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• (1630)

[English]

The Chair (Mr. George Chahal (Calgary Skyview, Lib.)): I call this meeting to order.

Welcome to meeting number 109 of the House of Commons Standing Committee on Natural Resources.

Pursuant to Standing Order 108(2) and the motion adopted by the committee on Thursday, June 6, 2024, the committee is commencing its study of the Trans Mountain pipeline expansion.

Today's meeting is taking place in a hybrid format. All witnesses have completed the required connection tests in advance of the meeting.

I would like to remind participants of the following points. Please wait until I recognize you by name before speaking. All comments should be addressed through the chair. Members, please raise your hand if you wish to speak, whether participating in person or via Zoom. The clerk and I will manage the speaking order as best we can. I use two cards: Yellow is a 30-second warning, and red is "time's up". I'll try not to interrupt you mid-sentence.

Now, I would like to welcome the witnesses who are with us for the first hour today. From the Canadian Association of Petroleum Producers, we have Greig Sproule, vice-president, tolls and tariffs. He is with us by video conference. From Cenovus Energy Inc., we have Jon McKenzie, president and chief executive officer, also by video conference.

You'll have up to five minutes for opening statements.

I'll start with you, Mr. Sproule. The floor is yours. You have five minutes.

Mr. Greig Sproule (Vice-President, Tolls and Tariffs, Canadian Association of Petroleum Producers): Good afternoon, Chair and committee members. Thank you for the opportunity to meet with you today to speak about the benefits of the Trans Mountain expansion project to the entire Canadian economy.

My name is Greig Sproule, and I am the vice-president of tolls and tariffs for the Canadian Association of Petroleum Producers, otherwise known as CAPP. CAPP represents Canada's oil and natural gas producers from coast to coast, including the conventional, offshore and oil sands sectors.

The upstream oil and natural gas supply chain stretches across the country, reaching thousands of businesses located in every province and supporting over 450,000 jobs for Canadians. When

factoring in induced employment, that number nearly doubles to 900,000 jobs. The jobs created by the industry are high-paying. The average wage in the conventional oil and natural gas sector pays about \$47 per hour more than the national average, which means higher standards of living for workers and higher income taxes for government. The industry is also one of the largest employers of indigenous people in the country, and hundreds of indigenous-owned businesses make up a significant part of the supply chain.

There are two major points I want to make today in my opening comments.

First, the Trans Mountain expansion project is a positive net benefit to the Canadian economy and will deliver benefits for Canadian businesses and taxpayers for decades to come. This project will support Canadian crude oil production growth and allow for increased access to global energy markets. This will contribute to Canada's GDP, provide positive support to trade balances, create and sustain Canadian jobs, and generate additional revenues for governments that help pay for our teachers, doctors, roads and social programs. The Bank of Canada is expecting the project to contribute 0.25 percentage points to Canada's GDP in the second quarter of this year. To illustrate that, this increase is larger than the total increase in British Columbia's GDP growth for this year.

Recent reporting has indicated that the Trans Mountain project has also enabled Canadian oil exports to reach record levels, contributing to increased trade balances. Record exports are also contributing to government revenues. Looking back at the last fiscal year, Canada's oil and natural gas industry generated approximately \$45 billion in revenues for governments at all levels through royalties, taxes and other fees.

This committee has been discussing, in part, the cost of building a pipeline. I would like to highlight the fact that much of the investment to build this project has supported Canadian jobs and businesses. Through construction, the project employed nearly 37,000 workers, including over 3,000 indigenous workers. Over \$4.8 billion in contracts was awarded to indigenous-owned entities. In addition, over \$600 million has been committed as part of mutual benefit agreements with indigenous communities.

My second point is that the project would have been even better for Canada if we had paved the way for private investment to build the pipeline. CAPP believes that, had the Government of Canada created a regulatory environment for the project to be economically viable for the private sector, it could have more appropriately de-risked the project while ensuring its completion.

Policy uncertainty, interprovincial challenges, delays in project approvals and regulatory complexity are making it incredibly difficult to build the nation-building projects needed to power Canada's economy. It is unfortunate that our complex and ever-changing regulatory environment is impeding Canada's ability to attract the private investment needed to build major projects like the Trans Mountain pipeline expansion. We need to fix our major-projects process in order to extract the true value of our natural energy resources and maximize that value for Canadians.

Thank you for your time today and for the opportunity to present the committee with additional information. I welcome any questions you may have.

• (1635)

The Chair: Thank you for your opening statement.

We'll now go to Mr. Jon McKenzie from Cenovus Energy.

You have five minutes. The floor is yours.

Mr. Jon McKenzie (President and Chief Executive Officer, Cenovus Energy Inc.): Good afternoon and thank you. My name is Jon McKenzie and I'm the president and CEO of Cenovus Energy.

Mr. Chair, I appreciate the opportunity to speak with the committee today.

I'd like to start by acknowledging that I'm in Treaty No. 7 territory in Calgary, which is also home to the Métis Nation of Alberta district 5 and district 6. I acknowledge these nations as the current and original stewards of the land.

Cenovus Energy is a Canadian-headquartered, integrated energy company producing oil and gas in western Canada, Newfoundland and Labrador, and the Asia-Pacific region. We also have upgrading and refining operations in Canada and the United States. We are a founding member of the Pathways Alliance, and a member of the Canadian Association of Petroleum Producers. We are a shipper on the Trans Mountain pipeline expansion.

Canada's oil and gas industry delivers products to Canadians and the rest of the world that are required, necessary and integral to supporting our modern standard of living and quality of life. We should never take this for granted. Hydrocarbons still generate 80% of our global primary energy supply, and the demand for these resources will continue to grow for the foreseeable future.

With access to international markets, Canada is uniquely positioned to continue supplying some of the most responsibly produced oil at a time when the developing world requires energy to raise the standard of living. As the fourth-largest producer and exporter of oil, Canada supplies nearly 5% of global production. The reserves Canada has been blessed with allow our industry to make outsized contributions to this country's prosperity.

Specifically on the TMX pipeline, I'd like to make two important points.

First, the TMX pipeline is a critical piece of infrastructure allowing Canadian energy to access global markets, which strengthens our sector and our country. Canada will enjoy these benefits for decades to come—benefits that will make life more affordable for the average Canadian, extending far beyond the tolls that will be paid by TMX shippers. These are long-term benefits that include high-paying jobs, increased taxes and royalties paid to all levels of government and a strengthened dollar, making the necessities Canadians import more affordable and increasing capital investment in Canada.

Our industry provides more than 450,000 direct jobs for Canadians, which leads to billions of dollars being reinvested in our economy. These are some of the best-paying jobs in Canada, allowing people to earn a living wage and have a high quality of life. Similarly, our industry is one of the largest employers of indigenous Canadians, with salaries about three times the average for indigenous workers in other sectors. We're also developing partnerships with indigenous companies, which helps advance indigenous reconciliation.

Cenovus and our peers pay billions of dollars every year in royalties and taxes. Our industry typically pays more than half of what we make to governments. In 2022, for example, that number was \$48 billion. That money is then invested in hospitals, education, social programs and other priorities, to the benefit of all Canadians.

As major exporters, our industry strengthens the Canadian dollar. In 2022, oil and gas accounted for about 30% of all Canadian exports. Without our sector, Canada would run a trade deficit of nearly \$115 billion. The result would be an even weaker dollar and an increased cost of imported essentials, such as fresh produce, clothing, construction materials and electronics. To continue to increase our contribution to Canadians' quality of life, we must remain globally competitive, with access to international markets through the pipelines TMX represents.

The second point I'd like to make is that it cannot take 12 years for a major project to be built, as it did here. Canadians deserve better. While this project is an undeniable win for Canadians and demonstrates that we can still build projects in Canada, it also highlights how cumbersome and inefficient our regulatory and approval processes have become. The private sector should be able to build these projects, which are clearly in the national interest, without requiring this level of federal government intervention.

With that, Mr. Chair, I'm happy to take your questions.

• (1640)

The Chair: Thank you, Mr. McKenzie, for your opening statement.

We will now proceed to our first round of questions. This is a six-minute round. We'll start with Mr. Falk.

You have six minutes. The floor is yours.

Mr. Ted Falk (Provencher, CPC): Thank you, Mr. Chair.

Thank you to both of our witnesses for your testimony here at committee. I found it very interesting and very useful.

With the TMX, we'll do a bit of background, with just a little bit of the historical numbers here. The government purchased the TMX project for \$4.5 billion from Kinder Morgan, after Kinder Morgan made many attempts to get the project moving but was stymied by unrealistic assessment requirements and just wasn't able to get the ball over the finish line to make it happen.

The government picked it up and what should have been a \$9.7-billion project quickly jumped to \$12.8 billion. By 2022, it was reported that the pipeline was at \$21.4 billion. That was in December 2022. In March 2023, this committee heard that the project was at \$31 billion. In three months, the project had increased by \$8.8 billion. In April of this year, it was reported that the project was at \$34 billion and that in May it would begin to start shipping oil and transporting oil down the pipeline.

It was at \$34 billion in April. It's October today. In order for something to be used, it has to reach substantial completion, but that doesn't mean it's totally complete. Do either of you have any idea of what the total cost of that project will come in at when it's totally complete?

Mr. Jon McKenzie: Maybe I'll start with the question. It's probably a better question for the people at Trans Mountain pipelines themselves. My understanding is that the last public figure was about \$34 billion.

Mr. Ted Falk: It was reported back in April, although that would have been just to the point of substantial completion, to where the pipeline could allow oil to start flowing. I imagine that there potentially could be a different number by the time the dust settles.

Can you talk a bit about some of the things that contributed to the time it took to get this pipeline built, the 12 years that you talked about? Was it government policy? Was it the requirements that were put on it by government? What was the problem with the lengthy delay in getting this project to completion?

• (1645)

Mr. Jon McKenzie: One of the things I'd say is that we don't necessarily have all the insight into the comings and goings of the TMX expansion in terms of the things that they were going through to get this pipeline built. I think your observation, though, is correct, in that this should not have taken 12 years to get built. The original timeline was much shorter. I think it is something that speaks to the regulatory process and our ability to get these major projects done in Canada.

Mr. Ted Falk: Do you think it's important that Canadians find out what the delays were that caused the lengthy delay?

Mr. Jon McKenzie: Yes, and I think that's the work of the Canada Energy Regulator. I think that's their job. Their job is to look at the spend and to look at the construction period and determine whether or not that was reasonable.

It's a better question, I think, for the regulator and the TMX people themselves, versus Greig and me. We are on the outside looking in. We're certainly shippers, but we're not necessarily privy to the spend or to the timeline itself.

Mr. Ted Falk: Thank you.

Mr. Sproule, you're in charge of tolls and tariffs. Can you tell me, prior to the TMX expansion coming into use, what was the toll rate to get oil from Alberta to the coast?

Mr. Greig Sproule: I'm going to give you an approximate one in terms of off the top of my head, but I think it was in the mid-two-dollar to three-dollar range, depending on whether it was heavy or light. I think that's a fairly representative number.

Mr. Ted Falk: The Canada Energy Regulator is the entity that establishes what the toll rate will be. What are their considerations in determining what the tolls should be?

Mr. Greig Sproule: Yes. They have a number of tests that are really standard across the board for pipeline tolls. It starts with, first of all, that costs have to be prudent. For the assessment of the costs that are before them, they will do an assessment and the costs can't go into the tolls if they're not found to be prudent.

Secondly, tolls have to be "just and reasonable". There are a lot of dimensions to that, but the "just" is really fairness, and they look at what the underlying agreements were between the parties that agreed to the commercial arrangements. "Reasonable" encompasses a lot of things, such as competitiveness in the marketplace.

Mr. Ted Falk: What do you anticipate the tolls will be once the Canada Energy Regulator makes a determination in 2025?

Mr. Greig Sproule: I don't have any particular insight into what they are going to be, beyond what's being filed. The CER will make that determination. I think the current tolls, as some have suggested, are represented. The shippers would love for them to be less, but they are equal to other tidewater access from Canada.

The Chair: Thank you.

We'll now go to our next speaker.

Ms. Dabrusin, you have six minutes.

Ms. Julie Dabrusin (Toronto—Danforth, Lib.): Thank you, Mr. Chair.

I appreciate that Mr. Falk started with a bit of historical context because, when we talk about issues that are important today, such as energy, our economy and climate change, it's important to talk about historical context too.

The historical context I want to start with is this: Under the previous Conservative government, there was no climate plan. There was no path to reduce emissions. Emissions were tracking up. In fact, if we had stayed under the previous Conservative government's plans, estimates say we would have seen emissions track up by 2030. They would have gone up by 41%.

It's important to keep that context in play when we talk about the work we've been doing as a government. We had to turn a big ship around, and we did that. We put in place a climate plan that includes carbon pricing as a very central and important part—I'll be getting back to that in a bit—as well as investments to support clean energy, investment tax credits and the like. It has been working.

I also think it's very important, when we're talking with people, to highlight that it was a huge ship we turned around. Like I said, 41% would have been where we are now. It would have been going higher. We're actually tracking emissions down. We're seeing that our emissions, at this current point, are dropping. They're at the lowest they have been in three decades, and that's as our population has been going up. It's as our economy is growing that we're seeing this. I'm basing this on two things: the inventory report we provided to the UN and the latest Canadian Climate Institute review.

I'll go to the Canadian Climate Institute piece. They pointed out that a lot of the reductions we saw were through electricity. One of the things I found interesting—and I'll get to this in my questions to our witnesses—is that our emissions would have been so much lower had it not been for the increases we've seen in emissions from oil and gas. That's why the oil and gas cap we're going to put in place on emissions from that industry is so important.

I find this fascinating: I thought the industry has been saying, until recently, anyway—and I'm going to ask them about this—that they are working to get to net zero by 2050. Actually, what we're seeing right now, when we look at our inventory reports on emissions, is that emissions are tracking up from the industry. That's a bit of framing for where my question will come from.

I also want to point out that the largest single tool we have to reduce emissions is carbon pricing. It's about a third of the reduction. It's considered the most efficient way to do this. It's the least expensive.

Look, I'm not surprised the Conservatives oppose carbon pricing, because that fits with their track record. Frankly, it also fits with what members of this committee have done in the past when they've talked about how they don't really believe in human-caused climate change. I think it's important to say, given that we have him joining us today, that I was surprised to see the leader of the NDP follow the Conservatives down that path and choose to step away from carbon pricing, since that alone could lead to 80 million tonnes of reductions by 2030. It is one of our most effective tools.

Welcome, Mr. Singh, to our committee.

However, I'm curious about whether he's coming here to say that he's going to hold oil and gas to account. His party has stepped away from the strongest tool we have in place.

• (1650)

Mr. Charlie Angus (Timmins—James Bay, NDP): I have a point of order.

The Chair: Ms. Dabrusin, I will ask you to hold for a second. We have a point of order from Mr. Angus.

Mr. Charlie Angus: I'm trying to get clarification.

I know she doesn't want to talk to the main oil sands companies. I think the oil sands industry is something the Liberals are very uncomfortable asking questions about.

I could certainly bring Mr. Singh in as a witness another time. Would that help?

The Chair: Mr. Angus, that is not a point of order, and I think that's engaging in debate. We'll proceed.

Please, colleagues, as a reminder, let's use points of order for points of order, not to engage in debate. You'll have the time to ask questions and engage in debate when you have your turns.

Ms. Dabrusin.

Ms. Julie Dabrusin: My clock hasn't stopped. Is that right?

The Chair: The clock will start when you start speaking.

Ms. Julie Dabrusin: Perfect. Thank you.

Actually, I'm curious about that piece.

I did actually have a question, and I will start with Cenovus. It's actually about the most recent ESG report that they put out in 2023, which seems to be missing the letter E.

The report reads:

This report differs from our previous Environmental, Social and Governance (ESG) reports in that it does not include information regarding Cenovus's environmental performance and plans due to recent changes to Canada's Competition Act. We have made the decision to defer reporting on our recent environmental activities.

The Competition Act changes we're talking about are that, when you make a claim, you have to back it up with evidence.

I would like to know from Cenovus what portions of the report you withheld because you didn't feel that you had the evidence that would support them under the Competition Act rules?

Mr. Jon McKenzie: Thank you for the question.

First, I would say that nothing has changed at Cenovus in terms of the work we're doing with regard to carbon emissions and our commitment to the environment. What has changed, however, is Bill C-59. Bill C-59 was a piece of legislation that came in without consultation and without an introductory period that requires all environmental representation—

• (1655)

Ms. Julie Dabrusin: No, I asked, actually.... I'm sorry, but I have very little time. My question wasn't about what the regulation says. It was actually about what was withheld from the report that couldn't be backed up under the rules.

Mrs. Shannon Stubbs (Lakeland, CPC): On a point of order, you talked it out. He was trying to answer your question. He was explaining exactly why. Let him—

The Chair: Mrs. Stubbs, that's not a point of order.

Ms. Dabrusin, you have the floor. Please go ahead with your question.

Ms. Julie Dabrusin: I was just hoping he could explain to me what was held back that couldn't be backed up by the evidence in that report.

Mr. Jon McKenzie: Again, I take a bit of issue with the way you phrased your question in that what we've taken out of the report are pieces that we're waiting for clarification on under Bill C-59, and in particular, what that bill means by recognized international standards.

Once we have some guidance from the committee, we will be making an assessment as to whether we can start to re-release that information.

The Chair: Thank you, Mr. McKenzie.

That round of questioning time is up. We'll now go to Monsieur Simard for six minutes.

[*Translation*]

Mr. Mario Simard (Jonquière, BQ): Thank you very much, Mr. Chair.

Mr. McKenzie, I hope you can hear me okay. Is the interpretation working for you? Can you hear what I'm saying? Maybe you can nod your head.

Mr. Chair, I don't want to lose my speaking time. I just want to make sure that the witness can hear the interpretation properly.

Mr. McKenzie, can you hear the interpretation?

[*English*]

Mr. Jon McKenzie: I can't hear you. I apologize. I didn't do very well in high school French. I tried my best.

[*Translation*]

Mr. Mario Simard: I'm sorry, but I want to stop the clock anyway. I don't want to lose my time for that. I'd like the witness to hear the interpretation for the question I'm going to ask him.

[*English*]

The Chair: Mr. McKenzie, can you hear the interpretation? Can you give us a thumbs up that you can?

Mr. Jon McKenzie: I can't hear any interpretation.

The Chair: We're going to suspend for a moment while we get this sorted out.

• (1655)

(Pause)

• (1655)

The Chair: Monsieur Simard, I paused your time. Please, go ahead.

[*Translation*]

Mr. Mario Simard: Thank you very much, Mr. Chair.

I have a question for you, Mr. McKenzie, now that the interpretation is working.

I know you're with the Pathways Alliance. One of your colleagues, Derek Evans, recently gave advice to Mr. Poilievre, the leader of the Conservative Party, saying that, all in all, carbon pricing would be essential, in his opinion. I find that interesting. I think we do need to put a price on carbon. For the fun of it and without being petty, we asked Mr. Poilievre in the House if he agreed with Mr. Evans. I can read it verbatim:

Mr. Speaker, he sounds like another useless lobbyist saying stupid things.

I'm not the one saying this; it's Mr. Poilievre.

I do not listen to big corporate lobbyists like him. ...

I know that big corporations and sometimes even very big corporations have no problem forcing workers to pay more tax on their gas but, personally, I cannot do that. I work for workers and consumers. That is why we are going to axe the tax.

He was talking, of course, about the carbon tax.

So I have to ask you this. You're a big oil company, and you want to reduce your carbon emissions. Do you agree with carbon pricing? If so, do you consider yourself a useless lobbyist?

• (1700)

[*English*]

Mr. Jon McKenzie: With regard to the carbon tax, our position has been quite clear.

To reiterate it once again, what we've said publicly is that a carbon tax can be an effective tool to reduce carbon emissions. However, it needs to be universally applied, and it can't be done to the detriment of making industry uncompetitive.

One of the issues that we have with the carbon tax is that it's not universally applied across the globe. It's applied across Canada, and we're talking about carving out certain pieces of the economy and certain industries for special treatment, which does make them uncompetitive.

The problem, again, is that we compete in the global world and we are applying a carbon tax only nationally, which does make our industry less competitive globally.

[Translation]

Mr. Mario Simard: We could debate this, but I think there's a fairly simple principle in the environmental community, which is the polluter pays principle. The higher our emissions, the more likely we are to be held financially accountable for them. I'll leave that to your judgment, and take into account the fact that you're in favour of carbon pricing.

I'd now like to hear your comments on another issue.

I read in some articles that Suncor was prepared to abandon the carbon capture and sequestration strategies it was putting forward to reduce its emissions, because the costs were too high.

Do you personally believe that reducing the carbon intensity of the oil sector is something that is achievable in the short term, from a financial point of view?

[English]

Mr. Jon McKenzie: One of the things we have said, and I think this is important to remember, is that our industry exports almost everything that we produce. If we are going to make a meaningful dent in the emissions that we contribute as an industry—and they are about 25% of our national emissions—under the timelines that have been spoken to, carbon capture and sequestration is probably one of the only technologies that gets us there in the time frames that we have allowed.

The issue we've spoken to is again one of competitiveness. What we need is a public-private partnership where the federal government, the provincial government and industry come together to solve this problem on behalf of Canadians.

The right answer is that Canada still needs—

[Translation]

Mr. Mario Simard: Unfortunately, I don't have much time, and I'd like to come back to one point, although I find what you're telling me very interesting.

I have a very simple question for you: Do you think low-carbon oil isn't competitive without public money?

I'd like to hear your opinion on that.

[English]

Mr. Jon McKenzie: Canadian oil and gas is very competitive on the world market, but the more regulation we put around it and the more things we do unilaterally that the rest of our global peers are not subject to will continue to make it less competitive. That's where the TMX pipeline comes in. It gives us the egress that we need to get our products to market in an effective way.

The Chair: Thank you. We'll now go to our next round.

Welcome to the committee, Mr. Singh.

You have six minutes.

Mr. Jagmeet Singh (Burnaby South, NDP): Thank you, Mr. Chair.

This is a question to Mr. McKenzie.

Your colleague from Suncor recently bragged that, thanks to Trudeau's TMX pipeline, “the sun is shining” and it's time to make hay for big oil. However, the sun isn't shining on Jasper or the 200,000 other Canadians forced to flee their homes because of floods, fires and climate disasters.

Do you accept a shared responsibility for Jasper burning down, for homes flooding and for the hurricanes that are tearing through communities?

Mr. Jon McKenzie: When we see those kinds of tragedies on television and we see the people who are directly affected by it, I think everybody's heart goes out to them and everybody feels very sorry for the victims of these kinds of natural disasters—

• (1705)

Mr. Jagmeet Singh: I appreciate that, but you share responsibility.

Mr. Jon McKenzie: I'm going to come to that, Mr. Singh.

I think that we have employees inside Cenovus who have been directly affected by the forest fires we had here in western Canada in 2023 and 2024, and we know first-hand how these tragedies affect people.

Mr. Jagmeet Singh: Sir, do you think your industry shares responsibility for what's going on? That's the question.

Mr. Jon McKenzie: I think what it does, Mr. Singh, is highlight the complexity of the issue. I'm not a forester, and I know nothing about hurricanes. I don't know if CO2 caused these fires.

Mr. Jagmeet Singh: You're denying that fossil fuels being burned has anything to do with climate change. Is that what you're suggesting?

Mr. Jon McKenzie: I'm suggesting to you that I don't know, and I'm suggesting to you that very few people know. What I am suggesting is that it highlights the complexity of the issue and that we need to do something about CO2.

Mr. Jagmeet Singh: Sir, just wait a moment here, sir. No one is denying the complexity. I'm asking if you share responsibility as a fossil fuel-burning company in the reality of the climate crisis we're in. Do you share responsibility in that? There are many answers, but you're completely deflecting and saying that it's complex. Obviously, climate change is complex, but you're a fossil fuel-burning company.

Do you share responsibility for the climate crisis that's going on?

Mrs. Shannon Stubbs: On a point of order, he's also an Albertan who employs Albertans and you're asking about Alberta. You're not either of those things.

The Chair: Mrs. Stubbs says it's a point of order, but I'll remind colleagues again—I have your time on hold, Mr. Singh—to please not use points of order for debate. They're for points of order. If you have a point of order that you have a concern about, and you want to reference what that point of order is related to the Standing Orders, please do so.

I'm going to go back to you, Mr. Singh. You can continue with your questioning.

Mr. Jagmeet Singh: Thank you.

It's clear that you're denying the impact of the climate crisis and the fact that burning fossil fuel contributes to that. That's deeply troubling.

I want to also point out something that's very interesting, and I want to hear your thoughts on this. Oil and gas companies like yours raked in \$37 billion in profits last year, and a whopping \$64 billion in profits in 2022. On top of that, Justin Trudeau is handing you \$12 billion in money for carbon capture projects. On top of that, he bought your industry a pipeline. A pipeline, mind you, that will cost every Canadian household \$1,200, yet you still come cap in hand, you and your industry, asking for more government handouts.

Let me get this straight: You're burning the planet. Do you expect us to pay you to do it?

Mr. Jon McKenzie: Mr. Singh, I reject the entire premise of your question.

Mr. Jagmeet Singh: Wait. Do you reject the money that you've been given? Do you reject the billions of dollars in profits you've made? That's a ridiculous thing to say. Obviously you've made these billions of dollars of profit. Obviously, you're receiving billions of dollars of handouts from the government. On top of that, you're asking for more. What is there to reject in that?

That is a ridiculous thing for you to say, sir.

Mr. Jon McKenzie: Mr. Singh, we paid \$48 billion to all levels of government in 2022. Yes, we did make profits, but almost 50% of that went back into government coffers.

Mr. Jagmeet Singh: You received billions of dollars of public money as well. That's a fact as well. Your industry receives—

Mr. Jon McKenzie: I'm not sure which billions of dollars you're talking about that we received.

Mr. Jagmeet Singh: I'm talking about the TMX pipeline.

Mr. Jon McKenzie: The national report that we publish every year sits on our website. It shows exactly how much government money we've received and exactly how much government money we've paid. If you look at that, you'll find that we paid well in excess of anything that we received directly. In fact, that amount is de minimis. I'd also suggest to you that the TMX pipeline was built for Canada and Canadians, and the benefits—

Mr. Jagmeet Singh: It's built for the oil industry. It's built for your sector, for your industry. There's \$1,200 per Canadian family to subsidize your sector on top of the billions of dollars you're receiving, and you're still asking for more money. You're literally asking Canadians to pay you to burn the planet.

Mr. Jon McKenzie: We are asking for nothing from the Canadian government.

The Chair: Mr. McKenzie, I'll ask you to hold on your answer.

We have a point of order from Mr. Falk.

Please, Mr. Falk, it's point of order, not debate. Go ahead.

Mr. Ted Falk: No, it's a point of order, because I think Mr. Singh is financially challenged. I don't think he understands income and expense statements.

• (1710)

The Chair: That's not a point of order, Mr. Falk. I'm going to cut you off. That's not a point of order. You're engaging in debate with a member here and directly targeting him.

You can do that on your time. If you choose to during your time, ask questions of the witnesses and direct them towards them, not towards other members.

Mr. Singh, your time is on hold. I'm going to turn the floor back to you, and you have about 45 seconds.

Mr. Jagmeet Singh: Mr. McKenzie, Canadians are making sacrifices right now. They're making sacrifices like fewer groceries in their carts, but you sure as hell don't have to make those sacrifices. Your CEO pay in your sector is up as much as 75%.

The Chair: Mr. Singh, I'm going to ask you to hold on again. We have another point of order.

Go ahead, Mr. Falk, on a point of order.

Mr. Ted Falk: On a point of order, the Speaker of the House recently called a member in the chamber “out of order” for using the kind of language Mr. Singh just used in committee. I'd like him to withdraw that.

Mr. Charlie Angus: You don't even know what the language is.

The Chair: Mr. Singh, just hold for a second.

Mr. Charlie Angus: This is interference, Chair.

An hon. member: Oh, come on.

Mrs. Shannon Stubbs: He said the word “hell”.

The Chair: I'm not sure what—

Mr. Ted Falk: The Speaker ruled it out of order in the House. It certainly should be out of order in the committee.

The Chair: I did not hear what was said. I'm going to ask all members—

Mr. Ted Falk: The clerk—

The Chair: Mr. Falk, excuse me.

I'm going to ask all members to use parliamentary language throughout our conversations. We'll do our best to make sure that any unparliamentary language that we hear—

Mr. Ted Falk: You should withdraw that language.

The Chair: We will. We can go back to the record and look to see if anything unparliamentary was said.

An hon. member: I can tell you, Mr. Chair—

The Chair: I will turn it back over to you, sir, so you can continue on your questioning.

Mr. Ted Falk: Apologize and withdraw it.

Mr. Jagmeet Singh: Can you pause the time for a second?

The Chair: Yes, the time is paused. Do you have a...?

Go ahead.

Mr. Jagmeet Singh: I just want to make sure, Mr. Chair, that you're okay with it.

I said, "you sure as hell don't". If there's a concern about that, then I can change that. I just want to make sure you're....

Mr. Ted Falk: That is unparliamentary.

Mr. Jagmeet Singh: These guys over here, the Conservatives, just for the folks watching at home—

The Chair: I'll ask everyone to hold for a second.

Mr. Jagmeet Singh: —want to interrupt because they want to defend these guys with the oil and gas companies.

The Chair: Mr. Falk and Mr. Singh, hold for a second, please.

I once again remind colleagues that I haven't seen the Speaker's ruling on the language used. We can go look at that.

However, I will ask all colleagues to focus on using parliamentary language that's not offensive towards anyone here at the committee. If we focus on that, I think we can get through today's meeting without any concerns.

Thank you for your point of order.

I'm going to go back to you, sir.

You have about 35 seconds left, I believe. Please, go ahead.

Mr. Jagmeet Singh: Canadians, as I said, are making a lot of sacrifices. You sure as heck are not. CEO pay is up by as much as 75%. However, Cenovus fired 2,000 workers just a couple of years ago, and as many as 50,000 workers could be fired because of your automation plans. You're returning 75% of your cash flow to your shareholders. Your profits don't create jobs. Your profits don't reduce emissions.

Why are you using public money to give millionaires raises and to fire workers?

The Chair: Give a very short answer, Mr. McKenzie, as we're at the end of time.

Go ahead. Please, provide a short answer.

Mr. Jon McKenzie: I believe the numbers that you were talking about were the workers who were laid off as part of the integration work between Husky and Cenovus. That was all part of the public record.

I don't know how to answer your question, Mr. Singh.

Mr. Jagmeet Singh: You don't know how to answer because there's no answer that's justifiable.

The Chair: Time is up. You'll get another opportunity afterwards.

Thank you.

We'll now go to our second round of questions.

Mrs. Stubbs, you have five minutes. The floor is yours.

Mrs. Shannon Stubbs: Thanks, Chair. I appreciate that.

I would just note that Mr. McKenzie said that the private sector could and should build pipelines in Canada.

Mr. Singh is here and raised this issue of the major struggles that Canadians now face because they can hardly afford to heat, eat, feed, drive and house themselves. Thanksgiving is coming, and there are pictures online showing that some Canadians are finding the cost of a 10-kilogram turkey to be over \$80. After nine years, more Canadians are forced to visit food banks than ever before.

Chair, I would just like to move the motion that I gave notice of on April 12, 2024.

Given that,

1. On April 1st, the Liberal Government increased the consumer carbon tax by 23%.
2. 70% of Canadians and 70% of...Premiers are opposed to the latest carbon tax increase.
3. The NDP Premier of Manitoba recently came up against the carbon tax and plans to put forward a proposal to exempt the province from the carbon tax.
4. 1 in 5 Canadians [are struggling, they] live in energy poverty.

Therefore, all of us together:

In order to lower energy costs for Canadians living in energy poverty, the committee report to the House its recommendation that the Liberal Government abolish the consumer carbon levy, more commonly referred to as the carbon tax.

I would urge all members around the table to vote for this motion to axe the costly carbon tax so that at least a little relief can be provided to struggling Canadians, their families and their loved ones on this Thanksgiving weekend and so that they can afford to eat.

Why don't we vote on it right now?

● (1715)

The Chair: We have a motion on the floor and we have a speaking order, so we'll get through the speaking order and hopefully be able to....

Ms. Dabrusin, the floor is yours.

Ms. Julie Dabrusin: Thank you, Mr. Chair.

We have witnesses here we're definitely going to want to hear from, so I'm going to suggest that we go back to them.

Just before that, I appreciate that the member opposite talked about the upcoming Thanksgiving day, because it gives me a chance to highlight the fact that next week Canadians will be receiving the carbon rebate wherever the federal backstop applies. With that, they will be seeing for the first time the doubling of the rural top-up on that payment, so I recommend that they look in their accounts. It'll be a direct deposit or they'll get a cheque.

The carbon rebate is part of the carbon pricing system, which the Conservatives apparently are suggesting that we scrap, never mind the fact that carbon pricing, as I mentioned at the very beginning, is the most efficient. When I say "efficient", it's the cheapest way of dealing with emissions. That is supported by so many economists who back us up on that. There may be other pathways to do it, not that the Conservatives have suggested a single other path they would use to do it, but I will say that the challenge is that it's an efficient system. I would fully support it.

However, I would like to suggest that, since we do have witnesses here and I would really like to be able to ask them some more questions, we adjourn the debate on this motion.

The Chair: We will put it to a vote.

Go ahead and call the roll, please.

(Motion agreed to: yeas 7; nays 4)

The Chair: Debate is adjourned.

We'll go back to Mrs. Stubbs for a question.

Mrs. Shannon Stubbs: Thanks, Chair.

Mr. McKenzie, maybe you can expand on the contributions that Cenovus and the oil and gas sector make to jobs, businesses and powerful paycheques for Canadians, as well as, importantly, all the very significant revenue that is sent, as is your responsibility, to all three levels of government to provide the social programs and services that all Canadians in every region benefit from, support and expect.

Also, could you comment especially on the importance in particular for indigenous communities and people in rural and remote regions, where the only economic opportunities available in some places are often operations like yours?

Mr. Jon McKenzie: I think I mentioned in my opening remarks that the oil and gas industry provides 450,000 well-paying jobs to Canadians. In Cenovus itself, we employ more than 8,000 employees, and those are well-paying jobs that pay well above the industry average and allow people to live independently and enjoy a high quality of life and a high standard of living.

Similarly, this industry, because we export our product, creates a demand for Canadian dollars, which increases the value of the Canadian dollar and supports all Canadians in the products that we import, which I talked about as well.

The biggest contribution by far is the amount that we pay in taxes and royalties. Royalties are actually unique to the natural resource industry in that we actually make contributions to the government well before we make any profits. Even in times of low commodity prices, governments across Canada can count on the support that they get from the extractive natural resource industry.

Those amounts, including the taxes we pay, as I mentioned, are more than 50% of what we earn. When we make profits, Canada benefits not just in terms of royalties, taxes, jobs and the Canadian dollar but also in terms of the investment that we make.

• (1720)

The Chair: Thank you, Mr. McKenzie.

We'll now go to our next speaker, Mr. Jowhari.

You have five minutes.

Mr. Majid Jowhari (Richmond Hill, Lib.): Thank you, Mr. Chair.

Thank you, witnesses, for your testimony today.

I'll go back and focus on the Trans Mountain pipeline expansion. That's why we are here.

I'll frame my questions around three themes. The first is the economic benefit we've been talking about, but in a bit of a different way. I'd also like to get some sense of the investment being made in clean energy, especially carbon capture. Thirdly, when I get some more time, I want to talk about the safety aspect of the Trans Mountain pipeline.

I'm going to start with Mr. Sproule.

Can you give me some idea about economic benefits and whether they hit our GDP at the national level? We have an almost \$3-trillion economy now. Talk about the jobs this pipeline will create and the trade surplus we've been experiencing, specifically the indirect, downstream impacts. Finally, talk about the benefit of the contracts being awarded to indigenous businesses.

Can you give us some indicators around that?

Mr. Greig Sproule: Thank you for your question.

I provided some statistics in my opening statement, but let me expand a bit.

In terms of post-construction, over the first 20 years of the project's operating period, Trans Mountain is expected to provide another 36,000 man-years of employment. That's a huge employment base and a huge tax base for the country. This is the kind of economic stimulation the country needs, in terms of contributing to the GDP and having a tax base.

On the export and balance of trade side, we're already seeing 300,000 to 400,000 additional barrels being exported from Canada. There's room for a couple hundred thousand more in there. That doesn't only have a benefit in terms of direct value. It also reduces the differential that was in place when Canada had a locked-in supply and one major customer. For every one dollar in reduced differential, it's a \$1.2-billion increase in GDP for Canada. I think these numbers come from the parliamentary budget office.

At the time it was approving and reviewing the Trans Mountain expansion, the National Energy Board was thinking that the differential may shrink by approximately nine dollars. We don't have an exact forecast, but we've already seen a shrinking of that. This will lead to hundreds of billions of dollars in economic impact over a 20-year period for Canada. It would have been lost without this project going forward. That's a huge benefit in terms of trade balance, tax base and employment.

In terms of indigenous, I gave a number for direct employment and ongoing arrangements. The oil and gas industry has been a major employer of indigenous people. It's providing them with one of the highest...in terms of indigenous opportunities for employment. Our figures show that, on average, it's about \$140,000 a year in terms of salaries for indigenous jobs. It has closed the wage gap between indigenous and non-indigenous. We're seeing, now, the opportunity to not just move forward with jobs and benefit agreements but also to move towards equity participation in the energy industry. It's leading the country. That's the next generation of opportunity for indigenous communities.

Thank you.

• (1725)

Mr. Majid Jowhari: Thank you.

I have only about 10 seconds. I want to set the stage for when I get to the next round. I'll be focusing on clean energy and carbon capture.

Mr. McKenzie and Mr. Sproule, please get ready.

The Chair: Thank you.

We'll now go to Mr. Simard for two and a half minutes.

Please, go ahead.

[Translation]

Mr. Mario Simard: Thank you, Mr. Chair.

Earlier, Mr. McKenzie, you ended your answer to my question by talking about the competitiveness of the oil and gas sector. If I understand correctly, you're in favour of a carbon tax, as long as it can be combined with the competitiveness of the oil and gas sector.

Currently, in the context of the climate crisis, most large companies are aware that we need carbon pricing, so there's a bit of a lag.

You may have seen my colleague Ms. Stubbs' motion earlier. Some people see carbon pricing as a plague. I heard the Leader of the Opposition say that teachers in Alberta were quitting because schools could no longer be heated. I heard the leader of the official opposition say that nurses in Alberta were quitting because hospitals could no longer be heated. Personally, I wonder whether this verbal outburst is serving the people in the oil and gas sector.

Isn't there a disconnect between the oil industry, on the one hand, which is trying to implement measures like the Pathways Alliance and update its practices to reduce its carbon footprint, and the Conservative Party, on the other, which is even more pro-oil than the industry itself?

[English]

Mr. Jon McKenzie: To be clear, I think what I said is that the carbon tax erodes the competitiveness of our industry and that it's nationally applied as opposed to globally applied.

I'm sorry. I missed the last part of your question. If you wouldn't mind quickly repeating that, I'll answer that.

[Translation]

Mr. Mario Simard: I was simply saying that you seem to have environmental practices that aren't to the Conservative Party's liking.

In short, would you say that you have a slightly higher environmental conscience than the Conservative Party?

[English]

The Chair: Give a short answer, Mr. McKenzie, because we're out of time.

Mr. Jon McKenzie: I think that the Canadian oil industry is one of the most heavily regulated industries in Canada and produces some of the most responsible oil that's produced globally.

We've had a Conservative government here in Alberta for decades. If we go beyond carbon to look at fresh water use, land reclamation and aboriginal reconciliation, among other things, I think that this industry is leading the globe in terms of sustainably producing barrels for the international market.

The Chair: Thank you, Mr. McKenzie.

We'll now go to Mr. Angus for two and a half.

Go ahead, please.

Mr. Charlie Angus: To put this meeting in perspective, it was called to look at why the government gave \$34 billion of taxpayers' money so your industry could massively increase oil production, which you're determined to do, and massively increase fossil fuel burning in total disregard of science and Canada's global obligations.

I expected better, honestly, yet you came here and both of you said not a single word about climate—not a single word. When you were asked about it, you gave us this impression that you didn't really know, you didn't understand if there was any connection at all, and that we were all in this together.

No, we're not all in this together. This is your industry doing this. We have now 86-plus lawsuits coming in from Chicago, Colorado and California about what you knew and when you knew it.

I'd like to ask you, this Mr. McKenzie. I'll read you the California indictment. It's fascinating. I'm sure you should read it.

It said:

Defendants could have refrained from undermining the global effort to mitigate the impacts of GHG emissions, or contributed to... practical technical strategies...that would have allowed them to continue their business ventures while...supporting a transition to a lower-carbon future.

Meh, you weren't going to do that. Am I right?

It goes on:

Instead, Defendants devoted significant efforts to deceiving consumers, lawmakers, and the public about the existential hazards of burning fossil fuels....

It said that you knew back in the 1970s and 1980s the exact kind of catastrophe that our children are living now.

Here you are again. This is like the big tobacco moment. You could come here and you could say, "Yes, we have a responsibility. Yes, we're going to mitigate." No, you're blowing smoke in our faces, saying you're not going to want an emissions cap and saying it's the public's responsibility to work with you if we want to lower emissions. You won't even release your environmental reports. You're keeping them secret.

It's a simple question: What do you say to my children, your children and our grandchildren who are going to live on a burnt planet because you were too busy making money hand over fist to even come and take responsibility for addressing the crisis that your industry caused?

• (1730)

Mr. Jon McKenzie: I think—

Mrs. Shannon Stubbs: Wow.

The Chair: Mr. McKenzie, I'll say just a short answer.

Go ahead.

Mr. Jon McKenzie: I think what we've said, Mr. Angus, is that we recognize we're 25% of Canadian emissions, and we've given, through the Pathways Alliance, we think, a path forward on how we can reduce that.

Mr. Charlie Angus: But you haven't reduced. You've continued to increase emissions. Everyone else has done their part—

The Chair: Mr. Angus, time is up.

Mr. Charlie Angus: —but you continue to rise. It's a lot higher than 25%, so don't play games with us.

The Chair: Mr. Angus, I just want to get Mr. McKenzie to finish.

Mr. McKenzie, in five to 10 seconds, please wrap up.

Mr. Jon McKenzie: I think the only thing we were trying to highlight, Mr. Angus, is that this is a very complex issue that requires not just an environmental lens and perspective, but it also requires an economic, political and geopolitical lens as well. We need complex solutions for complex problems.

The Chair: Thank you, Mr. McKenzie and Mr. Sproule, for coming to committee today and testifying. If you would like to provide the clerk any additional information, you can do so via a brief sent to the committee clerk.

Thank you once again.

Colleagues, we will now suspend for a few minutes and get our next panel set up.

Mr. Mike Morrice (Kitchener Centre, GP): Chair, I would to ask for UC to ask a question.

The Chair: We're suspended.

Mr. Mike Morrice: They can block it. It's fine, but I want to ask.

The Chair: I already called it, Mike.

We're suspended.

• (1730)

(Pause)

• (1735)

The Chair: I call this meeting back to order.

I would now like to welcome our witnesses for the second hour today. From Red Nation Natural Law Energy, Travis Meguinis, commander-in-chief. Also joining us with Red Nation Natural Law Energy is Brittany Thomas, executive administrator. From the Tsleil-Waututh Nation we have Mr. Reuben George, spokesperson, sacred trust initiative, by video conference.

You have up to five minutes for your opening statements.

I use this yellow card for a 30-second warning, and the red card signals that time's up. I'll try not to cut you off mid-sentence.

Mr. George, we will begin with you. You have five minutes. Please go ahead.

• (1740)

Mr. Rueben George (Spokesperson, Sacred Trust Initiative, Tsleil-Waututh Nation): Hello, everyone. I'm Rueben George from Tsleil-Waututh Nation.

[Witness spoke in hən̓q̓əmin̓əm̓]

[English]

I'm sitting here in my territory, and right across from me is the TMX terminal. Tsleil-Waututh people hold a sacred and legal obligation to protect, defend and steward the water, lands and air resources of our territory for all generations. The nation does this through asserting and exercising governance and stewardship rights. It is our obligation to restore the health of our inlet.

It is no secret that TWN, my nation, is opposed to TMX. We've been following the project for 10-plus years and have participated in numerous processes to advance our concerns, including the NEB, the CER hearings, two rounds of consultation and two legal challenges. We have also produced our own independent analysis of TMX, grounded in our own unextinguished law and informed by world-class spill and economic analysis.

Tsleil-Waututh is a leader in economic development in the Lower Mainland of B.C., but our businesses must be undertaken in accordance with Tsleil-Waututh law and with our obligation to restore the health of our Burrard Inlet.

We've been tracking the underlying economics of TMX, because according to the Canadian legal test, the economic benefits of the pipeline are supposed to justify the burdens, including the infringement of TWN's indigenous rights, oil spill risks and climate-related risks. Our economic analyses have consistently shown that TMX will not be profitable. We have conducted numerous expert economic analyses that conclude that Trans Mountain is not economically viable and will not return the profit to its owners. Since 2015, report after report has indicated that the economic case and the need for TMX have crumbled.

We attended Kinder Morgan's AGM in Houston, Texas, on several occasions and met with Kinder Morgan's largest institutional investors on Wall Street. We knew that the company was not accurately communicating the risks and uncertainty facing the project. We studied the 2013 toll methodology. We understood that the economics could only support a profitable project of about \$10 billion maximum. Contrary to popular understanding, this is the reason Kinder Morgan walked away from TMX. They hoodwinked Canada on the way by selling it for \$4.5 billion.

Finance Minister Morneau said after the purchase that TMX would be operated on a commercial basis. That has not happened. A commercial operator would not have applied to the CER for a toll that recovers less than half the cost of the construction. Imagine what would happen to Enbridge's share price if they tried that.

If the CER approves the tolls Trans Mountain applied for, it means a \$17 billion to \$20 billion loss to its owners. The CER has been put in a position it was not designed to regulate. There may be other benefits for the Canadian economy, as you heard, but Trans Mountain will lose a significant amount if the tolls as applied for are approved by the CER. The only other option is that the oil companies pay more for the pipeline that serves only them. Like they said earlier, they have record production and profits, while Canadians are still struggling with the cost of living.

We predict that a debt writedown might be spun as economic reconciliation, but let's be clear that this is a massive subsidy to the oil and gas sector.

In short, it comes down to this question: Who do you think will pay for this pipeline? Should it mostly be the oil companies who are its only customers and primary beneficiaries and who are recording record profits, or should it mostly be taxpayers who are struggling with the cost of living? I'd like to know where each of you stands on this.

Lastly, TWN is concerned by the federal government's expressed intention to sell the pipeline, and specifically to first nations. This will in effect allow the federal government to rid its hands of this failed, catastrophic economic venture while being able to style it as a move towards reconciliation.

We understand that first nations across Canada have varied interests and needs and will make decisions that are best for their communities. We are, however, concerned that this pipeline will be

pitched to first nations as a viable economic opportunity, without providing full information. They will be burdened with the liability of a spill.

● (1745)

Selling an oil pipeline with bad economics to first nation groups is a modern-day equivalent of gifting smallpox blankets. The long-term harm outweighs the original gift. It's a catastrophic mess.

On one day this time last year, we had 434 fires. We've seen the Chilcotin River, a main tributary to the Fraser River, be filled up with half of a mountain that fell into the river and backed it up for 12 kilometres—

The Chair: Mr. Rueben, I would just ask you to wrap up if you could. We're over time, and I just want to get you to conclude your opening statement.

Mr. Rueben George: Okay. Thank you.

The political theatre here could be frustrating, and I've been watching this really closely.

I think it's time for me to have a snack. Thank you.

The Chair: Thank you for your opening statement.

We will now go to Mr. Meguinis for five minutes.

Sir, the floor is yours.

Mr. Travis Meguinis (Commander-in-Chief, Red Nation Natural Law Energy): Thank you, Chairman. I'm honoured to be here amongst Canada's finest. I offer a heartfelt welcome to all of you.

My name is Travis Meguinis. I'm a surviving descendant member of Treaty 7 territory and Tsuut'ina Nation, but I also have Treaty 6 bloodlines from Saddle Lake Cree Nation and Maskwacis, Alberta. I'm a proud member of the Tsuut'ina Nation and a past Indian Act-elected leader, but I'm also a hereditary leader. I'm a man who carries our traditions with faith and belief like all of you do here when you're sworn into office. In our traditional way, it's important to be proud and to share where you come from and what you've earned.

As a hereditary sovereign organization, Natural Law Energy was created to compete and practice Canadian customs, which is in a corporate system. We were invited to participate in the KXL. It was through Treaties 4, 6, 7 and 8 that we participated, and we amalgamated all the leaders in those territories who were part of the Crown consultation here in Ottawa and were invited by industry. At that time, we, as Natural Law Energy, were invited by Canada again to participate in the engagement process over five years ago with Trans Mountain.

Natural law is a constitutional word for our people. Natural law is a real thing. We understand where we come from, which is why we have sun dances, and your science holds today that everybody came from the sun. The sun was the first mother to this galaxy we know that's part of the Milky Way.

With our natural laws, we understand creation. We understand the cosmos. We understand Mother Earth. We have that connection, which is why we get into energy. Energy is a big part of humanity today, and it's the thumbprint that we bring from our traditions that could bring balance. This is actually the first time, and we're blazing trails. I speak for the chiefs whom I've consulted with along the way, working on Trans Mountain from Edmonton to the southern peninsula of Vancouver Island.

From the Cree territory, the Dene, where I come from, Squamish Chief Dale Harry and Lower Nicola Indian Band Chief Stu Jackson are just a few of the allies we have in trying to bring a better way of living to our people. Our people, through the last 500 years, have been in survival mode living amongst the newcomers. We have our stories and our creation stories that we share, and our natural laws are our education that comes from the sun dance, the sweat lodge, horse dance and chicken dance, just to name a few. That's our education. That's our way of life, and we walk two roads with that life. We want to work with everybody at the table. We don't want to be in survival mode or playing defence for the next 500 years.

We understand energy. We've worked with energy. I know that we can bring a lot of good to the AER, and it's understood and it's fair. I can hear both the right and the left speak here today. I agree with both similarities. I do believe it's the indigenous, as you call us, who bring a good balance to the development of natural resources. It's through our studies and through our knowledge that we can implement new policies that we call laws. Our natural laws are God-Creator given and God-Creator protected.

● (1750)

It's with respect that I say this here today. We've been engaged for the last five years, and we've spent millions.

I'll leave you with two last thoughts.

We talk about millions and billions. Some of my team have mentioned that, if I were to sit here with all of you for one million seconds, it would be 11 days. However, if I sit here with all of you for one billion seconds, it would be 33 years. I say with respect that there is a big difference between millions and billions. We have our ways of trying to function and move forward respectfully with everybody.

They say that, when you guys first came, Columbus called people "Indians". I'm just glad you guys didn't call us "turkeys".

Voices: Oh, oh!

Mr. Travis Meguinis: Thank you, Chairman.

The Chair: Thank you, Mr. Meguinis, for your opening statement.

We'll now proceed to our first round of questions. I'll begin for six minutes with Mr. Patzer.

Go ahead.

Mr. Jeremy Patzer (Cypress Hills—Grasslands, CPC): Thank you very much, Chair.

Thank you so much to both witnesses for coming here today. I appreciate it.

One of the most distinct honours I've had in my time as a member of Parliament was joining Chief Francis of Nekaneet First Nation for a sweat and smudge ceremony when Natural Law Energy was going through the Keystone XL process.

I'm wondering if you could talk a little more about what that project would have meant for your nation, and about some of the great work your nation is doing on energy and what it's meant for your community.

Mr. Travis Meguinis: Some of the things that came forward during that time.... Yes, Chief Alvin Francis was at the table with all the other chiefs from Treaty No. 4, Treaty No. 6 and Treaty No. 7. We did something very historic there. We brought nations together to purchase the Keystone pipeline within Canadian boundaries. I believe that, had Biden not pulled it, we'd have more access to housing and essential needs.

Everybody's smart here. Most importantly, we bring the thumbprint of understanding our mother earth. Like anybody else, the treaty nations in Alberta have lived among oil and gas. My fourth great-grandfather, who was a chief who signed Treaty No. 7, also signed some oil deals with the northwest mineral company. That's how far back oil and gas goes in our nations. We're talking early 1900s or late 1800s. We know it in our territory. It is common knowledge. Therefore, we understand that we must bring a balance of essential needs and wisdom to the table, because we have that connection to creation.

Thank you.

● (1755)

Mr. Jeremy Patzer: Trying to get multiple treaties together to form under Natural Law is quite an accomplishment.

I'm wondering if you could talk about how many communities are involved in this, and what the proposed project here would mean for those communities.

Mr. Travis Meguinis: I sit here today by myself. I'm honoured to answer the call and the invitation. However, behind me, there's a lot of wisdom from elders, technicians and engineers. A lot of what we work on is blazing trails for indigenous.... We don't want to be marginalized anymore when it comes to industry. A lot of the stuff that happens in our traditional territories has us sitting on the sidelines, looking in. To be here and speak with my feather hat, as hereditary chief.... I've crowned chiefs. I gave a feather hat to your Prime Minister Trudeau. I was also part of the crowning ceremony for AFN's national chief Cindy Woodhouse at the beginning of this year. I was part and parcel to all of that.

To speak for all treaty areas.... They have different needs, and there are different environments. However, the engagement process we have is always traditional. We go in there and ask the elders for their permission first. For anything to do with buying pipelines or being part of that, we go to the ceremonies and the elders, and we ask them whether it's right and okay.

Thank you.

Mr. Jeremy Patzer: In your opening remarks, you talked about the future and what that might look like for your nation.

For the next generation, for the young people, I'm wondering about opportunities that do exist or maybe what opportunities could exist if Natural Law Energy is successful in its bid to buy this pipeline. I'm wondering if you could speak to the importance of that and also to what it would mean for the elders.

Mr. Travis Meguinis: Just to be clear here at the table, one of the things is that it's Natural Law X. The X symbolizes our forefathers when they signed treaties. They didn't know how to speak or write English, so they marked the treaty with an X. That refers to Natural Law TMX.

Just like you practice safer ways to do corporate governance in Canada, we do as well. We take the good as much as anybody else, and we try our best. We incorporated another company called Natural Law X, which holds that distinction from Natural Law Energy, which was after the KXL. Natural Law X is Natural Law TMX. It's a whole different set of members, ones from Edmonton all the way to the southern peninsula of Vancouver Island. We have about 40 nations that we're talking to.

The only way you get things done is through a band council resolution. You shouldn't be running around saying that you have nations on your side when you have a chief's signature; that's one person. You have to have a band council resolution to come to the table, and you practice it through GP and LP with your practices in corporate Canada.

The Chair: Thank you.

We'll now go to Ms. Dabrusin for six minutes.

Ms. Julie Dabrusin: Thank you, Mr. Chair.

It's been really interesting. I want to thank both of you for coming to speak with us today.

I'm going to start with Mr. George, but both witnesses today have been talking about the law, and both are presenting very different perspectives on what the future for this pipeline should be.

The question that I have is this: Under the Tsleil-Waututh Nation's laws, how would this get resolved? What would be the way to figure it out when we seem to have very differing points of view on what the future of this pipeline should be?

• (1800)

Mr. Rueben George: It should have never been built. It should have never been built from the very beginning. When we went to the National Energy Board, they gave us 45 minutes to explain a 1,200-page assessment. At that time, they hired Steven Kelly to put in 20% of Kinder Morgan's application on behalf of Kinder Morgan to the National Energy Board. He then was hired by the National Energy Board. They said, "We're going to fix this mess," which was the ministerial committee. They said that they hired first nations, but those first nations were former employees of Kinder Morgan. This is what we've been dealing with the whole time, right along the way.

What we do, as the Tsleil-Waututh Nation.... For the first time in 45 years, we did the clam harvest because we're cleaning. We hand-planted eelgrass, which brought back herring, which brought back gray whales. It was the first time I'd seen them in 40 years. I've never seen a sea lion in this inlet, and they came back. Our salmon count went down to 6,000—we brought it up too—10 years ago. We brought it up to 1.3 million in one day last year. It's up in the millions. That's what we're protecting.

Vancouver has been voted one of the most beautiful places to live, and that's what we want to continue to have it be. There are green energy alternatives. There are things that I work in that make sense. This doesn't make sense. Like I said, it's a \$17-billion to \$20-billion problem that isn't going to go away anytime soon. This is what the taxpayers are stuck with.

I'm afraid for my friend, my brother, my relation, that.... Like I said, it's economic smallpox. I'm happy to sit down with you and share the work that we have done and the work that we have done working with world-renowned economists that shows that this is a disaster.

Ms. Julie Dabrusin: I appreciate that answer, but I'm trying to figure out how to resolve between the different perspectives we're getting.

Maybe I can then turn to you, Mr. Meguinis, as to what you would say. You've been talking about Natural Law. How would this get resolved when there's a very distinct difference of opinion here about this pipeline?

Mr. Travis Meguinis: Respectfully, I don't want to come across as ignorant or too bold here, but I'll just say that there are a lot of things that should have happened. A lot of things should have taken place.

One thing that my forefathers would say is that residential schools shouldn't have happened, but we have to move forward. We have to try to practise what we know, and progress that is something that we understand. It's energy that we understand, too. Energy is spiritual.

I represent, like I said, a coalition. Our numbers in Alberta alone are in the tens of thousands from each nation. Saddle Lake Cree Nation has close to 15,000. You look at Maskwacis—there are 20,000.

Our numbers don't resemble how many numbers they have in other provinces. You go to Saskatchewan, and there are 72 nations there. In Alberta, there are 48 nations. You go to B.C., and there are 200 and something nations there. Our numbers are pretty high when it comes to demographics. There are a lot of leaders there who look to energy for survival.

Keep in mind that we haven't been at the table. It's going on over a century that we haven't been at the table to leave our thumbprint on resource development and to help maybe bring balance to what we see and what you and all your colleagues are talking about today and what a great leader from the NDP spoke about today as well.

I hear that, and we echo that. We're all responsible.

When we go out and do something, for anything that we do, if we take something from mother earth, we offer something first, because our natural laws are God-created and given. Canadian law is man-made. To activate a Canadian law, the way we look at it—and you hear it from elders—when you do something wrong with man-made laws, you get a sentence and something bad comes out of it. You break the law.

In our natural laws, you give first. You go take a plant from mother earth, you get a good smudge and something good comes to you. That's an ideology and an example I give back to you.

• (1805)

The Chair: Thank you.

We'll now go to Monsieur Simard for six minutes.

[Translation]

Mr. Mario Simard: Thank you very much, Mr. Chair.

Mr. George, is the interpretation working?

[English]

Mr. Rueben George: I'm sorry. The translation is not working.

The Chair: We will suspend for a moment.

• (1805)

_____ (Pause) _____

•

The Chair: Monsieur Simard, the floor is yours. Go ahead.

[Translation]

Mr. Mario Simard: Thank you, Mr. Chair.

Mr. George, I appreciated your very frank testimony. I understand your bitterness and your disappointment, and you do the same thing as I do when you're angry: You eat chocolate. I find that very interesting.

I want to pick up on some of the things you brought up.

If I understand your testimony correctly, you feel that your community has been inadequately consulted throughout the Trans Mountain project. Am I wrong?

[English]

Mr. Rueben George: Definitely we weren't consulted. That's why we ended up going to court. That's why we created our 1,200-page assessment, our spill analysis, our clean analysis and multiple economic studies. We had to push that and make sure that we were heard. It was every step of the way, from the very beginning with the National Energy Board over a decade ago to present time today.

That wasn't coming across in good faith. From the very beginning, from hiring former employees of Kinder Morgan to be a part of this, they were just showing the direction they wanted to go in, how they weren't going to listen and how they railroaded our indigenous rights.

[Translation]

Mr. Mario Simard: So I understand that, in effect, you were consulted pro forma, without really listening to the point of view you had to put forward.

You said that you commissioned independent analyses. If possible, I'd like you to submit them to the committee. It might be interesting for our analysts.

You also said something that piqued my interest. You suggested that, ultimately, the government's willingness to cede or transfer the pipeline in any way to first nations was perhaps a sign of reconciliation. In fact, you think it would be a poisoned chalice, since we know very well that you will then have to manage all the problems related to potential spills. In the end, what you're being left with is a pipeline that isn't profitable.

Do you accept that analysis?

[English]

Mr. Rueben George: Yes, and more so. Yes, we would love to file some more information about the troubles we had in this process. When Canada purchased the pipeline, the regulator of the pipeline, that made things really difficult for us.

I'm Coast Salish, and one of our longhouse leaders in our ceremonies, but also I've been adopted into sun dance families, which my brother was talking about. I have a declaration that over 30 sun dance chiefs signed, saying they opposed this because it's in our law.

What we receive in our ceremonies, which my brother was talking about, is enlightenment. Where that enlightenment comes from in ceremonies is how we all use in every single ceremony worldwide.... I have travelled the world and I have prayed in every corner of this earth. We use fire, earth, water and the sky. When we receive enlightenment, we also turn around and protect those things that we use, which are fire, earth, water, the sky and everything on top of that.

It's our law to protect what we love. It's our law to enhance what we love. That's what I was explaining about how Tsleil-Waututh introduced elk into our territory, which brought back grizzly bears, wolves and everything like that.

This is a stranded asset. If this toll goes through, it will be worse. Like I said, there will be \$17 billion to \$20 billion of debt that the taxpayers are going to be stuck with. The oil companies should pay for it, but if the tolling goes through, in our estimation, it's going to be \$23 billion or \$22 billion. Are they going to subsidize that? Is Canada going to subsidize that and put us further into debt? It's a big fear about what we're doing.

Can you imagine how we would be green energy leaders if we invested that money into something that makes sense and could help us all? If we did that, for example, it would be \$180 million to build a hydrogen plant that would make 3,500 tonnes of green hydrogen a year. That would be enough money to deploy 200 heavy-duty hydrogen trucks and five fuelling stations, and it would go across with the debt of what they spent in that \$34 billion. That would fund what I just explained, in 180 cities across Canada. That's what that would do. We would be green leaders, instead of funding something that's creating disasters, 434 fires and floods everywhere.

Anyway.... Okay. I saw that. I should stop.

Thank you.

• (1810)

[Translation]

Mr. Mario Simard: I just want to take a second to thank you. Please don't hesitate to submit any information with the committee. I'd be happy to read it.

[English]

The Chair: Thank you.

Mr. Rueben George: Yes. We will, for sure.

Thank you.

The Chair: We will go now to Mr. Angus for six minutes.

Mr. Charlie Angus: Thank you.

I really appreciate the presence of our two witnesses today. In a previous life, I was a negotiator with the first nations in Quebec. Sometimes, we had to run blockades. There were good projects and bad projects. I was involved in mining, forestry, hydro and projects that should have gone ahead, where they tried to ignore the communities, and projects that shouldn't have gone ahead.

I'm going to focus on you, Mr. George, because of this powerful document you have put out on the TMX. I want to get some answers on it. I have three basic sets of questions. I will try to get through them.

You are at the inlet where there's been a lot of concern about a possible blowout. We know what happened with the Enbridge blowout in the Kalamazoo River with bitumen. It's much worse than oil. It was disastrous, and they're still picking up the pieces.

In the first nations communities I worked in, the community that took the lead was the community that had the greatest impact on its

traditional territory. Would you say you are facing serious risk if that blows out in your territory? As part of that, then, have you been approached to be part of the reconciliation pipeline?

Mr. Rueben George: TMX is supposed to come up with its own spill analysis and it still hasn't. That was one of the conditions.

We did. Do you know what we found, Mr. Angus? Within hours, a million people would get sick. Five hundred thousand birds will die. You have people like my mom, who live here, and I live here. When we presented to the National Energy Board, we said that it's a shame that they're making decisions about people that are going to be here forever. We're not leaving anywhere.

We challenged them with a question: How many of their people live here today? How many of their kids who are adults have moved away already? They're nomadic people. We're not. My mom and me and my family are here forever. The catastrophic likelihood of a spill of over 85% is something that we can't stand for.

That's what we said from the very beginning.

• (1815)

Mr. Charlie Angus: Thank you.

I just want to clarify that they don't have a spill plan and they were approved. That's pretty reckless, don't you think?

Mr. Rueben George: They came up with it late. That was one of the conditions. I'm sorry; I am corrected. They did have a spill plan and came up with it late.

Mr. Charlie Angus: That a commercial enterprise—

Mr. Rueben George: They don't understand the dilbit. That wasn't included in that spill plan.

Mr. Charlie Angus: That would be a big thing not to have included.

You've written that the tolls being less than half of what they should be has made this a project that the Canada Energy Regulator should never have approved. For the National Energy Board, the CER and even the federal cabinet decisions, the whole justification was that there was an economic argument. However, according to your analysis, more than half of the cost of every barrel of bitumen that goes down there right now is being covered by the taxpayer.

Based on that, you state that this violates the principles of the Canadian Energy Regulator Act and should have been struck.

Why do you think that this project went ahead?

Mr. Rueben George: I'm sorry. Can you say the last bit again, please?

Mr. Charlie Angus: You said that this project should have been denied because it violates the principles of rate-making and fails to meet the standards set out in the Canadian Energy Regulator Act of being "just and reasonable".

Why would they have approved it?

Mr. Rueben George: That's the million, or I should say, the \$17-billion to \$20-billion question here.

We've been saying all along that it doesn't make sense. It doesn't make sense to Tsleil-Waututh, to the Vancouver people or to the British Columbian people, who are taking all the risk and receiving the least benefit from it. It's a big problem. I agree it should not have been....

I'm happy to include this in the information that we're going to send you.

Mr. Charlie Angus: The other thing that I find really shocking—we're not going to talk about this as a carbon bomb tonight—is the fact that this massive increase in bitumen burning is going to have a huge destabilizing impact and vastly increase emissions.

I want to ask you about TMX's climate plan in case there's a climate disaster. Look at what happened in the Fraser River. Look at what's happening with with the landslides and the fires.

Under their toll plan, they were supposed to have a plan that justifies the burdens, including infringement of aboriginal rights, oil spill risks, climate impacts and protection of endangered species, yet you're saying in your report that they don't have the money to cover off impacts from climate-caused catastrophes.

Doesn't that just sum up everything about TMX?

Mr. Rueben George: Yes, it does.

We went to the insurance companies and they backed out when we explained some of these problems, which are exactly what you're talking about.

We don't have to look very far. Exxon Valdez is still a mess over 30 years later. It's still a mess. That's not to mention all the people who took them to court, who were cleaning with that toxic foam they were spraying. All of them tried to sue, but it was delayed and delayed and all those people ended up dying. None of them were compensated. None of them got anything back from that.

We have so much to worry about here, especially with the work that we're doing. Like I said, we've really enhanced what we have here. It's one of the busiest ports here. We've been doing clam harvests because we've been cleaning the inlet. The salmon count was up. We reintroduced elk into our territory. We brought back grizzly bears, wolves and flowers and started to complete the ecosystem. One disaster will ruin all that.

Mr. Charlie Angus: Thank you, Mr. George. Thank you so much for that.

Mr. Rueben George: Thank you, Mr. Angus.

The Chair: Colleagues, we're going to go with a shortened round of four-four and two-two, so that we can finish right on time.

Go ahead, Mr. Falk.

Mr. Ted Falk: Thank you, Mr. Chair.

Thank you to our witnesses.

I want to ask Chief Meguinis some questions, but before I do that I want to agree with Mr. George on several things.

I want to thank you for your testimony. I do agree with you that the government should never have bought the TMX project. It should have left it alone.

I'm as frustrated as you are that there have been 20 billion extra dollars spent on that project. We need a full accounting, and someone needs to be accountable for that money. It's a shame. You are right. Today the Canadian taxpayer is on the hook for that, and that needs to be resolved.

I'm in full agreement with those comments you made. The government should have stayed out of the oil business, and it should have left it up to private enterprise.

Chief Meguinis, I'd like to ask you some questions, if I may. Thank you so much for coming.

Before I start, I have one quick question. You said that we call you "indigenous". What would you like to be called?

• (1820)

Mr. Travis Meguinis: That's not for me to decide, but as a surviving descendant member of Tsuut'ina, in English we always refer ourselves as the real human beings.

Mr. Ted Falk: That's not the question, but you just made that comment, and I wanted some clarity there. I didn't want to misrepresent you.

Our first two presenters at our committee meeting today, Mr. Sproule, from the Canadian Association of Petroleum Producers, and Mr. McKenzie, from Cenovus, both indicated the significant contributions indigenous peoples have made to the construction of this project but also the significant benefits they're going to experience and realize.

First of all, do you agree with that, and could you expand a little bit on that, please?

Mr. Travis Meguinis: Just to touch on that, I myself am here to give testimony in regard to the Trans Mountain pipeline and our work on the Trans Mountain pipeline. Both of those individuals have big jobs, just like all of you sitting here. You're trying to make sense, to make everything work and go forward. Our job was to try to engage on the TMX, engage the first nations. We did that with our own monies. We literally spent millions, with allies we have from industry. The starting point was through our ceremonies.

To Mr. George, now, my brother there, there's no disrespect, but our people on the prairies have been living amongst oil and gas, and we've never really had our fingerprint, our footprint on oil and gas, the development of it. However, our people have stories and legends of it, teachings that are still alive and well in our homes today.

There are things that we can do to formulate.... Again, this is what the Red Nation does. We blaze trails, and we can blaze trails on healing. All of us are human beings. We come from mother earth. We get a cut; we heal. It's the same with the planet that we live on. It's the same with the sun—she heals. Mother earth will heal.

With that, I can say, as far as economics go, no, we've never asked or engaged industry to fill our pockets, to do engagement, but we're at the table and we're willing to hear what kind of path we can develop so that all the issues that are happening on the coast....

Again, I speak to different points here. Tsleil-Waututh is a powerful nation. I've seen their area. It's pristine. Go out there and see their area, but come to my area too. My area is on the prairies, and you look out to the Rockies. In Treaty No. 7 on the prairies, you can see for miles. They say that long ago only the brave lived out in the open.

With that, I thank you.

Mr. Ted Falk: Thank you.

The Chair: Mr. Falk, your time's up. Thank you.

We're going to go to Mr. Jowhari.

Go ahead, you have four minutes.

Mr. Majid Jowhari: I think we're going to....

The Chair: Okay. Mrs. Romanado, go ahead. Thank you for joining us at committee.

Mrs. Sherry Romanado (Longueuil—Charles-LeMoynes, Lib.): Thank you very much, Mr. Chair.

Through you, I'd like to thank the witnesses for being here today.

I'm not a regular member of this committee, but I actually found it very interesting to be participating today and to welcome the two perspectives. What I heard today actually captures exactly how Canadians are feeling about this project. Like all of you, we have different perspectives.

I'm from the province of Quebec.

[*Translation*]

I agree with my colleague Mr. Simard: I too would like to receive additional information from Mr. George.

[*English*]

Balancing very different perspectives is something, I think, Mr. Meguinis, you spoke about.

I'm also the parliamentary secretary to the Minister of Emergency Preparedness and was heavily involved in the evacuations for the wildfires and so on. To see the devastation of our planet, in terms of these natural catastrophes that have been amplified by climate change....

I would like to give you an opportunity, Mr. Meguinis, to help us with your perspective, in terms of finding that balance. You spoke about that balance, and I think that would be something that would be most welcome to this committee, to hear a little bit about the project.

• (1825)

Mr. Travis Meguinis: With the balance, it becomes a lot of hard work—I'll put it that way. In anything that you do in life, there is a balance of hard work, determination and boundaries that one must cross.

I sit here today and I speak in English. It's not my first language, and I apologize to my elders that I don't speak in my mother tongue, my father tongue, to everybody here. The balance that we do see and talk about, again, will come from the natural laws, ceremonies and the things that we believe are holy and sacred. Jeremy talked about that earlier.

It would be nice if we can have that type of engagement from the other side coming to our side as well. Let's just say it: There are a lot of things that happen. The wildfires.... You make a comment there and I feel for the families who have their homes burnt up and destroyed. They say a lot of these fires come from people coming out from the city and not understanding wilderness. The ones who are doing the due diligence to let the people come out and enjoy hiking, we have to engage with them. We have to ask ourselves why these people are going out there throwing a cigarette? A lot of these wildfires are happening from that.

The respect to the land is something that we carry. It's understanding—again, I always go back to this—the creation stories. We have that connection to the cosmos, to the stars, sun, moon, mother earth and to all things that matter, that live, ones that walk, swim, fly, crawl and grow. We have that connection.

Thank you.

Mrs. Sherry Romanado: Thank you very much, Mr. Chair.

The Chair: Thank you.

Monsieur Simard has passed his time over to Mr. Morrice.

Go ahead.

[*Translation*]

Mr. Mike Morrice: I want to start by thanking Mr. Simard.

[*English*]

Thank you, Charlie, as well.

Mr. George, you spoke a bit about theatrics. I want to start by saying thank you to you and Chief Meguinis as well. I think what I've heard from both of you, throughout the last hour, is coming from your hearts. I think this place is better when we have that.

I also think, Mr. George, you asked a question of us in your testimony about our perspective. I want to start briefly on that.

I live quite far from the pipeline. I live all the way out in Ontario. For me, the decision to purchase the pipeline—days after this government affirmed that we were, in fact, in a climate emergency—is one of the reasons why I decided to run. It was devastating for me at that time, but I don't live near the pipeline the way you and your ancestors have for time immemorial.

I admire the advocacy that your nation has pressed for so many years. I'm also mindful that this committee heard, for the second meeting in a row—this time from oil and gas CEOs—their quotes, “this project is an undeniable win”. One of them wasn't sure if CO2 caused climate change at all, but he thought that Canada will enjoy the benefits of TMX for decades to come. It's a critical piece of infrastructure. Meanwhile, you've called it economic smallpox.

I was wondering, Mr. George, if you could reflect on what we've heard today from these CEOs. What does that bring up for you?

Mr. Rueben George: It's baffling to me, the state of where we are today and where we continue to go. These tragedies are for sure not the new norm. It will progressively get worse. We have a hurricane right now in the southwest United States that's causing havoc. I mentioned the fires. I mentioned all this.

What I think of, Mr. Morrice, is what my grandfather would think, Chief Dan George, if I tried to explain to him that there were 434 fires in British Columbia in one day at once, what an atmospheric river was, how the floods and the landslides cut off Vancouver from the rest of Canada for months or these hurricanes that are happening, the change of weather, the ice melting or even to have him witness how the tides here have changed since his lifetime.

I spoke multiple times at the United Nations, and many scientists explained how fossil fuels are responsible for this. Not to try to do something about it and not to try to move forward...and not just as an industry but also as leaders of Canada. I just explained it—\$180 million for a hydrogen plant with 200 trucks with 100% green hydrogen. We could move in that direction. We would be leaders in the world of green energy if we took that money and spent it on something else.

It's baffling. Do you know what I think of? Everybody who's speaking, including them, are part of the human race. They're incapable of making sound decisions for themselves and their future generations. I'm doing my best to do that for them to make sure our future generations have something.

• (1830)

The Chair: Thank you, Mr. George.

I want to thank both witnesses for their testimony today and for appearing for the study. If you would like to provide an additional brief, you can please send that in directly to the clerk. Thank you for joining us today. I look forward to seeing you again.

As a reminder, colleagues, for the study of Canada's electricity grid and network, please submit your suggested drafting instructions and recommendations for the report no later than Friday, October 11, at 4 p.m.

That concludes the meeting. The meeting is adjourned.

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