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Speaker: The Honourable Louis Plamondon



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HOUSE OF COMMONS

Thursday, September 28, 2023

The House met at 10 a.m.

Prayer

ROUTINE PROCEEDINGS

• (1005)

[*Translation*]

COMMITTEES OF THE HOUSE

INDUSTRY AND TECHNOLOGY

Mr. Joël Lightbound (Louis-Hébert, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, I have the honour to present, in both official languages, the 17th report of the Standing Committee on Industry and Technology in relation to Bill C-34, An Act to amend the Investment Canada Act.

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

* * *

[*English*]

PETITIONS

POST-SECONDARY EDUCATION

Ms. Michelle Ferreri (Peterborough—Kawartha, CPC): Mr. Speaker, it is an honour to rise in the House of Commons today to present this petition on behalf of graduate and post-doctoral science students to support science. It is signed by hundreds of students.

Graduate students and post-doctoral scholars are Canada's workforce in research and innovation. The undersigned have asked for an increase in the value of tri-agency graduate scholarships, post-doctoral fellowships, tri-agency graduate student scholarships and tri-agency research grant budgets.

WATER CONSERVATION

Ms. Elizabeth May (Saanich—Gulf Islands, GP): Mr. Speaker, it is an honour to rise virtually in the House to present a petition of concern to citizens of Saanich—Gulf Islands and some from beyond Saanich—Gulf Islands.

The petitioners ask the House to consider the state of Canada's waterways. They point out that healthy waterways are critical for our forests, watersheds and fisheries. When we have a healthy watershed, it is essentially green infrastructure. It purifies our water and does real work. The petitioners point out that our water laws

are inadequate to protect waterways. They particularly isolate large corporations that use their muscle to allow waterways to be denigrated by pollution from their operations.

The petitioners call on the government to update Canada's water laws and ensure that our waterways across the country are protected from industry and pollution. They urge the government to work with experts and professionals in the field of water conservation.

ETHIOPIA

Mr. Jamie Schmale (Haliburton—Kawartha Lakes—Brock, CPC): Mr. Speaker, I am proud to stand and present this petition on behalf of Canadians from across the country who would like to draw Parliament's attention to the ongoing unrest and violence happening in Ethiopia.

The petitioners would like the Government of Canada to take the following actions immediately. They are calling for an end to the violence and for restraint from all sides and parties involved in the ongoing conflict given that there is an election expected in the coming months. They are calling for an increase in humanitarian aid and attention to that part of the forgotten conflict and those who are suffering because of it. They are calling for international investigations into potential reports of war crimes and violations of human rights law.

HEALTH

Mr. Mel Arnold (North Okanagan—Shuswap, CPC): Madam Speaker, I rise today to present two petitions sent to me by citizens of North Okanagan—Shuswap concerning the natural health products regulations the government is proposing.

The citizens on these petitions call on the Minister of Health to work with the industry to embrace modern labelling and adjust Health Canada's proposed cost recovery rates to accurately reflect the size and scope of the industry. They say that new regulation changes should only be implemented once the self-care framework is adjusted, the backlogs are cleared, operations run efficiently and there are policies and procedures in place to ensure that stable operations continue.

FREEDOM OF POLITICAL EXPRESSION

Mr. Garnett Genuis (Sherwood Park—Fort Saskatchewan, CPC): Madam Speaker, I have one petition to table, which is in support of my private member's bill, Bill C-257.

Business of Supply

RELIGIOUS FREEDOM

Mr. Arnold Viersen (Peace River—Westlock, CPC): Madam Speaker, I am pleased to stand and present a petition on behalf of Canadians who are concerned about what is happening in India. The petitioners are calling on Canada to recognize what the report from the U.S. Commission on International Religious Freedom says: that various actors are supporting and enforcing sectarian policies in India. The petitioners say that Christians, Muslims and Dalit groups are being persecuted.

The petitioners are asking the government to ensure that freedom of religion is upheld in India and that any relationship between Canada and India be based on a human rights framework.

CLIMATE CHANGE

Mr. Mark Gerretsen (Kingston and the Islands, Lib.): Madam Speaker, I rise today to present a petition on behalf of Canadians who are calling to the attention of the government the most recent intergovernmental panel on climate change. It is bringing to notice the impacts of flooding, wildfires and extreme temperatures. They indicate that addressing the climate change crisis requires a drastic reduction in greenhouse gas emissions.

The petitioners are calling on the government specifically to move forward immediately with bold emissions caps for the oil and gas sector that are comprehensive in scope and realistic in achieving the necessary targets that Canada has set to reduce emissions by 2030.

* * *

QUESTIONS ON THE ORDER PAPER

Ms. Julie Dabrusin (Parliamentary Secretary to the Minister of Environment and Climate Change and to the Minister of Energy and Natural Resources, Lib.): Madam Speaker, I ask that all questions be allowed to stand.

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

Some hon. members: Agreed.

GOVERNMENT ORDERS

● (1010)

[Translation]

BUSINESS OF SUPPLY

OPPOSITION MOTION—CARBON TAXES

Hon. Pierre Poilievre (Leader of the Opposition, CPC) moved:

That, given that,

(a) the Bloc Québécois supported the so-called "Clean Fuel Standard", a second national carbon tax, which will raise gas prices in Quebec by 17 cents per litre, according to the Parliamentary Budget Officer;

(b) the Bloc Québécois said carbon taxes need to be "increased much more radically than it is now";

(c) the New Democratic Party and Liberals supported measures to quadruple the carbon tax to 61 cents per litre; and

(d) Atlantic Liberal members of Parliament allege they are not in favour of the carbon taxes but have supported carbon tax measures 23 times since 2015,

the House call on the government to introduce legislation, within seven days of this motion being adopted, to repeal all carbon taxes to bring home lower prices on gas, groceries, and home heating.

He said: Madam Speaker, I was saddened today to see the line-ups in Quebec City. It is unprecedented. This morning, Quebecers are waiting in line for food because they can no longer pay their bills. Groceries are expensive. The cost of food has skyrocketed by more than 20% in the last two years, and that increase corresponds almost perfectly to the carbon tax imposed in the country. Obviously, if the government imposes a tax on the gasoline or diesel used by farmers who produce our food and the truckers who deliver it, it becomes a tax on everyone who buys the food. Unfortunately, more and more Canadians can no longer afford to buy their own food. A report published the food banks association two or three days ago indicates that 1.5 million Canadians depend on food banks to eat. A full 7 million Canadians are currently not eating enough because of the cost. That is the reality after eight years of this Prime Minister.

What is the Bloc Québécois doing?

Not only did the Bloc Québécois support the Liberal Prime Minister's inflationary policies, it also wants to radically increase the carbon tax. The member for Longueuil—Saint-Hubert said in the House, "Madam Speaker, the carbon tax is a very good measure. However, it needs to be increased far more drastically than it has been so far." That shows just how out of touch the Bloc Québécois is with ordinary people.

The leader of the Bloc Québécois is trying to distance himself from his own position. A few days ago, he appeared on the TVA network and suddenly forgot he had supported the carbon tax. He said that the tax did not apply to Quebec, but that is not true. The second carbon tax does apply to Quebec. According to the Parliamentary Budget Officer, it will add 17 cents to the price of a litre of gas. With the sales tax applied on top of the carbon tax, the total increase will amount to 20 cents a litre. For that reason I will be sharing my time with the member for Charlesbourg—Haute-Saint-Charles.

The Bloc Québécois voted against a motion to eliminate this second carbon tax and allow Quebecers to keep their own money, and the leader of the Bloc Québécois forgot that too. He said that he never voted on the second carbon tax, but the June 5 record of the House of Commons debates says otherwise. Either he forgot or he wants Quebecers to forget. We have not forgotten. I remember that he voted for the second carbon tax. I also remember that the Bloc Québécois wants to radically increase taxes at Quebecers' expense. Quebecers should not have to send their money to Ottawa. Why would a supposedly sovereignist party want to give Quebecers' money to Ottawa and hand it over to federal politicians and bureaucrats?

I believe that Quebecers should be masters of their own house and masters of their own money. That is why I am going to eliminate the carbon tax. Voting for the Bloc Québécois is costly. It is very costly. We will make sure no one forgets that.

The Bloc Québécois leader is also trying to forget something else he did to attack the values of Quebecers in the regions. His own member supported amendments to Bill C-21 to ban a 300-page-long list of hunting weapons. The Liberals presented the committee with a 300-page list of hunting weapons.

• (1015)

Here is what the Bloc Québécois member for Rivière-du-Nord said, and I quote:

I almost get the impression that the definition in G-4 was written by the Bloc Québécois. I know that's not the case, since it's a government proposal, but I must say that it meets the Bloc's expectations. Now, it remains to be seen whether the definition is satisfactory.

This means that he may have wanted to ban more hunting rifles. Contrary to what the Bloc Québécois with its far left ideology thinks, hunters in the regions of Quebec are not criminals. Hunters have the right to continue keeping their heritage alive and to do so respectfully, without being attacked by the government. That is why the Conservative Party is the only party in the House of Commons that will stand up for hunters in Quebec and across Canada.

Speaking of hunting, because food is so expensive, hunting has become more than just a recreational activity for many communities. People are hunting to feed themselves. After paying their bills, people cannot even afford to feed themselves, so they have to be able to hunt. It is necessary to their survival as human beings. The only party that stands up for hunters in the House of Commons is the Conservative Party.

[English]

Here we are today with 1.5 million people relying on food banks and seven million people having cut their diets below what they should be eating because they cannot afford the price of food. This is the misery that has unfolded after eight years of the Prime Minister's inflationary deficits and carbon taxes.

It is worse. Now the Prime Minister, with the necessary help of the NDP, plans to quadruple the carbon tax to 61¢ a litre. When one taxes the gas and diesel of the farmer who makes the food and the trucker who ships the food, one taxes all who buy the food. No wonder people cannot afford groceries. The NDP-Liberal government is taxing those groceries and now, terrifyingly, plans to quadruple that tax.

Amazingly, members of the Atlantic caucus of the Liberal Party are now saying the opposite in their ridings to what they are doing on Parliament Hill. They have voted 23 times to hike the carbon tax when they are here, but then when they go back to Atlantic Canada, they say they are against the carbon tax. The people of Atlantic Canada are smarter than that. They are not going to be fooled by politicians who say one thing in the Atlantic and say the exact opposite when they are on Parliament Hill. They will realize. This is a very simple principle: If the Atlantic Liberal MPs do not vote for Atlantic Canadians in the House of Commons, then Atlantic Canadians will not vote for Liberals at election time.

Atlantic Canadians know there is only one party that will axe the carbon tax, that only one party has stood up and fought this tax every step of the way. Over the weekend, we will make sure Atlantic Canadians are aware their MPs will be voting on Tuesday on

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whether to quadruple the tax to 61¢ a litre or axe the tax. That is the choice, and all the constituents in their ridings will be watching carefully. We will make sure it does not slip by.

As well, we will make sure all the constituents of the NDP, which has sold out working-class people in favour of big government and big corporations, know the NDP is busy picking their pockets and is serving government greed in Ottawa rather than the interests of hard-working Canadians and seniors across our country.

This is common sense. It is the common sense of the common people united for our common home, their home, my home, our home. Let us bring it home.

• (1020)

Mr. Mark Gerretsen (Kingston and the Islands, Lib.): Madam Speaker, Erin O'Toole ran on pricing pollution in the last federal election. Does the member for Carleton think Mr. O'Toole made the wrong decision in doing that, and if so, why did he not say something at the time?

Hon. Pierre Poilievre: Madam Speaker, I did. I spoke out against the carbon tax. One can look at the records of this chamber. I have been speaking out against the carbon tax since 2007. One does not have to go back to 2021; one can go back almost two decades. I have been fighting the carbon tax completely consistently.

This member has people line up at food banks in his riding. He votes in here to quadruple the tax that his government imposes on their gas, heat and groceries. The people of Kingston deserve better than that member of Parliament.

[Translation]

Mr. Mario Simard (Jonquière, BQ): Madam Speaker, one thing that does not work for Quebecers is lying. People will quickly realize that what the leader of the official opposition is saying—

The Assistant Deputy Speaker (Mrs. Carol Hughes): I must interrupt the hon. member. There seem to be discussions going on between the other two parties. I would like the hon. member to start again, because I know the leader of the official opposition would like to hear the question.

The hon. member for Jonquière.

Mr. Mario Simard: Madam Speaker, I am sure he will be happy to hear what I have to say. One thing that does not work for Quebecers is lying. People will soon realize that what the leader of the official opposition is saying about carbon pricing is false. It is not true.

Now I have a question for him. He claims to be standing up for Quebec, but what will he do when Bill 21 is challenged in court? Will he stand up for Quebec, or will he sit down and fail miserably?

I would like him to answer that.

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Hon. Pierre Poilievre: Madam Speaker, where is the lie? The motion we moved in the House states that “the Bloc Québécois supported the so-called ‘Clean Fuel Standard’, a second national carbon tax, which will raise gas prices in Quebec by 17 cents per litre, according to the Parliamentary Budget Officer”. That is true. On June 5, the Bloc Québécois voted against our motion to eliminate this second carbon tax. That is on the record. I encourage everyone watching us to go back and look at the public record.

The Bloc Québécois has also said that the carbon tax needs to be increased much more radically than it is now. That is also on the record. It was the member for Longueuil—Saint-Hubert who said that.

Is the member going to deny the reality that all Quebecers can see with their own eyes?

[*English*]

Ms. Heather McPherson (Edmonton Strathcona, NDP): Madam Speaker, on that speech, this entire day of debate and this motion: honestly, if that member was a kid in a playground, he would be the kid kicking sand in everyone's eyes. It is not exactly a good look. It does not look like someone who is working with others.

I will say one thing. This is the same party that voted against an excise profit tax for the oil and gas industries that were making \$38 billion in profit in one year. This is the same party whose member tweeted about the carbon tax while her own city was on fire. This is the same party whose counterpart in Alberta is going to take Albertans' money and 53% of the CPP.

Does he think Danielle Smith is entitled to 53% of the CPP?

Does he agree with that plan? Will he—

Some hon. members: Oh, oh!

• (1025)

The Assistant Deputy Speaker (Mrs. Carol Hughes): Before I go to the point of order, I do want to remind members that somebody else has the floor. I know that the Leader of the Opposition would like to hear the question. I would ask members, if it is not their turn, if they are not being recognized, to not speak out of turn.

The hon. member for Kingston and the Islands is rising on a point of order.

Mr. Mark Gerretsen: Madam Speaker, I think the deliberative process affords all of us the chance to listen. I could barely hear what was being said, due to the heckling. Maybe you would allow the member to repeat her question.

The Assistant Deputy Speaker (Mrs. Carol Hughes): I am sure the leader of the official opposition heard the question. I just want to make sure, though, because the voices were starting to get higher.

I know that the leader of the official opposition is quite capable of answering questions, so I would ask members to hold back on their thoughts.

The hon. leader of the official opposition.

Hon. Pierre Poilievre: Madam Speaker, if I were that NDP member, I would be back in Edmonton apologizing to Albertans for her betrayal of that province.

Her leader wants to shut down the single biggest industry in Canada, which is our responsible energy sector. The NDP literally works against the union jobs in Canada's energy sector in that member's own province. The member votes in favour of a 61¢-a-litre carbon tax that is nearly unanimously opposed by the people of Alberta. Albertans understand what Canadians across the country now understand, which is that the NDP has betrayed working-class people to favour a radical leftist authoritarian agenda.

We as Conservatives are the only party defending the working-class people of Alberta and all of Canada.

The Assistant Deputy Speaker (Mrs. Carol Hughes): I am still hearing some voices of members who are not being recognized. I would ask members to please hold on to their thoughts. I know everyone wants to participate, but there are opportunities to do that.

[*Translation*]

The hon. member for Charlesbourg—Haute-Saint-Charles.

Mr. Pierre Paul-Hus (Charlesbourg—Haute-Saint-Charles, CPC): Madam Speaker, I thank the opposition leader for his excellent speech.

Our Bloc Québécois friends may be having fun, but Quebecers are realizing that they would perhaps do well to listen to what the Conservative Party is proposing. I would remind my colleagues that, this morning in Quebec City, in the Bloc riding of Beauport—Limouilou, there was a long lineup at Bouchée généreuse, a food bank. A journalist came by and recorded a video. He said that he could not get over the fact that in Quebec City there are so many people lining up to get help in order to eat.

I would also remind my friends in the Bloc Québécois and in the Liberal Party that according to this week's news, Quebecers have been the hardest hit by inflation. In Quebec, inflation has gone up by 14.9% since February 2021, while the average pay has risen by only 9.8%. This suggests that we have collectively gotten that much poorer.

Also this morning, an article in the Journal de Montréal and the Journal de Québec reported that Quebecers have slipped into financial insecurity. According to a poll, 65% of young people say that they are unable to pay all their bills without going further into debt. The reality of inflation has caught up with young people: 51% are living paycheque to paycheque and life's simple pleasures are out of reach.

We are not making this up. It is the reality. It is the reality of Canadians and, particularly, Quebecers. In Quebec, we have been saying for months that things are not so bad, but now we are the province where things are only getting worse.

May I have some respect in the House?

The Assistant Deputy Speaker (Mrs. Carol Hughes): I would like to remind members who want to have conversations that they can go outside to the lobby.

The hon. member for Charlesbourg—Haute-Saint-Charles.

Mr. Pierre Paul-Hus: Madam Speaker, when we talk about the carbon tax, our Bloc Québécois friends like to say that it does not apply in Quebec. They need to understand that the federal carbon tax, which does apply to provinces other than Quebec, has a direct impact on consumption in Quebec.

We only have to think of the Alberta farmer who is taxed to grow the food, the trucker who transports it and has to pay a tax, the store that sells the food and the family who buys it. It is a chain. At the end of that chain, the taxes that have been imposed on producers elsewhere in Canada, including the carbon tax, have a direct impact on consumer prices for Quebecers.

This tax was created by the Liberal Party, which decided it was the best thing in the world. They insisted on it and imposed it on Canadians, and the Bloc Québécois unfortunately supported that. It is easy enough for the Bloc Québécois to say that Quebecers have their own tax, the carbon exchange, and that the carbon tax does not impact them. However, as I just said, there is a direct—not indirect—impact on consumer products in Quebec.

What we are doing today is not complicated. We are asking the government to give Quebecers and Canadians some breathing room, to give them a break. The ending of our motion is straightforward. It asks that “the House call on the government to introduce legislation, within seven days of this motion being adopted, to repeal all carbon taxes to bring home lower prices on gas, groceries, and home heating.”

We are actually not attacking the Bloc Québécois. We are asking the Bloc Québécois to show some sense, to understand that people are suffering and that it is expensive. The articles that I read at the start of my speech were not pulled out of thin air, nor were they made up by the Conservative Party. They are reporting facts, things that are happening right now. The Bloc members here in Ottawa, in what they like to call their foreign Parliament, do not understand that reality is different for ordinary people. As I said, there are people in Beauport—Limouilou who are lining up this morning to be able to eat. That is the reality.

I am asking the Bloc Québécois members to think logically. Can they understand that we need to find ways to bring down consumer prices and make it possible for people to keep more of their money? There is already so much taken from their pay in taxes and, on top of that, all consumer goods are getting more expensive. The cost increase is appalling. By eliminating taxes, we will be able to lend a hand to the industry by making things easier for consumers.

I will not blame all 32 Bloc Québécois members. I have spoken with some of them, so I know that there are some who can reason, who think logically, who understand. However, there are others who come into the House and just throw words around. The member for Longueuil—Saint-Hubert said, “Madam Speaker, the carbon tax is a very good measure. However, it needs to be increased far more drastically than it has been so far.”

This means that, even though it costs a lot, he believes it is still not enough. His party wants to increase the tax even though it will cost even more. It does not matter if the price of carrots doubles. They do not care. They just want to increase the tax. This is the request from one Bloc Québécois member. We want to know whether

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the 31 other Bloc members and the leader of the Bloc Québécois agree with this request. Does the leader of the Bloc agree that we should increase a tax that is already too high and that should not exist in the first place? It is not clear, because we have never heard the member for Longueuil—Saint-Hubert's colleagues tell him to calm down or say that he is going too far, that he needs to stop and that people are already paying enough. No, they seem to think that what he is saying makes sense.

Let me clarify something that the Bloc members do not seem to understand. The motion also explains that the Bloc Québécois supported the creation of a second carbon tax, which does apply to Quebec. I am referring to the infamous clean fuel regulations.

We know that there was no vote on this. These regulations were put in place by the government, so there was no vote. However, in June, the Leader of the Opposition tabled a motion that specifically called for the cancellation of the carbon tax and the regulations. What did the Bloc Québécois do? It voted against the motion.

As a result, this regulation has been in force since July 1, so now there is a tax, applied through the regulations, that will make gas more expensive. The Parliamentary Budget Officer demonstrated this in a report that I am not allowed to show to the House, but I have it here. In his report, the Parliamentary Budget Officer demonstrates that Quebecers, yes, Quebecers, will be taxed directly under these regulations.

The Bloc Québécois will say that it is not a tax, it is regulations, but that is just semantics. When people pay, when they take out their credit card to pay for gas, it is a tax. For us, it is a tax. For the public, it is a tax. No matter what it is called, the fact remains that when regulations are in effect and make people pay, it is a tax.

● (1030)

Environment and Climate Change Canada has come up with estimates for all this. The Parliamentary Budget Officer's report states:

Relative to household disposable income, PBO results show that the Clean Fuel Regulations are broadly regressive. That is, the cost to lower income households represents a larger share of their disposable income compared to higher income households.

Environment and Climate Change Canada even estimates that the clean fuel regulations will increase the price of gasoline and diesel in 2030, the year in which the regulations reach full stringency, and will reduce Canada's real GDP by up to 0.3%, or \$9 billion, in 2030.

While the Liberals and the Bloc Québécois always claim that they listen to the experts, they obviously have selective hearing because some experts are pointing out problems. Most importantly, they are not listening to Canadians, or to Quebecers in the Bloc Québécois's case. If anyone is wondering why people are starting to ask questions, I just gave the answer.

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Sometimes, the Bloc Québécois can do good things. In its election platform, there is one good thing. The first point is obviously not so good because it is about achieving independence. That will not be achieved here, but in Quebec City. I invite the Bloc members to run for provincial office so they can try to achieve independence there.

Anyway, back to Ottawa. The Bloc Québécois states in its platform that it must be able to change. That is written in black and white. For the past two weeks, their new messaging has been that they are responsible people, that they are the adults in the House, even though they are yelling behind me. They say they can change.

I must admit that they showed they could change. To counter the effects of the legislation created by Bill C-5, which allows criminals to serve their sentences at home, I introduced Bill C-325. The Bloc Québécois said they would support me because a mistake had indeed been made. The Bloc admitted that it was a problem. Everybody makes mistakes, and the Bloc members acknowledged that they were wrong.

Today, we are asking them to do the same for these taxes, which have a direct impact on the economy for Canadians and Quebecers. We are asking the Bloc to support the Conservative Party and acknowledge that the government may have gone too far. Enough with all these taxes. They are not having the desired results. We can clearly see that some results are not coming through at all in the fight against climate change. There are other solutions, other approaches.

I would invite the Bloc members to listen to the speech that the Conservative leader gave in Quebec City. He clearly listed our strategies with respect to the environment. There are ways to help the environment, but taxing and suffocating people is not the solution.

I therefore ask that the Bloc Québécois support our motion and convince the Liberals to do likewise. We would also like them to convince the NDP, but that is another matter. The most important thing is to convince the Liberals to change tack and adopt our motion.

• (1035)

Mr. Adam van Koevorden (Parliamentary Secretary to the Minister of Environment and Climate Change and to the Minister of Sport and Physical Activity, Lib.): Madam Speaker, it looks to me like my colleague is trying to pick a fight with the Bloc Québécois today, but I will nonetheless ask him a question.

When my colleague ran for election, he pledged to put a price on carbon. Given that Quebec has succeeded in reducing its greenhouse gas emissions, as a proud Quebecker, does he not support his province and the environmental plans on which he campaigned? Does he not benefit from them?

Mr. Pierre Paul-Hus: Madam Speaker, what I support first and foremost is the people who are hungry.

People are lining up every morning in Beauport—Limoulu to get something to eat because they cannot afford to buy food at the grocery store. They have a hard time getting to work because they cannot afford to put gas in their car.

It is these people that I support. The top priorities in life are food, transportation and shelter. The situation is dire in Quebec in that regard, and it keeps getting worse.

Mr. Denis Trudel (Longueuil—Saint-Hubert, BQ): Madam Speaker, listening to my Conservatives friends this morning, one would think the Bloc Québécois is the party in power in this country. It is unbelievable.

My colleague mentioned that he is concerned about people who are hungry right now. It is funny, because two weeks ago I was in Quebec City, the only part of Quebec where the Conservatives have elected members. There was a conference on homelessness where every party that has members in the province was represented. The Liberals were there, but strangely enough, the Conservatives were nowhere to be seen. One might well ask why not a single Conservative showed up.

I have a question regarding the infamous energy bill that the member for Bellechasse—Les Etchemins—Lévis waved around in the House.

Does my colleague understand that it had nothing to do with the carbon tax and everything to do with the Quebec-California carbon market? What that member said in the House was a bald-faced lie.

Mr. Pierre Paul-Hus: Madam Speaker, a question from the member for Longueuil—Saint-Hubert is a dream come true. He himself is calling for the tax to be radically increased.

When he was gallivanting around Quebec City during the homelessness summit, did he tell the people there that he asked Ottawa to raise taxes so things would cost even more, so there would be even more homeless people because folks do not have enough money to buy food? Is that what he told people in Quebec City while he was there tooting his own horn? Sooner or later, people need to be reasonable and stop talking nonsense.

• (1040)

Mr. Alexandre Boulerice (Rosemont—La Petite-Patrie, NDP): Madam Speaker, I cannot believe my Conservative colleague's speech. What planet is he on? We have only one planet, and we are destroying it with the kind of pro-oil and pro-pollution ideology he is advocating for today.

The goal of the Paris Agreement is to limit global warming to 1.5°C, as long as all states respect their commitments. At this point, 2.4°C of warming looks likely. That means there will be natural disasters and forest fires like the ones we had this summer. People's health will be impacted; people will die because of climate chaos.

If my colleague cares so much about people, why is he not doing everything he can to save the planet?

Mr. Pierre Paul-Hus: Madam Speaker, I really enjoy hearing the NDP member shout himself hoarse like that. I would remind him that he lives in downtown Montreal. All he has to do is walk five minutes in one direction and then five minutes in the other and he has covered his entire riding.

We live in rural ridings, and people need to get around. They live far from urban centres. They need cars to get around. They cannot just go from one subway stop to another like my colleague from Montreal. He lives in a completely different reality than most Quebecers who do not live on the Island of Montreal or in downtown Montreal. He is living in his own bubble, his own reality.

I understand what he is saying, but my colleagues and I live in rural areas. If people do not have a vehicle or the price of gas is unaffordable, then they cannot get around. They cannot even get to the grocery store to buy food, which has also become too expensive.

[English]

Mr. Adam van Koevorden (Parliamentary Secretary to the Minister of Environment and Climate Change and to the Minister of Sport and Physical Activity, Lib.): Madam Speaker, I will be sharing my time with my colleague, the member for Toronto—Danforth, my co-parliamentary secretary for environment and climate change, as well as natural resources.

The opposition is once again tabling a motion that it claims would help Canadians with household costs, but in actuality, it seeks to weaken our efforts on fighting climate change. I will take a few minutes now to explain why action on climate change is so essential, why carbon pollution pricing and clean fuel regulations are core to that action and how we have been able to act while protecting Canadians against affordability impacts.

This summer, as every member of the House knows, Canadians faced devastating wildfires across the country. We saw entire communities evacuated through the flames, and we now face costs to rebuild in the hundreds of millions of dollars. Scientists confirm, and Canadians understand, that these historic wildfires were made much more likely and far more intense because of climate change and that we will continue to face even more severe natural disasters in the future if we do not take serious action now and demonstrate leadership to reduce the carbon pollution that causes climate change.

I will quote a recent article from the Financial Post that leans in on the issue of how serious governments need to have more than one ambition and more than one commitment:

[Carbon pricing] puts a price on greenhouse gas emissions [and it] is often accused of exacerbating rising food costs. This is a mistake. Addressing both food insecurity and climate change must be national priorities and to suggest that we can [improve] affordability if we sacrifice the environment is a dangerous error.

That article and many others go on to explain how climate change is actually far more responsible for rising food costs than is a price on pollution, which is actually one of the solutions to fighting climate change and the intense weather we are experiencing.

Our government understands the urgency of addressing climate change. We know that we need to act now and to act seriously. That is why, since 2016, our government has put in place a comprehensive suite of measures that help Canadians reduce carbon pollution and accelerate the adoption of new clean technologies. Canadians have asked us to take action, and we have delivered.

In fact, in the last election, every single member of this House ran on a commitment to price pollution and to price carbon. Erin

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O'Toole, as the leader of the Conservatives, ran on a commitment to have a carbon price. This means that every voter in Canada voted for some type of carbon pricing mechanism.

At the heart of this action is an economic tool that economists and experts around the world recognize as one of the lowest-cost and most flexible options to address climate change. That is putting a price on carbon pollution. Economists and serious stewards of the economy know that markets are a powerful tool. They can create prosperities for innovation and solve problems by harnessing the decision-making power and knowledge of millions of households and businesses across the country.

Pricing carbon is a market-based instrument. It is actually at the core of Conservative thinking. Conservative governments across the world believe in these market-based instruments and using markets to influence such things as how much pollution a society can create. This is an example of a Conservative Party that is lost in space. It does not believe in climate change, and it does not believe in the simple math around fighting climate change with a market-based instrument such as a carbon price, despite the fact that all its members ran on one.

I would not be surprised if Conservative members did not even believe in gravity. Climate change is right in front of them. It is absurd to look at that in the face, particularly in the wake of the worst wildfire season our country has ever experienced, and deny its existence entirely.

Markets fight climate change, in large part, by using price signals. Any rare, expensive or desirable good has a higher price, and this spurs new businesses to enter markets, innovate and provide more of these goods and services to find lower-cost ways of delivering them. Putting a price on carbon works the exact same way. It sends a signal that polluting costs us all, encourages the market to create cleaner alternatives and encourages households and businesses to adopt these alternatives and pollute less.

We all pay when we flush the toilet in our homes. When we put our garbage out to get picked up on garbage day, we pay through our property taxes. What comes out of our tailpipes and the emissions created by heating our homes also have costs, and it is important to recognize that those costs actually have a value.

Provinces such as Quebec and British Columbia have been doing this for a long time. I know a lot of Quebec members have stood up and talked about carbon pricing. They have been benefiting from it, as Ontarians did until 2018, when Doug Ford cancelled cap and trade in Ontario.

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● (1045)

This is Economics 101, and the opposition should know better than to claim it does not work. They ran on a similar plan. If they were serious about addressing climate change, then they would know that real action requires significant investments and a carbon pollution price will encourage the most efficient and lowest-cost investments possible. Their constant demands to eliminate the price on carbon suggest that they do not understand how the economy works, they do not believe in serious action on climate change, or both. It could also be that they just need something for bumper stickers and T-shirts. I think that is probably the case.

Let me now turn to affordability, which is top of mind for all of us these days. Canadians are facing higher prices because of rapid inflation, which has been driven by pandemic supply chain disruptions, the war in Ukraine and high housing costs because of long-standing shortages. I could stand for 20 minutes and talk about what we need to do in order to address housing costs, but today, we are talking about climate action. We know that governments across the world that take it seriously are taking action.

Our government is focused on an affordability plan across our mandate. Our \$8.9-billion plan put in place multiple measures to make life more affordable: enhancing the Canada worker benefit, ensuring affordable child care and dental care, increasing the old age security pension and topping up the Canada housing benefit. This is just to name a few things that the Conservatives consistently voted against. We have continued to work to address the issues that cause affordability impacts by taking action this summer; for example, we have worked to lower the costs of new rental housing and hold grocery store chains to account by managing price increases.

Affordability is baked into our approach on climate change too, and pricing pollution is just the same. First, let us be clear: Carbon pricing is not about raising government revenues, as the opposition has consistently implied. The enabling federal legislation, the Greenhouse Gas Pollution Pricing Act, mandates that every cent of proceeds from the federal system is returned to the province or territory of origin. Jurisdictions that requested the federal system have the option to receive those proceeds directly and use them as they see fit. Nunavut and Yukon did just that with the federal fuel charge. They are using the proceeds to reduce affordability impacts on households and fight climate change.

In other jurisdictions, the federal government returns these proceeds directly to Canadians. For the fuel charge, this means that Alberta, Saskatchewan, Manitoba, Ontario and the Atlantic provinces all receive a climate action incentive rebate four times a year. Ninety per cent of fuel charge proceeds in these provinces are returned via climate action incentive payments delivered directly to households, something that the Conservatives ignore entirely. These are set amounts based on the number of people in the household, with a 10% top-up for rural households.

Over eight out of 10 households receive more money back than the carbon price will cost them in a given year. It is worth pointing out that this 80% is made up of the 80% of households that need it the most. The wealthiest Canadians tend to use more heat, have larger homes, drive less fuel-efficient vehicles and maybe heat more than one home, such as a cottage. There is nothing wrong

with that, but the fact is that when one uses more fossil fuels, one ought to pay for the emissions. There are average amounts for lower- and middle-income households, and they particularly benefit. A typical family of four in Ontario received \$976 in 2022, and they will receive more this year.

I am often asked about how this is supposed to work. Why collect a carbon price and then return all the money back to households? How can this change behaviour and spur on innovation? The key is the way we return the proceeds. Because the payment is the same for all households, Canadians still get a benefit from reducing pollution, for example, in choosing a cleaner vehicle, switching to a heat pump to heat their home, or insulating their home through one of our many green housing grants. They get the same payment regardless, and they come out ahead. However, the climate action incentive payment reduces the impact on their pocketbook if they cannot make a change right away. Households that do not have short-term options to reduce pollution, such as those where someone just bought a new car or cannot find an insulation contractor, do not see an impact on their finances overall. The incentive payment cancels out most or all of the carbon price.

This approach gives Canadians the flexibility to address climate change when it makes sense for their particular situation. Moreover, it complements the many other measures we have put in place to help Canadians transition to a cleaner economy affordably, such as a \$500-million program to support the move to home heat pumps rather than dirty and expensive home heating oil.

There is a lot to talk about today. The clean fuel regulations are another powerful market-based tool for climate action that the opposition is firmly against. I would point out that, since we are focusing on affordability, the number one cost driver of food, particularly vegetables grown in drought-prone places such as California, is climate change. When we resist the need to fight climate change, we are resigning ourselves to more expensive food from places like that.

I will go back to the clean fuel regulations for just a minute. This is another part of Canada's action plan, which is expected to deliver another 26.6-million tonnes of emissions reductions annually by 2030.

Our plan to reduce emissions and ensure affordability is working. The Conservatives should stop standing against climate action.

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• (1050)

Mr. Warren Steinley (Regina—Lewvan, CPC): Madam Speaker, it is a pleasure for me to take my feet and talk about the opposition motion.

There was so much that was factually wrong in the member's speech that it would take me all day to go through it point by point. He talked about all the supposed affordability measures his government has put in place. I have one simple question: Since he has been the member of Parliament for Milton, how much has food bank usage gone down in his hometown?

Mr. Adam van Koeverden: Madam Speaker, here is the very problem. The Conservatives want to use the pain of Canadians to drive this notion that fighting climate change is affecting their pocketbooks. If we ask any economist, that is wrong. The member is leaving the room; he apparently does not want to listen to the answer.

The reality—

The Assistant Deputy Speaker (Mrs. Carol Hughes): The hon. member for Regina—Lewvan is rising on a point of order.

Mr. Warren Steinley: Madam Speaker, obviously the member cannot say who is or is not in this chamber. He has been here long enough that he should know the rules.

The Assistant Deputy Speaker (Mrs. Carol Hughes): I would remind hon. members that they are not to mention who is in the chamber and who is not.

I also want to remind members that they have opportunities to ask questions at an appropriate time and should not be trying to ask questions or make comments while someone else has the floor.

The hon. parliamentary secretary.

Mr. Adam van Koeverden: Madam Speaker, I am here for an honest and open conversation and debate on important issues, and it is common decency to stick around as colleagues answer questions. That is the least we can ask of each other.

To get to the core of the question, we are all focused on affordability. It is wrong to conflate fighting climate change with rising affordability costs and the hardships of Canadians and to use that to fight a carbon price that we all ran on.

Mr. Charlie Angus (Timmins—James Bay, NDP): Madam Speaker, people in Ontario did not pay a carbon tax. We were part of the cap and trade system, but then Doug Ford and his gang of grifters came in from Etobicoke. They ran on a buck a beer. They said they were going to get people a buck a beer, but decided to rip up all the EV charging stations and then kill the cap and trade program. Now Ontarians are having to pay into carbon pricing because of Doug Ford and his gang. Doug Ford is scrambling, saying we are going to be the automobile centre of the planet after ripping up the EV charging stations. The only thing we have actually seen Doug Ford deliver was an \$8-billion boondoggle to his corrupt insider friends.

Could my hon. colleague talk about the Conservatives' propensity for backroom deals and the danger of a grifter government during a climate crisis?

Mr. Adam van Koeverden: Madam Speaker, my hon. colleague knows the importance of fighting climate change, because wildfires tore through his riding this summer.

I agree that when Doug Ford decided to cancel the cap and trade, which created billions in revenues for the Province of Ontario to fund health care, green initiatives and education, it left Ontarians in the lurch. However, the federal backstop program delivers the proceeds from the carbon levy in Ontario directly back to Canadian families.

It is very much worth pointing out that the Conservatives are exactly the same as the Doug Ford government. They will not say that we need to fight climate change and lower our emissions. They will put up billboards, as Doug Ford has done around Ontario, saying the future is electric, but when it comes to actually implementing policies, having good ideas, discussing with experts on how to fight climate change and how a carbon price does that, they do not show up at those meetings. They are not willing to have those conversations, and they do not ask experts; they rely on bumper stickers and T-shirts for all their policies.

• (1055)

Ms. Elizabeth May (Saanich—Gulf Islands, GP): Madam Speaker, I have to say I agreed with everything the parliamentary secretary said. Unfortunately, the only thing that makes the Liberal climate record look good is the complaining from the Conservatives suggesting that we should do nothing.

I note that the parliamentary secretary is wearing an orange shirt for Orange Shirt Day and reconciliation. The government is pursuing the Trans Mountain pipeline, and a Crown corporation has broken a sacred promise to the Tsleil-Waututh Nation, changing its plans to go through the first nation's territory and destroy its most sacred area. The National Energy Board CER just made the decision to do what TMX wants and, yet again, violate UNDRIP. Could he comment on that?

Mr. Adam van Koeverden: Madam Speaker, I hope my hon. colleague and friend is doing okay. I can hear in her voice that she is a little under the weather. I wish her a quick recovery.

The member underscores it perfectly. I hope she does not mind it if I borrow her earlier idea that if one does not believe in climate change, one might not believe in gravity either. It is so important that we continue to stand up for what is right. That includes truth and reconciliation, climate action and justice across our country, three things that the Conservatives consistently seem not to care about.

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Ms. Julie Dabrusin (Parliamentary Secretary to the Minister of Environment and Climate Change and to the Minister of Energy and Natural Resources, Lib.): Madam Speaker, today is a really important day because, if there is anything I can say after reading the text of the motion, is that it lays bare something that we have seen throughout the debates of the House, which is that the Conservatives do not care about climate action. They do not take climate action seriously, and that is deeply troubling after the summer we have seen in this country, with wildfires and hurricanes, and the impacts they have had on individuals right across our country.

What some people may find surprising, and I appreciate the opportunity to show again, is that it leaves bare that the Conservatives do not have an economic strategy to build a strong Canadian economy for the future. That is what Canadians are looking to us for. They want to make sure that we are building an economy where there are strong, good-paying jobs for the future, which, when we look at what the Conservatives are asking for from us today, is something they are unable to deliver on. In fact, they are trying to take things apart.

We have a choice as a country. We can stay locked in our old ways, keep our heads in the ground and not look at where the future lies, or we can move to the future. The world is in a global change toward green technologies, a green economy and clean energy.

The questions I would have for the Conservatives as we go forward are these: Are they going to follow the Blockbuster method? How is VHS working for them? That is where they are trying to take Canadians back to. To be serious about this, because this is serious, Canadians want to have those opportunities, such as good-paying jobs and strong, safe communities. Dismantling tools to fight climate change just moves us in the wrong direction.

Climate change is putting homes, farms and businesses at risk from increasing natural disasters, which has a cost, and I will touch on that a bit, but the other piece is that not taking action on climate change also impacts trade and investments in our country, which would impact the average Canadian who needs to know that we are there with a strong plan.

The other question I have, beyond the question about VHS, is this: Why do the Conservatives not trust Canadians to make the best decisions by being able to keep money in their own pockets? In the next couple of weeks, Canadians will be receiving cheques or direct deposits as part of the carbon pricing plan in the federal backstop provinces, which is the underpinning for how carbon pricing works in their country. It is putting money into their pockets to let them choose what they are going to do with that money. That means they could carry on as they did before and spend that money on it, or they may be able to use that money to make some changes in how they are going to do things, such as letting themselves keep more money in their pockets.

It should not come as a surprise to us that the Conservatives do not want Canadians to keep more money in their own pockets because there is another piece they did not support. As of this year, Canadians will have \$3,000 more of tax-free earnings when they file their taxes this year than in 2019. In 2019, the average Canadian's personal exemption would have been around \$12,000. This

year it is \$15,000. That is \$3,000 more in the pockets of Canadians. They get to choose how to use that.

I am not sure why the Conservatives are opposed to these measures. They are the kinds of things that, when I talk to people in my community, they want to see. They want to be able to make their own decisions with their money. Not only that, they want more tax-free money and want us to act on climate change, so I am a bit surprised when I see that.

It is really important that we talk about how carbon pricing is efficient. That is something that is recognized by leaders in economic thinking. Perhaps the Conservatives do not want to take my word for it, so let us look at what The World Bank said about a price on carbon pollution.

It stated:

A price on carbon helps shift the burden for the damage back to those who are responsible for it, and who can reduce it. Instead of dictating who should reduce emissions where and how, a carbon price gives an economic signal...In this way, the overall environmental goal is achieved in the most flexible and least-cost way to society. The carbon price also stimulates clean technology and market innovation, fuelling new, low-carbon drivers of economic growth.

● (1100)

I want to underline that it “stimulates clean technology and market innovation, fuelling new, low-carbon drivers of economic growth”. I think that is what Canadians are looking for from us.

Let us look at what the OECD had to say about it when it was reviewing the Canadian carbon pricing system. It said, “The carbon pricing benchmark provides an economically efficient mechanism for raising the bar on emission reduction.” “Economically efficient” sounds like what Canadians are looking for from us. I would question why the Conservatives seem to be so opposed to a system that would be economically efficient, fuel economic growth and actually help to build a strong economy.

An economist from the University of Calgary commented on this and said that, while regulations would dictate what one must do to cut back on fossil fuel use, carbon prices leave it to a consumer or a business to decide what works best for them. He said that to let the person or business decide what is best for them makes it the most efficient way, and usually the cheaper way, to address carbon emissions.

It is a personal choice and it is a cheaper way to address carbon emissions. That sounds to me like a win-win, but Conservatives seem to be opposed to that, so I will have to leave it with them to figure out why they feel so strongly. Canadians want that efficiency. They want us to stimulate clean technology and market innovation. They want a solid economy that is creating good-paying jobs. They want to be able to make decisions with their own money.

Let us talk about some other pieces for these businesses in our country. Let us talk about our international relationships. Earlier this year, the president of the European Commission, Ursula von der Leyen, came to speak to us. In her speech, she really emphasized the importance of the work we are doing, including the importance of carbon pricing. I will remind members opposite, in case they were not properly listening, that she said:

As renewable energy is the future, our partnership with Canada is crucial for speeding up the transition to clean energy. Canada and Europe are world leaders in the fight against climate change. We have written our climate targets into law. We have set carbon prices, and we have proven that it is possible to grow the economy and reduce emissions.

New challenges await us, however. The global race for clean technology is on. There is growing competition to attract investment and to control the most important links in key supply chains. In this more competitive environment, Canada and Europe must be on the same side.

That is a trading partner of ours. That is what she delivered to us as a message. Carbon pricing was part of the message she brought to us. I want to underline something, because I believe many of us here celebrated when we signed the free trade agreement with the E.U., the CETA agreement. We were very excited about that.

I have news for members opposite, in case they have not been paying attention to this. Europe is introducing a carbon border adjustment in the coming days. That means that products coming from and being manufactured in a country that has a carbon price in place will face fewer barriers being traded into the E.U.

This is about simple economics. We want to have that access so our businesses can thrive. Then through those strong businesses, we can have good-paying jobs for Canadians. Again, what the Conservatives are proposing today removes those opportunities for us.

I know I am running out of time, so I will just add that the other piece is investments in Canada. We are seeing international industries coming to Canada for battery manufacturing, zero-emission vehicles, battery recycling, solar farms and all that. What do they say? They say they are choosing Canada because we have one of the cleanest electrical grids in the world and because they believe that we are at the forefront of the green transition.

If the Conservatives are that opposed to carbon pricing, they can go into those communities where those jobs are being created and tell those people that they do not support those jobs being created. We have a strong plan for a green economy.

• (1105)

Mr. Marc Dalton (Pitt Meadows—Maple Ridge, CPC): Madam Speaker, the Liberals, backed by the NDP and the Bloc, are simply out of touch with everyday Canadians. She says that it is about simple economics for people to thrive. Right now, gas is \$2.15 a litre, the highest in North America. The member for Kootenay—Columbia just told me that across the line, it is \$1.30 Canadian. People are struggling. A seventh of food bank users are people who are working and cannot afford to eat.

Does the member not recognize that enough is enough, and that it is time to axe the tax?

Ms. Julie Dabrusin: Madam Speaker, I thought I outlined in quite a bit of detail why carbon pricing works as a system. We recognize people have been struggling with the high costs of inflation,

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but the carbon price is not the reason. In fact, the Bank of Canada said that the contribution of the carbon price to inflation was 0.15%. That is not even half a per cent; it is not even a quarter per cent. It is 0.15%.

Absolutely, we must be helping Canadians in this difficult time. When I mention things such as the fact that they can keep \$3,000 more of their earnings this year through an increased personal exemption, which the Conservatives did not support, those types of measures are what we are doing to help Canadians. This is along with the Canada child benefit, which is indexed to inflation, as well as child care agreements for \$10-a-day child care. We are there to support Canadians. We recognize they need that support, but getting rid of carbon pricing is not going to help Canadians.

Mr. Randall Garrison (Esquimalt—Saanich—Sooke, NDP): Madam Speaker, I appreciate the reasonable tone of the member's speech, especially in the face of such an irrational motion as we have before us today, which calls on cutting one of the only tools we are using to fight climate change. This is being done in the face of huge fires in my own province this summer.

I wonder if the hon. member would agree with me that there is some urgency when a provincial government had to spend nearly a billion dollars fighting fires this summer, just like British Columbia did. That is money that could have gone to health care. That is money that could have gone to affordability. If we do not fight climate change, government resources are going to be taken up more and more in just responding to the crisis.

• (1110)

Ms. Julie Dabrusin: Madam Speaker, I really appreciate that question, because I did not have enough time to go into that part, which is that climate change costs us. The example of the firefighting costs in B.C. is a wonderful example of that, and when I say "wonderful", I mean a terrible example.

The Canadian Climate Institute looked at it and said that the cost to GDP for every Canadian, or per person, would be \$630 by 2025. That is just the cost of climate change to us, as an estimate, by 2025, and it goes up from there. Climate change costs us. People are losing their homes, their businesses and their farms because of it. We want to protect them from that.

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[Translation]

Ms. Kristina Michaud (Avignon—La Mitis—Matane—Matapédia, BQ): Madam Speaker, I often hear the Minister of Environment say that greenhouse gas emissions decreased in 2022. Let us remember that, in 2022, we were just coming out of the pandemic. We had not broken free of it quite yet.

Yesterday, I read an article from the Canadian Climate Institute that said that, according to research, emissions actually rose in 2022. What is more, over the past few weeks, we learned that Canada intends to double oil production in Newfoundland.

In this context, what is Canada's plan for reducing greenhouse gas emissions?

Ms. Julie Dabrusin: Madam Speaker, I always appreciate the comments of this Bloc Québécois member. I can tell that we are both passionate about the environment, something I consider very important.

What are we doing to reduce greenhouse gas emissions?

We are doing a number of things. By 2035, for example, all new vehicles sold will be zero-emission vehicles. We are also helping Canadians change how they heat their homes. We are providing money to assist them. We are doing a variety of things, not just one thing. Carbon pricing, however, is very important.

Mr. Yves-François Blanchet (Beloeil—Chambly, BQ): Madam Speaker, I want to start by saying that I have the pleasure of sharing my time with my esteemed colleague, the hon. member for Jonquière.

Next, I want to quickly thank our Conservative friends. They have given us an amazing opportunity to expose their battle tactics. In my view, they have given us this opportunity far too early, to their own disadvantage. These tactics could prove to be their undoing. In summary, their strategy is to say the opposite of the truth or, to put it more bluntly, to lie.

The example of the firearms bill made that quite clear. The Conservatives brag like there is no tomorrow, but the removal of hunting rifles from Bill C-21 is due solely to the efforts of the member for Avignon—La Mitis—Matane—Matapédia. To say otherwise would be a crude and vulgar lie.

The example of the emissions regulations is another good joke. We do not get to vote on regulations. Let everyone take note. However, true to form, relying on rather old-fashioned tactics, the Conservatives have cobbled together a motion containing one point and a whole lot of vitriol. Now they are saying that if we do not want the point, we have to swallow the vitriol. Obviously, we vote against these kinds of Conservative motions. That is the natural reflex of an intelligent person.

The carbon tax does not apply to Quebec. I am almost tempted to say it in English, so there will be a small chance that three people or so will understand me. The carbon tax does not apply to Quebec. Quebec has a carbon exchange. It is a cap-and-trade system that was negotiated by successive ministers of the environment. The minister of the environment who was in office when the system was introduced in 2013 is someone I know well. It is me.

I just want the Conservatives to know that their attack ads are not working on Quebeckers. They can make all the dumb little jokes they want and buy ad spots on television because their coffers are full, but it is not working on Quebeckers. The Conservatives do not realize it. What do they know about Quebec? They held a convention in Quebec City where they somehow managed to avoid talking about Quebec and adopted proposals that run counter to what Quebeckers want. The Conservative leader comes to Quebec once a year, but he wants people to think that he has a second home there.

It was a tactical error to do this so early and to tell these lies so early. I have a whole year to debunk these lies, expose these tactics and show that the Conservative leader is not worthy of Quebeckers' trust, whether he becomes prime minister or not.

Canadians are caught between a rock and a hard place. They are caught between right-wing activists and proponents of fake left-wing individualism. They are caught between the Conservatives and the Liberals. However, that is not the case in Quebec. In Quebec, Quebeckers have the Bloc Québécois. They may even have the balance of power without any risk. We vote for what is good for Quebec, whether it comes from the Conservatives or the Liberals. We vote against what is bad for Quebec. In the meantime, we try to improve what is presented.

Let us look at the contents of the latest narrow-minded Conservative propaganda motion. First, as I was saying, the Bloc Québécois did not support anything because we do not vote to pass regulations. As usual, the Conservatives cooked up a motion today to try to trick the House. We will vote against the motion again today because it is bad for Quebec.

Still, the Conservative leader has done us a favour. I am pleased because, in between buying a tight T-shirt and a pair of Ray-Bans, by attacking us, he is admitting that it is the Bloc Québécois that will prevent any party from having a majority in the House, as it did in 2019 and 2021.

• (1115)

When we are talking about these two parties, a majority spells bad news for Quebec. The Bloc Québécois has never asked for new taxes or an increase in taxes. That is untrue. That is on the Conservatives. It is fake news.

Yes, the cost of living is a concern. Gas prices are concerning. The cost of groceries is concerning. Costs for farmers are concerning, as are costs for truckers. The plight of seniors is concerning, or at least it is to us. However, none of that is because of the carbon tax in Quebec. It does not apply in Quebec.

There is a question I often want to ask the Conservatives. I want to know what their issue is with the truth. I will explain why things are so expensive. I will explain why the Conservative leader's wacky idea of imposing partisan Conservative rule on the central bank is a ridiculous idea.

Here is a number: \$200 billion. That is how much the oil companies made in profits in 2022. I repeat: \$200 billion. There are 11 zeros in that number. In Canada, there are 40 million people, including Quebecers. Let us do the math. Let us remove seven zeros from the \$200 billion. That adds up to \$5,000 per capita in profits for the oil companies. That includes babies, seniors, everyone.

The Conservatives claim that fighting climate change is increasing the cost of living. That is false. It is big oil's despicable profits that are increasing the cost of living. That is \$200 billion in 2022 alone, on the backs of farmers, seniors, truck drivers, families. They need to stop with the lies. They are just knock-off lobbyists for big oil.

The Liberals are no better. There is one group that lies and another that covers up, and the oil companies are profiting from the \$200 billion in generous subsidies.

Neither one of these parties is working for the environment. Neither one of these parties is working for Quebec.

The Bloc Québécois will continue to work in good faith to keep Parliament running, even though some members are in campaign mode. We will continue to fight against inflation in a responsible and clean way. We will not put up with lies or deceit.

We will be voting against this motion. If the Conservatives or Liberals are looking for Quebec, if they are looking for the Bloc Québécois, they know where to find us.

● (1120)

[English]

Mr. Sukh Dhaliwal (Surrey—Newton, Lib.): Madam Speaker, I thank the hon. leader of the Bloc Québécois for his leadership on this file. The member mentioned that the leader of the Conservative Party did not know anything about Quebec. He has come to British Columbia a few times, but I personally believe he does not know about British Columbia either. British Columbia was the very first province—

Some hon. members: Oh, oh!

The Assistant Deputy Speaker (Mrs. Carol Hughes): I only recognized one individual. That individual is speaking, but I am hearing other voices. I would ask members, if they wish to participate, to wait until I recognize them.

The hon. member for Surrey—Newton.

Mr. Sukh Dhaliwal: Madam Speaker, I know why those members are aggravated. They know that he does not know anything about British Columbia. British Columbia was the first province to bring in a carbon tax in 2008. It covers 70% of the emissions created by fossil fuels.

What are his comments about British Columbia being the leader in that future?

[Translation]

Mr. Yves-François Blanchet: Madam Speaker, I find that very interesting.

In 1999, I went to Vancouver for four days. This means that I know as much about British Columbia as the Conservative leader

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knows about Quebec. I do not claim to know British Columbia. I say that with no malice whatsoever. I do not speak on behalf of British Columbia, and I do not wake up longing for the Rockies.

However, I will tell everyone here that when I say that no one else serves Quebec's interests, it is because the two major parties in the House must represent the interests of those they consider to be Canada as a whole, meaning Toronto and Edmonton.

Mr. Jacques Gourde (Lévis—Lotbinière, CPC): Madam Speaker, I took the time to listen to my colleague and I found what he said about oil company profits interesting.

My question will be simpler. Let us focus on Quebec, because my colleague is an expert on Quebecers and was the environment minister.

To help us understand the impact of all the gas taxes on an average family in Quebec, can the leader of the Bloc Québécois tell me how many litres of gas the average individual or average family in Quebec uses per year?

That way, we do not have to be very good at math to see how all these taxes taken together can affect a family. In Quebec, how many litres of gas does the average family of four use per year?

Mr. Yves-François Blanchet: In other words, Madam Speaker, how old is the captain? That is nonsense, but it is not entirely unexpected.

The member wants to do the math, so let me just say that it is \$5,000 per capita. That makes me want to say, "It is scandalous".

Mr. Alexandre Boulerice (Rosemont—La Petite-Patrie, NDP): Madam Speaker, historically, thanks to Jean Lesage and René Lévesque, Quebec has used its hydroelectric resources to produce green, clean energy. There is no oil production in Quebec, although the leader of the Bloc Québécois was once briefly tempted by a project on Anticosti Island.

However, we are among the world's biggest polluters. English Canada has a lot of work to do in the oil and gas sector, but the biggest purchasers of SUVs in Canada are Quebecers.

Despite our fantastic water resources, should we not be pushing our compatriots, our fellow Quebecers, to make an effort? It is not just English Canada's fault. Quebecers also need to do more to reduce greenhouse gas emissions.

● (1125)

Mr. Yves-François Blanchet: Madam Speaker, everyone must do more at all times to reduce greenhouse gas emissions, but the temptation to shift this responsibility to individuals is potentially rather regrettable because it removes some of the responsibility from those who are the biggest emitters.

I would remind my esteemed colleague that my work, at the time, with respect to Anticosti, was to regulate a project that would never happen. I believe that his party was strongly in favour of a project called energy east. They paid the price for it.

Business of Supply

I think that everyone must reduce emissions, make the effort. Quebeckers are no angels when it comes to the environment. Our consumption and our emissions are not so angelic. We have the advantage of being in an exceptional geographic position in the world when it comes to green energy and that means we have an obligation to be an example.

Mr. Mario Simard (Jonquière, BQ): Madam Speaker, it is hard to speak after someone so eloquent. I will do my best.

I feel that, with this motion, the Conservative Party has gone from what we knew about them, the populism of constantly presenting us with very simplistic solutions to complex problems, to trickery. Trickery that is crass and abhorrent deceit. It is hypocritical, devious. That is what I see in the motion by the Conservative Party.

Indeed, comparing efforts to fight climate change and the rising cost of living is irresponsible. I am sure that people will agree with me. I wonder if that irresponsibility is what the Conservatives call “common sense”.

I will say it again, and I will not come back to it. I will reiterate what my leader said. There is no carbon tax in Quebec. Quebec has its own carbon pricing, the carbon exchange. The second tax the Conservatives are referring to is a clean fuel regulation on which no one voted, but that they had previously proposed themselves. I will come back to that later.

I have repeatedly heard the leader of the official opposition say that Canada is broken. When I read his motion this morning, I see that the only thing that is broken is the Leader of the Opposition's value system. I have also heard him say, with respect to the cost of living, that people are requesting medical assistance in dying because they have nothing to eat. I have never heard anything so irresponsible in my life.

This summer, my mother-in-law passed away. She requested medical assistance in dying. Whenever anyone in that situation hears absurdities like that, they see the Conservative Party's true colours. I would say there is a love affair between the Conservatives and the oil industry, a bit like the Bloc Québécois and Quebec.

The worst deception before us today is the use of the rising cost of living and the plight of the most vulnerable to advance oil company projects. I do not think we have ever seen anything so indecent in the House.

In my view, the leader of the official opposition is driven by fear. I have the feeling that the leader of the official opposition is afraid that our dependence on oil and gas in Canada and Quebec will come to an end. I think that the leader of the official opposition is afraid of the end of oil in the same way that we in the Bloc Québécois are afraid of the demise of Quebec's culture, language and unique lifestyle. Our project is Quebec. His project is oil.

Let us review the facts. Again this week, we saw Conservative members burst into applause at the mention of new oil projects. That happens a lot. When we talk about oil in the House, they clearly lose their heads. When I first arrived here in 2019, I was surprised to hear shouts of “build the pipeline”.

Not only that, but I have previously seen a motion from the Conservative Party stating that oil is irreplaceable. The only thing that I see as being irreplaceable is air, water, and the relationship that I have with my son and my wife. It is certainly not oil. For a Conservative, oil is irreplaceable. The Conservatives even have buttons that say, “I love oil”. At this point, it is an all-consuming passion.

The Conservatives are in favour of all investment tax credits for the oil and gas sector. That is \$82 billion. We will not hear a Conservative say that we need to tighten public finances and reduce subsidies for fossil fuels. We will never hear that. As the Conservative leader said, 2022 is a record year. The big oil companies made \$200 billion in profit.

The opposition leader made an appearance in Québec City. I will read a thoroughly unpleasant quote. The Leader of the Opposition said that he would not throw billions of dollars at “projects that are mismanaged by incompetent politicians”. He actually said that to Quebeckers when he talked about strategic projects for public transit. However, I have never heard him say a single word about a Canadian project worth over \$30 billion that is nothing short of a disaster, does not serve us in Quebec and will continue to exacerbate the climate crisis. I have never heard him say a single word about Trans Mountain.

● (1130)

Let us be clear, the leader of the official opposition is not thinking about the next generation, he is thinking about the next election. The leader of the official opposition is not thinking of the poor, he is thinking of the wealthy, the big oil companies that are raking in billions of dollars. He is thinking about the greedy people living off fossil fuel subsidies. These are not empty words. I have hard evidence.

The duplicity does not end there. In 2011, the Conservative government did exactly what the Conservative Party is accusing the Liberal government of doing. What they are criticizing us for, as though we were in government, is Harper's renewable fuels regulations. Who was in government then? The leader of the official opposition and former leader Erin O'Toole.

I will quote Mr. O'Toole. I love this quote. I read it at night before going to bed: “We recognize that the most efficient way to reduce our emissions is to use pricing mechanisms.” The former Conservative leader wanted to put a price on carbon. That is incredible.

Not long ago, last week, the member for Bellechasse—Les Etchemins—Lévis started waving an invoice that she wanted to bring to the table. I invite her to table it. It is an invoice that, in her opinion, shows that there was a carbon tax in Quebec. If we look more closely at that invoice, however, what does it refer to? It refers to Quebec's emissions cap-and-trade system. The member was criticizing a Quebec pricing mechanism in the House of Commons.

The idiocy does not end there. There is more. Where was the member for Bellechasse—Les Etchemins—Lévis from 2008 to 2018? She was in Quebec City; she was a minister.

At that time, in 2015, what did Premier Philippe Couillard say on the floor of the Quebec National Assembly? He said, “And the beauty of the carbon market is that it can also generate revenues that are directly linked to climate change.” I can imagine the member right behind him cheering and clapping.

In 2012, Premier Jean Charest, who almost became the Conservative leader, said, “Quebec was the first jurisdiction in North America to introduce a carbon levy, with a program that was applauded by environmental groups while also being very good for the sector and producing \$200 million per year.”

Jean Charest was talking proudly about putting a price on carbon. Where was the member? She was right behind him, cheering. Now she is in the House of Commons waving around an energy bill mentioning that there is a price on carbon in Quebec and accusing the Bloc Québécois and the Liberal Party of Canada of bringing in this tax while she was a provincial minister in Quebec. Is that not deceitful?

Earlier, I contrasted our interest in Quebec with the Conservatives' interest in the oil industry. It made me think of a poem by Gérard Godin. He wrote a fantastic poem commenting on the turpitude and deceit of some politicians who were not standing up for Quebec. The poem ended by saying that some politicians will have “a grease stain on their conscience”.

That made me think about my Conservative colleagues, particularly those from Quebec. In 20 or 30 years, when their grandchildren ask them what they did to fight against climate change when they were MPs and how they acted, the only thing the Conservative members will be able to say is that they defended the interests of oil companies. They will have to say that they did nothing and that they defended the interests of oil companies.

My colleagues from Quebec are not going to have a grease stain on their conscience. They are going to have a great big oil stain.

● (1135)

Mr. Darrell Samson (Parliamentary Secretary to the Minister of Rural Economic Development and Minister responsible for the Atlantic Canada Opportunities Agency, Lib.): Madam Speaker, I want to thank my colleague for his very interesting and impressive speech. I liked the way he described the opposition leader. He made my day.

One thing is important. Can he explain why he thinks the Conservatives are against the Atlantic accord and the changes that we want to make to harness offshore wind energy? We want to ensure that we are able to do two things: contribute to the economy and help the environment.

The Conservatives are against that. Are they against the fact that the Atlantic provinces are starting to make some money? Are they against it because they do not want to invest in the green economy?

Mr. Mario Simard: Madam Speaker, is my colleague talking about Bill C-49? Yes? Okay.

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I find that rather strange. The Conservatives are probably against this bill for their own reasons. What I find odd about this bill is the addition of the term “renewable energy”. To me, oil has never been renewable energy. I do not know what others think, but I do not believe that oil is a renewable energy source.

They can speak for themselves, but I would say to my colleague that we have to be very careful. The Liberal government has a tendency to greenwash the oil and gas sector. Unfortunately, it is a lot like our Conservative colleagues in that regard.

[*English*]

Mr. Ziad Abouttaif (Edmonton Manning, CPC): Madam Speaker, we can tell sometimes when members of the Bloc Québécois are not comfortable, because they go in all directions, making accusations everywhere.

The question is this: How can the member of the Bloc Québécois support a radical tax increase on Quebecers by 17¢ a litre by supporting the clean fuel standard?

[*Translation*]

Mr. Mario Simard: Madam Speaker, what a happy coincidence. My colleague was the one who moved the motion stating that oil is irreplaceable. Not only did he say at the time that oil was irreplaceable, but he also wanted to designate a day to celebrate it. He wanted an international day to celebrate oil.

We are moving toward renewable energy, but the Conservative Party says we need to keep using oil. The Conservatives are dinosaurs through and through. The chief oil and gas lobbyists are telling low-income earners, people who cannot afford food, clothing and housing, that the oil sector should get more money. If that is not indecent, I do not know what is.

Ms. Heather McPherson (Edmonton Strathcona, NDP): Madam Speaker, I apologize in advance, but I am going to try to speak French today.

I would like to thank my colleague for his important speech. I feel compelled to tell him that, while the Conservatives deny climate change and do everything they can to divide the House and prevent Parliament from fighting climate change, most Albertans want the federal government to act. Albertans want a clean, healthy environment for their children, as do all Canadians.

Therefore, I want ask the member the following. How can we protect the environment and ensure that Albertans are protected, even those who are Conservatives?

● (1140)

Mr. Mario Simard: Madam Speaker, as we have said many times, no one wishes ill on Albertans. Unfortunately, their economy is based on the fossil fuel sector. Earlier, the leader clearly stated that Quebec was no more virtuous than anyone else. We have renewable energies, and we put them to good use.

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We need to review Canada's industrial landscape and stop subsidizing fossil fuels. We could develop wind and solar energy, as the United States is doing. Unfortunately, Canada is very far behind. The government is trying to invest in carbon capture strategies that will never work and trying to produce net-zero oil. It is sheer idiocy. We need to put an end to these pipe dreams and ask ourselves some tough questions about the energy transition.

Mr. Alexandre Boulerice (Rosemont—La Petite-Patrie, NDP): Madam Speaker, first, I will be sharing my time with the super, dynamic, experienced, highly knowledgeable and learned member for Timmins—James Bay.

I am tired of constantly talking about the carbon tax. I have reached my limit. The Conservatives have circled back to this nonsense five times in one year. That is just for one year and I am tired of it.

It is Groundhog Day all over again. They keep at it again and again, with the same old Conservative pro-oil, pro-fossil fuel rhetoric that flies in the face of science, the IPCC, the United Nations and even things that are happening in the Conservatives' own ridings. At some point, this kind of wilful blindness and denialism becomes frightening. It means we are going to keep right on polluting and, because polluting should be free. We are setting a bad example to the world, when average Canadians are already among the world's worst polluters per capita. Based on Canada's per capita greenhouse gas emissions, we are the world's second leading polluter. Fortunately, Canada is not as big as China or the planet would already be screwed.

We have to make a considerable effort to protect our environment, our children, future generations and to create good jobs for the future and sustainable jobs with sustainable energy. The Conservatives are living 50 or 60 years in the past, when we thought there would be no consequences to polluting so much and emitting so much carbon in the atmosphere, but now we know.

We not only know, but it has been proven and we are seeing it. The impact of climate change, climate disturbances and climate chaos can already been seen here at home and around the world. It is happening faster than predicted, more dramatically than predicted. Every three months, scientists tell us that they thought this was coming, but that it is going to be more serious more quickly and everywhere. No one will be spared.

We saw that this summer with forest fires like we have never seen in Quebec and in Canada. Here in Ottawa and Montreal, it smelled like smoke. There was smoke everywhere. Then there were the people in British Columbia and in Abitibi and on the North Shore who were forced to evacuate because they were risking their lives. Their homes could catch fire. That is where we are.

Because of climate change, some places are not getting enough rain, while others are getting far too much. The temperature is rising. There are more, bigger and more dangerous fires and wildfires. Other areas are being affected by flooding. I think it was in 2022 in Pakistan. At one point, a third of the country was under water. Millions of people were displaced to save their lives. We saw it again this summer in many places, such as Greece, Italy and just recently Libya. It rained so heavily in such a short period that a dam broke. Part of the city of Derna was completely devastated. Thousands of

people were killed, and that sort of thing is going to start happening more and more often.

If we listen to the Conservatives, we will hit a brick wall and keep pressing on the gas. Their plan is to do nothing. There are small measures that might help a little, like the carbon tax. The carbon tax is not a panacea. I am not saying that it will solve the problem, but they do not even want to do that. They are so out of touch with reality that they are ideologically blocked and unable to look anywhere else. They are wearing blinders.

There are parts of the planet, entire areas, that are going to become uninhabitable. If the average temperature rises to 35°C and the humidity is greater than 90%, the human body cannot cool itself down.

• (1145)

This causes extreme heatstroke leading to death, as the organs cannot survive. This will happen with greater frequency around the equator, whether in North Africa, Asia or Central America. Global warming is also causing accelerated evaporation of the oceans, which will make it more humid. What will people do when it reaches over 35° on a regular basis with extremely high humidity? They are going to move. They are not going to stay where they are. There will be a massive influx of climate refugees. We cannot be angry with them, since, where they live, it will literally become uninhabitable.

I asked a question last year to the Department of Immigration and the department of housing to find out what the federal government's plan is for receiving climate refugees. I was told that programs already exist. In fact, there is no plan, and yet we are already seeing a greater influx of refugees at the border. I recall that Roxham Road made the headlines in a somewhat populist way. People are increasingly going to be moving around on the planet and that will have consequences. I am saying this so that it is clear: The current Liberal government has no plan. I just want to mention that.

People will be on the move not only because they are too hot, but also because they are hungry. In a recent article in *The Guardian*, Cary Fowler, U.S. President Joe Biden's special envoy for food security, said there is every reason to believe that a global food shortage will take hold by 2050. As we have seen, problems are already happening because of certain conflicts. The war in Ukraine is impacting the wheat supply of many countries. However, the magnitude of the food shortage in question will be far greater and will persist in regions of the world where growing grains, fruit and vegetables becomes difficult. These consequences are very real, and the Conservatives seem determined not to see them. The current federal government, the Liberals, also have a responsibility, but they are clearly not doing enough. They tend to want to have it both ways

Here is a quote:

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We need to cut worldwide emissions by half by 2030 if we want to achieve net-zero emissions by 2050. That will require far more ambitious efforts to reduce emissions right now while ramping up investments in clean energy.... That is why it is time to do what a majority of Canadians, including in Alberta, believe is necessary, which is to put a hard cap on emissions from the Canadian oil and gas sector. ...any company or jurisdiction with net-zero emissions targets cannot continue to build or invest in new sources of fossil fuels. Companies cannot put off actually reducing their emissions by buying carbon credits. Also, they cannot lobby against climate action behind the scenes while claiming to be climate champions. Any progress made regarding net-zero emissions must be made public and independently verified.

That quote was from Catherine McKenna, former Liberal minister of environment and climate change. She wrote an op-ed in *La Presse* yesterday to tell us that the time to act is now. Unfortunately, despite the promises by the member for Laurier—Sainte-Marie, despite the commitments made by his government to put a hard cap on emissions from the oil and gas sector, there is still nothing on the table as of September 2023. We are still waiting for the Minister of Environment and Climate Change to introduce a measure that was supposed to have been in place months ago. The oil and gas sector is responsible for 30% of Canada's greenhouse gas emissions and its emissions are increasing. It has the worst record of all industrial sectors in the country by far. Without strong action, nothing will change.

Greenhouse gas emissions continue to increase, sadly. Looking at the curve between 2005 and 2021, we can see that they are increasing. It is unfortunate that my time is up, because I had a lot left to say.

• (1150)

[English]

Mrs. Jenica Atwin (Parliamentary Secretary to the Minister of Indigenous Services, Lib.): Madam Speaker, I really appreciate that my hon. colleague is offering Canadians facts and truth. When it comes to the climate crisis, we all have to face this reality together.

Could he comment quickly on how important it is to speak about what is really happening across the country and in this world? The fact is that it is a clear waste of our time what we are seeing with this opposition motion.

[Translation]

Mr. Alexandre Boulerice: Madam Speaker, I thank my colleague for her question, for her long-standing concern for environmental issues and for her work on this file.

I wanted to make an important point. Canada is a laughingstock right now. Successive Conservative and Liberal governments have not been able to turn things around. The Paris Agreement tells us that in order to avoid catastrophe and keep the planet livable, we must not exceed 1.5°C of global average temperature increase by the end of the century. We are already at 1.3°C, I think, so there is very little room to manoeuvre left. On top of that, even if countries meet their current commitments—if they meet them, which they have not—we are heading towards 2.4°C. At 2.4°C, we will have the catastrophic scenarios I mentioned earlier.

I therefore hope that we can work together to improve things. We have a lot of work to do in many areas. One thing is clear. We cannot count on the Conservatives on this.

Mr. Denis Trudel (Longueuil—Saint-Hubert, BQ): Madam Speaker, I really liked my colleague's indignant tone when he said the Liberals opposite are not doing enough to fight climate change.

I do have one question, though. In the last budget, in 2023, the government still gave billions of dollars to oil companies, specifically for carbon capture, an approach that we know does not work at all. My NDP friends voted for the budget. How do they explain that?

Mr. Alexandre Boulerice: Madam Speaker, I thank my colleague for acknowledging my indignation over climate change. Everyone knows that we are pushing the Liberals to do more on a lot of files, including the climate crisis and the housing crisis, because they are not doing enough in either of those areas.

We negotiated an agreement to make them do things that they never agreed to do in the past. We are using our leverage to obtain many advantages for people in the areas of health, dental care and indigenous housing. We are also pushing the government to pass anti-strikebreaking legislation at the federal level, which would be a first in the history of Canadian federal politics.

[English]

Mr. Ziad Aboultaif (Edmonton Manning, CPC): Madam Speaker, the hon. member is from Quebec. Does he deny that the Bloc Québécois supported the clean fuel standard, which has added 17¢ per litre for every Quebecker?

[Translation]

Mr. Alexandre Boulerice: Madam Speaker, I understand that, today, the Conservatives are on a partisan mission to attack the Bloc Québécois. They can do what they want. It is their choice and their interest.

I would simply like to point out that there are people like Rich Kruger, the president and CEO of Suncor, who had the gall to say that his company is going to stop talking about renewable energy and climate change, that it is going to stop pretending, that its only interest is to make as much profit as possible as quickly as possible, and that that is just too bad for everyone else, for citizens, for the planet and for the environment. It is people like Rich Kruger that this member and his party support in life.

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Ms. Heather McPherson (Edmonton Strathcona, NDP): Madam Speaker, as the critic for labour for the NDP, my hon. colleague has done so much to put in place things like anti-scab legislation. I know that he cares about workers. One thing I know about the Conservatives is that they do not. When Suncor, a week after the provincial election, laid off 1,500 workers, the Conservatives said nothing about it. When Rich Kruger says that he will burn this planet to the ground just so he can get that last dollar out, we do not hear a peep from the Conservatives.

Perhaps he could talk about why the Conservatives care so much about CEOs and so little about Albertan workers.

• (1155)

[Translation]

Mr. Alexandre Boulerice: Madam Speaker, I thank my colleague from Edmonton Strathcona for her hard work standing up for workers in Alberta.

I think that we need to be able to make this transition, which will create sustainable jobs in sustainable energy sectors. This means that people could go through this transition with the vocational training and support they need to take on the jobs of the future in renewable energy. There is incredible potential in Alberta when it comes to solar and wind energy. I hope we will be able to work with the unions and the Alberta Federation of Labour to create good jobs in this new sector.

[English]

Mr. Charlie Angus (Timmins—James Bay, NDP): Madam Speaker, I would like to bring forward a bit of history to start today, because I know the Conservatives hate deeply facts and history.

I am going to read from the people of the State of California, attorney general versus ExxonMobil, Shell, Chevron, ConocoPhillips, American Petroleum Institute and BP.

In 1988, Shell, along with all the other big oil companies, did major scientific studies of the dangers of fossil fuel burning. In that report to Shell executives, they warned that the drive of CO₂ buildup was going to have “significant changes in sea level, ocean currents, precipitation patterns, regional temperature and weather.” However, they said something even more concerning. They said, “by the time the global warming becomes detectable”, which they said in 2000, “it could be too late to take effective countermeasures.” They knew they were burning the planet.

What did Shell do? The next year, Shell raised the drilling platforms in the ocean by six feet. It was saying to hell with the people who were living on islands in the Pacific and the hundreds of millions of people on shorelines. It knew it was burning the planet. It knew the ice caps were melting. It was damned sure it would get every last dime before the planet was done. To make that possible, it had to use an elaborate system of disinformation.

As such, today, once again, we have the Conservatives bringing forward this constant disinformation, but it is not even smart disinformation. It is distilled down to this dumb meme they are going to send out as their attack ads.

Yesterday, we were told that the leader of the Conservative Party apparently had a paper route. He has no other job history, but he had a paper route at one time. In June, I remember him saying that he was going to keep speaking until the government dropped the budget and got rid of dental and child benefits. He spoke for three hours to his rapturous backbench, and then even it got bored and the budget passed. Therefore, he needed a new stunt, because with the Conservatives it is always about stunts, spin, smear and smoke and mirrors, and smoke from fires.

The Conservative leader announced, in the hottest summer in the history of the planet, that he was going to go from coast to coast to coast to pitch the idea that burning fossil fuels should be free, saying to hell with the 14 million hectares of forest lands that burned this year, the 200,000 Canadians displaced and the communities that lived in fear. When he came to my region, people were trying to escape the fire by canoe, because we could not get Hercules planes up there. He was promising that not only was he going to expand pipelines everywhere, but that fossil fuel burning was going to be free.

However, it did not work out so well for him, because even he had to flee the fires. However, it did not stop the Conservatives with their sock puppets of disinformation.

The member for Kelowna—Lake Country, as her community was burning, was going on about making fossil fuel burning free, showing disconnect and disinterest in keeping people safe, and not recognizing that there was a direct link between fossil fuel burning and the destruction of our environment. The member for Kelowna—Lake Country would rather promote the sock puppet messages from the Conservative war room than protect her own people.

I mention the member for Kelowna—Lake Country, because just recently the West Kelowna fire chief, Jason Brolund, spoke at the United Nations. This is what leadership is. He said that climate change became very real for West Kelowna, that the scope and scale for them to fight was nearly impossible to be successful again, that because of the changing climate leading to conditions, it was making it easier for fires to burn and grow. He asked a simple question. He wanted to know why we were spending money on fighting fires when we should be spending money on dealing with climate change.

However, we would not hear that from the member for Kelowna—Lake Country, because she is a loyal sock puppet of disinformation for the Conservative Party office.

The new member for Calgary Heritage, in his very first speech in the House, was going on about the rise in the price of potatoes, and he blamed it on the carbon tax. Calgary gets its potatoes from Idaho. There is no carbon tax there. That does not matter to Conservatives, because they are deeply opposed to facts. Facts make them angry; they need spin.

• (1200)

What caused the rise of price of potatoes in Calgary Heritage? It was the droughts and the wildfires in the western United States. However, the Conservatives do not want us to hear that.

Here we are with a motion that is not a credible one. It is more like political toxic gibberish, which is what we have come to expect. The Conservatives are failing to deliver for Canadians, as well as leaving our children and our grandchildren to deal with a planet that is now on fire. They are missing and deliberately undermining the opportunities.

I want to say one more thing so people can understand how serious this is. The EU just released its graph on Canada's forest fire average. In just over three days, Canada pumped more than 50 megatonnes of carbon into the atmosphere from wild, out-of-control forest fires. That is more than what we would normally put out in a year, and this is at the end of September. Those members know that the planet is on fire, but it is to hell with the planet and the truth.

At the same time this past week, the International Energy Agency said that the explosive growth in renewables would give us a fighting chance against the 1.5 barrier. It does give us a chance. We are seeing a huge investment in renewables around the world, and yet the Conservative Party, at every level, tries to stop, delay and deny the ability of Canada to participate.

My friends should look at Texas. Texas is so right wing it would fit in comfortably with the Conservatives. Texas got through the death-causing heat wave because of the massive amount of solar that is online right now in the state of Texas, with over 890,000 jobs in Texas in clean energy. More and more are coming on stream all the time, yet the Conservatives do not want people to hear that. That is why Danielle Smith tried to shut down the huge opportunities for Alberta workers, because they would rather tie themselves to an industry.

We heard Rich Kruger say that they are more than willing to burn the planet to get the last dollar and leave Alberta workers, and Canadian workers, on the sidelines. They were going to go after work. That was Kruger's statement. They just fired 1,500 workers. We have lost 50,000 jobs in the oil patch as profits have gone up \$200 billion. They have made \$200 billion while our planet burns and they are not putting any of it back in. They expect the taxpayer to pay for their carbon capture and they are firing the workers. Therefore, Alberta energy workers came forward and said they wanted a vision to get into the huge opportunities in clean energy. All we have heard from the Conservatives is absolute ridicule.

People will look back on this era and wonder whether there were any leaders willing to stand up to protect the future of the planet, because the planet is in crisis now. If people ever want to hear laughter, just listen to the Conservatives talk about the planetary crisis. It is to hell with the planet, to hell with our burning forests, to hell with the people who are living in the coastal regions, like in Nova Scotia. Two years in a row there have been catastrophic hurricanes.

The Conservatives would rather leave people to that fate than actually be part of the solution with which the rest of the world is em-

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bracing and moving ahead. It is about ideology. It is about disinformation. It is about rage farming. They believe that if they run disinformation, get people angry and spin disinformation, the member, who lives in Stornoway, will become prime minister. To hell with the planet, to hell with our children; to hell with our burning forests.

We need to come together and show a better vision.

The United States, with Biden's massive investments in clean tech, is leaving us at the side of the road. We hear the Conservatives ridiculing the investments in the battery plants. We either compete or we are left at the side of the road. However, it is to hell with the workers, to hell with the future economy, to hell with our planet. It is about rage farming. It is about obstructing anything that we are doing as a nation to live up to our global obligations and to preserve this planet for our children.

• (1205)

Mr. Warren Steinley (Regina—Lewvan, CPC): Madam Speaker, I listened to the member's speech. Speeches like that are why he is going to lose his seat in Timmins—James Bay, because to him it is to hell with his constituents. He does not care what they have to say. We have been up there. We know that they have an affordability crisis, and he spent the last 10 minutes rage farming, talking about Conservatives not caring about the environment or Conservatives not caring about children. I have three children. What a ridiculously stupid comment by that member, to say that we—

Some hon. members: Oh, oh!

The Assistant Deputy Speaker (Mrs. Alexandra Mendès): Can we avoid the insults, please? The hon. member knows this. That is actually going overboard.

The hon. member for Regina—Lewvan.

Mr. Warren Steinley: Comments can be stupid, Madam Speaker; I did not call the member that. Sometimes people say things on this floor, like we do not care about children, that are ridiculous.

Have the constituents from Timmins—James Bay talked about the affordability crisis? How much has the food bank usage gone up under the member's watch?

Mr. Charlie Angus: Madam Speaker, the Conservatives come to rage farm in Timmins and they refuse to meet with the Cree, the Ojibway and the Algonquin people. They never will meet with the indigenous people in the riding. They do not seem to think they count.

Business of Supply

Let us talk affordability. What is the price for a Chassagne- Montrachet bottle of wine? It is \$818. A bottle of Le Passage Cotes is \$265. A bottle of Vaio Armaron Amarone is \$719. That was the drink of four Conservatives who were flown over to England by the climate-crisis crank, Dan McTeague, for one night. Talk about affordability. Here is the kicker: Those four Conservatives then finished the night off with a \$1,791 bottle of Champagne.

For them to talk about affordability, when their leader lives in a 19-room mansion; when they are being flown around the world by cranks, claiming that it is being paid for; and they are spending \$1,800 on Champagne. To hell with the—

The Assistant Deputy Speaker (Mrs. Alexandra Mendès): The hon. deputy House leader.

Mr. Mark Gerretsen (Kingston and the Islands, Lib.): Madam Speaker, with all due respect to the member for Regina—Lewvan, at least the member for Timmins—James Bay is allowed to stand and speak in the House. We have been back in session for only a week and a half, and we have already seen the Conservative leader silence members from debating on a very important issue with respect to India. We have already seen the Leader of the Opposition send out an email, which has been leaked, telling his caucus members not to talk about the LGBTQ rights that are being discussed literally on the streets in front of this place.

Therefore, it is very rich for the member for Regina—Lewvan to stand up and somehow tell the member for Timmins—James Bay that he is unable to speak on behalf of his constituents. Would the member like to comment on that?

Mr. Charlie Angus: Madam Speaker, I feel at a disadvantage; I have never had a paper route. However, I have been a carpenter and I have worked to raise my kids. I have done many jobs, and the thing that I have learned from people is that they expect us to be honest.

The leader of the Conservative Party, at a time of international crisis, refused to get a security clearance. He does not want to know facts; he wants to be able to throw whatever toxic gibberish out there while we are dealing with an international crisis. That man is not fit to live in a 19-room mansion. He is not fit to have his private chef paid for by the taxpayer. He is not fit to be—

The Assistant Deputy Speaker (Mrs. Alexandra Mendès): The hon. member for Pierre-Boucher—Les Patriotes—Verchères.

[*Translation*]

Mr. Xavier Barsalou-Duval (Pierre-Boucher—Les Patriotes—Verchères, BQ): Madam Speaker, I want to congratulate the member for Timmins—James Bay for his speech on the Conservative motion. Why am I congratulating him? In his speech, he appealed to people's intelligence, unlike today's Conservative motion, which appeals more at the reptilian brain, if not lower.

When we look at the Conservative motion, we can see that it is not based on facts. The Conservatives are not interested in the facts when the facts do not fit their narrative. They are not interested in reality and the truth. That is okay. When the facts do not work for them, they come up with an alternative reality. They write motions full of half-truths and then complain about how everyone else voted against the motions. They are saying that the carbon tax applies in

Quebec when it does not apply in Quebec. They are saying that the Bloc Québécois supported regulations that the government adopted.

What does my NDP colleague think of these tactics? Does he think that we are here in Parliament to elevate the debate, or to use spin regardless of whether it is true or false?

• (1210)

[*English*]

Mr. Charlie Angus: Madam Speaker, we are in a really dangerous moment. The Conservatives are using disinformation, rage farming and toxic means to attack, and people are starting to get more and more threatening toward MPs who disagree with them. We need to elevate this to a level where we are dealing with a climate crisis of unprecedented proportions. Instead, we get toxic gibberish from the Conservatives.

Mr. Rick Perkins (South Shore—St. Margarets, CPC): Madam Speaker, the volume and verbosity of the member for Timmins—James Bay was in inverse relationship to the quality of the content of that presentation.

I will be splitting my time with the member for Banff—Airdrie.

Today I rise on an important motion that is significant to Nova Scotians and to all Canadians. As we know, after eight years of the NDP-Liberal government, Canadians are struggling to make ends meet. Earlier this week, I spoke in the House about one such example, university student Walt McDonald. Walt, like many students right across Canada, is having to choose between eating his breakfast and saving his single meal from the food bank for lunch. The Dalhousie Student Union food bank, as I informed the House, says that the food bank usage is at a record high. It says that 10 years ago, it served just snacks to students, but now students are using it for their weekly meal plan.

This is what life is like after eight years of the NDP-Liberal government. What is the government's solution? It is to raise taxes. There is not anything it has met that it does not want to tax, and there is not anything it has met that it does not want to increase the tax on. The Liberal-NDP government has supported measures to quadruple the carbon tax to 61¢ per litre.

The carbon tax hikes are coming at the worst possible time for Canadian families and for students like Walt who are struggling with the rising costs of everything due to the inflation caused by this coalition. The NDP-Liberals would argue that their cherished carbon tax is the only way to address climate change, but of course we know this is false, first, because it does nothing to improve the environment as carbon emissions continue to go up, and second, because it fails to grasp the reality of what life is like not only for Nova Scotians but for all Canadians.

Business of Supply

Unlike the large cities that are dense in population and have ample services like public transit, rural communities like mine do not enjoy those same amenities. When a lobster fisherman wakes up before dawn to go on the water in February, there is no public transit system to take him to the local dock at four in the morning. A forestry worker who drives from Lunenburg to Northfield in 20 minutes cannot spend an extra four hours to commute via bicycle. A senior living on OAS and CPP does not have \$30,000 to spare to upgrade their heating system to solar, or even \$10,000. The MP for Central Nova brags about his solution for everything in our affordability crisis, which is to install a \$10,000 heat pump.

These are the realities of what life is like in Nova Scotia and other rural communities across Canada. Taxing these everyday realities is not a solution and is doing nothing to combat climate change. While the Liberal approach is to punish working people for heating their homes and driving to work, Conservatives believe we should protect our environment with technology and not taxes, by developing Canada's energy sector to utilize cleaner energy like natural gas and propane. By reducing our reliance on fossil fuels like coal in favour of clean natural gas, Canada could develop its energy sector from coast to coast and finally end its import of dirty fuels from overseas dictatorships such as Venezuela and Saudi Arabia, which are what we have to use in Nova Scotia.

These are the fuels we are forced to use in our homes and to drive our vehicles in Nova Scotia because the Liberals would rather we do that than have a pipeline to the east coast from the Prairies with some of the cleanest oil and gas on the planet. They would rather have us use electricity from burning coal imported from Columbia than extract the trillions of cubic feet of shale gas we have right in Nova Scotia and New Brunswick. We actually import shale gas from the United States into Nova Scotia thanks to the efforts of the NDP-Liberal coalition.

By unleashing Canada's natural resource sector and approving good Canadian projects, global emissions would be reduced. That is because Canada has the strictest environmental regulations in the world for producing these resources. The oil extracted in Canada is the cleanest, most efficient energy in the world. On top of that, the emissions produced by shipping oil across the Atlantic Ocean from Saudi Arabia completely negate any benefit from any supposed improvement by the carbon tax.

• (1215)

Let us green-light Newfoundland and Labrador's planned increases in oil and gas production, which would allow us to fully replace every single barrel of oil we are importing from abroad within five years. Let us make Canada a place where nuclear and hydro-electricity are welcomed, not admonished.

The other issue the Liberals argue is that they believe this tax is revenue-neutral and that through this climate action incentive payment, as they euphemistically call it, eight out of 10 families will receive more in rebate cheques than they pay out. That is sort of typical Liberal math, where they cannot find a million people whom they have let in. They cannot add that, and on top of that, they actually believe that one can tax somebody and give them back more money than they paid out. It does not make any basic

economic sense. It is completely false, as we know from the Parliamentary Budget Officer's report.

The report stated that Nova Scotians would see a net loss of \$1,500 from the carbon tax despite the receipt of climate action incentive payments from the Liberals. The truth is that the Liberal carbon tax is bad for Nova Scotia. If those rebates were working, Nova Scotia Liberal MPs would not be calling on their own government to increase the size of those cheques. Obviously those cheques are not having any impact on our cost of living crisis. If they were, two weeks ago after caucus, in a unified force under the member for Kings—Hants, the MPs would not have gone out and said that they should increase those payments.

The Liberals' solution to the carbon tax problem of the cost of living is to actually increase payments to people, not get rid of the problem in the first place. It is the carbon tax that is causing it. Despite this, the Liberals from Atlantic Canada support raising the cost of living on Nova Scotian families. Since 2015, the Liberal members from Atlantic Canada have voted 23 times in Parliament for the carbon tax, the increases in the carbon tax and the budgetary measures to increase the carbon tax.

The Liberal members from Atlantic Canada have an opportunity today to show that they will actually speak up for their constituents and not for their leader, demand that the cause of the problem be removed from the cost of living, and demand that their own government remove the carbon tax. They know, because they heard it all summer, that the carbon tax is the main irritant that the government has caused to the economic well-being of Canadians.

The member who spoke previously mocked anyone drawing attention to the cost of living increases. I will do it again, since he does not seem to care about the price of anything, which is, again, why he will soon be the former member for that riding. Under the NDP-Liberal coalition government, lettuce is up 94%, onions are up 69%, cabbage is up 70%, carrots are up 74%, potatoes are up 73%, oranges are up 77% and apples are up 61%. The only thing that is up in this country, besides taxes, is the cost of everything, thanks to the NDP-Liberal government.

It is hypocritical of these members to stand up and say that we should stand out, take a different view on this and stand up for our constituents. I challenge them to, once and for all, speak for what their constituents told them this summer, which I know was not happy. They told me personally that what they heard at the door was not happy. They should stand up and support this motion and oppose the government's continued policy of increasing the cost of living on every Canadian and every Nova Scotian.

Business of Supply

• (1220)

Mrs. Jenica Atwin (Parliamentary Secretary to the Minister of Indigenous Services, Lib.): Madam Speaker, the assertions of this poorly constructed and willfully ignorant motion are categorically false.

As a member from the Atlantic provinces, I am being targeted by this farce. I really want to speak on behalf of my constituents, who are very aware of what we are facing with the climate crisis. They understand that the price on pollution drives innovation and is but one important part of our climate action plan. The Atlantic Accord is yet another. It incentivizes offshore wind and renewable energy options, yet the Conservatives are against it.

Why does nothing the Conservatives say about the environment make any sense?

Mr. Rick Perkins: Madam Speaker, what does not make sense is that the member voted 23 times to support the cost of living increase. What does not make sense is that the Green/NDP member, trying to make up her mind on what her belief is, is willing to actually vote for a bill that would impose a process on the development of offshore energy in Atlantic Canada using the same process exported from Bill C-69 into Bill C-49. That process has resulted in absolutely no energy projects being developed in western Canada. That same approach would have the same result on Atlantic energy development in Atlantic Canada, which is that zero projects would get approved, even the renewable energy ones that we all want.

[Translation]

Mr. Mario Simard (Jonquière, BQ): Madam Speaker, I have a very simple question for my colleague. I would like to know how he voted on the clean fuel regulations. Did he vote for or against them? It is quite a simple question.

[English]

Mr. Rick Perkins: Madam Speaker, it was a simple question and I will give a simple answer.

I voted against it, and the reason I voted against is that it puts the cost of living up. On July 1, in Nova Scotia, gas went up 14¢ a litre. Five days later, it went up another 5¢ a litre. As a result of the NDP-Liberal coalition, gas went up from \$1.49 to \$1.69 in the space of five days. It is now almost \$2.00 thanks to the great cost of living concern of the Liberal-NDP coalition.

Mr. Brian Masse (Windsor West, NDP): Madam Speaker, I thank my colleague, whom I enjoy working with at the industry committee.

When I look at this motion, I would ask the member a very serious question about process. The motion calls for the government to actually introduce legislation within seven days. For all the hyperbole in what we have heard today, the Conservatives are asking the government to come with its own legislation within seven days, during a time when we have a national holiday to recognize indigenous persons, and actually table it back in the House. How realistic is it to have that expectation? If the government does not have that prepared, is the Conservative Party going to prepare and actually table that legislation within seven days after this motion fails? It is very juvenile.

Mr. Rick Perkins: Madam Speaker, except for that last word, I do enjoy very much working with the member on the industry committee. He is very positive and helpful in moving the agenda forward.

However, on that particular issue, I think it is pretty easy. We have legislation and bills on the carbon tax that we have introduced in the past to simply remove the carbon tax. Government members do not have to create a new bill. It is already there in the ones they voted against. They could reintroduce it and vote for it.

* * *

• (1225)

BUSINESS OF THE HOUSE

Mrs. Shelby Kramp-Neuman (Hastings—Lennox and Addington, CPC): Madam Speaker, there have been consultations, and I believe that if you seek it, you will find unanimous consent for the following motion. I move:

That, notwithstanding any Standing Order or usual practice of the House, on Tuesday, October 3, 2023, should the regular business of the House following the election of the Speaker commence between 2:00 p.m. and 4:00 p.m., the House shall immediately proceed to Statements by Members, followed by Oral Questions, and by the Daily Routine of Business; and at the expiry of time provided for debate on the opposition motion today, all questions necessary to dispose of the motion be deemed put, a recorded division deemed demanded, and the vote deferred until Wednesday, October 4, 2023, at the expiry of the time provided for Oral Questions.

The Assistant Deputy Speaker (Mrs. Alexandra Mendès): All those opposed to the hon. member's moving the motion will please say nay.

It is agreed.

[Translation]

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

(Motion agreed to)

* * *

[English]

BUSINESS OF SUPPLY**OPPOSITION MOTION—CARBON TAXES**

The House resumed consideration of the motion.

Mr. Randall Garrison (Esquimalt—Saanich—Sooke, NDP): Madam Speaker, it is always hard to figure out where to start when the Conservatives are talking about the carbon tax, since they deny the reality of the climate crisis. However, I was in Kelowna this summer when West Kelowna and parts of Kelowna were on fire, and the Conservative member for Kelowna—Lake Country was tweeting about ending the carbon tax. One of my friends, and a friend of many in the House, the former member for Kelowna—Lake Country, Stephen Fuhr, had his house burned to the ground during these fires.

When the members talk about how expensive things get, I think they are forgetting that for those who are the victims of fires, floods and typhoons, things are really very expensive and very difficult. Lives are completely disrupted. If we do not take action on climate change, we are going to see those costs passed on to people in huge numbers.

Mr. Rick Perkins: Madam Speaker, the first part of the member's question is false. The member for Kelowna—Lake Country did not tweet that tweet during the fires; it was an earlier tweet that was retweeted by the Minister of Environment to create a false impression. The members of the NDP should get their facts straight.

On the second part, I will take no lessons from the member down there about the fact that I had forest fires and hurricanes in my riding. There have been hurricanes in my riding for 400 years. The fires in my riding were started by man-made initiatives, so—

The Assistant Deputy Speaker (Mrs. Alexandra Mendès): Resuming debate, the hon. member for Banff—Airdrie.

Mr. Blake Richards (Banff—Airdrie, CPC): Madam Speaker, I rise today to speak to this motion on the Liberal-NDP carbon tax. I want to answer five questions in my remarks today.

The first is to talk a bit about the effects of the tax. There is certainly no doubt that the Liberal-NDP carbon tax is having a significant impact on affordability for all Canadians. We only have to look at how it layers on top of layers. When farmers are hit with the carbon tax, what do members think happens? Of course, it raises the cost of food. When those who transport those goods, whether it be our food or other goods, are hit with the carbon tax on the fuel they use for transport, what do members think happens? It increases the price of goods that everyone buys. When producers, stores and businesses are faced with all the cost increases that come along the distribution chain and on the inputs they have, what do members think happens? Of course, it raises the price of everything people buy. At the end of the day, who ends up paying for all of that? It is Canadians who are suffering. Canadians who are struggling to get by right now are faced with additional cost increases because of the Liberal-NDP carbon tax. That is the effect this tax has. Everything that Canadians buy and consume becomes more unaffordable. It makes it more difficult for them to feed their families, heat their homes and fuel up their cars to get to and from work, or their children's soccer practices, and things like that. That is the only effect it has had, quite frankly, because it has had no impact on reducing emissions. Its only impact has been to make life more unaffordable for all Canadians.

What have been the results? The claim here is what we have heard many members of the Liberal-NDP government and the Bloc Québécois say, which is that the whole point is to make people feel some pain. They want to make people feel pain so they will somehow adjust their behaviour, as if there somehow might be a choice in Canada for people to not heat their homes. I do not think there is a choice for most Canadians as to whether they will heat their homes or not. We live in a cold country and in the winter people need to heat their homes, so we are not going to incentivize them by saying that they will freeze in the dark in their homes. Frankly, that is not a choice that people can or should make.

Business of Supply

When we talk about this idea that somehow it is going to have some impact and make people feel pain, yes, it certainly has made them feel pain. It has forced people to make those difficult choices of letting their kids go a bit hungrier so they can afford to heat their homes or afford to drive to work. There is no doubt it has made people feel pain, but has it had an impact on the environment? Certainly not. The Liberal government has never met an emissions target, because its only approach has been to try to make Canadians feel pain and to make life more unaffordable for them. That is not the way to approach the situation we face. All that has done is make people feel that pain needlessly. That has been the result.

Not only that, our oil and gas sector has been vilified, which is harmful to our economy. It harms people's paycheques and the opportunities for not only Albertans in my home province, but people all across this country, as well as their livelihoods, which in some cases have been taken away. In other cases they are struggling that much more to try and get by. If we hit them with a carbon tax and a second carbon tax on top of that, it just becomes more difficult for people to live their lives. That is what the result has been.

● (1230)

How has the government gotten away with this? We only need look at the text of our opposition day motion itself to provide that reminder to Canadians. It notes that the so-called clean fuel standard that the Bloc Québécois supports would raise gas prices in Quebec by a whopping 17¢ per litre. The Bloc has openly stated that carbon taxes need to be increased much more radically. This is, of course, absolutely ridiculous at a time when people in that province, like in every other province, are already struggling to make ends meet.

Of course, the NDP and Liberals have supported measures to quadruple the carbon tax to 61¢ per litre, which will only further burden already struggling Canadians, and they are empowered to do so by members of caucus from all regions of the country. I will give an example of the Atlantic Canada members of Parliament. They claim they are not in favour of carbon taxes, and yet they have supported carbon tax measures 23 times since the current government has been in office. Canadians absolutely deserve much better than that kind of deceptive behaviour. This is a clear indication that they have absolutely no regard for the financial well-being of their own constituents. Instead, they just have a blind adherence to their Prime Minister and their political party. It is those parties' penchant for ignoring the real costs and the true impact on the taxpayer, who is paying the freight. That is what is happening.

We are in a position in this country where the Liberal-NDP government constantly demands more and more from Canadians to fund its agenda. It ends up trapping them in a vicious circle where those same policies that fire the very inflation leave them with less and less to pay for them. No government measure illustrates that better than the Liberal-NDP-Bloc carbon tax.

Business of Supply

I would like to touch on the outcome of those Liberal-NDP-Bloc policies. I mentioned earlier that the Liberals have never met an emissions target in eight years, so it is clear that their carbon tax, which they claim they have to charge in order to curb emissions, is just simply a monumental Trojan Horse concealing what is simply a monstrous cash grab. Their so-called price on carbon raises the cost of absolutely every good and service as it gets downloaded through manufacturing, production and distribution chains to land on the Canadian consumer. Not only is the carbon tax buried in the price of everything that we buy, Canadians also find it as a direct line item on their utility bills for essentials, such as home heating, and many of the other products that we need.

We have seen that Liberal policies have accomplished the absolute opposite of what government policy should do. The intent should be to help those who are most vulnerable in our society and, at the very least, to cause them no harm. Unfortunately, the Liberal carbon tax has been causing outsized harm to those same vulnerable groups. The tax has led to an increase in the cost of goods and services that most impacts those who are already struggling to make ends meet. We are seeing that first-hand in the struggles of low-income families, seniors on fixed incomes and people living in rural areas when they are faced with higher transportation costs and what that means to an already stretched household budget.

Instead of helping the most vulnerable, the Liberal carbon tax has created those burdens on people who can least afford it. Since Parliament resumed last week, we have heard Conservative members explain the impacts on the cost of food, for example, that inflation, the carbon tax and other government measures are having. I will not get into those details, but we have heard them. They have been elaborated on quite significantly in this House by many members of my party. Liberal members heckle and seem to be tired of hearing about it, but the truth is, because they do not want to hear it repeated, that when we tax the farmer, when we tax the trucker and tax everyone involved in the supply chain, we tax the consumer and make life more unaffordable for Canadians.

• (1235)

At the end of the day, we need to see the carbon tax axed so we can bring down the price on everything for Canadians. There is only one party in this House of Commons that will do that, and it is the Conservative Party.

Ms. Heather McPherson (Edmonton Strathcona, NDP): Madam Speaker, my colleague spoke a lot about costs. In Alberta, workers are losing their jobs because the oil and gas sector is no longer able to keep them employed. We just lost 1,500 from Suncor just recently.

The fact of the matter is in 2016, the wildfires in northern Alberta cost almost \$10 billion. With the wildfires in British Columbia, we have spent \$357 million fighting those wildfires this year. When he talks about costs, surely he can recognize that the cost of inaction on climate change is much greater.

In his constituency, in Canmore, the community is working so hard to fight for climate change. It is reducing emissions by 80% by 2050 in that city.

How does he justify the fact that the Conservatives have no plan to deal with the climate crisis to the folks in Canmore?

Mr. Blake Richards: Madam Speaker, the member raised the concept that jobs are being lost in the oil and gas industry. Why are those jobs being lost? Those jobs are being lost because members of the Liberal-NDP government, including the member who claims to represent Albertans, are vilifying that industry. They are putting up policies that make it impossible for the industry to survive.

What does that mean? That means that instead of using Albertan and Canadian oil and gas, which is the most environmentally friendly in the world, we are seeing oil being used from places like Saudi Arabia, Venezuela and others that do not have that same environmental record. That then harms the opportunity for Canadians to make a living and for Canadians to be able to afford to heat their homes and feed their families, and that is the—

• (1240)

The Assistant Deputy Speaker (Mrs. Alexandra Mendès): Questions and comments, the hon. parliamentary secretary.

Ms. Julie Dabrusin (Parliamentary Secretary to the Minister of Environment and Climate Change and to the Minister of Energy and Natural Resources, Lib.): Madam Speaker, I am trying to make sure I properly understand what the member opposite is saying. A family of four in Alberta will receive a cheque for \$386 in the next couple of weeks.

Is the motion today suggesting that he would like to scrap that and not have people in his community receive that payment? Does he not trust the people in his community to make the best economic decisions as to how to use that money?

Mr. Blake Richards: Madam Speaker, I would challenge the member to come to Alberta and tell Albertans, to their faces, that somehow they are better off because of the carbon tax. I can tell members that is not how anyone in Alberta or anywhere in this country feels. They feel the effects on their bottom line. They feel the effects on their ability to feed their families, to heat their homes and drive their vehicles to get to work. That is what the Liberal-NDP carbon tax is doing. It is making life more difficult for all Canadians. There is only one party that will axe that tax and bring home lower prices for all Canadians, and that is the Conservative Party of Canada.

[Translation]

Ms. Kristina Michaud (Avignon—La Mitis—Matane—Matapédia, BQ): Madam Speaker, the Conservative Party is taking an impressive intellectual shortcut by connecting the carbon tax to the rising cost of living. Not once in their speeches have we heard them say that we need to make more of an effort to fight climate change. We never hear them say what my colleagues said earlier, that the oil companies made \$200 billion in profits in 2022. We never hear them talk about how the government is helping out the oil companies. In fact, it has helped them to the tune of \$82 billion in subsidies.

Business of Supply

If the government had the courage to halt these subsidies, we could spend all that fine money on helping the people who need it the most. We could help the most vulnerable among us, try to solve the housing crisis, provide grocery money, and fix the homelessness problem. Why not use that money for these things?

However, the shortcut between the carbon tax and the increased cost of living is irresponsible.

[*English*]

Mr. Blake Richards: Madam Speaker, the carbon tax clearly has had the effect of making life more difficult and less affordable for all Canadians. It certainly has had no impact on the environment. We have seen, under the government, that it has never met any of its emissions targets.

What can we do instead? Rather than taxes, let us look at technology as a way of reducing our emissions. We already have an industry in this country that is one of the most environmentally responsible in the world. It is constantly looking at ways to improve its technology. We can be leaders in this world, both environmentally and economically, by ensuring that we are leaders in all forms of energy. That is the approach we need to see in this country, not taxation.

Mr. Warren Steinley (Regina—Lewvan, CPC): Madam Speaker, it is my pleasure to take to my feet today on behalf of the constituents in Regina—Lewvan to talk about the opposition motion. I am going to go over the motion at the start of my speech and then talk about what effects the carbon tax has had on constituents in Regina—Lewvan and across this country.

The motion brought forward by the leader of the Conservative Party of Canada says:

That, given that,

(a) the Bloc Québécois supported the so-called “Clean Fuel Standard”, a second national carbon tax, which will raise gas prices in Quebec by 17 cents per litre, according to the Parliamentary Budget Officer;

(b) the Bloc Québécois said carbon taxes need to be “increased much more radically than it is now”;

(c) the New Democratic Party and Liberals supported measures to quadruple the carbon tax to 61 cents per litre; and

(d) Atlantic Liberal members of Parliament allege they are not in favour of the carbon taxes but have supported carbon tax measures 23 times since 2015, the House call on the government to introduce legislation, within seven days of this motion being adopted, to repeal all carbon taxes to bring home lower prices on gas, groceries, and home heating.

Like many members in the House, I went across my riding this summer and talked to people about what was affecting them the most. I would be very surprised if most members did not hear the feedback that the cost of living is really hampering everyone across the country. The cost of mortgages has doubled. Twenty-five per cent of mortgages in Canada have increased rapidly, and those Canadians are struggling to make their mortgage payments.

The cost of groceries is going nowhere but up. Carrots and oranges are up 75%. Potatoes are up 74%. Lettuce is up 94%. That is hitting people's pocketbooks each and every time they go to the grocery store.

With regard to the cost of home heating and the cost of gas, in Saskatchewan we do not have the luxury of going on a transit sys-

tem to and from work very often. People drive to work. Moms have to drive their kids to soccer, football and hockey. My colleague from Banff—Airdrie put it very rightly when he said that it is not a luxury to heat our homes in the winter in Saskatchewan.

Saskatchewan gets pretty cold in the winter. I am not sure if other members have been there in January, but -40°C is quite a regular occurrence. I say that because I want to tell a bit of a personal story about what happened to my family and a friend of mine and their kids on the way home from hockey one night a couple of years ago.

They were coming home from the rink and a blizzard just came in. They were halfway home and the people from the rink all stopped in the middle of the road to make sure they could see. They could not, so they were stuck. Actually, eventually, my wife and kids and my friend ended up hitting the ditch. The temperature that day when they got to hockey practice was -10°C . By eight o'clock at night, when they were in the ditch, it was -30°C .

This is one thing I always think about when we talk about the use of electric vehicles, which sometimes and in some places are useful. That night, my wife, my three kids, my friend and his kids spent nine hours in a vehicle in -40°C . If that was an electric vehicle, they would all be dead right now. There are places where electric vehicles can be used, but this is a situation where it would have been catastrophic. There were 10 to 12 cars lined up in a row when this snowstorm hit.

Yes, we have to do better and use technology to make sure that we can lower our emissions, but sometimes there is a necessity to maintain what we have right now. That is one thing I want to put on the record. Sometimes when we tax people there is no choice but to still use fossil fuels in this country and still use clean, sustainably made and produced fossil fuels from our country.

My colleague also had another great point. Whenever we do not use oil and gas from Canada, we ship it in from nations across the world that do not have anywhere near the environmental standards that we have in this country. Actually, in essence, the less fossil fuel we use from Canada from our oil and gas sector, which we do not promote because we think it is a dirty word, the more the world's emissions go up. If we want to talk about the environment, we will talk about the environment all day on this side, because we believe that technology, not taxes, will fix this problem and lower emissions in our country.

I look forward to splitting my time with a member of the Liberal Party sooner rather than later.

● (1245)

To get back to the point, the crux of this motion is to make life more affordable for all Canadians. I think the NDP and Bloc doth protest too much. I have heard a lot of passion coming from the Bloc and the NDP about this motion, because it hits a little too close to home for them. They realize that they are on the wrong side of this issue.

Business of Supply

The Conservatives have been talking about affordability for years and the fact that there is a financial crisis coming. Costs are rising on everything, and that is affecting pocketbooks and making people in this country try to stretch their paycheque further and further each month. I asked the member for Milton about food bank usage in his city and he could not answer because he is too busy talking from prepared PMO notes.

I will talk about the food bank usage in my city of Regina. In 2017-18, food banks gave out about 48,573 hampers, and we need to do better than that. The unfortunate fact is that in 2022-23, they had to give out 75,246 hampers. That is a 64.5% increase in the amount of food they had to give out at the food bank in Regina. The even sadder part is that 40% of the food bank usage was by people under 18. I will say that again: 40% of the food bank usage in my city is by people under 18.

We keep hearing from the NDP-Liberal government that it has never been so good in this country. However, after eight years this country is broken. Nine out of 10 young people in this country do not think they will be able to afford a home, ever. We used to pay off a mortgage in 25 years. Now in this country, people need 25 years to save up to afford the down payment on a home. That is not the Canada I want my three children to grow up in.

There are measures that we can take immediately. I heard from the parliamentary secretary that people get more back from the carbon tax. That is not true. People go to the grocery store. If the government taxes the farmer who grows the food, taxes the trucker who trucks the food and taxes the grocery store owner who has to keep the lights on and sell the food, that all trickles down to the consumer. The grocery rebate does not cut it. It is not making up the difference.

The Prime Minister himself stood up and said thank goodness the government increased the child tax benefit because it helps to pay the mortgages that have increased. That is not the point of that benefit. It is supposed to help raise kids and help put kids in sports, not help pay mortgages, which have continually increased because of out-of-control spending by the current Liberal government and its NDP junior partner. It is out-of-control spending. When the government put \$60 billion more debt onto the backs of Canadians in this country with its last budget, that caused inflation to rise. When inflation rises, that causes the Bank of Canada to increase interest rates.

Do not take my word for it. Tiff Macklem, the Governor of the Bank of Canada, said that every time there is an announcement that the carbon tax is going up, inflation goes up across the country. That is exactly what the Governor of the Bank of Canada said to the people of Canada.

We are also talking about what we can do, and everyone asks what our plan is. Our plan is to control spending, which would decrease inflation and decrease interest rates, incentivize municipalities to build houses so housing becomes more affordable once again, and give building bonuses to the municipalities that are far exceeding the targets they have. That is what we are talking about doing. There is hope for this country, and we are going to turn hurt into hope in the coming years. We will roll out plans that involve technology, not taxes, for the environment.

What is interesting is that the New Democrats, the Bloc members and the Liberals have all talked about how much they care about the environment. The funny thing is that the NDP-Liberal coalition has never met an emissions target that it has set. It has caused all this pain for our country, including an affordability crisis, a housing crisis and doubling the price of rent, and it has done nothing to hit an emissions target for the environment. The Liberals committed to planting two billion trees. The member for Lakeland has actually planted more trees than has the entire government.

When it comes to putting Canadians first, we will always put Canadians first and listen to our constituents. I am happy to support this motion.

• (1250)

Ms. Julie Dabrusin (Parliamentary Secretary to the Minister of Environment and Climate Change and to the Minister of Energy and Natural Resources, Lib.): Madam Speaker, it is very interesting to hear the member opposite, but I feel it is very important that we correct some of the things he put forward, because they are patently untrue.

Let us start with oil imports. Today, the rate of oil imports coming into our country is lower than it has been in decades. In fact, it is lower than it was at the time of the Conservative government of which the Leader of the Opposition was a member. There were actually higher oil imports at that time. I wanted to correct that.

I will also correct another piece. When we are talking about inflation and the connection to carbon pricing, the Bank of Canada said that the impact of the carbon price on inflation is 0.15%. That is less than half of a per cent, so the numbers the member opposite is stating are just incorrect.

That is my comment. I do not really have a question. I just wanted to add that comment.

• (1255)

Mr. Warren Steinley: Madam Speaker, I know Liberals are generally very loose with their facts, but I did not say a number when it came to inflation. I said the Bank of Canada governor, Tiff Macklem, said that every time there is an announcement that the carbon tax is going up, inflation goes up. If the member wants to stand on a record of adding \$60 billion in more debt onto Canadians and say that it does not affect inflation, she can explain that to her constituents.

One other thing I would say is that she is part of a government whose Prime Minister stood up on national TV and said the government will take on debt so Canadians do not have to. Who does he think pays the debt of the Government of Canada? It is taxpayers across the country. I will take no lessons on fiscal or monetary policy from her.

Business of Supply

[Translation]

Mr. Denis Trudel (Longueuil—Saint-Hubert, BQ): Madam Speaker, today, the Conservatives are serving up another load of hogwash to make us think they care about the most vulnerable among us. I just got back from a tour of Quebec; the housing crisis is visible everywhere. There are tent cities all over the place, single mothers sleeping in their cars and pregnant women giving birth outside.

In 2022, the oil industry made \$200 billion in profit. The Liberal government sent \$50 billion to the oil industry in 2022. I have not heard my Conservative colleagues protesting that.

How many homes does my colleague think we could build with the \$50 billion we sent to the oil industry in 2022?

[English]

Mr. Warren Steinley: Madam Speaker, I will always be a supporter of our oil and gas industry. It is the cleanest and most sustainable oil and gas that can be found anywhere in the world. We do it the most environmentally friendly and better.

Sometimes I think the Bloc does not realize that we are not in government. We will put through policies that get more houses built. I agree that we have a housing crisis in this country. We have people paying double for rent, and we have people paying double for their mortgages, and that was all set up by the NDP-Liberal reckless coalition.

Mr. Charlie Angus (Timmins—James Bay, NDP): Madam Speaker, I am still trying to get an answer about the four Conservatives, the members for Northumberland—Peterborough South, Lakeland, Cumberland—Colchester and Battlefords—Lloydminster, who flew over to England for a single meeting. They were fed chateaubriand, porterhouse steaks, oysters and smoked salmon at a cost of \$4,690. Who paid for that? They say that Dan McTeague, the well-known climate crisis denier, paid for that, but that is simply not credible.

Then they started into the booze: \$818 Canadian for one bottle of wine. That was not good enough. That just wet their lips. It was \$265 Canadian for the second bottle of wine. The third bottle of wine, when they were really tipsy and talking climate denial, was \$719. Then they finished it off with an \$1,800 bottle of wine. That was \$3,593 just on the booze alone.

Will the member be honest and tell us who paid for that trip and why they were over in the U.K.? This is an enormous amount of money. Who was trying to influence the Conservatives on climate denial?

Mr. Warren Steinley: Madam Speaker, once again the member is showing just how out of touch he is with his constituents. He wants to talk about something that does not affect his constituents. His constituents want to know where he is when it comes to affordability. His constituents want to know where he is when it comes to supporting them in this House.

I cannot wait to share that clip. When he is on his feet, the only thing he can do is rage-farm, try to make people feel bad and make personal attacks instead of supporting his constituents. It is actually

quite embarrassing for him, and I hope he has a great time retiring in California, where he should be happier.

Mr. Sukh Dhaliwal (Surrey—Newton, Lib.): Madam Speaker, I am thankful for the opportunity to take part in this debate today.

Our government is relentlessly focused on building an economy with stable prices, steady growth and abundant, good middle-class jobs. The last three years have been difficult, which has increased the financial pressure on Canadians. First the country was slammed by the COVID pandemic, then came the COVID recession, supply chain bottlenecks, labour shortages, Russia's illegal invasion of Ukraine, wildfires and hurricanes.

Fortunately, the Canadian economy has remained resilient, and in many ways, we are performing much better than our international peers. There are nearly one million more Canadians in the job market today than before the pandemic, and the OECD predicts next year Canada will experience the strongest economic growth among all G7 countries.

Since 2015, our government has been making significant investments to support Canadians and make life more affordable through actions that are making a real impact and putting more money in the pockets of Canadians. For example, the government is supporting about 3.5 million families annually through the tax-free Canada child benefit, with families receiving up to \$7,400 per child under the age of six, which is an increase of \$440 from last year. In fact, the latest payment was issued to Canadian families just last week.

Over the past seven years, the Canada child benefit has helped lift 435,000 children out of poverty and provides real, meaningful support to middle-class families every single month.

Our government has also increased old age security benefits for seniors aged 75 and older by 10% as of July 2022, which is providing more than \$800 in additional support to full pensioners. This is in addition to strengthening the Canada pension plan, which will eventually raise the maximum retirement benefit by up to 50%. Increases to the guaranteed income supplement for the lowest income single seniors has raised benefits for nearly 900,000 low-income seniors. Our government has also enhanced and expanded the Canada workers benefit to better support millions of low- and modest-income Canadian workers.

In 2021, the latest year we have data for from Statistics Canada, there were close to 2.3 million fewer Canadians living in poverty compared to 2015. In other words, in 2021, 7.4% of Canadians lived in poverty, which is down from 14.5% in 2015. Our government remains committed to reaching its goal of a 50% reduction in poverty by 2030 based on 2015 levels.

Through measures and programs like the ones I have just highlighted, we have strengthened the social safety net millions of Canadians count on, all the while ensuring Canada maintains the lowest deficit and net debt-to-GDP ratio of G7 countries.

Business of Supply

In the past year, we have supported Canadians through global inflation by introducing a suite of targeted measures to help the Canadians who needed it most to help them pay their bills. This included a one-time inflation relief payment last fall to 11 million low- and modest-income Canadians, which was worth up to \$467 for a couple with two children and up to \$234 for a single Canadian without children. It also included direct tax-free payments of up to \$1,300 per child over two years to eligible families to cover dental expenses for their children under the age of 12 while we continue to work on implementing the new Canadian dental care plan.

• (1300)

Since 2015, it has been obvious that our priority is to build a strong middle class so that everyone can succeed, and it will continue to be like this. That is why, at the beginning of this fall session, our government tabled an important bill, the affordable housing and grocery act, which would eliminate the GST on new apartment construction projects, in addition to helping to stabilize grocery prices for Canadians. These are foundational investments that continue to make a real difference in the lives of Canadians.

Even the pillar of our climate action plan, a price on carbon, is providing more money for most Canadians than it costs them. Climate change is a threat to Canadians and the entire world, and carbon pricing is an essential tool to address it. We know that Canada, like the rest of the world, needs to transition our economy as quickly as possible to clean sources of energy, so we can eliminate carbon pollution, which is changing the climate.

In 2008, in my own home province of British Columbia, the government implemented North America's first broad-based carbon tax, which applies to the purchase and use of fossil fuels and covers approximately 70% of provincial greenhouse gas emissions. The Conservatives may think it was a joint NDP and government bill, but it was the free enterprise premier at that time, Mr. Gordon Campbell, who was the one who brought in this leadership when it came to the carbon tax.

In 2016, when we announced the pan-Canadian approach to pricing carbon pollution, some provinces, including British Columbia, were already leading the charge on pollution pricing and were seen as global leaders. The pan-Canadian approach was designed to leave provinces and territories the flexibility to continue to lead with their own pollution pricing systems, while setting minimum national standards that ensured carbon pollution pricing would be in place across the country.

Canada's carbon pollution pricing policy is designed to be affordable for Canadians while growing a clean economy. All of the direct proceeds from the federal carbon pricing system are returned to the jurisdictions where they were collected. If we do not act, we will face a world of ever-increasing costs and instability due to natural disasters, such as forest fires, flooding and crop failures. This summer's wildfires and natural disasters throughout Canada was a reminder that we must take serious action, as fast as possible.

In conclusion, our relentless focus as a government is on investing in Canadians, restoring middle-class prosperity and building a country where everyone has a real chance to succeed. The members opposite are calling for action and, frankly, we are doing just that.

• (1305)

Hon. Kerry-Lynne Findlay (South Surrey—White Rock, CPC): Madam Speaker, the member for Surrey—Newton calls it global inflation, but even random Liberals such as John Manley and Bill Morneau have said that the Liberal government is causing inflation. It is homegrown. It is reckless spending. It is not prioritizing their spending the way they should.

We have adjacent ridings. In fact, the member lives in my riding, and I am often in his riding because we are neighbours. In our ridings, they cannot afford groceries. Our constituents cannot afford to fill their gas tanks. We have gas prices in the Lower Mainland at over \$2 a litre. The very middle class that he is speaking about are the ones who are falling further and further behind.

I am wondering how much more pain the member for Surrey—Newton wants to inflict on his constituents and mine for a failed carbon tax that does not reduce emissions, does not fight fires and has not stopped hurting Canadians.

Mr. Sukh Dhaliwal: Madam Speaker, I see a pattern from the hon. member for South Surrey—White Rock when it comes to misleading Canadians. I will mention two instances.

The minister was in Surrey to plant trees and bring in a program to plant trees. I recall the hon. member tweeting that we did not meet the targets. In fact, the truth was that I was able to come up with the numbers that clearly show that we are ahead of those targets.

When it comes to the middle-class families, the biggest number for child care is going into Surrey—Newton. I am very proud of the policy and of the people of Surrey—Newton, who have given me a chance time after time, and the only reason is that their voice is here, and I am not misleading the people.

• (1310)

Mr. Brian Masse (Windsor West, NDP): Madam Speaker, one of the curious aspects of the motion is that it would require the Liberal Party to create legislation within seven days, which would come at a time when we have a national day of significance for first nations' recognition and what we need to reconcile.

I find it rather curious, in the sense, and I ask why they would not create their own legislation. How does the member feel about that? If the motion passes in its current context, the Conservatives, and I have checked, do not actually have legislation tabled for this, so they would have to draft it up within a few days. How does the member feel about the motion that would have his party create legislation?

Business of Supply

I find it rather curious that the Conservatives say they do not trust the Liberals, but at the same time they are wanting them to create—

The Assistant Deputy Speaker (Mrs. Alexandra Mendès): I have to give the hon. member for Surrey—Newton time to answer.

Mr. Sukh Dhaliwal: Madam Speaker, I thank the hon. member for Windsor West for bringing up this issue.

I am very proud of the Liberal government. The legislation that we brought forward has always been well thought out and has helped middle-class families in Canada, whether it was to do with the Canada child benefit, the environment or safety.

All the legislation that we brought forward was very well thought out and planned. I can assure the hon. member that any legislation moving forward will be in the best interest of every Canadian.

Ms. Elizabeth May (Saanich—Gulf Islands, GP): Madam Speaker, we have another day's debate on carbon pricing, which is a necessary but completely insufficient response to the climate crisis. This is one of things that lacks context in these debates, which is that it is as if carbon pricing were an adequate response to the climate crisis. It is not.

Canada's emissions have continued to rise as the government of the day, while talking a good game, has increased subsidies to the fossil fuel sector and increased production of fossil fuels from Canada, all at the very time we must be slashing them deeply. I wonder if the hon. member has any comment on the sorry record of his government.

Mr. Sukh Dhaliwal: Madam Speaker, I will go back to my home province of British Columbia where the government implemented carbon pricing in 2008. Now, it covers approximately 70% of the provincial greenhouse gas emissions. It helps, but there is more to be done, and our government is committed to doing that.

Mr. Francesco Sorbara (Vaughan—Woodbridge, Lib.): Madam Speaker, I will be sharing my time with the member for Louis-Saint-Laurent.

It is wonderful to rise today. I am quite interested to speak to today's Conservative opposition day motion, brought forward by the Leader of the Opposition. It speaks to many of the issues that we are dealing with in society and how best to tackle them in today's economy, in today's Canada and the world context that we are situated in.

I am pleased to take part in today's debate to speak about the economic situation in Canada and the rest of the world, and some of the measures we, as a government, are taking to make life more affordable from coast to coast to coast in this beautiful country.

We know that interest rates are high, and that is weighing heavily on Canadians. We know rates have become what I would call normalized after the 2008-09 financial crisis, and we are seeing this both here in Canada and in the United States. Liquidity measures have been reversed, there is quantitative easing and so forth. We are seeing a return to normalized rates. However, we know that this is, in part, being driven by global inflation and the battle against it, as well as the normalization of the economy post-COVID.

Global inflation has driven up the cost of necessities, and people are worried about their family finances. Canadian consumer prices rose by 4% last month. That is why our government is focused on building an economy with strong and consistent growth, as well as abundant, well-paying middle-class jobs. We are committed to helping Canadians get through this difficult time.

We are seeing some positive results from all our hard work. The OECD projects that Canada will have the strongest economic growth in the G7 next year. DBRS Morningstar also recently confirmed our AAA credit rating earlier this month. I would note that I actually worked at DBRS for a number of years before going into the bond markets here in Canada. I would like to say hello to many of my colleagues who are still at that entity.

• (1315)

[*Translation*]

There are 980,000 more Canadians employed now than before the pandemic. Most notably, the labour force participation rate for Canadians in their prime working years reached a new record of 85.7% in June.

Studies have been published about our early learning and child care system.

[*English*]

Studies show that every dollar invested in early childhood education generates between \$1.50 and \$2.80 in economic activity for the broader economy. Affordable early learning and child care is important to our economy and to our country. It is one of the most important ways we are helping middle-class families across Canada with real, meaningful support every single month. All provinces and territories have signed agreements with the federal government, reducing the average cost by over 50%, and we are on track to reach the \$10-a-day child care that we committed to by 2026. That is something I think all members of this House should be proud of and applaud.

The government will provide an additional \$625 million to support provinces and territories in investing in infrastructure that would make child care more accessible and would target underserved communities.

I would like to say that, with my almost two-year-old in day care these days, we have seen an over 50% reduction in our day care fees, saving us approximately \$800 a month in after-tax money. Our family is blessed in many ways. If we put that to before-tax money, it is saving our family over \$1,000 a month, or \$12,000 a year.

An hon. member: Oh, oh!

Mr. Francesco Sorbara: Madam Speaker, I would like to say hello to the hon. member from Calgary who just shouted something out. He is a gentleman and an avid golfer. I wish him the best.

Making sure Canadians have access to affordable child care is important, but we also know that far too many Canadians are struggling with the increasing cost of essentials, such as housing and groceries.

Business of Supply

Such initiatives as putting a price on carbon, an effective and affordable way to combat climate change, has been putting more money back in the pockets of Canadians. Eight out of 10 households get more money back than they pay, with low- and middle-income households benefiting the most.

We know that more needs to be done to address affordability. That is why we began this fall parliamentary session by introducing Bill C-56.

I just came from subbing in on the finance committee with CMHC officials, and it was great to talk about the removal of the goods and services tax on new purpose-built rental housing to encourage the construction of more rental homes, including apartment buildings, student housing and senior residences, across Canada.

I come from an area of the country where builders build houses and the associations are located. Since 2015, I will put on record, I have argued that we remove the GST on purpose-built rental housing in combination with the provinces. The GST combined with the HST would allow, encourage and incentivize more purpose-built rental housing to be built across the country and here in Ontario even more so. All the associations are applauding it. I encourage this measure and that Bill C-56 be passed as quickly as possible by all sides of the House.

[Translation]

For a two-bedroom rental unit valued at \$500,000, the enhanced GST rental rebate could deliver \$25,000 in tax relief.

• (1320)

[English]

This is another tool to help create the necessary conditions to build the types of housing that we need, that Canadians need and that families want to live in. This measure would also remove the restriction in the existing GST rules to ensure that public service bodies, such as universities, colleges, hospitals, charities and qualifying non-profit organizations that build or purchase purpose-built rental housing, are permitted to claim the 100% enhanced GST rental rebate. The government is also calling on the provinces that currently apply provincial sales taxes or the provincial portion of the HST on rental housing to join us by matching our rebate for new rental housing.

In fact, the finance minister of Ontario, an old colleague of mine whom I worked with for a number of years in Toronto at DBRS, came out that same day and said that the Province of Ontario would be joining the federal government in removing the tax on purpose-built rental housing, the HST portion on the federal side. We encourage all provinces and territories to join in, follow the lead of some of the provinces and territories and eliminate the provincial component.

We are also requesting that local governments put an end to exclusionary zoning and encourage building apartments near public transit in order to have their housing accelerator fund applications approved. Earlier this month, the government announced that London, Ontario, will be the first city to benefit from this fund, and it will certainly not be the last. It represents one of the ways we are encouraging initiatives aimed at increasing housing supply. It also

supports the development of complete, low-carbon, climate-resilient communities that are affordable, inclusive, equitable and diverse.

Every community across Canada needs to build more homes faster, so we can reduce the cost of housing for everyone. We know that there are more cranes currently in the city of Toronto than in any other city in North America. We could combine cities in North America, and we would not reach the same number of cranes. I want to salute all the builders and workers out there from the carpenters union, IBEW, the pipefitters, everyone working on the condos and high-rises in downtown Toronto, in the GTA, across Ontario and Canada who get up every morning and build the housing we need. We need to applaud them. We are going to give them more work, not just today but in the years to come.

Without more homes in our communities, it is difficult for businesses to attract the workers they need to grow and succeed. When people spend more of their income on housing, it means less money is being spent in our communities for necessities such as groceries. We are taking immediate steps to enhance competition in the Canadian economy, with a focus on the grocery sector, to help stabilize costs for middle-class Canadians.

[Translation]

Through Bill C-56, the government is introducing the first series of legislative changes to the Competition Act to give more power to the Competition Bureau to investigate when industries are behaving unfairly, for example where price fixing or price gouging is occurring, and take enforcement action; remove the efficiencies defence, to end anti-competitive mergers that raise prices and limit choices for Canadian consumers; and empower the Competition Bureau to block collaborations that stifle competition and consumer choice, particularly in situations where large grocers prevent smaller competitors from establishing operations nearby.

[English]

By making these changes, we will empower the Competition Bureau to investigate price gouging and price-fixing. I have been calling for this for a very long time. More competition and less consolidation, more innovation and lower prices mean more choice for consumers across Canada.

Business of Supply

In conclusion, our government understands that many Canadians still need to get through these difficult times. Canadians are being pressured, and we understand that. The focus of our government is investing in Canadians, restoring middle-class prosperity and building a country where everyone has a real chance to succeed. We will continue to do that day after day.

Mr. Dave Epp (Chatham-Kent—Leamington, CPC): Madam Speaker, I note that my hon. colleague across the way spent much of his speech talking about measures that the government is introducing to address other government measures that have raised the cost of living for so many Canadians. I applaud the efforts to outline the mitigation efforts, but today is about a Conservative motion to eliminate the carbon tax, which is one of the drivers of the increased costs that Canadians are suffering from.

We have heard much about greenhouse gas targets. Let us go to the environment for a second. The current government has never met one greenhouse gas target it has set.

We have also heard a lot about hurricanes and fires and the challenges that Canadians are facing from our environment. My question for my hon. colleague is twofold: As a buried premise to that issue, what would the carbon tax have to be to stop hurricanes and wildfires? If the government had met its greenhouse gas emissions targets, would that have stopped those hurricanes and those fires that Canadians are suffering from?

• (1325)

Mr. Francesco Sorbara: Madam Speaker, the first thing I would say is that we have a plan to fight climate change, and I hope to see and would like to see a plan from the official opposition to do the same. The greatest threat we have today globally, existentially, is climate change. We need to fight it. We need to reduce greenhouse gas emissions here in Canada. We need to help the world do that in unison, and we are.

We see today's announcement of a \$7-billion investment in Quebec with Northvolt. We are seeing announcements on technologies. If one walked down Sparks Street yesterday and spoke to representatives from Rio Tinto, Teck Resources or a number of companies, including those putting electric buses on the road, one would see that we are collaborating with all levels of government and with private industry, which I love, to reduce greenhouse gas emissions. Therefore, I encourage the official opposition—

The Assistant Deputy Speaker (Mrs. Alexandra Mendès): Questions and comments, the hon. member for Jonquière.

[*Translation*]

Mr. Mario Simard (Jonquière, BQ): Madam Speaker, this morning, we saw the leader of the official opposition completely exploit the cost of living crisis and therefore exploit the suffering of poor people who cannot afford to house, clothe or feed themselves, just to push big oil's agenda. In 2022, the oil companies made \$200 billion in profits, which represents \$5,000 per Canadian, young and old.

I do not know what my colleague thinks, but if we want to lower the cost of living, if we want to help people out, should we not start by ending the subsidies for the greedy oil and gas sector?

Mr. Francesco Sorbara: Madam Speaker, I thank my colleague for the question. The housing crisis is one of the most important issues for this government. We have introduced many measures to help Canadians not only buy, but build houses.

[*English*]

We continue to work with all levels of government through the housing accelerator fund and increasing the Canada mortgage bond from \$40 billion to \$60 billion, which is something that is a little esoteric. Finance guys, like me, love to see that. There is about \$200 billion in CMBs out there trading, which will encourage 30,000 new rental apartments to be built every year across this country.

[*Translation*]

It is very important for us to have an overall picture of the real estate market in Canada.

[*English*]

We are making sure we are doing everything to help Canadians purchase a home—

The Assistant Deputy Speaker (Mrs. Alexandra Mendès): Questions and comments, the hon. member for Edmonton Strathcona.

Ms. Heather McPherson (Edmonton Strathcona, NDP): Madam Speaker, this debate today has been a bit absurd. The Conservatives have once again brought up this debate because, frankly, they are fundraising off it. They need to make some mailers, and they all want their clips on this particular issue. It is not in any way meaningfully looking at ways that we can deal with the climate crisis or the cost of living crisis. I am not even going to deal with the motion; I am going to deal with some of the member's speech.

One thing the member had spoken about is how the carbon tax works and how it helps people because of the rebates. When Rachel Notley, who brought in the very first carbon tax in the country, did this in Alberta, she did it in a way that actually helped Alberta respond to the climate crisis, and it was much stronger in terms of making sure. In fact, \$1.5 billion went to the Calgary green line, which is really important for the city of Calgary. One point five billion dollars went to—

Some hon. members: Oh, oh!

The Assistant Deputy Speaker (Mrs. Alexandra Mendès): I am going to stop the hon. member. Could we have some silence so the member can listen to the question being asked?

The member for Edmonton Strathcona.

Business of Supply

Ms. Heather McPherson: Madam Speaker, I find it interesting that a member for Calgary is complaining and whining about the fact that \$1.5 billion was spent on the Calgary Green Line. These are interesting times.

Would the government look at Rachel Notley's carbon tax and perhaps manage the federal carbon tax in a way that would—

The Assistant Deputy Speaker (Mrs. Alexandra Mendès): The hon. member for Vaughan—Woodbridge has 15 seconds.

Mr. Francesco Sorbara: Madam Speaker, we brought in a carbon tax, a price on carbon, for Canadian provinces. If there was one in place, it does not apply. Therefore, for the province of Quebec, the price on carbon does not apply to that province, from my understanding, and each province can determine its own usage of that—

• (1330)

The Assistant Deputy Speaker (Mrs. Alexandra Mendès): Resuming debate, the hon. member for Louis-Saint-Laurent.

[*Translation*]

Mr. Gérard Deltell (Louis-Saint-Laurent, CPC): Madam Speaker, climate change is real and is having a major impact across Canada and around the world. We have to face that fact.

We have two options. We can either impose taxes, like this government is doing, or we can take real action with concrete, effective measures. On September 8, in Quebec City, the Leader of the Opposition, member for Carleton and leader of the Conservatives gave an important speech highlighting what our future government would do if we are fortunate enough to have Canadian voters put their faith in us. That is what we all hope for the good of Canada.

The Conservative leader talked about the very real impact of climate change. That is why we believe that we need tangible measures to tackle this reality, which affects Canada and the entire planet.

First, we need tax incentives to reduce pollution using high-tech tools. The Liberals think they need to impose a tax, but we think we need to create tax incentives for the high-tech sector to tackle climate change. We need to give the green light to green technologies and make it easier for Canadians to access green energy sources like hydroelectricity, solar energy, wind energy and any new technologies that we develop. We need to give the green light to green energy and stop conducting studies all the time and creating red tape. We need to take action to green-light green energy.

We also need to promote and develop the know-how and natural resources that we have in Canada so we can export them around the world, but also make use of them here at home. In Canada, we have everything we need to make things like electric cars. I am thinking about lithium, among other things. It is on us to develop it as fast as possible in order to give Canadians and the entire planet access to the Canadian natural resources they need and the Canadian expertise that sets us apart around the world in a positive way.

We, the Conservatives, are proposing concrete action that will deliver real results in the fight against climate change. What is the Liberal government's approach? After eight years of the Liberal government, Canada has never met its targets. The Liberals will say that that is not true, that Canada has met them. Yes, but that was

during the pandemic. I am not sure that shutting down the economy is the right thing to do, quite the opposite, in fact.

A study examined 63 countries to see how effectively they are fighting climate change. The study was not done by the Conservatives, but rather by the UN. It found that, after eight years of this Liberal government, Canada ranks 58th out of 63 countries. Why is that? It is because this government is always quick to talk, to moralize and to lecture everyone, to blame everyone else on the planet and, above all, to tax people more. That is the problem we have.

This government's greedy desire to take even more money out of people's pockets is its trademark. What is more, its ally in this matter, the Bloc Québécois, wants the government to radically increase the amount of money it takes out of taxpayers' pockets by radically raising the carbon tax. It is not me saying that. It is the Bloc. That is not the right thing to do.

Let us set the record straight. Canada currently has two carbon taxes. The first is the Liberal carbon tax, which applies from coast to coast to coast. Here are the facts: As we have always said, Quebec and all the other provinces have full jurisdiction in this area. That is why Quebec has had a carbon exchange for over a decade.

For federal Conservatives, it is not about deeming that good or bad. We respect Quebec's desire to have a carbon exchange, and that is fine. From time to time, the exchange is the subject of some debate in Quebec. People have been talking about it over the past few days. That is okay; that is what debate is.

I would like to remind the House of a statement made by a former member of Quebec's National Assembly, a former Quebec government minister and former PQ member and minister. No, I am not talking about the current Bloc Québécois leader, who is and always will be the most polluting environment minister in Quebec's history because he gave the green light to the most polluting project in Quebec's history. I am talking about Sylvain Gaudreault, the former member for Jonquière and former minister, who said that the carbon exchange was based on paying for the right to pollute. He said, "It's a major flight of capital—we're talking hundreds of millions of dollars." I will not go into the details, but of course Quebec's carbon exchange is up for debate.

• (1335)

What people are forgetting is that the federal Liberal government gave itself the power to set the price of carbon on Quebec's carbon exchange, effective next year. We never heard the Bloc Québécois complain that it made no sense for Ottawa to barge into an area of provincial jurisdiction by setting the price of carbon. Should we be surprised? Not really, since these people support the carbon tax from coast to coast to coast.

Business of Supply

That brings me to the other point. Aside from the rain, everything we own has been transported. The last I heard, Quebec is not 100% self-sufficient. Sometimes Quebecers buy things produced outside Quebec, things produced in Canada. Invariably, these goods are transported, and transportation generally involves combustion engines. In that case, the Liberal carbon tax applies. That means the first Liberal carbon tax has a direct impact on Quebecers.

Let me turn to the second Liberal carbon tax. I find it comical that they have given it a big honking title rather than calling it a carbon tax. Here are the facts. Even though they refer to it as the “clean fuel regulations”, the reality remains. When the government imposes a price after a good is purchased, they can call it whatever they want, but we call it a tax. That tax, which is 17¢, will apply in Quebec. This is not coming from us; it is coming from the Parliamentary Budget Officer. After conducting an in-depth study, as he always does, he concluded that it would cost an extra 17¢. Add tax on top of that, and oil will cost 20¢ more per litre used.

That means that there are two carbon taxes that were created by the Liberal government and supported by the Bloc Québécois. We offered the Bloc an opportunity to distance itself from all this. On June 5, we tabled a motion to that effect, condemning both taxes and specifically the “clean fuel regulations”, yet the Bloc Québécois voted against it. That just makes no sense.

What especially does not make sense is the greedy attitude of the Bloc Québécois, who want to take even more money out of taxpayers' pockets. The member for Longueuil—Saint-Hubert told the House, in that eloquent way that he has, that we need to drastically increase taxes. I respect everyone's point of view, but that is not an opinion that we share. What an arrogant, irresponsible and completely pretentious attitude toward people who are struggling to get by these days. No big deal, we just need to drastically increase taxes: That is the Bloc Québécois's policy, and it is enthusiastically supported by the Liberals, unless a Liberal plans to rise and say that they disagree. Do they agree with that? Do they agree with the idea of drastically increasing this tax?

They are very quiet. Later, they will have the opportunity to say that this does not make sense, as will the other members of the Bloc Québécois. One might think that the member for Longueuil—Saint-Hubert just got carried away, but such is not the case. He said what he thinks, which is a very good thing. The problem is that this is the worst thing we could do with inflation being the way it is.

As we speak, people in Quebec City are lining up in front of a food bank to be able to eat. That is unacceptable. Quebecers, like all Canadians, have seen housing prices double in the past eight years. Inflation is the highest it has ever been in the last 50 years.

What do the Bloc Québécois and the Liberals want to do? They want to radically increase the Liberal carbon tax. That is totally unacceptable, disrespectful and despicable, at a time when all Canadians and all Quebecers are facing very serious problems because of inflation.

We need to join forces. Above all, we must not overtax people. We need to give them some breathing room. Taxing people is not an effective way to fight climate change.

[English]

Mr. Mark Gerretsen (Kingston and the Islands, Lib.): Madam Speaker, I just want to say that I am thrilled to hear the member say, at the opening of his speech, that climate change is real. I genuinely mean that.

What I want to understand is, given that in the 2021 Conservative convention, 54% of the delegates decided that they did not want to make reference to the fact that climate change is real and that we need to do something about it, how does he square his opinion on that with Conservatives?

To that end, during a convention like that, does he go up to people and say that, actually, they are wrong, that climate change is real, and try to convince them?

This is a genuine question. I respect the member.

• (1340)

Mr. Gérard Deltell: Madam Speaker, during the famous and historic Quebec speech, the hon. leader of the Conservative Party of Canada said the following clearly:

[Translation]

We have to face up to the real impact of climate change. We have to face up to this with a realistic and constructive attitude, not with taxation.

[English]

This is where we stand. This is where Canadians stand. They need action. They are sick and tired of hearing the narrative of the Liberals when we all know they are all talk and no results, especially when it comes to addressing climate change.

[Translation]

Mr. Mario Simard (Jonquière, BQ): Madam Speaker, in my short political career, I have never heard so much deceit. Earlier, the member for Louis-Saint-Laurent said that it was normal for the Conservatives to criticize Quebec's carbon exchange.

However, last week, his colleague from Bellechasse—Les Etchemins—Lévis was waving a paper around. She may not realize it, but she was actually referring to carbon pricing in Quebec. Conservative MPs were criticizing a Quebec policy in the House of Commons, a policy put in place when she was a minister in the Liberal government. That is unbelievable.

Not only that, but big oil pocketed \$200 billion in 2022. That is \$5,000 per Canadian. As for what the member for Louis-Saint-Laurent said, he deserves a round of applause. He thinks there is a connection to be made between this and the price of turkey, turnips, and food in general. The only turkey I see here today is the MP for Louis-Saint-Laurent.

Business of Supply

The Assistant Deputy Speaker (Mrs. Alexandra Mendès): Order. We must try to stick to comments about the content, not the person, please. I would ask the hon. member to be careful.

The hon. member for Louis-Saint-Laurent.

Mr. Gérard Deltell: Madam Speaker, it is with great sadness that I see that the leader of the Bloc Québécois, the most polluting environment minister in Quebec's history, is starting to rub off on his colleagues. It is very disappointing, but what can we do? The example comes from the top. That is how they acted.

I just want to remind the member that in Quebec, which he loves so much, just as I do—because it is not true that they love Quebec more than we do—18 billion litres of fuel was consumed last year. That is Quebec's reality. Of that volume consumed, 47% came from the United States.

As long as we need so-called fossil fuels, I will always fight for Canada. I have nothing against Texas or Louisiana, but, the last time I checked, neither Texas nor Louisiana contributed to equalization, which provides \$13 billion to Quebec.

Mr. Alexandre Boulerice (Rosemont—La Petite-Patrie, NDP): Madam Speaker, I know that the member for Louis-Saint-Laurent likes facts. I will share some with him.

Canada's population is 60th in the world in number of residents, but we rank 11th in terms of greenhouse gas emissions. We go from 60th to 11th place. If we think of it in terms of greenhouse gas emissions per capita, we are the second largest polluters in the world. Only residents of Saudi Arabia pollute more than Canadians on a per capita basis. Even the Americans pollute less than we do per capita.

What solution does the member for Louis-Saint-Laurent have to offer other than to produce more oil, more fossil fuels and hope that some high-tech magic wand will work?

Mr. Gérard Deltell: Madam Speaker, the Leader of the Opposition, who we hope will be the next prime minister of Canada, gave a speech in Quebec City on September 8. He stated very clearly that we plan to move forward with concrete action, and that certainly will not involve taxing and lecturing, which is what the Liberal Party has been doing for the past eight years.

We want to offer tax incentives for investments in cutting-edge technology to fight climate change. We want to give green energy the green light. Enough with spending years and years studying whether there will be an impact here or there. We must act immediately.

Now more than ever, the world needs Canada's know-how, energy and natural resources. We need to export them. We also need to be self-sufficient in this regard.

• (1345)

[*English*]

Mr. Mark Gerretsen (Kingston and the Islands, Lib.): Madam Speaker, I hope you will indulge me just for a moment before I start my debate to give a special thanks to my father. It has nothing to do with his time in politics or as the environment minister provincially. It is for once again bailing out his son this morning as he has probably done so many times throughout his life.

I arrived in Ottawa yesterday, read the contents of today's motion, went to get my notes and realized I had forgotten everything in Kingston. My father drove halfway to Ottawa to rendezvous to deliver those notes so I could be properly prepared for today. As an avid watcher of CPAC, I am sure he is tuned in right now. I want to express my thanks to him for once again bailing out his son.

I know there is a lot of information that has been talked about today in terms of the effects of pricing pollution and what this government has been able to accomplish. I know the member for Regina—Lewvan, who is only one of many, has spoken several times about not meeting targets and the ineffectiveness of policies that this government has brought on board.

I want to bring to the attention of the House the growth of these policies and put into context how effective these policies have been. The growth of the renewable energy and Canada's progress on phasing out coal-fired electricity has seen emissions from the electricity sector decrease by 64 megatonnes between 2005 and 2021. This progress puts Canada in an excellent position to meet those 2035 targets that we have set to get to a net-zero electricity grid by that point.

The data also shows a 16% decrease in residential emissions, with less home heating by oil being used. Many Canadians are taking the steps to change their homes' energy efficiency by making the switch to heat pumps, solar and cleaner options. I think it is very important, while I say this, to also point out that there is one sector that has continued and grown in terms of emissions, and that is the oil and gas sector.

Despite the oil and gas sector continuing to grow in terms of emissions, the net emissions throughout our country have continued to decrease. In fact, the oil and gas sector is the only industry that has actually continued to increase in terms of emissions over the last few years.

I think it is very telling, and Canadians are rightfully concerned about this, that I have presented three or four petitions since the House resumed last week specifically calling on the government for strong and bold emissions caps when it comes to this sector particularly. I think it is the right thing to do. I never comment on it when I am presenting the petition because the rules do not permit me to, but I certainly think that it is the right thing to do, to put on bold caps.

We are in a transition. Whether Conservatives like it or not, the world is moving away from fossil fuels. One in every 10 cars in this country that is being sold is an electric vehicle. Regardless of the fact that Conservatives do not want to believe it, it is absolutely true. As a matter of fact, in 2021, the average new light-duty vehicle had 25% to 35% lower greenhouse gas emissions than a similar new vehicle in 2011. The progress we are making is working.

Business of Supply

The member for Regina—Lewvan got up and said we have not met our targets. There are a lot of Conservatives who have said we have not met our targets. I would rather have very bold, ambitious targets that we do not quite achieve, than loose statements like, “We are going to fix the environment with technology.” What does that even mean? That is the Conservatives' entire plan. They say they are going to fix the environment and climate change, which they suddenly believe in, with technology, and then nothing else after that.

An hon. member: Oh, oh!

Mr. Mark Gerretsen: Madam Speaker, we have evolved for the last several hundred years with the advancements of technology. I really appreciate that insight, but could they provide a bit more specifically with respect to how they are going to do it?

I find it very interesting that Conservatives have done this for the 11th time. The member for Rosemont—La Petite-Patrie earlier said that this was the fifth time this year. It is also the 11th time since this Parliament resumed two years ago after the election that Conservatives have brought in this motion.

• (1350)

I am glad to hear that the Leader of the Opposition allows them to speak to this topic. We certainly know that he restricts their opportunities to speak on other issues, such as that take-note debate we had last week on the possibility that India was involved in murdering a Canadian citizen. We had a take-note debate on that, and not a single Conservative member asked a question. The House leader for the Conservatives spoke for five minutes, and then they vacated the debate from that point forward. They were not allowed to speak on it. They were hushed on it.

It also happened a couple days later when an email was sent out by the Leader of the Opposition's office instructing Conservatives not to comment on the protests that were going on outside with respect to the issue of LGBTQ rights. We saw Conservatives once again being silenced by their leader. They did not say a single word. There was nothing on Facebook or on Twitter. As a matter of fact there is one member I feel really sorry for. I will not name her. She actually did tweet something, and I thought it was great that she was showing support for the LGBTQ community, only to remove it later on. I think it is extremely unfortunate that the leadership, the member for Carleton, told her she had to take it down, and then she obviously did that.

It is really interesting that we are here today speaking about something the Conservatives have brought up 11 times, and meanwhile the Leader of the Opposition silences them with regard to other very important issues.

However, what makes this even more interesting, confusing and perplexing, is the fact that Conservatives have a history of running on pricing pollution. I asked the member for Carleton why he, led by Erin O'Toole in the last election, did not say anything during the election about why he was against pricing pollution when Erin O'Toole, the man with a plan, had it in his platform. The member for Carleton said that we can go back to 2007 and see he has been against it. Why did he not say anything about it during an election, when it actually meant something?

An hon. member: We did.

Mr. Mark Gerretsen: Madam Speaker, he says “we did”. They are heckling me, saying they did, but the public never heard about it. I guess the member made a phone call or sent an email that only Conservatives got to see. They should stand for their principles. If they were really against it back then, they would have stood up back then during the election and actually said they were against pricing pollution, but they did not. They bought into Erin O'Toole's plan. They ran on Erin O'Toole's plan, and now they are in this place and they have brought forward 11 motions, one after another, against that plan.

However, Erin O'Toole was not the only one. Stephen Harper also did it, so some of those Conservatives have run under multiple leaders looking to price pollution, yet here they are, once again, with no shame at all saying they did this twice under Stephen Harper and Erin O'Toole, but now are suddenly against it.

How can people actually believe what Conservatives tell them?

I want to read something. This comes out of the B.C. legislature. I found it this morning. I found it very interesting. I will read a quote:

In 2008, our government made the decision to implement a tax on carbon. It was designed to help British Columbia reduce greenhouse gas emissions while at the same time be fair to hard-working families. To do that, by law, we made it—the carbon tax—revenue-neutral. What does it mean to have a revenue-neutral carbon tax? It means that every dollar collected from B.C. carbon tax is given back to taxpayers in the form of tax credits or tax cuts.

I know that the member for Vancouver-Kensington made a comment about it and tried to blame it on the federal government, as far as revenue neutrality. Well, the fact of the matter is that we have the option of how we wanted to bring this about, as far as a carbon tax. Our policy—it's law—is to put it back into the pockets of taxpayers. We don't see it as a slush fund, which it appears that the NDP sees it as. Since 2008, the carbon tax has raised almost \$8.5 billion and returned more than \$10.6 billion in tax reductions for businesses, individuals and families.

• (1355)

The quote goes on. The member, in the B.C. legislature, goes to say:

Our carbon tax appears to be working. Independent studies have found that between 2008 and 2012, fuel use in B.C. dropped by 16 percent per capita. In 2015, a review of seven independent studies suggested that B.C.'s carbon tax has reduced emissions in the province by up to 15 percent. All of this has been accomplished without taking a dime off B.C. taxpayers.

Do we know who said that in the B.C. legislature, back on February 27, 2017? The now-Conservative member for Pitt Meadows—Maple Ridge, who sits in this House, the same member who got up earlier in this debate and tried to chastise this government for bringing in a price on pollution.

These are his words. I am not making it up. I am literally reading from the record of the B.C. legislature on February 27, 2017.

Statements by Members

How can that member actually come into this House and speak to this issue against it as if he has any authority on it, given the comments that he made just a few years ago on this exact same issue?

All I am doing here is underscoring the hypocrisy that we see time after time after time. I should really say that 11 times because they have brought in a similar motion 11 times.

They ran on it. They did not ever challenge their leaders on it. They spoke about it in other legislatures as if it was the be-all and end-all to fixing the problem that we have with climate change. Now, suddenly, they come in here and act as though a carbon tax, a price on pollution, is absolutely ludicrous, that it will never work.

Explain to me how this is not one of the ultimate forms of hypocrisy. It is literally oozing down the steps on that side of the aisle. I cannot understand how they would ever put themselves in a position to demonstrate such incredible hypocrisy.

All we get from Conservatives, as I indicated earlier, is finally the recognition that climate change is real. Whether humans have created it, well, they have not gone that far. I am sure they are still debating that internally, but, at least now, the member for Louis-Saint-Laurent mentioned, moments ago, that climate change is real. I think I have heard a couple others say it from time to time. At least, we are hearing that now.

All they offer is to say that they will fix this with technology. That is their solution. They will fix this with technology and that is it, a hard stop there.

We can talk about what more we can do. I agreed with the member for Saanich—Gulf Islands earlier, when she was speaking about this issue, when she said that the carbon tax is only one thing. Of course, it is only one thing, putting a price on pollution. We need to do more.

I think, as I indicated earlier, that another great system that we need to implement is cap and trade. We need to bring in cap and trade and put on strong emissions caps in the oil and gas sector specifically.

A lot of people do not understand that, rightfully so, because it is not as simple to explain as an actual price on pollution, but the cap-and-trade model allows the government to set an overall cap on the GHG emissions for sectors covered over a given period. This cap is gradually and progressively reduced over time, encouraging the emission reductions. At the end of a three-year period, for example, emitters must obtain an emissions allowance for each tonne of GHGs they release into the atmosphere and surrender those to the government. They must surrender enough allowances to cover their emissions or penalties will apply.

The whole idea here is nothing new, as this idea was conceived and brought into North America back in around 2005, 2006, and that was with the western initiative. This was a number of states. This was Quebec, which still, to its benefit, and rightfully so, is in the western alliance, and Ontario, at the time, although Doug Ford has backed out. This was a plan that basically put a cap on the amount of emissions and if one needed to exceed that, one would have to sell off one's emissions.

STATEMENTS BY MEMBERS

● (1400)

[English]

FLEMINGDON PARK MINISTRY

Mr. Michael Coteau (Don Valley East, Lib.): Madam Speaker, I would like to acknowledge the outstanding work of Flemingdon Park Ministry, a local charity in my beautiful riding of Don Valley East.

The ministry has been helping residents in Don Valley East for over 40 years and has worked tirelessly to create a sense of belonging and support within our community. Its work is a testament to the power of community and the spirit of giving. One of the major accomplishments of Flemingdon Park Ministry is The Common Table, an urban farm that aims to help eliminate food insecurity by giving people space to grow their own fresh food.

As we enter the season of giving and goodwill, I want to thank Flemingdon Park Ministry for its service to community and its dedication to fighting food insecurity. I thank all the volunteers who have continued to work hard to provide services, foster connection and nurture hope for all people in Don Valley East.

* * *

THE ECONOMY

Mr. Michael Barrett (Leeds—Grenville—Thousand Islands and Rideau Lakes, CPC): Madam Speaker, as we approach Thanksgiving, I am mindful of what and whom I am thankful for, such as my wife Amanda and our children Luke, Ama, Michaela, James and Nathan, and such as my friends who are joining me on the Hill today, Matt Grills and Kyle MacDonald.

As Canadians gather to give thanks for the blessings in their lives, it is important that we not lose sight of our neighbours who have had hard times forced upon them. With the NDP-Liberal government, it has gotten to the point where seven million Canadians are not sure how they are going to be able to feed themselves. That is the result of taxing the farmer who grows the food, taxing the trucker who moves the food and taxing the Canadian who buys the food.

Canadians are resilient, but they are losing hope. That is why a Conservative government would restore hope with the common sense of the common people. We would axe the carbon tax and allow Canadians to bring home powerful paycheques. The great Canadian comeback is coming. Let us bring it home.

ERNIE LUSTIG

Hon. Judy A. Sgro (Humber River—Black Creek, Lib.): Madam Speaker, it is with great sadness that I rise in the House today to share the tragic passing of a great supporter of the Liberal Party and a truly great Canadian, Ernie Lustig. Ernie had been the riding president of Humber River—Black Creek since 1999. His contribution to the community and to my family and I was much appreciated. He was a passionate man committed to his family and his country.

Our deepest condolences go to his son Joel and daughter-in-law Fern; daughter Ellen and son-in-law Jerry; his grandchildren Lauren, David, Josh and Aubrey; and his two great-grandchildren Drew and Chloe. Ernie was predeceased by his wife of 70 years, Sharon Lustig, our first lady, as we called her all the time.

Ernie Lustig will always be remembered as a smart, generous, dedicated man who was truly one of a kind, and it was an honour to have been his friend. May my friend rest in peace.

* * *

[Translation]

CHÂTEAU DE MARIE-ÈVE

Ms. Sylvie Bérubé (Abitibi—Baie-James—Nunavik—Eeyou, BQ): Mr. Speaker, two weeks ago, the Château de Marie-Ève welcomed its first tenants in downtown Val-d'Or. The name pays tribute to Marie-Ève Charron, a well-known local homeless woman who was tragically murdered in 2016. The project, spearheaded by La Piaule, aims to put a roof over the heads of 41 people at risk of homelessness. Each new tenant shares their needs and an appeal is made to the public for donations.

I therefore encourage the public to donate tables, chairs, beds and appliances. The dramatic uptick in homelessness in our city is worrying. Every level of government is trying to find solutions, but as Stéphane Grenier, president of the La Piaule shelter, said, “No matter how much money we pour into homelessness, we'll keep going in circles if we don't have housing” to offer.

In closing, I would like to highlight the remarkable work of La Piaule and congratulate the whole team for this fine initiative.

* * *

NAMUR

Mr. Stéphane Lauzon (Argenteuil—La Petite-Nation, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, our town of Namur in the Outaouais region has a special link with the city of Namur in Belgium. Last August 26, I was delighted to attend a reception dinner organized by mayor Gilbert Dardel and the Papineau RCM team to honour our wonderful Belgian guests.

Last week, a delegation of 26 residents from the Papineau RCM, led by reeve Benoît Lauzon, was hosted by Maxime Prévot, mayor of Namur and a federal MP in Belgium. These inter-municipal exchanges, ongoing since 2015, are a symbol of the co-operation and camaraderie that Canada cultivates with countries around the world.

Statements by Members

It was an honour to welcome our Belgian friends back to our magnificent region. We hope that their visit was as wonderful as the friendship between our two Namurs.

* * *

● (1405)

[English]

INTERNATIONAL TRADE

Mr. John Barlow (Foothills, CPC): Mr. Speaker, the job of the federal government is first and foremost to protect Canadian interests. Once again, farmers are paying the price for the Prime Minister's failures on the world stage.

The Liberals are trying to fast-track the United Kingdom's accession to the CPTPP, ignoring devastating trade discrepancies for our beef and pork producers. The numbers are staggering. Last year, the United Kingdom exported more than 4,000 tonnes of beef, worth \$33 million, to Canada. By contrast, Canadian beef exports to the United Kingdom were zero. It is a similar trajectory for our pork producers. Whether it is beef and pork or peas and pulses, our producers are losing valuable market access because of the failures of the Prime Minister.

Conservatives believe in free and fair trade that benefits our allies and our producers. As Conservatives, we would succeed where the Liberals have failed. When it comes to trade negotiations, we would show strength. We would focus on economic opportunities and defend our producers and our world-class standards. Conservatives would restore Canada's reputation as a trusted and tried economic trading partner around the world. Conservatives would bring it home.

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NATIONAL DAY FOR TRUTH AND RECONCILIATION

Mrs. Jenica Atwin (Fredericton, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, on the National Day for Truth and Reconciliation, we commemorate the thousands of children who were stolen at the hands of residential institutions. It is a painful reminder of the horrors that occurred and of what was lost. It is also a day of cherishing what is being regained.

I recently had the privilege of visiting Kehkimin Wolastoqey language immersion school. Children attending this land-based and experiential learning centre are little busy bees. They are connecting to their culture, relearning their language and maintaining a healthy relationship with mother earth through nature. It is truly beautiful and heartwarming to witness. It is healing in action. Language is key to one's identity, and these children will grow up being loud and proud of every aspect of who they are, a feeling that their ancestors were violently robbed of.

Statements by Members

I want to say a special shout-out to the founder and staff at Kehkimin, and I want to celebrate one of the children who recently received his traditional name, notably Benson, Wapsq (Polar Bear), the son of Rachel, who is one of my team members.

I also wish to tell my own two Wolastoqey boys that I am so grateful to be their mom and to witness them grow up. They are my motivation and the reason why I am here, to fight and create a better world for them.

[Member spoke in Wolastoqey]

[English]

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JOHN MARLATT

Ms. Pam Damoff (Oakville North—Burlington, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, in July, we lost one of the pillars of the Oakville community. John Marlatt, owner of the iconic Moonshine Cafe, passed away after a brief illness. John and his wife Jane opened the Moonshine Cafe 17 years ago and created a unique live music venue where artists were supported and the public was always entertained.

The President of the Treasury Board and I were very lucky to get to know him over the years. I have many fond memories of fun nights at the Moonshine. John hosted a music night before the 2010 municipal election, where candidates like myself were invited to sing with Phil Cain on stage.

There was a celebration of John's life on Monday in Oakville. He had a heart of gold will be missed by all, but none more than Jane and his family. I have no doubt that John is playing his guitar and singing his songs up in heaven.

* * *

THE ECONOMY

Ms. Raquel Dancho (Kildonan—St. Paul, CPC): Mr. Speaker, millions of Canadian seniors are struggling to afford food, rent and basic necessities. Over one-third do not have sufficient income to meet their needs, and we know that 1.5 million Canadians are going to food banks each month. After eight years of the Liberal government's reckless spending, resulting in record-high inflation and rising interest rates, many Canadians are falling further and further behind.

However, my community is taking action. Good Neighbours Active Living Centre in Winnipeg opened the supports to seniors food pantry for seniors struggling with food insecurity. Neighbour helping neighbour is what Canada is all about, and I know that this program will make a positive difference in the lives of many, many seniors.

Fighting inflation and lowering the cost of living is the Conservative Party's number one priority. We would return to balanced budgets and stop throwing fuel on the inflationary fire. The golden years of Canada's seniors should be filled with dignity and financial security, not food banks. Conservatives would make that happen.

• (1410)

CONTRACEPTION

Hon. Hedy Fry (Vancouver Centre, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, Tuesday was World Contraception Day. As access to sexual and reproductive services comes under attack globally, more voices are calling for the right to universal free contraception. My province of B.C. set an example this April by implementing the policy. It is time for all of Canada to follow suit.

Preventing an unwanted pregnancy is vital to reproductive health and gender equality. It empowers individuals, especially women. Universal free contraception ensures that cost is not a barrier to low-income Canadians, especially adolescents. It reduces unintended pregnancies and promotes responsible family planning.

I urge all parliamentarians to support universal free contraception, make contraception a fundamental right and not a privilege, and ensure a healthier, more equitable future for all Canadians.

* * *

AGRICULTURE AND AGRI-FOOD

Mr. Brad Vis (Mission—Matsqui—Fraser Canyon, CPC): Mr. Speaker, over the weekend, I was honoured to attend the Agassiz Fall Fair and Corn Festival. Congratulations go to Mr. Vander Wyk on being crowned this year's Corn King.

As many farmers shared, the NDP-Liberal government is attacking one of the primary tools to produce quality food in Canada: fertilizer. The NDP-Liberal government recently outlined an unscientific plan to drastically reduce fertilizer usage by 2030. Canadian farmers already outperform the entire world on sustainability. In fact, they are up to 70% more efficient in fertilizer use. Rather than praising Canadian farmers as the global standard, the government is insulting producers and the pocketbooks of every Canadian through higher costs at the grocery store. Food prices have already increased more than 10% over last year.

All farmers across Canada should know that a future Conservative government would stop the attack on fertilizer so they can continue to grow quality, sustainable and local homegrown food.

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[Translation]

CARBON TAX

Mr. Richard Lehoux (Beauce, CPC): Mr. Speaker, families in my riding and across Canada are struggling to make ends meet. The cost of living has increased dramatically over the last eight years because of the government's mismanagement and punitive carbon tax.

Statements by Members

Conservatives care about the environment. There are many ways to fight climate change without resorting to a carbon tax that increases the price of everything. Our farms, processing plants and shipping companies have to take on this extra cost, which is then passed on to consumers.

Liberal and Bloc Québécois members want to radically increase the tax. Our common sense Conservative approach is to completely axe the carbon tax to give a break to families and farmers and to reduce greenhouse gas emissions using science. With legislation like Bill C-234 and today's opposition motion, Conservatives will continue to defend the interests of Canadian farmers and families.

Let us come together and axe the carbon tax so that Canadians can buy food, have a home and bring home a bigger paycheque.

* * *

BATTERY INDUSTRY

Mrs. Élisabeth Brière (Sherbrooke, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, today is a big day. This morning, the Minister of Innovation, Science and Industry announced the largest private investment in Quebec. The Swedish company Northvolt has chosen Quebec to build its new plant for manufacturing electric vehicle batteries. This project will create thousands of manufacturing jobs and once again reinforce the enviable position of Canada, and especially Quebec, in the battery industry.

According to our energetic Department of Innovation, the auto industry's shift to electric vehicles is the opportunity of a generation. This shift also confirms that the industry is responding to our government's call to lower greenhouse gas emissions.

Sherbrooke is taking its place in the battery sector and in the electrification of transportation. Calogy Solutions, Professor Claverie and his solid-state battery, and the Société de transport de Sherbrooke and its electric buses support this new, growing industry.

* * *

● (1415)

CLIMATE CHANGE

Mr. Alexandre Boulerice (Rosemont—La Petite-Patrie, NDP): Mr. Speaker, the planet is literally burning. We saw it this summer in Quebec, in British Columbia, and pretty much all around the world.

In this country, the oil and gas sector is responsible for 30% of all our carbon emissions, which are increasing every year. That is why we absolutely must have a strict cap on greenhouse gas emissions for this sector.

The Liberals promised it in 2021, but we are still waiting. We are resolutely waiting for these regulations. The time for half measures is over. The Minister of Environment and Climate Change cannot present a plan riddled with loopholes, exemptions or delays. New Democrats will not accept a weak, loose system with financial compensation for companies and no coercive measures. Playtime is over. A strict emissions cap is essential if we are to meet our targets.

We urge the minister to take action. The NDP will make sure our children are protected.

* * *

JOYCE ECHAQUAN

Mr. Gabriel Ste-Marie (Joliette, BQ): Mr. Speaker, three years ago today, Quebec witnessed the death of Joyce Echaquan, a 37-year-old Atikamekw woman—a wife, a mother of seven, beloved, irreplaceable.

The shocking circumstances of her death brought to light the racism she experienced in hospital, which led to devastating consequences. The resulting shockwave raised awareness about the urgent need to combat this racism by establishing cultural safety measures for indigenous peoples within the institutions that must serve them. It is a matter of principle. In fact, it is called “Joyce's principle”, in her memory.

We still have a lot of work to do to ensure that our laws, policies and practices all live up to this principle, but we now have a name in mind to remind us of this duty: Justice for Joyce.

On behalf of the Bloc Québécois, I would like to express our solidarity to her husband, Carol Dubé, her seven children and the entire Manawan community as they gather to honour Joyce Echaquan's memory this evening.

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[English]

HOUSING

Mr. Dan Muys (Flamborough—Glanbrook, CPC): Mr. Speaker, after eight years of the NDP-Liberal government, rent is out of control. Today, a one-bedroom apartment is pushing \$2,000 a month. When the Conservative leader was the housing minister in the previous Conservative government, a one-bedroom apartment went for around \$900 a month.

After eight years of those Liberals, Canadians are now paying out-of-control prices in rents. In Toronto, a single room in a shared apartment is going for \$1,300. In Vancouver, a single room in a shared apartment is going for nearly \$1,800.

International students are living in homeless shelters and under bridges, with one Toronto shelter saying one-third of its residents are students. Refugees are sleeping in the streets. Tent cities are spanning the country. In fact, prisoners in Vancouver have asked for increased sentences to avoid Vancouver's housing hell.

The Prime Minister is not worth the cost. He has added more to the national debt than all previous prime ministers combined, driving up inflation, forcing up rates and mortgages, which, in turn, drives up rent.

*Oral Questions***NATIONAL DAY FOR TRUTH AND RECONCILIATION**

Ms. Yvonne Jones (Labrador, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, September 30 is National Day for Truth and Reconciliation. This day of reflection and remembrance is an opportunity to walk together with indigenous peoples toward healing and reconciliation in Canada.

We must begin by acknowledging the painful history that has brought us to where we are today.

For centuries, indigenous peoples endured colonization, the residential school system, and the loss of their land, language and culture. It is a history we must continue to confront head on, unlike the combative and aggressive words used by the leader of the Conservatives, when he said, “Canada’s aboriginals need to learn the value of hard work more than they need compensation for the abuse suffered in residential schools.” Those are the cold, harsh views that have set back progress of indigenous peoples for generations.

We must never forget the atrocities of residential schools and their generational trauma that still linger in this country. Let us stand united in our commitment to truth, to reconciliation and to a better Canada for all people.

ORAL QUESTIONS

• (1420)

[*Translation*]

FOREIGN AFFAIRS

Hon. Pierre Poilievre (Leader of the Opposition, CPC): Mr. Speaker, the whole world sees the Prime Minister as a clown. Whether or not we hold the Liberal former speaker of the House responsible for recognizing a Nazi in Parliament, the reality is that for five days, the Prime Minister went into hiding and avoided his responsibility to defend and repair Canada's reputation.

[*English*]

The Prime Minister is seen as a clown on the world stage, but whether we blame him or the Liberal Speaker for recognizing a Nazi on the floor of the House of Commons, we all agree that it took him five days, while he hid under a rock and let our reputation be torn to tatters.

Why was Prime Minister more concerned about protecting his personal reputation than defending the nation?

Hon. Karina Gould (Leader of the Government in the House of Commons, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, every member of Parliament recognized that it was the Speaker's responsibility. That is why he was called upon to resign, and that is why he did resign.

* * *

CARBON PRICING

Hon. Pierre Poilievre (Leader of the Opposition, CPC): Mr. Speaker, for five days the Prime Minister was in hiding, and he is hiding from answering my questions today about the people who are starving.

Seven million Canadians are not eating enough because of the price of food, and 1.5 million are going to food banks. Food banks

across the country have lineups that go around the street, never seen before.

The middle-class hungry is the new phenomenon the Prime Minister has brought us after eight years in power. His solution is a radical quadrupling of the carbon tax to 61¢ a litre on the farmers and truckers who bring us our food.

Will he finally adopt the Conservative common sense plan to axe the tax to bring home affordable food?

Hon. Anita Anand (President of the Treasury Board, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, I would like to put the question to the opposition as to whether those members will actually support Bill C-56, which is before the House.

Instead of voting against every measure that goes to support Canadians, whether it is senior citizens, workers or small businesses, the Conservatives have a choice. We urge them to vote in favour of Bill C-56.

Hon. Pierre Poilievre (Leader of the Opposition, CPC): Mr. Speaker, we have made our choice. We will axe the tax to bring home affordability.

Interestingly, the Liberal members of Parliament from Atlantic Canada tell their constituents that they agree with me and not with the Prime Minister. When they are on the home front, they tell their constituents that they are on the Conservative team to axe the carbon tax, but when they come here, they seem to forget their spinal cords at home and vote with the Prime Minister to quadruple the carbon tax to 61¢ a litre, which also applies to home heating.

Will those Atlantic MPs find a spine, vote with us and axe the tax to bring home lower prices?

Hon. Randy Boissonnault (Minister of Employment, Workforce Development and Official Languages, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, residents of Edmonton Centre, indeed Albertans across the province, wrote to me about the fact that this summer, like so many summers before, they could not breathe the air because of forest fires.

What do the Conservatives want to do? They want to cancel the child care benefit; they want to pull the CCB. They want to chop, chop, chop. That is the party of slash and burn. The Conservatives are going to slash programs and let the planet burn. Shame on them.

Hon. Pierre Poilievre (Leader of the Opposition, CPC): Mr. Speaker, we are going to chop the carbon tax.

That Liberal member, just like his NDP coalition partners, has betrayed Albertans, who are ripped off by the carbon tax, just like people right across the country. That member, just like the NDP, decided to betray his constituents and vote for the Prime Minister's plan to dig deeper into the pockets of hard-working people.

Oral Questions

Will the government abandon its reckless plan to quadruple the tax to 61¢ a litre and vote for our motion to do it next week?

Hon. Randy Boissonnault (Minister of Employment, Workforce Development and Official Languages, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, what is reckless is the Conservative ideology that somehow pausing renewable projects is a good strategy.

People in my riding and in our province want us to lean in. They want clean electricity. They want reasonable electricity. They want hydrogen plants. They want to be part of the economy of the future.

The Conservatives want to slash and burn. Shame on them. We are here to deliver for Albertans and for Canadians.

• (1425)

[*Translation*]

Hon. Pierre Poilievre (Leader of the Opposition, CPC): Mr. Speaker, today, the leader of the Bloc Québécois lost it. He lost it because we pointed out that, on June 5, he voted to maintain the second carbon tax, which applies to Quebec. He lost it because we pointed out that one of his MPs wants to drastically increase the carbon tax on the backs of Quebeckers. He is going to lose it again in a few moments, I have no doubt.

Is the Prime Minister going to keep working with the leader of the Bloc to increase taxes on the backs of Quebeckers?

Hon. Pascale St-Onge (Minister of Canadian Heritage, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, what Quebeckers know is that, in 2023, it makes no sense for a party that hopes to govern this country to have absolutely no plan for combatting climate change.

The only solution the Conservatives have to offer, day in and day out, is to cut programs that help families make ends meet and to make polluting free, when we have just had the worst forest fire season ever.

It is irresponsible and it is a choice we would never make. It is risky to put the future of the country in the Conservatives' hands.

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FOREIGN AFFAIRS

Mr. Yves-François Blanchet (Beloeil—Chambly, BQ): Mr. Speaker, the leader of the official opposition used the word “clown” a few minutes ago. That is interesting. Why would he not eliminate oil profits and subsidies? That is a matter for another time. We still have at least a year.

In the meantime, we have to get back to what happened last Friday. There was no call to Mr. Zelenskyy, to the Jewish community or to the veterans of Quebec and Canada who fought against the Nazis.

Is the government aware of the terrible consequences of the Prime Minister's negligence, and what does it intend to do to address them?

Hon. Karina Gould (Leader of the Government in the House of Commons, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, obviously, calls have been made. Everyone in the House and across Canada has clearly been hurt by what happened last Friday.

The Prime Minister apologized to Canadians and to every community that was hurt by last Friday's events. We will keep doing that, because it is truly regrettable for all of us in the House and for Canada.

Mr. Yves-François Blanchet (Beloeil—Chambly, BQ): Mr. Speaker, the government is going to move forward without taking the necessary action. Meanwhile, because it took five days before the government even thought about doing something, Russia, India and China, none of which are friends to the government or to Canada in general, began spreading propaganda and wreaking havoc on the interests and global perceptions of Canada and, unfortunately, Quebec.

It would have been better if, as head of the government, the Prime Minister had said right away, “I get it. Here is how it happened. We are sorry.” That would have appeared in the same news articles.

What does the government intend to do to save its allies from this embarrassing situation so that we can finally move on to something else?

Hon. Karina Gould (Leader of the Government in the House of Commons, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, I thank my hon. colleague for that question.

The same day we learned about this horrendous incident that occurred in the House last Friday, the Prime Minister recognized that this was painful for Canadians and communities who were affected by the Holocaust. Calls and apologies were made through diplomatic channels right from the start.

Canada will continue to work with its allies to defend Ukraine and to work toward achieving peace, justice and sovereignty for that country.

* * *

NATURAL RESOURCES

Mr. Alexandre Boulerice (Rosemont—La Petite-Patrie, NDP): Mr. Speaker, this summer, forest fires laid waste to parts of the country. We are experiencing the climate crisis first-hand. The environment minister's inaction is getting embarrassing.

The International Energy Agency's recent report says that Canada must stop approving new fossil fuel projects and move its net-zero emissions target up to 2045. The Liberals have been doing the opposite, though. They bought a pipeline, and the environment minister is saying yes to Bay du Nord.

Will the minister finally wake up and listen to the International Energy Agency's recommendations?

Hon. Pascale St-Onge (Minister of Canadian Heritage, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, like our colleague, our government is obviously concerned about the future of the planet. That is why we have reduced our greenhouse gas emissions by more than 62 megatonnes since 2019. That is like taking 11 million cars off the road.

Obviously, we know we need to keep doing more to fight climate change. That is what we are going to do.

Oral Questions

● (1430)

PUBLIC SERVICES AND PROCUREMENT

Mr. Alexandre Boulerice (Rosemont—La Petite-Patrie, NDP): Mr. Speaker, when it comes to climate, the Liberals are asleep at the switch.

The move to a new insurance company for the public service is causing a lot of headaches for employees who are already struggling with the cost of living.

There are never-ending delays for drug and treatment claims. Some claims are being denied, even for sick children. It is almost impossible for people to get an explanation because no one answers the phone.

Workers deserve better, but the Liberals are leaving them to fend for themselves. What is the Liberals' plan for fixing the mess that they created and helping struggling families?

Hon. Anita Anand (President of the Treasury Board, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, I thank my colleague for the question. Of course, public servants, retirees and their dependants deserve adequate support to access their benefits. Wait times at the Canada Life call centre are unacceptable.

I have had discussions with Canada Life executives and told them the same thing.

I will work very hard to make sure that public servants can access their benefits.

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[English]

FOREIGN AFFAIRS

Hon. Michael Chong (Wellington—Halton Hills, CPC): Mr. Speaker, I listened carefully yesterday to the Prime Minister's apology in the House. He did not apologize on behalf of the government or on behalf of Canada. He apologized on behalf of the House.

However, a prime minister does not speak for the House; a prime minister speaks for the government or for Canada. Yesterday in the House, he did not apologize on behalf of either for the embarrassment and shame of the government's mismanagement of an official state visit. Why?

Hon. Karina Gould (Leader of the Government in the House of Commons, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, my colleague knows perfectly well that the Prime Minister issued an apology on behalf of all of us because those of us who were present here in this chamber on Friday all stood. It was unbeknownst to any of us that this individual was to be here or that he would be recognized by the former Speaker. I think all of us feel a deep shame about this, and had we known otherwise, not a single one of us would have stood and applauded that individual.

Hon. Michael Chong (Wellington—Halton Hills, CPC): Mr. Speaker, for five days, the Prime Minister let Canada's reputation whither. For five days, the Prime Minister did not apologize, and when he did, it was not on behalf of the government or on behalf of Canada. It was on behalf of Parliament, for whom he does not

speak. Why did he avoid speaking on behalf of himself, the government or Canada?

Hon. Karina Gould (Leader of the Government in the House of Commons, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, as the member opposite knows perfectly well, as soon as this was discovered, the Prime Minister spoke about how deeply hurtful this was to all parliamentarians and indeed to all Canadians, particularly all communities who were impacted by the Holocaust. Conversations were had and apologies were made through diplomatic channels immediately upon knowing about this. As soon as the former Speaker admitted his responsibility, the Prime Minister took responsibility and issued his apology.

[Translation]

Mr. Luc Berthold (Mégantic—L'Érable, CPC): Mr. Speaker, while Canada was experiencing the worst diplomatic crisis in its history, what did the Liberal Prime Minister have to offer? Five days of silence, five days in hiding, five days in which he did not even pick up the phone to call President Zelenskyy or the outraged communities, five days in which the world's anger at the inexcusable act that occurred here grew to the point where Canada lost all credibility.

Why did it take the member for Papineau five days to act like a prime minister, to defend our reputation, our communities and our country?

Hon. Karina Gould (Leader of the Government in the House of Commons, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, as the members opposite know very well, as soon as the Prime Minister realized what had happened, he said it was both painful and shameful for Canadians. Everyone in the House knows very well that it was the Speaker of the House who decided to invite this individual, without warning any members, the government or the Ukrainian delegation that he was going to acknowledge this individual's presence.

He took responsibility for it. He apologized and resigned.

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● (1435)

CARBON PRICING

Mr. Luc Berthold (Mégantic—L'Érable, CPC): Mr. Speaker, the line at one of the food banks in Quebec City this morning was longer than we have ever seen. These are people who, after eight years under this Liberal government, can no longer afford to buy food. The carbon tax, which applies to the production and transportation of the items we buy at the grocery store, is a major contributing factor.

The "Liberal Bloc" supports this tax, which is sending people directly to food banks. What is worse, the Bloc Québécois wants to drastically increase the carbon tax at the expense of Quebecers who are struggling to make ends meet. People are finally realizing that voting Bloc is costly.

Rather than dodging the issue and shouting in the House, will the Bloc Québécois finally show some compassion and vote in favour of our motion to cancel the carbon taxes?

The Deputy Speaker: Questions are usually addressed to the government.

The hon. parliamentary secretary.

Ms. Rachel Bendayan (Parliamentary Secretary to the Deputy Prime Minister and Minister of Finance, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, I would be happy to let the Bloc Québécois respond.

I want to say that 35 Liberal MPs are from Quebec, and we fought, with our minister from Shawinigan and our Prime Minister, to ensure that foreign investments come to Canada. We announced today that a new company, Northvolt, is going to set up shop in Saint-Boniface, Quebec. That means thousands of jobs are being created in Quebec thanks to the work of our government.

That is the future and that is what working for Quebec looks like.

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[English]

HOUSING

Mr. Jasraj Singh Hallan (Calgary Forest Lawn, CPC): Mr. Speaker, anyone who took out a five-year, \$500,000 variable rate mortgage in 2021 is now paying up to \$24,000 more in interest a year. This is around the time the finance minister was telling everyone to borrow as much as they wanted because interest rates would be low for a very long time. What borrowers did not expect was for her to pour hundreds of billions of dollars of fuel on the inflationary fire, giving them the most rapid interest rate hikes seen in the last three decades. After eight years of the Liberals' incompetency, they are just not worth the cost anymore.

When will the Prime Minister finally balance the budget so interest rates can come down and Canadians can keep a roof over their heads?

Hon. Sean Fraser (Minister of Housing, Infrastructure and Communities, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, I find the hon. member's newfound interest in building more homes for Canadians fascinating when he has a history of voting against measures that would build more homes for Canadians.

I would point out to the hon. member that officials at the finance committee yesterday confirmed the Conservative proposal would build fewer homes than the measures we have introduced already. Why is his plan to cut funding for home building and raise taxes for home builders? It is not going to work.

There are members who will work to build homes for Canadians, and they sit on the government side of the House.

Mr. Jasraj Singh Hallan (Calgary Forest Lawn, CPC): Mr. Speaker, so the minister who was responsible for breaking immigration is now responsible for breaking housing even further in this country. I have built more homes than the members of the Liberal government combined have, so I would know a bit more about doing this.

The finance minister is out of touch and out of control. She said two months ago that she solved inflation. It has gone up 43% since then to a whopping 4%. The interest rates went up because of the government's high deficits. When will it finally balance the budget so Canadians do not lose their homes?

Hon. Sean Fraser (Minister of Housing, Infrastructure and Communities, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, in typical Conservative fashion,

Oral Questions

the member is ignoring the homes that we have built over the last number of years for low-income people. The reality is that, when I look at the plans the—

Some hon. members: Oh, oh!

The Deputy Speaker: Order. I am really having trouble hearing the minister's answer.

The hon. Minister of Housing.

Hon. Sean Fraser: Mr. Speaker, it is fascinating that, when we make a point that stings, all the Conservatives have left to do is yell.

The reality is that the plan they have put forward is not worth the paper it is written on. Their plan is to cut the funding to build homes and raise taxes on the people who will build them. It will not work.

We are going to put forward measures that would change the financial equation for builders. We are going to change the way that cities build home, and we are going to build the workforce to get it done.

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[Translation]

NATURAL RESOURCES

Ms. Kristina Michaud (Avignon—La Mitis—Matane—Matapédia, BQ): Mr. Speaker, last week at the UN, Canada was reminded that it is one of the largest expanders of fossil fuels in the world. It is a major oil-producing country, as the Minister of Environment and Climate Change likes to remind everyone. Instead of standing up for themselves, the Liberals are proud to prove the UN right. They have authorized even more oil exploration off the coast of Newfoundland to double oil production there. Oil companies and the Conservatives are delighted. Environmentalists are appalled.

Clearly the minister has chosen a side. Does he realize that he is on the wrong side of history?

• (1440)

Mr. Marc Serré (Parliamentary Secretary to the Minister of Energy and Natural Resources and to the Minister of Official Languages, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, under the Conservatives, only 1% of our oceans were protected. Fortunately, we have now protected more than 14%. We brought in protections, conditions, in accordance with international best practices that helped us set targets based on our conversations. Biodiversity is important, and we will consult the Bloc Québécois and all Canadians to ensure that we protect the environment and create jobs.

Oral Questions

Ms. Monique Pauzé (Repentigny, BQ): Mr. Speaker, the UN is not the only one criticizing Canada's oil expansion. So too is former Liberal environment minister Catherine McKenna. Now that she has left politics, she can say what she really thinks. What she told *La Presse* is that Canada is on track to become the world's second-largest producer of new oil by 2050. However, she also said it does not have to be that way, and she is right. The Liberals do not have to be part of the problem.

Will they back down on their oil expansion plans in Newfoundland?

Mr. Adam van Koevorden (Parliamentary Secretary to the Minister of Environment and Climate Change and to the Minister of Sport and Physical Activity, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, I thank my colleague for her question.

Setting an emissions cap for the oil and gas sector is one of the key measures in our plan to reduce greenhouse gas emissions. Oil and gas companies have proven time and time again that they are capable of innovating and developing new, competitive technologies.

We will continue to work with the provinces, territories and stakeholders to take action to reduce greenhouse gas emissions from oil and gas production.

Ms. Monique Pauzé (Repentigny, BQ): Mr. Speaker, last week, the Liberal government announced that it wants to double offshore oil production right in a biodiversity protection zone by 2030, even if it is likely to affect threatened species.

The Conservatives think this is the greatest thing ever. Go ahead and kill the whales. Who cares, as long as the oil is flowing. Shame on them. This is a threat to biodiversity and the future of the planet, a threat authorized by the Liberal government and heartily endorsed by the Conservatives.

Will the government finally listen to reason and cancel these irresponsible authorizations?

Mr. Marc Serré (Parliamentary Secretary to the Minister of Energy and Natural Resources and to the Minister of Official Languages, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, protecting all of the species that live in our marine ecosystems remains a priority.

The proponent was required to develop and implement a plan to protect marine life. The project underwent a major environmental assessment. Its plan was reviewed and approved by Fisheries and Oceans Canada experts.

I would like to point out that no oil production projects have been proposed in a marine refuge and that, if possible, such projects will not be approved.

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[English]

CARBON PRICING

Mr. Stephen Ellis (Cumberland—Colchester, CPC): Mr. Speaker, what the Conservative team has been warning about for more than a year has become an awful reality. After eight years of the NDP-Liberal government's policies, my home province of Nova

Scotia has been plunged into a failing grade, an F in fact, with respect to 13 indicators of poverty.

The punishing carbon tax has vaulted Atlantic Canadians past the point of being able to feed themselves, put a roof over their heads and heat their homes. The Liberal Prime Minister is not worth the cost. Will the Prime Minister cancel his plans to increase his inflationary carbon tax?

Hon. Sean Fraser (Minister of Housing, Infrastructure and Communities, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, I have to point out that it is unacceptable that the member repeats talking points from a recent \$45,000 junket he joined, where he enjoyed porterhouse steaks and chateaubriand, and where they ordered 10 bottles of \$600 wine and champagne.

We are going to put forward measures that would protect the environment and put more money in the pockets of families. What the Conservatives are proposing is to take money from my constituents so they can make it free to pollute. In the era when our province has dealt with hurricane Fiona, hurricane Lee, wildfires like we have never seen and floods that have taken loved ones from their families, it is completely unacceptable for a Nova Scotian to take that position.

Mr. Stephen Ellis (Cumberland—Colchester, CPC): Mr. Speaker, it is interesting that the outgoing member for—

Some hon. members: Oh, oh!

The Deputy Speaker: I know the hon. member for Timmins—James Bay really wants to ask a question. Maybe he can get on the schedule with the whip. I am hearing lots of people going back and forth.

The hon. member for Cumberland—Colchester has the floor.

• (1445)

Mr. Stephen Ellis: Mr. Speaker, it is rich that the outgoing member for Central Nova, the failed minister of immigration and now failing Minister of Housing is over there doing the chest-thumping and backslapping antics of the Atlantic Liberal members. The problem is that it is nothing but a charade and it lacks a backbone.

Voters know their carbon tax is increasing the price of home heating, fuel, food and housing, and that is serious business. They want Atlantic Canadians to believe that they are not in favour of the carbon tax, yet they have voted for carbon tax measures more than 23 times since 2015. The Prime Minister's acolytes, the Liberal Atlantic members of Parliament, are not worth the cost.

Will the Prime Minister cancel his plans to increase the punishing and inflationary carbon tax?

Hon. Sean Fraser (Minister of Housing, Infrastructure and Communities, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, my hon. colleague wants to take money from his constituents so he can make it free to pollute. This should come as no surprise because the Conservatives, over the course of my time in this chamber, have wanted to cut or vote against programs that support ordinary people all the time.

They want to take dental benefits away from children. They want to cancel investments in child care. They vote against tax measures that cut taxes for the middle class and raise them on the 1%. We are going to protect middle-class Canadians. We are going to work to defend their pensions when the Conservatives lack the courage to do so.

Mr. John Barlow (Foothills, CPC): Mr. Speaker, here is NDP-Liberal logic. They are going to increase the carbon tax on the farmers who grow the food, on the truckers who transport it, on the manufacturers who process it and on the retailers who sell it, but they are going to try to convince Canadians that these higher taxes do not impact the price of the food we are buying at the grocery store shelves. No one believes them. No one believes them when seven million Canadians have to access a food bank every single year. No one believes them when food bank use in Alberta is up 70%. No one believes them when the Calgary Food Bank supports 700 families every single day.

The Prime Minister is just not worth it. How many families have to rely on a food bank before the Liberals join the Conservatives and axe the carbon tax?

Mr. Adam van Koevorden (Parliamentary Secretary to the Minister of Environment and Climate Change and to the Minister of Sport and Physical Activity, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, it is disgraceful how the Conservatives are using people's financial struggles and pain to reinforce inaction on the environment and climate change. Canadians know how important it is to fight climate change. They know that on this point the Conservatives have absolutely no credibility and no plan for affordability or to fight climate change. If they do not have a plan for the environment, they do not have a plan for the economy.

We have a plan to address both affordability and climate change. The Conservatives ran on a plan with Erin O'Toole to put a price on carbon. They have spun on their heels with their new leader from Carleton, because apparently climate change is not a thing in that part of Ottawa.

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HOUSING

Ms. Lindsay Mathyssen (London—Fanshawe, NDP): Mr. Speaker, the Deputy Prime Minister recently praised a shady corporate landlord named Dream Unlimited Corp. for building more housing in Toronto, where rent averages \$2,600 a month for a one-bedroom. What has Dream Unlimited done in Toronto? It has jacked up rent in its buildings by 22% in five years. How can this even be considered a solution? It is insulting.

When will the Liberals stop leaving it to the big developers and start announcing measures to build social and co-op housing that will actually get us out of this housing crisis?

Hon. Sean Fraser (Minister of Housing, Infrastructure and Communities, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, my hon. colleague has asked when the Liberal government is going to start investing in housing for low-income families. "Right after we formed government in 2015" is the answer to her question.

We have been putting forward a national housing strategy, backed by \$82 billion in investment, that is providing thousands

upon thousands of homes for low-income families. However, I would point out that the path going forward involves a mix of investments that will support homes for low-income families and for middle-class families. As a result of the removal of the GST on the construction of new apartments, we are seeing developers announce new projects. There are some that have announced 5,000, 3,000 or 1,000. This is going to put a roof over the heads of hundreds of thousands of Canadians.

* * *

PENSIONS

Mr. Blake Desjarlais (Edmonton Griesbach, NDP): Mr. Speaker, for months the leader of the Conservative Party has made it very clear where he stands. He wants to cut Canadians' pensions and make seniors get less money. Now they are applauding that plan. His friend, Ms. Danielle Smith, is taking his lead and threatening to pull Alberta out of the CPP. It is shameful.

Albertans are worried that their pensions will be gambled away by unpredictable and unreliable Conservatives. When will the government get serious and defend the pensions of seniors?

• (1450)

Hon. Randy Boissonnault (Minister of Employment, Workforce Development and Official Languages, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, let me be really clear. I have emails today from Brent, Eva and Ryan, all seniors in Edmonton Centre, and many emails beyond that, imploring our government to make sure that the Premier of Alberta keeps her hands off Albertans' pensions that are in the CPP. Just on performance alone, a few years back, CPP was 20% and AIMCo was 0.5%. The math speaks for itself.

Pensioners need their pensions. This is not the time to play politics with pensions. It is simply not worth it.

* * *

NATURAL RESOURCES

Mr. George Chahal (Calgary Skyview, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, in my riding and across this country, companies are in a race to deploy cutting-edge technologies that deliver the energy we need while driving down emissions and costs. This is a win-win-win, because Albertan workers are using their expertise to build projects that deploy green, affordable and reliable energy to households, and the Government of Canada is investing in them.

Can the Minister of Employment, Workforce Development and Official Languages please update this House on recent developments in the energy sector?

Oral Questions

Hon. Randy Boissonnault (Minister of Employment, Workforce Development and Official Languages, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, I want to thank the hon. member for Calgary Skyview for the incredible work he does every day for Albertans.

This summer alone, our government invested more than \$300 million in over a dozen great projects, powering over 100,000 homes and giving thousands of good-paying jobs. Today we announced nearly \$24 million for the Cypress 2 wind farm in Alberta. This project, with EDF Renewables and the Kainai First Nation, will reduce emissions equivalent to getting 20,000 cars off the road.

While the Conservatives want to chop, chop, chop and block projects, we are delivering for Albertans.

* * *

FINANCE

Mr. Adam Chambers (Simcoe North, CPC): Mr. Speaker, former Bank of Canada governor David Dodge said the burden of past debts is catching up with us, and governments cannot spend their way out of problems, except the issue for the current government is that for every problem it sees, the solution is to spend more money. Everybody now knows that when the government spends money, the Bank of Canada raises its interest rates. When the Bank of Canada raises its interest rates, Canadian mortgage holders pay more.

Will the government finally rein in its out-of-control deficits so Canadians can keep their homes?

Ms. Rachel Bendayan (Parliamentary Secretary to the Deputy Prime Minister and Minister of Finance, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, as my colleague from the finance committee well knows, all of the rating agencies have reconfirmed our AAA credit rating.

What I would like to address is the fact that the Conservative members are oddly silent when it comes to investments that our government has made in order to attract companies like Northvolt, which just announced today that it is coming to Canada. It could have gone to California; it could have gone to anywhere else around the world, but it has decided to partner with our federal government in order to install a brand new company right here in Canada. That will create thousands and thousands of jobs for Canadians who need them. That is us working for Canadians.

Mr. Adam Chambers (Simcoe North, CPC): Mr. Speaker, while households are struggling with higher mortgage and interest costs, the Canadian taxpayer is going to get side-swiped. That is because this year the government has to borrow over \$420 billion just to satisfy its spending and deficits. It also expected to pay almost \$44 billion in servicing the debt, except that assumed interest rates were going to come down by the end of this year and interest rates have gone up.

Will the Minister of Finance stand up and tell Canadians how much taxpayers are on the hook because interest rates have not come down?

Ms. Rachel Bendayan (Parliamentary Secretary to the Deputy Prime Minister and Minister of Finance, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, I spoke with a mother in my riding who is wondering how

much a Conservative government would cost her. Our government has been supporting families through this difficult time—

Some hon. members: Oh, oh!

The Deputy Speaker: Order, please.

The hon. Parliamentary Secretary to the Minister of Finance can start again.

Ms. Rachel Bendayan: Mr. Speaker, obviously I hit a nerve with the Conservatives, because when I spoke to a member of my constituency, when I spoke to this mother, she was concerned about how much the Conservatives' plan would cost her. She is relying on the Canada child benefit, which continues to go up because it is indexed to inflation. She is relying on the supports of our government. She is relying on the construction of new homes that our government is committed to building. The Conservative Party is nowhere to be found.

* * *

● (1455)

HOUSING

Mr. Eric Melillo (Kenora, CPC): Mr. Speaker, after eight years of the NDP-Liberal government, inflationary spending is driving up the cost of living and interest rates to the point where people are worried they might lose their home. The more the government spends, the more inflation grows and the higher interest rates get.

Now with mortgage interest costs up 31%, it is clear that the Prime Minister is not worth the cost. When will the Liberals finally control and put an end to their out-of-control spending so that Canadians can keep a roof over their heads?

Hon. Sean Fraser (Minister of Housing, Infrastructure and Communities, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, if the hon. member is concerned about making sure Canadians have a roof over their heads, I find it curious that he seems to be supporting a plan that has been described as being so unaware of the scale or urgency of the housing crisis that it has come up with measures such as a snitch line to rat out neighbours.

He has put forward measures that are actually going to result in raising taxes on the people who build homes. That will not result in more homes. He is proposing a plan that is going to result in cuts to the funding that is supporting homebuilding.

We are going to change the financial equation for builders by putting incentives forward. We are going to change the way cities build homes, and we are going to continue to make investments so the most vulnerable people in our communities do have a roof over their heads. There is one party in this House that is committed to building homes for low-income families and for the middle class, and we are right here.

Oral Questions

Mr. Eric Melillo (Kenora, CPC): Mr. Speaker, the minister talks about the urgency of addressing a crisis that he and his government have created. Unfortunately, it is not just homeowners who are struggling. After eight years, housing prices have doubled and young adults have given up completely on their dream of home ownership. In Toronto, students are paying \$1,500 a month for one bedroom, not a one-bedroom apartment but one individual bedroom within a shared apartment.

This is just one example of the housing crisis the government has caused, so I ask this again: When is it finally going to stop its out-of-control spending so that Canadians can afford a home?

Mr. Marc Serré (Parliamentary Secretary to the Minister of Energy and Natural Resources and to the Minister of Official Languages, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, affordability is our top priority, and I will give another example to the member. My constituents Daniel and Hélène Gingras, from my riding of Nickel Belt in northern Ontario, took advantage of the greener homes program to help cover the cost of installation, and they are saving hundreds of dollars a month on their energy bills while at the same time reducing emissions.

Addressing affordability and fighting climate change go hand in hand. Canadians know that the Leader of the Opposition is just not worth the risk.

[*Translation*]

Mr. Denis Trudel (Longueuil—Saint-Hubert, BQ): Mr. Speaker, where is the \$900 million that Quebec is supposed to receive for housing? There is not a Liberal blunder, not a single distraction, that is going to make us forget that.

I have travelled all around Quebec. This is not just an issue in Montreal. People in Sainte-Anne-des-Monts talked to me about homelessness; it is something they have never seen before. In Saint-Jérôme, there are 40 families living in their cars. There are families without a roof over their heads all over Quebec; meanwhile, the federal government is depriving Quebecers of \$900 million for housing.

When will the government hand the money over to Quebec without conditions?

Hon. Sean Fraser (Minister of Housing, Infrastructure and Communities, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, as members well know, we are in discussions with Quebec to reach a new agreement, to support their efforts to build housing throughout the province.

My counterpart and I are having conversations to establish our shared priority. In fact, the member can rest assured that I am the minister who intends to reach an agreement between Canada and Quebec. It is good for Quebec and it is good for Canada.

Mr. Denis Trudel (Longueuil—Saint-Hubert, BQ): Mr. Speaker, if the Liberals' priority was to provide housing to our people back home, they would have given the housing funds to Quebec a long time ago. By holding on to that money, they are showing that their priority is not to build houses as quickly as possible, but to fight over flags with Quebec.

They should start by giving us the means to build apartment buildings. Not to worry, we will be happy to invite them for the photo op.

When will they give Quebec the \$900 million for housing? We need that money now.

Hon. Soraya Martinez Ferrada (Minister of Tourism and Minister responsible for the Economic Development Agency of Canada for the Regions of Quebec, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, I thank my colleague for the question.

As he knows, we work very well with Quebec. We have signed several agreements and made historic investments in housing in Quebec. We will be happy to make further announcements—very soon, I hope—because many projects are already under way and we look forward to making these announcements.

Mrs. Dominique Vien (Bellechasse—Les Etchemins—Lévis, CPC): Mr. Speaker, a recent survey shows that one in two young people are living from paycheque to paycheque, and eight out of 10 young people say they are unable to buy a home. This is where eight years of a Liberal government have led us, and the Bloc is complicit with the Liberals, whose carbon tax increases are driving up the cost of everything we buy. Without a doubt, voting for the Bloc is far too expensive.

When will the Liberals stop their inflationary policy so that Canadians can keep a roof over their heads?

• (1500)

Hon. Marie-Claude Bibeau (Minister of National Revenue, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, we have had a national housing strategy for years and are investing billions of dollars in it. We are working with the Government of Quebec and we have different types of programs in all the categories, including affordable housing, the GST exemption on rental housing construction and the FHSA, which offers young people an opportunity to invest and save in a tax-free account for the eventual purchase of their first property.

* * *

CARBON PRICING

Mr. Jacques Gourde (Lévis—Lotbinière, CPC): Mr. Speaker, with the Bloc-Liberal coalition wanting to radically increase carbon taxes, voting for the Bloc Québécois is too costly, especially since the Bloc leader does not even know the annual gas consumption for a family of four in Quebec. The Bloc-Liberal coalition does not understand the struggles of Canadian families.

When will this government see sense and cancel the carbon tax?

Hon. Marie-Claude Bibeau (Minister of National Revenue, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, Quebec is not subject to the price on pollution for the simple reason that it has had its own carbon exchange for 10 years.

My colleague does not understand that climate change is having an impact on our businesses. If we abolished the price on pollution, as the Conservatives would like to do, that would put Quebec and British Columbia businesses at a disadvantage compared to the rest of the country.

Oral Questions

Mr. Jacques Gourde (Lévis—Lotbinière, CPC): Mr. Speaker, the carbon taxes are increasing the cost of living for Canadians, including our farmers. As if eight years of Liberal incompetence were not costly enough, now the new Bloc-Liberal coalition is adding to the pile. It is scandalous. Voting for the Bloc Québécois is very costly. By radically increasing the carbon tax, the Bloc Québécois is trampling on and penalizing our Canadian farmers.

When will the Bloc-Liberal coalition choose common sense?

Hon. Diane Lebouthillier (Minister of Fisheries, Oceans and the Canadian Coast Guard, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, Conservative common sense is like jam: the less there is, the more it is spread around. The Conservatives are proposing to cut services and support for families, set back women's rights and muzzle scientists. I could go on like that all afternoon. Chop, chop, chop, that is what common sense looks like to the Conservatives. We will pass.

* * *

IMMIGRATION, REFUGEES AND CITIZENSHIP

Ms. Anju Dhillon (Dorval—Lachine—LaSalle, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, many businesses in communities across Quebec and Canada and in my riding of Dorval—Lachine—LaSalle are having trouble finding the workers they need.

Can the Minister of Immigration, Refugees and Citizenship inform the House of our government's plan to bring in newcomers with high-demand skills in order to spur innovation and economic growth?

Hon. Marc Miller (Minister of Immigration, Refugees and Citizenship, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, Canada remains a destination of choice for skilled newcomers, and immigration remains an essential tool in our plan to address the labour shortage. Thanks to programs like express entry for temporary foreign workers and international students, we are welcoming newcomers with high-demand skills to spur innovation and economic growth. We will continue to welcome immigrants to Canada and to use every tool at our disposal to address labour shortages because that is good for our economy and for Canada.

* * *

[English]

HEALTH

Mr. Garnett Genuis (Sherwood Park—Fort Saskatchewan, CPC): Mr. Speaker, on May 29, the Liberal-NDP coalition voted against a Conservative motion to sue the companies responsible for the opioid crisis for all damages and devote the money received to prevention, treatment and recovery.

Liberals sided with McKinsey and big pharma against the victims of the opioid crisis. However, McKinsey just agreed to pay another \$230 million in damages in the U.S.

While American victims are collecting big time from these corporate drug dealers, why did the government vote against bringing home full compensation for victims here in Canada?

• (1505)

Hon. Ya'ara Saks (Minister of Mental Health and Addictions and Associate Minister of Health, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, it seems

that, as usual, the opposition is behind the times and is offering nothing when we address this critical issue. Thankfully, we have other members of the House who do. We would invite them to work with us rather than continuing to promote fear and stigma.

We have been working with B.C. since 2018 on litigation against big pharma and those who enabled them. We were part of the Purdue settlement in 2022. At the government's request, B.C. also amended its legislation to reinforce the federal government's participation in these class actions.

Get on board and get up to speed.

The Deputy Speaker: We should make sure that we speak directly to the Chair when we do that rather than the member.

The hon. member for Kamloops—Thompson—Cariboo.

Mr. Frank Caputo (Kamloops—Thompson—Cariboo, CPC): Mr. Speaker, after eight years of the NDP-Liberal government, fatal overdoses from opioids and other illicit drugs are now the leading cause in the deaths of children aged 10 to 18 years. We are talking about children's deaths here, so the NDP members can heckle me all they want.

It is actually the NDP that should be ashamed, because these kids had their whole lives ahead of them. This costly coalition's insistence on decriminalization means that these kids' lives have been cut short. It is shameful that this NDP-Liberal government will not end its radical agenda.

When will it keep our kids safe?

Hon. Ya'ara Saks (Minister of Mental Health and Addictions and Associate Minister of Health, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, I was in Barrie this summer on International Overdose Awareness Day, and I spoke to Christine Nayler, the mother of Ryan, who said that harm reduction is health care.

We are saving lives. The member knows perfectly well that safe supply is highly regulated and that diversion of supply is illegal in this country.

We will use every tool we have to save lives and reverse the tide of the overdose crisis. I suggest that the member work with us rather than restigmatizing people and putting them in the shadows instead of getting them the help they need.

JUSTICE

Mr. Rick Perkins (South Shore—St. Margarets, CPC): Mr. Speaker, Penny Boudreau choked her 12-year-old daughter to death in Bridgewater, Nova Scotia. She claimed Karissa had run away, but when Karissa's body was found, Penny was convicted of murder and sentenced to life in prison. This child murderer has now been granted another pass to leave prison. Karissa will never live her life, but her murderer is free to live hers.

Can the Liberals tell my community where the justice is in this?

Ms. Jennifer O'Connell (Parliamentary Secretary to the Minister of Public Safety, Democratic Institutions and Intergovernmental Affairs (Cybersecurity), Lib.): Mr. Speaker, crimes such as this are truly horrific. I think it is important to remember that, in this place, it is our job and our duty to all Canadians to ensure we have a criminal justice system that is robust but not partisan, and members opposite should not use heinous crimes for partisan gain.

I welcome members opposite to work with us on the public safety committee when it comes to ensuring a victims' rights focus, but we will not play games with the public justice system. Instead, we are going to make it safe for all Canadians.

* * *

FOREIGN AFFAIRS

Ms. Jean Yip (Scarborough—Agincourt, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, my constituents in Scarborough—Agincourt, Armenian Canadians and those across the country have been expressing their concern over the devastating situation in Nagorno-Karabakh. Armenians in Nagorno-Karabakh have spent almost a year without fuel, food or medicine because of the blockade of the Lachin corridor. There is now an exodus of Armenian refugees with the resumption of military activity by Azerbaijan, in violation of the 2020 ceasefire agreement.

Could the Minister of International Development please outline what measures the Government of Canada is taking to respond to this situation?

Hon. Ahmed Hussen (Minister of International Development, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, I want to thank the hon. member for Scarborough—Agincourt for her strong advocacy on this issue.

We have been following, as a government, the deteriorating situation in Nagorno-Karabakh. This is a situation that also impacts Armenian Canadians. Earlier this morning, I announced that Canada is providing \$2.5 million to the Red Cross to provide food, emergency health care, protection services and other essential life-saving assistance to more than 60,000 refugees caught in Nagorno-Karabakh and the surrounding regions.

We continue to call on Azerbaijan to respect the ceasefire, ensure humanitarian access and protect civilians.

* * *

● (1510)

OIL AND GAS INDUSTRY

Mr. Mike Morrice (Kitchener Centre, GP): Mr. Speaker, while climate change-fuelled wildfires burned over 175,000 square kilometres of area across the country this year, oil and gas companies

Oral Questions

are gouging Canadians at the pumps and raking in record-breaking profits.

The Liberals have already imposed a windfall profit tax on banks and life insurance companies. The Greens have put forward a motion to apply this same tax to the oil and gas industry to help fund proven climate solutions. Will the minister commit to this responsible, reasonable measure and tax those most responsible for the crisis?

Mr. Adam van Koeverden (Parliamentary Secretary to the Minister of Environment and Climate Change and to the Minister of Sport and Physical Activity, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, the Canada recovery dividend was a pandemic program, and it was a one-time tax program for banks and life insurance. Since then, we have continued our work to eliminate inefficient fossil fuel subsidies that are encouraging smart government investment, because that is going to increase Canada's global competitiveness.

In budget 2023, our government also announced our \$120-billion clean economy plan to grow Canada's clean economy to create well-paying jobs and careers for workers right across Canada. Phasing out fossil fuel subsidies in our country will ensure that government programs and spending support the energy sector and are aligned with our ambitious climate goals.

Mr. Charlie Angus (Timmins—James Bay, NDP): Mr. Speaker, what we have seen in the state of California is that the five big oil companies are now being sued for active disinformation on the climate crisis and false promotion of both natural gas and petroleum as a solution. What we see is the big tobacco moment, where the companies are now being held accountable for this disinformation, which is, of course, supported by the Conservatives and the Conservative leader.

Is the government considering going after big oil for disinformation, as the State of California is doing, holding these companies accountable and making them pay for the massive damage they have done to our forests, our communities and our children's future?

Mr. Adam van Koeverden (Parliamentary Secretary to the Minister of Environment and Climate Change and to the Minister of Sport and Physical Activity, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, on a day when we are confronted with climate change denial and actions to bring us back to a Harper era, when Harper called the Kyoto accord a "socialist" regime, it is actually heartening to hear from members in the House who are following through on their commitments from the last election, where we all ran on a commitment to price carbon.

Business of Supply

I appreciate the question from my colleague opposite. I will look into the issue, and we will have a conversation off-line.

[Translation]

The Speaker: Thank you for welcoming me. I am very grateful for your unanimous agreement to grant me the honour of being the interim Speaker for five days. I will remember this forever.

During my long, 39-year career, I will no doubt have been the longest-serving member of Parliament but the shortest-serving Speaker.

We will now proceed to the weekly statement by the House leader of the official opposition.

* * *

• (1515)

[English]

BUSINESS OF THE HOUSE

Hon. Andrew Scheer (Regina—Qu'Appelle, CPC): Mr. Speaker, thank you for recognizing that it has been a difficult few days. While your tenure will not be long, I hope it will be smooth. As such, I will make my intervention today as simple as possible for the chair occupant. I am sure you will do a great job over the next few days. I am not sure a five-day tenure will qualify you for a portrait in the hallway, but I will leave that to you to negotiate with the clerks.

I am wondering if the government House leader could inform the House as to the business for the rest of this week and the next.

[Translation]

Hon. Karina Gould (Leader of the Government in the House of Commons, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, I would like to congratulate you on your appointment, even though it is temporary, but I would also like to thank you, on behalf of the government, for agreeing to serve as interim Speaker to ensure a smooth transition while we await the next Speaker of the House of Commons. Thank you for taking on this role as dean of the House.

Tomorrow, we will begin the second reading debate on Bill C-50, the Canadian Sustainable Jobs Act. On Monday, the House will stand adjourned to mark the National Day for Truth and Reconciliation. When we return on Tuesday, the first order of business will be the election of a new Speaker. When we resume our work that day, we will continue the second reading debate on Bill C-56, the Affordable Housing and Groceries Act. On Wednesday, we will resume debate at second reading of Bill S-12, an Act to amend the Criminal Code, the Sex Offender Information Registration Act and the International Transfer of Offenders Act. If the debate on Bill C-56 is not completed, we will resume second reading debate on Thursday. On Friday, we will proceed to second reading of Bill C-49, an Act to amend the Canada-Newfoundland and Labrador Atlantic Accord Implementation Act.

GOVERNMENT ORDERS

[English]

BUSINESS OF SUPPLY

OPPOSITION MOTION—CARBON TAXES

The House resumed consideration of the motion.

Mr. Mark Gerretsen (Kingston and the Islands, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, I, too, want to extend my congratulations to you on your new position. I have always had an incredible amount of respect for you, ever since the first time I entered the House in 2015. You, being the dean of the House, resided over, and have since resided over, all elections of the Speaker. It is nice to see you filling this role. We greatly appreciate you doing that during the time of need of the House.

I will pick up where I left off in my speech prior to question period. I was pointing out what I saw as the rich hypocrisy that tended to come from the other side of the House when it came to pricing pollution. As I indicated during my speech, all members of the Conservative caucus, who sit here today, and many of those from before them, ran on pricing pollution, some dating back to Stephen Harper's time.

What I find to be even richer than that is the fact that some members of the House, in particular the member for Pitt Meadows—Maple Ridge, were part of a government that supported pricing pollution and introduced pricing pollution. That member went on to give a long speech in the British Columbia legislature about how effective pricing pollution was and how well it was working in British Columbia.

I am sure the member felt quite confident when he ran in the 2021 election on the plan that Erin O'Toole had put forward at the time. I am sure he thought it was the right plan, because he had seen this successfully work in British Columbia. Now he is with a new Leader of the Opposition who does not feel the same way, and he has suddenly changed his tune. Indeed, he rose in the House earlier today and asked a question specifically on this topic, as though he never made those comments or took those positions in the past.

I find it extremely difficult to give any credibility on this issue to the Conservatives. They tend to do exactly what the member for Timmins—James Bay was saying earlier, which is to look for any opportunity to exploit individuals, in particular individual hardships, in order to utilize that for some kind of political gain. We continually see that.

I would like to touch on my comments with regard to the Atlantic accord. What we do know is that both in Nova Scotia and in Newfoundland, the premiers have been calling on the government to install legislation, to give the opportunity for Atlantic Canada to benefit tremendously, economically and environmentally, but in particular economically, on a new opportunity to produce wind energy in Atlantic Canada, offshore. This is where the future is going.

Business of Supply

People can put their head in the sand and pretend that the future still remains in oil and gas. They can die by that sword by insisting that it is the only option and the only form of energy that will ever be required, or they can get with the times, open their eyes and see what is going on throughout the world, see what is going on just in our country alone with respect to that transition.

Even if, as Conservatives have said many times in the past, they are not in favour of that Atlantic accord, even if they still believe that oil and gas is the only way to go, why would they not be in favour of unlocking the opportunities of Atlantic Canada to potentially prosper off a new form of energy? We would think that Conservatives would at least say they do not believe it will ever happen but we should go ahead and try. They will not even do that.

That is how beholden they are to oil and gas, generally speaking, and to the industries that are profiting billions of dollars every year. For some reason, the Conservatives are absolutely relentless in their quest to shutter any opportunity of any kind of new technology that does not involve the extraction of fossil fuels from the ground. I find that extremely troubling.

I always thought that eventually the Conservatives would come around, that eventually they would say that since 10 out of every 100 cars in Canada being sold are electric cars now, it is probably going in that direction. However, it seems as though the Conservatives, at every possible opportunity, absolutely claw onto and grasp at every last little straw in an attempt to hold onto the fossil fuel industry, as though it is the only thing here for their survival.

• (1520)

Mr. Clifford Small (Coast of Bays—Central—Notre Dame, CPC): Mr. Speaker, while St. Peter denied Christ three times, the Atlantic Liberal MPs denied the harmful effects of the carbon tax on their constituents 23 times.

Based on Canadian averages for carbon emissions per kilometre, my hon. colleague across the way created 75 kilos of carbon emissions this morning when his daddy drove his papers to Ottawa for him. I wonder if the member knows that documents can be scanned and emailed, and that would cause no carbon footprint.

Does the member take full responsibility for the carbon he created this morning in a useless fashion?

Mr. Mark Gerretsen: Mr. Speaker, I am so proud to have this opportunity to talk about how my father, who is 81 years old, and my mother, who is 77 years old, purchased their first electric vehicle six months ago. I have no doubt that my father, with his dog in the back seat, drove to Prescott in his electric vehicle.

If anyone can convince my parents, who are 81 and 77 years old, that the future is in electric vehicles, if someone can teach them how to drive an electric vehicle and see the joy they have in using it, I am convinced that anybody can do the same thing.

[*Translation*]

Mr. Yves Perron (Berthier—Maskinongé, BQ): Mr. Speaker, I have a very simple question for the member.

Can he tell us about the clean fuel regulations that his government adopted on July 1? I would like him to tell the House, first, if

his government asked the Bloc Québécois to support it and, second, if the House had to vote on it.

• (1525)

[*English*]

Mr. Mark Gerretsen: Mr. Speaker, the reality is that we have brought forward an incredible amount of legislation to reduce our carbon emissions. I took some time in my speech, albeit before question period and not everybody was in the House at the time, to explain exactly where the emissions had been reduced. The only—

[*Translation*]

The Deputy Speaker: I have to interrupt the member. There is a problem with interpretation.

[*English*]

We will pause briefly to figure out what is going on. We are now good to go.

The hon. member for Kingston and the Islands.

Mr. Mark Gerretsen: Mr. Speaker, as I was saying, our government has brought forward a number of initiatives that have lowered carbon emissions. Perhaps a number of colleagues were not in the House before question period, but I specifically talked about the impacts that they had. The one area that is keeping the number up, not allowing us to meet our objectives, is the oil and gas sector, specifically. It is the only area where GHG emissions have continued to increase.

I am calling on the government to bring in significant, bold caps when it comes to emissions. That is what is going to give us the ability to continue to see the downward trajectory.

Mr. Richard Cannings (South Okanagan—West Kootenay, NDP): Mr. Speaker, I was not here before question period, so I missed most the member's speech. I would like him to repeat the details about how much the carbon tax affects the price of food, for example. I have heard from the Parliamentary Budget Officer, for instance, that it increases the price of food by 0.15% compared to the 80¢ increase I see at the gas pumps at home because of the greed of oil companies.

Mr. Mark Gerretsen: Mr. Speaker, there are a whole bunch of things going on when we talk about the inflation of food prices. For example, in the United States, 20% of the market share of groceries is with Walmart. That is a lot, right?

In Canada, 43% is with Loblaws. When we start to develop these monopolies and other practices, we are going to naturally start to see anti-competition acts that will inflate the prices. Yes, we can point to that. We can also point to the global impacts of what is going on. Ukraine produces 15% of the world's grain, what happens when that all of a sudden stops? That is going to increase the price.

Business of Supply

Conservatives want people to believe that it is just a price on pollution that is contributing to it. Sure, that is their angle. They have been at it for months and months now, but I think the vast majority of Canadians realize that these situations involve more complex variables and it is not as simple as their one-liners and three-word slogans they spout out so much.

Mr. Ron McKinnon (Coquitlam—Port Coquitlam, Lib.): Madam Speaker, I appreciate my colleague's mention of the carbon pricing that we introduced in British Columbia in 2008. As a B.C. member, it has been my experience that it has been most effective and revolutionary.

I would like the hon. member to speak further to that.

Mr. Mark Gerretsen: Madam Speaker, thanks for the opportunity to repeat this. The member for Pitt Meadows—Maple Ridge said in the B.C. legislature, “Independent studies have found that between 2008 and 2012, fuel use in B.C. dropped by 16 percent per capita. In 2015, a review of seven independent studies suggested that B.C.’s carbon tax has reduced emissions in the province by up to 15 percent.” These are not my words. These are the words of the member for Pitt Meadows—Maple Ridge when he was part of a government in British Columbia that introduced a price on pollution.

• (1530)

Mr. Adam Chambers (Simcoe North, CPC): Madam Speaker, John Maynard Keynes said when the facts change, he changed his opinion. What changed in the last few years is that we are now in a cost of living crisis. Someone does not have to be Einstein's cousin to understand if we reduce the carbon tax, we will reduce inflation. Everybody is saying that.

Why can this member not exercise some independent thought for once?

Mr. Mark Gerretsen: Madam Speaker, circumstances certainly have changed. The only thing that has changed in terms of re-evaluating the position of the Conservative Party is a new leader because the member who just asked me a question ran in 2021 on pricing pollution. His colleagues ran on it in previous years. Yes, absolutely circumstances change and that leads to other outcomes, but the only circumstance that has changed is the individual he is taking his marching orders from now.

Mr. Michael Coteau (Don Valley East, Lib.): Madam Speaker, I would like to thank the member for his statement. He was talking about government investments into programs and looking for ways to mitigate the carbon footprint here in Canada. I know his father, John Gerretsen, was responsible for the Greenbelt.

Can the member talk about the advantage of government really investing in climate change and looking for ways to mitigate CO₂?

Mr. Mark Gerretsen: Madam Speaker, given that the member brought it up, under the leadership of Dalton McGuinty, my father was the environment minister at the time. He created, with the help of so many people, the Greenbelt. It established an area that homes would not be built on, because the policies of the day were to make areas more intense and dense. Doug Ford looked to completely eliminate that, but we all see how that worked out for him. He had to reverse his position on that, probably exposing the Ontario people to huge liability in terms of court cases.

The reality of the situation is that government does have the ability to bring in policies and practices that could genuinely shape the outcome. We saw it then and we can continue to see it now with policies we are bringing in.

Mr. Kody Blois (Kings—Hants, Lib.): Madam Speaker, as a Nova Scotia member of Parliament, I stood in this House last week and was frankly disturbed by the fact that the Conservative Party of Canada is standing against Bill C-49, which is a piece of legislation that drives Atlantic Canada's offshore future. I was calling on the members from Newfoundland and Labrador, and Nova Scotia, who are Conservative, to stand up for their constituencies to be able to make a difference. Of course, the Conservatives like to talk about the carbon price, but they refuse to talk about ways we enable renewable energy and the way that we drive innovation forward.

Can the member for Kingston and the Islands provide some reflections of his surprise about the fact that the Conservatives will not support us on this bill?

Mr. Mark Gerretsen: Madam Speaker, even if Conservatives do not believe in climate change, do not believe that renewables are the answer and that it is going to be oil and gas forever, why would they not be in favour of unlocking the potential of this economic opportunity? It really speaks volumes to their position. They are more interested in suppressing economic opportunity and promoting the oil and gas sector than they are in their own constituents.

Mr. Jasraj Singh Hallan (Calgary Forest Lawn, CPC): Madam Speaker, before I start, I would like to inform you that I am splitting my time with my very eloquent and passionate advocate and colleague from Mégantic—L'Érable.

It was all a scam. The carbon tax was sold when a bumper sticker should have been slapped on that said, “Not as advertised”.

The Liberals sold it a few ways. They said that more Canadians would get more back into their pockets with these phony rebates than what they would have to pay into it. The Parliamentary Budget Officer proved that was false and made it very clear in his report that Canadians would pay more into this scam than what they would get back in these phony rebates.

The Liberals also said they would solve climate change and make everything better, that they would make emissions come down. That was proven false by their own Parliamentary Budget Officer, as emissions keep going up and they have not hit a single emissions reduction target they set for themselves. This is why they should have thrown on a bumper sticker that said, “Not as advertised”. This was a scam from day one and it is coming to light now.

The carbon taxes and the carbon tax scam are also very discriminatory because every province feels them differently and gets charged differently. For Albertans, it is yet another attack on our province by the Prime Minister. Not only has he repeatedly kicked Albertans down, he has also made sure that Alberta does not again become the prosperous province it used to be. By introducing Bill C-69, supported by the NDP, the Liberals and NDP made sure that no good pipeline projects would be able to be completed in this country. Pipelines are great way to lower emissions and not have our products transported on trains and trucks. They are safer, more secure and will bring down emissions. They can bring home not only more powerful paycheques for Canadians, but jobs, prosperity and a better economy.

We can see that the world today wants clean, responsible, low-carbon Canadian energy, but the policies and radical left ideology of the Liberal-NDP government are not allowing it. It has repeatedly blocked projects. What is the result of that? We see dictatorships around the world making profits. We see emissions going up. As an example, Germany's chancellor came to Canada within the last year literally asking for our liquid natural gas and was willing to take it immediately. The Prime Minister had more than 15 good LNG projects on his desk when he became Prime Minister. Not one has been completed yet. When he turned Germany's chancellor away, the chancellor went to Qatar, which has fewer human rights and environmental regulations than Canada. He bought LNG there, when he could have got it from Canada, which has the highest human rights and environmental standards when it comes to producing clean, responsible energy.

What is the result of all of this? Last winter we saw heating costs double. We heard stories of seniors having to turn down the heat in their homes and literally making do with blankets during the wintertime because, after eight years of the irresponsible Liberal-NDP government, things are way more expensive than they have ever been before. These costs have driven up everything and have made it so that 1.5 million Canadians are now visiting a food bank in a single month. Liberal inflation has driven up interest rates and Canada is most at risk in the G7 for a mortgage default crisis. This has also driven up rents and everything else.

● (1535)

When I met this single mother, she told me the reality of her situation. She is a single mom of three kids. Her rent went up by \$600. She could not afford to eat. She could not afford to feed her kids and heat her home at the same time. What did she have to do? She had to move in with her abusive ex-husband once again and live in that same situation because she could not afford to feed her kids anymore.

The Liberal-NDP government refuses to acknowledge that the carbon tax has real consequences. When the government is taxing the farmer who makes the food, the trucker who ships the food, the manufacturer and the people who are storing the food, that tax ultimately goes on the Canadian who is buying the food. That is the sad reality after eight years of the current incompetent Liberal-NDP government.

Canadians' disposable income is getting smaller and smaller due to the deficits that the Liberal government continues to drive up. It

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is not just that: The Liberals have increased the cost of a house by doubling the amount of mortgages and rents and the time it takes to save up for a down payment on a house. They are also increasing the costs inside the house, like heat, gas and grocery costs. All of these have gone up and they are all inflationary, which was proven by the Governor of the Bank of Canada.

Canada could be the world leader today in clean, responsible energy that could actually bring down global emissions, and not just emissions in Canada. We could provide for the whole world. We have enough. We just have a Liberal-NDP government that is the ultimate gatekeeper of the success of Canada. There are many marginalized communities that work in the energy sector. The Liberal-NDP woke government, due to its crazy left ideology, has stopped those marginalized communities from being able to be successful here in Canada. Over and over again, we see authoritative, crazy left ideology out-trump common sense.

However, common sense would be restored once again in this country when the member for Carleton becomes prime minister of this country. We would green-light green projects. Canada is 64th in the world for permitting. We would make sure that good projects like hydro, tidal and nuclear would actually be built in this country. We would get pipelines built so we could bring down world emissions. We would make sure that our first nations and indigenous brothers and sisters would also become prosperous once again, under a Conservative government, when we partner with them and make sure that we get Canada back to the successful state it needs to be once again.

We would scrap this failed carbon tax so the cost of gas, groceries and home heating would come down. We would make sure that we get more energy produced in this country so that we could lower the cost of energy.

That is what the world needs, that is what Canada needs and that is what Canadians need. When the member for Carleton becomes prime minister, we would bring those things home. We would bring home powerful paycheques and we would bring home lower costs for our people.

● (1540)

Mr. Kody Blois (Kings—Hants, Lib.): Madam Speaker, there was a lot that my hon. colleague touched upon in that 10 minutes that I have real trouble with, in its factual basis. One, farmers are exempt from the carbon price. The Conservatives continue to talk about that. They are exempt. Two, the member talked about indigenous communities and large industrial projects. His party is standing in the way of legislation that indigenous communities in Atlantic Canada are calling for to help make a difference on those industrial projects he talks about in the renewable energy sector.

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However, I am going to ask the member a very simple question because I do want to see where the Conservatives stand. They talk about cutting all carbon pricing, but yet many industrial projects, like ones in Saskatchewan and in his home province of Alberta, are building industrial capacity on the basis of carbon pricing. Would his party cut all forms of carbon pricing that are really important to the industrial future of his province as well?

Mr. Jasraj Singh Hallan: Madam Speaker, the member is completely out of touch. He is out of touch with the farmers whom his government continues to attack with this carbon tax, which has actually driven up the cost of everything. When farmers are driving tractors on their farms, they are hit with the carbon tax. When they are drying their grain, they get hit with the carbon tax. How can he possibly say that farmers are exempt from carbon taxes? This guy is completely out of touch.

We need to axe the carbon tax, and he needs to join with his Newfoundland premier who also wants to scrap this and actually recognizes that the costs have gone up because of this failed carbon tax scam.

• (1545)

[Translation]

Mr. Gabriel Ste-Marie (Joliette, BQ): Madam Speaker, I thank my colleague, with whom I have the honour of serving on the Standing Committee on Finance. When we were debating—

Some hon. members: Oh, oh!

The Assistant Deputy Speaker (Mrs. Alexandra Mendès): Order.

[English]

Could I ask the hon. members to please keep the noise down so the hon. member for Joliette can ask a question?

Mr. Kody Blois: Madam Speaker, I do not want to wait. I apologize because I was yelling back and forth. I would like to apologize and let the record show that. When the Conservatives actually stand up and say that things are—

The Assistant Deputy Speaker (Mrs. Alexandra Mendès): That is debate. I think the hon. member's apologizing is sufficient.

The hon. member for Joliette.

[Translation]

Mr. Gabriel Ste-Marie: Madam Speaker, let me start over. I thank my friend and colleague, with whom I have the honour of serving on the Standing Committee on Finance.

The Conservative member for Bellechasse—Les Etchemins—Lévis was very critical of the carbon tax that was allegedly charged on a propane bill in Quebec. In doing so, it was not the federal carbon tax she was criticizing, but a policy of the Quebec government under Jean Charest—the Conservative leadership candidate she supported—and Philippe Couillard, under whom she served as a minister.

Is that not a bit of a blunder?

[English]

Mr. Jasraj Singh Hallan: Madam Speaker, I have great respect for my hon. colleague, and I think we do some great work on the finance committee.

I will say that included in this motion is the fact that it is too bad that the Bloc teamed up with the costly Liberal-NDP coalition and was okay with slamming Quebeckers with a clean fuel standard, which is just carbon tax 2.0. This has no rebates to it and is going to be very impactful in a negative way to Quebeckers. Bloc members need to join with us. They need to ask for this to be cancelled. We need to axe the carbon tax so Quebeckers do not get higher costs on their gas, groceries and home heating either.

Mr. Peter Julian (New Westminster—Burnaby, NDP): Madam Speaker, I am a little perplexed. We have seen what Conservatives do when they are in power. In Alberta, they have destroyed the renewable energy sector, which is costing tens of thousands of jobs. This is quite strange when they are saying they actually believe in renewable energy. That same government in Alberta is also attacking the retirement security of Albertans, and we saw when the Harper government was in place, that the Harper regime actually was taking apart retirement security for Canadians. As such, the issue of the credibility of Conservatives comes up.

As the member knows, the Harper tax havens cost us, today, over \$30 billion annually. These are tax havens that serve the ultra-rich and very profitable corporations. I would like to ask my colleague, very simply, how he thinks he can be credible when this is the deplorable Harper record.

Mr. Jasraj Singh Hallan: Madam Speaker, I would like to remind my colleague that it was just a few months ago that the great people of Alberta re-elected once again a strong majority Conservative government provincially, rejecting the out-of-control, out-of-touch, ideological, left NDP.

I will also remind him that in 2019, Bill 1, which the UCP ran on, was to axe the carbon tax. I will remind him once again that there was a major majority of Albertans who elected a strong Conservative government in 2019. Albertans will continue to reject this failed policy of carbon taxes and solve the issue of climate change through technology and not taxes.

[Translation]

Mr. Luc Berthold (Mégantic—L'Érable, CPC): Madam Speaker, I want to congratulate my colleague on his eloquence, the quality of his speech and especially his strong and passionate defence of his province, Alberta. I thank my colleague.

We are here today because after eight years of this Liberal Prime Minister, the economic situation of Canadian and Quebec families is only getting worse. This morning, I saw on Twitter that there were record lineups at food banks. This happened at the Bouchée généreuse food bank in the Quebec City area. The journalist says he has never seen such long lineups before.

People are relying on food banks because they simply cannot afford groceries anymore, now that everything is more expensive. A Leger poll published today in *Le Journal de Québec* is quite worrisome, especially for young Quebecers. More than half of young people are living paycheque to paycheque.

That means that they get paid \$500 on Thursday and, by the following Wednesday, all that money is gone and the bank account is empty. They simply have to wait for the next paycheque and hope that nothing bad happens during the night, like their car getting towed. People just do not have the money. That is what living from paycheque to paycheque means.

Unfortunately, in Quebec, 51% of young people are living paycheque to paycheque. The number of workers living paycheque to paycheque increased by 26% in 2022. According to the poll, this is causing more stress. The higher cost of living is demoralizing those aged 40 and under, 62% of whom feel unable to cope with societal issues, an increase of 5% compared to 2022. They feel less confident in their ability to face challenges. The cost of rent is getting to be a real problem for them: 72% say that rent makes up too big a chunk of their budget. That is 8% more than the previous year. Those are huge numbers when we talk about something as important as housing.

I also want to quote a comment from that article. Kassendra Hachey, who is 28, said: “I live paycheque to paycheque. I work every other weekend on top of going to school. I have to work at least 24 hours to make ends meet.”

Unfortunately, that is the reality and situation for young Quebecers today, after eight years of this Liberal government. With its inflationary spending, the Liberal government has made the situation intolerable. It is unacceptable for people to be experiencing a situation like this in 2023 in a G7 country like Canada.

We are at a turning point where real choices need to be made. Either we continue in the same direction where fewer and fewer people will be able to afford housing and fewer and fewer people will be able to afford food, or we choose to take action to bring down prices, mortgage payments and inflation.

That brings me to today's motion. It is a quick and easy solution that we can implement immediately and that will have a direct impact on the wallets of these young people, the wallets of every family across Canada and in Quebec. Our proposal is to cancel the carbon taxes, which are increasing the price of everything.

I can already hear the Bloc Québécois members say—as they have said over and over again today—that the carbon tax does not apply in Quebec and that the Conservatives are wrong. They used unparliamentary language. The leader of the Bloc Québécois used unparliamentary language throughout his speech this morning. Unfortunately, no one noticed. I am pointing it out because, unfortunately, the leader of the Bloc Québécois took the liberty of saying things he should not have said.

Any carbon tax imposed on Canadians still has an impact on Quebec. It is not complicated. This is because everything produced elsewhere in Canada is subject to the carbon tax. What is produced elsewhere in Canada is not necessarily available in Quebec. That food has to be transported all the way to Quebec. We know that a

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lot of food processing takes place in Ontario. It has to be transported by trucks, which are subject to the carbon tax.

Therefore, when food reaches grocery store shelves in Quebec, it obviously costs more because twice the carbon tax will have been imposed, along with the GST. In short, Quebecers are suffering because of the carbon tax imposed by the federal government in the other provinces across the country.

● (1550)

In Quebec, the Bloc Québécois had a unique opportunity to ensure that there were no additional costs on carbon added to the price per litre of gas at the pump. The government brought in the clean fuel regulations through the back door. The House did not vote on these regulations because the Liberals adopted them behind closed doors. They did not think it made much sense so they did it in secret.

We saw them coming. We moved a motion on June 5 to say that it did not make sense to increase the price of gas per litre again when Canadians and Quebecers do not have any money left in their pockets.

Anyone who lives in a big province like Quebec will know that a car is vital for getting around in the regions. Sometimes it takes two cars to get around, go to work, attend activities, do what needs to be done. We saw the Liberals coming.

We therefore moved a motion to repeal the carbon taxes that are indirectly affecting the cost of groceries and to ask the government to repeal the clean fuel regulations. These regulations, which the Liberals snuck in under the radar, were actually a second carbon tax. We wanted to prevent the price of gas from going up 20¢ a litre plus GST for Quebecers. We told ourselves that anyone with any common sense who wants to defend the interests of Quebecers would agree with this common-sense motion so that we could put money back in Quebecers' pockets right away.

We were in for a surprise. The Bloc Québécois, which claims to be the great defender of the interests of Quebec and the regions of Quebec, did not support our motion. We were sure that the Bloc Québécois would support this motion.

The Liberals voted against it. The NDP voted against it, which is not surprising because that is how the costly NDP-Liberal coalition operates. The NDP followed the Liberals' lead. The Bloc Québécois voted against this motion, against repealing carbon tax 2.0, which would have stopped the government from raising the price of gas by 20¢ a litre in Quebec by 2030.

The Conservatives were the only ones to stand up, but unfortunately, there are not enough of us. Since July 1, Quebecers have been included in the clean fuel regulations, which will make gas and groceries more expensive. Those are the facts. That is the truth.

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Not only is that the truth, but we were flabbergasted by what we found out later. We wanted to understand why the Bloc Québécois would not vote in favour of our motion to cut carbon taxes. We started digging through Hansard to find some of the speeches made by members. We realized that the Bloc Québécois members love increasing the price of gas.

On May 26, 2020, the member for Repentigny said, “Here are some ideas of what we can do. We can increase the carbon tax. Yes, I said it.”

On February 7, 2023, she said, “We need to keep the fuel tax. We cannot give in and cancel it, which would be dangerous and get us nowhere. I never said it would be easy. It is not easy, but we have to do it.”

What is she saying we have to do? Take more money out of Quebecers' pockets. That is what that means.

On June 1, 2023, the member for Repentigny also said, and I quote, “we are not in favour of cancelling the clean fuel regulations. In addition, we do not approve of the Conservative grandstanding on the important issue of inflation and the rising cost of living.”

Did I understand that correctly? Does the Bloc Québécois not see the rise in inflation and the cost of living? This is not grandstanding. It is reality. I think it is high time that the Bloc members opened their eyes and took a look at what is happening around them and what is happening in Quebec.

On June 1, 2023, the member for Jonquière said, and I quote, “In my opinion, saying that the carbon tax is responsible for today's inflation is a simplistic solution to a complex problem.”

It certainly is a simple solution that will put money back in Quebecers' pockets right away.

Finally, I had to get to this: On February 7, 2023, the member for Longueuil—Saint-Hubert said, and I quote:

Madam Speaker, the carbon tax is a very good measure. However, it needs to be increased far more drastically than it has been so far.

I think...that the tax [should] be set at \$200 per tonne now. Based on what we are hearing, it will be about \$170 per tonne in 2030. That is much too late. It is two minutes past midnight right now. It is no longer one minute to midnight. We must do something drastic.

Going straight to taking money out of Quebecers' pockets, that is the leftist ideology. That is the Bloc Québécois ideology.

That is why I hope the Bloc Québécois will do the right thing, show a little compassion and vote in favour of our motion to leave more money in the pockets of Quebecers.

• (1555)

Mr. Adam van Koevorden (Parliamentary Secretary to the Minister of Environment and Climate Change and to the Minister of Sport and Physical Activity, Lib.): Madam Speaker, my colleague's argument is, in fact, doomed to fail. Quebec has had a cap-and-trade program for over a decade. Perhaps that is because, unlike the Conservatives here, Premier Legault's government genuinely believes in fighting climate change.

Quebec's food inflation is equivalent to Ontario's, and we are looking to implement real solutions for affordability. The Conservatives have no credibility when it comes to issues of affordability or climate change.

[English]

If the members opposite would like to support affordability, they should vote for Bill C-56, the affordable groceries and housing act, but they are playing games on the other side for bumper stickers and T-shirts. This is not serious policy. They need to talk to at least one expert about what they are talking about.

[Translation]

Mr. Luc Berthold: Madam Speaker, what is not serious is that, after eight years, the Liberals are the main cause of this inflation because of their reckless spending. There is \$60 billion in new spending in the last budget. What does that do? It injects more money into the economy. What does that do? It raises the cost of living. What does that do? It forces the Bank of Canada to say that interest rates have to be increased to slow the economy down because costs are increasing too quickly. What does that do? It increases the cost of mortgages. What does that do? It annihilates any hope young people may have of ever owning a house. That is what eight years of a Liberal government does.

• (1600)

Mr. Jean-Denis Garon (Mirabel, BQ): Madam Speaker, in 2012, in the Quebec National Assembly, the member for Bellechasse—Les Etchemins—Lévis's premier bragged about taking \$200 million out of Quebecers' pockets with the carbon exchange and said he was happy that Quebec was taking part in that carbon exchange. His colleague, Minister Pierre Arcand, even said that it was a very prudent and conservative approach.

However, the other day, she came into the House with a propane bill and criticized the Quebec tax, Quebec's share of the emissions trading system. I am certain that the member is smart enough to read a propane bill. She was dishonest with the House and is clearly uncomfortable with the Conservative position, having supported Jean Charest in the leadership race.

Mr. Luc Berthold: Madam Speaker, I rise on a point of order. I think the member has just crossed a line. He just called a colleague something I will not repeat. You heard what he said, as did I. I would ask him to retract it and apologize.

The Assistant Deputy Speaker (Mrs. Alexandra Mendès): I would ask the hon. member for Mirabel to limit himself to speaking about comments, not people. If he could apologize, that would be appreciated.

Mr. Jean-Denis Garon: Madam Speaker, I apologize. I wanted to point out that she had misled the House. Having supported Jean Charest, she seems very uncomfortable with the Conservative philosophy, so I simply wanted to know whether my colleague has checked to ensure that his colleague has a valid Conservative Party of Canada membership card.

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The Assistant Deputy Speaker (Mrs. Alexandra Mendès): I think this is a somewhat removed from government business, but I will turn the floor over to the hon. member for Mégantic—L'Érable.

Mr. Luc Berthold: Madam Speaker, indeed, I would ask the member to stick to the matters currently before the House and not to ask questions about matters that concern another chamber.

I have a question for my colleague. Does he support the carbon tax? Does he agree that it should be radically increased, as one of his colleagues suggested, which will make life more expensive for all Quebecers?

Anyone who lives in the regions knows that they need a car to get around. When we see the price at the pump, whether federal, provincial or municipal, it is obvious that people who cannot afford to put gas in their cars also cannot afford to buy groceries. It is scandalous.

[English]

Mr. Matthew Green (Hamilton Centre, NDP): Madam Speaker, do members know what the scandal is? The scandal is that Conservatives, day after day, stand up and talk about the harms of capitalism and all of the impacts on profits, but they are afraid to name it. Unlike the hon. member, I will not take Quebecers for fools, because I know that when Quebecers were listening to this particular speech, they knew it was about the greed of corporations. The insatiable profit coming from the big five oil and gas companies in 2022 was \$38.3 billion, not to mention the obscene profit held by corporations related to food and food supply.

We can look at what they do, day in and day out, shilling for these corporations shamelessly. When will the hon. member have the courage to finally stand up against the big money interests on Bay Street and in the corporate elite, and the real perpetrators of inflation, which are the price gougers and these big oil and gas companies?

Mr. Luc Berthold: Madam Speaker, it is the greed of this costly coalition that has caused so much pain to so many Canadians. The revenue of the government, because of inflation, rose by 30%, supported by this party. That is why we think we should say no to a carbon tax and put much more money in the pockets of all Canadians right now.

[Translation]

Mr. Kody Blois (Kings—Hants, Lib.): Madam Speaker, as usual, it is a pleasure to meet with my colleagues in the House of Commons to discuss and debate a motion moved by the Conservative Party for their opposition day. I am always pleased when I have the opportunity to engage in a dialogue with my Conservative colleagues on their proposals because it is an opportunity to understand their position, their priorities and their vision for Canada.

I am not usually one to get upset, but unfortunately, most of the proposals they have made over the past few years have made me sad because they are bad for Canada. Today, we are studying a motion on the carbon pricing. More specifically, the Conservatives are calling on the government to introduce a bill to eliminate all carbon pricing to lower the price of gas, groceries and heating.

I will begin by explaining why the government put a price on carbon.

The threat posed by climate change is very real. It is not a problem that is only going to happen in the future. It is happening now. All of our regions felt it this summer when we had the worst wild-fire season in the history of Canada. There has also been flooding across the country, particularly in my riding of Kings—Hants. What is more, the frequency and intensity of storms is definitely a challenge for all Canadians. It is a challenge for everyone. We are familiar with this reality.

The initiatives put in place by the government and all parliamentarians in the House are for our children and grandchildren. Of course, we also answered questions today about changes in practice and other initiatives because climate change is real. It is happening right now.

• (1605)

[English]

I want to highlight that there are 77 carbon pricing initiatives around the world. I have had the opportunity to go to the World Bank site, and people can actually look at where they exist in the world and what types of initiatives other countries, other jurisdictions, have taken on. It is not as though Canada is the only country in the world that has a price on carbon. There are many other countries that go that way.

The Conservatives like to draw attention to carbon pricing. Nowhere did the Government of Canada, on this side, ever suggest that carbon pricing alone is going to be a silver bullet mechanism to help solve climate change. In fact, it is one mechanism among many that this government has presented. However, as I have said and perhaps teased some of my Conservative colleagues opposite on, the idea of introducing a price signal into the market and letting the market respond accordingly is inherently a small-c conservative principle.

I asked the member for Calgary Forest Lawn about the fact that there are projects across this country from companies that are responding to the price signal and driving really important innovation. The Conservatives like to talk about the slogan “technology, not taxes”, and it is indeed a slogan because they have no evidence of how they are going to incentivize the private sector and our great Canadian companies to make innovations and drive transitional change. Billions of dollars in this country are premised on that, and not only do companies now understand that it is in their best interests to do this because it is where there are generational opportunities, but of course they want to get around the price signal.

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The Conservatives stand here today and do not signal that they are willing to support any form of carbon pricing in this country. That is problematic because billions of dollars of investment in this country rest upon that. Indeed, I will not suggest that we have it perfect, and I will get into that in my remarks, but the Conservatives do not offer a compelling alternative whatsoever. They just simply oppose without putting forward any solutions of their own.

• (1610)

[*Translation*]

From a political perspective, I am curious about and interested in this motion, particularly the way it is worded. Perhaps the Conservatives and the Bloc Québécois are fighting. The Conservatives named the Bloc Québécois in the text of their motion. I think there must be some kind of argument going on between the Conservatives and the Bloc Québécois. Perhaps the alliance between the two parties has started to break down because of the Conservatives' actions. We will see, but that is what I think is happening right now.

[*English*]

I want to start with the clean fuel standard. I note this initiative just so that all my colleagues, Canadians watching at home and perhaps people here in the gallery can understand what it is. The clean fuel standard is an initiative to reduce the carbon intensity in the fuels that we use. There have been other initiatives throughout time that I would say are similar to it. For example, there were times that we moved on regulations to remove lead from the fuel we use in our cars. I believe that initiative was championed by the Mulroney government some years ago, back when the Conservatives were progressive and we had actual action on climate and environmental initiatives coming from the Conservative Party of Canada. However, indeed, it was the Progressive Conservative Party of Canada, and I will continue to remind Canadians that there is a difference. My constituents remind me every day that there is a big difference between the predecessor party that someone like Scott Brison was elected to in 1997 and what the Conservative Party of Canada has become today.

This is the initiative: to decarbonize our fuels. We are essentially asking oil and gas refiners in Canada to do that. They can do so with a number of different initiatives. They can add biofuels into the content of their fuels. They can work with farmers. There are tremendous opportunities in the agriculture sector to do offsets through credits. They can work on putting out charging stations. They can put home heating pump programs in place to demonstrate that they are getting the carbon intensity of their fuel down. There are a ton of options.

I want to talk about the projects. The Conservatives often talk about the cost. Indeed, they have in the text of this motion “17 cents per litre”. The parliamentary budget office has said that perhaps in 10 to 12 years there will be a 17¢ cost. In Nova Scotia, that was three cents a litre this summer. Yes, the program is not designed to rebate, but the program also drives industrial action. For example, the Conservatives have not stepped up today and talked about Come By Chance, the sustainable aviation fuel facility in Newfoundland and Labrador, with 87 million dollars' worth of investment in the economy of Newfoundland and Labrador. It matters. The Conservatives have not talked about the electrolyzer. I

have to be honest: I do not know what that is, but Irving Oil knows that it matters to its clean energy future. It has invested \$90 million in it as part of the hydrogen strategy.

I was out in Regina, Saskatchewan. Perhaps a Saskatchewan member of Parliament will engage with me on this. A big billion-dollar co-operative is spending hundreds of millions of dollars to help drive its initiatives, in part because of the clean fuel standard. However, the Conservatives never talk about that, and it is important to note it.

The Conservatives are concerned about the three cents a litre in Nova Scotia, and I do not want to sound dismissive; I know every penny matters right now. The affordability question is an important one. However, if the Conservatives want to highlight the three-cents-a-litre increase on gasoline in Nova Scotia as a result of the clean fuel standard, they also need to highlight the major industrial investments being made in the Atlantic region. Maybe, as I have done publicly, they could encourage the provinces to see that, while the program was not designed to rebate, provinces have more money in their treasuries as a result of these major industrial projects and could reduce the provincial gas tax to make sure that is taken care of. They could do that. These are some suggestions that I offer to my Conservative colleagues.

The text of the motion is inherently, and I better not use the word “misleading”, but I have problems with the contents and the way the motion is written. For example, on 17¢ litre, the Conservatives do not give any context to the reader at home about what that means. They talk about things such as quadrupling to 61¢, and they give no context.

It was tripling just a few months ago. We would hear Conservative members, like a flock of crows, saying, “triple, triple, triple”, and we heard that for months. I guess now they are going to have to say “quadruple, quadruple, quadruple, quadruple”. I do not know how it has changed, but it has changed. They play a little loose and fast with the facts.

Again, the question around affordability and the question about whether or not we can look at adjusting measures under the carbon price is fair game. I am there, and I am going to get to that in my speech, but it is the idea that somehow they just basically put this out that I have problems with it.

The member for Calgary Forest Lawn stood up in this House a few speeches ago and said that the carbon price applies to a tractor driving on a farm. That is fundamentally untrue. If the Conservatives want to suggest that the carbon price applies to grain drying and that it should be removed, then yes, that is factually correct. They can go there. I have stood here and voted for the bill that came forward, Bill C-234.

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However, we have to keep the debate in some realm of fact. It is like we are in a post-truth era, when people get up to say anything. I know we can have different perspectives on this, and I know that there is a range of debate, but we have to keep this in the confines of what is actually real.

On that, as we have talked about the price of fuel, groceries and home heating, I have an article from the National Post. I know that the Conservatives read the National Post because, of course, it is a bit more conservative leaning. I think some of it is fair. I read it too. The article is from September 21, 2023, so not that long ago, and I would encourage all members of the House to read it. There was a question about how much the carbon price contributes to the things the Conservatives are talking about today. I will read from the article, which I am happy to table later if I get unanimous consent. It says that the Bank of Canada estimates that 0.15% of inflation is tied to carbon pricing. Yes, there is some impact, but what we do not talk about, of course, is that the money is being rebated back to households.

The article also says that the carbon price contributes to less than 1% of the cost of groceries. When we look at what the Conservatives are calling for, yes, every dollar matters, but when we talk about this being a mechanism to drive some of those industrial projects I talked about earlier, that is extremely important. In fact, Trevor Tombe, who is an economist from Alberta, cites that it is 30¢ on every \$100 grocery bill.

This is an important question, but the Conservatives are essentially calling for a reduction of 30¢ on every \$100 that is spent on groceries in this country. I think they should join us in other initiatives that really matter for being helpful support: child care, the Canada child benefit and supports for seniors. There are a lot of different initiatives that they can get on board with. I am not so convinced that this one alone would solve the question of affordability.

I have talked about carbon pricing as it relates to major industrial projects, and I think I have exhausted that one. However, I look forward to my hon. member for Coast of Bays—Central—Notre Dame standing up. We will have a great debate on whether or not that matters to his province, and we will get that on the record.

I want to talk about the position of Atlantic MPs, because we Liberal Atlantic MPs are specifically noted in the text of the motion before us. I cannot speak for every one of my Atlantic Liberal colleagues, as that would be inappropriate, but I will speak as one Atlantic Liberal member of Parliament.

Unlike what the leader of the official opposition had to say in question period today, I am not against carbon pricing. I am calling on this government to have adjustments to its approach on the federal backstop.

Unlike my Conservative colleagues, who just want to burn it down and say, “No, this is terrible”, but offer no solutions, I am trying to be constructive in both my comments here in the House, anything I say publicly, and what I say to my constituents on the intent of the policy. I go back to climate change and the generational challenge that we have before us.

This government is trying to move in the right direction, and the intent is the right one, but I think there are a couple of things that need to be adjusted. I am happy to talk about them.

• (1615)

First of all, the definition of what qualifies as a rural community has to be re-examined. Right now, if one lives in a census metropolitan area versus if one is outside defines whether one is urban or rural. We know the country is a bit more nuanced than that. There is an opportunity to re-evaluate that. There are some communities that may be within a CMA but are inherently and objectively rural communities. I have said that before and will continue to say it.

The rural rebate provided for constituents outside of those CMAs could be examined and could be increased, and not because rural Canadians do not want to be a part of the fight on climate change. We have to make sure there is a difference between the lived realities in urban and rural areas.

On affordability of home heating, I want to note that this government put \$118 million into Atlantic Canada in October. We have not heard one single mention of that from the Conservative benches. It is a program that makes a difference on energy efficiency, and it is a program that makes a difference on home heating oil usage. It is good for the environment, but particularly to the intent of this bill, it is really important for affordability. There was not one word mentioned on that.

There has to be more time for those programs to work out, and I made it very clear that I hope the government will consider exempting or otherwise indemnifying individuals until such time that the merits of that program to help people get transitioned off can be in place.

The last thing I would say is we need to continue to focus on the supply side with, for example, EV charging stations and maybe perhaps more of an emphasis on the heat pump program. I have talked to the member for Long Range Mountains, and I know in Newfoundland and Labrador there is some work that has to be done on electricity upgrades to ensure the heat pumps can actually function and we can move forward. However, this is all really good for focusing on affordability and also tackling the issue of climate change. That is my proposition, which is that it is not mutually exclusive. These things need to happen at the same time.

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I want to go to Bill C-49. The Conservatives are going to roll their eyes because I have been at them over the last week, but I am still perplexed as to why the Conservative Party of Canada, the official opposition in this country, is opposing a bill that is supported by the Premier of Newfoundland and Labrador, the Premier of Nova Scotia, the clean energy sector, indigenous communities and business stakeholders. We are engaging with fisheries, and I say that because I can image the member for Coast of Bays—Central—Notre Dame is going to ask about the fisheries. They are extremely important stakeholders who deserve to be and are part of that conversation.

Everyone is on board, this is the way to enable it, yet Conservatives stand in opposition. They have something to answer to Atlantic Canadians on that question because they are standing against the interests of Atlantic Canadians. They talk about the technology, the future of renewable energy in Atlantic Canada, not taxes, but they will not even let the technology drive forward. It is so hypothetical.

I have really enjoyed engaging in this. I cannot wait for questions. I am going to move quickly so we can get as many members in as possible.

To conclude, carbon pricing is an initiative that is implemented around the world to help create a mechanism to drive change. This government is focused on investing on the supply side to help people make that change. We have made sure, in the way the program is designed, that money goes back disproportionately to households to help protect them.

I have talked about the statistics, and about how much carbon pricing, according to the Bank of Canada and according to economists in the National Post, a paper I hope the Conservatives read, is contributing very little to the overall things they are talking about here today.

I have explained my position on carbon pricing. I believe in the intent. I believe in the inherent nature of why we are doing this. However, I am calling for adjustments. I stand here proud, as an Atlantic Canadian member of Parliament, recognizing that, for the constituents I represent, the national program needs to be adjusted to better reflect their reality. I am offering solutions. I look across the way, and I see very little in terms of solutions.

On a bill that represents billions of dollars to Atlantic Canada's economy, let us forget the fact that this represents an ability to decarbonize our electricity grid and perhaps provide power to my good friends over in Quebec through Atlantic Canada. This is about jobs, prosperity and great economic opportunities for communities. The Conservatives continue to stand against that.

I look forward to a member of Parliament from the Conservative caucus of Newfoundland and Labrador or Nova Scotia getting up and going on the record here today and explaining to their constituents why they are standing in the way of billions of dollars of opportunities, and I think I am going to get that answer right now.

• (1620)

Mr. Clifford Small (Coast of Bays—Central—Notre Dame, CPC): Madam Speaker, the outgoing member for Kings—Hants, on November 28, 2022, to The Laker News, a local paper, said,

“They are trying to play a bit of boogeyman on the federal government in relation to carbon [tax] pricing right now.” That is what he said about Premier Houston's party in Nova Scotia. Fast-forward to September 15. The CBC headline reads, “Atlantic Liberal MPs press [the Prime Minister] for rural carbon tax carve-out.”

What is it going to be? Is it going to be support for his constituents by voting for our motion, or is he going to be with the boogeyman?

• (1625)

Mr. Kody Blois: Madam Speaker, after I am done answering this, I am going to walk some Q-tips over to the hon. member and see whether he was able to listen to the 20-minute speech in which I provided very clear answers to where I stand on this policy.

I actually had a conversation with Premier Houston in May 2022 to say that I would hope that the provincial government would implement its own made-in-Nova Scotia carbon pricing plan. The Conservatives stand against that. I believe in the intent of the policy, but there needs to be some serious adjustments. I am on record in the House. The member can look at the record afterward, and he can read it so he can understand where I stand. I have been very clear.

However, where is the member as it relates to Bill C-49 and the great opportunities for Newfoundland and Labrador? He will have to answer to the good people of his riding on that one.

[*Translation*]

Mr. Yves Perron (Berthier—Maskinongé, BQ): Madam Speaker, I thank my colleague from Kings—Hants for his speech. It is nice to hear a well-articulated speech that is based on facts.

I have a very specific question to ask that he will certainly have no problem answering. Could he inform the House of Commons about the clean fuel regulations that were adopted by his government on July 1 and tell us when the government asked for the Bloc Québécois's support on this? When was there a vote in the House on this? Was there one?

Mr. Kody Blois: Madam Speaker, I do not really know, as I am not responsible for drafting opposition motions. As I said, there are many issues with this Conservative motion. I do not know the answer.

I do, however, want to raise an important question regarding Bill C-49. The aim of this bill is to create an opportunity for offshore wind farming in the Atlantic. We know that Hydro-Québec has concerns regarding a shortage of electricity and clean energy in Quebec. Members from Quebec and the Atlantic provinces have a great opportunity to work together to ensure a very clean and very green energy supply for Quebec and the Atlantic provinces.

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I am very happy to work collaboratively with my colleague.

[English]

Ms. Heather McPherson (Edmonton Strathcona, NDP): Madam Speaker, I said this earlier today, as I have been in this chamber all day today, and I think that the motion that has been put forward is frankly a fundraising opportunity for the Conservatives. They are not treating this seriously. They are not interested in engaging seriously in debate on how to make this program work for Canadians and how to actually meaningfully address climate change. Therefore, I am going to ask the member about his speech and about how we could fix a carbon program.

In my province of Alberta, Rachel Notley brought in the very first one, the carbon levy, and it was highly successful. One of the things that it did was actually contribute to reducing our carbon footprint by including things such as billions of dollars in investment into transport and billions of dollars in rebates so that folks could put solar panels on their homes and retrofit our homes. There was millions of dollars that went to developing bio-energy and millions of dollars that went for methane reduction.

I wonder whether the member would be interested in looking at a carbon levy or a carbon tax that would be used to reduce our carbon footprint and meaningfully deal with the climate emergency.

Mr. Kody Blois: Madam Speaker, that is an important question. What I heard from my hon. colleague is that she understands the importance of a price signal and the importance of carbon pricing and recognizing that, whether in her home province of Alberta or one of the other 76 jurisdictions around the world, this is seen as a really important way to be able to support the fight on climate change.

I agree with the member's comments that we have to construe this policy in a way that is fair and equitable to all parts of the country. As I said in my remarks here today, I would like to see a higher rural rebate. I would like to see some thought given around the home heating question in Atlantic Canada, where 40% of our households still rely on home heating. The government has put really good programs in place. There is the \$118 million that I mentioned, which would be very similar to the transit piece that the member mentioned in Alberta. However, those programs need time to get out, and we have to balance the affordability question versus environment. They go hand in hand, so I think of any of these.

I would really welcome a mature and responsible debate instead of some of the mudslinging I see. To be fair, there are some Conservative members on the other side who stand up to provide credible positions, but far too much that I have heard in this debate today is just information that is not factually correct. We have to be better as parliamentarians.

• (1630)

Mr. John Williamson (New Brunswick Southwest, CPC): Madam Speaker, we have cited a few headlines, and here is one that came out four hours ago in the National Post: "Most Canadians want carbon tax reduced or killed: poll". The article says, and this is astonishing, "While Alberta typically charts as the most anti-carbon tax jurisdiction in Canada, this time it was Atlantic Canada", where 50 per cent of respondents want the carbon tax completely eliminated.

The hon. member talked about three cents. In my province of New Brunswick, carbon tax 2 was eight cents plus HST, but we are dealing with numbers that people do not see. Between my province of New Brunswick and Maine, the carbon tax shows just how big the gap in gas prices is. Pump prices in the state of Maine are 50¢ per litre less than they are in New Brunswick. That is all taxes.

My question, member, is this: How can you say Conservatives are not representing Atlantic Canada when you are the one punishing them with these taxes? You oppose the isthmus deal—

The Assistant Deputy Speaker (Mrs. Alexandra Mendès): I would remind the hon. member that I am not punishing anybody. I would ask the member to speak through the Chair.

Mr. John Williamson: Madam Speaker, I wonder how Atlantic Canadian Liberals can say they are the ones standing with their voters, when they are the ones punishing them with the carbon tax, which is going to go up another 62¢ between now and 2030; when they have targeted law-abiding firearms owners; when they are not supporting the premiers of New Brunswick and Nova Scotia on funding for the isthmus; and, of course, when they are the ones continuing to vote for higher carbon taxes. I would ask the member to answer that, please.

Mr. Kody Blois: Madam Speaker, I had to take out a pen because there were about 16 interventions in that question. I hope I will get time to answer.

On the isthmus, we are there with 50%. As I said on Radio-Canada this week, if the courts indeed determine that this is a purely federal responsibility, we will be there with 100% of the cost.

I stand here asking for adjustments to the carbon price. The member opposite suggests that carbon pricing should not exist in Canada, contrary to the fact that 77 jurisdictions around the world point to this as being an effective policy. Beyond that, the Conservatives have provided no credible plan on how they are going to challenge and address the issue before us. Therefore, the member has some explaining to do as well.

On Bill C-49, so that when the member clips this and sends it home to his constituents, this is a generational opportunity for Atlantic Canada for offshore wind. The premiers of Nova Scotia and Newfoundland and Labrador want it. The member stands against it. He needs to go home and explain why he is standing in the way of billions of dollars of generational opportunity, especially when the line from the Conservatives is "technology, not taxes".

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Last, with respect to the 50-cent difference between Maine and New Brunswick, if he goes to Maine, I am sure he will find that there is a 50-cent difference between the price of milk in Maine and in New Brunswick. There are a lot of price differentials. He is tying this exactly to what we are talking about today, which is not necessarily a true reflection of the fact that there is a price differential between Canada and the U.S. on a number of products. Maybe he is saying that he does not want to support the dairy farmers in New Brunswick and across this country and that he wants to get rid of supply management, which we have seen from the Conservative Party. It has not been strong on that policy that matters for rural Canada.

Ms. Michelle Ferreri (Peterborough—Kawartha, CPC): Madam Speaker, I am sharing my time this afternoon with the member for Lakeland.

It is always an honour to rise in the House of Commons to speak on behalf of my constituents of Peterborough—Kawartha and of all Canadians. I am the shadow minister for families, children and social development, and I have been pretty vocal in my cry of the mental health crisis across this country, in particular for our kids. They are not doing okay.

Today, what we are going to talk about in the House directly impacts our children. Today is an opposition motion day put forth by our leader, the leader of the Conservative Party of Canada. An opposition motion has been put forth by us. We are the official opposition; we are not in government. We do not get to set the agenda and we do not get to set policy. We are here as opposing members to bring balance to the government. The problem is that we do not have just the Liberals in power; we have an NDP-Liberal coalition that signed a deal that is deeply hurting Canadians.

The opposition motion that was put forward today and that we are debating in the House is that “the House call on the government to introduce legislation, within seven days of this motion being adopted, to repeal all carbon taxes to bring home lower prices on gas, groceries, and home heating”. My Conservative colleagues can applaud for that. It is a very important piece of legislation and will give members an idea, when the vote happens, where the members of the House stand.

The reality is that there are very real consequences to decisions and policies made in the House, and there are very real consequences to taxing fuel, which is what the carbon tax is doing. When we tax fuel that a farmer needs to run his tractors on his field or to take care of his animals, we are then going to have to transfer that tax to the trucker, who is going to have to move that food. We are then going to have to tax the manufacturer of the food. Members can guess who ends up paying that compounded price. It is Canadians, the people at home watching this. What happens to their hard-earned paycheque? It falls out of their hand like sand.

I asked last night, through my social media channels, to hear from my constituents, because that is what we are elected to do in the House. We are elected to listen to and be the voice of our ridings. There are about 115,000 people in my riding of Peterborough—Kawartha. We are a bellwether riding, which means we are reflective of the entire country. We are a bit of a microcosm of what happens in Canada. I asked people to share their stories with me of

how the carbon tax is impacting their lives, and I asked if I could read those into the record, so that is what I am going to do right now.

I am going to start with Shannon Montgomery Sundberg, who writes that she does not even know where to start. She is a business owner and needs fuel for everything. She needs truck parts, plow parts, machinery, oils and insurance. Her customers are not able to pay what they owe, because their own families are struggling. Shannon says that she cannot afford to hire extra help; there is not enough work to keep the business going. The lack of income is starting to affect her mental health, for which, she says, there is no help.

Shannon writes, “It is so much more than carbon tax. It is a whole broken system. Ontarians are being forced out.” They feel that the government does not want them, and that it “should be helping its people, not stomping on them while they are down.” She says divisions created by the government make her cry almost daily. Everywhere she looks, she sees people in difficulty. As a mother of four grown children, who have spouses and children of their own, Shannon says that she worries every day about the cost of healthy food. She asks, “Can you imagine as a mother not being able to offer good healthy food to your kids and their kids because you are trying to hold on yourself?”

Shannon calls herself “a very proud Canadian”, but she nonetheless has a “disgusting feeling” towards the whole government. She writes, “Every single person under our Prime Minister has had every opportunity to walk away and/or speak up. We the people voted the Government in and we the people should be able to say enough is enough. We want a Government for the people.”

Chad writes, “We live in a rural part of Ontario. With the current fuel prices, to fill my truck and SUV for my wife and I for one week is about \$325. We spent \$500 last week on groceries as we have a family of 5; [that is] \$825 in one week for groceries and fuel.”

● (1635)

Carol Anne Grant writes that their power bill for one month is now \$400. With the cost of heating their home, she says, their whole pension goes to paying household bills, with nothing left for groceries. Stats from Food Bank Canada say that seven million people are not able to feed themselves and that 1.5 million people a month are using food banks. These are people with jobs. That is what is happening across our country.

This next message comes from Jeff Dunk, who writes that he works for a trucking company and that there are drivers sitting at home. There is not enough work because people do not want to pay the current rates for transportation.

Erica's message is pretty profound, as all of them are. Erica writes, "My husband and myself work decent paying jobs (combined over \$100,000) and we have two kids. We rent our two bedroom home and have two vehicles. I run out of money two days after pay day." One of their children is diabetic. She says, "the cost of groceries is ridiculous. I am spending about \$400 every two weeks to feed my kids." That means that the hydro bill is not getting paid, or sometimes they pay just enough to keep the lights on. Sometimes the heating gas bill is not getting paid.

Erica goes on to ask, "How is it that a family making over \$100,000 a year can't be comfortable? We are just as broke as we were when we were barely making \$50,000 a year combined." She has worked hard and finally has a wage she always dreamed of, yet she says, "I am getting nowhere. I am stuck in the small rental because I can't afford the rent for anywhere else. I am penny pinching for two weeks to make it to next pay day. I am tired. I feel defeated. It is no wonder mental health has become a crisis. Trudeau is to blame for that."

• (1640)

The Assistant Deputy Speaker (Mrs. Alexandra Mendès): We have to use titles and not the names of members.

Ms. Michelle Ferreri: Madam Speaker, this is the reality across the country. Because parents are not okay and are so busy worrying about paying for food, heat, hydro and groceries, their kids are less engaged. They do not get the attention they need. They feel disconnected. We know this.

We can look at the Children First study that came out in August. This is an incredible organization that does studies. This is what is happening to children in our country. Food insecurity in children is up 29%. Canada ranks 30th out of 38 in the OECD for child well-being. Canada ranks 81st out of 193 countries on the global KidsRights Index, which is down from 48th in 2022. Listen to this one: Suicide is a leading cause of death in children. Yes, this is linked to the carbon tax because the most compassionate thing someone can do as a leader is make life affordable. That is what we need in this country.

Jennifer wrote to me and said that she and her family have lived comfortably on a budget so she could stay home with their kids. The cost of child care was way too high. Jennifer's husband works the night shift at a logistics warehouse of a major grocery corporation. As long as he has worked there, there has never been such a slowdown, especially considering it is the week before Thanksgiving. They are cramming more orders onto fewer trucks. Because stores are selling less, orders are smaller and less frequent, and production is down to a third of the usual. Jennifer writes, "Hero workers who worked their asses off during Covid are now getting slapped in the face right before Christmas with layoffs and jobs lost; that is what the carbon tax has done to my family."

Donna is a senior from my community. She called me this summer and asked me if I would stand in the House of Commons and ask the Prime Minister a question. She wanted to know if he could live on \$1,300 a month, because that is what she is doing.

I have travelled this country. I have listened to the frontline workers who have severe burnout because they, too, are struggling with the cost of living. If the people who are on the front lines of

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our health care, our social services and our education system are not okay, and if our parents are not okay because they are lying in bed at night wondering if they are going to be able to keep their house, then our kids are not okay.

The most compassionate thing we can do today is approve this motion, get rid of the carbon tax and care for the Canadians who are suffering.

Mrs. Brenda Shanahan (Châteauguay—Lacolle, Lib.): Madam Speaker, the last time I heard my hon. colleague speak, it was during the debate on child care. We were trying to put in place a child care framework, to ensure that affordable child care would be available across the country.

My hon. colleague mentioned how unaffordable child care was for one of her constituents, and so I would like to hear from her: Why did she spend all that time during that debate arguing against affordable child care?

• (1645)

Ms. Michelle Ferreri: Madam Speaker, everything I said in that debate is true, because 50% of the people eligible for the Liberals' child care that is going to save the world cannot even access it. That is what we are reading into the record.

For her record, we absolutely voted in favour of it. However, the reality is that it is not working. If she does a Google search today, she will see local child care centres across this country shutting down, because the program is doing exactly what we said. It is not rolling out correctly, and people cannot access it.

[*Translation*]

Mr. Simon-Pierre Savard-Tremblay (Saint-Hyacinthe—Bagot, BQ): Madam Speaker, let me read point (a) of the Conservatives' motion:

(a) the Bloc Québécois supported the so-called "Clean Fuel Standard"...

I have only one question. Maybe you can enlighten me, Madam Speaker, since you know so much about parliamentary procedure.

How is it possible to support a standard?

[*English*]

Ms. Michelle Ferreri: Madam Speaker, it sounded as though the member was asking the Speaker that question.

The Assistant Deputy Speaker (Mrs. Alexandra Mendès): The hon. member was being a bit facetious, but the question was to the hon. member.

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The hon. member for Peterborough—Kawartha.

Ms. Michelle Ferreri: Madam Speaker, there was facetiousness in the House of Commons? I am shocked.

I would like to know how many constituents have called the hon. member from the Bloc and said that they support a radical increase in tax on their fuel. How many constituents are happy that fuel is going through the roof and increasing the cost of their home, living, groceries and food?

Mr. Richard Cannings (South Okanagan—West Kootenay, NDP): Madam Speaker, my hon. colleague for Peterborough—Kawartha is right in that Canadians are hurting. There is the price of gas and the price of food, and yet all the Conservatives put up as a solution is to cut the carbon tax. The carbon tax went up 3¢ a litre this year.

There was such a lot of rage farming that I got a lot of calls from my constituents, who did not know that the federal carbon tax does not apply in British Columbia or that it was only going up 3¢. The price of gas had gone up almost a dollar in that time. None of that was due to the carbon tax.

The reason people are hurting, in terms of fuel increases, is because of the greed of the big oil companies. The Conservatives have said absolutely nothing about that in this place.

When are they going to face the facts and tackle the real problem?

Ms. Michelle Ferreri: Madam Speaker, I respect all my colleagues in the House, but that is laughable.

The Liberals and the NDP, who signed a coalition, said to lock one's interest rates in; they were never going to go up, and everything was going to be great. People are losing their homes.

To say that we are not doing anything for affordability is bonkers. The Liberals and NDP are wasting an astronomical amount of money. Inflation is through the roof. Interest rates have jumped to 5%. People cannot make their mortgage payments. They cannot feed their kids.

To tell us that we are not doing anything is bonkers. The Conservatives are the only members in the House fighting for affordability, to help people be able to afford to live.

The Assistant Deputy Speaker (Mrs. Alexandra Mendès): 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 Calgary Nose Hill, Public Safety; the hon. member for Calgary Rocky Ridge, Carbon Pricing.

Mrs. Shannon Stubbs (Lakeland, CPC): Madam Speaker, it is a pleasure to follow my friend, the formidable MP for Peterborough—Kawartha. We come from different parts of the country and different backgrounds, but as are all Conservatives in our big, growing movement, we are united with our Conservative leader to fight to axe the carbon tax; to bring down food and fuel prices, as well as heating and cooling costs for all Canadians; to build homes Canadians can afford; and to bring jobs, money, businesses, natural resource development and exports.

Conservatives will bring project approvals up and the cost of traditional energy down. We will green-light green technology and ensure major projects and infrastructure can get built in this country again, so all Canadians can have accessible, affordable, reliable fuel and power, and, most importantly, hope for the future.

Our leader and Conservatives warned the NDP-Liberal government repeatedly during the past eight years that its reckless tax, spending and inflationary deficit agenda would drive investment out of Canada and make everything more expensive for everyone. Only a few months after I was elected as the MP to represent the people of Lakeland, in response to the 2016 budget, even I warned of the dangers of this regressive, repressive tax. Before the Liberals imposed it, I said then, which is clearly true today, that the carbon tax was just a revenue generator for government to feed reckless spending and out-of-control deficits masquerading as environmental policy.

However, the NDP-Liberals have traded on all Canadians' deep concern and care for the environment to cover their obvious cash grab. The proof is in the most difficult ways. Almost a decade into their irresponsible, harmful experiment, it has been all economic pain and no environmental gain for Canadians. Of course, the MP who predicted everything about the consequences of the NDP-Liberal agenda was our leader, the MP for Carleton, in his previous role as the official opposition finance shadow minister. What is remarkable is that he also warned of the risks and costs back in 2007, 16 years ago, of the Liberals' plan to implement a carbon tax, which he warned would cost everyday Canadians thousands of dollars that they would not be able to afford. He has always opposed it, and we still do.

In terms of inflation, rising interest rates and the skyrocketing prices for essentials such as gas, groceries and home heating, Conservatives warned about the connections of all these policies. We warned that the dreams of new and young Canadians would be compromised and undermined by the NDP-Liberal policies that always do, in real terms, the very opposite of what they claim. The NDP-Liberals like to say that they do not take lessons from Conservatives or our leader, but they really should have. It would have saved all Canadians years of struggles, bankruptcies, foreclosures, anxiety, catastrophic losses of generational opportunities, hundreds of thousands of job losses, billions in investments and a brain drain to other countries, allies and foes alike. It is a tragic hindsight, and it is obvious that they really should have listened.

Business of Supply

Canadians remember the Liberals' main 2015 promise that they would help the middle class and those working hard to join it, but the facts are stark, and these are pesky things for politicians such as the Prime Minister, who do not keep their word or take responsibility. As the Prime Minister has been in power for almost a decade, it is time for him to answer for it. The truth is that, under the previous Conservative government, more Canadian kids and vulnerable families were lifted out of poverty than at any other time in the history of our country, and Canada's middle class became the richest middle class of any country on earth in 2014. At that time, it really was sunny skies ahead.

What has happened today? The Liberals have moved the way their government measures the poverty line to pretend their policies have worked. The middle class is dwindling, because the vast majority of Canadians cannot pay their bills or cover their essential costs, and more Canadians are falling behind after eight years under the Prime Minister and the NDP-Liberal government.

The truth is that there is no honest way to skirt the fact that the NDP-Liberals' carbon taxes have very real, punitive and burdensome impacts on everyday Canadians. In Lakeland, the NDP-Liberals' carbon tax will cost people nearly \$4,000 a year in the next six years. The consequence is that Canadians everywhere, not just in Lakeland, are struggling to make ends meet, to put food on the table, to fuel their vehicles, and to heat and cool their homes and businesses. In the vast majority of our country there are just no other immediately available and affordable options for Canadians. They are left with no choice. They are squeezed by all sides, and it is at a breaking point after eight years under the Prime Minister and his NDP-Liberal policies.

• (1650)

The Liberals can spin it all they want. They can dig in and stubbornly justify their harmful agenda, but the independent Parliamentary Budget Officer confirms what we warned, that the NDP-Liberal carbon tax hikes the cost of literally everything. This is why 80% of Canadians pay more than they will ever get back from the Liberals, exactly as we said.

The independent PBO also found that the tax has not actually reduced emissions since it was imposed. It is a cash grab. It is not a bug, an accident or an unintended consequence. It is a feature of their agenda. The Liberals themselves admitted that their carbon tax is meant to make driving more expensive, and they are plowing ahead to quadruple those costs and add a second carbon tax on top of it. Together, those taxes would hike prices at the pumps by 61¢ a litre in the next seven years. Seriously, who could afford this?

There is no light at the end of the tunnel for most Canadians under these NDP-Liberals, who are totally out of touch. Now, exactly as we warned, Canadians are out of money. Canadians are not sitting around hoping the government that claims it is here to help would make it totally impossible for them to afford to drive and heat their homes, but this is actually exactly what the NDP-Liberals and Bloc want to do and are doing.

As we warned, it is mostly hurting the working poor, people on fixed incomes, rural and remote Canadians, indigenous communities and, especially, people in rural regions in the west and Atlantic

Canada. This is because of the differences in the realities of the various regions and provinces.

Canadians in our biggest cities can hardly even afford to rent a single room in a single house. That alone is thousands of dollars. They cannot keep up with interest rate hikes caused by soaring inflationary deficit spending, which are pushing their rent and mortgages out of reach. We also warned about this in 2016.

It is not a pleasure, at all, to tell the NDP-Liberals that we told them so, because of all the pain, anger and anxiety they have caused. However, they also cannot pretend that Conservatives did it.

Colinton is a village of 170 people near Athabasca, in a beautiful area where the landscape shifts to rolling hills and more lakes, giving way to the treasured and beautiful boreal forest that spans throughout northern Alberta. Gordie from Colinton wrote to me and said that his daughter and her husband have four kids, and here is the crucial and horrible part that would be familiar to most Canadians: They both have well-paying jobs. However, by the time they pay rent, gas, power and heating, the family has to skimp on groceries or choose to not pay some bills. As we all know, this often ends up in a spiral people cannot escape.

This is not just happening in Lakeland. It is a common reality, and it is a travesty that Canadians now face, after almost a decade under the Prime Minister, in urban and rural communities alike, in every region of the country.

Rob from Bonnyville had never contacted my office before, but he recently did so because he needed to tell me about the dire situation with his gas bill. He said,

We are paying more than 100% tax on the small amount of gas we are using. If this tax is supposed to be for the amount of CO₂ generated by the burning of the gas, something is definitely wrong here.

What happens in winter when the gas bill is \$100 or more, are we going to be gouged over \$100 for the tax as well? This is certainly an unfair tax charged to Canadian citizens.

He also said, "What about the seniors on a fixed income, they cannot afford this kind of charge."

Business of Supply

It was -52°C for a couple of weeks in my backyard last Christmas, so it is obvious why Ron is worried. He is just one of the four out of every five Canadians who will pay more in carbon tax than they get back, while nearly half of Canadians are forced to borrow just for basics and have no emergency savings. More than ever before, 20% of Canadians are skipping meals, and seven million struggle to put food on the table. Sixty-nine per cent of seniors have to postpone their retirement because of these NDP-Liberal policies.

All this, in a first world country blessed with all the human capital and abundant natural resources that underpin our entire economy, if only the Liberal government would stop keeping it in the ground through red taping and gatekeeping. It is a disgrace.

This is not really a theoretical debate either. What Conservatives are saying is true. It is happening in real time. It is literally how things work when an out-of-touch, out-of-ideas government taxes the farmers and ranchers who grow the food, the processors and all the agri-food businesses that make the food, the truckers who ship it, the stores that sell it, and the people who buy it, which is literally all of us because we all need to eat, who are also taxed on their own fuel and home heating. The consequences are that Canadians cannot cover the basics. They cannot afford to eat. What is this for?

No one can really answer that anymore, because there is no proven or discernible impact on emissions reduction. Emissions have increased every year in the past eight years, except when all Canadians were locked down by COVID.

• (1655)

Conservatives will axe the carbon tax to bring prices and costs down for Canadians so they can have hope for the future. We will turn hurt into hope. The NDP-Liberals should be ashamed of themselves. It is clearly not worth the cost.

• (1700)

Mr. Adam van Koevorden (Parliamentary Secretary to the Minister of Environment and Climate Change and to the Minister of Sport and Physical Activity, Lib.): Madam Speaker, I appreciate the commentary by my colleague from Lakeland in Alberta. I love Alberta and visit often. I always enjoy a warm reception when I am there.

There are a couple of things that I take umbrage with in the member's speech, namely, child poverty rates. According to child poverty rates in 2015 when this government took office, Canada was ranked 24th in the OECD and today, thanks to the Canada child benefit, Canada is ranked second. There is more work to be done.

A Calgary-based economist looked into the cost of carbon pricing on a grocery bill. For a family of four, Trevor Tombe found that carbon pricing adds about five dollars to a monthly grocery bill for a family of four in Alberta and two dollars for a family in Ontario. The rhetoric around \$4,000 to \$6,000 a year from the member, which is false, also ignores the fact that there is a \$386 quarterly payment through the climate action incentive, something that the Conservatives never want to acknowledge. That is \$1,444 that helps the least-well-off Albertans the most.

The member for Lakeland—

The Assistant Deputy Speaker (Mrs. Alexandra Mendès): I have to give the hon. member the chance to answer the question.

The hon. member for Lakeland.

Mrs. Shannon Stubbs: Madam Speaker, I do not know why the Liberals keep asking me this question since I was a very strong internal and then later external critic of that policy. I did not run on it and the person who put it forward unilaterally is no longer here, because the Conservative caucus made an extremely difficult but principled decision. We will axe the carbon tax.

I think that the Liberals should just keep right on saying that Canadians have never had it better, that their agenda is working, that it is so easy and so good for Canadians. We will, like my colleague said, remain the only party in this House of Commons that wants to make life affordable, that wants to bring prices and costs down for all Canadians, and that wants to give every single Canadian hope for the future that they deserve.

Ms. Heather McPherson (Edmonton Strathcona, NDP): Madam Speaker, ultimately, the carbon tax is about a climate change measure. It is part of a climate change plan. What I dislike is that this is not enough of a conversation about how we deal with the climate crisis. We need to be dealing with it in multiple ways. I am sure the member will agree with me when I say that the Liberals have met none of their targets with the plan, so there needs to be an even broader conversation on how to deal with it.

I have one very easy question for the member. The member of her party from South Shore—St. Margarets this afternoon said that hurricanes have been happening for hundreds of years in his riding and that wildfires are man-made. Does she believe climate change is real? Does she believe wildfires are a result of climate change?

Mrs. Shannon Stubbs: Madam Speaker, this is the issue. The NDP-Liberals claim that their carbon tax is in place to reduce emissions, even though the model that they have imposed does not reflect anything near what economists who propose carbon taxes for emissions reductions actually propose, which is an equivalent reduction in red-tape taxes to offset the price and exemptions for emissions-intensive trade-exposed industries. The truth is that model is not even up for debate. It is not what the Liberals have done and it is not what the NDP-Liberals support.

I think it is their job to explain to Canadians how this is possibly worth the cost. They need to tell Canadians how high the prices have to go before they are going to see a difference.

Business of Supply

[*Translation*]

Mr. Simon-Pierre Savard-Tremblay (Saint-Hyacinthe—Bagot, BQ): Madam Speaker, I am going to repeat my colleague's very simple question. Is climate change real or not?

[*English*]

Mrs. Shannon Stubbs: Madam Speaker, Conservatives will take action to reduce emissions globally by exporting our technology and products to help our allies get off dictator oil and ensure Canadians' energy self-sufficiency and security so we can support our allies. Energy security, self-sufficiency and sustainability dictate the price of food and the standard of living, which is a crucial thing for this country to secure that has absolutely languished and been lost, I fear generationally, under the NDP-Liberals.

• (1705)

Mr. Mark Gerretsen: Madam Speaker, on a point of order, I know that the member for Pitt Meadows—Maple Ridge really wants to get up. I believe if you seek it you will find unanimous consent to allow the inventor of the carbon tax in British Columbia to ask a question at this time.

The Assistant Deputy Speaker (Mrs. Alexandra Mendès): I do not think the hon. member wants to challenge my decision to pursue debate.

The hon. member for Berthier—Maskinongé.

[*Translation*]

Mr. Yves Perron (Berthier—Maskinongé, BQ): Madam Speaker, it has been quite a day. We have heard a lot of different things. I will do my best to remain calm.

For starters, the Conservatives wonder why we do not adopt their motions, why we do not vote in favour of most of them. I will tell them, quite honestly, that it is because most of their motions are rigged. Most of their motions contain inaccuracies. Then, they get offended when we say they are not telling the truth. We are here to serve the public interest; we are not here to pass anything and everything.

It is interesting, because our party is mentioned in the motion. During question period today, I even saw members of the official opposition asking questions of the Bloc Québécois. I found that very interesting. Perhaps they see an independent Quebec in the future, with some of us in government. I found that amusing, so I just wanted to point it out.

The motion states that the Bloc Québécois supported and adopted the clean fuel regulations with the Liberal government. It also refers to the Liberal-Bloc coalition. It is rather funny, though, because coalitions change from one week to the next in this Parliament. Sometimes we hear about the Liberal-NDP coalition. Sometimes the Conservatives also move motions that make sense, and we support them. When that happens, the Liberals talk about the Bloc-Conservative coalition. It changes all the time, so it is super entertaining. I invite people at home to do a survey on this and compile the statistics to see which coalition is the most frequent. Clearly, it is a bit ridiculous to make these accusations.

Today's motion states almost verbatim that the Bloc supported the clean fuel regulations. I often tell my constituents that it is very

important for the Bloc Québécois to be present in the federal Parliament, even if our political party will never be in power, because we have a great deal of influence. That said, I did not think our influence was that significant, since regulations are adopted by the government. We do not vote on regulations, so when the Conservatives say that we passed those regulations, it is not true.

If it upsets the Conservatives when we tell them that it is a lie, then what can we say? I will go back to what I was saying. On top of that, these clean fuel regulations will have no impact on Quebec because the Government of Quebec already has regulations that call for greenhouse gas emissions to be reduced by 15% by 2030. That is what it says in the regulations.

We are not the ones who adopted the clean fuel regulations and we never supported them. What is more, these regulations will make no difference to Quebecers' wallets. What I am saying is serious because they have been repeating this all day long. Repeating a lie a million times does not make it true. Actually, it depends on the lie. For a year now the Conservatives have been saying that the Liberal government has been in power for eight years. When they started saying that it had been only seven years. It was therefore not true. In a month it will be eight years, at which point it will be true. I am not sure if that will work for the other lies, but it works for this one.

We are here to work for the people and to try to move forward on issues. Some will say I am a dreamer, but I want to quote John Lennon. I just had a flash. There is a line in the song *Imagine* that goes like this:

You may say I'm a dreamer
But I'm not the only one

As a parliamentarian, I dream of the day when election campaigns last a month and a half or two months instead of three or four years; in the interval, we would work for the common good. I invite my Conservative colleagues to watch sittings from the Standing Committee on Agriculture and Agri-Food. I think we manage to work well together, and I am very proud of that. I have said it several times before in the House.

I try to bring the same attitude here. In that spirit, I will not start calling this or that member a liar. Instead, I will state that what was said is not true. Some might say that it is the same thing, but at least I will not use unparliamentary language. At least there is that.

Private Members' Business

• (1710)

The Bloc Québécois did not adopt the clean fuel regulations. I hope they make a clip of what I just said. The carbon tax does not apply in Quebec. I hope they make a clip of that, too. Quebec has an emissions trading system that was established with California and that is still in force. The system was set up in 2013, if I am not mistaken. That date is just off the top of my head. It may have been a little more recent than that. Actually, forget I mentioned the date. This system was adopted prior to the carbon tax and is advantageous for Quebeckers. It is estimated that it adds 8.8¢ to the price of a litre of gasoline in Quebec, compared with 14.3¢ for the carbon tax. That definitely means we are at an advantage, not a disadvantage.

When the Conservative members from Quebec strongly denounce the carbon tax, accuse the mean old Bloc of costing Quebeckers a lot of money and say that, if they take office, they will repeal the carbon tax and put money directly back in Quebeckers' pockets, it is not true. Quebec's emissions trading system will remain in effect even if the Conservatives repeal the carbon tax that applies in other provinces. It is important to point that out. When I rise in the House, I will always make it my duty to clearly and calmly set the record straight.

We said that the Conservatives were proposing simplistic solutions. Earlier, a member quoted our use of the word "simplistic" and said that the Conservatives' solution was indeed simple because it would put money back in Quebeckers' pockets. The word "simplistic" actually means something that seems simple but is actually ineffective and poorly thought out, something that does not actually solve the problem. With all due respect, I would invite the Conservatives to look up the definition of the word "simplistic" so that they know for next time. Perhaps they should stop trying to exploit opposition to climate change and the cost of living for their own political gain. It is true that the cost of living is high and that that is very serious, but there are other places where the government can find money. Oil companies are making outrageous profits. We talked about that today.

At the Standing Committee on Agriculture and Agri-Food, we studied inflation at the grocery store and made some recommendations. One of them, of course, was about the need to determine the breakdown of the profits being made by the major grocery chains, which constitute an oligopoly. The five major grocery chains control 80% of the market. We are hearing a lot today about the price of gas. Funnily enough, the oil companies are also an oligopoly. As far as gas is concerned, we know how much money those companies are making. As far as the grocery sector is concerned, we do not know. What we are saying is that we need this information to determine what action the government can take, because concrete measures will have to be taken to help our agri-food businesses.

There is one thing that boggles my mind when it comes to the fight against climate change. It is hearing some people say that we need to produce oil and build pipelines, without taking climate change into account, because they expect that this will lower the cost of living. I urge my colleagues to talk to vegetable farmers, particularly in Quebec, but also elsewhere. Some had to deal with torrential rains all summer long. Of course, we cannot always make a direct scientific link between a particular season and global

warming. However, I could also mention forest fires, more frequent hurricanes and a whole host of other events.

We cannot link each element directly, but we can see that the frequency is higher, that the climate disruptions are substantial and that it is costing money. It is not true that climate change does not cost money. It is costing us a tremendous amount of money. This summer, the forest fires cost us \$8 billion, and that does not even take the long-term effects into account. Just think of the cost of insurance. There will come a day when the companies will no longer want to insure people who live in fire-prone areas. That is important as well. As far as insurance is concerned, can we determine together how to share the cost of the risk factor with farmers in order to maintain food production for the future? Keeping food production local and not relying on foreign companies that can raise prices overnight could also bring down the cost of living.

• (1715)

In closing, I invite my Conservative colleagues, with all due respect, to be more conscientious. Let us work together for the common good.

[English]

The Assistant Deputy Speaker (Mrs. Alexandra Mendès): It being 5:15 p.m., pursuant to order made earlier today, all questions necessary to dispose of the opposition motion are deemed put and a recorded division deemed requested and deferred until Wednesday, October 4, 2023, at the expiry of the time provided for Oral Questions.

The hon. deputy House leader is rising on a point of order.

Mr. Mark Gerretsen: Madam Speaker, I believe if you seek it, you will find unanimous consent to see the clock at 5:30 p.m. so we can start Private Members' Business.

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

Some hon. members: Agreed.

PRIVATE MEMBERS' BUSINESS

NATIONAL STRATEGY FOR EYE CARE ACT

The House proceeded to the consideration of Bill C-284, An Act to establish a national strategy for eye care, as reported (with amendments) from the committee.

[English]

SPEAKER'S RULING

The Assistant Deputy Speaker (Mrs. Alexandra Mendès): There is one motion in amendment standing on the Notice Paper for the report stage of Bill C-284. Motion No. 1 will be debated and voted upon.

[Translation]

I will now put Motion No. 1 to the House.

*Private Members' Business**[English]*

MOTIONS IN AMENDMENT

Hon. Judy A. Sgro (Humber River—Black Creek, Lib.) moved:

That Bill C-284, in Clause 2, be amended

(a) by replacing, in the English version, line 10 on page 2 with the following:

“(a) identify the needs of health care professionals and other professionals in relation to”

(b) by replacing, in the English version, line 12 on page 2 with the following:

“ment of eye disease and on vision rehabilitation;”

The question was put on Motion No. 1 and it was agreed to on division.

The Assistant Deputy Speaker (Mrs. Alexandra Mendès): Is the House ready for the question?

Some hon. members: Question.

[Translation]

The Assistant Deputy Speaker (Mrs. Alexandra Mendès): The question is on Motion No. 1.

If a member participating in person wishes that the motion be carried or carried on division or if a member of a recognized party participating in person wishes to request a recorded division, I would invite them to rise and indicate it to the Chair.

[English]

The deputy House leader.

Mr. Mark Gerretsen: Madam Speaker, I think we can carry this on division.

(Motion agreed to)

Hon. Judy A. Sgro moved that the bill, as amended, be concurred in at report stage with a further amendment.

[Translation]

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

[English]

The deputy House leader.

Mr. Mark Gerretsen: Madam Speaker, we request that it be carried on division.

(Motion agreed to)

The Assistant Deputy Speaker (Mrs. Alexandra Mendès): When shall the bill be read the third time? By leave, now?

Some hon. members: Agreed.

Hon. Judy A. Sgro moved that the bill be now read the third time and passed.

She said: Madam Speaker, I want to begin, as always, by acknowledging my colleagues who are here, because it takes all of us for anything to get passed in this House.

Bill C-284 is important to me, but it is very important to the communities that we all represent: CNIB, Fighting Blindness and

all of those organizations plus all of the people who are suffering from blindness and vision problems, and I know that there are many in this room itself.

Now that I have managed to get the bill to third reading, I want to begin by thanking all members for getting it that far, and I hope that this is the last time that I am speaking to it. Maybe we can get this bill eventually moved over to the Senate and get the work done there that needs to be done that will improve vision for thousands and thousands of Canadians. There are many MPs who have vision loss or vision problems themselves, and I am hoping that a nationalized strategy will bring all of the partners together as we move forward.

October starts next week. In October we will be celebrating Children's Vision Month and I am honoured to be able to speak to you all today, on the eve of this occasion, about my bill, Bill C-284, establishing a national strategy for eye care. I trust that again together, because we do not do anything alone and it takes all of us, we will be able to move this forward and get the House's support for Bill C-284 in the third reading stage to help children reach their full potential with good eye health and vision care. We cannot let the blur obscure children's future.

As early as 2003, the Canadian government made a commitment to the World Health Organization to develop a vision health plan for Canada by 2007 and implement this plan by 2009. Just to remind members, we are at 2023. The vision loss community has been waiting for a very long time to see Canada take some steps when it comes to a national eye care strategy, but Canada has lacked any substantive framework on the matter of public eye health care to this day.

When I started to look closer at the issue, it was clear to me that it has to be changed. We have taken tremendous steps forward in improving the health of Canadians with the promise of national pharmacare and most recently a plan to implement national dental care. The introduction of a strategy to improve vision care is another critical step in this direction. It is worth reminding members that, in 2021, the Canadian Council of the Blind in partnership with Fighting Blindness Canada, the Canadian Ophthalmological Society and the Canadian Association of Optometrists, with support of other organizations, commissioned a study on the cost of vision loss in Canada. The study revealed that Canada is experiencing an emerging crisis in avoidable vision loss that has the potential to get even worse unless action is taken immediately.

Members might well be aware of those striking numbers: Over eight million Canadians have an eye disease; 1.2 million live with vision loss or blindness; and 1,292 deaths were associated with vision loss in 2019 alone. There is a high percentage of seniors and school-age children who have undiagnosed eye problems. The study suggests that without changes in public policy, the number of Canadians living with a blinding eye disease will increase to up to 14 million Canadians by 2050. Meanwhile, 75% of vision loss can be prevented, and prevention is the key. Establishing a national eye care strategy would ensure that Canadians' vision health is prioritized.

Private Members' Business

We all take our vision for granted. It is only when we start to find that we cannot see as well as we used to or as well as we would like to that we start to maybe pay attention by checking the last time we had an eye exam, and making sure that we are taking good care of our eyes as we take care of other parts of our body. Unfortunately, we often do not until it is much too late.

There are so many challenges when one cannot see, from social isolation to depression to travel difficulties. Vision loss has a profound loss on individuals, their families and society, costing our economy an estimated \$32.9 billion a year.

● (1720)

I will just repeat that number: The cost because of vision loss is \$32.9 billion a year. Over half of that cost is attributed to the reduced quality of life primarily due to loss of independence, especially in the aging population. Another \$4 billion is attributed to reduced productivity in the workplace.

Bill C-284, when passed, would commit the government to a national strategy, a framework dedicated to improved access to eye care and rehabilitation services, a strategy that also envisions the creation of a vision desk at the Public Health Agency of Canada and investments in research to find new treatments to prevent and stop blindness. The bill is also calling on an enhanced access to eye health care for indigenous people.

Our eyesight is precious. Without it, we are bound in countless ways: physically, socially, cognitively and more. The impacts of blindness include an increased risk of financial hardship, as well as the inability to drive, read, participate in physically activity or socially interact with others, which can often lead to depression and other mental illnesses. Improving eye health would contribute to improved well-being and unlock human potential for everyone. I invite my colleagues to join me on this mission to protect this valuable sense.

Making eye health, vision care and rehabilitation services a health priority requires members' support. I encourage all who are here today to become champions for Bill C-284 in their own areas and refer it to the Senate as soon as possible so we might all be able to celebrate it as the law of the land sooner rather than later.

Again, I call on all my colleagues in the House to please support Bill C-284 in its third reading today, on the eve of the Children's Vision Month of October, which is to help children reach their full potential with good eye health and vision care.

To my colleagues, I thank them very much. I appreciate getting to the third reading. The best thing tonight would be for the bill to collapse, go for a vote and have it move on to the Senate, but I am in my colleagues' hands as this debate progresses.

● (1725)

Mr. Ziad Aboultaif (Edmonton Manning, CPC): Madam Speaker, I thank the member for such a great bill.

If 75% of the cases are preventable, what is the remedy to make that awareness happen so Canadians can prevent getting a disease that is related to their eye care and their vision?

Hon. Judy A. Sgro: Madam Speaker, clearly it is the whole issue of awareness. We neglect far too many things, and eyes are an-

other thing we neglect until we start to develop a problem, when it is often too late.

Establishing a national eye care strategy with a framework would bring the provinces to the table with the federal government and other health officials to develop a plan to increase awareness and to make sure tests are available for people everywhere, so they do not develop glaucoma or macular degeneration. By the time they find out, it is way too late. If we talk about awareness, as we do with many things, it would get people to go see a doctor earlier rather than later.

[*Translation*]

Mr. Simon-Pierre Savard-Tremblay (Saint-Hyacinthe—Bagot, BQ): Madam Speaker, I salute my colleague, who is the chair of the committee I sit on. We have been working together almost on a weekly basis for almost four years. I congratulate her on her bill. Obviously, the Bloc Québécois will support it. We see no reason to oppose it.

That being said, the measures in this bill are mostly symbolic in nature, like an awareness month or producing a report. Once it has been stated that we will be supporting it, why not move forward quickly in a very real and tangible way?

[*English*]

Hon. Judy A. Sgro: Madam Speaker, my hon. colleague and I work very well together and advance a lot of good, important issues at the Standing Committee on International Trade. I have lobbied many of my colleagues over the last year and spoken to them about the bill. CNIB, Fighting Blindness Canada and the other 25 organizations that are supporting the bill have all sent letters, and they have all lobbied everybody.

Tonight it is in our hands. If we simply speak briefly and let the bill collapse, it will go to a vote next Wednesday and it will be in the Senate right away. Then we can get the Senate to work as fast as all of us do, I hope.

Mr. Terry Sheehan (Parliamentary Secretary to the Minister of Labour and Seniors, Lib.): Madam Speaker, I would be remiss if I did not thank the member for Humber River—Black Creek, as my wife is an ophthalmologist's medical tech. Your comment that 75% of eye issues are preventable is right on. I hope the request of the hon. member happens, and the bill collapses, goes to the Senate and comes back for a vote.

• (1730)

The Assistant Deputy Speaker (Mrs. Carol Hughes): I want to remind the hon. member he is to address questions and comments through the Chair.

The hon. member for Humber River—Black Creek.

Hon. Judy A. Sgro: Madam Speaker, as I indicated earlier, it takes all of us to make a difference in this country.

The national eye strategy was started by you, Madam Speaker. You were the one who started this several times through different motions that you tried to move forward. I suspect that if I had not had this opportunity because my name got picked out of the hat first, you would have been the one moving forward on this issue.

This nationalized care strategy is a tribute to you as well for the work that you have done in trying to get a vision strategy done. I acknowledge that work, Madam Speaker.

Ms. Michelle Ferreri (Peterborough—Kawartha, CPC): Madam Speaker, I would ask what this looks like for the member in terms of the provincial jurisdiction. We are trying to navigate this waterway when we are looking at a national eye care strategy, but we still have provincial and territorial jurisdictions. How does she see that panning out?

Hon. Judy A. Sgro: Madam Speaker, I think one of the first things that have to happen as part of this framework is the establishment of someone from each province and territory who is going to sit down at the table with the federal government. Together they would move forward on how the framework will look and how it will establish the treatment opportunities for many people.

Mr. Ziad Aboultaif (Edmonton Manning, CPC): Madam Speaker, most of us take our eyes for granted until we have a problem with them. When we have a problem, it is not the time to be scrambling for solutions. That is why I support Bill C-284, the national eye care strategy act. I thank the hon. member for Humber River—Black Creek for bringing this matter before the House.

One of the reasons I like this legislation is that it understands the need for co-operation in health care. It calls on the Minister of Health to establish a national strategy for eye care in collaboration with provincial and territorial governments, as well as indigenous leaders and other health care-related stakeholders. There are approximately eight million Canadians who suffer from some form of degenerative eye disease. That means one in five Canadians.

Look around this chamber. Statistically, it is likely that 68 hon. members are afflicted by a degenerative eye disease. Sometimes people are not aware of it. It could be one of us. It could be me.

Fighting Blindness Canada, the largest charitable funder of vision research in Canada, estimates that 75% of eye disease cases are preventable in the event of early diagnosis. That is a sobering number and explains why we need a national eye care strategy. This afflicts one in five Canadians and in most cases is preventable. We would be derelict in our duty if we did not work to address this issue.

The most common eye diseases in Canada include macular degeneration, cataracts, glaucoma and diabetic retinopathy. All of

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those can lead to blindness if not treated in time. The earlier the treatment, the better the chances of a positive outcome.

The bill calls for a national strategy to identify the training and educational needs of health care practitioners who specialize in ocular care; to promote improved research on prevention and treatment; to promote data sharing between the federal and provincial governments in relation to eye disease prevention; and to facilitate the rapid approval of new treatments used for eye disease. It is not that nothing is being done now; it is that we need to do more. That is why this bill calls upon the Minister of Health to take into consideration existing strategies directed at prevention and treatment of eye disease. A national approach taking into account what is already being done in the provinces should be of benefit to all Canadians.

This is a health care issue, one that affects the quality of life of millions of Canadians. As I said earlier, we tend to take our eyes for granted. I can think of few things that are more terrifying than slowly going blind, but that is the reality many Canadians are facing, and we have the opportunity in this House to do something about it. If we are serious about health care, then we should be serious about eye care, as our eyes are vitally important to our health.

As well as being a health issue, this is a financial issue. Fighting Blindness Canada estimates that preventable blindness in Canada costs about \$33 billion each year, as the hon. member said earlier. That includes \$9.5 billion in direct health care costs, \$6.1 billion in indirect health care costs and \$17.4 billion for the cost of well-being. Admittedly, this is not as much money as the Liberal deficit, but it is still a staggering amount when we stop to think about it. That is the cost of eye disease that could be prevented through early detection and treatment, something that would be enhanced by having a national eye care strategy as outlined in this legislation.

Vision loss will usually have a negative impact on an individual's financial health. Along with that comes a loss of independence and reduced quality of life.

Canada's population is aging, and many eye diseases are age-related. That means the number of individuals living with vision loss is growing. Those numbers will increasingly impact Canada's health system and economy, so it is important that we act now.

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• (1735)

It is important, as the bill states, to “identify the needs of health care professionals for training and guidance on the prevention and treatment of eye disease and to vision rehabilitation;” to “promote research and improve data collection on eye disease prevention and treatment and on vision rehabilitation”; and to “promote information and knowledge sharing between the federal and provincial governments in relation to eye disease prevention and treatment and to vision rehabilitation”. We have the ability to make this a reality.

Bill C-284 also calls for the designation of the month of February as “Age-Related Macular Degeneration Awareness Month”. I also support that. This designation has been used in other countries as a way to bring the issue to a wider audience. In so many cases of eye disease, prevention starts with awareness. By concentrating on the issue for the month of February, more Canadians will become aware of the eye issues they may face as they age and what can be done in terms of prevention.

All of us age, although most of us cannot imagine what things will look like when we are older. We may think that macular degenerative eye disease is going to happen to someone else and not to us. However, the truth is that it affects too many Canadians. If a person does not suffer from it, probably someone in their family or a close friend or colleague will.

The experts tell me that macular degeneration occurs most often in people over 60 years old, and Canada does have an aging population problem. What is a problem now will only grow larger as the rest of the baby boomer generation moves into retirement. Age is a big factor when it comes to degenerative eye disease. A person in their 50s has about a 2% chance of getting age-related macular degeneration. By the time they reach 75, their chance is about one in three. Yet, as I said, most macular degeneration issues can be prevented with early recognition and treatment, which is why a month spent raising awareness of this issue is so important.

Losing one's eyesight is terrifying to contemplate. Vision loss is an issue that literally affects millions of Canadians. We have the ability to do something to prevent it. There is no reason to delay.

I support Bill C-284, the national strategy for eye care act. We need to do what we can to protect the health of Canadians. I encourage members to support the bill.

• (1740)

[*Translation*]

Ms. Marie-Hélène Gaudreau (Laurentides—Labelle, BQ): Madam Speaker, there is an important celebration happening tonight. It is the 40th anniversary of the Centre collégial de Mont-Laurier, where I graduated from in 1997. I want to say hello to everyone there. I cannot be with them, but they will see that the work we are doing in the House of Commons is important.

I want to congratulate the member for Humber River—Black Creek for her initiative. Hats off to her. She is the member behind Bill C-284.

We talked about this earlier. I note that the Liberal Party, the Conservative Party, the NDP and also the Bloc Québécois agree on

this bill. Therefore, I think the time has come to move forward, and we are getting there. Tonight, it is nice to have a calm atmosphere, so we can listen to each other. Some people may be falling asleep but, that said, this is an important subject. Everyone has been earning their keep these past few days.

The current bill is similar to several bills that have been introduced in recent parliaments. I am thinking about bills on autism, cancer and diabetes. These bills are designed to raise public awareness of these illnesses, both in terms of prevention and education. We know very well that prevention is necessary and the key to a healthy world. Whether through sport, diet or healthy lifestyle choices, we can work towards having a healthier population and thus put less pressure on the health care system.

However, prevention also involves raising awareness and providing information. We are not all specialists who know everything about every disease. That is understandable. We do, however, need to be vigilant about our own health. That goes without saying. It is all about taking prevention into our own hands. That said, we also need to know how to detect symptoms and recognize when it is time to consult a health professional. No one wants to clog up the emergency room.

Millions of Canadians are suffering from eye disease. We know that. Eye health is important to our quality of life. We are therefore in favour of Bill C-284 because it is not restrictive and does not interfere with Quebec's exclusive jurisdiction over health.

This bill requires the federal government to produce a report that will form the future Canadian strategy for eye health.

Madam Speaker, I think I am bothering some of the members opposite, but that is okay. That does not bother me because often—

The Assistant Deputy Speaker (Mrs. Carol Hughes): Order. I am told that some people can be heard talking. I encourage people who want to have conversations to take them outside.

[*English*]

There are proceedings taking place, and it is not respectful to the member who is trying to deliver a very important speech.

[*Translation*]

The hon. member for Laurentides—Labelle.

Ms. Marie-Hélène Gaudreau: Madam Speaker, thank you for enforcing respect in the House.

I will share a story about a constituent. His name is Sylvain. His story will illustrate why Bill C-284 is important. His situation is a bit like mine.

Sylvain is a man in his fifties. He works at a big bank. He is a very busy man. He has been wearing glasses for a number of years. Over time, he notices that his vision is not as keen as it used to be. He assumes that it is a natural part of the aging process. It seems to line up with his age.

Sylvain neglects to make an appointment with the optometrist because he is a busy man. He does not take the time to do it. He figures he will get his eyes tested someday and get a new prescription. When the time comes, he goes to his eye exam and he has to see the ophthalmologist. Unfortunately, the news is not good. He gets an alarming diagnosis: It is glaucoma.

Many people are familiar with this disease, which damages the optic nerve so that information is not properly transmitted from the eye to the brain. The way I explain it to people is that it is as if you woke up one morning and you feel as though you are looking through a straw. Sylvain was about to retire. He had plans. He was living in Montreal but was moving to the country, to the Laurentians, in my riding. He was planning to travel and go on bike rides. In the winter, he was planning to ski in the area. In the end, he had a lot less quality time and he had to set aside some of his plans.

• (1745)

Because of the type of glaucoma that he had and the stage of the disease, it was too late for Sylvain. Even the drugs he was prescribed could not slow the disease's progression. It was really impossible, and that is why prevention is key. There is a lack of knowledge. This disease must be prevented. It is unacceptable that people like Sylvain and many other Quebeckers and Canadians are unable to recognize the warning signs, but we cannot blame them. At the same time, if people do know the signs, then they can take action. It is also not easy to get the right information. Some people even have trouble distinguishing between a cold and the flu, so imagine trying to tell the difference between glaucoma, astigmatism or another eye problem, and yet some eye diseases can be fatal.

I mentioned at the outset that I was once in a similar position. In my early forties—some would say it was not so long ago—my eyes were fine. All of a sudden, I felt my eyesight change. My eyesight had started to deteriorate as I got closer to 40, so I got my eyes checked out. I was told that I had early-stage glaucoma. I was shocked to think that I, at 40 years old, would need laser eye surgery to prevent glaucoma. I learned afterwards that it runs in my family. My colleagues can imagine how many people fall through the cracks and cannot get surgery, like Sylvain, who now sees the world as if he is looking through a straw. I was lucky. I did not even know what glaucoma was. Even while preparing this speech, I had to read up on the disease because I was not sure of the facts anymore. That shows how ill-equipped we are as a society to recognize the major symptoms of many diseases.

I am sure that many Quebeckers in the House will talk about this. I would like to remind my colleagues of an ad that ran on television. It was a major national campaign in Quebec known as *Mémomamo*. Lise Dion, a well-known Quebec comedian, was featured in these ads, which urged women to book an appointment for a mammogram and get early cancer screening. More than 60,000 women

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in Quebec have registered with the Quebec breast cancer screening program. That is a record in 100 years of campaigning.

It took a major awareness and education campaign for Quebec to get a breast cancer prevention policy. Women are the ones who are most commonly diagnosed with this type of cancer, which has the highest survival rate if the screening detects it in time. The same goes for the example I gave of glaucoma. It takes money to run screening and prevention campaigns. The federal government needs to be able to conduct such health campaigns in Quebec. In order for the Quebec department of health to take the necessary measures to keep Quebeckers healthy—and let us not forget that health falls under the exclusive jurisdiction of Quebec—the federal government needs to understand that the bill is important and that the Bloc Québécois supports it.

• (1750)

[*English*]

Mr. Matthew Green (Hamilton Centre, NDP): Madam Speaker, today I rise to speak in support of Bill C-284, which is an act to establish a national strategy for eye care. I want to thank the hon. member for Humber River—Black Creek for introducing this important legislation, which addresses a long-neglected issue in our health care system.

Above my desk in my office here in Ottawa is a portrait of Tommy Douglas. When I think about the impact that he has had on health care for Canadians, I often reflect on his saying this: “When we're talking about medical care we're talking about our sense of values.”

Our New Democratic Party has been advocating for a comprehensive, public health care system since our founding convention in 1961, where it was affirmed:

Believing that a country's most precious possession is the health of its citizens, the New Party will introduce a National Health Plan, providing benefits to those who need them without regard to their ability to pay. The plan will cover a full range of services: medical, surgical, dental and optical treatment, as well as prescribed drugs and appliances.

I am proud of the role that New Democrats have played in establishing our national health care, as well as recent work we have done to force the Liberal government to establish a national dental care program. We will continue to work toward a national pharmaceutical plan. I believe that it is also important to add eye care to our universal health care model.

In one of the richest countries in the world, it is shameful that millions of our fellow Canadians lack access to essential eye care. Over eight million Canadians live with an eye condition that puts them at significant risk of blindness. We know that, as the population continues to age, this number will only increase.

Seventy per cent of existing vision impairments in Canada are estimated to be correctable with prescription glasses, yet not everyone who needs glasses can afford them. The impact this has on the independence and quality of life of individuals and their families is significant.

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In 2019, vision loss had a direct and indirect economic impact of \$33 billion, a number that is expected to rise to \$56 billion by 2050. I appreciate the comprehensiveness of this bill; in particular, it would identify the training, education and guidance needs of health care practitioners and other professionals related to the prevention and treatment of eye disease, including clinical, practical guidelines.

It would also promote research and improve data collection on eye disease prevention and treatment. It would promote information and knowledge sharing between the federal and provincial governments in relation to eye disease prevention and treatment. It would ensure that Health Canada is able to rapidly consider new applications for treatments and devices used for macular degeneration, cataracts, glaucoma and diabetic retinopathy.

What is more, this bill designates February as age-related macular degeneration month, raising awareness and education about the most common cause of vision loss in individuals over 50.

I want to take a moment here to recognize Hamilton Health Sciences, McMaster University, St. Joseph's Healthcare and the researchers at the Regional Eye Institute at St. Joseph's Healthcare Hamilton, who are currently undertaking one of the most comprehensive studies on the prevalence of age-related macular degeneration. This work will help us understand the prevalence of AMD among Canadians, and it could even provide us with valuable insight on the genetic and lifestyle risk factors linked to developing it, as well as treatments to slow vision loss in patients with AMD.

The need for a national strategy is, in part, obvious, because it is the right thing to do. However, it is also needed because there currently exists an inequality and inadequacy of eye care services at the provincial level. For instance, most health guidelines recommend having an eye exam once a year for people aged six to 18 years or 65 years or older, as well as those with diabetes or an eye disease. However, Manitoba and Nova Scotia only insure eye exams every 24 months for all seniors. Ontario has ended free annual eye exams for seniors through the Ontario health insurance plan, so those who cannot afford to pay out-of-pocket for an eye exam are putting their health at risk. The different services provided by each province will lead to greater health inequalities for Canadians, solely because of where they happen to live. This clearly highlights the need for a national eye care strategy and the importance of having eye care fully covered by our health care system.

• (1755)

There is also a gender issue at stake. Women carry a greater burden of visual impairment. Recent studies show that one in four women is at risk of visual impairment compared to only one in eight men. In a society that claims to value gender equality, this disparity is unacceptable.

As the NDP health critic and my colleague from Vancouver Kingsway pointed out, this legislation aligns with the NDP's long-standing commitment to universal public health care. It also echoes the excellent work of my NDP colleague, the hon. member for Algoma—Manitoulin—Kapusking, who introduced Motion No. 86 this past May calling on the federal government to work toward a national strategy for eye and health care. New Democrats are not newcomers to this issue, Madam Speaker, as you of all people

would well know. We are proud to stand shoulder to shoulder with organizations like Fighting Blindness Canada, the Canadian Council of the Blind and the CNIB, which are leading the call for greater support for eye care.

In conclusion, I ask my colleagues across all parties to support Bill C-284. Early detection and treatment of eye disease can prevent 75% of visual loss cases, but only if people have access to eye care. New Democrats believe that every Canadian has the right to live a full and productive life, and that must include quality eye care. Let us ensure that our public health care system finally covers us from head to toe.

Mr. Majid Jowhari (Richmond Hill, Lib.): Madam Speaker, I am thankful for this opportunity to discuss Bill C-284, which advocates for a comprehensive strategy to address eye health.

I would like to begin, as my colleague before me did, by thanking my esteemed colleague, the hon. member for Humber River—Black Creek, for the extensive work she has done on this bill.

I might dare to call myself a poster person of someone who has faced eye health care challenges since my early forties. Late detection of glaucoma with a delay in having it addressed caused me to go through a very complicated cataract surgery and then another surgery of the cataracts, so I had two cataract surgeries with two detached retinas back to back, followed by two glaucoma surgeries. Because of the medication, I then had to have a cornea replacement last year. That was all due to the late identification and treatment of the condition of glaucoma in my eyes. Unfortunately, all of them were in my right eye.

I dare to call myself a poster person for this bill, and once again, I thank the hon. member. I also thank the doctors who helped restore my eyesight to the level that it is now so that I can function. I would like to specifically highlight Dr. Ahadian, who is my ophthalmologist; Dr. Berger, who is my retina specialist; Dr. Birt, who is my glaucoma specialist; and Dr. Chew, who is my cornea specialist. They all worked very successfully on restoring the health of my eye.

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That is all to say how important eye health is. The key part is about how important it is for it to be part of our overall health. Vision loss can have a massive impact on daily life. I could spend hours talking about the impact it had on me. Two back-to-back detached retinas basically meant that I had to lie flat on my face for 18 weeks, over two nine-week periods, without being able to move. That stopped me from eating something for more than five minutes. The rest of the time I was basically flat on my face, and I could not actively participate in any activity, whether it was work or family events or anything.

It is important for us to make sure we really support this bill and work across the aisle to make sure that it passes to develop the strategy that is needed and embed it into the health care system. As Canada's population ages, the importance of maintaining good eye health and preventing vision loss is imperative. Vision loss can be caused by several common eye diseases, including macular degeneration, cataracts, glaucoma and diabetic retinopathy. I am glad to say that I do not have diabetic retinopathy, but I unfortunately have to say that I have suffered through all of the others.

According to a report from Deloitte and the Canadian Council of the Blind, more than eight million Canadians had a common eye disease in 2019 and were at serious risk of losing their vision, as I was. Throughout a person's lifetime, and especially as they age, it is important to maintain good eye health. Routine vision care can help to reduce the risks of blindness and vision loss later in life and improve the outcomes associated with eye diseases such as cataracts and glaucoma. I cannot emphasize how important it is to ensure that everyone has access to an optometrist and an ophthalmologist and they go through routine eye examinations as early as they can.

• (1800)

One's vision does not need to be impaired to see an optometrist or an ophthalmologist. People need to make sure their eyes are healthy and can continue functioning to have a quality life. This is why I am standing in the House today in support of Bill C-284, which would establish a national strategy for eye care to support the prevention and treatment of eye disease to ensure better health outcomes for Canadians.

This bill calls on the Minister of Health to establish a national strategy in consultation with the provinces, territories, experts and indigenous groups. This strategy would allow governments at all levels across Canada to work together to address vision loss. Bill C-284 demonstrates to Canadians that we are all working to better support their eye health through a comprehensive and collaborative approach. A national strategy for eye care contributes to ensuring that Canadians are getting the vision services they need.

The federal government's health portfolio is leading and supporting a range of activities related to eye disease prevention and treatment, in support of health care delivery, which is undertaken by the provinces and territories. I would like to spend a bit of time talking about some of the supports that the federal government is giving the provinces and territories around health care in general. We are hoping that some of them, through the provinces and territories, get directed to eye care.

As we all know, budget 2023 committed close to \$200 billion in funding to support our health workforce; reduce backlogs; expand

access to family health services, mental health and substance abuse; and modernize our health system. This includes \$46.2 billion in new funding to be transferred directly to the provinces and territories through new Canada health transfer measures, as well as tailored bilateral agreements to meet the needs of each province and territory, personal support, work wage support and territorial health investment. As we all know, \$25 billion of that is focused on what we call the shared priorities between the provinces and the federal government. My plea to all levels of government, including my own government, is that some of that shared funding be focused on eye health care.

Addressing health workforce shortages and surgical backlogs, including for vision-related surgeries, is a key part of the plan and is a health system priority for this government. I was really fortunate to be able to get immediate support when I went through back-to-back detached retinas. That is considered an emergency. However, I had to wait more than three months to get scheduled for a cornea transplant. I would like to once again thank Dr. Chu for doing such an amazing job in helping to restore my sight.

The Government of Canada recognizes that supporting research is key to a fulsome understanding of eye health, including how to prevent vision loss. The Canadian Institutes of Health Research has supported key vision-related research that has strengthened the evidence base. Health Canada also regulates drugs and medical devices, including those intended for eye diseases and conditions.

Finally, the government fully supports Canada's public health system, which provides coverage for any vision care services that must be performed in a hospital. There are those who have glaucoma and they receive special consideration when they visit a doctor. However, those who do not have it have to pay for the services when they go to their ophthalmologist or optometrist. I am hoping that some of this shared priority focuses on making sure those services are provided as part of the health care system. The efforts to protect Canadians' vision in the long term is something that all members and all Canadians would benefit from and stand behind.

Once again, I wish to thank the hon. member for Humber River—Black Creek for putting forward this bill meaningful bill. I hope that we can all continue to support Bill C-284 to strengthen the work under way across Canada to prevent and treat eye—

• (1805)

The Assistant Deputy Speaker (Mrs. Carol Hughes): The member's time is up. I have been trying to signal him.

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Resuming debate, the hon. member for Peterborough—Kawartha.

Ms. Michelle Ferreri (Peterborough—Kawartha, CPC): Madam Speaker, I thank my hon. colleague for putting forth this private member's bill. It is always an honour to get up in the House and address Canadians as an elected representative from my riding of Peterborough—Kawartha, but our voices often resonate across Canada.

What we are talking about tonight, for those watching, and I know my mom and dad are watching, is a private member's bill. My parents will like this private member's bill. It was put forward by a Liberal, the member for Humber River—Black Creek, and it is a really good private member's bill.

A private member's bill is something that, as it sounds, is put forth by members themselves. There is policy we see on the floor of the House of Commons that comes forward, and then there are private member's bills, where a member works together with people here at the House of Commons to put it forward. It takes a little more work in a lot of ways because the member has to convince everybody in the House to work with them and get everyone on board.

A lot of this often comes from a place of personal experience. We all have an agenda for why we got elected or what we are doing here, and we have personal connections and things we want to change. The member who put this bill forward shared her story of her personal connection and why she put it forward, and I am going to read the summary into the record for people. Bill C-284 is “An Act to establish a national strategy for eye care”, and the summary states:

This enactment provides for the development of a national strategy to support the prevention and treatment of eye disease, as well as vision rehabilitation, to ensure better health outcomes for Canadians.

It also designates the month of February as “Age-Related Macular Degeneration Month”.

There is a reason I love this bill so much. When we look at our health, let us be honest: Nothing else matters in the world other than our health. Someone does not know they do not have health until they do not have health. I always say it is like that age-old adage: When someone is sick and laying on the ground with the flu or something, they could have all the money in the world and all the possessions in the world, but without their health they cannot do anything.

What I like about this bill is that it puts a focus not only on our eyes, but on the overall health of our eyes and the impact our eye health has on us. It also talks about prevention, and that is the smart economics, I would say, of this bill. When we look at prevention, that is really when we are working upstream.

Often in this House, what we are doing is intervening. The damage has already been done and we are doing an intervention, constantly. We are doing damage control all the time. We see this in so many aspects, such as our mental health crisis and our opioid crisis. We are trying to undo all of these things. However, if we focus on prevention and research, we will save ourselves so much money in the long run. I like that this bill has a specific focus on research and prevention.

There is an area about this bill that intrigued me and got me thinking. I am the shadow minister or critic for children, families and social development. We have a ton of children in this country who are not reaching their full potential in learning. Something is often overlooked, and I can remember my own experience of this with my kids when things were not working out at school or something was going on. The simplest thing we can do is check to see if their vision is working, if their eyes are working. People do not know any different. If someone's eyes are not working, but they have never had them tested and do not know any different, that is what their baseline is. They do not know that they cannot see the board or cannot see their friends.

There could be a whole bunch of kids acting up or their behaviour has changed or they are not reaching their full potential. They could be a bright child but have fallen through the cracks because they are not engaging socially, or they do not feel smart so their worth declines. That has a spider web of impacts.

● (1810)

We can help our children have access. A ton of children fell through the cracks in so many areas with the pandemic, which I am going to park because I have so many feelings on that. They really fell through the cracks and did not get access to testing. I think that if we have a national eye care strategy that helps in those very first few years, diagnosing whether there is a vision issue, we are going to prevent so many long-term issues. The same can be said for our seniors.

Before I get to our seniors, I want to talk about the economic impacts when we look at prevention and what this is costing our system. There was a report from 2021. It is two years old, so the data could be even more current. A headline about the report reads, “New report reveals vision loss costs Canada almost \$33 billion annually”. That is not chump change. That is not nothing.

If I go back to the beginning of what I said, our health is our mental health, so our mind and body have to be working well. If our eyes are not working well, this is going to impact our mental health as well, which costs the system. I do not even know that one can quantify whether that \$33 billion would take into account all of the other secondary issues that would happen as a result of not having access to eye care.

The article about the report goes on to say, “What is most concerning is that 75 percent of vision loss is either preventable or treatable if caught early”, so we can see why the private member's bill has garnered support in the House. It is because it is just common sense, as we would say on this side of the House. The report revealed the following costs from vision loss borne by society and individuals every year—

● (1815)

The Assistant Deputy Speaker (Mrs. Carol Hughes): The time provided for the consideration of Private Members' Business has now expired and the order is dropped to the bottom of the order of precedence on the Order Paper.

ADJOURNMENT PROCEEDINGS

A motion to adjourn the House under Standing Order 38 deemed to have been moved.

[*English*]

PUBLIC SAFETY

Hon. Michelle Rempel Garner (Calgary Nose Hill, CPC): Madam Speaker, I believe that the Minister of Public Safety was appointed to cabinet about two months ago, so my question is whether he has received his mandate letter yet from the Prime Minister. Particularly, if he has received the mandate letter, could he provide the House with an update on the status of the amnesty for firearms and whether it is in place until October 30?

I know there are a lot of folks across the country who are impacted by this. There is a lot of interest from different advocacy groups about what is going to happen on October 30: whether there is going to be a buyback program in place by then and whether the amnesty is going to be extended. There are a lot of folks from different groups who just really want to get some understanding on whether the Prime Minister's Office has given the new public safety minister a mandate letter, and whether that mandate letter has provided a little more clear direction on what the minister should be doing with regard to the October 30 deadline, which is quickly approaching.

I know this is something that, probably regardless of political stripe, a lot of folks are getting communications on in their offices, inquiries both from constituency groups and from different advocacy groups on all sides of the firearms debate. I was hoping the minister could provide an update on whether he has received his mandate letter. Broadly speaking, I think that is of interest to the House. Also, could he provide an update on the status of the October 30 amnesty as well as the status of the buyback program?

Ms. Jennifer O'Connell (Parliamentary Secretary to the Minister of Public Safety, Democratic Institutions and Intergovernmental Affairs (Cybersecurity), Lib.): Madam Speaker, the new Minister of Public Safety is working hard with colleagues and critics across this House to discuss his portfolio and is meeting with the Prime Minister in terms of his mandate.

However, it is important to note that when it comes to gun legislation in this country, Canadians have sent a very clear message that we expect to take off the streets those dangerous assault rifles that were meant to do maximum harm and were never meant to be in the hands of people in our communities.

With that being said, we have heard many perspectives, including those from indigenous communities and from hunters who are reasonable gun owners who use weapons for the purposes of hunting or sport shooting. Therefore, we want to make sure that in the process, when it comes to any gun legislation, we are listening and considering, making sure that our gun legislation is balanced. Let us make no mistake: Canadians have made it very clear that dangerous assault weapons and handguns have no place in our society.

The government is working on the buyback program. We are still consulting to ensure that the rollout will provide the clarity that the member opposite is requesting. However, at the end of the day what is important for Canadians is safety on our streets, ensuring that

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dangerous weapons are not in the hands of criminals. Our priority is keeping communities safe. The details of the buyback program will come forward and we will ensure that Canadian communities are safe.

• (1820)

Hon. Michelle Rempel Garner: Madam Speaker, admittedly, it is a little concerning to hear that the government is still consulting and working on the buyback program and does not have clear direction for the House, given that we are about 30 days out from the amnesty expiring. Even when talking about firearms coming off the street or whatever, we can have a whole policy discussion about firearms ownership in Canada, but at the end of the day this is really about timing.

We are now at 30 days away. We have not heard from the government with respect to whether the amnesty will be extended. I know that there are groups on all sides of the debate that are wondering if it is going to be extended. How does the government put in place a buyback program in a month? There needs to be a buyback program for retailers and for owners who obtained firearms legally.

Again, maybe my colleague opposite would just like to take a moment to clarify: Is the October 30 amnesty going to be extended; and is the buyback program going to be implemented before October 30?

Ms. Jennifer O'Connell: Madam Speaker, it is no surprise to me that Conservatives do not understand why consultation and having these conversations is important and why working with other orders of government and working with stakeholders is crucial to implementing policy that is effective. I do not share the pessimism that the member opposite has, when it comes to consultations to ensure that our policies are effective. The impact that we want to have in this country with this program is to create safer communities and get dangerous assault rifles off our streets.

CARBON PRICING

Mr. Pat Kelly (Calgary Rocky Ridge, CPC): Madam Speaker, I rise tonight in Adjournment Proceedings to have another go at a question I asked on May 30.

I talked about the fact that, when fully implemented, the carbon tax is going to be 41¢ a litre, and the Liberals have a new carbon tax in the guise of fuel regulation that will add another 17¢. GST, of course, is going to be added to both of those, bringing us up to 61¢. I pointed out that Canadians cannot afford an extra 61¢ on a litre of gasoline. This does not just affect Canadians who drive a car. This makes fuel for public transit more expensive and the vehicles that municipalities run more expensive.

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However, the response was quite striking. The minister got up, and gave an entire answer talking about natural disasters, fires and floods, as if to say that Canadians have to pay this tax in order to stop hurricanes and forest fires. To bring that kind of political answer is just ridiculous. We have heard over and over again the claim that, if we oppose a tax on the basic necessities of life that all Canadians need, it is somehow our fault that devastating forest fires and deadly weather events happen, because we asked the question.

How high does the carbon tax have to be? At what point will we solve a century of forestry mismanagement and the mismanagement of culling pine-beetled trees that allowed for these tinderbox conditions to arise? If the carbon tax is the solution, how high will the tax have to go? It staggers the imagination, and it is deeply offensive to Canadians who cannot afford to live.

Rent has doubled. The down payment to buy a home has doubled. Mortgage payments have more than doubled. Groceries are out of control. The cost of heating a home is beyond what many Canadians can pay, and the new carbon taxes on fuel will add 61¢ a litre. Canadians cannot afford these expenses.

Therefore, for the minister to get up and lecture me, lecture the opposition benches and, in so doing, lecture every Canadian who has to pay these taxes, really, telling them that it is their duty because this tax is responsible for stopping these catastrophic and complicated events. To trivialize such things as forest fires and wildfires by simply making it a matter of accepting a carbon tax is very disappointing.

I ask again: When will the government make life a little bit more affordable for Canadians and repeal these punitive taxes?

• (1825)

Mr. Adam van Koeverden (Parliamentary Secretary to the Minister of Environment and Climate Change and to the Minister of Sport and Physical Activity, Lib.): Madam Speaker, it is an honour to rise on behalf of the Minister of the Environment and Climate Change this evening to talk about our plan to fight climate change and ensure affordability for Canadians.

Before I start, I spent the summer in my riding talking with my constituents and asking them how we can help more because things are expensive these days. When I was not meeting with my constituents and hearing from them, I was discussing the issues with economists, experts and researchers, and delving into the PBO report a bit. One thing I did not hear from any of my constituents this summer was that they would like us to do less to fight climate change.

Fighting climate change requires more than just one approach. Certainly, pricing carbon is a necessity. It has won a Nobel Prize in economics. I do not have a Nobel Prize in economics, and I do not know if my colleague opposite has a Nobel Prize in economics, but the gentleman who does, whose name is William Nordhaus, won it for demonstrating clearly that, if we want to fight climate change from an economic perspective, then market-based instruments such as carbon pricing are an absolute necessity.

With respect to what my colleague opposite referred to as trivializing a natural disaster, there is a scientific straight line drawn between burning more fossil fuels, emitting more carbon pollution

and increasing heat in northern boreal forests and the prevalence, intensity and duration of forest fires. It is not something that really can be debated. Climate change is having an impact on the severity of these forest fires, and we just had the worst year on record. It goes hand in hand that we want to fight climate change because we want families to be safe in their homes all year round. We do not want to have to evacuate far northern communities for weeks on end for fear that climate change will ruin their community.

My colleague is right, that there are other ways to fight forest fires, such as through forest management strategies and having a better response to national disasters, but it does not change the fact that, if we want to fight climate change, then we need to reduce our reliance on fossil fuels. Canada's population is 0.5% of the global population, and we are responsible for 1.5% of global emissions. Simple math tells us that, as a result, individuals in Canada create three times as much pollution as the global average. That should tell any Canadian something, which is that we have work to do as Canadians. We should be stewards of the environment and the climate. Every young person who I meet within my riding, or in Alberta, as I spent some time in Alberta this summer, want us to focus on fighting climate change.

Unfortunately, all day today we did not hear any ideas from Conservatives other than they would axe the tax. That is their strategy. That is their new bumper sticker. That is the new T-shirt the member for Carleton goes around wearing. However, that is an irresponsible thing to say if they do not have an alternative, because the Conservatives have not put forth a plan to fight climate change or reduce our emissions. Instead, they use vague terms such as “technology”.

I have a question for my colleague. I hope he will indulge me. I have done my best by not reading my notes and listening intently to the member's speech. In an alternative universe, back in 2021, let us say that Erin O'Toole had won the election and the member opposite for Calgary Rocky Ridge was the Minister of the Environment and Climate Change or perhaps the Minister of Transport. Would he follow through on his commitment that he ran on in 2021 to price carbon in Canada?

• (1830)

Mr. Pat Kelly: Madam Speaker, after the next election, when we are on the other side, if the member is re-elected, he will have an opportunity to ask questions of a future Conservative government, but tonight is when opposition members ask questions of the government.

If I am to take the point the member made in his response, which was that we are not fighting climate change and that the carbon tax is a successful policy instrument in fighting climate change, I might be prepared to accept his full argument, but the carbon tax has not allowed for Canada to meet any of its emissions targets. We are not controlling emissions or reducing emissions through the carbon tax. All it does is make life more expensive for Canadians who cannot afford to eat, heat or buy groceries.

Mr. Adam van Koeverden: Madam Speaker, that is actually not true. Canada's emissions have fallen, and Canada's emissions per GDP have fallen dramatically, in fact, and it is a result of action by this government. However, there is a lag period as well, because the previous government did almost nothing to fight climate change. It thought it was a big joke. The Harper government referred to the Kyoto protocol as a "socialist" regime.

We still have a long way to go in this country, but it is going to take a concerted effort on behalf of each member of Parliament to

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listen to people in their riding who are actually experts, economists, experts on affordability and experts on fighting climate change, to develop a strategy that works for all Canadians.

Back to the issue of affordability for just a second. I happened to have a look at the PBO report, and I noted the bottom three quintiles of earners in Alberta net more money through the climate action incentive payment than they pay. Those are the most vulnerable Canadians. Those are the people who need it most. They are getting more money back because the two top quintiles, the fourth and the fifth quintiles, burn more fossil fuels.

[Translation]

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

(The House adjourned at 6:33 p.m.)

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