there for them.

[English]

**Hon. Pierre Poilievre (Leader of the Opposition, CPC):** Mr. Speaker, the government is now exposed for having wasted massive sums over the last several years. According to the Auditor General, there is \$4 billion of known waste and another \$27 billion of suspected waste. There is \$60 million of spending that is under criminal investigation. There were 190,000 people who quit their jobs and therefore were not eligible to receive the CERB benefit but did anyway. They even sent the CERB to 1,500 prisoners.

Why did the government waste so much and make Canadians pay the price?

**Hon. Carla Qualtrough (Minister of Employment, Workforce Development and Disability Inclusion, Lib.):** Mr. Speaker, the Auditor General found, very clearly, that CERB and our individual benefits achieved their intended goals of getting money to Canadians quickly, of allowing Canadians to stay home safely and of avoiding severe social and economic consequences.

We, as a Parliament, approved an attestation-based approach. We knew from the beginning that there would be postpayment verification. We are working methodically through that, and I can assure all Canadians that we are on top of this.

**Hon. Pierre Poilievre (Leader of the Opposition, CPC):** Mr. Speaker, we already knew that the government paid billions of dollars in wage subsidies to profitable corporations that were able to pay out dividends to their wealthy executives. Now we know they also paid \$15 billion to companies that did not have a significant revenue drop, so they were able to pocket the cash at the expense of the Canadian people. This is the same government that gave money to Loblaw's and other wealthy corporations, always at the expense of the working class.

Why do they always take from the have-nots and give to the have-yachts?

[Translation]

**Hon. Diane Lebouthillier (Minister of National Revenue, Lib.):** Mr. Speaker, our government made decisions that unquestionably saved lives and the economy during the COVID-19 pandemic.

For the past several months, the CRA has been verifying recipients' eligibility. The Auditor General's findings are consistent with what the CRA has said. The verification and recovery process will take years.

While the Conservatives are left to deal with their leader's ridiculous advice about cryptocurrency, we will continue to deliver for Canadians.

• (1425)

**Hon. Pierre Poilievre (Leader of the Opposition, CPC):** Mr. Speaker, the government is delivering for inmates. It sent CERB cheques to 1,500 inmates who were serving time in prison for committing crimes. They were not eligible for the CERB. The Liberals also gave the CERB to 190,000 people who had voluntarily left their jobs and were not eligible. The government wasted \$30 billion, and we also know that criminal investigations are under way.

Will the government finally launch an investigation to recover the money that Canadians lost?

**Hon. Diane Lebouthillier (Minister of National Revenue, Lib.):** Mr. Speaker, in a recent CBC article, the member for Edmonton West agreed with the government, saying that verification and recovery would be "a several year process".

My question is very simple. Does his own leader agree with him?

\* \* \*

**FIREARMS**

**Mr. Yves-François Blanchet (Beloeil—Chambly, BQ):** Mr. Speaker, on this day, December 6, we commemorate the terrible femicide that took place at École Polytechnique.

Compassion must guide all of our efforts, including the study of the bill to control assault weapons. The government has tabled an amendment that is unusual, huge and complex, so much so that the minister and the Prime Minister admit that it is an issue that should be dealt with by experts.

Will the government agree to add two committee meetings so experts can analyze the amendments very quickly, but rigorously?

**Hon. Pascale St-Onge (Minister of Sport and Minister responsible for the Economic Development Agency of Canada for the Regions of Quebec, Lib.):** Mr. Speaker, we thank the Bloc and the NDP for their co-operation and their reasonable and responsible approach to working together to strengthen the bill at committee. It is truly important that everyone work together on this matter.

Today we talked about the École Polytechnique massacre. The objective of the bill really is to get assault weapons off our streets and to protect the rights of hunters and indigenous communities. That is what we are working on. The Prime Minister has made a commitment, and I encourage everyone to work together.

**Mr. Yves-François Blanchet (Beloeil—Chambly, BQ):** Mr. Speaker, that is precisely what I am trying to get at with my question.

Obviously, I share the concern that sport hunters may be used as pawns in this matter, but this does not in any way help ensure the safety and sense of security of the victims' families, of women in general, or of civil society as a whole.

We want to truly understand, because clarity is at the heart of the matter, and we are simply asking to add two committee meetings with experts to study the amendment.

Can we do that?

**Hon. Pascale St-Onge (Minister of Sport and Minister responsible for the Economic Development Agency of Canada for the Regions of Quebec, Lib.):** Mr. Speaker, our government is committed to working with all parliamentarians, with our colleagues in the Bloc and the NDP, to ensure that this bill is well balanced and that it achieves the objectives we have set, specifically, to get rid of the assault weapons used in massacres like the ones at the Quebec City mosque and École Polytechnique, while at the same time protecting the rights of hunters and indigenous communities.

\* \* \*

[English]

#### HEALTH

**Mr. Jagmeet Singh (Burnaby South, NDP):** Mr. Speaker, the army had to be called into long-term care homes in this country, and now the Red Cross has been called into children's hospitals in Ottawa. It is clear that our health care system is in crisis, but the Prime Minister has been missing in action. Leadership is not looking for excuses. It is showing up and finding solutions.

When will the Prime Minister show leadership, step up, call for an emergency meeting of the first ministers and solve the crisis in our health care system?

**Mr. Adam van Koevorden (Parliamentary Secretary to the Minister of Health and to the Minister of Sport, Lib.):** Mr. Speaker, I agree with the hon. member. Urgent actions are indeed required to address the current health workforce crisis. That is why we have taken significant steps forward by establishing a coalition for action for health care workers to inform immediate and long-term solutions to address these challenges, by introducing measures

#### Oral Questions

to facilitate the entry of foreign national physicians and permanent residents, and by announcing a national nursing officer to provide strategic advice from a nursing perspective.

Our government's priority remains working together for better outcomes for Canadians, and that includes the youngest patients in our hospitals. I appreciate the attention to this very important matter.

• (1430)

[Translation]

**Mr. Jagmeet Singh (Burnaby South, NDP):** Mr. Speaker, doctors, nurses and health care workers are sharing horror stories about what is happening in our health care system. This is a crisis, that much is clear. We have children who are getting sick and cannot access health care services. This Prime Minister lacks leadership.

When will this Prime Minister show some leadership and do what it takes to save our health care system?

**Hon. Dominic LeBlanc (Minister of Intergovernmental Affairs, Infrastructure and Communities, Lib.):** Mr. Speaker, I thank the leader of the NDP for his important question. We obviously share his concerns about the issues we are seeing in the public health care system across Canada. He talked about the difficulties in children's hospitals. The shortage of health care professionals is an important issue, and it is exactly what we are discussing with the premiers and the ministers of health.

We are really encouraged by these conversations. We are going to increase federal resources to ensure that these challenges end as soon as possible.

\* \* \*

[English]

#### FINANCE

**Mr. Jasraj Singh Hallan (Calgary Forest Lawn, CPC):** Mr. Speaker, today, the Auditor General released a damning report confirming that Liberal mismanagement led to at least \$32 billion in inflationary spending. This is more costs and no control. The Liberals' lack of transparency contributed to the affordability crisis. The Auditor General is deeply concerned by the lack of controls, and her report shows the Liberals are going to keep their failed approach for current and future programs.

Why are Canadians continuously on the hook for Liberal failures?

**Hon. Carla Qualtrough (Minister of Employment, Workforce Development and Disability Inclusion, Lib.):** Mr. Speaker, it bears repeating that the Auditor General found we achieved the goals we set out. We kept Canadians safe, we made sure Canadians were paid quickly and we averted significant social and economic hardship for our country.

### Oral Questions

This Parliament approved the attestation-based approach. We knew when we committed to this, and we were very transparent from the beginning, that we would do post-payment verification. We are methodically going through that and will continue to do so, working individually and with Canadians to make sure we have a fair and equitable response to this.

**Mr. Jasraj Singh Hallan (Calgary Forest Lawn, CPC):** Mr. Speaker, if the Liberals' goals were to lack transparency, lack accountability and lack control, the Auditor General confirmed that in her report today. The Liberals' legacy of mismanagement has made life more unaffordable, sending more Canadians to food banks than ever before. Record high food, rent and mortgage costs are being driven up by the Liberals' inflation. The more the Liberals fail, the more Canadians have to pay.

How many more Liberal failures are Canadians on the hook for?

**Hon. Karina Gould (Minister of Families, Children and Social Development, Lib.):** Mr. Speaker, we took important action when we understood that the high cost of living was having an impact on Canadians. In fact, yesterday the Financial Post noted that our child care policy has been a success. It said, "government policy has played a role in getting women back in the workforce...especially when it comes to child care.... Women feel more confident going back into the workforce because they won't be spending their whole paycheque on child care."

We are there for Canadians and we are delivering.

\* \* \*

### COVID-19 EMERGENCY RESPONSE

**Ms. Melissa Lantsman (Thornhill, CPC):** Mr. Speaker, the government will blame everyone else for its inflationary spending, but when the Auditor General confirms that a minimum of \$32 billion in COVID overpayments and suspicious payments need more investigation, there is little argument that this mess added to inflation. The Auditor General has sounded the alarm bells on the lack of control on COVID spending. There are lots of checks and no balances, and the government is continuing the same approach with current legislation and current programming.

How can Canadians trust the government?

**Hon. Randy Boissonnault (Minister of Tourism and Associate Minister of Finance, Lib.):** Mr. Speaker, I will get to the hon. member's question in a moment.

I want to add my voice to that of the Minister for Women and Gender Equality and others in the House today on this 33rd anniversary of École Polytechnique. I was a 19-year-old student at the U of A when word got to us that 14 women were gunned down at École Polytechnique. It became worse when we realized it was motivated by hate and misogyny. We must do everything in the House to protect women and end violence against women.

On the substantive question the hon. colleague asked, millions of mothers who received CERB benefits did not cause inflation, and neither did the businesses that took supports so they could keep their doors open.

• (1435)

**Ms. Melissa Lantsman (Thornhill, CPC):** Mr. Speaker, we are not talking about those cases. Canadians deserve transparency about the \$32 billion the Auditor General says is just the tip of the iceberg of people who got money, and it needs to be investigated. Canadians deserve to know that there was no control when the money was going out, and now they have learned there is no control or accountability for taxpayers to get that money back.

As food bank use is at its highest rate and one in five Canadians is skipping meals, I will ask this again: How can Canadians trust the government?

[Translation]

**Hon. Diane Lebouthillier (Minister of National Revenue, Lib.):** Mr. Speaker, the CRA does not agree with the Auditor General's calculations concerning recipients who were not eligible for the wage subsidy. The CRA's actual audits indicate that compliance with the subsidies was high and that the Auditor General's figure is exaggerated. This is not the Auditor General's fault. We all know that she was pressured by the opposition to produce this report. Political games notwithstanding, let us not forget that the wage subsidy saved the economy.

\* \* \*

### TAXATION

**Mr. Richard Martel (Chicoutimi—Le Fjord, CPC):** Mr. Speaker, according to a new report released yesterday, the cost of groceries is going to keep going up in 2023. The grocery bill for an average family will climb to \$16,300 next year. That is a big hit to the family budget. Parents are already stretched thin and are unable to feed their family. Now they are being told it is only going to get worse. All these increases are unaffordable for Canadians. I never would have thought that people in Canada would not be able to eat or stay warm.

Will the Liberals promise not to increase taxes so that Canadians can eat?

**Hon. Karina Gould (Minister of Families, Children and Social Development, Lib.):** Mr. Speaker, the difference between us and the Conservatives is that on this side of the House, we have confidence in Canadians. We understand that less fortunate Canadians need this help. We will provide them with help for dental care, housing, and early childhood and child care services.

We have confidence in Canadians, and we will be there to support them today and in the future.

*Oral Questions*

**Mr. Richard Martel (Chicoutimi—Le Fjord, CPC):** Mr. Speaker, I cannot believe that the member opposite gave us that answer when the government has completely lost control of public spending. The Auditor General confirmed that the government is trying to track down \$32 billion in benefits that were paid to ineligible recipients. What are the consequences of that?

Nationwide, Canadians' debt is increasing. People do not have enough money, so they are charging their groceries to their credit cards. The Liberals have allowed themselves to lose billions of dollars.

Once again, will the Liberals show compassion and not increase taxes?

**Hon. Randy Boissonnault (Minister of Tourism and Associate Minister of Finance, Lib.):** Mr. Speaker, our approach is based on compassion, responsibility and fiscal prudence.

If we look at the facts, millions of mothers who received CERB did not create inflation, and neither did the thousands of businesses that took wage subsidies.

If the Conservatives truly, from the bottom of their hearts, want to help Canadians get through these difficult times, they can do the right thing and vote for Bill C-32, which will benefit Canadians.

\* \* \*

**HEALTH**

**Mr. Mario Simard (Jonquière, BQ):** Mr. Speaker, Quebec's finance minister will table his economic update on Thursday. He will have to make do with what he has because the Liberal government is still stubbornly saying no despite Quebec and the provinces calling for higher health transfers for years.

ERs are in crisis. There are not enough workers. Even pediatric units, which care for our children, are paying the price, yet Ottawa continues to say no. Why?

**Mr. Adam van Koevorden (Parliamentary Secretary to the Minister of Health and to the Minister of Sport, Lib.):** Mr. Speaker, I thank my hon. colleague for his question.

Our health care system is facing major challenges, and we must work together to improve health care for Canadians. We are disappointed in the outcome of the meeting and in the provincial and territorial premiers' statement.

Nevertheless, our government remains ready to work with the provinces and territories and to continue discussing priorities.

• (1440)

**Mr. Mario Simard (Jonquière, BQ):** Mr. Speaker, the government does not want to increase health transfers. It wants standards. What standards?

What makes Ottawa think it can tell Quebec and the provinces how to do their job? Consider what Ottawa did with Phoenix, Roxham Road, the passport crisis, the old age pension delays, and the delays with EI and the immigration department, which is where applications go to die.

How dare the government play backseat driver and tell Quebec and the provinces how to do their job?

**Hon. Dominic LeBlanc (Minister of Intergovernmental Affairs, Infrastructure and Communities, Lib.):** Mr. Speaker, with all due respect, as my hon. colleague is well aware, to say that we are not prepared to increase health transfers is not true. We have been very clear. We will work with the provinces to increase federal transfers to the provinces, which are responsible for managing their health care systems. We recognize that.

We are simply asking to have a transparent discussion with the provinces to ensure that, together, we get results for patients and families in Quebec and Canada.

**Mr. Mario Simard (Jonquière, BQ):** Mr. Speaker, that “transparent discussion” is code for standards. We will say it again. What the health system needs is not standards; it needs Ottawa to contribute its share.

Quite frankly, no one believes that there are no standards in the Quebec health care system. The federal government's pretentious and dismissive attitude toward the provinces, saying that it will show them how to do things, is no longer acceptable to anyone. What the health care system needs from Ottawa is money, not condescension.

When will the government increase health transfers?

**Mr. Adam van Koevorden (Parliamentary Secretary to the Minister of Health and to the Minister of Sport, Lib.):** Mr. Speaker, I thank my colleague for his question, but what he says is not true.

Our government has a long history of working with the provinces and territories, not only to provide funding, but also to ensure a national vision for health care and systems that meet the needs of Canadians. We will increase Canada health transfers by 10% in March 2023. An additional 5% increase was announced a few months ago.

We will continue to work with the provinces and territories to improve health care in Canada.

\* \* \*

[English]

**COVID-19 EMERGENCY RESPONSE**

**Mrs. Kelly Block (Carlton Trail—Eagle Creek, CPC):** Mr. Speaker, in 2021 the government procured a system to track vaccines. This system, VaccineConnect, is set to cost Canadians over \$59 million.

The government then decided to delay the development of key capabilities, forcing employees to use spreadsheets instead. This led to significant waste of vaccines and taxpayers' dollars, including confusion on expiration dates.

Why did the government delay key developments on its own project, wasting vaccines and taxpayers' money?

*Oral Questions*

**Mr. Adam van Koeverden (Parliamentary Secretary to the Minister of Health and to the Minister of Sport, Lib.):** Mr. Speaker, Canada's COVID-19 procurement strategy was undertaken at a time of considerable uncertainty, with a goal of protecting the health and safety of Canadians. That is what we did.

While Canada's overall COVID-19 immunization strategy has been a success, with modelling suggesting that public health measures without vaccination could have seen over 16.5 million cases and nearly 500,000 deaths, improvements can and will be made to ensure continued success and future preparedness.

However, there was no waste. That is a false claim. To suggest we did not act expediently is outside the—

**The Speaker:** The hon. member for Carlton Trail—Eagle Creek.

**Mrs. Kelly Block (Carlton Trail—Eagle Creek, CPC):** Mr. Speaker, perhaps that member would like to have a conversation with the Auditor General.

In her report this morning, she made it clear the government is on track for almost \$2 billion in wasted vaccines by the end of this year, over 15 million doses wasted so far, with the potential of the majority of another 55 million doses set to expire in 26 days. The government took vaccines meant for underdeveloped countries, the only G7 country to do so, while wasting billions in expired vaccines.

When will the government stop its wasteful spending of taxpayers' dollars?

**Mr. Adam van Koeverden (Parliamentary Secretary to the Minister of Health and to the Minister of Sport, Lib.):** Mr. Speaker, leave it to the Conservatives to suggest that buying vaccines during a deadly pandemic was wasteful. Context matters. At the start of this pandemic, no one could predict which vaccine would be most effective.

With an increased global demand, our government prioritized, protecting the health and safety of Canadians. We will continue to work to keep securing the vaccines Canadians need while taking measures to manage our supply and reduce wastage. As recommended, we will also continue to work with provinces, territories and indigenous partners to enhance data sharing across jurisdictions and partners through a pan-Canadian health data strategy.

• (1445)

**Mr. Adam Chambers (Simcoe North, CPC):** Mr. Speaker, the Auditor General stated that the process the government relied on to distribute COVID benefits led to \$4.6 billion in overpayments to ineligible individuals, and at least another \$27 billion that needs to be investigated.

How much of this \$32 billion can taxpayers expect to recover? How much money is the government going to spend in administrative costs to recover money for taxpayers?

**Hon. Carla Qualtrough (Minister of Employment, Workforce Development and Disability Inclusion, Lib.):** Mr. Speaker, we, as a Parliament, approved an approach that was attestation based with a rigorous postpayment verification.

As a result of that approach, Canadians were able to put food on their tables. Canadians remained attached to their jobs. We posi-

tioned our economy well to come roaring back at the end of the pandemic. It has, and 117% of the jobs have been recovered. Our public health outcomes are the envy of the world.

**Mr. Adam Chambers (Simcoe North, CPC):** Mr. Speaker, the problem is that the Auditor General said very clearly the postpayment verification process is anything but rigorous.

The problem is that taxpayers are now on the hook for these billions of dollars they may never receive back. This is the same failed process the government is relying upon when distributing its new dental and rental benefits.

Will the government admit it had no controls and finally put some controls in place before it distributes any more government money?

**Hon. Carla Qualtrough (Minister of Employment, Workforce Development and Disability Inclusion, Lib.):** Mr. Speaker, we are pursuing a very rigorous postpayment verification process based on best practices in the world of risk-based analysis.

We are taking a compassionate approach. We absolutely paused repayment during omicron and other things that came up during the pandemic. I can assure the House that we are on top of it and we are following up.

\* \* \*

**HEALTH**

**Ms. Lindsay Mathyssen (London—Fanshawe, NDP):** Mr. Speaker, families are frustrated and anxious about the state of our emergency rooms. Sick kids are waiting in makeshift spaces for up to 20 hours and this government is letting Premier Ford download health care costs onto municipalities.

London city hall, already overburdened, is being asked to pay \$300 million to cover health care's restructuring. The Liberal government is leaving families and the cities they live in to fend for themselves against the callous provincial government.

When will the government hammer out a health care transfer deal to ensure cities do not have to bear the brunt of health care costs?



*Oral Questions*

**Mr. Adam van Koeverden (Parliamentary Secretary to the Minister of Health and to the Minister of Sport, Lib.):** Mr. Speaker, we share the frustrations and concerns of parents across Ontario with the wait times at hospitals, particularly for kids. It has been a really challenging flu, RSV and COVID season, with all of those piling up. We recognize it has been extraordinarily challenging for health care workers as well. We believe, on this side of the House, that all someone should need to get health care in Canada is their health card, not their credit card, so we will always stand up for our public system. Canadians are proud of our system. It is one based on need, not on ability to pay.

\* \* \*

**CHILD CARE**

**Ms. Leah Gazan (Winnipeg Centre, NDP):** Mr. Speaker, for decades advocates have called to nationalize early learning and child care. However, we still do not have legislation in place that ensures long-term protected funding for child care that prioritizes the expansion of non-profit and public service delivery. Families deserve access to high-quality, affordable child care now.

When will the Liberals introduce this important legislation?

**Hon. Karina Gould (Minister of Families, Children and Social Development, Lib.):** Mr. Speaker, it has been a pleasure to work with the hon. member and so many colleagues in the House to deliver early learning and affordable child care across this country.

In fact we have reduced fees by 50% from coast to coast to coast, which means that more families are able to afford child care and more women are entering into the workforce. In fact, women's workforce participation is at an all-time high in Canadian history thanks to some of the policies, including child care, that this government has put forward. I am looking forward to introducing legislation soon to make sure we keep early learning and child care a good for Canadians for all time.

\* \* \*

**GENDER-BASED VIOLENCE**

**Ms. Lena Metlege Diab (Halifax West, Lib.):** Mr. Speaker, today is the National Day of Remembrance and Action on Violence Against Women. Thirty-three years ago today I was a law student and remember very well the horrific shooting of 14 brilliant women at École Polytechnique in Montreal. Today is a day we vow to fight back against gun violence and gender-based violence.

Can the minister speak about the importance of this day and our government's plan to address gender-based violence?

**Hon. Marci Ien (Minister for Women and Gender Equality and Youth, Lib.):** Mr. Speaker, the massacre at École Polytechnique was one of the most horrifying things to happen on Canadian soil. There were 14 women killed and 13 injured simply because they were women. We will always stand up for victims and survivors of gender-based violence. We support them. We honour them. We condemn anyone who tries to sully their memory, and we will not rest until every Canadian is safe.

• (1450)

**DEMOCRATIC INSTITUTIONS**

**Mr. Philip Lawrence (Northumberland—Peterborough South, CPC):** Mr. Speaker, the Auditor General is an incredibly critical part of our democracy. When an individual calls the Auditor General's integrity into question, which happened just now in the House, it is an attack on our democracy. Simply put, her only offence was not supporting and endorsing Liberal waste.

Will the minister apologize?

[*Translation*]

**Hon. Diane Lebouthillier (Minister of National Revenue, Lib.):** Mr. Speaker, our colleagues on the other side of the House can talk about what a waste it was to implement the 13 programs that we put in place during the pandemic, but on this side of the House, we can say that we saved lives.

I am certainly not going to apologize for saving lives and neither is our government. The worst part is that the Conservatives are willing to play politics with children's pain and dental programs. It is a real shame.

[*English*]

**Mr. Philip Lawrence (Northumberland—Peterborough South, CPC):** Mr. Speaker, it was not the opposition who called out \$32 billion in waste. It was the Auditor General.

My question again is a simple one. Will the minister retract her comment calling into question the independence of the Auditor General, yes or no?

[*Translation*]

**Hon. Diane Lebouthillier (Minister of National Revenue, Lib.):** Mr. Speaker, as I mentioned earlier, the CRA does not agree with the Auditor General's calculations concerning recipients who were not eligible for the wage subsidy.

The CRA's actual audits indicate that compliance with the subsidies was high and that the Auditor General's figure is exaggerated. That is not the Auditor General's fault. We all know that she was pressured by the opposition to produce this report. Political games notwithstanding, let us not forget that the wage subsidy saved the economy.

**Mr. Luc Berthold (Mégantic—L'Érable, CPC):** Mr. Speaker, nowhere in the Auditor General's report does she question the time she needed to take to produce this report. Nowhere in the report does she accuse the opposition of pressuring her to produce this report.

However, to hide her incompetence, today the Minister of National Revenue questioned the integrity of the Auditor General of Canada in her report on pandemic spending.

*Oral Questions*

Will she apologize immediately, yes or no?

**Hon. Carla Qualtrough (Minister of Employment, Workforce Development and Disability Inclusion, Lib.):** Mr. Speaker, we absolutely respect the Auditor General.

[*English*]

She absolutely agreed with us that we met the objectives of this plan. We kept Canadians safe, we put money in their pockets quickly and we avoided significant economic and social harm.

[*Translation*]

**Mr. Luc Berthold (Mégantic—L'Érable, CPC):** Mr. Speaker, it was this Parliament that asked the Auditor General to investigate pandemic spending and the way the government managed the pandemic. It was this Parliament that asked her to get to the bottom of this. It was not the opposition.

However, today in the House, the Minister of National Revenue had the nerve to hide her incompetence at managing the crisis by throwing accusations at the Auditor General of Canada and questioning her integrity.

There is just one thing left for the minister to do, and that is to stand up and apologize to the House.

• (1455)

**Hon. Diane Lebouthillier (Minister of National Revenue, Lib.):** Mr. Speaker, I have tremendous respect for the Auditor General. The opposition is the one impugning her.

Our government made the crucial decision to support businesses and workers during the pandemic—

**Some hon. members:** Oh, oh!

**The Speaker:** Order. It is hard to hear the answer.

I will ask the hon. minister to start over, but first I would ask all members to calm down a little. I know Christmas is coming and everyone is excited, but I would like everyone to calm down and take a little time to think about that.

**Hon. Diane Lebouthillier:** Mr. Speaker, let me just say that I have total confidence in the Auditor General and she has my utmost respect.

Our government made the crucial decision to support people and businesses during the pandemic. We created 13 programs. We saved lives, and I will never apologize for saving lives during the worst time this country has known, worse even than the Second World War.

\* \* \*

**THE ENVIRONMENT**

**Ms. Monique Pausé (Repentigny, BQ):** Mr. Speaker, COP15 is under way in Montreal, and the Prime Minister, who could not be bothered to go to COP27, will be one of the few heads of state, if not the only one, to make an appearance. What is he going to say?

He will say that biodiversity is a treasure, that it is threatened by human activity and that we have a responsibility to do more to protect the world's wildlife. He will look serious and solemn, and he will wait for the applause.

If he wants to be taken seriously for once, why not announce an end to oil exploration off the coast of Newfoundland?

**Hon. Jonathan Wilkinson (Minister of Natural Resources, Lib.):** Mr. Speaker, it is very significant that COP15 is being held here in Canada. It is very important to protect nature and biodiversity around the world. We have done a great deal on that here in Canada. We have invested to protect land and marine areas, and we have also promised to plant two million trees.

It is very important to be a global leader in protecting nature, and Canada is stepping up.

**Ms. Monique Pausé (Repentigny, BQ):** Mr. Speaker, Canada's oil is bad for the planet. It contributes to global warming and harms biodiversity. Oil exploration and production have devastating impacts on such animal species as the right whale and corals as well as on plants. This is nothing new to anyone here: Ottawa continues to act as though it is business as usual. Biodiversity is great and important for the planet, but oil is more important to Canada.

Will the Prime Minister be honest enough to admit to COP15 participants that Canada is harming biodiversity?

**Hon. Jonathan Wilkinson (Minister of Natural Resources, Lib.):** Mr. Speaker, it is very important to protect nature and biodiversity, and Canada is a leader in this area. It is also important that my colleague understand that we are undergoing an energy transition and that we must have a prosperous economy for the future. We have a plan to protect nature and to fight climate change but also to ensure a strong and prosperous economy for the future.

\* \* \*

[*English*]

**DEMOCRATIC INSTITUTIONS**

**Mr. Garnett Genuis (Sherwood Park—Fort Saskatchewan, CPC):** Mr. Speaker, the government is attacking the Auditor General's independence in order to cover up its own incompetence.

More than \$30 billion went to ineligible recipients; that is, people who did not meet the criteria of the programs. When the Auditor General called this out, the government's response was to criticize the work of a strong, independent professional whom the Liberals, in fact, appointed.

Will the Minister of Revenue apologize to the Auditor General and agree to accept all her recommendations?

**Hon. Randy Boissonnault (Minister of Tourism and Associate Minister of Finance, Lib.):** Mr. Speaker, we respect the Auditor General and welcome her report. However, let us take a look at some of the—

• (1500)

**The Speaker:** I just want to remind the hon. members that the rules are that they ask the question and then they wait. They do not keep asking the question over and over again.

The hon. minister, from the top please.

**Hon. Randy Boissonnault:** Mr. Speaker, let me state once again that we thank the Auditor General for her report and that we respect her work, but let us look at what her report said. The pandemic benefits prevented an increase in poverty that would almost have doubled without our investments, and they helped the economy bounce back from the effects of the pandemic. CERB allowed 8.9 million Canadians to be supported through the depths of the pandemic, and the wage subsidy kept 5.38 million people on the payroll.

We have already recuperated \$2.3 billion. The system will continue to work, and we will continue to have the backs of Canadians.

**Mrs. Rosemarie Falk (Battlefords—Lloydminster, CPC):** Mr. Speaker, the Auditor General did take a look, and more than \$30 billion in payments went to ineligible applicants. We know in this House that the Auditor General is a respected officer of Parliament. It was Parliament that asked for the report from the AG. The minister is now calling into question the independence of the AG. Will the minister apologize?

**Hon. Carla Qualtrough (Minister of Employment, Workforce Development and Disability Inclusion, Lib.):** Mr. Speaker, we thank the Auditor General for her report. We worked closely with her to make sure she had all the data she needed to make her findings, and we are also working hard on the post-payment verification to ensure that we work with individual Canadians. Over 150,000 Canadians have already worked out agreements with CRA for payment, and we will continue methodically pursuing this work until it is done.

**Mrs. Rosemarie Falk (Battlefords—Lloydminster, CPC):** Mr. Speaker, that definitely was a non-answer. The Liberals say they worked with the Auditor General, but they will not accept the recommendations from the Auditor General. Will the Minister of National Revenue stand up and apologize for her remarks, which seem to be that her government does not trust the Auditor General and the work that was done?

**Hon. Randy Boissonnault (Minister of Tourism and Associate Minister of Finance, Lib.):** Mr. Speaker, our government trusts and respects the work of the Auditor General. Let me just share with members—

**Some hon. members:** Oh, oh!

**The Speaker:** Are we done? Very good.

The hon. minister, please proceed.

**Hon. Randy Boissonnault:** Mr. Speaker, let me repeat that our government respects and honours the work of the Auditor General, and that we accept her report. Let me share point 10.23 from the report. I quote:

We found that the COVID-19 programs achieved their objective to help Canada avoid a more severe contraction of the economy and the social consequences of, for example, a significant increase in poverty. This financial support allowed the economy to rebound and return—

### Oral Questions

**The Speaker:** The hon. member for West Vancouver—Sunshine Coast—Sea to Sky Country.

\* \* \*

[Translation]

### OFFICIAL LANGUAGES

**Mr. Patrick Weiler (West Vancouver—Sunshine Coast—Sea to Sky Country, Lib.):** Mr. Speaker, our government recognizes that French is in decline in Canada, as the census showed. That is why it is important to pass our ambitious bill.

Could the President of the Treasury Board explain to us how Bill C-13 will improve French in the federal government?

**Hon. Mona Fortier (President of the Treasury Board, Lib.):** Mr. Speaker, I thank my colleague for his question and especially for his hard work. We are firmly committed to promoting both of our official languages. With Bill C-13, Treasury Board will play an enhanced role in monitoring and evaluation. For the first time, that will include monitoring federal institutions to ensure that they meet their obligation to take positive measures, including in areas where they work with their provincial and territorial counterparts. We need to move forward with Bill C-13 to strengthen official language minority communities, among others.

\* \* \*

[English]

### DEMOCRATIC INSTITUTIONS

**Mr. Rob Morrison (Kootenay—Columbia, CPC):** Mr. Speaker, Mary called me on the weekend. She is a senior on a fixed income, and her doctor is 230 kilometres away. She cannot afford the fuel inflation.

The Auditor General today revealed \$32 billion in questionable spending, including \$54 million to build a \$250,000 app, billions in wage subsidies to wealthy corporations, and issuing cheques to prisoners and organized crime.

Will the minister apologize for questioning the independence of the Auditor General?

• (1505)

**Hon. Kamal Khera (Minister of Seniors, Lib.):** Mr. Speaker, we recognize the challenges seniors are facing. The government has been there for them, unlike the party opposite, which has opposed every single measure we put forward to support seniors, whether it was the doubling of the GST credit, which will help 11 million people, rental and dental support, increasing the old age security by 10% for those 75 and over, or the fact that we are increasing the guaranteed income supplement, which has helped over 900,000 seniors. We are going to continue to make sure we support seniors, now and into the future.

*Oral Questions*

[Translation]

**VETERANS AFFAIRS**

**Mr. Pierre Paul-Hus (Charlesbourg—Haute-Saint-Charles, CPC):** Mr. Speaker, there has to be some sort of limit to what we are going to hear from the Minister of National Revenue today. It is one thing to attack the Auditor General and say that she doubts her integrity, but she even had the gall to say that managing the pandemic as a minister was more difficult than managing the Second World War.

Does the minister have the courage to stand up today and apologize on behalf of the 40,000 Canadian soldiers who lost their lives between 1939 and 1945?

**Hon. Randy Boissonnault (Minister of Tourism and Associate Minister of Finance, Lib.):** Mr. Speaker, we thank the Auditor General for her report and we have great respect for her work. Let us look at a few facts from that report. The supports provided during the pandemic prevented an increase in poverty. The CERB program supported 8.9 million Canadians and the wage subsidy kept more than 5.3 million people employed. It was the compassionate thing to do. We did it for Canadians, and it was the right thing to do.

**Mr. Pierre Paul-Hus (Charlesbourg—Haute-Saint-Charles, CPC):** Mr. Speaker, I am very disappointed in the Minister of National Revenue's lack of courage. She is the member for Gaspésie, and I would remind the minister that there were people from my regiment, the Régiment de la Chaudière, who landed at the beaches in Bernières-sur-Mer in 1944. Those soldiers were courageous people.

Can the minister from Gaspésie demonstrate as much courage as the Régiment de la Chaudière soldiers from Gaspésie by standing up and apologizing on their behalf?

**Hon. Diane LeBouthillier (Minister of National Revenue, Lib.):** Mr. Speaker, allow me to reassure my colleague. If there is anyone who does not lack courage, it is most certainly the people of Gaspésie and the Magdalen Islands.

That said, CRA is working very hard to make sure that everyone who collected COVID-19 benefits was eligible to do so. Our robust audit and recovery strategies will be thorough and compassionate. This report only goes to show that our estimates were correct.

\* \* \*

[English]

**THE ECONOMY**

**Mr. Taleeb Noormohamed (Vancouver Granville, Lib.):** Mr. Speaker, whether it is because of bad crops or extreme weather, Putin's illegal war in Ukraine or supply chain issues, food prices in Canada and around the world are on the rise. Canadians are having a hard time putting food on the table, and they are looking to us.

Can the Minister of Tourism and Associate Minister of Finance tell the House what the government is doing to help Canadians with the cost of living?

**Hon. Randy Boissonnault (Minister of Tourism and Associate Minister of Finance, Lib.):** Mr. Speaker, I would like to thank my

friend and hon. colleague from Vancouver Granville for his hard work on the file and his dedication to his residents.

We are always here to support Canadians, and the measures we have in place put more money in the pockets of Canadians. In the fall economic statement, we propose to eliminate student loan interest, to make housing more affordable and to increase the Canada workers benefit. The Conservatives can do the right thing and see their hearts grow not one, not two, but three sizes, and vote for Bill C-32 and to support Canadians.

\* \* \*

**HOUSING**

**Ms. Jenny Kwan (Vancouver East, NDP):** Mr. Speaker, hundreds of thousands of people experience homelessness in Canada every year, and the Liberals' national housing strategy is failing them. The Auditor General says the Liberals will not meet their chronic homelessness target, and the CEO of CMHC confirmed that is the case. Meanwhile, people are dying on the streets. There is zero accountability from the Liberals and no clear plan to eliminate chronic homelessness. Canadians need action, not failed Liberal promises.

What is the government's plan to eliminate chronic homelessness in Canada and ensure that everyone has a place to call home?

**Hon. Ahmed Hussen (Minister of Housing and Diversity and Inclusion, Lib.):** Mr. Speaker, this is our plan: We are doubling funding to the reaching home strategy, from \$2 billion to just under \$4 billion. We are introducing the rapid housing initiative, which is on track to build 14,000 deeply affordable homes for the most vulnerable, including those experiencing homelessness. We have the introduction of the Canada housing benefit, which is helping vulnerable Canadian renters across the country. We are building more deeply affordable housing through the co-investment fund, which offers \$2.9 billion to build 22,000 additional deeply affordable homes.

\* \* \*

● (1510)

**HEALTH**

**Mr. Gord Johns (Courtenay—Alberni, NDP):** Mr. Speaker, Canadians are dying and lives are being shattered every day because of a contaminated drug supply. The Conservative leader wants to double down on the failed war on drugs, while the government will not fund the supports people need. The Liberals promised in the last election to send \$500 million to the provinces and territories to improve access to evidence-based treatment, but yet again it has not followed through.

When will the government move past the stigma and mount a health-based response to this national crisis?

*Government Orders*

**Hon. Carolyn Bennett (Minister of Mental Health and Addictions and Associate Minister of Health, Lib.):** Mr. Speaker, the toxic drug and overdose crisis continues, as the member says, to take a tragic toll on families, loved ones and communities. The government will use every tool at its disposal to work with its partners to end the national public health crisis.

Since 2017 we have committed more than \$800 million to address the overdose crisis, and we are taking concrete steps to divert people who use drugs away from the criminal justice system. Approving B.C.'s decriminalization proposal for personal possession of certain substances was an important step. We know we have to do more, and we will.

[*Translation*]

**The Speaker:** That is all the time we have today for Oral Questions.

The member for Mirabel is rising on a point of order.

**Mr. Jean-Denis Garon:** Mr. Speaker, I would like to read a quote from the Auditor General's statement: "With the audits we are releasing today, the focus of our work is shifting to look at how federal departments and organizations managed programs and services for Canadians as the pandemic continued to evolve".

Today, in the House, the Minister of National Revenue questioned—

**The Speaker:** Let me remind the House how a point of order works.

If a Standing Order has not been followed, then a member must explain how it was not followed.

If the hon. member for Mirabel wants to continue with a Standing Order that was not followed, I will be happy to hear what he has to say.

The hon. member for Mirabel.

**Mr. Jean-Denis Garon:** Mr. Speaker, to make a long story short, today the Minister of National Revenue attacked a fundamental institution of the House whose primary role is to hold the government accountable. She tried to mislead the House. She was therefore out of order. Today she must rise, retract her comments and apologize.

**The Speaker:** That is a matter of debate. It is not really a point of order.

[*English*]

The hon. parliamentary secretary to the government House leader is rising on a point of order.

**Mr. Mark Gerretsen:** Mr. Speaker, I am rising on a point of order that you somewhat addressed. You made very clear what a point of order is, and then the member continued to go on about something that was not a point of order. There has to be a point that you intervene when it relates to matters like that.

**The Speaker:** I thank the hon. member for his guidance. He is absolutely right.

I want to remind all members that, when they rise on a point of order, it is because a point of order was not followed and they need to explain why it was not followed. Otherwise, it becomes debate,

and we do not want to take time away from each other's ability to debate important questions that are already on the Order Paper.

---

## GOVERNMENT ORDERS

[*English*]

### FALL ECONOMIC STATEMENT IMPLEMENTATION ACT, 2022

The House resumed consideration of Bill C-32, An Act to implement certain provisions of the fall economic statement tabled in Parliament on November 3, 2022 and certain provisions of the budget tabled in Parliament on April 7, 2022, as reported (without amendment) from the committee, and of Motion No. 1.

**Mr. Mark Gerretsen (Parliamentary Secretary to the Leader of the Government in the House of Commons (Senate), Lib.):** Mr. Speaker, when I left off just before question period, I was reflecting on the fact that there is too much attention being paid by the Conservatives in the House to inflation only as it relates to domestic inflation. They are not considering the whole picture of inflation being a global issue, something that countries throughout the world are, quite frankly, dealing with right now.

Canada has the third-lowest inflation rate in the G7. Of course, that is little comfort to those who are experiencing the effects of inflation right now, but that is exactly why we are debating this particular piece of legislation today. This is legislation to help those who are feeling the impacts of inflation the most with trying to get through this very difficult time.

• (1515)

**The Speaker:** I apologize for interrupting the hon. parliamentary secretary.

I would remind everyone that debate is taking place and people should take their conversations into the lobby or the hallway. Inside the chamber, we all want to hear what the hon. parliamentary secretary has to say, and when the questions come, we will want to hear them as well.

The hon. parliamentary secretary can proceed.

**Mr. Mark Gerretsen:** Mr. Speaker, that is the first time somebody has ever said that everyone wants to hear what I have to say. I certainly thank you for those kind words.

This bill is bringing in measures that are specifically designed to assist those most impacted by inflation right now. Most important is to look at the impact of the measures we are talking about in this bill in support of Canadians, those who need it the most. It is well documented that the impact of those measures on inflation is next to nothing.

*Government Orders*

I think it is very important that we reflect on exactly what some of those measures are. For starters, the one measure in this bill I am very happy to see, because I think it is long overdue, has to do with the elimination of student loan interest from the federal portion. I know it has been said in the House that we do not have a student loan problem. I would disagree with that. I suggest that is exactly the opposite of the truth because we do have a problem when it comes to education.

The reality is that decades ago, when my parents were in their teens and early twenties, all one needed to get a job that could provide security to build a family and buy a house was a high school diploma. By and large, one could find stable employment to provide for oneself and one's family. That is not the case any more.

Now, one needs much more than that. One quite often needs a university degree, to be highly skilled in a trade or, in some cases, have completed a masters or postgraduate work. The difference between now and then is that secondary school is covered through taxes. It is covered through property taxes and taxes that individuals pay to support the school system. To get to the point of being able to provide and start a family back then was free. Now we are in a situation where education is a lot more expensive. The cost of getting to that place of providing for and building a family is much more expensive.

When we start talking about things like eliminating the interest on student debt, I think it is absolutely important because it moves us toward being able to provide the education that people need to get stable employment. That employment can be used to build a family, buy a house and so on. From my perspective, we ultimately have to get to a point where either community college or university for Canadian citizens is almost as easy to access as high school is because it is through that that people can experience the quality of life that previous generations, like that of my parents, were able to experience.

I really think that this piece of legislation is absolutely key right now. We need to get this through the House. I am glad to see that we are at the final stage of this. The reality is that there are Canadians out there waiting on this legislation to be passed so they can start to get some of the supports in it. We know full well that the House could end up debating this fall economic statement until May or June, just like the Conservatives forced us to do with the last fall economic statement. We have had numerous speakers on this: 38 Conservatives, six NDP, 10 Bloc, one Green and 26 Liberals. After all these speakers, I cannot understand how anybody in the House would possibly think that continuing debate on this piece of legislation would be more important than getting the supports the legislation provides to Canadians.

I am glad to see that there is time allocation on this. We need to get to a point where we can have a vote on this. Let us have our voices heard through that vote, and if it passes, get the supports to Canadians. There are Canadians out there suffering right now who need these supports.

● (1520)

**Mr. Marty Morantz (Charleswood—St. James—Assiniboia—Headingley, CPC):** Madam Speaker, in the Parliamentary Budget Officer's review of the fall economic statement, Bill C-32, he cate-

gorized \$14.2 billion as unannounced spending. I am just wondering if, before we go to actually vote on this bill, the member would tell us what the details of that spending are.

**Mr. Mark Gerretsen:** Madam Speaker, I will be completely honest. I am not fully versed in the Parliamentary Budget Officer's report, but I would say that every member of Parliament gets the information from the government at the exact same time.

The member assumes that I am going to somehow have access to that before him, but that would be against the rules of the House. I am allowed to see what is tabled when he is allowed to see it. He knows that. To suggest that there is some kind of information that I have that he does not have is simply not the truth.

**Ms. Elizabeth May (Saanich—Gulf Islands, GP):** Madam Speaker, I am wondering if the hon. member for Kingston and the Islands has any comment on this as we debate Bill C-32. I understand his point that other members have spoken. It was almost getting to be like *The Twelve Days of Christmas* with how many members have spoken. I expected it to move into music. I ended up being the one Green who spoke.

There are other thoughts and comments that we would like to make, but we do not want to prolong debate unnecessarily.

The fundamental point is that we have rules and procedures in this place. We have time allocated for debate. If that is truncated on a routine basis continually, what does that mean for the future of this place as a place that is the heart of democracy, where debate takes place and where we do not truncate and bring down the *bail-lon* every time?

**Mr. Mark Gerretsen:** Madam Speaker, I think that the member brings up a very good point. It is unfortunately the reality of the place where we are now. It is an inevitable cycle. Conservatives are just using every single tactic they have, not only to slow down legislation that they are against, but also to slow down every piece of legislation of the government.

It is almost as though they want to force the government to use time allocation so they can say we are being undemocratic. The cycle continues so they can say that we did it 50 times, 60 times, 70 times and so on. Perhaps the member is on to something, in that we need to look at our Standing Orders and how we deal with this kind of stuff.

I will be completely honest. Before I got here, when I used to hear of Stephen Harper bringing in time allocation and terminating debate, I used to think it was an egregious thing to happen, until I realized, when I am sitting here, exactly how this place functions.

When Canadians actually figure out how this place functions, I know they will understand why it is necessary to do this and why it is necessary to end the games.

**Mr. Brian Masse (Windsor West, NDP):** Madam Speaker, I want to get back into more of the substance of the debate. The member has mentioned the student relief and interest payments.

One of the things that we also see compounding is that students are graduating with fewer opportunities to be in a job for a longer period of time, with benefits and pensions. I wanted his thoughts about that. I see a lot of young people simply getting buried and falling behind, and that has caused significant problems for them starting families.

**Mr. Mark Gerretsen:** Madam Speaker, the member makes an excellent point.

Back in the sixties and seventies, one could graduate from high school in Kingston and go and work at DuPont or Alcan. One could have an entire career there, have a pension at the end and have benefits with that pension. The reality is that those jobs are becoming fewer and fewer.

We do not see the ability for individuals to have one job. I think that the average person now has seven or eight jobs throughout their employment time.

To answer his question, what is important now is that the government needs to recognize that the labour force has changed. We cannot rely on these companies to be providing these pensions and long-term strategies for retirement. It is becoming more onerous, quite frankly, for the government to provide those strategies and to make sure that people are prepared for their retirement because the opportunities this member mentioned, and that I mentioned at the beginning of answering the question, just do not exist anymore.

• (1525)

**Mr. Dan Mazier (Dauphin—Swan River—Neepawa, CPC):** Madam Speaker, it is an honour to speak to Bill C-32, the government's fall economic statement.

With inflation at record highs, interest rates rising and tax hikes on the way, Canadians are paying more attention to the government's spending now more than ever. They expect their government to be fiscally responsible with their tax dollars, and Canadians expect their government to make outcome-based investments and things that matter to them.

Unfortunately, since the Liberals took office in 2015, rural Canadians have been neglected by the government. I wish the government had spoken to rural Canadians and listened to their priorities and concerns before introducing the fall economic statement. Clearly, it failed to listen to rural Canadians.

Missing from the fiscal update is a plan to address rural crime. Rural crime is a pressing issue for Canadians who live in rural and remote regions. Unfortunately, the Liberal government has been silent on this issue.

Statistics Canada has reported that the crime rate in rural Canada has increased at a much higher rate than in urban Canada. The data shows that rural crime rates are 30% higher than in urban communities. Rural Canadians are vulnerable, and criminals are deliberately preying on the individuals and families in rural areas, knowing that the RCMP response times are highly delayed.

I spoke with a woman who lives just outside of the small community of Ethelbert, Manitoba last summer. She told me how her home was broken into multiple times in one year. Her home was invaded, her personal belongings were stolen and her safety was

### *Government Orders*

threatened. It took hours for the RCMP to respond, not because the police officers did not care but because they were so busy dealing with other responses.

Like many rural Canadians, the dream of living in a peaceful and tranquil region of our nation has turned into a reality of fear for one's safety. This is just one story, but I can assure members that nearly every Canadian who lives in rural Canada has, or heard, a similar one.

However, now the Liberals want to use the very limited policing services in rural Canada to implement their politically driven buy-back program to confiscate legally acquired firearms. Even the provinces and territories are speaking out against this. New Brunswick, Alberta, Saskatchewan, Manitoba and Yukon oppose this wasteful use of police resources.

The provincial minister of public safety in New Brunswick said:

New Brunswick's bottom line is this: RCMP resources are spread thin as it is...We have made it clear to the Government of Canada that we cannot condone any use of those limited resources, at all, in their planned buyback program.

The Liberals would rather use RCMP resources to enforce a firearm ban, which will do nothing to address rural crime, than use RCMP resources to protect the vulnerable families that live in rural Canada.

I should remind Canadians that violent crime has increased by 32% since the Prime Minister took office, and gang-related homicides have increased by 92%. Clearly, the Liberals' plan is not working. The Prime Minister has no plan to address the 30% higher crime rate in rural Canada, and that is very concerning.

The fiscal update did include new measures to support the victims of hurricane Fiona, and while I applaud the support, I want to raise an issue that was not addressed.

I was recently in P.E.I., meeting with Atlantic Canadians who feel neglected by their federal government, particularly the rural Canadians who feel their government is ignoring their needs.

Access to reliable, high-speed Internet and cellular service is critically important to rural Canadians from coast to coast to coast. When hurricane Fiona hit Atlantic Canada, cellular towers were down for days. The inadequate backup capacity on cellular infrastructure meant that Atlantic Canadians could not make a phone call in times of need.

*Government Orders*

Thousands of Atlantic Canadians waited weeks before they could reliably make a call on their cellphone. Imagine a single mother who does not know if she can contact local emergency services after a storm. Imagine seniors knowing they may not be able to call their loved ones in times of trouble.

While some cellular towers had backup generators, many did not have sufficient capacity and others had no redundancy at all. I found this very troubling. However, what I found even more troubling was the fact that this issue was raised by Atlantic Canadians to the Liberal government less than three years earlier after hurricane Dorian.

Atlantic Canadians called on the Liberals to address cellular redundancy in Canada, but their request fell on deaf ears. The Prime Minister failed to address cellular backup capacity in disaster-prone areas, and Canadians once again felt the impact of his neglect to this issue.

• (1530)

Even after the premier of Nova Scotia wrote to the Liberals urging them to address this issue, nothing was mentioned in the fall economic statement. Canadians deserve access to reliable cellular service.

If we want to connect Canadians with high-speed, reliable internet and cellular services, we need to increase competition in Canada. The only way to get lower prices and better service is to increase competition, enabling more innovation and choice.

Canada has among the highest, if not the highest, wireless prices in the world, according to a report by Rewheel/research. The minimum monthly price for a 4G smartphone plan that includes at least 20 gigabytes of data is higher in Canada than in Greece, New Zealand, South Africa, Norway, Germany, China, the United States, Finland, Sweden, Japan, Australia, Spain, the United Kingdom, India, Brazil and Italy, and the list goes on and on.

The Liberals think they can solve the problems with big government spending, but a lot of solutions emerge when we remove the government gatekeepers.

I think of Starlink, for example, a private company that provides internet through low earth orbit satellites. This is a company that is not reliant on government funding, that entered the Canadian market on its own, and has probably connected more rural and remote Canadians in one year than the government has since it took office. That is the power of innovation. That is the power of competition.

We should be encouraging private sector growth and innovation, not discouraging it.

Before I conclude, I want to point out one more thing. I noticed that there was a heading in the fall economic statement entitled “A Fair Tax System”. This reminded me of an encounter I had with a local taxi driver this year.

I was heading to the airport at four in the morning. A taxi driver had picked me up from my hotel and he told me he would only work for another two hours. I asked him why. He said that if he worked too much overtime, the increase in his tax rate would not make it worth his time. He would be working to put more money in

the government’s coffers than in his own pocket. We should let that sink in.

Our tax system is discouraging Canadians from working. The government is discouraging seniors who want to top up their pensions. It is discouraging students who want to work for their tuition. It is discouraging parents who want to work a little extra to pay for Christmas presents. This is heartless and in no way a fair tax system. We should always be rewarding those Canadians who want to work.

Canadians are concerned with the rising cost of living. They are concerned with the irresponsible government spending. They are concerned with the neglect displayed by the government. They are concerned with what the future holds. I will continue to stand up for these Canadians.

**Mr. Kevin Lamoureux (Parliamentary Secretary to the Leader of the Government in the House of Commons, Lib.):** Madam Speaker, the Conservative members always express concern with respect to the government spending. I do not know to what degree they recognize the true value of some of the spending that has taken place. We can talk about child care from coast to coast to coast. We have seen massive reductions for the first time with the national child care program. We have seen historic amounts of health care transfers to support provinces and address the needs of Canadians and their expectations on health care. In fact, we brought in a national dental program for children under the age of 12.

Would my colleague not recognize these are the types of programs on which Canadians expect their national government to deliver?

**Mr. Dan Mazier:** Mr. Speaker, one thing the member talked about was spending. I will point to the Auditor General's report. The Auditor General found, “Employment and Social Development Canada established performance standards by focusing solely on the speed of payment”, and identified at least \$32 billion in overpayments and suspicious payments that required further investigation. We are focused on that kind of spending.

• (1535)

**Ms. Lori Idlout (Nunavut, NDP):** *Uqaqtittiji*, I am going to ask the member a similar question I have asked other members. Given the context that, as we all know, some major corporations are making major profits, windfall taxes on corporations like Loblaws and oil companies need to happen, because the people he talked about are the ones who are suffering the most. Revenues from windfall taxes could go upward of \$4.3 billion, if this kind of windfall tax was put on corporations like Loblaws and oil and gas companies.

Does the member agree these major corporations need to pay their fair share of taxes?



*Government Orders*

**Mr. Dan Mazier:** Madam Speaker, when it comes to taxes, it was one of our asks in this fall economic statement. We were looking for the Liberals to stop increasing taxes, in particular the carbon tax. Eliminating the carbon tax on home heating immediately would at least cut the costs for people to heat their homes, not sometime when we pass a bill, not sometime when we happen to get the House in order and not when we start to tax someone else. The government would immediately stop taxing Canadians who work so hard to heat their homes.

[*Translation*]

**Mr. Richard Lehoux (Beauce, CPC):** Madam Speaker, I want to congratulate my hon. colleague on his excellent speech.

He talked a lot about rural areas across Canada. I wonder if he could elaborate on what he would have liked to see in this budget statement. I agree with him that there is not much in this statement for rural areas.

[*English*]

**Mr. Dan Mazier:** Madam Speaker, the one thing that really stood out to me was that it did not address Canada's needs at all, especially when it comes to rural crime. Today we talked about things that happened a long time ago and we said it should never happen again. In rural Canada, crime is 30% higher. There was not even a breath spent on that, not even on how we would address it or how we would take those sacred resources from the RCMP and apply them to rural Canada so we could look after rural Canadians. The government has totally blown up that whole idea.

[*Translation*]

**Mr. Martin Champoux (Drummond, BQ):** Madam Speaker, I thank my hon. colleague for his speech.

Earlier the member for Winnipeg North praised the government's actions in the area of health transfers with all kinds of conditions. Health care systems in Quebec and the provinces are in a critical state. Now is not the time to dither and try to set standards with absolutely no knowledge of exactly what they entail.

My colleague did not seem to respond as nervously as I did on this issue. I would like to hear his comments on this.

Why is the federal government so determined to impose standards for health transfers? Does my colleague agree that there should be no standards and that health transfers should be increased, as the provinces and Quebec have unanimously called for?

[*English*]

**Mr. Dan Mazier:** Madam Speaker, I am sorry that I did not answer the question about health care.

Health care squarely belongs in the realm of the provinces especially, but the key for the federal government to keep our country together is to work with the provinces, respect their power and work as a team, as a country, and not to divide us and take us in different directions. It needs to work as a true leader. A Conservative government will do that.

[*Translation*]

**Ms. Marie-Hélène Gaudreau (Laurentides—Labelle, BQ):** Madam Speaker, I will begin my remarks with a short aside about

Sainte-Adèle, a municipality in my riding. On Friday, a terrible fire destroyed the Hôtel Mont Gabriel, which is a Laurentides—Labelle institution. The hotel has been perched on the summit of Mont Gabriel since 1936. I have a personal attachment to it because, in the 1960s, my father worked at Mont Gabriel to pay for his education. I want the staff and the general manager, Martin Lavallée, to know that I am with them as they confront this calamity, which has struck just days before Christmas.

Today, I am here to speak about Bill C-32 at report stage. This bill seeks to implement the government's economic statement. Unfortunately, as we can see, it basically amounts to some minor legislative amendments. Quite frankly, I really feel that this is an attempt to implement the budget that was tabled a few months ago. I would like to elaborate on the economic reality that Quebeckers are facing. Bill C-32 is backward-looking. It mentions inflation 108 times, but how much attention does the issue really get? The content of this bill is not anchored in the future or in the present.

I am trying to find ways to get us through these difficult times. Some examples of the challenges we face are skyrocketing grocery bills and the inability to fill our tanks with gas while we wait to buy an electric vehicle to get to work, because in the regions, a car is essential. Unfortunately, public transportation is not available everywhere. Donations to media food drives are also down because people are struggling.

The government has identified the cause of the higher cost of living, but it has done nothing about it. It has announced that there are difficult days ahead, which we obviously are aware of, without providing a way to get through them. Still, even though the measures in Bill C-32 are not perfect, because there are shortcomings, we can say that we are relatively satisfied with the measures presented.

However, the government should have given more consideration to the Bloc Québécois's requests. They are simple and clear, and we know that they will be effective. We have proof. These measures can directly help Quebeckers. Our three requests were to increase health transfers, provide adequate support for those aged 65 and over, and urgently reform the EI system.

The Liberal government ignored our offer of help and rejected our proposals. This is a missed opportunity to help Quebeckers. I know Quebeckers are watching, and I want them to know that we will not give up. I must admit that there are some positive elements, however, and I will mention them today.

As we know, property flipping is really driving up prices on the housing market and making it very difficult to buy a home, particularly for first-time buyers. I commend the federal government on its initiative to tax gains from property flips. I hope that will help curb real estate speculation and make it easier for people to buy a home.

*Government Orders*

Another related measure that I welcome is the creation of the tax-free first home savings account. I talked about it with my older daughter and her friends, and they say that it will definitely help them.

• (1540)

That measure was in the spring budget. Things have changed, and we had to adjust.

Bill C-32 is not perfect. However, we are happy to see the provision that amends the Canada Student Financial Assistance Act to eliminate the accrual of interest on student loans as of April 1, 2023, and the provision that seeks to phase out flow-through shares for oil, gas and coal activities. Obviously, we welcome that.

The pandemic made it clear just how much desperately the Quebec health care system needs help. As we speak, the three emergency rooms in the Laurentides—Labelle area are alarmingly overcrowded. I have to say it. The occupancy rate in the small municipality of Rivière-Rouge is 80%. It is 167% in Sainte-Agathe-des-Monts and 240% in Mont-Laurier. The holidays have not even begun yet. The numbers speak for themselves. We need those transfers, and we will not give up.

In my riding, the holidays also herald the arrival of vacationers and, potentially, higher demand on our emergency services. It seems the government is trying to divide and conquer. It has been aware of this request, which has been made repeatedly, for quite some time. I get the impression it is trying to wear us down, but at what cost? Unfortunately, there may be accidents on ski hills this winter. Where are people supposed to go? There is no more room.

To take care of our people, we need our money to be transferred to our province and the other provinces. Quebec's health care system needs the means to care for Quebeckers. My sense is that the federal government is more interested in politicking. Enough is enough. I am not looking forward to rising in the House again this winter with updated occupancy rates.

Unfortunately, when Canada's health ministers met in Vancouver in November, the Liberal Party's attitude was just as condescending and disdainful as ever when it comes to provincial jurisdiction. I do not appreciate that at all. ER doctors are telling us that ERs are at a breaking point. The federal government has our money, but it is not doing anything.

The Bloc Québécois is defending the united position of Quebec and the provinces, and we are asking that the health transfers be increased from 22% to 35%. Unfortunately, taking care of people does not seem to be the Liberals' number one priority. In health care, the results are not there when it comes to ensuring the dignity of seniors with sufficient quality of life and financial support.

At the start of the pandemic, I had the opportunity to ask the former governor of the Bank of Canada, Mr. Poloz, some questions. He appeared before the Standing Committee on Finance, which was studying the COVID-19 emergency measures. When we spoke about EI as an economic stabilizer, he mentioned that it was important. We took action. In the current context, I am wondering why we cannot use what worked in the past to deal with what we are going through now. There are proposals on the table, and we will vote

in favour of this update even though there are a number of things missing.

• (1545)

[*English*]

**Mr. Kevin Lamoureux (Parliamentary Secretary to the Leader of the Government in the House of Commons, Lib.):** Madam Speaker, there was a time when the provinces and Ottawa got together on health care and the provinces would say they did not want more cash; they wanted a tax point transfer. They got a tax point transfer as opposed to receiving cash. That took out billions of federal dollars going to the provinces. Now we hear the Bloc saying that Ottawa should be nothing more than an ATM machine, and that when the provinces want cash, we should just give them cash. That does not recognize the history of what has taken place.

Does the member believe that Ottawa should never have given the tax point transfer, and that instead of giving the tax point transfer, it should have stuck strictly to giving cash?

Second, does the member not recognize that there is an obligation for the Government of Canada, through the Canada Health Act, to provide health care services, something I personally believe in?

• (1550)

[*Translation*]

**Ms. Marie-Hélène Gaudreau:** Madam Speaker, I thank my colleague for the question.

However, for the people watching, I would like to point out that decades ago, 50% of the tax dollars collected by Ottawa were transferred for health care. There was never any question as to whether the provinces were able to deliver services. No, the fact of the matter was that Ottawa trusted them and it had other things to manage.

The day that this government can demonstrate that it is properly managing what it is supposed to manage, we will stop saying that we need health transfers. Let the provinces do what they are good at in health care.

**Mr. Richard Lehoux (Beauce, CPC):** Madam Speaker, I thank the hon. member for Laurentides—Labelle for her presentation.

I just have one question. She talked a lot about her riding. I assume that, like me, she saw very little in the way of improvements to telecommunications and the cellular network. In my opinion, concrete action is needed to improve the cellular network as a matter of public safety.

Could the member share her thoughts on that?

**Ms. Marie-Hélène Gaudreau:** Madam Speaker, as I said earlier, this is just a rehash of the budget, but it took a pandemic for the government to say that high-speed Internet is an essential service.

Now, when we talk about public safety, the government points out that there is broadband, but if there is no electricity, what will our providers or people who live in more remote areas without cell-phone coverage do? Again, we will have to wait months for the government to say that it is an essential service.

That is one of the shortcomings of the economic statement.

[*English*]

**Mr. Don Davies (Vancouver Kingsway, NDP):** Madam Speaker, the great Canadian economist Jim Stanford just published a report through the Centre for Future Work, and he found the following:

...15 sectors...were...the source of the fastest price increases experienced in Canada since 2021. Products like gasoline, groceries, mortgage interest, home energy products, and building materials have led the acceleration of inflation—and those higher prices flow directly into the record profits recorded in those 15 sectors. Large price increases for just 8 specific products sold by those super-profitable sectors account for over half of the rise in Canadian prices in the latest 12-month period; without those 8 products, overall Canadian inflation would be one-third lower.

Does my hon. colleague agree with the NDP that unless we attack the record profits and excess profits made by these corporate sectors, we are not going to get a handle on inflation in this country?

[*Translation*]

**Ms. Marie-Hélène Gaudreau:** Madam Speaker, I thank my colleague for his question.

I am not a tax expert or an economist, but what I do know is that we need to listen to scientists, to those who are recommending measures to offset this inflation. We saw it with the key rate, which continues to rise, even though inflation is still very high. Nevertheless, I rely on science and everything that will be proven to help us deal with what is coming. We all know that winter is going to be difficult, both in terms of our health and our finances.

[*English*]

**Ms. Lindsay Mathysen (London—Fanshawe, NDP):** Madam Speaker, it is an honour to rise in the House to represent the people of London—Fanshawe and to speak to Bill C-32 today.

There are a lot of issues that have been raised in this bill that we have been talking about for a long time. We have been fighting for Londoners, of course, but fighting for a fairer economy and bringing that voice into this place.

There are a lot of pieces of this bill that we think are a good start and reasons we support this bill, but as usual there is a lot lacking. As a New Democrat, I work, I push and I continue to fight for so much more for the people of London—Fanshawe. One of the key points is that we are supporting the removal of the federal portion of interest on student loans. That could make a real difference for students.

I was formerly the post-secondary critic for the NDP in this place, and we fought for so much more. We called for the cancellation of up to \$20,000 of federal debt per student and a break from that repayment. We made it retroactive. We talked about going even further. Ultimately, the government is making money off the backs of our future, off those who will contribute to our economy in so

### *Government Orders*

many ways through the education system, and that is very short-sighted. We could go so much further, but it is a good start.

On the windfall tax, we support some of these measures, but the government could do much more if it had the political courage to go further. Big banks, big box stores and oil and gas companies have made record profits from COVID.

If we had raised that proposed 15% and made it permanent, we would see an extra \$4.3 billion in the federal coffers. We could reinvest that in people and in social programs that establish the solidity that people need. The equity that people can get from social programs is the role of government, not to play catch-up to big corporations that are at the very top.

We have concerns with this bill, because it does not go far enough. As New Democrats, we were fighting in the last Parliament to deliver supports under the CERB and the wage subsidy to handle and to deal with what people were facing with COVID-19. When the government provided those supports and said it had people's backs, people needed that and they believed it.

Now we see the government clawing that back. It is clawing back the benefits that people applied for in good faith. There are people I know, who come to my constituency office, and do not know where to turn. They count on the government to provide fairness and support, and they are not seeing that.

I was here a few weeks ago with my hon. colleague from Elmwood—Transcona. I am always awed by his ability to give a speech in this place, off the cuff. He has so much knowledge within.

Something he was talking about really stuck with me. It was the need for respect and the call for the respect that people deserve. They work so hard, play by the rules, do everything they are supposed to and do everything the government asks of them. They are paying their fair share in taxes, yet when they need the government to help them, it is not there. They become frustrated and angry. They do not know where to turn.

It is that need to show respect that is a piece of the tax fairness we talk about. The government has to find the right balance to show that respect to Canadians. It has to have the courage to ask those who make the most in this world to redistribute those excess profits and to not take advantage of people who are just trying to get by and who are just trying to feed their families. They need to pay their fair share.

*Government Orders*

• (1555)

I am so happy to see that my colleague from Cowichan—Malahat—Langford has championed this issue and has received unanimous support to investigate the greedflation from grocery stores that we talk about, at the agriculture committee. However, it is clear that the \$1 million a day that Loblaws makes in profits, because it is taking advantage of people, is driving inflation. It has to be a part of that fair taxation.

According to the new study released by the Centre for Future Work, 15 profitable industries, including the grocery sector, are driving inflation in Canada. The combined profits of these 15 sectors are up by a whopping 89%. Nobody's salaries are up by 89%. People feel that, and they see that unfairness. They are asking for solutions from the government.

The windfall tax that we have been calling for on excess profit could go so far in systems that are now in crisis. That is because of underfunding and government cuts and because of downloading of responsibilities from the federal to the provincial government and from the provincial to municipal governments.

We are seeing that in our health care system. In my hometown of London, Ontario, hospitals have seen a surge, like so many across this country, especially in the children's hospital. Patients are waiting up to 20 hours for service.

I cannot imagine being a parent and watching my child suffer. It is one thing for parents to take that on themselves and try to deal with it, but they have to watch their child go through that, to suffer in a hallway, to wait and then to be told to go home. Surgeries are being cancelled in London, because they cannot deal with the influx of patients. People take their kid home and they are suffering. I cannot imagine what that has done to families.

Now people in London are, in an innovative way, trying to deal with those long wait times in emergency rooms. London Health Sciences Centre is trying to change how it structures its emergency room policies. It is trying to create a separate emergency room system for those dealing with mental health crises and addiction crises. It is trying to make something work.

The Doug Ford Conservative provincial government said that it is not going to fund it, and that the city needs to take the burden of that cost. It is \$300 million on a city in Ontario that cannot carry a deficit, and it has to somehow figure out how to service the people in our municipality and not overburden the taxpayers.

One of the things regarding inflation that we have heard is that the government is at fault and it is overspending. Conservatives have a very simplistic view that it is just about taxes. We know that is not true. The Conservatives will not accept the fact that, even though there are studies about it now, including the one that I just referenced, this could potentially be about greed.

I will come back to the point that the member for Elmwood—Transcona was making about respect. Instead of continuing to protect big corporations, if we could implement true tax reform to make these companies that are making massive excess profits pay their fair share and to hold those wealthy friends accountable, then that would be respect. That would be showing the Canadian public

that we are willing to do the work, and that we have the courage to stand up to ensure they have that fairness and they see that fairness.

One of the problems that I also see is regarding the Bank of Canada and its continuous pursuit to hit that 2% target, yet in that lies the potential of a recession. If it hits that 2% target, it could risk 850,000 jobs. There are already people desperately trying to make ends meet, and now they have to worry about losing their job and figuring that out.

• (1600)

London has such a proud manufacturing history. There are McCormick, Dr. Oetker, Labatt, Indiva in my riding and Environize. There is a place called the Cakery. There are so many places and I wish—

**The Assistant Deputy Speaker (Mrs. Carol Hughes):** The member's time has expired. I am sure she will be able to add more during questions and comments.

Questions and comments, the hon. member for Kings—Hants.

**Mr. Kody Blois (Kings—Hants, Lib.):** Madam Speaker, my hon. colleague touched on the profits of grocers. As the chair of the agriculture committee, I had the privilege of listening to some of the testimony yesterday from corporate leaders in the grocer sector in Canada. They maintain that even during the pandemic, their margin was around 2% to 4% on food-related profits.

The member talked about excessive profits, and I can appreciate that this government has made important investments and made sure banks and insurance companies have been paying additional corporate taxes.

However, what is her definition of "excessive" as it relates to grocers? Is 2% to 4% excessive in her mind? That is an honest question so we can see where that basis might be.

• (1605)

**Ms. Lindsay Mathysen:** Madam Speaker, I would imagine \$1 million a day is pretty excessive. Grocers can talk about it being about the supply chain and so on, yet the amount of money they are making, is \$1 million in profits a day. We could talk about the bread price-fixing scam and that they never really paid that money back. We could talk about the money that they were given by the government to improve their refrigerators, money that they were going to invest in their own companies anyway, but the government rushed to the rescue and gave them more taxpayers' dollars. It is the same pockets, but it is just in different ways that taxpayers have to pay.

It is not the government's job to defend companies. Its job is to equalize payments, taxes and programs to ensure equality.

[*Translation*]

**Ms. Sylvie Bérubé (Abitibi—Baie-James—Nunavik—Eeyou, BQ):** Madam Speaker, I thank my colleague for her speech. I think there may be one thing she forgot to talk about, and that is employment insurance.

As we know, EI is an economic stabilizer during a recession, and we hear there may be a recession in 2023. I am worried for the people in my riding with respect to EI, because six out of 10 workers will not be eligible for EI.

After seven years, the government still has not made a move. What does my colleague think the government should do to finally reform EI?

[*English*]

**Ms. Lindsay Mathysen:** Madam Speaker, I was taking too much time and that was the next point in my speech. It was about those workers and how they have given to the EI system. However, because successive Liberal and Conservative governments have used it to pay off debt and make themselves look better in terms of their bottom lines, they have taken advantage of that money and, at the same time, restricted how workers can use EI when they need it. This is a huge fear, and it is what New Democrats have been fighting for in order to ensure EI fairness.

One of the things we want to do is introduce a service guarantee that will make departments responsible for establishing and publishing binding service standards for programs like EI. That would be a start, but ensuring we strengthen it to allow more workers to access it is really key.

**Mr. Daniel Blaikie (Elmwood—Transcona, NDP):** Madam Speaker, at the end of my colleague's speech, she talked a bit about layoffs, and we know that in the fall economic statement the government was beginning to hint at the possibility of a recession early in 2023. However, we have not seen the government's much-promised and vaunted EI modernization.

I am wondering if the member wants to talk about the importance of EI reform as we head into a potential recession.

**Ms. Lindsay Mathysen:** Madam Speaker, I thank my hon. colleague for all of his work on this file.

This is really key and something that New Democrats, for a long time, have been fighting for. We have been trying to ensure we are protecting the deferred wages that workers are putting into that system, so they know they are there and they will be allowed to access them when they need them. Those are the key things. It is not about ensuring that governments can use them to prop up what they consider is a balanced budget.

[*Translation*]

**Mr. Kody Blois (Kings—Hants, Lib.):** Madam Speaker, as usual, it is an absolute privilege to see everyone here and to be able to discuss Bill C-32, which implements the measures outlined in the fall economic update.

### *Government Orders*

I had the opportunity to speak at second reading of the bill. I am very pleased with the way the Minister of Finance has struck a balance between providing important programs for very low-income Canadians in a targeted way while remaining fiscally responsible.

Today, most of my comments will be on important issues for the future, particularly in the context of a potential global recession in 2023. Indeed, the global economic situation is a bit bleak right now, and I think it is very important to create additional opportunities for the future while finding ways to not spend government funds.

• (1610)

[*English*]

I am going to cover three areas. I hope that as we get close to the end of the time I will get a signal so I can try to allocate my time accordingly.

As we try to make the transition to a low-carbon economy, the first thing that I think is really important for all of us as parliamentarians to give some thought to is the amount of energy generation that is going to be required in the country. Estimates suggest that we are going to have to double the generation of electricity in Canada in the next 15 to 20 years. That represents about 130 Site C dams, which is a major hydroelectric project in British Columbia.

I have said it before in this House and I will say it again that the government is focused on it, but I think we as parliamentarians need to be focused on the question of how we actually create that generation capacity. I have been a strong proponent, a strong voice, for small modular reactors. Whether or not it is the hydrogen opportunity that exists or whether it is looking at the hydroelectric opportunities, we need to be thinking about how we are going to generate that electricity in a zero emission way to be able to work towards our goals by 2050.

Whether it is major energy projects or it is things such as critical minerals, we need to be mindful of how we could help drive forward and expedite major projects that are going to be important to our transition towards a low-carbon economy. The two areas would be electricity and critical minerals. We have seen our Minister of Innovation, Science and Industry do tremendous work on lining up a supply chain in Canada around the automobile industry. I know this is going to matter for everyone in the country, but particularly for those in Quebec and Ontario, where we do have a very strong auto tradition. That is going to be the future.

We also need to consider the critical minerals that are associated with those vehicles, with that transition on an energy front and on an environmental front, but also on the security side as well. China controls 90% of the global rare earth minerals in the world. Canada is playing a role and can play an even bigger role, but I think we need to give some thought as to how we are going to allow major mining projects and major energy transition projects to happen in the country in an expedited manner. That is something we need to see in the days ahead. Our various cabinet ministers who would be on this file are thinking about that, but as parliamentarians we need to be providing solutions and giving some thoughts on that as well.

*Government Orders*

I have mentioned presumptive approval for Health Canada. Health Canada regulates a whole bunch of different things, from hockey helmet specifications to carbonated drinks to feed additives, crop protection products and vaccines. It is quite an extensive list when we see the swath of what Health Canada regulates.

I would like to see us look at ways we can change the approval process of certain elements. As the chair of the agriculture committee, my reflection over the last year or so has been that there are ways we can rely on other jurisdictions. What I am suggesting here in the House today is that we look at things such as agriculture-related products and try to find a way to make sure that our farmers have the same tools that other jurisdictions might have and make sure we are competitive. We would do that by looking at other jurisdictions whose regulatory processes we trust.

I cannot speak for all my colleagues, but I would suggest, by and large, that we respect that as the regulatory process goes forward in United States it is done in a reasonable manner. The European Union, for example, would be another jurisdiction that we respect and believe the process it is undertaking is valid. There is Australia, New Zealand and Japan, as well. Everyone would have their examples, but there are jurisdictions that we think would mirror the process that we have in Canada. What if we had a process where, if an applicant arrived in Canada with a particular product, and I will stick to agriculture for now, that already had approval from the United States, the European Union and maybe Australia, let us say it was three out of six jurisdictions whose regulatory processes we trusted, we would give that product a presumptive approval.

• (1615)

[*Translation*]

I think it is very important to find other solutions to speed up regulatory processes in Canada so we can make sure our farmers, our processors and our businesses have the tools they need to be competitive.

[*English*]

That would ensure they are actually in hand and are there. It is something I lay before the House. It is something that does not cost any money, but I think is extremely important and could be a really good sign for our stakeholders in the country without putting our Canadian consumers or Canadian values at risk, because we would be relying on existing processes that we trust. We would still be doing the process in Canada, but providing a presumptive approval until such time that Health Canada either found there was a reason to suspend the approval or it went through the entire process and was approved. It would of course reduce that delay time.

One of the two other areas I want to cover is the offshore wind opportunity in Atlantic Canada. There is a global race right now on being able to develop zero-emission hydrogen products. That is important for the future. We have seen the Prime Minister sign an accord with the German chancellor on being able to deliver Canadian hydrogen by 2025. We need legislation to make sure that the offshore petroleum boards in Atlantic Canada can service the regulator on actually developing offshore wind to drive the hydrogen market. It is a multi-billion dollar opportunity in Canada. There are other jurisdictions around the world that have the same potential, but we need to make sure that legislation is in place. It is something that I

look forward to working with all my colleagues on, indeed on the government side, to make sure that is in place. There is a requirement with the Nova Scotia legislature as well.

The last thing I want to talk about is the Atlantic loop. I held a press conference last week where I took the opportunity to provide some comments regarding my frustration with the provincial government in Nova Scotia, particularly around the question of affordability and some of the measures it could take in Nova Scotia to be able to join us on the federal side with respect to some of the measures we are putting in place. What is concerning is the premier's comments around what is a really important energy transition project, the Atlantic loop. I will be calling on our government to make sure there is federal leadership at the table to have the Atlantic loop in place, but at the same time, it is not helpful when the Premier of Nova Scotia is sending mixed signals on the best path forward.

I respect the fact that the provincial government is trying to help support affordability by limiting the increases around power rates in the province, but in the process Bill 212 in the Nova Scotia legislature has downgraded Nova Scotia Power's credit rating and is estimated to cause an almost 2% increase in electricity rates to make up for the fact that any future borrowed money, including for projects like the Atlantic loop, are going to have to come from ratepayers themselves. The Atlantic loop is something that I will be encouraging my government colleagues to be supporting to show federal leadership. It is something that matters to the region.

I look forward to taking questions from my hon. colleagues.

**Mr. Kyle Seebach (Dufferin—Caledon, CPC):** Madam Speaker, I listened to the member talk and what he did not mention at all is the Inflation Reduction Act that was passed in the United States and the government's response to that.

At the international trade committee, we heard over and over again that investment is going to evaporate in Canada unless changes are made. There are a couple of little sprinkles here, but the IRA was introduced in August and it is now December. Why has it taken the Liberal government so long to meaningfully respond to the significant risk to Canadian businesses as a result of the Inflation Reduction Act?

• (1620)

**Mr. Kody Blois:** Madam Speaker, it is an important question, and I only have 10 minutes.

*Government Orders*

I talked about some of the things that I think are going to be important, including the regulatory measures. I hope the member opposite would agree it is simply not a spending race, in terms of the government being able to draw private capital. Yes, that matters, and as I mentioned in my speech, we have seen our Minister of Innovation, Science and Industry drawing private capital here.

I am not sure we are necessarily going to be able to match the level of spending we have seen in the United States, but I agree with him that there are measures in the fall economic statement that are important. I suspect the government will have other measures in the budget for 2023. However, I will remind him it is not just about spending. It is also about other measures that can draw private capital in to help make a difference and drive these projects forward as well.

[*Translation*]

**Mr. Luc Desilets (Rivière-des-Mille-Îles, BQ):** Madam Speaker, something outrageous happened during question period today. The member for Gaspésie—Les Îles-de-la-Madeleine made some unacceptable remarks that left no doubt she does not have confidence in the Auditor General and does not find her credible. She gave two absurd examples, described the situation as being worse than the Second World War, and more. I will spare the House the shocking details.

The government has to work with the Auditor General. It also has to work with the opposition when it comes to the budget and the economic statement. In my colleague's opinion, do such remarks jeopardize those relationships?

**Mr. Kody Blois:** Madam Speaker, I did not hear the comments made by the Minister of National Revenue during oral question period. I understand the importance of the Office of the Auditor General of Canada, of course. Since I did not hear the Minister of National Revenue's comments, it is hard for me to answer my colleague's question.

[*English*]

**Mr. Brian Masse (Windsor West, NDP):** Madam Speaker, I am glad there was discussion with regard to auto investments. I would like to hear comments from my colleague with regard to EV incentives. Unlike the United States, Canada has nothing for used batteries, and we only have a \$5,000 incentive federally. The U.S. actually has \$7,500 U.S., which is around \$10,000 Canadian, and they have state incentives as well. The Prime Minister did say in Washington, D.C., that he would harmonize those incentives. He has not done so, which is going to distort our auto market and the introduction of electric vehicles.

What solutions does the government have, given the fact that right now the Biden administration will provide a better incentive for Canadian-made vehicles than the current Prime Minister?

**Mr. Kody Blois:** Madam Speaker, I do not speak on behalf of the government, but of course, I am on the government side as a caucus member.

I am proud of the way this government was able to step up and work with the United States to make sure their tax credit was aligned. I take note that the member opposite wants to make sure there is public money on the table to try to have a symmetry be-

tween those. That is a conversation I am happy to have with my hon. colleagues, whether it be with the minister responsible for trade, the minister responsible for global affairs or others, to see whether we will see that alignment.

I want to remind the hon. colleague that we are coming into a period where there could be a global recession. We are going to have to make some choices between supporting health care, making sure we support future investments in defence and making sure Canada has a role in the world. There is a finite amount of resources on the table. I am happy to have the conversation with our government ministers, but we are going to have some important choices to make in the days ahead.

**Mr. Kyle Seeback (Dufferin—Caledon, CPC):** Madam Speaker, I am happy to speak to the fall economic update.

"Canadians have never had it so good," is the message we get when we listen to Liberal members talk about what is going on in Canada. They say things are great, that Canadians should be grateful for everything that is going so wonderfully here in this country. They talk about how it is so wonderful because of all the money they have spent. The answer to every problem in Canada, if one is a Liberal, is to spend money. That is the solution, so spend they have.

The Liberals have doubled the national debt. The amount of debt of every prime minister up to the current Prime Minister, the Liberals have doubled. Every prime minister before accumulated a certain amount of debt, and the current Prime Minister and government doubled it in a few short years. They say that as a result of that, things are great.

Maybe we should talk about how great things are as a result of all this spending. First of all, we just heard from the Auditor General that a lot of the spending did not really go anywhere that it should have. There were \$4.6 billion in confirmed overpayments during the pandemic and \$27 billion in suspicious payments, so we are looking at \$32 billion of money that went who knows where, not where it should have gone. This includes the fact that 1,500 people in jail received these benefits.

To this point, there is absolutely no real plan to get any of this money back. Liberals say they are working on it and the wheels are in motion, when they are not saying the Auditor General was pushed into making this report by the opposition and trying to undermine the Auditor General. It is an interesting position for a government to take, when it appointed the Auditor General.

We look at all that spending and at the issues across the country from coast to coast to coast. Many members have been rising in this chamber to talk about the issues in hospitals all across the country. The premiers have said the federal government should be transferring more money to the provinces for health care, and the government is saying that the cupboard is kind of bare.

I am thinking that \$32 billion, if it had been properly managed, would therefore have been available for health transfers, but that ship has sailed and the government is doing virtually nothing to get that money back.

### *Government Orders*

There is \$27 billion a year now being paid in interest on the debt, which has doubled over the course of the last number of years under the Liberal government. That is \$27 billion every year that could be spent on things like health care. Right away, if we put those things together, one year of the massive interest on the massive debt plus the \$32 billion spent on who knows what, and we would have over \$50 billion for health care.

There are some hospitals and some provinces across the country that would very much be interested in receiving some of that money, but of course they cannot, because the Liberals have spent it on other things.

The interest on the debt is actually going to go to \$43 billion a year by 2026. Let us think about that number. It is staggering: \$43 billion a year simply to pay interest on the credit card.

When one raises issues like this, the government says it spent so Canadians did not need to spend. Well, Canadians are spending now, through their taxes, paying \$27 billion a year in interest, which is moving to \$46 billion. However, that is okay, because everything in this country is fantastic. Canadians have never had it so good.

Right now, inflation is at a 40-year high. People in this country are having to choose to eat or to heat their homes, but Canadians have never had it so good.

• (1625)

In one month, 1.5 million Canadians used a food bank. It is unprecedented. The struggle of Canadians after seven years of spending by the government is worse than it has ever been, so the ratio that we have spent all this money and things are great is completely debunked, because things are not great.

There are so many Canadians who are within a few hundred dollars of not being able to make ends meet, and inflation is eating into that every single day, but, right, everything is great. The money was spent to make the lives of Canadians better, except that their lives are not better. By virtually every measurable index, the lives of Canadians now are worse than they were 10 years ago.

There is no apology from the government on this. It will say things like, “Yes, but we are going to pay this benefit here or this little benefit there.”

When a person is \$200 away from not being able to make ends meet, a one-time payment of \$500 is not going to help. It might get them through the first couple of months, but there are 10 other months in the year in which we have to try to make ends meet.

One in five Canadians are skipping meals, but all this spending was so great for Canadians.

The result of the economic policies of the government has been to impoverish the nation, and that is where we are when we look at all the statistics that are adding up.

There is absolutely no recognition of this by the government. There is no apology for it. It simply says, “We have this little program here. We have another program here. That is all Canadians need.”

The other glaring omission from the government has been any meaningful response to the Inflation Reduction Act in the United States. It is a transformational document on how the United States is going to have its economy move going forward. No, we cannot match, dollar for dollar, the kinds of programs the United States is offering, but it offers these things in very clear ways. It offers tax incentives for governments. It offers production incentives for businesses.

What we are being promised here in Canada are programs. There is going to be a program here that a business can apply for, an opaque program. At committee, we heard industry representatives say that these programs are given according to a naughty list and a nice list. If one is on the naughty list, one has no idea why one is on the naughty list, and one does not get the funding.

When the government is picking winners and losers in business, everyone loses. The response is not sufficient, and the response it is offering is not going to help Canadian businesses.

We have heard over and over again from witnesses that this is a game-changer in the United States and that the government needs to act quickly. Well, my definition of “quickly” is not waiting for the budget in two, three or four months to announce some measures, sprinkling a couple of things here in the update and then saying to businesses, “Do not worry. Everything is going to be fine when the budget is released.”

Businesses cannot wait three, four, five, six or seven months. Investments are happening in the United States right now.

The government has impoverished Canadians over the last number of years, and now it risks losing out on the manufacturing bonanza for electric vehicles, etc., that is coming, because it is just acting so slowly.

This is an update that we cannot support and Canadians cannot afford.

• (1630)

**Mr. Mark Gerretsen (Parliamentary Secretary to the Leader of the Government in the House of Commons (Senate), Lib.):** Madam Speaker, I cannot believe the way the member ended his speech, by saying the government is the reason Canada is lagging in terms of electric vehicles.

Does it not have anything to do with the way the opposition has acted over the last seven years? We are talking about a political party that does not even believe climate change is real. We are talking about a political party that at every single opportunity goes on and on about extracting more fossil fuels from the ground, and now the member is trying to suggest that, suddenly, Conservatives are going to be the champions of electric vehicles. It is absolutely ludicrous to hear that.



*Government Orders*

**Mr. Kyle Seeback:** Madam Speaker, I would suggest that the member spend a little less time standing in the chamber pontificating and maybe spend some time at committee listening to what industry is saying. Industry is unequivocal that the government is leaving it behind. Whether it is with respect to the production of electric vehicles or whether it is with respect to the production of electric vehicle charging stations, the government is so woefully behind on this that there is no chance there is going to be anywhere near the number of chargers needed. This is clear and on the record at committee.

My response to the member is this. Maybe he should spend a little less time in the chamber talking and a little more time researching and listening to witnesses.

• (1635)

[*Translation*]

**Mr. Martin Champoux (Drummond, BQ):** Madam Speaker, my Conservative colleague's last intervention was very interesting. It was about production and delays involving electric vehicles.

The Bloc Québécois keeps proposing a gradual energy transition, which would mean taking the money that is being invested in Albertan oil and investing it in the development of clean energy instead.

I will ask my colleague a question, since he seems to be on the same side as me on the issue of encouraging the purchase and production of electric vehicles.

Would he agree with the Bloc Québécois's suggestion to stop funding the most polluting energy sources and using that money for investments in clean energy so that Alberta can continue to be a leader?

[*English*]

**Mr. Kyle Seeback:** Madam Speaker, if a person lives in a riding like mine, Dufferin—Caledon, and does not have any gasoline, and the production of gasoline is stopped, they are going to have a hard time getting to work. In the town of Orangeville there are six charging stations, six for a town of 30,000 people.

What I would suggest is this. We can transition in a responsible manner. I do not know how long that transition is going to take, but I can tell colleagues that it is not going to come anywhere near the timelines the government is talking about. It is so woefully behind on the charging network. It has no plan whatsoever for how we are going to triple electricity generation in this country. The provinces cannot afford it.

RBC has put out a report stating that the path to net zero is \$2 trillion. How much has the government allocated for any of it? The answer is not even 10% of it.

**Mr. Colin Carrie (Oshawa, CPC):** Madam Speaker, my colleague from Caledon was the critic for environment as well. How out of touch the Liberals seem to be. Could he just give our Liberal colleagues an idea of the actual cost of these charging stations, and what the estimation was that the Canadian motor vehicle association was giving us at committee so he could get himself educated?

**Mr. Kyle Seeback:** Madam Speaker, it is very clear that just to build out the charging network itself requires billions of dollars to

be spent every year, starting now. The estimate is somewhere around \$5.4 billion a year. The government is not spending even a fraction of that. It is not building out the charging network. The Canadian Vehicle Manufacturers' Association was very clear on how far behind we are.

The government is using a model for how many charging stations we need that is incongruent with those used by every other country in the world. It is saying we need far fewer than European countries and others, and it has no plan to double or triple our electricity-generating capacity across the country, which we need if we are doing this transition. It is all talk and no action, just like this economic update.

[*Translation*]

**The Assistant Deputy Speaker (Mrs. Carol Hughes):** Order.

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 Sherwood Park—Fort Saskatchewan, Government Priorities; the hon. member for Spadina—Fort York, Foreign Affairs; the hon. member for North Island—Powell River, Health.

[*English*]

**Mr. Kevin Waugh (Saskatoon—Grasswood, CPC):** Madam Speaker, it is an honour to speak to the fall economic statement this afternoon.

I have to say that I am, along with many Canadians, deeply disappointed in the fall economic statement because it was an opportunity to provide real leadership to Canadians, give relief to small businesses in this country and take action to address the rising costs we are seeing coast to coast to coast.

It seems that the Deputy Prime Minister has forgotten that we are in the worst cost of living crisis we have seen in a generation. Inflation, as we have talked about for months in the House, is at a 40-year high. Gas prices are still at record levels, especially diesel. Housing is more expensive than it has ever been.

Where did this crisis start? This time, the Liberals cannot blame the person by the name of Stephen Harper. They have had seven years to correct this. They want to blame global economic conditions, and sure, maybe that has a bit to do with it. However, what is the real root of the inflationary crisis we find ourselves in today? What has made everything worse in this country? The Liberals know, but they do not want to say. They know that the crisis has been caused by years of massive out-of-control Liberal deficit spending.

*Government Orders*

I was here in 2015 when the Liberals came into power, and Conservatives left them with a balanced budget and a very good economic forecast. That was left to them by a responsible Conservative government. They, in seven years, squandered it. I get it. The Prime Minister could not help himself. His agenda was failing, so he needed to try and buy votes every way he could think of.

However, the chickens have now come home to roost. The price of chicken, by the way, has doubled since the Liberals took office in 2015. All that spending they have done in the last seven years has driven inflation to a 40-year high. Canadians coast to coast are struggling mightily.

Canadians are having to choose between filling their cars with gas, putting food on the table and heating their homes. A paycheque today does not go as far as it used to. Liberal inflation, combined with Liberal tax hikes, means that Canadians need to do more with less.

What does the government propose? It proposes to make everything worse in this country. This economic statement introduces another \$20 billion of inflationary spending to drive inflation up even further. It also includes hikes to EI premiums next month and to CPP contributions, taking more money off of everybody's paycheque.

Instead of stopping their tax hikes, the Liberals are pushing forward with their plan to triple the carbon tax in 2023. That is right. In the dead of winter, the Liberals will be raising the cost of fuel, home heating and groceries.

Food bank usage, as we all know, is already at an all-time high in this country, with a 35% increase in the last year. In my city of Saskatoon alone, with a population of about 250,000, about 20,000 people a month visit the food bank. The city of Saskatoon used to be the economic engine of Canada.

Executive director, Laurie O'Connor, admits the numbers she sees coming through her door every day are very concerning. The donations of food and purchasing power have significantly decreased because food is so expensive. It is going to only get worse.

Members may recall that the 13th edition of Canada's Food Price Report came out yesterday. It says a family of four will see their food bill go up by over \$1,000, reaching about \$16,000 a year. According to Stuart Smyth from the University of Saskatchewan, who helped in the report that was released yesterday, a family of six will pay over \$21,000 in 2023 for food.

● (1640)

The problem is right in front of the Liberals' faces, and they have simply ignored it.

In Saskatchewan, the temperature today hit between -30°C and -40°C, and it is early December. People of my province are trying to figure out what temperature they can afford to set their thermostat to. If we think about it, in the last week in Saskatchewan, it was -30°C to -40°C already, and we are not even at January temperatures.

I want to know what the Prime Minister would say to the families who are already struggling to put food on the table when they

see the last few dollars they have been using up when they move the thermostat up. The Prime Minister and the Liberal government has failed those families. They have failed retirees and the people living with disabilities who are on a fixed income.

What should the government be doing today?

First, without question, it should cancel all planned tax hikes and stop any government-mandated increases to the cost of living, with no hikes at all to payroll taxes and no tripling of the carbon tax. Canadians simply cannot afford any more of this Liberal tax increase.

Second, it needs to stop creating new inflationary spending. We know that government spending is only going to make inflation worse. If a minister wants to spend more money, he or she should have to find the equivalent savings in their budgets. Even the Deputy Prime Minister mentioned that a bit in the fall economic report. However, while she did mention it, the Liberals gave the CBC an additional \$42 million over two years. Why? It is because the CBC had a tough time during the pandemic.

This is the type of spending that has got to stop in this country. The CBC, the public broadcaster, already gets between \$1.2 billion and \$1.5 billion, but they will then be given an additional \$42 million over two years. Plus, we found out today that it is going to be at the trough when Bill C-18 gets cleared through the House. The public broadcaster will be one of the biggest beneficiaries from Google and Facebook when that bill passes through the House.

When the Prime Minister was first elected he promised that deficits, as we all recall, were not going to exceed \$10 billion and that he would balance the budget by 2019. We all know that was a farce.

The pandemic is not the only thing to blame here. Forty per cent of the government's new spending measures had nothing to do with the last two years of COVID. Since coming to power, the Prime Minister has introduced \$205 billion in new inflationary spending, which had nothing to do with COVID, and I just mentioned the public broadcaster.

The cost of the interest payments on the federal government's debt has doubled. The payments are nearly as high as the cost of the health transfers to the provinces. Imagine what could be done today if that money were directed elsewhere.

*Government Orders*

Instead, due to this Liberal mismanagement, we have interest rates that are increasing faster than they have in decades. In fact, we expect another 50 basis points tomorrow by the federal Bank of Canada. Mortgage payments, as we all know, are going sky high. Therefore, anyone who bought a house a few years ago and has to renew their mortgage could pay up to \$7,000 more a year. Many Canadians cannot afford that. Some, unfortunately, are losing their homes.

While the Liberals are focused on making the problem worse, Conservatives are going to propose some solutions for Canadians. Instead of printing more money, a Conservative government would create more of what money buys. We will get more homes built and make Canada the quickest place in the world to get a building permit. Young Canadians who have never been able to afford a home and start a family under the Liberals will find a more competitive and more affordable market under our Conservative government.

A Conservative government will make energy more affordable. We will repeal the anti-energy laws and axe the carbon tax. We will not punish Canadians for heating their homes or simply driving their kids to activities, if they can even afford those activities in 2023.

• (1645)

**Mrs. Jenica Atwin (Fredericton, Lib.):** Madam Speaker, I particularly enjoy every time my hon. colleague speaks in the House, but more for the tone than the content.

I would like to ask the member about something that I know is being celebrated in my community with respect to the economic statement. It is the removal of the federal portion of interest on student loans. I wonder if the member could speak to what kind of a powerful impact that could have on students in his riding.

**Mr. Kevin Waugh:** Madam Speaker, there is no doubt that if they do not have to pay the interest, and we can defer the interest payments for I do not know how many years, that would obviously help the students of today going to school. At the same time, who is paying the interest on those loans? It is going to be Canadians.

I can say that it was a good gesture to help not only university students but also students going to college who are taking part in the trades we have in this country. It was a good gesture. I do not know how long we can go on with it because of the Liberals' spending. We are seeing interest rates rise almost every two or three weeks in this country because of the money they are spending.

• (1650)

[*Translation*]

**Mr. Luc Desilets (Rivière-des-Mille-Îles, BQ):** Madam Speaker, I would like to hear my colleague's opinion on the following question. We in the Bloc have focused on the three main elements we wanted to see in this bill, specifically, employment insurance, pensions for people aged 65 to 75, and health transfers. For years now, this has been part of the Bloc Québécois DNA and what we have been calling for. That is what we want.

Does my colleague support these priorities? Would he support these Bloc Québécois priorities?

[*English*]

**Mr. Kevin Waugh:** Madam Speaker, yes, health care is essential in this country, but we have seen, coming out of the pandemic, that there is excruciating pain in every hospital in this country. The pandemic was not easy for every hospital in every province in this country.

We are fighting the shortage of doctors and nurses. It would be nice if we could take out of the air an extra hundred doctors and put them in the city Saskatoon, but that is not possible. We will see where it is going to go. It is an interesting time, as we are coming out of the pandemic. With the Liberals' spending, it is going to be tougher to get out of it because of the interest rates that we are going to see in the next little while.

**Ms. Lindsay Mathysen (London—Fanshawe, NDP):** Madam Speaker, I did not hear the hon. member, in his speech, talk about the increasing cost of housing and how difficult it is for people to be able to afford that. Ultimately, here in the House, we believe that housing is a human right and that the financialization of the market through things like real estate trusts and investment trusts are part of that problem. Could the member talk about that?

**Mr. Kevin Waugh:** Madam Speaker, I am fairly confident that in the province of Saskatchewan we have really moderate housing costs compared to everybody else in the country. I feel for those people starting out who are living in Vancouver and Toronto and the GTA, where it is without question nearly impossible to start under \$700,000 or \$800,000. In my city and my province, that would get people a pretty good house these days.

Canadians really do want to save for housing. It is going to take a little time. I am really disturbed by the interest rates. I lived when they were 12% to 18% in the 1970s and 1980s. It was hard. The younger folks, if I can say this, have never seen 12% to 18% interest rates. They have to get used to it because the way the government is spending, we are getting there faster than ever before.

[*Translation*]

**Mr. Martin Champoux (Drummond, BQ):** Madam Speaker, I am quite pleased to rise again to speak to the economic statement and Bill C-32. Actually, I am getting a little tired of this. Let me explain. It is not because I do not want to do my job, it is just that I would have preferred to discuss something with a little more content and substance.

There were three clear, repeated demands, the same ones that the Bloc Québécois always brings forward. The government knows what they are. It is not a secret. It is not as though we kept them to ourselves just to throw them in the government's face at the last minute. No, these are the demands we have always made. My colleague from Rivière-des-Mille-Îles said it earlier: This is about increasing health transfers; providing better support for seniors starting at age of 65 and stopping this kind of two-tiered plan that favours seniors aged 75 and over; and respecting the commitment to comprehensively reform employment insurance. This commitment dates back several years, and it is especially important in view of the possible recession on the horizon.

*Government Orders*

We know what a refuge, a comfort and a safety net employment insurance can be when there are fears of a recession. This is true for workers, of course, but it is also true for businesses and for society as a whole. One can only imagine what would happen if people were to suddenly lose their jobs because their firm or business closed and they were left without any recourse or resources in the meantime.

Today, I want to talk a little bit about the stress and anxiety people feel, the real fear of not getting enough to eat, despite the fact that they have worked all their lives and have taken it for granted that their years of good and loyal service to society would be recognized at retirement. In other words, people believe that their government will not let them down at the stage of their lives when they are most vulnerable. Despite what my colleagues opposite will say, that is exactly what the Liberal government is doing now.

Seniors' associations, and even seniors themselves, come knock on our door begging us to help them. These seniors and associations protest against this system, which they say is discriminatory and enables only those 75 and older to get increases and support cheques during the pandemic. The others, those aged 65 to 74, are hung out to dry. That is what seniors tell us. They say they are being hung out to dry, even though they worked their entire lives. They worked on assembly lines in factories, earning low wages, not making enough money to put something aside for their old age. Then, they find themselves struggling and facing hardship. They are the ones who come to see us, these honest, humble people who have the right to fully enjoy their retirement and their well earned quality of life at 65, not just at 75. What is left for these people?

The government changed the rules halfway through the game, so it is too late for them to pivot and talk to their banker about setting aside a little more of their paycheque. Actually, many of them never actually had money to set aside. Now they have a choice. They can go back to work. The government says there is a labour shortage and jobs available all over the place. Another option is to get help from food banks. Hello, dignity.

I want to share one person's story. Mr. Danis is a constituent of mine. He is 72 or 73 years old. I know he is in that age group because he is concerned about the government discriminating against seniors on the basis of age. Mr. Danis is at the forefront of my mind whenever I talk about seniors. I have lost track of how many times he has called me. He has come to my office when I was not even there. He has called outside of office hours, on weekends. He has contacted me through Facebook messenger. He has done everything in his power to talk to me.

When we finally managed to meet up and have a conversation, I cannot even begin to describe the emotion in his voice. We are talking about a man who worked hard, very hard, his whole life for little income. It is exactly the situation I was describing earlier. Mr. Danis lives in the same house. It is his house. He has lived there for 53 years. His roof is leaking and needs to be replaced. He says that he is going to let it leak because he cannot afford to repair or replace it. He also cannot afford to take out a new mortgage. He is struggling to make ends meet on a small government pension. What is more, that pension has not increased, even with inflation being what it is.

• (1655)

Mr. Danis is a proud and dignified man. He has some health problems and must travel 45 kilometres to a nearby city for treatment he cannot receive in Drummondville, where he lives. Due to the cost of gas, he cannot fill up his tank, and his car is not in good condition. What can we do for these seniors who worked all their lives and cannot even meet their basic needs and take care of their health because their pensions are frozen? These seniors are not old enough to be eligible for the pandemic support cheque.

I will draw a parallel to health transfers, the third very important request that the Bloc has made in years. I will give the example of Hôpital Sainte-Croix, which is in my riding of Drummond. This hospital is the pride of the region. It was a fine hospital at the time, and the services were exceptional. I want to commend the medical staff and all support staff. All the employees at this hospital are personable, professional and competent. There is no arguing about that.

However, last year, the elevators were in terrible shape. One was not working at all, and the other broke down. Had there been a crisis or a fire, had there been any need to evacuate the hospital, patients on the third floor and up could not have been evacuated. This is a hospital we are talking about. We do not have enough money to maintain hospitals adequately.

We are going to build a new hospital. The Liberals think that, if we have enough money to build a new hospital, we must have tons of money, so there must be no need to increase health transfers. I just do not get it.

The health care funding shortage comes at a human cost too. Triage now means dismissing situations that would have been emergencies 20 years ago.

I am going to talk about seniors again. Mr. Rocheleau is a very nice guy, and I really like him. He is 80 years old, and he has been chairing the Remembrance Day poppy campaign for the past 10 years, but he has been involved with the campaign for 53 years. He waited for hip surgery for two years. Two years could be 25%, 50% or 75% of what an 80-year-old has left in their active life. It is inhumane to make elderly people wait for operations that would guarantee their quality of life for the years they have left. It is absolutely mind-boggling to me.

I have about two minutes left. I want to take this opportunity to talk about the infamous EI reform, which we are waiting for. How many demonstrations are held here on the Hill by workers' groups, unions and just about everyone else calling for EI reform?

*Government Orders*

One woman in particular came to the Hill a few years ago. I am talking about Émilie Sansfaçon. She came to meet the Prime Minister and members of all parties. Everyone was at her feet, everyone wanted a photo with Émilie. What a fighter, people said. Émilie was fighting cancer, and it may have already been terminal at that point. She is no longer with us. She was asking for 50 weeks of EI sickness benefits so that people like her who have to fight a serious illness can do so with dignity, free from financial worries. Is that not the least we could do for them?

A government member will probably stand up in a few minutes to boast about what the government did for health and everything it did to save lives during the pandemic. That is what the government keeps telling us over and over again. If it really wants to look good with its spending, maybe it could spend in the right places.

Everyone agrees that 26 weeks of EI sickness benefits is not enough. It is a good step forward, but when a person is battling cancer or other types of serious illnesses, 26 weeks is not even half of what they need. This measure would not have cost much, and it would have gone a long way.

I commend Louis Sansfaçon, Émilie's father, who continues to fight on behalf of his daughter. I promise him that one day, there will be 50 weeks of sickness benefits, and that the Bloc Québécois will be there to keep fighting for the government to spend taxpayers' money, money that it has been entrusted with, on the things taxpayers need most.

• (1700)

[*English*]

**Mr. Chris Bittle (Parliamentary Secretary to the Minister of Canadian Heritage, Lib.):** Madam Speaker, I would like to ask a question about heritage. My hon. colleague sits on the heritage committee, and I am wondering if he would like to take the opportunity to talk about media in Quebec, what is happening there and what steps we can take as a Parliament to assist news outlets, especially when facing foreign tech giants.

[*Translation*]

**Mr. Martin Champoux:** Madam Speaker, I thought I was going to be taken to task by the Liberals after my speech, but instead, in hockey parlance, they are giving me an assist. I thank my colleague, who is also a member of the Standing Committee on Canadian Heritage. He knows where I stand on the media, artists and the cultural industry.

There are two extremely important bills that really should be passed quickly. One is stuck in the Senate, which is outrageous. The Senate needs to stop playing games with Bill C-11. The cultural industry is depending on it. The web giants need to pay their fair share in every sector in which they are making a profit in Canada and Quebec, and that includes both the cultural industry and the broadcasting industry. This is also about protecting our news media.

We are working hard on Bill C-18, which is currently being examined in committee. Things are moving along well, and there is goodwill. I completely agree with my colleague. We need to do everything we can to ensure that the web giants contribute in sectors where they are making exponential profits.

• (1705)

**Ms. Sylvie Bérubé (Abitibi—Baie-James—Nunavik—Eeyou, BQ):** Madam Speaker, I thank my colleague for his fine speech. He talked about a number of issues, including seniors. He also talked about employment insurance. Of course, when someone has cancer, as my sister did, and is in remission, 26 weeks is not nearly enough.

It is the same thing with seniors. The government must not wait until people are 74 years old. They become seniors at 65. One day, we will reach the age of 65 too, and we will deserve a proper pension.

What is my colleague's proposal for getting the government to do more and meet these demands, which are so important not only for Quebec, but for all of Canada?

**Mr. Martin Champoux:** Madam Speaker, I thank my hon. colleague for her question and her comments.

It is not complicated. As I said earlier, I firmly believe that all the members of the party currently in power want to make things better. I simply cannot believe that they are acting in bad faith, just to do things differently from what the opposition parties are proposing.

There are plenty of places where they can invest taxpayers' money in a constructive, sustainable and positive way. Health transfers are not a frivolous thing. This is an urgent need. We have been calling for a \$110-a-month increase in seniors' pensions for a long time. Seniors aged 65 and over are calling for it. I cannot imagine which seniors are telling them that it is okay for the increase to start at age 75. I have not met any. None of my 31 Bloc Québécois colleagues has heard a single senior say that 75 is the right age.

There are places where the government could spend the money better and where the Liberals could make their mark. That would be positive, and we would be the first to congratulate them.

[*English*]

**Mr. Don Davies (Vancouver Kingsway, NDP):** Madam Speaker, housing is obviously a necessity, and it is in crisis in many parts of the country. In the Lower Mainland of British Columbia, which I represent, housing is unaffordable.

I am wondering if my hon. colleague can tell the House what suggestions he would like to see in this budget that would help Canadian families and individuals afford a safe, secure and decent place to live.

[*Translation*]

**Mr. Martin Champoux:** Madam Speaker, I know that I do not have much time left, and I will try to answer quickly because it is a very pertinent question.

One of our Bloc Québécois colleagues, the member for Longueuil—Saint-Hubert, is a strong advocate for housing. The entire country is grappling with this crisis. It is more acute in certain places, of course, but it is also starting to affect cities where it was not previously a major problem. We could be taking action.

The term “inflation” appears 108 times in this economic update, but there is no concrete measure to actually provide direct assistance to Quebecers and Canadians in the event that a recession materializes.

*Government Orders*

The housing crisis will not improve unless much more vigorous action is taken. In that regard, I believe that my colleague and I very much agree.

It feels like the Liberals are standing with their arms crossed, watching a train go by, and that they will wait until it derails and pick up the pieces afterwards. We cannot do that. Action is needed now. Human beings and families are affected.

[English]

**Mr. Dan Muys (Flamborough—Glanbrook, CPC):** Madam Speaker, it is always an honour to rise in this House to speak. Today I am speaking to Bill C-32, an act to implement certain provisions of the fall economic statement tabled in Parliament on November 3, 2022 and certain provisions of the budget tabled in Parliament on April 7, 2022, and the fiscal update.

When I spoke on the government's last fall economic statement and fiscal update in February, I shared how frustrated the people of Flamborough—Glanbrook were feeling about the cost-of-living crisis and the housing crisis. I am sad to report that over the course of the past year, and certainly after hearing the fall economic statement that was delivered earlier, their frustration has only become worse.

Canadians wanted hope, and instead they got increased heating and grocery bills. They wanted a plan for the economy and for the recovery, and instead the PBO and other organizations predicted private sector growth will be sluggish or even worse. Canadians wanted to hear an update that would give them confidence in these uncertain economic times, and instead what the government delivered was an update that failed to address the out-of-control cost-of-living crisis. It actually adds fuel to the inflationary fire. With more government spending and more taxes, Canadians have never felt more pessimistic about their financial future.

When I spoke last winter, the inflation rate was only the worst it had been in 20 years. By the spring it was only the worst it had been in 30 years. Now it is the worst it has been in 40 years. How much more can the government expect Canadians to suffer?

I spoke recently to Mary, a senior in Waterdown, a community in my constituency. She expressed how gravely concerned she was with the rising cost of rent, utilities and groceries, and how they had risen so quickly that she is barely able to manage the basics anymore. Her exact words were, "I just manage to survive, never thought my retirement years would be so sad."

Those words "my retirement years would be so sad" break my heart, and they should break the heart of all members of this place. Seniors like Mary have worked hard their entire lives, and they deserve to enjoy their retirement years. The reckless policies of the government are robbing them of that.

It is not just seniors that are feeling the pinch; it is also young families. A couple of months ago, at one of the fall fairs in my riding, I spoke to Will, who is a father of a young family in my constituency. His mortgage renewal is coming up in a few months, and he is very concerned. Not only is he seeing his grocery bill double, but he is also seeing the cost of fuel to get to work increase dramatically. He is now seeing his heating bills increase as winter and the cold weather start to set in. In the back of his mind, he has the fact

that his mortgage is coming up for renewal. We know there are higher interest rates happening because of the inflationary spending of the government.

Out-of-control government spending has created more dollars chasing fewer goods, causing higher inflation, leading to higher interest rates. We know that tomorrow the Bank of Canada is going to announce the latest in a series of rate increases, the seventh, I believe. This is going to further increase the cost on families like Will's. It is really the cruellest tax of all.

In growing suburban Ontario communities like mine, people like Will are putting on a brave face and are trying to plow through, but they are dealing with these inflationary pressures on food, home heating and they are looking down the road at their mortgage rates as well.

We ran a survey of the people in Flamborough—Glanbrook this past fall. We asked them how the cost of living was impacting them. We already knew the answer from all of these anecdotes. Over 900 people responded and the results really told the story. Ninety-four per cent surveyed said they were feeling the financial pinch, and more than half of those were going to change their habits or hold off spending plans as a result. The pinch, of course, is not limited to people in my riding. Six in 10 Canadians across the country have said that they are feeling the impact of inflation in their daily lives.

A study out of Dalhousie University reports that a quarter of Canadians are cutting back on essentials like food, housing and utilities. We know that when people go to the grocery stores these days, they are cringing at the price of some basic items. Meat is up 7.6%. Dairy is up 10%. Bakery products are up 15%. Vegetables are up 12%. Those are the figures from a couple of months ago. We know they are probably higher today.

● (1710)

Food banks, as has been noted, are seeing a record number of visits, with 1.5 million Canadians visiting food banks. That is a dramatic increase. It is an all-time high. It is a shame. How much more does the Prime Minister expect Canadians to take?

People like Mary and Will cannot afford to pay their mortgage and rent, while our Prime Minister is spending \$6,000 a night on hotel rooms in London. Is there a more blatant example of how out of touch the Prime Minister is? How much more can the government expect Canadians to take before they break? They are looking for hope. They are looking for strong and competent leadership.

There is a host of problems and inconsistencies throughout this bill. First of all, I do not see actions lining up with words.

*Government Orders*

The government talked about the fact that Canadian farmers grow the food that feeds the world. We know we have an abundant food supply here, but we have seen the government attack farmers and slap a fertilizer tariff on them and the carbon tax on the heating and cooling of barns and the drying of grain. The growing of those crops that feed Canada and the world are breaking their operations.

Also, in the statement they said that we have the natural resources to support our allies with energy security, which sounds great, but the Liberals have been ensuring we cannot get these resources out of the ground. Just last week we saw Germany finally give up on us and sign an agreement to import LNG from Qatar instead.

Perhaps the biggest inconsistency of all is the fact the economic update was purported to help make life more affordable for Canadians. How can we make life more affordable for Canadians when we are tripling, tripling, tripling the carbon tax and increasing other taxes as we head into winter? A Conservative motion was put forward to exempt home heating fuel from some of those taxes to bring a bit of relief. That is important to people in my constituency who heat with propane or home heating oil because there is not the natural gas infrastructure in certain parts of the riding and they do not have that option. However, the Liberal and the NDP coalition voted to defeat that motion.

If I can conclude anything from Bill C-32, it might be that the Liberals are true to their form. They will tax and spend believing that will get us out of a cost-of-living crisis. We saw \$30 billion more in spending. There is perhaps a grab bag of credits to give the appearance of supporting Canadians. While we certainly support relief through the GST credit, we saw a whole bunch of other money spent. What is happening is the Liberals are taking more money out of one pocket and giving a bit back and pretending it is actually going to help people.

What is happening is Liberals are profiting from inflation. They are increasing taxes on things like home heating and food, and there is the resulting interest rate increases. One of their solutions was for people to cut their Disney+ subscription. Canadians want a better answer than that.

We know the interest on the national debt that has been racked up by the government is going to exceed in the coming years the amount of money that is spent on the Canada health transfer. We have \$27 billion in interest payments this year. That is money that should be and could be spent helping farmers, families and seniors rather than gobbling up their bank accounts to pay for more government spending through taxes.

That is why a Conservative government would commit to any new spending being matched by a dollar-for-dollar equivalent in savings, just as households manage their own budgets, rather than just racking up the credit card endlessly. At the end of the day, they are paying for that plus the interest rate increases they are going to see as a result of the inflationary spending.

Instead of creating more cash, Conservatives would create more of what cash buys, more homes, more gas and more food. We certainly have all the resources in Canada to do that. We will make energy more affordable by repealing some of the anti-energy laws and

getting Canadian energy out to markets so we can generate jobs and economic activity here. A tax plan is not an environment plan. It is actually a tax plan. We have an opportunity to change that.

We will also make Canada one of the better places—

• (1715)

**The Assistant Deputy Speaker (Mrs. Carol Hughes):** The hon. member's time is up, but I am sure he will be able to add during questions and comments.

Questions and comments, the hon. Parliamentary Secretary to the Minister of Canadian Heritage.

**Mr. Chris Bittle (Parliamentary Secretary to the Minister of Canadian Heritage, Lib.):** Madam Speaker, I was listening to the hon. member's speech and he spoke about speaking to his constituents. I know when he was speaking to his constituents he did not talk about the rebate on the price of pollution and I am guessing he did not mention to his constituents that he ran on a carbon tax. When he was speaking to his constituents about affordability, did he mention the CCB and the fact that his party voted against it? Did he mention to his seniors about voting against rental and dental supports? Did he mention voting against the OAS and GIC increases, or is that just inflationary spending that people should not receive?

**Mr. Dan Muys:** Madam Speaker, absolutely, we are opposed to inflationary spending, because what that is doing is increasing the interest rates. We are going to see that again tomorrow. People in my community who have housing prices now approaching \$1.2 million on average are going to pay for that in interest rates. We know that the average homeowners in Canada are going to see, when it is time to renew their five-year mortgage, a \$7,000 increase in mortgage payments. In my community, we are above the average, so people are going to see about \$1,000 a month more in expense.

I think Canadians would rather pay less on their mortgage and less on interest than for the inflationary spending and policies of the government.

• (1720)

**Mr. Mike Morrice (Kitchener Centre, GP):** Madam Speaker, the member for Flamborough—Glanbrook spoke about making energy more affordable. On this point it is important that we talk about the extent to which oil and gas companies across the country are gouging folks at the pump, including in his riding. In the last year alone, the wholesale margins, in other words, the profits, are up 18¢ a litre.

Is the member concerned about this gouging that is happening? Would he not agree that more needs to be done to recover these funds and use them to invest in making life more affordable for people across the country?

*Government Orders*

**Mr. Dan Muys:** Madam Speaker, I respectfully disagree. Energy companies in Canada create thousands of jobs and pay millions of dollars in taxes. All of that contributes to the Canadian economy. It contributes to what we are able to pay for health care, education and the services that we value in this country. In fact, we have one of the most abundant supplies of energy in the world. It is clean. It is environmentally sourced. We are consulting with indigenous communities on extracting it. If we were to get more of our natural gas to the B.C. coast to liquefy it and get it to China, it would help that country get off coal, as it is planning to build a thousand coal plants over the course of the next years.

**Mrs. Cheryl Gallant (Renfrew—Nipissing—Pembroke, CPC):** Madam Speaker, it is estimated that the interest alone on the debt will be greater than the combined health transfers to the provinces. How will this burgeoning, continually snowballing debt impact Canada's ability to care for our citizens?

**Mr. Dan Muys:** Madam Speaker, the hon. member for Renfrew—Nipissing—Pembroke has asked this very good question many times throughout her long tenure as a member of Parliament.

It is a very important one because when we are spending \$27 billion and more, growing to \$30 billion, \$40 billion over the course of a number of years, on interest on the debt, we are not spending that money on health care, education and the things that matter.

My mom is a retired nurse. She worked in the health care system in Hamilton, Ontario, and saw that first-hand. My dad just went through chemotherapy. I know all Canadians who have gone through health issues understand this. We value our health care system, so rather than spending \$27 billion on interest, let us spend more on health care. Absolutely, that makes a lot of sense.

[*Translation*]

**Mrs. Caroline Desbiens (Beauport—Côte-de-Beaupré—Île d'Orléans—Charlevoix, BQ):** Madam Speaker, we will not oppose Bill C-32, which implements the government's economic statement. Seasons may change, but this government's economic statements remain the same. We are not very excited, because this one is virtually the same as the spring economic statement, which contained nothing in the way of a constructive or reassuring vision for the people of Quebec and Canada.

The Bloc Québécois decries the economic update, which mentions inflation 108 times but does not offer a dime in extra support for recognized initiatives, such as transportation electrification, or for seniors, the unemployed, or families trying to put a roof over their heads. The cornerstone of this government's everything-old-is-new-again approach to solving problems is interference. When it comes to interfering in areas under Quebec's and the provinces' jurisdiction, none can equal this government.

Let us think about that for a minute. Retirees who contributed their entire working lives to the economic and social development of their communities, who humbly and honestly paid their taxes, as my colleague from Drummond was saying earlier, and who suddenly are 65, or 70 or 74, are being completely ignored by the government. However, the contributions they made while working were used to run the public service, including the seats in this place. Now, we thank them by telling them to go back to work, to do

something else, to find a way to earn some income, to go to food banks, because there is no money for them.

All of a sudden, at 75 years of age, they receive a cheque. It is extraordinary. Sometimes magic happens, but we do not know why. We do not know what justifies it and the reason behind it.

In fact, I think that the government does not know its citizens. In any case, it does not know the citizens of Quebec. Does it have any idea what their reality looks like? That is the question. Does the government know Mr. Lucien, who no longer has affordable housing, who has to use the food bank and make tough choices to be able to afford his medication? Does the government know Ms. Mariette, who has to pay for essential home care services to be able to continue living at home because that is what she wants more than anything? She has to turn the heat off at night and eat only one meal a day so that she can continue to live at home. Does the government know Ms. Agathe and Mr. Georges, who did not make much money when they were working? Even so, they worked for 45 years and were honest about paying their taxes. Ms. Agathe is in a wheelchair because she worked as a waitress all her life and no longer has any circulation in her legs. She lives on the outskirts of the city and so she has to take public transportation to get health care. Her husband, who is a little younger than her, retired unexpectedly early because he saw that his wife was unable to get around. Today, they live at home. They have not had any additional income for more than 15 years. They are aged 72 and 65 respectively.

With inflation taking a heavy toll on seniors' meagre incomes, old age security offers little in the way of actual security because fixed costs, rising food prices and gas taxes are not going away.

What really worries me is that seniors have been getting poorer for a very long time. The government has not taken them into account when making decisions for a very long time. I think society agrees on that. We can blame a lot on the pandemic, but the health care issues we are dealing with now have everything to do with the fact that the pandemic amplified indifference, complacency and callousness on the part of both governments—for these decisions were not made by just one government—toward the people who built the Canada and Quebec we know today. By the time people reach old age, they have built their lives and contributed in the hope of benefiting from a decent social safety net. What we are seeing now is people who, if they had more money, would manage to live at home instead of crowding long-term care facilities and hospitals.

• (1725)

There is a whole network of interconnected issues that are the result of the government not paying attention to the seniors who built this society. I find that particularly painful, because I know many of them in my riding. They are upright, reliable and honest people who have really given everything in the hope of receiving a little something. Now the government is telling them that it is not going to happen.



It seems that there is no accountability at the federal level these days. No one is accountable for anything. Things go wrong, but it is nobody's fault. Neither the Conservatives nor the Liberals are accountable for their past actions. To hear them tell it, each party has done much better than the other and nothing is their fault. It must be that thing called fate, or the evil pandemic, or the global inflationary crisis.

Then there are the excessive oil investments and environmental failures—both of which make people sicker and sicker—but they are nobody's fault. Elderly people and the unemployed find themselves on the street, but it is nobody's fault. Small and medium-sized businesses are closing down because there are no accommodating tax provisions for them, while foreign and oil mega-corporations conveniently squirrel their profits away in tax havens, but that is nobody's fault.

On top of that, people need to be asked more and more to have confidence in politics, so we go on plastering faces on placards during every election campaign, when we have the nerve to tell people we will be forming government and doing great things for them. Yes, the government will do things like interfere and impose its position and its assessment of the reality facing seniors, as if there could suddenly and magically be two categories of seniors. It will also interfere by determining how much money will be paid into the health care system and, more importantly, how the provinces will spend it, when the federal government has no idea what choices the provinces must make in managing health care.

Let me give an example. In Quebec, we want to encourage seniors to remain in their homes. If the government offers money on the condition that we invest only in hospitals and long-term care facilities, is that a good condition for Quebec? The answer is no. That is one reason why we do not want conditions. We want the money that, in principle, is owed to us.

The government likes to interfere in provincial jurisdictions, and so it is interfering in the protection of the French language with a bill that I would describe as odious and that will paralyze all of Quebec's efforts to impose the use of French in federally regulated businesses and to teach French to new Quebecers. The government is also interfering in the housing sector and property taxes. It watches everything and tries to make its way into every sector.

It is also perpetuating the status quo on employment insurance. We have been waiting for EI reform for years. There are new realities in the labour market such as seasonal work and self-employed workers. With respect to employment, there are support measures for people who suffer from serious illnesses, illnesses that are becoming more prevalent than they were 15 or 20 years ago. I am also thinking of Émilie Sansfaçon, who left behind two children. She came to this place, despite being under treatment and not feeling well, to raise awareness and ask the government to change its position and support seriously ill people looking to heal with dignity.

I will conclude my speech by saying that the independence movement did not come out of nowhere. It is not a delusion. It is not a bubble in the brain of someone who appeared just like that. The independence movement is a movement that advocates free management of its own public funds, a movement that wants to take its own direction.

### *Government Orders*

I think that the Government of Canada is a *Titanic* right now. It has not noticed, but the hull has been breached. I hope it will realize this fact before meeting the iceberg of opulence, because opulence is fatal in the eyes of our constituents.

• (1730)

In Quebec, our hull is solid and our engines are remarkable. We are successful. Resources are invaluable and almost unlimited. We have unique economic development levers—

**The Assistant Deputy Speaker (Mrs. Alexandra Mendès):** I must interrupt the member because she has far exceeded her speaking time.

The hon. member for Saint John—Rothesay.

[*English*]

**Mr. Wayne Long (Saint John—Rothesay, Lib.):** Madam Speaker, as a government, we often hear about everything we are doing wrong. It seems to be one thing after another. Certainly, the official opposition is quick to remind us that we cannot manage the economy, yet it ran nine straight deficits. The economy was in a mess when we took over.

In the fall economic statement, we came forth with a lot of good programs. To be sure, we hear from the party opposite about eliminating the tax on home heating, which would be about \$40 or \$50 per tank, but what about the doubling of the GST credit? What about the elimination of interest on student loans? What about the rent support? What about all of the programs we have offered that will help Canadians through the situation we are in now?

Can the member opposite tell us which of those programs she would cut?

• (1735)

[*Translation*]

**Mrs. Caroline Desbiens:** Madam Speaker, there are a number of programs that we helped the current government develop. We are satisfied with some of those programs, but what bothers me and what I would tell my colleague is that there are not enough programs.

The government needs to improve its overall economic management to be able to offer more services to the public through new programs, those that we have long been calling for.

**Mr. Luc Desilets (Rivière-des-Mille-Îles, BQ):** Madam Speaker, this afternoon, during oral question period, we heard the member for Gaspésie—Les Îles-de-la-Madeleine make preposterous comments that cast aspersions on the Auditor General.

The Auditor General's report was tabled today and, in it, we learned that the government overspent approximately \$23 billion, if I am not mistaken.

In keeping with the really great speech my colleague gave, I would like her to draw a parallel between the money wasted and the economic statement, which contains nothing new and no additional measures.

*Government Orders*

**Mrs. Caroline Desbiens:** Madam Speaker, I thank my wonderful colleague for his question, which allows me to elaborate on my comments.

The \$23 billion that the Auditor General mentioned is likely money that could be allocated to the various programs we were talking about earlier.

What worries me even more is that, at the moment, the government is checking whether CERB was paid out to the right people. People are being asked to pay the government back, then the government realizes that it was correct after all and gives the money back to them. Meanwhile, the *Titanic* is headed for the iceberg.

During the pandemic, we suggested that the government should be careful about handing out the CERB. It has access to the annual income of anyone who pays taxes, so it could have easily directed supports to where they were needed most, and we would not have the problems we are facing today. We would be much further ahead.

[English]

**Mrs. Jenica Atwin (Fredericton, Lib.):** Madam Speaker, the member mentioned in her speech that not a lot is different from the spring economic statement. I would highlight that we experienced hurricane Fiona on the east coast, and spending was dedicated to that for rebuilding Atlantic Canada and eastern Quebec.

I wonder if the member could comment on how important it is to help rebuild resilient communities moving forward in the future.

[Translation]

**Mrs. Caroline Desbiens:** Madam Speaker, of course there should be a climate change resiliency piece and a fund. We are no longer talking about what is going to happen 15 years from now. It is happening now. It is important to acknowledge that because water levels are rising, and fast. The government absolutely has to make this situation a priority.

What we want to see is that \$23 billion, which people are searching high and low for, being available the minute the storm hits. That would mean money to support small boat harbours, fishers and anyone affected. We absolutely need a fund to help communities face clear and present climate change.

[English]

**Mr. Michael Cooper (St. Albert—Edmonton, CPC):** Madam Speaker, I rise to speak to the government's fall economic statement, a fiscal and economic blueprint that falls short.

The Conservatives called on the Liberals to do two important things. First was to stop the deficit spending that is fuelling inflation and driving up the cost of living for everyday Canadians. Second was for the government to commit to no new tax hikes. After all, Canadians are facing a cost of living crisis as a result of 40-year-high inflation being driven by the Liberal government's reckless spending. Food inflation has hit double digits. One in two Canadians is \$200 away from insolvency, and an astonishing 1.5 million Canadians are going to a food bank every month, which is a 35% increase from last year.

The Liberals often say that they have the backs of Canadians. Well, in the face of a cost of living crisis, the least one would expect from a government that truly had the backs of Canadians is for it to commit to no new tax hikes. However, what we learned is that those are just more empty Liberal words, because they did not do that; they did the opposite, with tax hikes that are going to hit workers, seniors, families and small businesses.

This starts with a payroll tax hike on January 1, not to be outdone by a carbon tax hike on April 1, which will further drive up the cost of essentials, including gas, groceries and home heating. The carbon tax, by the way, has done nothing to reduce GHGs, which have gone up not down under the Liberals' watch. It is a carbon tax that the Governor of the Bank of Canada has determined exacerbates inflation, causing a 0.4% increase in inflation, further worsening the cost of living crisis.

When it comes to spending, the government doubled down on its failed inflationary policies. We saw \$20 billion in new inflationary spending, and that is on top of half a trillion dollars in new deficit spending over the past two years.

The Liberals will claim that this is as a result of COVID, except the Parliamentary Budget Officer has clarified that it is not and that 40% of the half a trillion dollars in spending pertains to non-COVID-related measures. The evidence of this is that after all the COVID programs and supports expired, government spending increased an astonishing 30% in just two years. The government has a spending problem.

Why all the spending? Simply put, the government measures its success on how much it has spent, as opposed to what it has delivered, and the results are not positive. Let us look at a few Liberal lowlights.

It gave \$35 billion to the Canada Infrastructure Bank, which was supposedly going to leverage private sector investment to get infrastructure projects completed. However, after six years, not a single infrastructure project has been completed. After \$35 billion and six years, there is not a single infrastructure project. Talk about taxpayers not getting value for their money.

The Liberals brag about spending \$40 billion on housing. Has that increased the housing supply? Has that made home ownership more accessible? No. Housing prices have doubled on the Liberals' watch.

*Government Orders*

• (1740)

Then there is the \$54-million app, the ArriveCAN scam, as it has become known, that should have cost \$250,000 instead of \$54 million to complete. It should have never been built in the first place given that it caused travel chaos and resulted in more than 10,000 healthy Canadians needlessly having to quarantine.

Today, there was a shocking Auditor General report that determined that \$32 billion of the Liberals' COVID spending went to recipients who should not have received the money. It was \$32 billion out the door and wasted. To put \$32 billion in perspective, the government spends \$45 billion on the Canada health transfer, so nearly three quarters of what the federal government spends on health care annually was wasted, out the door and gone.

We talk about waste and mismanagement, but the Liberal government is not one to learn lessons, because in the fall economic statement, \$14.2 billion was found to be unannounced by the Parliamentary Budget Officer. There were no details about where that \$14.2 billion is going. When my colleague, the member for Charleswood—St. James—Assiniboia—Headingley, asked the finance minister where the \$14.2 billion was going, she could not say or would not say. All we know is that it is a blank cheque to who knows what. Talk about a lack of transparency. Talk about a lack of respect for the sweat-soaked tax dollars of hard-working Canadians.

For all of this spending, what do we have? We have 40-year-high inflation. If we listen to the Liberals across the way, they act as though they are bystanders to the 40-year-high inflation, except they are not. Their policies have driven it. Let us look at the facts.

To pay for half a trillion dollars of deficit spending, the Liberals, through the Bank of Canada, embarked on a policy of quantitative easing, something the Canadian government has never done before. It is essentially money printing. What happened over two years? The money supply increased by half a trillion dollars, on par with the Liberal government's half a trillion dollars in deficit spending. This is not a coincidence. What we have seen is a 27% increase in the supply of money at only a 2% rate of economic growth. We cannot have cash outbid goods and services tenfold and not have inflationary pressures, and that is precisely what has happened as a result of the government's out of control spending.

The finance minister is fond of saying she will not take lessons from the Leader of the Opposition. I would say to the Minister of Finance that she should start listening to the Leader of the Opposition, because it was the Leader of the Opposition who was among the first to sound the alarm that all of this spending was contributing to inflation. Had the finance minister listened to the Leader of the Opposition, we would not be in this inflationary mess that is pummelling everyday Canadians.

• (1745)

**Mr. Kevin Lamoureux (Parliamentary Secretary to the Leader of the Government in the House of Commons, Lib.):** Madam Speaker, the member does not talk about the facts. He says that we as a government are responsible for Canada's record-high inflation rate, but he does not look at the world's circumstances. We are responsible for having a lower inflation rate than the United States of America, England and many other European countries. Compared

to the G7 and the G20, Canada's inflation rate is better, but it is still not good enough for this government. That is why we continue to bring in supports for Canadians, which the Conservative Party consistently votes against.

Would the member not recognize or give us credit for the fact that in comparison to other countries in the world, in particular the United States of America and those in Europe, we actually have a lower inflation rate?

**Mr. Michael Cooper:** Madam Speaker, the fact that the United States or the United Kingdom has worse inflation than Canada is cold comfort to everyday Canadians who are struggling.

No matter what the parliamentary secretary says, he cannot evade responsibility for the policies of his government that have driven 40-year-high inflation, with the supply of money outpacing goods and services tenfold as a result of the half a trillion dollars thrown out the door, billions of which were wasted. On top of that, the government is making life even worse with tax hikes in the new year.

• (1750)

**Mr. Brian Masse (Windsor West, NDP):** Madam Speaker, speaking of increased inflation, the Ambassador Bridge is close to me, and the illegal blockade of the Ambassador Bridge saw the vast majority of outsiders illegally shut down Canada's number one infrastructure and trade route to the United States. In fact, 40% of Canada's daily trade occurs there.

I am wondering whether the Conservative Party supports the City of Windsor's request to be made whole given the \$5.7 million it cost to pay for police officers and to keep people safe during this illegal blockade. It is very important, because now that is thrust upon municipal taxpayers. Constituents could not get to doctor appointments, including children. It was significant.

I am wondering where the Conservative Party is with that request of \$5.7 million, because the cost of the illegal occupation, mostly by outsiders, is now on the backs of municipal taxpayers.

**Mr. Michael Cooper:** Madam Speaker, at the end of his question, the member for Windsor West spoke about the backs of taxpayers. If he had the backs of taxpayers, he would not be supporting the tripling of the carbon tax. He would not be supporting payroll tax hikes. He would not be supporting measures that are making life more unaffordable. He certainly would not be supporting the \$20 billion in inflationary deficit spending that is exacerbating the cost of living crisis.

*Government Orders*

[Translation]

**Ms. Sylvie Bérubé (Abitibi—Baie-James—Nunavik—Eeyou, BQ):** Madam Speaker, I thank my colleague for his speech. We do agree on one thing: The economic statement is very disappointing.

Consider vulnerable people. It is important to increase health transfers. Old age security also needs a boost to provide adequate support to people aged 65 and up. EI reform is another urgent matter.

Does my colleague agree with the points I just raised?

[English]

**Mr. Michael Cooper:** Madam Speaker, I understand where the hon. member is coming from given that this was a disappointing fall economic statement.

The member cited health care. We have seen no meaningful commitments from the government when it comes to health care. Indeed, thanks to the government's reckless spending, debt servicing costs will soon outpace and be a larger amount than what is allocated to the Canada health transfer annually.

Quite frankly, there would be more money for health care if the government would rein in its wasteful, reckless spending.

[Translation]

**Mr. Richard Lehoux (Beauce, CPC):** Madam Speaker, it is a pleasure for me to rise in the House today to speak to Bill C-32, which seeks to implement the government's fall economic statement.

To be clear, let me just say that my pleasure stems not from the content of the bill, but rather from the fact that I get to stand up and be the voice of Canadians and the people of Beauce regarding what should have been included in the bill.

To begin with, I would like to take a moment to denounce the inflation created by the Liberal government itself. With punitive policies like the carbon tax, this government is destroying local businesses while at the same time driving up grocery prices. This out-of-touch government has also imposed an equally disastrous fertilizer tariff on farmers. Even as our country grapples with the worst food inflation in 40 years, the worst since the days of Pierre Elliott Trudeau, as I recall, the government is still looking to line its pockets with new taxes. Ours is the only G7 country to have imposed a tariff on fertilizer during the most difficult time in recent years.

Food bank use is growing so quickly that organizations in my riding, such as Moisson Beauce, are struggling to meet demand. In Beauce, a third of new food bank users are children. This government refuses to look in the mirror and admit its shortcomings. The Conservatives have been fighting for months against these taxes and tariffs, but this NDP-Liberal coalition has a hidden agenda, so it refuses to do the right thing. As a country, we should be taking care of the things that we can control. Everything starts in our own backyard. We need to help farmers lower production costs so that, by the time the food they produce gets to store shelves, people can afford to feed their family. Currently, one in five Canadians is skipping meals to stay afloat financially. That is shameful. This needs to change.

In this budget, agriculture is not even a minor priority for this government. We would think that after seven years, the Prime Minister would understand that feeding our population is essential and that it starts at the farm. Farmers have been ignored long enough. It is time to give them the tools they need to grow our economy and produce affordable food for everyone. This is a powerful economic driver for our country, and we have to exploit its full potential. We just need a leader who can open his eyes and see that.

Similarly, I would like to draw members' attention to another failed Liberal plan, the plan to open our Canadian borders to all Ukrainian meat products. The Conservatives are all for supporting Ukraine in its war against Russia, but there are much better ways of doing it. On Friday, in a press release, the government authorized import permits for unlimited quantities of chicken from Ukraine, without even conducting an impact analysis to see how that would affect the Canadian markets. To top it all off, the Liberals did not even consult stakeholders before signing this agreement.

Our American counterparts put off accepting Ukrainian meat for food safety reasons, and I cannot blame them. We could provide Ukraine with financial support while helping famine-hit countries closer to it by sending them those products. This is not just about taking care of our country's food system first. It is also a matter of global food safety. The last time the Canadian Food Inspection Agency inspected a chicken factory in Ukraine was in 2019, yet the government expects sanitary conditions to have remained the same in a war-torn country. How can this government be so naive?

Furthermore, given that this government promised to protect supply management, why did it sign this agreement to open up the market after stating over and over that it would make no further concessions with respect to supply management? The Liberal government is playing with fire at a time when we must be extremely vigilant.

• (1755)

Avian flu is becoming more prevalent in North America, and the problem is just as bad in Europe. Countries such as Poland, one of Ukraine's neighbours, have had several cases of avian flu in recent months. How can we have any assurance that imported meat is safe if we have no protective measures in place?

I would now like to move on to another topic, that of immigration in this country.

Canada's immigration system is broken. The Liberal minister rises in this place, makes bold promises and uses the same talking points every day, but nothing is happening in that department.

*Government Orders*

Every day, my two offices in Beauce receive multiple requests for updates from people who need help and from business owners about the system backlog. According to recent studies, there is a backlog of 2.3 million applications. Whether we are talking about applications for permanent residence, work permits or sponsorship, everything is at a standstill because of the government's poor management. Businesses in my riding are losing contracts and threatening to move abroad because they cannot get the temporary foreign workers they need in time.

Doctors are waiting for work permits and documents when they could be working in local hospitals and helping my constituents. It is shocking. It is not just the immigration system in this country that is broken. Name any department and there is a good chance that it is broken as well. Whether it is Service Canada with pensions, the guaranteed income supplement or the passport fiasco, the list of failures goes on and on.

When my staffers talk to employees on the phone, it is clear that things are disorganized and there does not appear to be any direction from the top. Employees are bouncing from department to department, burning the candle at both ends.

Training has slowed to a crawl, and most officers are too junior to help with complex cases. Some employees are still working from home. When is the government going to get its public servants back in the office and on track to better serve our communities?

The workers cannot be blamed for the government's incompetence. I sincerely respect these officers and the tough job they do, but something has to change. There is only so much they can do with the tools they have been given.

Now I want to touch on some issues that my colleagues have often heard me talk about here in the House. Rural Canadians are being left in the lurch. My riding does not have public transportation. We have to drive to get to work and take our kids to their activities. The people of Beauce are hard-working, as evidenced by our 2.1% unemployment rate, which I believe is among the best in Canada. Unfortunately, the carbon tax is eating up Canadians' paycheques. Cell service and high-speed Internet are not even close to what they should be in 2022, but there is nothing in the budget to fix that problem either.

Now, this government also wants to prohibit my law-abiding constituents from owning certain hunting weapons. Many Canadians make their living in part from hunting. This is one way we feed our families, but the government wants to eliminate that option too.

I could go on and on, but since I am running out of time, I have a message for Canadians. The Conservative Party of Canada will continue to be there for them and fight for what Canadians need, which is more money in their pocket at the end of the week and healthy, affordable food on the table for our families this holiday season.

A Conservative government would have made much more tangible changes if we, the Conservatives, had had the opportunity to introduce our own budget. I hope that Canadians are taking note of what this NDP-Liberal government is doing to our country. The time for change is approaching, and I hope that the Liberal govern-

ment will be held accountable for the disastrous choices it has made.

I will continue to defend the people of Beauce and all Canadians by condemning this inflationary government in the House at every opportunity.

• (1800)

**Mr. Francis Drouin (Parliamentary Secretary to the Minister of Agriculture and Agri-Food, Lib.):** Madam Speaker, I would like to thank my hon. colleague, with whom I am fortunate to sit not only on the Standing Committee on Agriculture, but also on the Standing Committee on Official Languages from time to time.

I heard him talk about supply management and how important it is to him. I hope he is convincing his colleagues of the importance of the amounts announced in the fall economic statement. I hope we can count on his support. I hope he will be able to convince all his colleagues, because that is what the dairy farmers have been asking us for.

This bill will provide \$1.7 billion for the entire supply-managed sector, and I hope my colleague will stand up in the House and tell us that he will absolutely support this.

My question for him is this: Will he support Bill C-32, yes or no?

**Mr. Richard Lehoux:** Madam Speaker, I thank my hon. colleague for his question.

I think that there are far too many problems with Bill C-32 for us to support it. With regard to all the money the government plans to spend, I think the government is just serving up leftovers, because these amounts were already allocated in previous budgets.

I wanted to raise one of my concerns today. The Liberal Party says that it supports supply management but, because of the measure that came into effect on Friday regarding Ukraine, we are now coming under heavy scrutiny from many countries around the world.

• (1805)

**Mr. Martin Champoux (Drummond, BQ):** Madam Speaker, I congratulate my hon. colleague from Beauce on his speech. I respect the member a great deal and hold him in high regard.

We are actually on the same wavelength on several issues that he raised in his speech.

Towards the end of his speech, he addressed the issue of Bill C-21, which is currently being studied and has many people talking. Hunters are very worried about it. I was a little disappointed to hear him getting into semi-false information about the list of prohibited weapons allegedly directly affecting hunters' rights. That is not entirely true. It is true that we have work to do on Bill C-21, which is far from perfect. The bill is actually a bit sloppy in some respects. However, I wish everyone would stick to the facts.

*Government Orders*

I wonder if my colleague could comment on the health care situation. In Beauce, like everywhere else in Quebec, the health care system is sorely strained. I would like to hear what he has to say about the government's management and the issue of increased health transfers, which the provinces and Quebec have long been calling for.

**Mr. Richard Lehoux:** Madam Speaker, I thank my colleague from Drummond for his questions.

I will start with the last question. As far as health transfers are concerned, it is undeniable that the Conservative Party has always been in favour of respecting provincial jurisdictions. That is the most important thing to us. When we are in power, we will be there to help increase these sums.

As for the first question on firearms, I do not know if the situation is the same in my colleague's riding, but I just spent three full weekends touring my riding, and countless hunters talked to me about this issue. There is some real concern. I agree that there is still a lot of work to do, and my fear is that the bill will be passed too quickly and it will be botched.

[*English*]

**Mr. Daniel Blaikie (Elmwood—Transcona, NDP):** Madam Speaker, I want to thank my colleague for giving his speech like a Beauce. My question is about the Canada recovery dividend, which is in this legislation. It is a one-time, 15% tax on profits over \$1 billion for Canada's banks and financial institutions. It is about bringing back public money that went out to companies that were very profitable. It is a really important component of getting some of Canada's largest and most profitable corporations to pay their fair share in the context of what we are living through right now. I would like to know the member's thoughts on the Canada recovery dividend.

[*Translation*]

**Mr. Richard Lehoux:** Madam Speaker, that is definitely an important component. However, when I look at all the inflationary policies this government has brought in, particularly in the latest budget statement, I think that even if it manages to recover larger amounts of money, the consequences of all the new taxes coming in the next few months and next year will be far more negative than positive.

[*English*]

**Mr. Robert Kitchen (Souris—Moose Mountain, CPC):** Madam Speaker, unfortunately, my speech will have to be curtailed, which is something that should have been thought of before the Liberals came up with Bill C-32.

The fall economic statement, which could have done so much to help people in need, does absolutely nothing to address the real crises that Canadians are facing, like inflation, the cost of living and more taxes. Where it could have stopped new taxes and tax hikes and stopped new spending and wasteful spending, it fails to do so and only adds to the inflationary economy. The people of Saskatchewan cannot afford these out-of-touch policies that take their hard-earned money out of their pockets and put it into government coffers.

Each and every household in this country is feeling the effects of the Liberal incompetence when it comes to managing inflation and the cost of living. This year alone, government revenues have increased to \$41.1 billion. Where is that money coming from? It is coming from the single mother who is skipping meals to make sure that her kids have enough to eat each week. It is coming from the families who have to pick between putting gas in their cars or keeping the lights on that month, because they are all paying higher taxes.

These are things the Prime Minister does not worry about and has never had to spare a thought for in his entire life. He is completely out of touch with his inflationary deficits, which are now at half a trillion dollars. It is clear that he has no problem profiting off the backs of Canadians and leaving the issues for future generations to deal with. He does not have their backs. He is profiting off their backs.

As we all know, this is Christmastime and a festive season for many. People are trying to get out, celebrate and help where they can. However, they are concerned, especially when a report that came out yesterday said that the cost of their food is escalating and, in 2023, prices will be 5% to 7% higher. Families will pay \$1,065 more for groceries in 2023.

My wife goes out of her way yearly to assist with baking for hospitals, charities and people who have lost loved ones, as well as my family. Yesterday, she was making some cookies and went to buy some supplies. One box of graham cracker crumbs, two small cans of Eagle Brand condensed milk, two oranges, two lemons, a small 125-millilitre bottle of artificial vanilla and two 450-gram sticks of butter, which fit into one bag, was a total cost of \$82.54. That is a lot of money for cookies, and next year it is going to be closer to \$100.

The Liberals are killing rural communities and are doing it without even batting an eye. Measures like the carbon tax are killing businesses both small and large, including farming operations that have stood the test of time for generations. It is a tragedy to see family farms having to sell off their operations just so they can pay the bills. Many ranchers and farmers are close to walking away from the industry because of these escalating input costs.

As we all know, the Prime Minister has a pattern of promising something and doing the complete opposite. Many years and many billions of dollars ago, he said that he would not exceed \$10 billion of debt. How soon people forget. The Prime Minister has now added more debt than all previous prime ministers combined. Furthermore, an alarming 40% of all new spending measures, roughly \$205 billion, has nothing to do at all with COVID.

Ultimately, it is going to come down to what I call the “heat or keep” principle. In Saskatchewan, winters get brutally cold with temperatures dropping down into the minus forties multiple times during the season. In fact, as I speak today, it is below -30°C. Thanks to measures like the carbon tax for the last few years, people have been wondering if they can afford to heat their homes, a concern that no Canadian should have to grapple with. Now, because of the ever-rising interest rates and inflation, they are wondering if they will be able to keep their homes. The Prime Minister could never begin to imagine the stress that is felt by those who have to decide to heat or keep, but this is what it has come down to.

If we take a look at the numbers, the outlook is grim. Families who are financially on the brink who bought a typical home five years ago with a typical mortgage that is now up for renewal will pay \$7,000 more a year. This is completely unsustainable and has the potential to financially devastate many hard-working homeowners who are just trying to live the life that they have earned and deserve. For example, someone with a mortgage of \$400,000 amortized over 25 years with a monthly payment of \$2,400 is not eligible for the relief that the Liberals are touting as the solution to the problem.

Speaking of the carbon tax, this could be a great opportunity for the government to actually help Canadians who are struggling to make ends meet. The Liberals could make the decision to cancel the tripling of the tax, but they will not.

• (1810)

Another big issue that I have with this economic update is that it fails to adequately address the Inflation Reduction Act that the U.S. passed in August, specifically with respect to investment in emissions reduction technology here in Canada.

The fact is that the Liberals have missed every single emissions reduction target they have set, yet they are still not doing enough to incentivize investment in clean technology. That is shameful. The United States has a 45Q tax credit that is straightforward, easy to understand and provides industry with certainty over things like regulation prices and timelines. By contrast, the measures created by the Liberal government are largely ineffective due to the high level of bureaucracy involved, with a mess of programs and credits layered on top of each other that create confusion and lack clarity.

We have already seen projects worth billions of dollars choose to operate in Texas over Alberta because of the ease of doing business in the U.S. The Liberals are choosing not to listen to industry experts who are prepared to assist and advise on clean tech like carbon capture and storage, or CCUS, because they do not want to be associated with the word “coal”. Is it the industry they are trying to kill, or is it the emissions?

Surely it is the emissions and the fact that CCUS can do it is something that we should be investing in. It is something that this economic statement does not move forward on and assist all Canadians by investing with private money, not public money.

• (1815)

**The Assistant Deputy Speaker (Mrs. Alexandra Mendès):** It being 6:15 p.m., pursuant to an order made earlier today, it is my duty to interrupt the proceedings and put forthwith every question

### *Private Members' Business*

necessary to dispose of the report stage of the bill now before the House.

The question is on the motion. 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.

The hon. parliamentary secretary to the government House leader.

**Mr. Kevin Lamoureux:** Madam Speaker, I request a recorded division.

[*Translation*]

**The Assistant Deputy Speaker (Mrs. Alexandra Mendès):** Pursuant to order made Thursday, June 23, the recorded division stands deferred until Wednesday, December 7, at the expiry of the time provided for Oral Questions.

[*English*]

The hon. parliamentary secretary.

**Mr. Kevin Lamoureux:** Madam Speaker, on a point of order, I suspect that if you were to canvass the House, you might find unanimous consent to call it 6:30 p.m. so that we can begin private members' hour.

**The Assistant Deputy Speaker (Mrs. Alexandra Mendès):** Is that agreed?

**Some hon. members:** Agreed.

---

## PRIVATE MEMBERS' BUSINESS

[*Translation*]

### BUILDING A GREEN PRAIRIE ECONOMY ACT

The House resumed from November 30 consideration of the motion that Bill C-235, An Act respecting the building of a green economy in the Prairies, be read the third time and passed.

**Mr. Sébastien Lemire (Abitibi—Témiscamingue, BQ):** Madam Speaker, it is a pleasure and an honour to be able to speak to this bill, but I also do so with great humility.

The principle of Bill C-235 was interesting in the sense that the Government of Canada can act specifically in a regional development fund and that there can be a contribution from regions and territories that take matters into their own hands and provide some sort of support for innovation in their jurisdiction. The principle seemed very appealing to me.

*Private Members' Business*

Then again, in committee, we felt that, despite the good will of the sponsor, the member for Winnipeg South Centre, whom I salute, the bill also had a political aim. To me, that is an irritant.

The Bloc Québécois is as much in favour of the principle of the bill as it was when we voted on it at second reading. However, I am now saying that the Bloc Québécois will vote against Bill C-235. This is the position I defended in committee.

Of course, we are in dire need of a plan to accelerate the greening of the Prairie economy, which is currently trapped in the 20th century because it relies far too much on fossil fuels.

As members will recall, the member for Winnipeg South Centre was the minister of natural resources from 2015 to 2018. He knows that this is going to be a huge project and that it will take a monumental effort to muster the necessary resources. In fact, it might have been interesting to see such a bill put forward back then.

We know that an economy based on oil and gas development is not sustainable in the long term and that the prairie provinces will suffer a decline unless they diversify their economy and start going digital. They will have to start soon, but doing it quickly may be just as painful.

The Bloc Québécois agreed with the principle of Bill C-235, but, as I mentioned, during our study, which included five meetings, 17 witnesses and five briefs, several shortcomings were revealed. The transition to a green economy that Bill C-235 talks about is essentially a shift to nuclear. Many people saw it as an opportunity to push small modular plants, which would provide the energy required to extract more oil. That shocked me.

In this context, I think that we cannot equate a transition to clean energy with a transition to nuclear energy. Let us not forget that there are still some serious safety issues involved in the management of nuclear waste.

We heard testimony from the governments of the three provinces covered by Bill C-235, and they basically told us that they did not want it. For me, as a Bloc Québécois member representing the interests of Quebec, this was quite revealing. Perhaps that is what made me change my mind. Why should we impose a bill on other provinces that will dictate to them how they should develop their own land?

To me, the provinces are the real experts. If the federal government wants to contribute financially, great. However, the real question is, who will be in charge of coordination and whose development vision will prevail? In this context, the provinces have made it clear that it is not up to Ottawa to take the lead. They will not allow the federal government to take charge of regional economic development on their territory. They do not want the federal government to be responsible for coordinating the various stakeholders involved, particularly the municipalities, which are under provincial jurisdiction, and the workers, who are also under provincial jurisdiction.

The Bloc Québécois does not feel directly involved because, obviously, we do not have any members from the Prairies. We are limited to Quebec. However, when a province asks that we respect its jurisdiction, we listen. We hope to get the same consideration in

return when we ask others to respect the autonomy and jurisdiction of Quebec. It would be nice if the House applied this principle more often: If an issue concerns us, we are interested; if it does not, we can still take an interest in the principle and support it. That is what the Bloc Québécois has done. However, when we examine the bill in depth, we realize that it is flawed. Above all, we want to say that the federal government should refrain from interfering even if it would like to. That is the position that we in the Bloc Québécois will take.

The amendments that the committee adopted and that are in its report are essentially technical changes, such as specifying which department is responsible for what, or semantic changes, such as adding a green veneer to the wording. However, this does not fix the flaws in Bill C-235, and many people expressed concerns about the bill being somewhat improvised.

● (1820)

With all due respect to the member for Winnipeg South Centre, who I think had a commendable motive in introducing the bill, there are significant challenges in the Prairies. As we know, one Albertan emits as much greenhouse gas as six Quebeckers, on average. A Saskatchewanian emits as much as seven Quebeckers. Transitioning to a green economy will really be a major challenge, but I do not think the answer lies in this bill. That speaks volumes about the magnitude of the challenges facing the provinces.

In regional economic development, there is a concept known as the “intrusive rentier syndrome”. It is what happens when a region has one large employer that pays high wages but is part of a declining industry. That is the challenge. Think of Trans Mountain, for example, which cost us \$14 billion and counting, with all the repair costs and so on. I made a suggestion in committee: Is it not time to sell that pipeline and invest the money in the research ecosystem so that solutions can be found in universities for a truly green economic recovery?

There was a certain amount of backlash against the acquisition of the pipeline. People reacted to the idea that the government would own such a big pipeline. The government should not take such a risk with taxpayer money from Quebec and Canada. It would normally be up to the private sector. The greening of the economy requires concrete incentives. The federal government can collaborate on this, but should not be interfering in local co-operation as the bill stipulates. It is a step we are not ready to take.



Of course there were some interesting options: the transportation issue, job creation, job retraining, projects that create natural infrastructure and a clean environment. That is in there, but, as I said, so is nuclear power. That is something I found that to be an irritant. Nuclear power cannot be presented as an option just by naming it. I think there would be some background work to do. I am glad that we were able to hear from the witnesses who came to testify during our study of the bill. They told us that progress has been made, but it remains an extremely risky industry. I am not prepared to take that risk at this time, although it is believed to be a good thing. A lot of good things can be said until a disaster happens. To me, that is very concerning.

I would like to talk about the fiscal policy that encouraged development of the oil industry at the time. There were tax credits on oil exploration and site development, or investment and subsidies to clean up the pollution. It was a public takeover of some of the environmental liabilities. There are some reasons for what happened in the past, but at the same time, they can lead us to solutions now.

Again, we can make a real transition with a better sharing in terms of energy. We know that a hydrogen plant was recently established in Alberta. Some solutions are being put forward. However, I wonder if this hydrogen produced in Alberta will be truly green. It does not make sense to burn oil to produce hydrogen in order not to burn oil in our cars. The issue of economic development in the Prairies is not a simple one. I acknowledge it is a good idea to want to have a greener economy in the Prairies. We will always co-operate when such is the aim, but the Bloc Québécois will oppose Bill C-235.

To conclude my remarks, I would like to say that the Liberal government has already made many commitments that it has not kept, and its credibility has been damaged. We know, however, that businesses and many citizens have gone to great lengths to make their contribution. The various Quebec governments have acted boldly on the environment for several decades. They have made courageous and ambitious decisions, and Quebec is therefore on the right path to a green economy. The committee study did not show that the provinces of Alberta, Saskatchewan and Manitoba have followed comparable and compatible directions. In fact, they voted against the bill. Our hope is that grassroots initiatives in the provinces will be adequately supported for the good of our communities.

• (1825)

The Bloc Québécois has long called for an end to supporting the fossil fuel industry and welcomes any measure aimed at redirecting the money towards businesses—

**The Assistant Deputy Speaker (Mrs. Alexandra Mendès):**  
The hon. member for Elmwood—Transcona.

[*English*]

**Mr. Daniel Blaikie (Elmwood—Transcona, NDP):** Madam Speaker, I am pleased to rise this evening to express my support for Bill C-235. I had done that before at second reading.

It is a bill that essentially requires federal ministers to come together to consult with provinces and indigenous peoples on a path forward for the Prairies in order to green their economy. I think that

### *Private Members' Business*

is a laudable goal. In fact, it is a goal that Canada ought to have made more progress on by now. I do think we need to be acting with a sense of urgency.

While I would say there are many more things we need to do, I do not think it hurts at all to create a framework wherein some of the coordinating conversations have to happen between various levels of government, including indigenous governments. It is a step in the right direction.

If we are going to get serious about facing the urgency of the climate crisis, though, we are going to have to get beyond talking about how to have conversations and what conversations we ought to have, and get talking about the very real projects that we need to undertake. Often in Canada when we talk about energy projects, we are talking about particular oil and gas projects. Whether that is a new extractive oil sands development or whether it is the building of a pipeline, we are going to require public investment. In the same way, incidentally, that the oil and gas industry, particularly the oil sands in Alberta, required massive public investment in the 1970s and 1980s in order to make that industry what it is, we need a comparable level of public investment in renewable energy now to set us up to be energy leaders in the future energy economy that is coming, whether some of us would wish it were not.

That is why often New Democrats are quite upset to see massive public expenditures in the oil and gas sector. That is an established sector, one which has already benefited for decades from public investment of various kinds. The opportunity cost of spending public dollars now on the oil and gas sector is real, because it means that we are not setting ourselves up to continue to be major players in an energy sector that is transforming. We see international competitors already undertaking the work not just to reduce their own emissions and green their economy, but to become experts in the building and maintenance of that very technology that is going to be the future basis of the global energy economy.

Canadians should be at that table. Canadian workers should be developing that expertise. Canadian companies should be developing that expertise. We will not be developing that expertise if we do not see government investment that is directed toward the energy sector being directed to renewable energy as opposed to going back to the well, quite literally in this case, of the oil and gas sector.

We are going to continue to extract some amount of oil and gas well into the future, because it is not just used for cars and it is not just used for home heating. It is also used for plastics. It is an important manufacturing input. To that extent, we know that Canada has to ask itself the question as to what a sustainable level of extraction is. I believe there is an answer for that.

*Private Members' Business*

We could work backwards from Canada's emissions commitments under the Paris Agreement and other international agreements where Canada has committed to lower its emissions, and we could talk about what a sustainable oil and gas sector looks like. It does not look like approving every project that the industry itself says is a good idea. Unfortunately, that has been the model. It does not look like when private sector actors make a major investment, as they did in the TMX pipeline, the government running out to bail them out and say, "Oh, we are so sorry your project did not work out in Canada. That is all right. Canadian taxpayers will carry the load for you. There is no risk investing in Canada, because if you make a bad investment, we are here to bail you out."

It is particularly frustrating, because when I talk about the role of a sustainable oil and gas sector in Canada, the focus really has to be not on just extracting more and more oil and gas, but on getting more and more value out of the oil and gas that we do extract. One of the ways to do that is to increase Canada's refining capacity. We have actually seen a significant diminishment of Canada's refining capacity. Often the argument is there is not the money to build a refinery, that it would cost tens of billions of dollars to build a refinery in Canada. That is what the government says in response to those of us who would like to see more emphasis on a value-added oil and gas sector.

However, what did the government do? It found what ended up being an over \$20-billion investment overnight for the TMX pipeline.

● (1830)

I will not be told that money is not available. The problem is that it is not available within the context of a strategic future-looking framework. It is just available as a knee-jerk reaction to the oil and gas lobbyists when they come asking for money in Ottawa. That is not the way public dollars ought to be invested in the energy economy.

We saw it again in the last budget, where the Liberals announced billions of dollars in new subsidies for carbon capture and storage. The way the politics of that works is that the Liberals lay out tons of funds for the oil and gas sector, only to be told by the Conservatives that they are not doing enough and that they do not understand the oil and gas sector, so it is a pretty nice setup the oil and gas sector has here in Ottawa.

It has a subservient Liberal government and an official opposition that, no matter how much money the Liberals pump into the oil and gas sector, is going to say it is not doing enough and that it does not take oil and gas seriously. That works pretty nicely for the industry, but it does not work out well for Canadian workers who are interested in having their children and their grandchildren be able to get meaningful employment in the energy industry as that changes.

Often, the way the public debate crystallizes is around these individual projects, whether they are the northern gateway pipeline, the TMX pipeline or energy east, and that is because the industry itself already has access to vast amounts of capital, so those companies are able to make the initial investment to raise hopes and excitement about these kinds of projects. What we need is access to capital for renewable projects.

The Canada West Foundation is not known to be a typically NDP organization. I think that is fair to say. It has a great paper out on the potential for a western power grid, something I hope folks, under the consultation framework proposed in Bill C-235, would get serious in talking about. I also hope that those same governments that come to the table under the auspices of the framework required by this bill would also put up capital to move ahead on that. There are some interesting findings that could help lower energy costs and certainly help lower emissions, but what we need is capital behind these projects to show Canadians that these things are possible. We also need to talk about the benefits of these things, not only from an environmental point of view, but also from an economic point of view. I believe that is how the conversation around climate is actually going to change in Canada as we create excitement around real projects in the same way there is excitement around real pipeline projects.

I am a construction electrician. I understand that excitement. I know what it means to look to a big project as a source of work and income for one's family, and I know that is true for so many Canadians out there. Renewable energy can be that same exciting source of potential future employment to support families, but we are always talking about it in the abstract because we have not had people come together and mobilize the capital it would take and do the planning to show the path on individual projects.

I talked about one that I think makes a lot of sense for western Canada. There are other parts of the country I can look to, which of course I will not speak to because we are talking about western Canada in the context of the bill, but I think how we shift public opinion and build the trust that has to be built with workers to effect a proper energy transition is by talking about particular projects.

The bill would not do that, and I am disappointed that after seven years in government the Liberals have not acted with the appropriate sense of urgency. They have not built excitement around particular projects that could be meaningful sources of work for Canadian workers and help us build the competency within Canada for those kinds of projects.

That is competency that we can sell not only here in Canada, but also across the world in the way Manitoba Hydro once had a very successful division that was sought the world over to help build hydro projects across the world. That was until the Tories sold it off for pennies on the dollar. However, there are ways of developing that kind of expertise, and that has a real value for us, for Canada's reputation in the world and also for Canadian workers.

That is where I hope to see the direction of government policy go. I think this at least would create some tables for conversations to happen. We are going to have to do a lot more than that, though, if we want to meet the real climate challenge that Canada and the planet are facing.

*Private Members' Business*

• (1835)

**Mr. Terry Duguid (Parliamentary Secretary to the Minister of Environment and Climate Change, Lib.):** Madam Speaker, I want to thank my long-time friend and hon. colleague, the member for Winnipeg South Centre, for his hard work in bringing forward this proposed legislation and his years of service to his community, to his constituents, to Manitobans and, indeed, to all Canadians. I know this is a topic about which he is very passionate, and it is one I fully support.

I followed the debate on Bill C-235 in the House and committee, from members as well as stakeholders and other orders of government. In the member for Winnipeg South Centre's speech during the first hour of debate on the bill, he highlighted how members sat at the committee table and considered a range of views to make the bill even more impactful and stronger. That is the value that committees and the varied opinions and expertise within the House bring to improving legislation.

Indeed, creating a framework for co-operation and engagement in the implementation of federal programs will lead to conditions for greater collaboration and more effective program delivery. It is about bringing everyone to the table.

Much has been said about the prairie virtues of self-sufficiency, hard work and collaboration. It is that spirit of collaboration and co-operation to achieve a shared goal that animates this bill. It is about those things and reaching out broadly to find areas in which we can find agreement and alignment. It is also about acknowledging that one order of government alone cannot build a greener economy that benefits everyone.

The government is deeply engaged to achieve shared goals and always looks to partner with indigenous communities, provinces, territories, municipalities and organizations to build a stronger economy and address the threat of climate change. This is evident in the renewed emphasis we have placed on economic development across the Prairies, with the additional resources invested to create PrairiesCan as a stand-alone regional development agency for the Prairies. PrairiesCan is now on the ground in more places across the region than ever before, ensuring that more communities have more help to prosper, because the best way to deal with local issues and opportunities is with a local perspective.

We are making progress with partners and finding opportunities in the transition to a greener economy.

There are projects across the prairie provinces in renewable energy, in carbon capture and storage, and in green transit and construction.

Municipalities understand local priorities and concerns. They are passing bylaws mandating sustainable development and investing in climate change adaptation. This is why we worked with other parties in committee to amend Bill C-235 to include consultation with municipalities. Our path forward must include consensus building and meaningful partnership and consultation with indigenous communities as well.

Many across the Prairies are already developing and launching community-led projects that will see their local economies go

greener and develop clean energy, like the Cowessess First Nation solar project.

Bill C-235 proposes a framework to align all the different parts of the government that are working on the energy transition, decarbonization, and creating a green economy on the Prairies and the good jobs Canadian workers can count on.

The bill is about a green economy that builds on the Prairies' economic strengths while increasing sustainability in sectors including energy, agriculture, forestry, mining, transportation, manufacturing, technology and tourism.

Through this bill, we have an opportunity to work with the prairie provinces and regional stakeholders to build this collaborative framework together. The framework will be one that prioritizes local and regional challenges and opportunities and meets our shared objective of green, sustainable and inclusive economic growth and employment across the Prairies.

As the hon. member for Winnipeg South Centre mentioned in previous debate on the bill, the Prairies have tremendous engineering expertise of a global calibre, not only in energy projects but in carbon capture, irrigation systems and more. Reaching Canada's net-zero targets will take a concerted effort to mobilize that expertise.

• (1840)

We know that consumers worldwide are demanding more sustainable energy development and Canada's energy sector is working to meet that demand. We need to recognize the work that has been done to reach sustainable net-zero goals. Achieving more of it depends on developing the next generation of energy infrastructure that is cleaner, sustainable and marketable.

By creating a framework for consultation, this bill will support the building of value chains that connect the Prairies, agriculture and forestry biomass to the manufacturing of biofuels used in Canada's automotive, aerospace, construction and energy sectors.

Industry in Alberta is working to reduce emissions in a range of sectors, including petrochemicals. It is advancing work on carbon capture and storage, as I mentioned before. One of the world's first net-zero hydrogen facilities will be located in Edmonton.

Prairie agriculture is also greening. Bill C-235 meshes with initiatives like the agricultural clean technology program. It helps agribusinesses invest in new clean technologies to increase sustainability and cut greenhouse gas emissions.

*Private Members' Business*

More than any other region, projects funded by the program, 24 of 60 projects, are taking place across the Prairies. The outcomes are more climate-friendly grain dryers, solar panels and precision agricultural technologies.

As critical minerals become more important on the world stage, Canada's economic prosperity is even more linked to sustainably developing and exporting our natural resources and value-added products. That is one reason PrairiesCan has invested in the development of its first-of-a-kind rare earth element processing plant in Saskatoon.

The \$7.5 million of federal support complements provincial government investments to help establish a domestic rare earth supply chain. This is because Canadian companies are not only suppliers of resources, but also processors and producers of value-added products. Bill C-235 can catalyze opportunities like these by ensuring improved alignment among the various stakeholders in the new prairie economy.

The western economy is incredibly well-positioned to thrive in the green economy and our government is taking steps to make sure partners have the necessary tools to make this happen. We are helping companies and communities on the Prairies capitalize on opportunities in the transition to clean technologies and a low-carbon economy.

An example is the Clean Resource Innovation Network, a group of over 1,300 oil patch companies, academics and innovators that are working to change the conversation from "energy or the environment" to "energy and the environment". They are dealing with important issues like curbing undetected methane emissions into the atmosphere.

The bill aligns with an array of additional federal programs tailored to economic and environmental areas outlined in the framework, such as infrastructure, natural infrastructure, forestry and transportation.

In a time of significant change, a strong prairie region is critical for a strong nation and the post-pandemic economy. People and industries across the prairie provinces make important contributions to Canada's economy and to feeding and fuelling Canada and countries around the world. Our government has been there for them and we will continue to be there for them.

As we partner with others through this bill to build a green Prairies economy, there will be new economic opportunities and job possibilities for Canadian workers that will be inclusive, long-lasting and effective.

I want to congratulate my hon. colleague and friend for presenting this bill. He is a true prairie champion whom I have worked with and admired for over 30 years. All of us on the Prairies should be very grateful.

• (1845)

**Mr. Pat Kelly (Calgary Rocky Ridge, CPC):** Madam Speaker, it is always a privilege to speak in the House of Commons, and it is my honour to do so tonight on this bill.

I will begin by saying that I was pleased to enjoy the remarks of the member for Winnipeg South Centre in the first hour of third

reading. I look forward to his participation in this debate. He should know that he has my best wishes and my congratulations for bringing this bill to third reading, although I do not support the bill and I am going to say why in a moment.

It is actually quite astonishing to me that this bill has made it to third reading and seems likely to pass, based on the remarks we have heard from other parties tonight. I say it is astonishing because this bill will do nothing other than compel a process, which the people affected do not want, by a federal government on unwilling provinces in furtherance of objectives, which the people of the provinces affected are not in agreement, in order to report back to a federal government that does not listen and has a track record for which it can be expected it will impose further harm on the three Canadian provinces that have already been severely harmed by the government.

For the benefit of those who were not here in the 42nd Parliament, the mover of this bill was the minister of natural resources. During his tenure the natural resource sector endured unprecedented capital flight estimated in the hundreds of billions of dollars. The global investment community ran away from Canada and moved its money to Texas, North Dakota, Mexico, North Africa and, sadly and tragically, to Russia, where the fruit of this capital reallocation is being used to finance a murderous war against innocent people in Ukraine.

The human cost of that capital flight from Canada was 200,000 jobs lost in the energy sector. Many of these people live in my riding. I had grown men in their fifties reduced to tears in my office on many occasions as they told me of the hopelessness and despair they had suffered as a result of the mass layoffs following the election of the Liberal government.

Among the very first things the Liberal government did when it was elected was cancel the northern gateway pipeline. Then the member, during his tenure as minister, and the government chased Kinder Morgan out of Canada and bought the Trans Mountain pipeline. Instead of being completed and in operation with private money, creating thousands of upstream jobs, it is now a much-delayed project on its way to becoming a bloated government boondoggle, which it may not be able to ultimately sell.

The member now wants to force a federal framework on three unwilling prairie provinces and ask members of this House to support it. I will not do it. I do not agree with the member or the government of which he was a minister, that it needs a framework for policies of a federal government that is bent on destroying the livelihoods of thousands of my constituents who get up and go to work every day providing the necessities of life for Canadians and people all over the world.

*Private Members' Business*

Without affordable, reliable and abundant energy, there is no quality of life for anyone. A warm home, affordable food, basic transportation, light, electronic communication, literally every single manufactured product that anyone wears or uses is only possible with access to such affordable, reliable and abundant energy. Western Canada abounds with such energy resources, and industry continually finds ways to reduce the emissions created by the extraction process. The three provinces, their municipalities and industries are already doing the hard work of being part of an overall goal of reducing emissions, but the world is desperate for Canadian energy.

The Economist recently reported that 150,000 people in Europe will likely die from the cold this winter. We should think about that. There are 150,000 people, most of whom live in countries among the wealthiest in the world, who may not make it through the winter because many will not be able to access affordable energy. As people suffer from chronic cold, their blood thickens and their blood pressure becomes elevated. They are unable to maintain circulation throughout their body and they succumb to heart attack, stroke and illness. This is the consequence of Canada's inability to export its energy resources, and we are enabling Putin's weaponization of energy.

• (1850)

I listened to the member's speech during the first hour of debate at third reading, and I must say I was incredulous at this member's comments on how he thinks the bill is the embodiment and fulfillment of Canadian federalism.

We had testimony at committee. The minister of justice for Saskatchewan said:

This bill would require federal ministers "to develop a framework for...the implementation of federal programs", which to us in Saskatchewan sounds pretty top-down, pretty definitive language, and what we call here "assertive federalism".

She went on to talk about a report that said, "a green transition that is carried out too glibly, too quickly and too politically will impact some 450,000 Canadians, and 450,000 Canadians could lose their jobs."

The president of the Saskatchewan Association of Rural Municipalities said, "In rural Saskatchewan, we are making excellent headway on our own solutions for a greener economy, and we don't require a federal framework."

Only Liberals steeped in the tradition of Pierre Trudeau's generation and his approach to federalism could possibly think that a bill that imposes a federal process on unwilling provinces is somehow a triumph of the federation.

The bill would impose a process to create a federal framework for the imposition of federal policy on three provinces that do not want it. They did not ask for it. They do not like this government. They disagree with this government. Fifty-six out of the 62 members elected to this chamber from these three provinces are not from the government's party. That is 90% of the MPs from most provinces who are elected here. They were elected in opposition to this government's agenda.

Is that a triumph of Canadian federalism, the imposition and creation of this framework? That is exactly the kind of imposition on

western provinces that is sadly eroding people's faith in Canadian federalism, just like under Pierre Trudeau when he was prime minister, when he destroyed the Canadian energy industry for a generation in a spectacular abuse of Canadian federalism. No, the bill is not a triumph of Canadian federalism. It would not be a springboard for some abstract, mythical, undefined, so-called green economy. It would not help Canadian workers.

This government has been promising green job retraining for oil and gas workers for years, and it does not exist. This will not help western municipalities. This is a bill that people in western Canada do not want. It is a bill that nobody asked for. It is a bill that would at best do nothing and at worst harm my constituents.

I am aware, following this debate, that this is likely to pass third reading. If it does, I offer the member for Winnipeg South Centre my personal congratulations. The passage of a private member's bill is no small thing. To him, I wish the very best, but I do not support the bill and I will oppose it.

**The Assistant Deputy Speaker (Mrs. Alexandra Mendès):** We will now go to the hon. member for Winnipeg South Centre for his right of reply.

• (1855)

**Hon. Jim Carr (Winnipeg South Centre, Lib.):** Madam Speaker, I want to start by expressing some deeply held emotion. I love this country, every square metre of it, in English, in French, in indigenous languages and in the languages of the newly arrived.

The characterization of the bill as jurisdictional creep is simply not the case. In fact, the opposite is true. The Government of Canada has added leaves to the national table. This is an addition, not a subtraction, and it is inclusive, not exclusive. It seeks to unite, not to divide.

My respect for Parliament has grown by leaps and bounds. The wisdom of inviting witnesses to add thoughtful commentary and an opposition that has been respectful though occasionally dissenting are what a democracy is all about, and it is always rooted in strengthening the national fabric, woven as it is from those mini threads that make Canada the envy of the world. With resources, natural and human, comes responsibility to each other and to the world itself. How could we not be humbled by the greatness of this magnificent country?

If I have a favourite part of this bill, it is the report back to Parliament it would require. In one year, those who occupy these chairs, which will be filled with so many who for too long who have been denied, must be heard, and they must be heard with all of the magnificence of this diversity, which truly is the envy of the world.

### *Adjournment Proceedings*

I invite members to travel, as we all have, and let the conversation turn to what Parliament represents to so many in faraway places, many of whom, given the choice, would rather be here than where there are. They would look at this chamber as a place where people gather to improve themselves, where we look at accomplishment and we take the personal accomplishment to the national one, and it is no small feat. It is woven from these strands of all of the diversity that makes this the most magnificent place on earth.

For me personally, this is a wonderful moment. I listened to my friends in the Bloc talk about the French language, the identity of the French language, how deeply enmeshed language is with their culture, their identity and their sense of belonging in ways that make us whole. In my little corner of this country, on the Prairies, we strive to create wealth and a sense of belonging across a wide range of natural and human resources.

In wrapping up this debate, I want to thank the people of Winnipeg South Centre, without whose confidence this would never have been possible. For all those who raised their voices in support of this idea, some may say it is aspirational idea, and I can handle that. I can handle aspirations, especially when they are shared, and that is at the centre of what this bill is all about.

It is with gratitude, thanks and a deep respect for this institution that I humbly present this bill to my colleagues in Parliament.

• (1900)

[*Translation*]

**The Assistant Deputy Speaker (Mrs. Alexandra Mendès):** The question is on the motion.

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 invite them to rise and indicate it to the Chair.

The hon. member for Winnipeg South Centre.

[*English*]

**Hon. Jim Carr:** I request a recorded vote, Madam Speaker.

**The Assistant Deputy Speaker (Mrs. Alexandra Mendès):** Pursuant to an order made on Thursday, June 23, the division stands deferred to Wednesday, December 7, at the expiry of the time provided for Oral Questions.

---

## ADJOURNMENT PROCEEDINGS

A motion to adjourn the House under Standing Order 38 deemed to have been moved.

[*English*]

### GOVERNMENT PRIORITIES

**Mr. Garnett Genuis (Sherwood Park—Fort Saskatchewan, CPC):** Madam Speaker, I am rising tonight to call out the hypocrisy of the government.

In the way it treats Canadians and the way it treats itself, there is, needless to say, a profound dissonance between those two things. On the one hand, we have a Prime Minister who clearly loves to

travel. He went to London this year and he or a member of his entourage spent \$6,000 a night on a hotel room. We have actually tried to get information from the government about the carbon emissions associated with all the Prime Minister's travel, because he is raising the carbon tax. In fact, he plans to triple the carbon tax on Canadians, while he benefits from a whole bunch of publicly funded travel.

It is part of his job to travel, but the government was not even able to provide to the public accounts committee information about the level of greenhouse gas emissions generated by the Prime Minister. We would think he would be willing to be transparent about the cost and the carbon emissions associated with his own personal travel, but he does not want to do that. Instead, he wants to impose burdens and extra costs on Canadians by tripling the carbon tax that they have to pay when they travel, on their own dime, to visit family members, to go to essential functions or to have some time away. Therefore, we see the hypocrisy already from the government on that.

While the Prime Minister has been travelling all over the world and staying in outrageously expensive hotels, we have the government imposing the ArriveCAN app on Canadians, which was making it very difficult to travel. The ArriveCAN app was full of glitches and, in cases I hear from constituents, people who met all the rules such that they should not have had to quarantine were nonetheless ordered to quarantine by this piece of technology that did not work. This app, despite all of its problems, cost \$54 million.

The government spends \$54 million on an app that does not work and that forces many Canadians to stay home, including, in certain cases, even Canadians who have complied with what are supposed to be the rules and are still being forced to stay home. Meanwhile, we have the Prime Minister being able to take advantage of all this publicly funded travel, so that is more hypocrisy from the government. The government is grounding Canadians, increasing their taxes and imposing the ArriveCAN app on them, while the government's own largesse is truly out of control.

In response to my questions about the government's outrageous spending, about the ArriveCAN app and other things, we were told by a member of the government that this app saved lives. He claimed the app saved lives, which is particularly bizarre because we have specifically asked the government, in a written question, to show us the data that supports the travel restrictions it put in place. It turns out, according to the government's own responses to questions, that it did not even track the travel-based transmissions of COVID.

Regarding the various restrictions the Liberals imposed on Canadians with respect to being in airports, being in train stations and going back and forth, on which they imposed all sorts of restrictions, we asked how many cases of transmission they had seen in these environments that would justify the restrictions they put in place. It turned out that the Liberals were not even gathering data on the level of transmission in airports, train stations, etc.

*Adjournment Proceedings*

In other words, the government is making these outrageous claims that this glitchy \$54-million app saves lives, and it does not even have the data. Will the government account for this complete hypocrisy?

• (1905)

**Mr. Adam van Koevorden (Parliamentary Secretary to the Minister of Health and to the Minister of Sport, Lib.):** Madam Speaker, I am thrilled to address this question in the adjournment debate.

Our government understands that many Canadians are worried about our economy as it faces a period of slower economic growth due to the global challenge of high inflation and higher interest rates.

We recognize that Canadians are feeling the pain of inflation when they go to the grocery store, fill up their tanks and pay their rent. However, my colleague opposite prefaced his question tonight on the basis of hypocrisy, so I am glad that earlier today I had the forethought to print off the campaign commitment that the member and all Conservative members made to Canadians in the last election in the platform that the then leader of the Conservative Party put out. It is entitled “Secure the Environment”.

The member wants to talk about pricing carbon. I just want to read the promise that he made to his constituents in the last election campaign. It reads, “We recognize that the most efficient way to reduce our emissions is to use pricing mechanisms. However, having a market-based approach means that we cannot ignore the fact that our” North American partner does not have one. That is a good point. We indeed do have pricing mechanisms. He also committed to suggesting they “will put a price on carbon for consumers” which is what we have. He also ran on a commitment to increase the price on pollution to \$50 a tonne, which is the current price as well. As I flip through the commitments that my colleague made to his constituents in the last election, I find a lot of similarities between the commitments that he made and what is currently in place.

I do want to suggest that there is good news for Canada right now. Inflation is slowing down. It was 8.1% in June and now it is under 7%. That is less than we see in many peer economies. In the United States, just south of the border, it is still almost 8%. In the Euro area it is 10%. We agree that inflation at 6.9% in Canada is still far too high but the reality remains there are still some difficulties ahead for Canada's economy. That is why we are moving forward with targeted measures that are already putting money back in the pockets of those who need it the most when they need it the most.

For example, individuals and families receiving the GST credit started receiving an additional \$2.5 billion in support last month. Over 11 million families will see support through that measure. I would point out, as we have a couple of times in this House, that the members of the Conservative Party voted against that measure to support Canadians and their families. It also means that Canadians without children are receiving up to an additional \$234 and couples with two children are receiving an extra \$467 this year. Seniors are receiving an additional \$225 on average.

When the member opposite speaks of hypocrisy, I want to point out that not only did he vote against all these measures to support Canadians, which put hundreds of dollars back into the pockets of Canadians, he also ran on a commitment in the last election to price carbon at \$50 a tonne, which is the current price. The arguments about how we are not supporting Canadians do not hold any water for me because, when given an opportunity to chime in, to provide amendments, to make some suggestions on a bill that is tangibly right now supporting Canadians with rental supports, dental supports and a doubling of the HST credit, he voted against it.

An analysis by the Parliamentary Budget Officer estimates the recent increases in temperature and precipitation, combined with future changes in weather patterns, will reduce Canada's real GDP by almost 6% in 2100. That is an atrocious thing that we can curb. We can fight climate change. Our government understands that.

I hope that whenever there is another election, the member opposite will continue to run on a platform of carbon pricing and sound economic and environmental policy. It will create a better future for all Canadians.

• (1910)

**Mr. Garnett Genuis:** Madam Speaker, I think the member thought he was answering a different question. I, of course, spoke about the government's carbon tax, but primarily about the Arrive-CAN app, about the hypocrisy we have seen from the Prime Minister and about the Prime Minister's spending. There was no response whatsoever on any of those issues. Clearly, the government cannot explain why it spent \$54 million on a glitchy app that it had no data to support whatsoever.

As to the government's spending, it is very interesting the way members of the government talk. They say, “We are spending all this money. We are giving people more money with nary a thought about where the money comes from.” Where does the money that the government spends come from? Oh, it takes it from people first.

We had a report from the Auditor General today. The Auditor General's report shows that over \$30 billion went to people who certainly or very likely did not meet eligibility criteria. The government creates programs that are supposed to go to one group of people but then billions of dollars out of that spending go to people and the government does not know who they are. The government is not tracking that. The Auditor General was able to identify that many of those people do not actually meet the criteria the government has set out. We have a big problem.

The government says it is being generous. It is being generous with taxpayers' money by giving it away, but it does not know who is getting it and it does not have any spending—

**The Assistant Deputy Speaker (Mrs. Alexandra Mendès):**  
The hon. parliamentary secretary.

*Adjournment Proceedings*

**Mr. Adam van Koeverden:** Madam Speaker, an old saying comes to mind: Those in glass houses should not throw stones. When given an opportunity, every Conservative member voted against all these measures to support Canadians tangibly.

The constituents and neighbours of ours who are struggling right now are receiving support, whether that is through rental supports, dental supports, the doubling of their GST credit or increases to their old age security and guaranteed income supplement. We are there for Canadians, but we recognize there are some difficult times ahead. This has been one of the most disruptive couple of years ever, certainly in my lifetime and even, I would say, over the last century.

Canadians can count on us to continue to support them. I do not know what they can count on from the Conservatives. It has been mostly slogans and no solutions from them over the last couple of months. I guess that is the influence the new Conservative leader has had on them. They have really lacked any substance in any of their arguments.

We will continue to do all we can in a way that is responsible. This is about balancing fiscal responsibility with compassion and real support for Canadians. As the Deputy Prime Minister explained in the fall economic statement, we are going to continue in the months ahead to work hard to build an economy that works for everyone.

## FOREIGN AFFAIRS

**Mr. Kevin Vuong (Spadina—Fort York, Ind.):** Madam Speaker, on February 17, 2022, the Chief Electoral Officer appeared before the procedure and House affairs committee, which was studying the 44th general election.

He stated that the Canada Elections Act enables Elections Canada to work with government security agencies to understand and mitigate foreign interference in our electoral processes and identify and address misinformation committed by domestic or foreign entities. The Canada Elections Act also prohibits the use of foreign funds for partisan purposes, including the propelling of like-minded puppet candidates seeking party nominations and running in elections. Any suspected wrongdoing is then referred to the Commissioner of Canada Elections.

Can the parliamentary secretary confirm that the Elections Canada CEO and the Commissioner of Canada Elections were fully consulted, along with CSIS and the RCMP, to determine if the 2021 election was compromised by foreign interference?

**Mr. Adam van Koeverden (Parliamentary Secretary to the Minister of Health and to the Minister of Sport, Lib.):** Madam Speaker, it is an honour to be back in the House for Adjournment Proceedings this evening. I thank the member down the way for the opportunity to address concerns of foreign interference in Canada.

Canada is a country of an open political system, a democratic process, much social cohesion, academic freedoms and prosperity. While these are reasons why people choose to come to Canada, they also makes Canada an attractive target for foreign interference. The government takes these threats very seriously, and we will not tolerate any foreign interference from any actor.

We are aware that certain foreign governments, including the People's Republic of China, the Islamic Republic of Iran and the Russian Federation, may attempt to threaten and intimidate individuals in Canada or their relatives abroad and that some of these tactics employed include harassment, intimidation, detention of family members abroad and refusal to issue travel documents or visas. When individuals in Canada are subjected to intimidation, harassment or manipulation by foreign states or their proxies, these activities are a threat to Canada's sovereignty and to the safety of communities and individuals in Canada. That will never be tolerated.

Where there is evidence of state-backed harassment or intimidation, CSIS and the RCMP apply the full measures of their mandates to investigate threats to Canada and to Canadians. CSIS investigates and may take measures to reduce foreign interference threats, including those involving threats to Canadian communities. The RCMP also collaborates with police of jurisdiction to investigate harassment, intimidation and other offences reported at local levels that, upon further investigation, reveal a nexus to foreign interference.

For example, in response to reports of so-called police stations being run by the People's Republic of China, the PRC, here in Canada, the RCMP has confirmed that it is currently investigating. If a member of the public feels that they are in immediate danger from a person suspected of acting on behalf of a foreign state, they are strongly encouraged to call 911 or contact their local police of jurisdiction. If a member of the police suspects criminal foreign interference activities that do not pose an immediate threat to life, they should report it immediately to the RCMP or CSIS through phone and online reporting channels, including the national security information network web portal.

Finally, we recognize that democratic institutions and processes around the world, including elections, are targets for foreign interference. Over the course of the 2021 federal election, CSIS and the RCMP worked closely with partners as members of the security and intelligence threats to elections, or SITE, task force to coordinate efforts against foreign interference by raising awareness, assessing threats and preparing the government's response to them.

While I cannot provide any more detail regarding specific threat activity, I can assure Canadians that our security and intelligence agencies investigate allegations of interference in Canada's democratic institutions or processes by a foreign state in accordance with their mandated authorities and that the RCMP investigates foreign actor interference further to its mandate.

Canadians can be assured that, while we cannot always make our actions known to the public, the safety and security of Canadians is absolutely always at the heart of our approach.



• (1915)

**Mr. Kevin Vuong:** Madam Speaker, a simple yes or no would have sufficed. As more media attention focuses on the porous defence and the lackadaisical attitude that the government has toward confronting foreign operators on our soil, along with the reluctance to safeguard Iranian Canadians and Chinese Canadians who are being intimidated, has the government abrogated its duty to protect its citizens and election process?

Is the government also content for Canada to put up permanent doormats for Iranian and Chinese governments to do whatever they want?

**Mr. Adam van Koevorden:** Mr. Speaker, I reject the premise of the question 100%.

We have taken swift action against the Islamic Republic of Iran, and we continue to be extremely strong against the People's Republic of China in their attempts to interfere in our elections or in any other course of due action in Canada.

I want to make it clear that the Government of Canada remains committed to combatting foreign interference by any foreign state seeking to harm Canada or our citizens. We protect our citizens and communities targeted by hostile state actors, safeguard our democratic institutions and promote economic security.

Canada takes a whole-of-government and whole-of-society approach, domestically and abroad, to strategically counter foreign interference activities. This includes the work of security agencies like CSIS and the RCMP, but this also includes our work with the G7 rapid response mechanism, which identifies and responds to foreign threats to democracy, as well as resources like “Foreign Interference and You”. It is available to the public in multiple languages through the Canada.ca website.

I would just close by acknowledging that the member down the way is a former member of the military and he knows—

**The Assistant Deputy Speaker (Mrs. Alexandra Mendès):** The time is up.

The hon. member for North Island—Powell River

#### HEALTH

**Ms. Rachel Blaney (North Island—Powell River, NDP):** Madam Speaker, as always I am honoured to be here in this place and talk on behalf of the constituents of North Island—Powell River. I am really sad to be here today. I never thought I would be sharing concerns with the House of Commons that constituents of mine are now afraid because of the total lack of health care.

The federal government has paid less and less into health care transfers, and provinces and territories are struggling. We knew, and it has been talked about in this country for a very long time, that we had an increasing population of people who are aging and that there are challenges in recruiting and retaining health care providers, and we still have not seen any meaningful action from the government.

I have spoken about this issue before in the House, and I will continue to do so. We are in a significant crisis. People in my riding are paying the price of that crisis. I receive emails and calls daily

#### *Adjournment Proceedings*

from remote communities in my riding, like Port Hardy, Port McNeill and Alert Bay, especially because their emergency rooms are being closed far too often.

All night long, emergency rooms are closed. That means if anyone has any serious health issue, they have to travel quite a distance to get somewhere that can help them. People who live in Alert Bay are on an island, so that is even more problematic.

Just last week, a constituent with serious health issues got themselves to the Port Hardy hospital. They arrived and, upon arrival, found out that the emergency room was closed. They collapsed. An ambulance was called, and they had to be taken to another community to be served.

Closures of emergency rooms are directly linked in our riding to a lack of staff. They are tired; they are burnt out, and they are leaving. The federal government must stand with its provincial counterparts to support strategies to both attract and retain health care professionals across Canada's rural communities. It is not sustainable, what is happening right now, and it is not safe.

Constituents are sharing stories of having to travel a long distance to get basic care. This cannot continue. Recently, an article came out about rural communities and pregnant people having to travel a long distance to get the services they need. When they do so, the pregnant person is paying out of pocket for a place to live and something to eat. Often, they are left alone, because their spouse or partner is back home looking after children or working, doing the things they need to do to sustain the family.

Someone who shared their story was from Port McNeill. Her name is Darci. She told a terrible story of being left alone and missing her partner, who was doing everything he could to support her. Finally, she gave birth to their child without her partner.

This issue is long-standing, but we are seeing it across the board, an increasing closure of so many services. For example, in Campbell River, the hospital lab is closed many days due to a severe shortage of staff. This means outpatients are arriving and finding it closed, and we know that overworked staff and exhausted lab staff are ready to leave and are looking for other opportunities.

We also know that doctors, nurses and health care professionals across the board are exhausted, tired and wanting to leave. We do not have a meaningful attraction strategy to bring newcomers and other folks from across Canada to be in our communities.

I want to thank the Citizens for Quality Health Care and other health care advocates from north Vancouver Island and Powell River, who have been warning about this for over three years, since before the pandemic. This is serious, and it needs to be addressed.

*Adjournment Proceedings*

• (1920)

[*Translation*]

**Mr. Adam van Koeverden (Parliamentary Secretary to the Minister of Health and to the Minister of Sport, Lib.):** Madam Speaker, I thank the member for the opportunity to discuss this very important issue.

[*English*]

The impacts of the health worker shortage are reverberating across all areas of the health system, but they are particularly clear right now in our hospitals. It gets harder to watch as children are affected. Understaffed emergency rooms have led to long wait times and even closures.

[*Translation*]

Our government is working with the provincial and territorial governments and key health sector stakeholders to find both immediate and long-term solutions to the health care worker shortage.

[*English*]

Health Canada convened a stakeholder symposium this spring to better understand the challenges facing the health workforce, and we are currently engaging with stakeholders to refine and align solutions.

I would also point out that over the last six months, the prime focus of the health committee, on which I serve, has been the human resources in health care crisis. We have been studying how to remediate this challenge, and literally nothing is off the table.

Rural communities, like the one my colleague serves in, require unique solutions to their health care challenges. That is why the government is providing \$26.2 million in funding to increase the forgivable amount of student loans for doctors and nurses who would like to practise in rural and remote communities.

We have also committed \$115 million over five years, with \$30 million ongoing, to expand the foreign credential recognition program, which will help 11,000 internationally trained health care professionals per year get their credentials recognized and find work in their field.

My colleague opposite raised the point that we are not doing anything to help people enter the health care sector. She says we are not doing enough to attract people with foreign credentials and qualifications. We are investing and hundreds of millions of dollars in these areas. It is a prime area of focus.

[*Translation*]

There is still much work to be done, and our government will continue to work with the provinces and territories.

• (1925)

[*English*]

We are committed to working with provinces, territories and experts to find ways to recruit new health care workers and improve working conditions to retain and make better use of our existing health workers.

[*Translation*]

I look forward to working with my colleagues, the provinces and the territories in the weeks and months ahead to improve the funding and delivery of health care services.

[*English*]

**Ms. Rachel Blaney:** Madam Speaker, I am very concerned to hear again “Let us have a round table” and “Let us have a conversation.” We need action in our communities.

Rural and remote health care is hurting because of many specific challenges. I am happy to inform the member that finding a family doctor is getting harder and harder. Accessing walk-in clinics is harder. Waiting too long for much-needed surgery in rural and remote communities is a long-term challenge. There is delay in medical test results and other medical services due to a lack of medical personnel. It is harder to attract people to rural and remote communities. This needs to be addressed in a more profound way.

Having to travel very long distances outside of the community to access regular and specialized medical services is very hard on families. Seniors waiting for long-term care are often in the hospital because they cannot get into a long-term care facility. There is a complete lack of mental health services that are comprehensive and support people in my riding. I am—

**The Assistant Deputy Speaker (Mrs. Alexandra Mendès):**  
The hon. parliamentary secretary.

[*Translation*]

**Mr. Adam van Koeverden:** Madam Speaker, I thank my colleague for raising this very important issue.

[*English*]

Rural areas are indeed facing an unacceptable shortage of health workers. Our government will continue working on addressing the shortage as well as improving health care in rural areas generally. The needs of Canadians in rural and remote areas are foremost in our minds, and we will work with provinces and territories in the coming weeks and months to improve our health care system.

However, we must not cherry-pick from the list of things that I mentioned tonight. We are creating solutions across the board in staffing, in health care transfers, for the pipeline and for education. No stone has been left unturned.

Our health system needs further investment. We also want to make sure that our tax dollars are being spent in the most effective way possible. Throwing more money into a broken system is not the best path forward, and we can improve the way that we deliver health care to eliminate inefficiencies and get better health outcomes for all Canadians.

*Adjournment Proceedings*

**The Assistant Deputy Speaker (Mrs. Alexandra Mendès):**  
The motion to adjourn the House is now deemed to have been adopted. Accordingly, this House stands adjourned until tomorrow at 2 p.m. pursuant to Standing Order 24(1).

---

(The House adjourned at 7:27 p.m.)



## CONTENTS

Tuesday, December 6, 2022

<b>ROUTINE PROCEEDINGS</b>			
<b>Auditor General of Canada</b>		Mr. Deltell .....	10465
The Speaker .....	10459	Mr. Boissonnault .....	10465
		Mr. Therrien .....	10465
<b>Federal Electoral Boundaries Commission</b>		<b>Points of Order</b>	
The Speaker .....	10459	<b>Alleged Use of Unparliamentary Language</b>	
<b>École polytechnique de Montréal</b>		Mr. Boulerice .....	10466
Ms. Ien .....	10459	<b>Fall Economic Statement Implementation Act, 2022</b>	
Ms. Gladu .....	10460	<b>Bill C-32—Time Allocation Motion</b>	
Ms. Larouche .....	10461	Ms. May (Saanich—Gulf Islands) .....	10466
Ms. Gazan .....	10461	Mr. Gerretsen .....	10466
Ms. May (Saanich—Gulf Islands) .....	10462	Mr. Desjarlais .....	10467
<b>Committees of the House</b>		Mr. Genuis .....	10467
<b>Justice and Human Rights</b>		Mrs. DeBellefeuille .....	10467
Mr. Sarai .....	10463	Ms. Hutchings .....	10468
<b>Government Operations and Estimates</b>		Mr. Barlow .....	10468
Mr. McCauley .....	10463	Mr. Boulerice .....	10469
<b>Finance</b>		Ms. Larouche .....	10469
Mr. Fonseca .....	10463	Mr. Morantz .....	10469
<b>Petitions</b>		Mr. Lamoureux .....	10469
<b>Medical Assistance in Dying</b>		Mr. Lemire .....	10470
Mrs. Falk (Battlefords—Lloydminster) .....	10463	Motion agreed to .....	10471
Mr. Genuis .....	10464	<b>Report Stage</b>	
<b>Human Organ Trafficking</b>		Bill C-32. Report Stage .....	10471
Mr. Genuis .....	10464	Mr. Steinley .....	10471
<b>Military Chaplaincy</b>		Mr. Blois .....	10473
Mr. Genuis .....	10464	Mr. Blanchette-Joncas .....	10473
<b>Hazaras</b>		Mr. Green .....	10473
Mr. Genuis .....	10464	Mr. Turnbull .....	10474
<b>Charitable Organizations</b>		Mr. Steinley .....	10475
Mr. Genuis .....	10464	Mr. Trudel .....	10475
<b>Medical Assistance in Dying</b>		Mrs. Roberts .....	10476
Ms. Lewis (Haldimand—Norfolk) .....	10464	Mr. Blois .....	10477
<b>Electoral Representation</b>		Mr. Villemure .....	10478
Ms. May (Saanich—Gulf Islands) .....	10464	Mr. Green .....	10478
<b>Children</b>		Mrs. Chatel .....	10478
Mrs. Roberts .....	10465	Ms. Rood .....	10478
<b>Questions on the Order Paper</b>		Mr. Lamoureux .....	10480
Mr. Lamoureux .....	10465	Mr. Lemire .....	10480
<b>GOVERNMENT ORDERS</b>		Mr. Garrison .....	10481
<b>Fall Economic Statement Implementation Act, 2022</b>		Mr. Deltell .....	10481
<b>Bill C-32—Time Allocation Motion</b>		Mr. Lamoureux .....	10482
Mr. Holland .....	10465	Mr. Blanchette-Joncas .....	10482
Motion .....	10465	Ms. Idlout .....	10483
		Ms. Chabot .....	10483
		Mr. Lamoureux .....	10484
		Mr. Desjarlais .....	10484
		Ms. Larouche .....	10485
		Mrs. Gill .....	10485
		Mr. Gerretsen .....	10486
		Ms. Gladu .....	10487
		Ms. Idlout .....	10487

Mr. Gerretsen ..... 10487

## STATEMENTS BY MEMBERS

### Birthdays Congratulations

Mr. Kusmierczyk ..... 10488

### Food Banks

Mr. Lehoux ..... 10488

### Gender-Based Violence

Ms. Damoff ..... 10488

### National Gallery of Canada

Mr. Champoux ..... 10489

### Bhimrao Ambedkar

Mr. Sarai ..... 10489

### Children

Mr. Lawrence ..... 10489

### Retirement Congratulations

Ms. Hepfner ..... 10489

### Hunters' Donation Program

Mrs. Chatel ..... 10489

### Christmas Poem

Mr. Genuis ..... 10490

### Holiday Season

Ms. Thompson ..... 10490

### Halifax Explosion

Mr. Ellis ..... 10490

### École Polytechnique Tragedy

Mr. Deltell ..... 10490

### École Polytechnique Tragedy

Mrs. Shanahan ..... 10490

### École Polytechnique Tragedy

Mr. Boulerice ..... 10491

### École Polytechnique Tragedy

Ms. Michaud ..... 10491

### The Economy

Mrs. Gray ..... 10491

### Canadian Association of Fire Chiefs

Mrs. Romanado ..... 10491

## ORAL QUESTIONS

### Gender-Based Violence

Mr. Poilievre ..... 10491

Mrs. St-Onge ..... 10492

### COVID-19 Emergency Response

Mr. Poilievre ..... 10492

Mrs. Lebouthillier ..... 10492

Mr. Poilievre ..... 10492

Ms. Qualtrough ..... 10492

Mr. Poilievre ..... 10492

Mrs. Lebouthillier ..... 10492

Mr. Poilievre ..... 10492

Mrs. Lebouthillier ..... 10492

### Firearms

Mr. Blanchet ..... 10492

Mrs. St-Onge ..... 10493

Mr. Blanchet ..... 10493

Mrs. St-Onge ..... 10493

### Health

Mr. Singh ..... 10493

Mr. van Koeverden ..... 10493

Mr. Singh ..... 10493

Mr. LeBlanc ..... 10493

### Finance

Mr. Hallan ..... 10493

Ms. Qualtrough ..... 10493

Mr. Hallan ..... 10494

Ms. Gould ..... 10494

### COVID-19 Emergency Response

Ms. Lantsman ..... 10494

Mr. Boissonnault ..... 10494

Ms. Lantsman ..... 10494

Mrs. Lebouthillier ..... 10494

### Taxation

Mr. Martel ..... 10494

Ms. Gould ..... 10494

Mr. Martel ..... 10495

Mr. Boissonnault ..... 10495

### Health

Mr. Simard ..... 10495

Mr. van Koeverden ..... 10495

Mr. Simard ..... 10495

Mr. LeBlanc ..... 10495

Mr. Simard ..... 10495

Mr. van Koeverden ..... 10495

### COVID-19 Emergency Response

Mrs. Block ..... 10495

Mr. van Koeverden ..... 10496

Mrs. Block ..... 10496

Mr. van Koeverden ..... 10496

Mr. Chambers ..... 10496

Ms. Qualtrough ..... 10496

Mr. Chambers ..... 10496

Ms. Qualtrough ..... 10496

### Health

Ms. Mathysen ..... 10496

Mr. van Koeverden ..... 10497

### Child Care

Ms. Gazan ..... 10497

Ms. Gould ..... 10497

<b>Gender-Based Violence</b>	
Ms. Diab .....	10497
Ms. Ien .....	10497
<b>Democratic Institutions</b>	
Mr. Lawrence .....	10497
Mrs. Lebouthillier .....	10497
Mr. Lawrence .....	10497
Mrs. Lebouthillier .....	10497
Mr. Berthold .....	10497
Ms. Qualtrough .....	10498
Mr. Berthold .....	10498
Mrs. Lebouthillier .....	10498
<b>The Environment</b>	
Ms. Pauzé .....	10498
Mr. Wilkinson .....	10498
Ms. Pauzé .....	10498
Mr. Wilkinson .....	10498
<b>Democratic Institutions</b>	
Mr. Genuis .....	10498
Mr. Boissonnault .....	10498
Mrs. Falk (Battlefords—Lloydminster) .....	10499
Ms. Qualtrough .....	10499
Mrs. Falk (Battlefords—Lloydminster) .....	10499
Mr. Boissonnault .....	10499
<b>Official Languages</b>	
Mr. Weiler .....	10499
Mrs. Fortier .....	10499
<b>Democratic Institutions</b>	
Mr. Morrison .....	10499
Ms. Khera .....	10499
<b>Veterans Affairs</b>	
Mr. Paul-Hus .....	10500
Mr. Boissonnault .....	10500
Mr. Paul-Hus .....	10500
Mrs. Lebouthillier .....	10500
<b>The Economy</b>	
Mr. Noormohamed .....	10500
Mr. Boissonnault .....	10500
<b>Housing</b>	
Ms. Kwan .....	10500
Mr. Hussen .....	10500
<b>Health</b>	
Mr. Johns .....	10500
Ms. Bennett .....	10501

Mr. Mazier .....	10503
Mr. Lamoureux .....	10504
Ms. Idlout .....	10504
Mr. Lehoux .....	10505
Mr. Champoux .....	10505
Ms. Gaudreau .....	10505
Mr. Lamoureux .....	10506
Mr. Lehoux .....	10506
Mr. Davies .....	10507
Ms. Mathysen .....	10507
Mr. Blois .....	10508
Ms. Bérubé .....	10509
Mr. Blaikie .....	10509
Mr. Blois .....	10509
Mr. Seeback .....	10510
Mr. Desilets .....	10511
Mr. Masse .....	10511
Mr. Seeback .....	10511
Mr. Gerretsen .....	10512
Mr. Champoux .....	10513
Mr. Carrie .....	10513
Mr. Waugh .....	10513
Mrs. Atwin .....	10515
Mr. Desilets .....	10515
Ms. Mathysen .....	10515
Mr. Champoux .....	10515
Mr. Bittle .....	10517
Ms. Bérubé .....	10517
Mr. Davies .....	10517
Mr. Muys .....	10518
Mr. Bittle .....	10519
Mr. Morrice .....	10519
Mrs. Gallant .....	10520
Mrs. Desbiens .....	10520
Mr. Long .....	10521
Mr. Desilets .....	10521
Mrs. Atwin .....	10522
Mr. Cooper .....	10522
Mr. Lamoureux .....	10523
Mr. Masse .....	10523
Ms. Bérubé .....	10524
Mr. Lehoux .....	10524
Mr. Drouin .....	10525
Mr. Champoux .....	10525
Mr. Blaikie .....	10526
Mr. Kitchen .....	10526
Division on motion deferred .....	10527

## GOVERNMENT ORDERS

<b>Fall Economic Statement Implementation Act, 2022</b>	
Bill C-32. Report Stage .....	10501
Mr. Gerretsen .....	10501
Mr. Morantz .....	10502
Ms. May (Saanich—Gulf Islands) .....	10502
Mr. Masse .....	10502

## PRIVATE MEMBERS' BUSINESS

<b>Building a Green Prairie Economy Act</b>	
Bill C-235. Third reading .....	10527
Mr. Lemire .....	10527
Mr. Blaikie .....	10529
Mr. Duguid .....	10531
Mr. Kelly .....	10532
Mr. Carr .....	10533

Division on motion deferred..... 10534

**ADJOURNMENT PROCEEDINGS**

**Government Priorities**

Mr. Genuis..... 10534

Mr. van Koeverden ..... 10535

**Foreign Affairs**

Mr. Vuong ..... 10536

Mr. van Koeverden ..... 10536

**Health**

Ms. Blaney..... 10537

Mr. van Koeverden ..... 10538





Published under the authority of the Speaker of  
the House of Commons

---

### SPEAKER'S PERMISSION

---

The proceedings of the House of Commons and its committees are hereby made available to provide greater public access. The parliamentary privilege of the House of Commons to control the publication and broadcast of the proceedings of the House of Commons and its committees is nonetheless reserved. All copyrights therein are also reserved.

Reproduction of the proceedings of the House of Commons and its committees, in whole or in part and in any medium, is hereby permitted provided that the reproduction is accurate and is not presented as official. This permission does not extend to reproduction, distribution or use for commercial purpose of financial gain. Reproduction or use outside this permission or without authorization may be treated as copyright infringement in accordance with the Copyright Act. Authorization may be obtained on written application to the Office of the Speaker of the House of Commons.

Reproduction in accordance with this permission does not constitute publication under the authority of the House of Commons. The absolute privilege that applies to the proceedings of the House of Commons does not extend to these permitted reproductions. Where a reproduction includes briefs to a committee of the House of Commons, authorization for reproduction may be required from the authors in accordance with the Copyright Act.

Nothing in this permission abrogates or derogates from the privileges, powers, immunities and rights of the House of Commons and its committees. For greater certainty, this permission does not affect the prohibition against impeaching or questioning the proceedings of the House of Commons in courts or otherwise. The House of Commons retains the right and privilege to find users in contempt of Parliament if a reproduction or use is not in accordance with this permission.

---

Also available on the House of Commons website at the following address: <https://www.ourcommons.ca>

Publié en conformité de l'autorité  
du Président de la Chambre des communes

---

### PERMISSION DU PRÉSIDENT

---

Les délibérations de la Chambre des communes et de ses comités sont mises à la disposition du public pour mieux le renseigner. La Chambre conserve néanmoins son privilège parlementaire de contrôler la publication et la diffusion des délibérations et elle possède tous les droits d'auteur sur celles-ci.

Il est permis de reproduire les délibérations de la Chambre et de ses comités, en tout ou en partie, sur n'importe quel support, pourvu que la reproduction soit exacte et qu'elle ne soit pas présentée comme version officielle. Il n'est toutefois pas permis de reproduire, de distribuer ou d'utiliser les délibérations à des fins commerciales visant la réalisation d'un profit financier. Toute reproduction ou utilisation non permise ou non formellement autorisée peut être considérée comme une violation du droit d'auteur aux termes de la Loi sur le droit d'auteur. Une autorisation formelle peut être obtenue sur présentation d'une demande écrite au Bureau du Président de la Chambre des communes.

La reproduction conforme à la présente permission ne constitue pas une publication sous l'autorité de la Chambre. Le privilège absolu qui s'applique aux délibérations de la Chambre ne s'étend pas aux reproductions permises. Lorsqu'une reproduction comprend des mémoires présentés à un comité de la Chambre, il peut être nécessaire d'obtenir de leurs auteurs l'autorisation de les reproduire, conformément à la Loi sur le droit d'auteur.

La présente permission ne porte pas atteinte aux privilèges, pouvoirs, immunités et droits de la Chambre et de ses comités. Il est entendu que cette permission ne touche pas l'interdiction de contester ou de mettre en cause les délibérations de la Chambre devant les tribunaux ou autrement. La Chambre conserve le droit et le privilège de déclarer l'utilisateur coupable d'outrage au Parlement lorsque la reproduction ou l'utilisation n'est pas conforme à la présente permission.

---

Aussi disponible sur le site Web de la Chambre des communes à l'adresse suivante :  
<https://www.noscommunes.ca>