



HOUSE OF COMMONS
CHAMBRE DES COMMUNES
CANADA

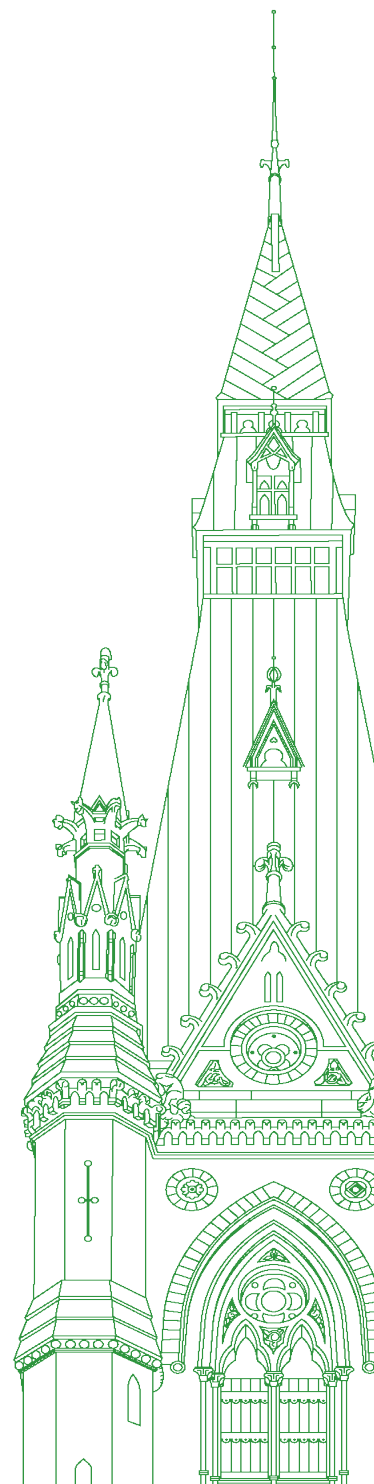
44th PARLIAMENT, 1st SESSION

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HOUSE OF COMMONS

Tuesday, November 7, 2023

The House met at 10 a.m.

Prayer

● (1000)

[Translation]

COMMISSIONER OF THE ENVIRONMENT AND SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT

The Speaker: It is my duty to lay upon the table, pursuant to subsection 23(5) of the Auditor General Act, the fall 2023 reports of the commissioner of the environment and sustainable development.

Pursuant to Standing Order 32(5), these reports are deemed to have been permanently referred to the Standing Committee on Environment and Sustainable Development.

ROUTINE PROCEEDINGS

[English]

COMMITTEES OF THE HOUSE

STATUS OF WOMEN

Mrs. Karen Vecchio (Elgin—Middlesex—London, CPC): Mr. Speaker, I have the honour to present, in both official languages, the eighth report of the Standing Committee on the Status of Women, entitled “Let’s Talk About it, Period: Achieving Menstrual Equity in Canada”.

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

[Translation]

PUBLIC ACCOUNTS

Mr. John Williamson (New Brunswick Southwest, CPC): Mr. Speaker, I have the honour to present, in both official languages, the following two reports of the Standing Committee on Public Accounts: the 30th report entitled “Systemic Barriers—Correctional Service Canada” and the 31st report entitled “Chronic Homelessness”.

[English]

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

Mr. Kelly McCauley (Edmonton West, CPC): Mr. Speaker, I rise to present our dissenting opinion.

After eight years of the Liberal-NDP government, Canada has been plunged into a never-before-seen housing hell. Forty-eight per cent of Canadians have given up the hope of ever owning their own home, mortgages have doubled, rents have doubled and Canada is in a housing crisis.

To address this, Conservative members of the committee recommend the immediate implementation of Bill C-356, the building homes not bureaucracy act, which includes seven recommendations:

- (a) establish a target for the completion of new homes in high-cost cities that increases 15% every year and ties federal infrastructure funding allocated to high-cost cities to that target;
- (b) provide for the reallocation of \$100 million from the Housing Accelerator Fund to municipalities that greatly exceed housing targets;
- (c) require that federal transit funding provided to certain cities be held in trust until high-density residential housing is substantially occupied on available land around federally funded transit projects’ stations; and
- (d) make it a condition for certain cities to receive federal infrastructure and transit funding that they not unduly restrict or delay the approval of building permits for housing.

It also amends the Canada Mortgage and Housing Corporation Act, the National Housing Act and the Excise Tax Act in order to

- (a) eliminate executive bonuses unless housing targets are met and to reduce executive compensation if applications for funding for new housing construction are not treated within an average of 60 days; and
- (b) provide a 100% GST rebate on new residential rental property for which the average rent payable is below market rate.

It would also require “the Minister of Public Works to table a report on the inventory of federal buildings and land, to identify land suitable for housing construction and to propose a plan to sell at least 15% of any federal buildings and all land that would be appropriate for housing construction”.

● (1005)

SCIENCE AND RESEARCH

Mr. Lloyd Longfield (Guelph, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, it is my honour to present, in both official languages, the sixth report of the Standing Committee on Science and Research, entitled “The Role and Contribution of Citizen Scientists”.

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

* * *

PETITIONS**NATURAL HEALTH PRODUCTS**

Mr. Warren Steinley (Regina—Lewvan, CPC): Madam Speaker, it is my pleasure to rise and present a petition on behalf of the constituents of Regina—Lewvan.

The petitioners draw the attention of the House to the notion that freedom of choice in health care is becoming increasingly curtailed and further threatened by the legislation and statutory regulations of the Government of Canada. They say it is a fundamental right for individuals to choose how to prevent illness or how to address illness or injury in their own bodies. They state that Canadians want the freedom to decide how they will prevent illness or how they will address illness or injury in their own bodies, and that Canadians are competent and able to make their own health decisions without state interference.

The petitioners call upon Parliament to guarantee the right of every Canadian to health freedom by enacting the charter of health freedom, drafted for the Natural Health Products Protection Association on September 4, 2008.

I have many constituents who are concerned with the changes to the natural health product regulations, and I present this on their behalf.

RARE DISEASES

Mr. Chris Lewis (Essex, CPC): Madam Speaker, it is an honour to rise this morning to present, on behalf of petitioners, petition e-4414.

The petitioners state that one in 10 Canadians has a rare disease and faces immense challenges in getting the appropriate care to survive and get better, that one in 15 babies in Canada is born with a rare disease and that the Government of Canada announced an investment of up to \$1.5 billion over three years as part of its national strategy.

The petitioners call upon the Government of Canada to implement the national strategy for drugs for rare diseases, work with the provinces to ensure immediate access to rare disease medicine, extend the funding for rare disease medicine, ensure that CORD and the Regroupement québécois des maladies orphelines are key partners in discussions, and finally, build out the NSDRD to include centres of expertise.

PAKISTAN

Mr. Damien Kurek (Battle River—Crowfoot, CPC): Madam Speaker, it is an honour to stand in this place and once again present a petition. This one has particular relevance, as I have heard from a number of constituents on this issue, including some heartbreaking personal stories of individuals who have been caught up in the circumstances that are taking place in Pakistan.

The petitioners state that the people of Pakistan and Pakistani Canadians are becoming increasingly concerned about reports of political turmoil and uncertainty in that country, and that the

restoration of democracy in Pakistan is in the best interests of Canada, Pakistan and the international community.

The petitioners call upon the Government of Canada to use all reasonable avenues of diplomacy to influence the Government of Pakistan to respect fundamental elements of democracy, including free and fair elections, freedom of the press and judicial independence.

I have heard from a number of constituents on this issue. I have heard heartbreaking stories of people who have been persecuted for trying to do what is best for their own country. With those close connections and many Pakistani Canadians being impacted by this, it is an honour to table this petition in the House today.

● (1010)

WORK PERMITS

Ms. Jenny Kwan (Vancouver East, NDP): Madam Speaker, in the petition I am tabling today, the petitioners note that in 2009, the immigration committee report on temporary foreign workers and non-status workers recommended that the government discontinue employer-specific work permits. They also note that in 2016, the HUMA committee report on the temporary foreign workers program found that “employer-specific work permits can place migrant workers in a vulnerable position with negative implications for their physical and mental well-being.” It recommended that immediate steps be taken to eliminate employer-specific work permits.

In 2019, Canada acknowledged that employer-specific work permits create a power imbalance that “favours the employer and can result in a migrant worker enduring situations of misconduct, abuse or other forms of employer retribution” when it implemented the open work permit for vulnerable workers, OWP-V, policy. Since then, numerous regulatory reforms attempting to improve the protection of temporary foreign workers, including the OWP-V policy, have failed to meaningfully counteract the high risk of abuse imposed on workers by employer-specific work permits.

The petitioners are calling for a just and equitable immigration system that provides full and permanent status to all workers coming to Canada, and regularization programs for those currently without status. In the interim, the petitioners are calling on the government to eliminate, without delay, the employer-specific work permit and adopt a work authorization regime that permits temporary foreign workers to freely change employers while in the country regardless of their occupation or national origin.

CLIMATE CHANGE

Mr. Mark Gerretsen (Kingston and the Islands, Lib.): Madam Speaker, I rise today to present yet another petition on behalf of constituents calling to the attention of the government the most recent Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change report, which indicates that Canada will continue to see, in addition to what we are already experiencing, increased flooding, wildfires and extreme temperatures. The petitioners highlight that addressing the climate crisis requires a drastic reduction in greenhouse gas emissions to limit global warming to 1.5°C, and note that the oil and gas sector is the largest and fastest-growing source of emissions. The petitioners indicate that in 2021, the federal government committed to cap and cut emissions from the oil and gas sector to achieve net zero by 2050.

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

NATURAL HEALTH PRODUCTS

Mr. Mel Arnold (North Okanagan—Shuswap, CPC): Madam Speaker, I rise today to present three more petitions from citizens in the North Okanagan—Shuswap who are concerned about the NDP-Liberal government's overreach into their lives, especially when it comes to natural health products.

The petitioners call on the Minister of Health to work with the natural health products industry and adjust Health Canada's cost recovery rates to accurately reflect the size and scope of the industry, and to only implement changes once the self-care framework is adjusted, backlogs are cleared, operations run efficiently and there are policies and procedures in place to ensure that stable operations continue.

CARBON PRICING

Mr. Garnett Genuis (Sherwood Park—Fort Saskatchewan, CPC): Madam Speaker, I have three petitions to table today.

In the first petition, the petitioners draw the attention of the House to the Liberals' imposed carbon tax, saying it will continue to drive up the cost of home heating for Canadians. They say that in Canada, heating one's home in the winter is not a luxury; it is a necessity, and that after eight years of the Liberal government, Canadians now must decide whether to heat their home or put food on their table. The petitioners also say that never before in Canadian history have Canadians paid more in tax than under the Liberal government, and that inflation has caused massive increases to costs faced by non-profits and registered charities and is further compounded by the carbon tax.

The petitioners call on the House to cancel the tripling of the carbon tax on home heating, ensure no new taxes on Canadians and ensure that Canadians are put first: their family, their paycheques, their home and their future.

• (1015)

FREEDOM OF POLITICAL EXPRESSION

Mr. Garnett Genuis (Sherwood Park—Fort Saskatchewan, CPC): Madam Speaker, the next petition I am tabling is in support of Bill C-257. This is a private member's bill I have put forward

Routine Proceedings

that would add political belief and activity to prohibited grounds of discrimination in the Canadian Human Rights Act.

The petitioners say that it is in the best interests of Canadian democracy to have a free public exchange of ideas, to protect the political speech of those with different points of view and to protect them from the possibility of discrimination or punishment for their perspectives.

The petitioners ask the House to support Bill C-257 and to defend the rights of Canadians to peacefully express their political opinions.

CHILDREN AND FAMILIES

Mr. Garnett Genuis (Sherwood Park—Fort Saskatchewan, CPC): Madam Speaker, the final petition I will table today raises concerns about the Liberal government involving itself in decisions that should be made by parents and provinces. They highlight the circumstances of the Prime Minister's attempt to interfere in New Brunswick politics in relation to policy 713.

The petitioners note that in the vast majority of cases, parents care about the well-being of their children and love them more than any state-run institution. They say the role of government is to support families and respect parents, not to dictate how they should make decisions.

The petitioners call on the Government of Canada to butt out and let parents raise their own children.

SENIORS

Mr. Kevin Lamoureux (Winnipeg North, Lib.): Madam Speaker, it is a pleasure to table a petition on behalf of a constituent who has been a very strong advocate for seniors and people 55 and over who get exploited through fraudulent means such that their life savings are often taken away.

The petitioners are looking for more stringent rules to be put in place. In particular, they ask us to undertake a serious and comprehensive review of the current transit system for Canadian citizens' money in this country, with the aim of putting more stringent procedures, protocols and safeguards in place to protect seniors, in particular from losing their lifetime savings and wealth to manipulation and fraud.

*Business of Supply***QUESTIONS ON THE ORDER PAPER**

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

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

Some hon. members: Agreed.

GOVERNMENT ORDERS

[English]

BUSINESS OF SUPPLY**OPPOSITION MOTION—REDUCING HOME HEATING COSTS**

Mr. Taylor Bachrach (Skeena—Bulkley Valley, NDP) moved:

That, given that,

- (i) 2023 saw a record fire season due to climate change, in which the area burned was double that of the historic record, and hundreds of thousands of Canadians were evacuated from their homes,
- (ii) Canadians continue to struggle with dramatic increases to the cost of living while Canada's biggest corporations, including oil and gas corporations, post record profits,
- (iii) federal government programs aimed at supporting energy efficient retrofits such as heat pumps are hard to access, especially for low-income Canadians,
- (iv) effective climate action must also address the very real affordability concerns of ordinary Canadians,

the House call on the government to:

- (a) remove the GST from all forms of home heating;
- (b) make eco-energy retrofits and heat pumps free and easy to access for low-income and middle-class Canadians, regardless of their initial home heating energy source; and
- (c) finance these changes by putting in place a tax on the excess profits of big oil and gas corporations.

He said: Madam Speaker, I will be splitting my time with my good friend, the member for Rosemont—La Petite-Patrie.

Canadians right across this country are struggling with the cost of living, including food, housing and home heating. In every province and territory, Canadians also want to see action on climate change. It is the challenge of our time, an existential challenge that affects all of us, our kids and future generations.

It is not only that we can address these two urgent issues of affordability and the climate crisis at the same time; it is that we must address these emergencies at the same time. That is why New Democrats brought forward this motion today.

The motion would do three things. The first is that it would remove the GST from all forms of home heating. The GST, after all, is a Conservative tax that was brought in by a former Conservative government and is being applied to something that, as we have heard many times in this place, is an essential.

The Liberals surprised everyone with their nakedly political decision last week to give some people a break in some parts of Canada where Liberals seem to be facing tough polls. Unlike that decision,

this motion would give a break to everyone in every province and territory, for all forms of home heating. This is a pretty simple policy proposal. It is one that the NDP has put forward again and again, going back to the time of the late Jack Layton.

The other thing this motion would do is make it easier for Canadians to choose clean forms of home heating that save them money on their heating bills, especially heat pumps, which, right now, are transforming the home heating of millions of people around the world. We have seen double-digit increases in the number of people using heat pumps to heat their homes; here in Canada, we have a lot of work to do.

The Liberals' current approach to helping Canadians install heat pumps or do eco-energy retrofits of their homes, particularly for low-income people but for all Canadians, including middle-class Canadians, is deeply flawed. Last week, they made changes for people mostly in Atlantic Canada who heat with home heating oil. These changes make it dramatically easier to afford these kinds of changes to improve their housing envelope, insulate their homes, add weather sealing and install heat pumps. Those are the changes we need right across this country for people in every province and on all forms of home heating.

Where are we when it comes to achieving the government's stated ambition on reducing climate pollution from home heating sources? We are far behind. Canada's commitment is that heat pumps must be used for more than 10% of home heating by 2030 in order to achieve what is in the emissions reduction plan. Right now, we are at 6%. By 2030, we need to get to that 10%, and that equates to about 560,000 heat pumps installed across the country. That is 70,000 heat pumps per year.

New Democrats had an Order Paper question, in which we asked the government how many heat pumps it has incentivized under its greener homes program since 2021, when it was brought in. We got the numbers back this past March. What was the number? It was not 70,000, but 438 heat pumps.

Granted, heat pumps are being installed for reasons other than the greener homes incentive program, but what this shows is that this commitment on heat pumps is being broken. It is like the promise for two billion trees to be planted; the environment commission just told us it is not going to meet its goal and has become a tree-counting program instead of a tree-planting program. Canada is far behind meeting its ambition and realizing the pace of change that we need if we are going to tackle this existential crisis.

Business of Supply

• (1020)

The government's heat pump program is far too difficult for people to access. I want to tell the story of Perry, one of my neighbours in Smithers, B.C. Last June, his natural gas furnace was at the end of its life, and he wanted to do the right thing. He wanted to put in a clean heat pump system that was going to run on clean B.C. electricity, save his household money and reduce climate pollution. He learned about the greener homes program and had an energy adviser do an audit of his house. He found an installer who was skilled and able to install a heat pump system. He went through all these steps, and it is not a simple procedure.

The installer installed the heat pump system. He looked through all the rules and specifications and put in two units. He submitted the paperwork to Natural Resources Canada, to the greener homes program. After months of waiting, he received the answer that although the outside unit that was installed was on the approved list of equipment, it was not approved if used with the inside unit that had been chosen. The inside unit was also on the list of approved equipment, but not in conjunction with the outside unit. One cannot make this stuff up.

There have been months of frustration and appeals to the program to use some common sense. He put in a heat pump that uses electricity and cuts his climate pollution down. This is the goal of the program, and he has done it; however, the program refused all his appeals and said he was not getting his \$5,000 rebate. What happened then? The installer went back, tore out one of the units and put in another unit the installer felt was inferior, but now both were definitely on the list and should be approved. He resubmitted the paperwork. Another energy audit was done. After six months, he received an email from the program saying that his account had been closed.

It has been a year and a half, and Perry still has not received his \$5,000 rebate. He has put so much time into fighting with the government program that, if he paid himself minimum wage, he would have over \$5,000. This just points out how ridiculous the government's approach is to getting people these systems that are going to save them money. We are going to change that.

How are we going to pay for this program? How are we going to put heat pumps in low- and modest-income houses across the country? How are we going to help people on low incomes to afford insulation and weather sealing so they can drive down their bill and have a cost of living that is easier to afford? The answer is very simple.

We are calling for the imposition of a tax on the excess profits of the oil and gas companies, which are making obscene profits and are making money hand over fist during a climate emergency. These companies are fuelling the climate crisis and making life more unaffordable for Canadians in every province and territory.

This is hardly a radical idea. This is exactly what the Conservative government in the U.K. did during the pandemic. It imposed a 25% profits tax on the oil and gas industry in the U.K. They took those revenues and drove them into affordability measures for ordinary people. Not only that, but the tax was then increased to 35%. The time for this idea has come.

Last week we heard from the Parliamentary Budget Officer that if we were only, as a country, to extend the very modest excess profits tax the government has placed on banks and insurance companies of 15% to the oil and gas industry, it would generate \$4 billion in revenue. That could go into such programs as the one we are putting forward today to get heat pumps into the homes of low-income Canadians and help them make their homes more energy-efficient, with a proper low-income energy efficiency program. That is going to go a long way.

These companies can afford it; right now the profits the oil and gas industry is making are eye-watering. I am going to provide some of the numbers. In 2022, Canadian Natural Resources had \$11 billion in profits. For Suncor, it was \$9 billion. I will add that Rich Kruger, the CEO, has said that the company is going to move away from climate ambition toward making even more money. Cenovus had \$6.45 billion in profit in 2022. The total for Canadian oil and gas companies is \$38.3 billion. This corporate profit-taking is driving inflation, making life less affordable and fuelling the climate crisis. It is time they paid for the solutions Canadians need.

• (1025)

Mr. Kevin Lamoureux (Parliamentary Secretary to the Leader of the Government in the House of Commons, Lib.): Madam Speaker, my question is on how the NDP sees the GST as something that is going to be applied for, let us say, such things as hydro versus gas versus propane. Is it going to be spread across all things that are classified as heating?

• (1030)

Mr. Taylor Bachrach: Madam Speaker, the answer is yes. It would be taken off all forms of home heating, including electricity. This would make a substantial difference. It would add up to at least what the government has done for people in Atlantic Canada and provide cost savings for people right across the country. That is the goal of this measure.

I would add that I hope the parliamentary secretary can help Perry from Smithers get his \$5,000.

Mr. Mel Arnold (North Okanagan—Shuswap, CPC): Madam Speaker, it was difficult to see the way the Liberal-NDP government decided to separate Canadians, initially, in this program.

The member claims that the motion would provide equal benefit to all types of heating fuel. However, I question why he and his NDP colleagues continue to prop up the corrupt, divisive and unaccountable Liberal government time after time. They bring forward a motion like this, on a day like today, when they say they are an opposition party yet never oppose the government when it comes to things that really matter.

Business of Supply

Mr. Taylor Bachrach: Madam Speaker, I have enjoyed my time working with my Conservative colleague in this place.

We have put forward a motion today that would make life more affordable for Canadians right across the country and that would have a measurable impact in Canada's fight against climate change. I believe that all of us as opposition parties should be not only in opposition but also in proposition, that we should push for the ideas that make this country better, that help Canadians in their daily lives.

That is what we would be doing with the motion: taking the GST off all forms of home heating, making it easier to install heat pumps in homes across the country and putting an excess profits tax on the oil and gas industry at a time when it is making record profits.

[Translation]

Ms. Louise Chabot (Thérèse-De Blainville, BQ): Madam Speaker, I have a question for my colleague.

In Quebec, we heat and light our homes with hydroelectric power, a clean and renewable energy. In your measures, how did you distinguish between the provinces that use less clean forms of energy and those, like Quebec, that use renewable, more environmentally friendly energies?

The Assistant Deputy Speaker (Mrs. Carol Hughes): I would ask the member to make sure she addresses her questions through the Chair and not directly to members.

[English]

Mr. Taylor Bachrach: Madam Speaker, it is a fair question. The answer is that we would take the GST off all forms of home heating. Of course, for electricity, people receive only one bill. There is only one power meter on their house, and, essentially, the measure would take the GST off all electricity used domestically. Domestic electricity use is also an essential, and it is a cost that Canadians face. This would be a way to make life more affordable for them. For people in Quebec, in my colleague's province, who use electricity for home heating, this would make a substantial difference in terms of affordability.

[Translation]

Mr. Alexandre Boulerice (Rosemont—La Petite-Patrie, NDP): Madam Speaker, I thank my colleague for his speech and for his initiative on this issue, which is so important to so many people. I also want to thank him for his leadership in the House.

My speech will focus on two main points: what is essential and what is existential.

Many things are essential to life. These are basic needs such as being safe, fed, housed and warm, to name a few. For a person to live comfortably and with dignity, those needs must be met. Everyone understands that. However, in our society right now, people are struggling to fill almost all of those needs. We can see it with the rising cost of groceries, which is reaching record levels. People are being forced to make absolutely heartbreaking choices. They have to cut back on food, they have to go without to feed their children, and they have to go without basic food items themselves.

Meanwhile, the price of groceries is through the roof and the CEOs of these major grocery chains are lining their pockets, giving

themselves obscene bonuses and ending the year with incomes of eight, 10 or 12 million dollars a year. Meanwhile, people are struggling and having trouble buying enough food to eat. The price of food is rising faster than inflation, which is already rising faster than average wages.

People are also struggling because of the housing crisis. They are having a hard time finding a decent home for a reasonable rent. Everywhere, in Rosemont-La Petite-Patrie, Montreal and throughout Quebec, this is a major crisis. The Liberal government of the 1990s, which was followed by the Conservatives, failed to invest adequately in affordable housing, social housing and co-operative housing. This is why so many people are struggling with housing today. They are having a hard time making ends meet. They are forced to move into apartments that are inadequate, that are too small for them. They are badly housed.

The cost of heating is also skyrocketing in many regions. The cost of fuel oil and natural gas is climbing, and that is another bill people have to pay. Things are really tough. The NDP has already taken action to help people and put forward solutions that have improved the situation. We increased the Canada housing benefit by \$500 for those most in need. Twice, we doubled the GST tax credit to help people who are really struggling to pay their bills. We have a dental care program that is already accessible for children aged 12 and under and that will soon be available to youth, seniors aged 65 and over, and people with disabilities. This is going to improve people's living conditions. It will save them hundreds of dollars a year.

We have other proposals. The NDP leader's bill would increase competition in the grocery sector and cut prices. We propose creating a universal public pharmacare program that would reduce the cost of medications. We also propose investing in social housing and housing co-operatives.

In today's motion, we are putting forward two new solutions that we think everyone in the House should get on board with.

We want to remove the GST from all forms of home heating. This measure would apply to all Quebecers and all Canadians. It would include Canadians in all regions. Unlike the Liberals, we are not trying to divide the regions. Like the Conservatives, we are conscious of the fact that people need a break on home heating costs.

Not only do we want to remove the GST from all forms of heating, but we also want a real home eco-energy retrofit program that includes making heat pumps easy to access for the lowest-income and middle-class families. Heat pumps will help families reduce their electricity and heating costs and will save them money in the long term, because they are excellent not only for heating, but also for cooling homes in the summer. That is one way to adapt to global warming and climate change. It is equitable and effective.

How will the government pay for this? My NDP colleague explained this earlier. Last year, big oil corporations made \$38 billion in profit. That is twice as much as they made the year before. They went from \$19 billion to \$38 billion in profit. I think there might be an opportunity to go get some of that money.

• (1035)

Even the Parliamentary Budget Officer said that by taxing oil and gas companies a little more, we could easily find \$4 billion a year. That is not nothing; \$4 billion would make it possible to invest in people and reduce their heating bills by giving them quick access to heat pumps. That would greatly improve things.

I will now move on to the existential part of my speech; existential as in “existential threat”. The planet is burning. We all remember the forest fires last summer. They were burning everywhere. Cities and towns had to be evacuated. There was smoke everywhere and we could smell it across Quebec and in several regions in Ontario and British Columbia. It is not just the forest fires; it is a rising number of natural disasters that are happening more and more often, right before our eyes, and will continue to happen if we do not effectively combat climate change and reduce our greenhouse gas emissions.

If the temperature rises by more than two degrees Celsius, certain areas of the planet will become uninhabitable for human beings. That means we will see massive population displacement, hundreds of millions of climate refugees, crumbling economies and wars as well. People say that two degrees does not change much and that in any one day we often go from 10 degrees in the morning to 18 degrees in the afternoon. However, what we need to understand is the global average. Many years ago, the planet was four degrees cooler. What does four degrees cooler mean? It means that there would be three kilometres of ice above our heads right now. Let us imagine if it were four degrees warmer. The planet would become an oven.

That is not the legacy we want to leave our children. There is an urgent need for action, but the Liberals are dragging their feet. We can see it. They still do not have a cap on greenhouse gas emissions for the oil and gas sector. We are still waiting. They still do not have regulations for clean and net-zero electricity for 2050. We are still waiting for those regulations. Those are two major elements that would make a difference. Right now, the Liberal government is headed straight for disaster on this issue. I am not the one saying that; it is in the commissioner of the environment's most recent report, submitted this morning, which clearly states that the government is failing on the environment front and in the fight against climate change.

Today the NDP is coming forward with a real plan. Having an energy-efficient retrofit program and free access to heat pumps to reduce greenhouse gases in the home heating sector means this is a real energy transition plan. Of course, home or residential heating is not the only sector that will allow us to reach our targets for reducing greenhouse gas emissions, but it is an important one. We cannot afford not to take action in all sectors of our economy and society. We must not only intervene in the energy, transportation and agricultural sectors, but also take action when it comes to our homes and residential heating.

Business of Supply

Experts tell us this motion is a step in the right direction. We have received the support of several experts and environmental groups who are telling us this is what needs to be done. Tom Green, a senior climate policy adviser with the David Suzuki Foundation, tells us it is a good thing. Alex Cool-Fergus, the national policy manager at the Climate Action Network, supports this motion. Catherine Abreu, who speaks on behalf of Quebeckers and Canadians at all the COPs, tells us it is a good thing. Caroline Brouillette says so too, as does Brendan Haley of Efficiency Canada. They are all telling us that the motion we are moving today is a concrete solution that is fair for all regions and effective for families and that it will have an impact on people's ability to get food, housing and heat. It will also make a real difference in our energy transition.

If we are serious about combatting climate change, this is the type of measure we need to support and implement as quickly as possible. The Liberal plan is not working. The Conservatives could not care less. We, in the NDP, take this seriously. We want to help the least fortunate, the middle class and families, and we are going to do so while helping save our planet by reducing greenhouse gas emissions. I urge all members in the House, if they are serious about these two issues, to vote in favour of the NDP motion.

• (1040)

[*English*]

Mr. Mark Gerretsen (Kingston and the Islands, Lib.): Madam Speaker, I believe that this motion is extremely ill thought out, and some of the answers that were provided by the member for Skeena—Bulkley Valley have only further contributed to that problem.

The question of electricity—

An hon. member: Oh, oh!

Mr. Mark Gerretsen: Madam Speaker, I am being heckled.

The Assistant Deputy Speaker (Mrs. Carol Hughes): I want to remind members that if they have not been recognized to ask questions and make comments, or to make a speech, they should not be speaking out of turn at this point.

The hon. government deputy House leader.

Mr. Mark Gerretsen: Madam Speaker, on the issue of people who heat with electricity, over 80% of Quebec heats with electricity.

My first question was whether this covered electricity. The member for Skeena—Bulkley Valley said yes. My next question was how we would differentiate between heating with electricity versus playing with a PlayStation, which uses electricity. The member said that it included all of it. How is that fair to people who live in Manitoba who heat with propane, but also have electrical bills? They do not get the GST off their electrical bills, because their home heating is not part of that electrical bill.

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Could the member explain to me how the NDP has crafted this motion in such a way that it would make things even more unfair? My question comes from a sincere place. I want to understand why the GST would be removed from their entire electrical bill if people happened to heat with electricity. However, if they heat with propane, they would still have to pay GST on their electrical bills.

• (1045)

[Translation]

Mr. Alexandre Boulerice: Madam Speaker, I am happy to answer this rather simple question. We have a measure that will help everyone, unlike the Liberals, who only help some families in some regions. The NDP wants to help everyone, including Quebecers who heat with hydroelectricity.

Furthermore, the Liberals are in no position to lecture, since their minister has said that people outside the Maritimes would have access to a discount on heating if they had voted correctly, meaning if they had voted Liberal. It is the same old Liberal recipe: We help our friends and those who vote for us, and we ignore the rest. The NDP wants to help everyone.

[English]

Mr. Damien Kurek (Battle River—Crowfoot, CPC): Madam Speaker, I find this really tragic. After the coalition's poll numbers have fallen, those members have become so desperate that now all of a sudden, because of the carbon tax chaos brought forward by the Liberals, the NDP is now trying to justify an argument for affordability on home heating.

If we go back to February of 2022, that party voted against a break on home heating. In April, June, October and December of 2022, that party voted against a break on home heating. In February of this year, that party voted against a break on home heating. On June 6, that party voted against a break on home heating and did so again in October. Then, yesterday, the NDP finally figured out that Canadians were struggling.

My question for that member is simple. When will those members vote to actually axe the tax to give all Canadians a break so Canadians can afford to keep the heat on?

[Translation]

Mr. Alexandre Boulerice: Madam Speaker, we will agree on one thing: The Liberal government is currently in chaos on these issues, like a chicken with its head cut off that has no idea where it is going.

However, I disagree with my colleague. There are fundamental differences between us and the Liberals. We want to remove the GST on all forms or types of heating to help all Quebec and Canadian families.

I am not sure my colleague is aware, but there is no carbon tax in Quebec. Their solution is therefore unfair. It will not help Quebecers. Furthermore, the Conservative Party does not even think there is a climate change problem. They think everything is fine, and that all we need is more fossil fuels and to pollute even more.

That is the Conservative Party. In the NDP, we are fighting this.

Mrs. Julie Vignola (Beauport—Limoilou, BQ): Madam Speaker, my colleague just mentioned that, according to the report of the Parliamentary Budget Officer, taxing large profits would bring in \$4.2 billion, but for 2023 to 2028, a five-year period, it is roughly \$1.5 billion yearly.

Heat pumps also require ventilation ducts. In Quebec, people will also need a furnace, because a heat pump will not work when it is colder than -12°C. This amounts to between \$8,000 and \$20,000 per installation. There are 11 million low-income people in Canada, and even more middle-income earners.

Averaging out the cost, for the free heat pump alone, we get \$77 billion for this measure, along with one to pay for it that would cost \$1 billion yearly. How does that work?

Mr. Alexandre Boulerice: Madam Speaker, I am quite surprised to hear that the Bloc Québécois is worried that we cannot tax multi-millionaires, big companies, oil companies, banks, insurance companies and pharmaceutical companies in order to give people practical help.

I already have a heat pump at home. It works very well and is very efficient. The Liberal program has provided 438 heat pumps nationwide in two years. It is completely ineffective.

We are going to have a real program that will be financed by seeking money where it is found, so that we can help Quebecers.

• (1050)

[English]

Mr. Mark Gerretsen (Kingston and the Islands, Lib.): Madam Speaker, I am very pleased to rise today to speak to this issue, an issue that is near and dear to my heart. I have some things to offer today about some of the flaws I see with this motion.

I first want to correct the record. I have already heard the NDP interventions today by both the member for Skeena—Bulkley Valley and the member for Rosemont—La Petite-Patrie. They indicated that the removal of the carbon tax on home heating oil was regional, and that is 100% incorrect. The way it works is that if people heat with oil and are currently subject to the federal price on pollution, regardless of where they live in the country, they will not pay the carbon tax.

I have some news for the members for Rosemont—La Petite-Patrie and Skeena—Bulkley Valley. In Ontario, twice as many people heat with oil than in all of Atlantic Canada. On the notion that it is somehow a regional thing, I hate to say it, but the NDP appears to be jumping on the bandwagon of a narrative that the Conservatives are trying to set, and it is factually incorrect. It is very important to point that out.

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While I am on this topic, I would like to address the issue of home heating oil and the price on pollution, which some call the carbon tax, that has been removed from home heating oil recently. I want people to appreciate why it was done that way.

We know two things about heating with oil. It is the dirtiest form of heating and it is the most expensive form of heating. So people can understand it from a numbers perspective, in 2023, the annual operating cost in Vancouver, British Columbia for those who heat with natural gas and have a 96%-efficient furnace will be \$600 for gas. For those who heat with oil in the same province and have a 94%-efficient furnace it will be \$1,800. They will effectively be paying three times the cost if they heat with oil.

In Calgary, Alberta, it is \$800 versus \$3,200, four times as much. In Regina, Saskatchewan, it is \$1,400 versus \$4,400. In Toronto, Ontario, it is \$900 versus \$3,400. In Winnipeg, Manitoba, it is \$1,300 versus \$4,700. In Montreal, Quebec, it is \$1,300 versus \$3,400. In Fredericton, New Brunswick, it is \$1,600 versus \$3,600. In Halifax, Nova Scotia, it is \$2,200 versus \$3,200. In every example I have given, I have shown that it is significantly more expensive to heat with oil, and it is the dirtiest form of heat.

There is a natural question that environmentalists might have, and it is a very good question because it is a policy that I had to really think about when I heard the announcement. The question would be why the government would remove the price on pollution on the dirtiest form of heating.

If we were to remove it and stop there, that would be bad, because we would accomplish nothing. We would be encouraging people not to heat with oil because of the price difference, unlike what the Leader of the Opposition implied in a question during question period last week, but we certainly would not be pushing forward. Our plan is not to remove the price on pollution; it is to pause it for three years so that people can use the money they otherwise would have been spending on the dirtiest form of fuel to transition to a heat pump.

From an environmentalist perspective, I am not happy with the idea of removing a tax from the dirtiest form of fossil fuel, but I know that in the long run, we will be better off from an environmental perspective because more people will have transitioned to heat pumps.

• (1055)

This brings me to the second policy that was also adopted, which the Conservatives and, quite frankly, the NDP like to conflate. It is the issue of heat pumps not being available throughout the entire country. That is not true. Heat pumps are available through a federal-provincial program to the whole country. It is up to the individual province to sign up for the program.

The province would provide x number of dollars and the federal government would provide x number of dollars. That is the way the program works. It is the way the three Atlantic provinces that have signed up for the program are currently doing it. I want to make something absolutely clear. The program is available throughout the entire country, but it is up to the provinces to decide if they want to come onboard.

Another thing about home heating and oil is that Quebec has actually banned oil heating in new homes, starting on December 31, 2023. Someone cannot build a house in Quebec that has oil as a form of heating.

According to a CBC article from December 31, 2021, “As of Dec. 31, oil-powered heating is banned in all new construction projects across Quebec, part of the province's push to reduce greenhouse gas emissions.” Quebec has always been a leader in this regard. The article continues, “In two years, Quebec will go a step further by making it illegal to replace existing oil furnaces with any sort of heating system powered by fossil fuels after Dec. 31, 2023.”

After December of this year, people have to replace their heating systems with a non-fossil fuel-burning source. Quebec, as a province, is doing the right thing. It is bringing in bold initiatives that are important, that are going to genuinely transform how people heat in the province.

As I indicated in a question earlier, over 80% of Quebec already heats with electricity. This motion is actually unfair to Quebecers.

The motion says that, “the House call on the government to...remove the GST from all forms of home heating.” That sounds easy. I am sure whoever drafted it thought it made a lot of sense. However, it is forgetting the complexities of how people heat their homes. It is not as cut and dry as somebody has a gas furnace, or an oil boiler or electric baseboard heating.

For example, heating one's home with a heat pump is done by electricity. The question that I had originally when I read the motion was about people who used electricity. The member for Skeena—Bulkley Valley answered that question by saying the motion would apply to all forms of heating. Therefore, if people heat with electricity, they would not pay the GST on their electrical bill.

When my kids are playing on their PlayStation or Xbox, they are using electricity. We are not going to be paying GST on that if I happen to be one of the people who also has baseboard heaters or an electric forced air furnace. Those are very common too, especially in Quebec. If people use forced air electric furnaces, presumably, according to this motion, all GST would be removed from their electrical bill. How is that fair? The consumption of electricity that is not related to home heating would be something that is not subject to GST anymore.

The member for Skeena—Bulkley Valley addressed that point too. He said that they knew about that when they drafted the motion, that they intended for it to be on the entire electrical bill. How is that fair to somebody who heats with gas, but also has an electrical bill? My gas bill would not have the GST on it, but my electrical bill would because I do not happen to heat with electricity.

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• (1100)

I think I understand where the New Democrats are coming from, but in my opinion, with all due respect, this is an extremely flawed motion in its wording. It does not achieve what I think they intended when they originally wrote it. That is why I am concerned about supporting it.

However, I agree with a number of things in it. I agree, and have said this in this House, that the oil and gas sector has profited with record profits. I brought to the attention of this House during various debates the fact that for the oil and gas sector, as it relates to the increases when purchasing gasoline at gas stations for our vehicles, the increase is nine times what the carbon tax effectively is. Let me explain that.

In the preceding year, on the average litre of gasoline in Canada, the carbon tax contributed a two-cent increase per litre, but the wholesale profit, the profits made not by the retailer who owns the gas station, but by the oil company selling it to the retailer, was 18¢ more per litre. It is nine times more of an effect from the profits being made versus the carbon tax. The Conservatives are nowhere on that. They are not nine times as outraged with big oil companies. No, not at all. They are picking on the two cents per litre when the bigger fish is the 18¢ per litre, but they are silent on it. I wonder why. I think we all know and I really do not have to say it. My point is I recognize that, and I think it is important to do something with respect to the oil and gas sector.

Will what the New Democrats are proposing solve the problem? They point to record profits. How do we do that? Do we do it the way we did with the banks and insurance companies? That was over a five year period. It was set up with an established base line that if they made anything more than that, they had a separate tax level, but only for five years and only while those profits were high. I understand they would collect the money and then reinvest it into environmentally friendly options, which is what they are proposing, but I do not understand the long-term strategy there. I certainly understand the short-term strategy of penalizing them for gouging the market, and I do not necessarily disagree with that, but there is no long-term strategy there.

A better long-term strategy, quite frankly, when dealing with the oil and gas sector, is to cap the emissions it is allowed to produce. This is a highly effective and established mechanism for doing that. It is nothing new.

That is why we set up strategies, such as Canada's methane strategy, which includes requirements for the oil and gas sector to achieve methane reductions of at least 75% by 2030 from 2012 levels. We have a position paper that was done on it.

I have submitted so many petitions, well over 20 petitions by this point, to this effect. I happen to have another one here. I presented one yesterday and will probably present this one tomorrow. These are from Canadians. This is what they are talking about. They are saying that the Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change has warned us repeatedly that rising temperatures over the next two decades will bring widespread devastation and extreme weather. They are concerned and feeling the impacts in Canada today with increased flooding, wildfires and extreme temperatures. They want to address climate change and recognize that it requires a drastic re-

duction in greenhouse gas emissions to limit warming to 1.5° Celsius in the oil and gas sector, which is the largest, fastest-growing source of emissions.

In 2021, they knew the federal government committed to cap and cut emissions for the oil and gas sector to achieve net-zero emissions. These petitions, which I have presented on behalf of thousands of Canadians, call on the Government of Canada to immediately move forward with bold emissions caps for the oil and gas sector that are comprehensive in scope and realistic in nature in achieving the necessary targets that Canada has set to reduce emissions by 2030. I think that is a better strategy.

We really have two forms of pricing pollution. We could do it through a direct price on pollution, what is commonly called a carbon tax, which has been done. People are provided rebates as an incentive to curb their behaviour but still get more money back, which is why 80% or more of the Canadians who are paying it get more money back.

• (1105)

We could do a cap-and-trade model. That is a model the western initiative adopted with a number of states in the United States and a couple of provinces in Canada, including Ontario, although Doug Ford has since backed out of it. Another way we can do it is through cap and trade.

By capping the emissions, we can start to control what we know is the highest emitting sector and the fastest growing. As a matter of fact, it is the only sector that has not started to turn downwards in terms of its graphical representation of its emissions.

I think it is really important that we develop sound policy. I kind of get where the NDP is coming from. I understand their motivation, but I completely disagree with it. Now is the time to be steadfast in our commitment to the environment, but also to find ways to support Canadians.

I do not see how removing the GST from all forms of home heating, notwithstanding the fact that I have already pointed out the flaws in the motion, ends up encouraging people to reduce emissions, which is what the price on pollution is. It is what the Conservatives got the NDP to agree with them to vote on yesterday, and I was really surprised when I saw that. A reporter asked me why the NDP was voting in favour of it. I said that I did not know. I understand that they see people are struggling, because we do too, but we can provide other supports for people. We do not have to rely on the narrative that the Conservative leader has created. There are ways we can deal with helping people that do not have to be at the expense of the environment.

I will conclude by saying that, although I appreciate where the NDP is coming from, I think that the motion is highly flawed. It creates a lot of questions, and those questions create a lot of inequality. We would be much better served to find other ways to support people.

By the way, I just want to throw this out there for my NDP colleagues. The motion is basically calling for Galen Weston not to pay GST on home heating. Are they aware of that? Are they aware of the fact that the motion basically says that Galen Weston would not pay GST on his home heating? I do not think this is what NDP members had in their heads when they created it, but unfortunately, the motion creates a lot of problems. I actually think that nobody knows better than the NDP that we would be better off targeting our supports to those who really need it than to those who do not, such as myself, Galen Weston and other people who are able to afford the cost of heating.

I would encourage my NDP colleagues to really give it some thought. I understand where they are coming from, but unfortunately, I think the motion is extremely flawed in its execution.

Mr. Randall Garrison (Esquimalt—Saanich—Sooke, NDP): Madam Speaker, I listened to the hon. member's speech with care. He noted that the impact of excess profits is nine times that of the carbon tax. I wonder why he is not nine times as outraged himself about the excess profits that are being raked in while contributing to the climate crisis.

Why will the government not support an excess profit tax on oil and gas, which was even imposed in the U.K. by Conservatives?

Mr. Mark Gerretsen: Madam Speaker, Hansard has this really good search feature where we can put in a couple of key words and it will pull out results for us. If the member put in the key words "oil and gas sector profits" and my name, it is going to pop up a lot.

I have actually raised this point a lot in this House. I have been asked this question a number of times by my NDP colleagues, and I have raised it. I have also raised it on the grocery chains.

I will not shy away from bringing to the attention of this House where I see gouging, as we have seen in grocery chains and as we have seen in the oil and gas sector. Referencing specifically 18¢ wholesale profits to two cents carbon tax, I have said that at least 20 times in this House. It is something that I am routinely bringing up in my party, and it is something that I am routinely bringing up through petitions. This is not an issue that I shy away from, nor have I in the past.

• (1110)

Mr. Warren Steinley (Regina—Lewvan, CPC): Madam Speaker, the member actually mentioned Regina and home heating oil, and there are not a lot of people who heat their homes with heating oil. They do not get any of the divisive carbon tax exemption that was brought forward.

An hon. member: Yes, they do.

Mr. Warren Steinley: No, they do not.

Madam Speaker, the Liberal minister from Newfoundland and Labrador said that if one wants exemptions and to be treated fairly, then please vote Liberal.

The Liberal member did not bring home the tax exemption for his people and there are more people who use home heating oil in northern Ontario than in Saskatchewan. There are quite a few Liberal members in northern Ontario. Why are they so incompetent that they could not get the tax exemption for their constituents and

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the people who live in their communities, when they are the ones, after eight long years, who created this affordability crisis in the first place?

Mr. Mark Gerretsen: Madam Speaker, either the member does not know the policy or the member is providing the wrong information in this House, because I started off my speech by saying that it does not matter what region one lives in. This is the policy. If people live in Canada and heat with oil and they are in a province that is subject to the price on pollution, they will not be paying the carbon tax on that oil, full stop.

Conservatives want us to think that this is a policy just for Atlantic Canada, and I deeply regret that the members from the NDP, the member for Skeena—Bulkley Valley and the member for Rosemont—La Petite-Patrie, have indicated the exact same thing. This is not a regional thing.

The member is right, actually, about one thing. Twice as many people in Ontario heat with oil than in Atlantic Canada. I did bring it home for my constituents who heat with home heating oil. We are bringing home reducing the price for home heating oil, so we can help people transition to heat pumps.

[Translation]

Mrs. Julie Vignola (Beauport—Limoilou, BQ): Madam Speaker, the motion at hand implies that people who consume more energy will save more on GST than on their heating bill. This means a person would not benefit if they live in an apartment where heat is included in the rent. It also means someone who rents would not be able to get a heat pump because they do not own the home.

I would like to ask my colleague a question, or rather offer him some suggestions. Why not expand energy efficiency programs to include low-income families, and maybe even give them preferential access? Why not also expand the programs to renters as well? These would be effective measures for the whole population.

[English]

Mr. Mark Gerretsen: Madam Speaker, the member brought up an excellent point which, quite frankly, I had not even thought of until she said it. Not only does this motion call on Galen Weston to not pay GST on his home heating, but for those who live in an apartment where one's heating is included in the rent, they are not benefiting from this either. It is an excellent point.

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The NDP members are going to have to come to terms with the fact that when they crafted this motion, it was not well thought out. I understand what their intentions were, but the way they crafted this motion just did not work. They would be much better off calling on the government to bring in programs to support lower-income Canadians, not to support Galen Weston, but to support people who could genuinely benefit from this.

I really think that this motion needs a do-over.

● (1115)

Mr. Kevin Lamoureux (Parliamentary Secretary to the Leader of the Government in the House of Commons, Lib.): Madam Speaker, I am wondering if the member could continue to provide some thoughts in regard to how this is being compared to a motion that we previously debated and voted on yesterday.

For me, one of the issues that seems to be getting lost is the environment and the benefits of heat pumps and the policy toward the environment. I wonder if he could provide his thoughts in regard to that.

Mr. Mark Gerretsen: Madam Speaker, I intentionally shied away from going heavily into this area because I think the NDP have provided good and meaningful contributions in this Parliament, so I did not want to pick on its members too much. However, the member has a really good point. How does this tie back to yesterday's motion? From my perspective, NDP members are trying to cover the fact that they voted with Conservatives yesterday. They are trying to hastily bring something forward to show constituents they are trying to play both sides of this. I just think there would have been another way they could have done that. They could have done it through a way that targets supports to Canadians who really need it.

To his question specifically about the environmental impact of this, I want to reiterate this, because it bears repeating. Everywhere in Canada if people heat with oil, they are subject to the federal backstop on the carbon tax; they do not pay a carbon tax on that. The whole point of that is to provide relief for people so they can make the transition to heat pumps. Three provinces have signed up with the federal government to make that transition. We need more, so I encourage more provinces to step up and get together with the feds so we can help provide more people with heat pumps.

Mr. Ted Falk (Provencher, CPC): Madam Speaker, I listened carefully to the member's speech. We all know that primarily the biggest beneficiaries of this carbon tax pause on home heating fuel are those from Atlantic Canada. In fact, the minister from Newfoundland and Labrador clearly said that other areas of the country could have had the same exemption had they voted more Liberals in. I am sure the constituents in Liberal-held ridings in Atlantic Canada said, "Oh, goody, we get a tax break." I am sure they were excited.

Why would the Liberals have given a pause on the dirtiest, the most carbon-intensive home heating fuel there is, and given a break on the carbon tax? Why not the other cleaner-burning fuels?

Mr. Mark Gerretsen: Madam Speaker, notwithstanding the fact the premise of the question is flawed again because it is this pitting regions against each other, this is not the case and something I have addressed many times, I do want to address his question.

Some hon. members: Oh, oh!

Mr. Mark Gerretsen: Madam Speaker, he asked a really good question and I want to answer it, if they can stop heckling me.

The answer to the question is because we understand oil is the dirtiest form, we understand it is three to four times more expensive for Canadians across the country and we want to provide relief to people so they can transition away and toward heat pumps. By the way, the member brought up heat pumps. I am very glad to hear Manitoba is currently sitting down with the federal government to work out a program where Manitoba can get on board with that same program being used in Atlantic Canada.

Mr. Eric Duncan (Stormont—Dundas—South Glengarry, CPC): Madam Speaker, it is an honour to rise in the House again to keep the pressure on our common-sense Conservative plan. Sadly, yesterday, the Liberals rejected fairness for all Canadians in our Conservative motion to take the tax off so Canadians could keep the heat on. I am honoured to be sharing my time today with the hon. member for Carleton, the Leader of the Opposition.

There is one party in the House of Commons that is fighting every single day to lower taxes for all Canadians. After eight years of the NDP-Liberal government, Canadians are hurting badly in every part of this country, whether it is housing, where housing costs have doubled, whether it is inflation that is hitting the pocketbooks of every family in Canada, or whether it is food inflation that is still stubbornly way too high, with an average family in this country paying \$1,000 more this year on their grocery bills than they did just last year alone.

After eight years, it is time to stop taxing every part of this country and instead provide some much-needed relief. Heating a home in this country, our cold Canada that we live in, is not a luxury. It is a necessity. Again, the problem we hear over and over again in every single part of this country is that Canadians are struggling to pay the bills. They are having to choose between heating and eating. It is heartbreaking, and we continue to see an NDP-Liberal coalition vote, time and time again, to make matters worse.

What we have here now, and why I think this debate has exploded in the last couple of weeks, is Conservatives talking about axing the tax entirely, not just on home heating but the carbon tax entirely. It is not an environmental plan. It is a tax plan.

Breaking news this morning, the independent environment commissioner and the Office of the Auditor General, and the work that they do on the audits, confirmed once again that the carbon tax is a tax plan, not an environmental plan. The government is not even going to meet the very targets it is claiming a carbon tax would solve. It is failing by every measure possible.

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What has really amplified this conversation and provided an opportunity for our Conservative motion that was sadly defeated yesterday and the one from the NDP today is the Prime Minister's desperation. He made a desperate, last-minute, panicked announcement a floor above here. He scrambled on a Thursday afternoon when his itinerary was updated and grabbed all of his Atlantic caucus members, because they were in full revolt as a caucus. They were hearing what the Leader of the Opposition was doing in Nova Scotia, in a long-time Liberal riding, where an electric rally of 1,000-plus people in the riding of Kings—Hants was about to get under way.

Atlantic Canadian MPs panicked and basically forced the Prime Minister to carve out a deal for 3% of Canadians. What the Prime Minister announced has backfired. The NDP and Liberal MPs and their costly coalition know it. What the Prime Minister is doing is what he does best, and that is not leading, it is dividing. He is pitting one region against the other. He is only carving out certain exemptions for certain types of home heating that impact certain parts of the country. If the Prime Minister was not divisive enough in that announcement and in how hasty it was, it was the Liberal rural economic development minister from Newfoundland who came out and said that if other regions wanted to get the benefit and get some sort of pause from the pain of the carbon tax, they should have voted in more Liberals.

An hon. member: Shameful.

Mr. Eric Duncan: Madam Speaker, shameful is absolutely right. Tone-deaf and out of touch.

In the last few months, I have had the honour and privilege of travelling to many parts of this country, including Atlantic Canada, to hear about the pain the carbon tax is causing.

● (1120)

The food bank in Fredericton, New Brunswick, has seen a 35% increase in usage in the last year. We heard in Nova Scotia from the president of the Nova Scotia Community College, who said that they have students who are granted admission and they are calling the school to ask if they can live in their pickup trucks on campus because they cannot afford to live, rent, heat and eat.

We are hearing that, in Newfoundland and Labrador, trucking companies are saying it is adding hundreds of thousands of dollars to their transportation bills to get groceries and reefer trucks from across the country to that province.

We talk about the Prime Minister, the Liberals, the NDP and their budgetary plan that the NDP will prop up and go along with, like they always do. Let us think about northern Ontario. In eastern Ontario, which is my neck of my woods as well as that of the member for Carleton, the leader of our party, they deserve that same pause from the pain as anybody else in the country.

People on natural gas and propane heating are hurting too. They are struggling to pay the bills just as badly as anybody else and anywhere else in the country, but I am thinking of northern Ontario where I have had the honour of travelling and hearing directly from Canadians there, in North Bay, Sudbury, Sault Ste. Marie, Timmins and Thunder Bay. Let me tell colleagues that the landscape there is

changing. After eight years of NDP and Liberal government, they have had enough. They are behind our plan for tax fairness. They are disgusted. They are furious with the fact that the government will not treat them with the same respect it is offering other Canadians.

The Prime Minister admitted that his carbon tax was punishing families and their budgets at home. It was causing a burden on them being able to heat their homes and pay the bills, yet what do we have here now? Time and time again, they ignored the concern. Every single Liberal MP yesterday voted against the same pause on the pain of the carbon tax that some of the other colleagues got in other regions. The situation is just as bad. In Thunder Bay, the regional food bank said their usage is skyrocketing. They cannot keep up with the number of people looking for assistance with their groceries. There are 12,000 people in Thunder Bay and the region and they have had to sadly admit they cannot even service far north communities anymore because they do not have the funds and they do not have the food. What we have at the end of the day is the same division.

The NDP proposed their motion here today. One thing to note that is a little curious, as it is absent from their motion, is that the NDP have talked about removing the GST from all forms of home heating. Maybe that is a clerical error. Maybe they could take the opportunity to fix this. They just voted yesterday with us to take all taxes off all forms of home heating for all Canadians. That is the right approach to what they need to do. Here we are, not even 24 hours later, and they are only saying we should take the GST off.

Here is the thing about the NDP. They can propose any motion they want here on their opposition day motion. The Liberals will not go for it. What the NDP will go for, like they have done every single time in their coalition deal is to talk a big game. They will talk tough. They will ask those questions, but when the time comes to vote on the actual budget, they prop up the Liberals every single step of the way and they are going to continue to do that. The reality is that at the end of the day, the NDP are going to continue their plan. The Prime Minister is putting a pause on until the next election. Bring it on. Conservatives will axe the tax. The Prime Minister and the leader of the NDP will quadruple the carbon tax in the coming years after the next election. Their plan is still in place. It will cause great pain to this country and to millions and millions of families and small businesses struggling to survive. The carbon tax is going to be 61¢ a litre on the price of fuel.

This country is struggling. Canadians are struggling. They need relief. What I think they need is for the NDP to finally stand up against their costly coalition, and take all taxes off all forms of home heating for all Canadians in this country.

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• (1125)

Mr. Mark Gerretsen (Kingston and the Islands, Lib.): Madam Speaker, I have a question for the member that I really want him to answer instead of going off on a tangent. When talking about the carbon tax relief on home heating oil, the member specifically said it affects “certain parts of the country”. That is not true. If people heat with oil and they happen to be subject to the carbon price backstop by the federal government, it is eliminated throughout the country. As a matter of fact, in the province of Ontario, there are twice as many people who heat with oil as there are in Atlantic Canada. Therefore, what he is saying is not true.

Will the member stand up and answer my question, rather than pivot somewhere else like he is really good at doing? Does he not agree that twice as many people will benefit from this in our province as in Atlantic Canada?

• (1130)

Mr. Eric Duncan: Madam Speaker, I love that comment because the member for Kingston and the Islands has the same desperation the Prime Minister has. Liberals are in full panic mode.

The folks in Kingston and the rest of Ontario are saying that Conservatives acknowledge that those who heat with propane and natural gas are hurting. The carbon tax is causing pain. There are tens of thousands of Canadians residing in the member's riding who do not get the same deal. The Prime Minister is dividing people by giving exemptions only on certain forms of home heating. Conservatives acknowledge the pain that anybody in this country heating with natural gas and propane is suffering. We acknowledge that the Liberals' plan is going to quadruple the carbon tax. The member is the one who is dividing.

Conservatives are saying we need to take the tax off all forms of home heating for all Canadians and stop pitting regions and certain types of home heating against each other.

[Translation]

Mr. Alexandre Boulerice (Rosemont—La Petite-Patrie, NDP): Madam Speaker, I was a bit surprised by my colleague's speech.

Generally, Conservatives are not too fond of taxes that apply across the board. In his speech, the member said we need to take taxes off all forms of home heating, yet he says he is going to vote against the NDP motion to remove the GST from all forms of home heating.

Why does he want to maintain the GST? Why is the Conservative Party in favour of maintaining the GST for all Quebecers and Canadians?

[English]

Mr. Eric Duncan: Madam Speaker, New Democrats continue to contradict themselves. Just yesterday, they voted for our Conservative motion to take the tax off all forms of home heating for all Canadians. In their motion today, they are talking about only the GST portion.

Let me make it clear again. New Democrats tabled this motion, but what will happen when the next budgetary measure comes forward? The Liberal plan is still in place, and they will vote for it at

the end of the day. They talk a big game in every part of this country, but when it comes to their voting record, they will prop up the government. After eight years of the Liberal-NDP government, they cannot afford it, and Canadians know they are going to prop up the same failed plan of the Liberals and the NDP once again.

[Translation]

Mr. Yves Perron (Berthier—Maskinongé, BQ): Madam Speaker, we often hear the Conservatives say they want to help ordinary folks and put money back in their pockets. The huge profits oil companies are making were mentioned a number of times today.

Could we not take the \$83 billion that has been earmarked to subsidize oil and gas companies between now and 2035 and instead use it to increase old age pensions for seniors aged 65 and older?

We had the oral agreement of several Conservatives on this point before the party leader changed. Since then, we have not heard them say that they still agree with the idea of increasing old age pensions for seniors starting at age 65. This is a Bloc Québécois battle.

I would like my colleague to clearly state his position on this issue.

[English]

Mr. Eric Duncan: Madam Speaker, all businesses should pay their fair share of taxes, but I will say again that it is hypocritical and contradictory of the Bloc Québécois members to talk about taxes. The irony of the Bloc Québécois, a separatist party in the House of Commons, is that it voted multiple times on a second carbon tax that goes not to Quebec but to Ottawa, 100% of which is being added to the original carbon tax as a second carbon tax. The Bloc Québécois needs to have a caucus meeting and figure out exactly where it stands on tax issues, because folks back home in the province of Quebec are not impressed with the second carbon tax and the Bloc's all-over-the-map approach.

Hon. Pierre Poilievre (Leader of the Opposition, CPC): Madam Speaker, yesterday, the Prime Minister's desperation reached new levels. He teamed up with the separatists in order to tax Canadians' home heat. He is more concerned about staying in power and keeping his hands in the pockets of hard-working people than he is about representing the interests of this country.

Let us take a quick trip down the Prime Minister's division, starting with the carbon tax on home heat. Originally, the Prime Minister said he would quadruple the tax on all Canadians, everywhere in the country, no matter how they heated their homes. Then, after I launched a relentless campaign to axe the tax, and moments before I was to rise before 1,000 common-sense Nova Scotians in a gigantic rally to keep the heat on and take the tax off, he scurried into the House of Commons foyer with Atlantic Canadian MPs, all of whom were terrified to lose their jobs, and said that he would bring in a three-year pause for their home heating.

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We later found out that only 3% of Canadians would get the pause; the other 97% would be left out in the cold. Therefore, I put forward a motion to treat every Canadian equally, because, as the Prime Minister said, a Canadian is a Canadian is a Canadian. My motion reinforced that exact same principle. Because of a vigorous axe-the-tax campaign in NDP ridings, the NDP was forced to flip-flop. After having voted 16 times for the carbon tax, the NDP leader caved. He admitted he was wrong all along, and he voted for my common-sense motion, leaving the Prime Minister without a coalition partner.

The Prime Minister then signed a new coalition deal to keep the tax on and throw Canadians out in the cold. This time, though, he signed the carbon tax coalition with the Bloc separatists. In so doing, the Liberals have given the finger to Canadians. They gave the finger to Canadians literally while they were voting to raise taxes on the people of this country. They gave the finger to the elderly woman who cannot keep her heating bill—

• (1135)

The Assistant Deputy Speaker (Mrs. Carol Hughes): We have a point of order from the hon. parliamentary secretary to the government House leader.

Mr. Kevin Lamoureux: Madam Speaker, I do not believe that anyone standing up and suggesting that any member of the House is giving the finger to Canadians is appropriate. I would suggest to you that what the member has stated is unparliamentary.

The Assistant Deputy Speaker (Mrs. Carol Hughes): I just want to remind members to be careful with the words they are using. If it is causing disorder in the House, then it becomes a problem.

The hon. Leader of the Opposition.

Hon. Pierre Poilievre: Madam Speaker, I agree that giving the finger is unparliamentary, but it was caught on tape. While the Liberals were voting to quadruple the tax on home heating, they were literally giving the finger to Canadians. It was to the same Canadians who will choose between eating and heating. It was to the single mother who is skipping meals so her children do not have to and to the two million Canadians who are going to a food bank, which is a record-smashing number of people. The Liberals gave the finger to the working-class people in Nova Scotia who are now living in campgrounds after eight years of the Prime Minister because they cannot afford housing. They gave the finger to the countless young people who are stuck living in their parents' basement because housing—

The Assistant Deputy Speaker (Mrs. Carol Hughes): The hon. parliamentary secretary is rising on another point of order.

Mr. Kevin Lamoureux: Madam Speaker, maybe I am explaining it wrong. I do not believe it is appropriate for a member to be able to stand in their place and talk about giving the finger to someone. It is the context.

If you look at Beauchesne, 6th edition, you will find what matters is the context in which one says something. Telling the Parliament of Canada that so-and-so is giving the finger to Canadians on this point and on that point would be the equivalent of my saying that the Leader of the Conservative Party is giving Canadians the finger—

The Assistant Deputy Speaker (Mrs. Carol Hughes): Again, this is becoming a point of debate. I want to remind the members that there was an issue raised yesterday. The Speaker at the time indicated that he would come back to the House if need be.

I would just ask the hon. leader of the official opposition to please continue. As he has seen that there is some disorder happening in the House, I would ask him to be careful in how he words his speech.

The hon. parliamentary secretary has a point of order.

Mr. Kevin Lamoureux: Madam Speaker, I am seeking clarification on this because I will be addressing the opposition motion.

Some hon. members: Oh, oh!

• (1140)

The Assistant Deputy Speaker (Mrs. Carol Hughes): One moment, please. I am hearing some comments that are not very respectful. I have the floor right now, and when I give the floor to somebody else, it is their right to speak without being disrupted. I will tell someone when their time is up.

The hon. parliamentary secretary.

Mr. Kevin Lamoureux: Madam Speaker, purely for clarification purposes, if I am speaking in the chamber and I say that so-and-so across the way is giving the finger toward Canadians about the environment, would it be parliamentary for me to say that?

The Assistant Deputy Speaker (Mrs. Carol Hughes): Again, I just want to remind the hon. parliamentary secretary and the hon. leader of the official opposition that this issue was raised yesterday. There was not a determination as to whether that was substantiated. As I have indicated, the Speaker did indicate that he would come back to the House if need be. I am not sure where that work is at this point, but I would just ask everyone to please be respectful in the House.

The hon. leader of the official opposition.

Hon. Pierre Poilievre: Madam Speaker, we agree that it is absolutely unparliamentary for someone to give the finger on the floor of the House of Commons. That is why we have called on the entire Liberal caucus to apologize for the conduct of one of its MPs. By the way, the Speaker did not say we were not allowed to address the incident. He did say he would come back, but we are free to speak, and we will not be censured.

We know that the Prime Minister now has a carbon tax coalition with the separatist Bloc Québécois. We know that he did this because he could not maintain his existing coalition. The pressure the Conservatives mounted on the NDP forced the NDP to collapse and admit that it had been wrong all along.

I remind the House that there has been only one party that has been consistent throughout and will be consistent forever. We are the only common-sense party that would axe the tax for everything, for everybody and everywhere, forever.

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I note that the NDP today has now performed yet another flip-flop. Originally, the New Democrats wanted to quadruple the tax. Yesterday, they said they wanted to pause the tax. Today, they will not take a position, because they have omitted mention of the Prime Minister's quadrupling of the carbon tax in the motion. They do not want to stick by their position. They think they will quietly sneak back into the carbon tax coalition and have nobody notice. Well, their constituents are noticing, and that is why working-class people across the country are abandoning the NDP in droves.

Even the NDP Premier of Manitoba has now said that the carbon tax represents an attack on working-class people and therefore cannot work as climate change policy. I will note that we are getting all pain and no gain from the Prime Minister on the carbon tax, because his own environment commissioner came out just today and confirmed that under the current policies, including the carbon tax, he will miss his 2030 climate targets. He has missed his Paris accord climate targets again and again. Emissions continue to rise under his leadership, which proves that the carbon tax was never an environmental policy. It was a tax policy designed to pick the pockets of people and put more money in the hands of politicians to spend. This is political and governmental greed at its worst. It is no wonder Canadians have never been worse off than they are after eight years of the Prime Minister.

[Translation]

What I find interesting is that the Bloc Québécois has announced a costly coalition with the Prime Minister. This was confirmed in an article in *La Presse*, where the Liberal ministers said they had an agreement with the Bloc Québécois to keep this Prime Minister in power for another two years. Yesterday, the leader of the Bloc Québécois saved the Prime Minister. We were going to adopt a motion to reduce the cost of heating for everyone, but the Bloc Québécois was there to prevent the motion from being adopted, to vote against working-class people who want to heat their homes, to vote against seniors, to vote against people who cannot pay their bills, and to prop up the Prime Minister.

The funny thing is that the Bloc Québécois is going against Quebec's position. The Quebec government joined the other provinces in opposing a federal carbon tax as part of the lawsuit challenging the constitutionality of Bill C-69 and as part of the lawsuit against the carbon tax. The Quebec government wanted to curb federal taxation powers, but the Bloc Québécois is on the federal government's side. This is a centralizing Bloc Québécois. Each time the federal government decides to impose a tax on Quebecers, we can expect the Bloc Québécois to say yes. It said yes to bigger government in Ottawa, and no to Quebecers. That is the Bloc Québécois's real record.

The leader of the Bloc Québécois is afraid of an election. He wants to hang onto his position as leader so he can go on big trips to Europe. He wants to fly there on a plane that burns fuel so he can talk about the sovereignty of various overseas groups that are far removed from with the concerns of Quebecers. I doubt the people of Beloeil—Chambly who are struggling to pay the bills are all that interested in the European separatist causes that the Bloc Québécois is obsessed with. The Bloc Québécois has no common sense. It is not working for Quebecers.

Only the Conservative Party has the common sense to take the second carbon tax off the backs of Quebecers. Quebecers do not want to pay the taxes that the Bloc and Liberals are imposing on their gas and food anymore. Quebecers want lower taxes so that work pays again. Quebecers want the federal government to encourage municipalities to cut the red tape so more affordable housing can be built. Only the Conservative Party can get those things done.

In the next election, Quebecers will have two choices. The first is a costly Liberal-Bloc coalition that raises taxes, takes their money, sets criminals free and doubles the cost of housing. The second is the common-sense Conservative Party, which will bring home lower taxes and bigger paycheques that buy affordable food, gas and housing in safe communities.

• (1145)

[English]

The choice is between either the costly coalition that takes one's money, taxes one's food, doubles one's housing cost, punishes one's work and frees criminals into the street or the common-sense Conservatives who free one to bring home powerful paycheques that buy affordable food, gas and groceries in affordable communities.

That is why I move the following amendment to the motion, which would add section (d): "Extend the temporary three-year pause to the federal carbon tax on home heating oil to all forms of home heating."

The Assistant Deputy Speaker (Mrs. Carol Hughes): It is my duty to inform hon. members that an amendment to an opposition motion may be moved only with the consent of the sponsor of the motion or, in the case that he or she is not present, consent may be given or denied by the House leader, the deputy House leader, the whip or the deputy whip of the sponsor's party.

The hon. member for North Island—Powell River.

Ms. Rachel Blaney: Madam Speaker, we do not accept it.

[Translation]

The Assistant Deputy Speaker (Mrs. Carol Hughes): Therefore, pursuant to Standing Order 85, the amendment cannot be moved at this time.

[English]

Ms. Leah Gazan (Winnipeg Centre, NDP): Madam Speaker, I would like to thank the corporate champion of Carleton for his comments.

The Conservative government in the U.K. has put in place a windfall tax on oil and gas companies. Will the Leader of the Opposition support our plan for a windfall tax so that we can invest that money to give working people a break on their energy bills, or is he too afraid to axe the profits of his oil and gas buddies, and CEOs?

• (1150)

Hon. Pierre Poilievre: Madam Speaker, first of all, let us just acknowledge what happened here. The NDP has flip-flopped again.

For the last eight years, its members have supported the Prime Minister's plan to quadruple the tax on home heating and then, under relentless pressure from common-sense Conservatives, yesterday, they flip-flopped and admitted they were wrong all along. Then today, they flip-flopped again and said that they now support a carbon tax on home heating for some.

The coalition is reunited, and all three of them are together now: the separatists, the socialists and the Prime Minister. The costly coalition is bankrupting the people. The only solution is a common-sense Conservative government that will axe the tax.

[Translation]

Hon. Steven MacKinnon (Gatineau, Lib.): Madam Speaker, when it comes to flip-flopping in the House, the Leader of the Opposition should feel right at home. He has been here since God knows when, but in 2008, he ran under Stephen Harper and promised to put a price on pollution. In 2019 and 2021, he ran under Erin O'Toole and swore to his constituents that he would put a price on carbon. All the Conservatives did.

Say what we like about flip-flopping, but the opposition leader has done his share. When did he change his mind? Was he misleading people back then, or is he misleading them now?

Hon. Pierre Poilievre: Madam Speaker, I have always opposed the carbon tax. When I began my career, Liberal lobbyists were all over Parliament Hill, asking for more taxes and other benefits for Liberal friends. That member is an example of the lobbying industry that exists on the Hill, one that favours the Prime Minister's pals and is costly to ordinary Canadians.

After eight years of this Prime Minister, he is not worth the cost. He acknowledged this by giving some people a break on the carbon tax, in ridings where he is slumping in the polls and where Liberal members were rebelling. Now we are simply saying that everyone should get a break.

[English]

It is just until the next election at which time we can have a carbon tax election to choose between the Liberal-NDP-Bloc plan to quadruple the tax and my common-sense plan to axe the tax and bring home lower prices.

Mr. Mark Gerretsen: Madam Speaker, I rise on a point of order. The Leader of the Opposition referred to the member for Gatineau as a former lobbyist. He has never been a lobbyist. Maybe the member wants to retract that.

The Assistant Deputy Speaker (Mrs. Carol Hughes): That is a point of debate.

Questions and comments, the member for Trois-Rivières.

[Translation]

Mr. René Villemure (Trois-Rivières, BQ): Madam Speaker, I thank the Leader of the Opposition for his insults.

I do not know what he read in *La Presse* recently. He and I must have read different things. Earlier I heard all kinds of falsehoods,

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jokes, smears, deceptions, hypocrisies, fantasies, inventions, fabrications and trickery. In all of this, I heard nothing about what was in the *La Presse* article he referred to. I wonder if he could enlighten me on that first.

Second, I would like him to define “common sense” for me. Rather than turning it into an empty slogan, I would like him to explain what he really means, philosophically, when he says “common sense”.

Hon. Pierre Poilievre: Madam Speaker, common sense is getting rid of the carbon tax to lower prices. Common sense is lowering taxes to make work pay again. Common sense is cutting red tape to make it possible to build more affordable housing for Canadians. Common sense is balancing the budget to reduce inflation and interest rates.

Common sense means that Quebecers are free to earn large paycheques to be able to buy food, fuel and affordable homes in safe communities.

That is common sense.

• (1155)

Mr. Yves Perron (Berthier—Maskinongé, BQ): Madam Speaker, there is a strange atmosphere in here. There are two extremes in the House, both of which are panicking over the polls. In fact, I could even say there are three extremes.

The government is starting to make last-minute decisions in a panic. If there is one point on which I could agree with the Conservatives, it is that panic has gripped the government, spurring it to make poor decisions, such as last week's announcement. The parties are caught in what I will call populism, meaning that they propose any old thing and toss slogans around. The Bloc Québécois just saw the proof once again. We asked for an explanation, but we received a string of slogans by way of an answer. No doubt they will make great sound bites, but they ring hollow.

I will talk about the absence of truth, the trick that certain political parties have of proposing any old thing to the House, not for the purpose of benefiting the common good or helping the citizens of Quebec and Canada, but for the purpose of scoring points. How do they score these political points? They move a motion that they know the other political parties cannot support because it contains measures that are unreasonable. Then they can reproach the other parties for not adopting the motion.

I will therefore continue my speech along this emotional path, especially since it threw me earlier, Madam Speaker, when you confused my riding with that of another member. My colleague from Trois-Rivières is very smart, likeable and charismatic, so I will take this as a compliment. However, I do not think he is quite as handsome as me, so I am a little irked. All joking aside, I should clarify, since I forgot to do it earlier, that I will be sharing my time with my colleague from Trois-Rivières, for whom I have the utmost affection, of course.

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Once again, the motion presented to the House does not make sense. The basic idea is not bad. However, as is often the case with measures proposed by the NDP, either the math does not add up or Quebec's jurisdictions are disrespected. It is always one or the other. One need only consider the pan-Canadian pharmacare plan. The Bloc agrees with it in principle. We are not here to harm Canada. However, when we ask them to put in writing that Quebec would have the right to opt out, they refuse to do so. We are therefore forced to vote against the pharmacare plan, because we want to protect Quebec. Then we are accused of not wanting pharmacare.

It is the same thing with the Conservatives. They are accusing us—oh, the irony—of having voted for a second carbon tax. I heard it yesterday and again today from the Leader of the Opposition. That was never put to a vote, however. Their so-called second carbon tax, this falsehood that Conservatives like to repeat all over the media and every other forum, is a regulation that was adopted by the government. We never voted on this regulation which, just like the first carbon tax, does not apply in Quebec because Quebec already has an equivalent regulation in place. Quebec's regulation is actually more stringent. This regulation has no effect on Quebec, but Conservatives repeat all day long that it does and that the Bloc Québécois voted for it. If that is not lying, I do not know what is.

I want to come back to the NDP's motion. They are talking about giving people a chance. We are on board with that. However, the Bloc Québécois believes in energy equity, or in other words, we believe that efforts must be made to prevent global warming while helping low-income people. That is what we should be doing, but it is not what the NDP is proposing in its motion. I hope that the NDP's intentions are nobler than the Conservatives'. I hope that the NDP does not intend to simply say tomorrow that the Bloc voted against their motion, because that would be very disappointing. That may happen. We will see. We will then know what to expect in the future.

The big problem with the NDP's motion is that it does not look at how much this measure will cost or fully consider where the money for implementing it will come from. Putting a tax on the excessive profits of oil companies seems like a good idea. According to the Parliamentary Budget Officer's estimates, that would generate about \$1 billion per year. My colleague from Rosemont—La Petite-Patrie even pointed that out earlier. However, the proposed measures would cost \$4.5 billion per year for the GST and even more for the heat pumps. The NDP wants to give everyone a free heat pump.

• (1200)

See how sensitive, tricky and also a little dishonest that is?

They are nice; they want to help Canadians. They want to give everyone heat pumps, but that is not realistic. I, too, would love to give everyone a heat pump. I would like that. Earlier, my colleague was more reasonable than I was. She tried to temper things by saying that various factors could lower the price tag and it might be about \$77 billion. However, according to the figures I have, it could be closer to \$100 billion. That is significant. That is a major measure. It is not that we are against heat pumps, but this just does not make sense.

That is the sad thing about all this. I dream of a time when MPs will work together, presenting reasonable measures for the common good. We are presented with measures that make no sense, and then, tomorrow, we will be criticized for voting against them. I find it very difficult to deal with this kind of populist dishonesty on a daily basis in the House. It is all about scoring points and making a good impression. The motion we are considering seems to indicate that the NDP is seeing that the polls are changing and they are in a bit of a panic. They want to show that they, too, want to eliminate taxes. That is what we are seeing today.

I will go over the proposal briefly, starting with removing the GST from residential heating. I am not saying that is a bad idea or one not worth looking at, but how do we distinguish electricity used for heating from that used for everything else in Quebec when more than 80% of Quebecers have electric heat? How is that going to be adjusted with respect to people in western Canada and the Atlantic provinces who heat with oil?

They use electricity too, but their power bills will not be adjusted, while their heating oil cost will. That means rewarding fossil fuel use. Do people still want to promote fossil fuels? Some things do not work. As I said, this measure would be very expensive.

The funniest, most bizarre measure—I am not sure how else to describe it—is giving everyone a free heat pump, including people in the middle class. It looks like they want to give free heat pumps to a whole lot of people. What is the plan for compensating people who are already installing one? What is the plan for making sure that businesses that do this kind of work can keep up with demand? I predict the price of heat pumps will skyrocket in the next two months. That is pretty clear.

How is the government going to balance the books then? We often hear people say that we have to balance the budget. A measure that costs about \$100 billion is huge. With that kind of measure, how are we helping people living on low and modest incomes?

As someone mentioned earlier, does that mean that people whose heating costs are included in their rent get nothing? Will landlords already charging high rents receive a tax credit? Will people living in 28-room luxury homes be exempt from paying tax on the heating for their huge mansions?

Parties have to think before proposing measures. I want to stress that I am a moderate and reasonable person. I understand the basic intention. The parties want to do something, but they are coming up with wild solutions knowing full well that almost no one will vote for them because nothing balances at the end of the month. Then they will call us out for refusing to help people.

Meanwhile, the Bloc Québécois is looking for support regarding subsidies for oil companies, for example. We have been talking a lot about how much they are making, because their profits are ridiculous. Not only are they making profits, but by 2035, it is expected that the Canadian government will have given them \$83 billion in subsidies. That is a lot of money that could go toward heat pumps. Could those subsidies be eliminated so old age pensions could be increased starting at age 65 for people who need them to buy groceries and pay their bills? Could we be reasonable and sit down to talk about how we could establish credits to help low-income people, people who need support or who need assistance because they have a large family so it is hard to put food on the table?

We should be focusing on things like this, in other words, specific, concrete things that affect people's daily lives, without resorting to disgusting populism and creating sound bites to smear other political parties.

• (1205)

I am sick of that. I want to work on behalf of Quebecers.

[English]

Mr. Mark Gerretsen (Kingston and the Islands, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, the hon. Bloc member brought up a lot of points that are similar to my points.

Could the member perhaps explain some of the policies currently existing in Quebec that are really encouraging people to move toward cleaner options? We know that Quebec has a long history of this. Quebec recently announced that it is illegal to install forms of oil heating in homes, and soon it will be illegal to even install any new fossil fuel-burning heating options.

Quebec has genuinely been a leader in affordable electricity for the province. What can the member share that the rest of the country could benefit from?

[Translation]

Mr. Yves Perron: Mr. Speaker, I thank my colleague for his generous question and for helping me answer it, because he supplied half the response before giving me the floor.

Indeed, Quebec has always been a leader. We saw that with child care. It took 25 years for Canada to get on board. I hope that Canada will get on board when it comes to energy as well.

Quebec helps people install more efficient heating systems, such as heat pumps, through the Rénoclimat program. A preliminary assessment is done of the homes. It is all well regulated. The program is geared to people who need help the most.

What could Canada recognize about Quebec? It could recognize the way we want to live and run our own affairs. Maybe it should just let us be. It may have better luck that way, if it wants to keep us. For now, what we want is to run our own affairs.

[English]

Mrs. Anna Roberts (King—Vaughan, CPC): Mr. Speaker, I would like to ask my hon. colleague a question.

There is a 70-year-old grandmother in Newfoundland who cannot afford to eat or heat her home. She has had to go out and get a

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second job to support her family. How is the carbon tax going to help this individual?

If seniors matter, why is the Quebec caucus voting with the Liberal government and not with Conservatives for common-sense solutions? Could the member explain this to me?

[Translation]

Mr. Yves Perron: Mr. Speaker, I will try to make this quick. There was a lot to her question.

First of all, the carbon tax does not apply in Quebec. I have said it many times. I would like her party to get that through their heads. It is an important detail. That is why we voted against the Conservative motion yesterday. We did not want to create an imbalance between people in this country. There are ways to help people.

Second, my colleague is talking to me about a 70-year-old woman. I just spoke about old age pensions starting at age 65. Her party always used to express support for our idea of increasing the old age pension starting at age 65, but since the arrival of the new leader, we are no longer hearing any support from them. Now, this member has the nerve to talk to me about a 70-year-old woman who is struggling to make ends meet. I am trying not to get angry, but sometimes it is difficult.

[English]

Mr. Randall Garrison (Esquimalt—Saanich—Sooke, NDP): Mr. Speaker, I listened with interest to the Bloc member's comments. I thought I heard a couple of red herrings in there.

One concern that the Liberals also raised is about how there might be some wealthy person in Canada who would benefit from having GST removed from their home heating. I am not really concerned about that, as long as they pay their taxes. The other one is the high cost of these programs.

Would the member support an excess profit tax on the oil and gas companies to help pay for things so that others can afford their heating and get off fossil fuels?

[Translation]

Mr. Yves Perron: Mr. Speaker, I thank my colleague for his smart, well-articulated question. How refreshing.

We could study his proposal. I said earlier that there is a major issue with the oil companies. Essentially, for years, the Bloc Québécois has been very vocal in every one of its speeches in the House about starting by ending the subsidies for the oil companies. They will have gotten \$83 billion by 2035. It makes no sense.

Yes, we can look at the proposal. We are open to all proposals. We will study all of them.

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However, we have to be smart about imposing taxes. We need to avoid price increases. Unfortunately and far too often, the oil industry passes the cost on to the consumer, who is trapped, while the industry continues to make record profits.

I think the government needs to stop subsidizing the industry.

• (1210)

Mr. René Villemure (Trois-Rivières, BQ): Mr. Speaker, I want to start by extending my heartfelt greetings to my constituents in Trois-Rivières, who often contact me about the precarious state of the French language and about immigration. It cannot be said often enough that the latest Official Languages Act is nothing but a bilingualism legislation that is not in Quebec's favour. We need to remember that.

Today's debate is on an NDP motion to remove the GST from home heating. Let us analyze the motion a little deeper. It states that "2023 saw a record fire season due to climate change". That is a fact, sadly. The motion also mentions that "Canadians continue to struggle with dramatic increases to the cost of living while Canada's biggest corporations, including oil and gas corporations, post record profits". That is also a fact. However, the NDP mentions neither banks, who are in the same situation, nor their hobby horse, grocery stores. The motion also mentions "federal government programs aimed at supporting energy efficient retrofits" that are "hard to access". That part of the motion is somewhat interpretive. I will go through the motion item by item.

At first glance, the motion seems to be talking about social justice and equity. It seems as though the intention of this motion is to provide help to those who need it most, which is keeping with the NDP's usual stance. However, sometimes we need to pay closer attention to determine whether the measures that are actually going to be implemented are consistent with the stated intention. Let me explain.

I will give an example from the business world, because that is what I am familiar with. Over the past 20 years, in the business community, we have been hearing a lot of managerial discourse designed to motivate employees or take advantage of them, as the case may be. Employers have been talking about responsibility when what they mean is accountability. Everyone has been talking about kindness, but it does not mean anything to anyone. Employers have been talking about team work, when employees are actually in competition. People often use big words—and the Leader of the Opposition is an expert in that area—without any real understanding of what those words actually mean.

I would remind my colleagues, who are always happy to hear it, that a word is a construct of sound and meaning. Sometimes the sound changes the meaning, and we can be misled by that. As the saying goes, the end justifies the means. In recent years, we have noticed that people have often been confusing the ends and the means. They think that the means are the ends, which is an error of judgment. When members say that the carbon tax is an end, that is an error of judgment. The carbon tax is simply a means.

Getting back to the NDP motion, it seems noble on the surface. Who would not want to help the least fortunate? Is that really what this is about, though? I was surprised to see a motion like this up

for debate this week at this point in the session. For some time now, we have been witnessing the Liberal government in turmoil. It does not know if it is coming or going with its flagship carbon tax initiative. First it says it will apply the tax. Then it says it will not. Then it says it will apply it on some things, but not on others. As the classic song goes, the Liberal government's internal dialogue is basically, "Should I stay or should I go?"

I would even go so far as to say that, in its confusion, the government is dragging its confidence and supply agreement partner down with it. I can see how desperately the NDP is trying to distinguish itself from the Liberals. Removing the GST from heating is not necessarily a bad thing in and of itself, but it has nothing to do with the carbon tax.

Measures already exist for heat pumps and alternative heating systems. Quebec talks about energy equity. There are actually numerous other options. At the end of the day, who is going to pay for heat pumps? It is typical of the NDP to continually ask for measures without concerning themselves with how they will be financed. Funding programs requires revenue, and that revenue usually comes from taxes. We have to be careful. I know that the New Democrats are in favour of taxing oil companies, but let us not confuse reality with obsession. Who will pay for heat pumps? The oil companies, of course.

• (1215)

That will mean more investments in oil so that oil companies can finance the heat pumps in question. This seems to me to be the antithesis of the NDP's usual position.

The NDP likes to say it will tax profits. I am not against that. However, profits exist for a reason. Take a risk and sometimes that risk is rewarded. Taxing excess profits is fine, but we need a definition of "excess".

Basically, when we talk about helping the most disadvantaged, we are talking about equity. Equity, when defined, is a fair assessment of what each person is entitled to. What are lower-income families entitled to? What are the people entitled to when they benefit from the GST credit because heating is included in the rent? That could be troublesome.

I would like to propose that we act according to what is right, or social justice, in other words, that we do the right thing at the right time, in the right way and for the right reasons. I do not think that is what is happening here. Honestly, I believe that the stated intention of helping the less fortunate is nothing more than a smokescreen for the NDP's veiled attempt to hold on to votes or win votes as it goes through challenging times. Passing the NDP motion would be a mistake, if not a failure. For the NDP, it would amount to a subtle betrayal of its own principles.

In light of the various arguments and given my conviction that its purported purpose is not directly related to its concealed aim or stated intention, the Bloc Québécois will vote against the NDP motion.

[English]

Mr. Kevin Lamoureux (Parliamentary Secretary to the Leader of the Government in the House of Commons, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, I want to go back to yesterday's motion. I think today's motion reflects, in good part, what took place with the vote yesterday.

One thing that is getting lost in this debate is the issue of the environment and the valuable role that heat pumps will play going forward. It is easy to say that we should get rid of this tax or that tax and so forth, but it overshadows the importance of good, solid government policy on heat pumps. Could the member share his thoughts on that?

[Translation]

Mr. René Villemure: Mr. Speaker, as always, the question from my colleague opposite is relevant.

I have not taken a position against the tax. I do not want to leave any room for confusion here. I also did not say that heat pumps are useless. I said that heat pumps still need financing and that the tax, in its current form, will not be affected by a goods and services tax reduction. I therefore did not take a position on whether the tax is relevant or not, but rather on the measure used to mitigate its impact.

I do not believe it will achieve the desired effect.

[English]

Ms. Rachel Blaney (North Island—Powell River, NDP): Mr. Speaker, I was a little confused by the member's speech, and I hope I can get some clarity.

The member talked a lot about social justice and its impact. From his speech, I wonder if he understands the correlation between economic justice and social justice and how, so often, the lowest-income people are the ones working the hardest to make ends meet while the very wealthy CEOs are making money off their backs. Does he think those two things need to be dealt with if we are going to be proud of this country we call Canada?

• (1220)

[Translation]

Mr. René Villemure: Mr. Speaker, my colleague will be happy to hear that I completely agree with her on that. However, I do not believe that the proposed measures will achieve the desired outcome or stated intent. I agree with the purpose, but I do not believe that these measures are the best way to achieve it.

Mr. Yves Perron (Berthier—Maskinongé, BQ): Mr. Speaker, I thank my colleague for his brilliant speech.

I am going to do something I do not normally do and talk about a family member. In a few minutes, my sister-in-law Carole will be going to an extremely important medical appointment. I want her to know that she has always been there for me and I will always be there for her. She can count on my support.

My question for my colleague relates to what I just said. It is about being there for others. Could my colleague explain what the role of a member of Parliament is? It is about being there for our constituents.

Business of Supply

Is it to move motions that we know will not be adopted, simply to score political points, or is it something else? I would like him to explain what "something else" might mean.

Mr. René Villemure: Mr. Speaker, I thank my brilliant colleague from Berthier—Maskinongé for his always relevant questions. I will keep his sister-in-law Carole in my thoughts.

Being there for people is a good thing. It is the essence of an MP's job. Our constituents delegated responsibility to us so that we could act for them in Parliament. We have to be there for our constituents. We have to be there for the public.

Electoral considerations will never be entirely absent, of course. However, electoral considerations should be front and centre during election campaigns, not during a session, when we should be there to help the less fortunate and, as my colleague who spoke before me was saying, to reconcile social and economic justice.

[English]

Ms. Rachel Blaney (North Island—Powell River, NDP): Mr. Speaker, I will be splitting my time with the member for Winnipeg Centre.

Just a few minutes ago, I saw a headline saying "Liberal government set to miss 2030 emissions targets, says environment commissioner audit". I found the article interesting. It reads:

The audit said it had expected to find specific targets for how much each of the measures it implemented would cut emissions, but found there were no targets for 95 per cent of those measures.

"Without expected emission reductions transparently available in the plan, it is not possible to know which of the mitigation measures to reduce emissions were key," the audit said....

We are in a climate emergency. Every day we are seeing the change of our environment. This summer, I watched as many communities across my province of British Columbia were on fire. People were fleeing in circumstances I cannot even begin to imagine. In this province, we have seen communities destroyed by a river that literally fell out of the sky. This is happening, and the expenses of it are phenomenal.

Here we are today. We have an actual motion that would address some of these issues. It understands the seriousness of what is happening in our climate; it has gone beyond the pale, and we are in an existential crisis that we need to make right. We need that action.

We also know that, in this circumstance, we are seeing Canadians struggle with the cost of living. I talk to everyday Canadians across my region, who are trying so hard to keep up with costs. At the same time, Canada's biggest corporations, including the oil and gas sector, have record profits unlike anything they have seen for about 30 years.

We need to address the climate and what is happening; we also need to acknowledge that our society is becoming one that is simply, in my opinion, unfair. Everyday people are working so hard, but they are not getting ahead because the ultrawealthy are scooping up the excess and leaving ordinary Canadians behind.

Business of Supply

This motion asks this place to remove the GST from all forms of home heating. This is something the NDP has been working on for a very long—

• (1225)

The Deputy Speaker: I believe we have a point of order from the hon. member for Battle River—Crowfoot.

Mr. Damien Kurek: Mr. Speaker, I would ask for a quorum call.

And the count having been taken:

The Deputy Speaker: We now have quorum; we may continue.

The hon. member for North Island—Powell River has the floor.

Ms. Rachel Blaney: Mr. Speaker, I am glad to hear we have quorum in the House.

I will go back to the fact the NDP has been fighting for a long time to have GST removed from all forms of home heating. In fact, there have been multiple motions that the Conservatives have made in the House that we have tried to amend to make sure we could see the GST included in these—

The Deputy Speaker: We have another point of order.

The parliamentary secretary to the government House leader.

Mr. Kevin Lamoureux: Mr. Speaker, is there a quorum requirement for one member of the Conservative Party to be in the chamber?

The Deputy Speaker: We cannot say whether someone is here or not. The hon. member is fully aware of that.

I apologize to the hon. member for North Island—Powell River for being interrupted so many times.

The hon. member for North Island—Powell River.

Ms. Rachel Blaney: Mr. Speaker, it is unfortunate that I have been interrupted so many times and that people do not want to hear the reality of so many Canadians in the riding of North Island—Powell River. Hopefully, people will be listening from here on in.

We have also done a lot of work on trying to get this place to understand that one thing we need to do is to finance the changes that are greatly needed across the country by placing a tax on excess profits of oil and gas corporations and holding to account, of course, places such as grocery stores, which are making an incredible amount of profit off the backs of everyday Canadians.

We know that Canadians across the country and in North Island—Powell River are scraping by and cutting back. They are trying to make ends meet, but it feels absolutely impossible. They deserve a break on their heating bills, wherever they live across this country, not just in particular parts of the country.

Here we are in this reality, and we need to see action taken. I want to come back to the fact that the NDP has called on the Liberals and, in fact, the Conservatives to remove the GST from home heating. We did that in multiple amendments that we offered to the Conservatives when they had motions before the House.

For me, one reason that this is incredibly important is that, as a British Columbian, I know that the so-called solutions that the Conservatives are offering leave B.C. out. The reality is, and it is com-

mon knowledge, that there is a provincial process for carbon pricing here in B.C. and not a federal one.

If federal carbon pricing were removed, this actually would not have an impact in British Columbia. That really concerns me, because the people in my riding are struggling. They need a bit of a break, and the GST would actually offer them one, one that was consistent and reliable, that people could have some faith in.

Here we are in this situation, and I do not know why. I do not know why the Conservatives keep leaving B.C., Quebec and the Northwest Territories out. I find that confusing; hopefully, we will figure that out.

I think about not only the huge cost of dealing with climate change across the country but also the human cost. In my riding, during the summer when we saw a lot of those significant forest fires, volunteer firefighters, firefighters from my riding, from communities such as Port McNeill, Port Hardy, Campbell River, Comox, Powell River and probably more, all went out to help. They took time, went out there and fought the fires, because there is just not enough people to do that work.

These people are making significant sacrifices away from their families, and to their health and well-being, and they are doing it because this is what is happening. Their health and well-being matter to me, as do the future of this planet and the health and well-being of our children.

Here we are in this climate emergency. People cannot afford the basic necessities, and it is only going to get worse if we do not see some significant work done on both sides of this.

We know that, if people in small communities have to face a forest fire or some sort of natural disaster that is due to climate change, especially in my riding, they often have one road out of the community, or they have the ocean. We are living in a rainforest with drought again and again, year after year. It is very concerning.

This Liberal government keeps saying that it is going to do things. We talked about that at the beginning, when we saw the commissioner saying that there are no real targets we can follow that are actually going to show a consistent movement toward meeting those goals. We know that this has to be dealt with quickly.

Home heating helps with that. Canada, in fact, has committed to more than 10% of home heating to be provided by heat pumps by 2030, in order to achieve the commitments for the emissions reduction plan. Right now, we are only at 6%.

To get to that 10% by 2030, about 560,000 heat pumps have to be installed across the country. That is about 70,000 a year. I believe that, this year, we are at just over 400. We are nowhere near where we need to get to.

This is a motion about fairness and making sure that everybody gets a little bit of help during this time of profound financial challenges. It means having stability. It is time for us to see that action.

• (1230)

We know that what the Liberals have announced is a temporary pausing of the tax for heating oil in all provinces for three years, but it does not look at it across the country and what we could do. The heat pump program needs to be a lot more resilient. It needs to be affordable for everyday Canadians.

I heard a member talking earlier about it going out to the middle class. With respect to the increasing costs right now, the middle class is hurting profoundly and the class below that is struggling in ways that we cannot even imagine. If we are going to take this seriously, we need to be addressing both things at the same time. We need to ensure there is a bar of dignity that people do not fall below and we need to ensure we address the climate crisis at a rate that will get those emissions down and see us progress. We are not seeing that. We are not seeing the federal government commit to this, and we need to get it done.

It is time for the ultrarich to start paying their fair share. Therefore, we are going to fight hard and we are going to continue to do that. The oil and gas industry is making huge profits, while gas prices are going so high. We need to make it right. I hope people will reconsider and vote for this motion.

Mr. Kevin Lamoureux (Parliamentary Secretary to the Leader of the Government in the House of Commons, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, the NDP is saying, in essence, that for all forms of heating, people would not have to pay GST. There is a considerable amount of confusion on this. If they say that electricity, natural gas, propane and heating oil will be exempt from the GST, two issues come to mind.

One is in regard to the fact that a lot of those products are used to do more than just provide home heating. Therefore, is there a way that the NDP would compensate or take that into consideration?

The second issue is whether this would be of a permanent nature. Is it something that would be for six months? During the summer, for example, would the GST still be taken off?

• (1235)

Ms. Rachel Blaney: Mr. Speaker, Seth Klein said this, “The fed NDP have a motion coming forward Tuesday trying to shift the debate caused by the Lib’s boneheaded carbon tax carve-out. This motion lays out a far better approach. This alternate motion calls on government to eliminate the GST for all forms of home heating, including electric, offer free heat pumps and energy retrofits for low and middle-income households and pay for it with revenues from a windfall profit tax on oil and gas companies.” I will be listening to Seth, and I thank him.

Ms. Lianne Rood (Lambton—Kent—Middlesex, CPC): Mr. Speaker, I find it very interesting that yesterday the NDP voted with Conservatives on our common-sense motion to remove the carbon tax from all forms of home heating for all Canadians, instead of just singling out the 3% of Canadians who use heating oil for their homes.

Business of Supply

The New Democrats are neglecting the 97% of Canadians who use other forms, such as natural gas or propane, for their home heating. Winter is here. It is going to be -20°C. Why then did the member today decline our leader’s common-sense amendment to the NDP motion today to exclude the carbon tax on all forms of home heating for all Canadians? They could do that today by accepting the Conservative amendment.

Ms. Rachel Blaney: Mr. Speaker, I will remind the member that I was very clear in my speech that we offered amendments more than once for the Conservative motions around their carbon-taxing concerns. We have pointed out that B.C., Quebec and the Northwest Territories are not included. Why are the Conservatives leaving those provinces and territories out of something so that those folks do not get the support they need during this time of huge inequality in income?

[Translation]

Mr. Yves Perron (Berthier—Maskinongé, BQ): Mr. Speaker, I want to draw my colleague’s attention to something important. At the beginning of her speech, she focused on the climate crisis and the fact that we must take action in light of that crisis. In the measures that the NDP is proposing, however, no distinction is made between different sources of energy.

Does my colleague not believe that her party could have proposed something better crafted and more structured to encourage people to move away from fossil fuels and switch to cleaner energy?

[English]

Ms. Rachel Blaney: Mr. Speaker, this is an incredibly important part of what we need to be talking about, moving forward to energy that is more economic and more environmentally friendly. However, what this motion is really addressing, though, is the fact that we need fairness for all people across the country, for people who are dealing with an economic crisis that is stressing them out and making it harder for them to decide on whether to pay for food, or heat or medication. The motion specifically focuses on this.

We have offered other ideas and motions that deal with those broader conversation, but we did not want to put all of that into a big motion, because it gets harder for people. This is what we are focusing on today. I look forward to continuing to work with every member in this place to move toward a greener economy that has environmental friendliness at the heart of it.

Ms. Leah Gazan (Winnipeg Centre, NDP): Mr. Speaker, I rise today to speak in support of our party’s opposition motion.

Business of Supply

This is what real climate action looks like: climate action that does not divide people, but brings people together; climate action that gives families and individuals struggling to make ends meet a break, while also reducing our carbon emissions; climate action that asks the big polluters, who have seen record profits, to pay for it.

We are in the midst of two different crises that must be addressed: a climate crisis and an affordability crisis linked to growing inequality.

Last spring and summer, we were confronted directly by the impact of the climate crisis. Record-setting wildfires covered large parts of the country, causing provinces to declare states of emergency and many residents to flee. Smoke blanketed cities across the country, including Winnipeg, where poor air quality kept people indoors and posed a danger to people with pre-existing health issues, including asthma.

What we saw over those months was a window into our future if we did not treat this climate crisis with the urgency it deserved. We cannot allow extreme weather events, which put the lives and health of people at risk, to become the new normal. It is not normal; it is a consequence of our failure to act.

Meanwhile, a growing affordability crisis is forcing a growing number of people in our communities to choose between groceries and rent, to choose between heating and eating. Grocery prices have soared, far outpacing the general rate of inflation and wage growth.

In Winnipeg Centre, which has the third-highest child poverty rate in the country, food bank use is climbing. In fact, according to a report by Food Banks Canada, food banks in Manitoba have seen a 30% rise in demand. In March of this year alone, there were 57,000 food bank visits, more than 20,000 of whom were children. Life is getting harder and harder for people who were already struggling to get by.

Who is not struggling? Canada's big oil and gas companies. The top five Canadian oil and gas companies reported \$38.3 billion in profits for 2022. That is an increase of more than double compared to their profits of \$16.9 billion in 2021. That is shameful.

Suncor alone made over \$9 billion in profit during 2022, an astonishing and shameful amount. Where is this money going? It is not going toward fighting climate change or making life more affordable for people. It is going to reward its shareholders and CEOs.

Speaking of CEOs, I want to talk about Imperial Oil. Brad Corson, the CEO of Imperial Oil, is the highest-paid executive in the Canadian energy industry. His pay almost doubled in 2022, up to \$17.3 million. Imperial Oil is currently under formal federal investigation for a months-long tailings leak at its Kearl oil sands mine in Northern Alberta. Documents filed by the company showed it knew that tailings were seeping into groundwater for years before contaminated fluid was reported on the surface.

When my constituents miss a shift at work, they get their pay docked and they risk getting fired. When the CEO of Imperial Oil presides over an environmental catastrophe, he gets his pay doubled. It is an insult to hard-working people all over the country

whose wages have not budged for years. That is just one reason why we need a windfall tax on the excess profits of big oil and gas companies.

● (1240)

Why a windfall tax? It is about ensuring that the big polluters, which are worsening the climate crisis, are paying for the action needed to address it. Right now, we know that is not happening. Major loopholes in the carbon pricing framework mean that oil and gas companies only pay a small fraction of the cost of their pollution, while 80% to 90% of their emissions are exempt. To take one example, Suncor, which I mentioned previously, only pays one-fourteenth of the full carbon price.

It would also generate significant revenue that we can invest in lowering people's energy bills, with home retrofits that reduce emissions and make life more affordable. How significant? The parliamentary budget office estimated that a windfall tax would generate \$4 billion over five years. This could fund a program to make heat pumps and other retrofits free of cost to families that would otherwise not be able to afford them.

A windfall tax, as we know, is not a radical idea. The European Union, the U.K. and India are among those that have implemented one. Why? It is common sense. At a time when energy companies are making record profits and people are struggling to pay their heating bills, we need to turn a portion of those excess profits into relief for consumers. We can also use revenue from a windfall tax for a massive expansion of energy efficient home renovations for low- and middle-class Canadians. Home retrofits and heating pumps are a win-win-win. They reduce emissions, lower people's utility bills and create green jobs.

In Winnipeg Centre, many people would like to make these changes to their homes, but they simply cannot afford the upfront cost. This program should not be restricted to folks who only use a certain type of fuel to heat their homes. Whether they use home heating oil, natural gas, electric baseboard heating or anything else, they should have access to a program that lets them reduce their carbon footprint and reduces their monthly power bill. It is about how we get to net-zero emissions and how we bring millions of people along in the fight against the climate emergency.

Business of Supply

Life is hard enough already for families and individuals in my riding who are working three jobs and skipping meals so their kids can eat. These are not the people who should be paying more to address the climate crisis. It is the big oil and gas companies and their CEOs who are fuelling this crisis, and we should be sticking them with the bill. We are running out of time to get this right.

Dividing people up by region and putting all the burden on individuals, as the Liberals are doing, will not get us there. Neither will burying our heads in the sand and refusing to even offer a climate plan, which is the Conservative approach. In fact, the Leader of the Opposition, the corporate champion from Carleton, is silent when it comes to the obscene profits being made by his oil and gas buddies. It is no wonder, because when he was sitting at the cabinet table, his government handed out \$55 billion in tax cuts to wealthy corporations, including oil and gas companies.

It is time for a new approach, one that finally asks the big polluters to pay their fair share of the costs, one that gives families and individuals who are struggling real relief from the rising costs driving them deeper into poverty and despair and one that makes energy efficient upgrades available to millions of households that want to do their part for our planet but cannot because the costs are too high. Today's motion is exactly the kind of new approach that is desperately needed. I urge the government and all parties of the House to support it and put us on a pathway to real climate action that lifts people up and gives them the help they need.

• (1245)

Mr. Ben Carr (Winnipeg South Centre, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, I was surprised to hear my hon. colleague use language that is typically attributable to the Conservatives' policy on climate change. I am wondering if she can comment on the following. At no time in the last few years has the price of groceries in Canada exceeded the cost of groceries in the United States. Canada remains among the countries with the lowest price of groceries in the G7. This is versus other countries, our allies, that do not have prices on pollution.

Can she comment on the correlation between an increase in grocery prices and a price on pollution? In jurisdictions where there is no price on pollution, grocery prices are still higher.

Ms. Leah Gazan: Mr. Speaker, I would like the member to ask the residents of Winnipeg Centre, who are having the hardest time ever feeding their families, about his brag that our food prices are really low. My riding has the third-highest number of children in the country going without food. Where is the Liberal government? It is trying to buy off and divide Canadians with bogus plans for political points.

The Liberal government, instead of supporting the NDP motion to control grocery prices, is having meetings with CEOs to demonstrate they are going to do the right thing so that people in my riding of Winnipeg Centre can eat. I am done with the political bantering, sound bites and bragging about how the Liberals have tackled affordability. I would like the member to sit down with the families and people of Winnipeg Centre who are currently starving and on the verge of being unhoused to see what they think about how well the government is doing on the affordability crisis.

• (1250)

Mr. Dave Epp (Chatham-Kent—Leamington, CPC): Mr. Speaker, I agree with the hon. member that no one should go hungry. There are eight billion people in this world, four billion of whom are fed by synthetic fertilizers enhancing food production. That has been acknowledged in three committees I have attended this past week.

Would the member acknowledge that natural gas from our fossil fuel companies is integral to feeding half of the world's production, as acknowledged by the World Food Programme, Canadian Foodgrains Bank and others?

Ms. Leah Gazan: Mr. Speaker, we know that the fossil fuel industry is contributing to catastrophic climate change. We know that climate change and the climate emergency are impacting food production, particularly in countries where the Canadian Foodgrains Bank works.

Let us talk about common sense. I am concerned about the Conservatives' "common-sense" plan. They are not willing to axe the profits of their corporate buddies, but they are willing to fuel their profits.

I am wondering if the corporate champion from Carleton, the leader of the Conservative Party, will put forward what he thinks is common sense and give another \$55 billion to big corporations in the oil and gas industry.

Mr. Brian Masse (Windsor West, NDP): Mr. Speaker, one thing that is really important is the cost of living in general. We are scoping on this component too.

I like the member's comments with regard to affordable services that are essential, such as cellphone prices and the costs there, and how Canada has deviated away from market control on these things. The United States has better control. The European Union has better control.

When we look at that, what are some of the other things we could look at to create affordability for Canadians? The industries that I mentioned are also making record profits using a public service, which is the spectrum for the airwaves we have. The Liberals and the Conservatives brought in \$20 billion from spectrum while at the same time passing on the extra costs to consumers.

Ms. Leah Gazan: Mr. Speaker, it is important to note that access to communications is a fundamental right that the Liberal government continues to turn a blind eye to. There are so many people across Canada who do not have access to a cellphone and do not have access to the Internet. That is something the government should be addressing. It is a human rights matter that the government is failing on, and it needs to act on that now.

Mr. Francesco Sorbara (Vaughan—Woodbridge, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, it is always a privilege and pleasure to rise in this House.

Business of Supply

Before I begin my formal remarks, I want to discuss affordability. It is important to get on the record this morning for my constituents and all Canadians what our government has done to make life more affordable for all Canadians over the last several years we have been in power.

We ran on a promise to cut the middle-income tax bracket from 22% to 20.5%. Every year, that is a roughly \$3.5-billion tax cut for Canadians from coast to coast to coast. Over eight years, that is over \$26 billion in the pockets of Canadians, about \$330 per year per individual and over \$600 per couple.

Then we brought in something else, which I want to claim a little credit for. It was to raise the basic personal amount to \$15,000 by 2023. That means Canadians will not have to pay federal income tax on the first \$15,000 of their income. In fiscal year 2024-25, that will be a \$6-billion tax cut for Canadians. It is putting hundreds of dollars back into Canadians' pockets. We should be proud of the \$300 or \$400 going back into the pockets of individual filers and, more so, families. Combined, we are looking at nearly \$10 billion in tax cuts for hard-working Canadians from coast to coast to coast.

Then there is the Canada child benefit, which has lifted 653,000 children out of poverty. Along with a strong labour market, growth and wages, it is a \$26-billion-plus program that we put in place to help Canadian families and children and to lift children out of poverty. For small businesses, we cut the tax rate from 11% to 9%, again putting more money into the pockets of business owners across this country.

There are so many other measures I could mention, but I want to speak directly to the opposition motion at hand, the energy sector it references and other aspects of it. The energy sector is about 10% of the Canadian economy. I salute the workers, who contribute real export dollars. Trade statistics came out this morning saying the energy sector again led the way and accounts for over 25% of Canadian exports. It will account for them today and tomorrow. Even with the green transition we are seeing in full force, the Canadian energy sector leads the way for Canadian workers and families.

I am pleased to take part in today's debate. The motion brings up important issues. There is no doubt that the effects of climate change are real and are becoming more and more devastating, harmful and expensive. That is why the government has put in place a price on pollution, and stands by it. Economists agree that a price on pollution is one of the least expensive and most efficient ways to reduce emissions. It is much less costly than the cost of doing nothing.

As everyone knows, the majority of proceeds from the price on carbon pollution go straight back into the pockets of Canadians in provinces where the federal fuel charge applies, with eight out of 10 Canadians in those provinces getting more money back through the climate action incentive payments than they pay as a result of the price on carbon. In Ontario, for example, a family of four gets nearly \$1,000 back in quarterly installment payments. It is returned to hard-working Ontarians. Eight out of 10, or even more than that, I would estimate, are better off under this system. It is very efficient and the least expensive way to reduce emissions.

• (1255)

[Translation]

Our world-leading carbon pollution pricing system is essential in our fight against climate change. It not only puts money back in the pockets of Canadians, but it is also highly effective because it provides a clear economic signal to businesses and allows them the flexibility to find the most cost-effective way of lowering their emissions.

At the same time, it also increases demand for the development and adoption of clean technologies. Furthermore, investments in strengthening Canada's competitiveness in the clean economy will not only promote the shift towards net zero.

They will also deliver good middle-class jobs for Canadian workers in communities right across Canada.

Today, a climate plan is just as important as an economic plan and a jobs plan. Climate policy is economic policy.

However, the reality is that many Canadians across the country are currently struggling to pay their bills and are under a lot of financial stress. It is important for us to help them.

[English]

I would like to say that I will be splitting my time with my colleague and good friend, the hon. member for Whitby.

[Translation]

On October 26, the Prime Minister announced that we will be doubling the pollution price rebate rural top-up rate from 10% to 20% of the baseline amount starting in April 2024.

Our government recognizes that people who live in rural communities face unique realities, and this measure will help put even more money back in the pockets of families dealing with higher energy costs because they live outside a large city and have limited access to clean transportation alternatives.

People in rural communities will receive their first increased payment in April 2024. This increase will be applied every year going forward.

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● (1300)

[English]

I note that the motion at hand mentions heat pumps. To provide more time and financial support for the roughly 1.1 million homes in Canada, including tens of thousands of homes in Ontario, using home heating oil to switch to heat pumps, as part of that October 26 package, the government also announced that it would temporarily pause the application of a fuel charge on deliveries of home heating oil, in all jurisdictions where it currently applies, for a three-year period.

Canada's cool climate means that heating accounts for over 60% of the energy used in the average Canadian home. Making the switch to more energy efficient heating equipment, such as a cold climate air source heat pump, can save energy, reduce utility bills and, yes, reduce the carbon footprint. Heat pumps are one of the best ways for homeowners to get off of home heating oil when compared to other electric home heating sources, and they are also two to three time more efficient.

In another part of the affordability measures put forward two weeks ago, the Prime Minister also announced a stringent oil to heat pump affordability program, which was introduced in 2022. The program helps low- to medium-income homeowners who are currently heating their homes with oil to transition to electric heat by installing a cold climate air source heat pump system.

To strengthen the program, the federal government is partnering with provinces and territories and collaborating to increase the amount of federal funding that eligible homeowners can receive for installing a heat pump from \$10,000 to \$15,000 and adding up to an additional \$5,000 in grant funding to match provincial and territorial contributions via co-delivery arrangements. The stringent program also includes upfront payments of \$250 for at or below medium-income homeowners who use heating oil and sign up to switch to a heat pump through our joint federal-provincial government program. This would make the average heat pump installation free for low- to medium-income homeowners as we continue to minimize upfront costs and make federal programs even easier to access for all households using home heating oil.

[Translation]

Cleaner, more affordable heating options will save people money on their energy bills for years to come. The reality is that, on average, homeowners who switch from oil to a cold-climate heat pump to heat and cool their homes save up to \$2,500 a year on their energy bills.

Climate change is real, and so is its catastrophic impact on Canada. It is important to take concrete action to combat it. That is exactly what we are doing.

All the experts agree that a pollution pricing system is the best way to fight climate change. That is why we are continuing to move in that direction.

Finally, we have been very clear. We are going to continue implementing our pollution pricing system while making sure we keep putting more money back into the pockets of Canadian households.

[English]

Mr. Scot Davidson (York—Simcoe, CPC): Mr. Speaker, I enjoyed my colleague's speech.

We know the carbon tax disproportionately affects rural Canadians. I was shocked this week to see that my riding of York—Simcoe is now classified as Toronto. The Liberals came up with this meagre top-up for people, which is about as handy as a front pocket on a pair of underwear, but now the people of York—Simcoe will not be getting it.

All my farmers, small businesses and rural families will not get the top-up because we are now classified just like Toronto, which has subways, transit and Uber. We do not have any of that stuff in York—Simcoe, so I would ask if my colleague thinks that is fair.

● (1305)

Mr. Francesco Sorbara: Mr. Speaker, the hon. member for York—Simcoe is a dear friend, and I have spoken with him about this issue. He raised it with me.

I think the issue as to how the riding of York—Simcoe is viewed within the carbon pricing system and the proceeds that are returned to its residents needs to be raised. The Holland Marsh area is a beautiful part of Ontario. There are many farmers and rural residents there who we need to ensure are not being considered as part of the city of Toronto, or the GTA, as we would call it. That would be the right thing and the fair thing to do.

Mr. Brian Masse (Windsor West, NDP): Mr. Speaker, the GST was brought in by Brian Mulroney, and the HST was later brought in by Stephen Harper. These are regressive taxes because they punish consumers. They also increase costs, which is an inflationary element.

We have had many elections, and we have fought in the House, in this chamber, to eliminate the GST, but no one has ever acted on it. At any rate, we have reduced these taxes on certain essentials for Canadians. Why not just reduce it on this essential, which is home heating in this case, as there is a history of members reducing the GST on many different essentials?

Mr. Francesco Sorbara: Mr. Speaker, our system of taxation in Canada is obviously a progressive system. We brought in a number of measures to cut and reduce income taxes for middle-income Canadians. We have asked the wealthiest to pay a bit more, which is the right thing to do, and we will continue to march in that manner.

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It is important that taxes are collected to pay for all the social programs that Canadians depend upon, from old age security to the guaranteed income supplement, to the tax-free monthly Canada child benefit and the Canada workers benefit, to the Canada dental benefit, which hundreds of kids in my riding depend upon and over 500,000 children in Canada have used. Therefore, it is very important that we have a strong social fabric put in place. Canadians understand that. The residents in my riding understand that. We need to continue down that path.

Mrs. Anna Roberts (King—Vaughan, CPC): Mr. Speaker, I would like to go over something with my hon. colleague.

There is a post by What's Interesting Vaughan that states, “Interesting and Frustrating Real Change! It completely wrecked our economy, tarnished our international standing, and unleashed a housing crisis of unprecedented proportions in Canada.”

The carbon tax has killed this country, however, the Liberals voted against our motion. My colleague liked the post. Can he explain that to me?

Mr. Francesco Sorbara: Mr. Speaker, if that post was liked, it was done in error. What's Interesting Vaughan is a Conservative-run Instagram account. My hon. member for King—Vaughan knows that.

She used the language that the carbon tax “killed” Canada. I would ask the hon. member to retract the word “killed”. In the context of what the world is dealing with now, I would say it is an incorrect term to use.

With respect to the Canadian economy, we have a very low unemployment rate. We have had very strong economic growth over the last several years. Our fiscal foundation is very healthy. We maintain an AAA credit rating. Our borrowing rates are almost the lowest in the world. Our growth rates are strong. We continue to generate a lot of jobs.

There are inflationary pressures on all Canadians, which is a global issue. We are dealing with it, and we will continue to deal with it in a responsible manner by putting in place some measures to deal with affordability, including the Canada child benefit and the Canada workers benefit, the middle income class tax cut and the Canada dental benefit, which the member opposite knows will also apply to seniors next year. I cannot wait to go around the city of Vaughan to tell all the seniors about the Canada dental benefit and how it will help every single one of them.

Mr. Ryan Turnbull (Parliamentary Secretary to the Minister of Innovation, Science and Industry, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, I can see that this topic has been on the minds of everyone here over the last few days. The Government of Canada understands that the effects of climate change have been devastating for many families and Canadians from coast to coast to coast.

In fact, the Canadian Climate Institute estimates the annual costs will amount to \$25 billion by 2025, and by mid-century, the estimate costs of climate change on our economy in Canada are half of the projected GDP growth of our entire country. That is an astounding and devastating amount of damage, which climate change is already causing.

In 2023, we saw a record wildfire season, with some areas burning double those of historic records. Hundreds of thousands of Canadians had to evacuate their homes. It is safe to say we all watched in horror as we saw those fires rage across the country. That is not the only climate disaster or extreme weather event this country has gone through in the past several years. We have seen record floods and heat domes and many other natural disasters.

Meanwhile, Canadians are facing an equally pressing affordability challenge as energy prices have skyrocketed. With winter coming very soon, households are facing higher heating bills. The government is taking real action to keep life affordable and to fight climate change at the same time, and now we must go further faster.

This is why the Government of Canada recently announced major new funding to help households switch away from polluting home heating oil to efficient and clean heat pumps. We know home heating oil is three times to four times more expensive than other forms of heating. It being the most carbon intensive, and also the most costly, is exactly why recent measures have targeted home heating oil right across the country.

Low- and middle-income households are struggling to make the switch to environmentally friendly heat pumps mainly because of the upfront cost, so we get that. We get that the upfront cost is truly the barrier to making the transition. Canadians want to do their part, and we want to encourage people to make the switch as soon as possible. Helping out with that upfront cost would really help them make that switch. That is what we have heard, and that is what we are doing.

We also recognize that acquiring and installing a heat pump can take a number of weeks, if not months, and people will still be facing high oil heating costs in the meantime. Two weeks ago, the Government of Canada announced an expansion of the funding for heat pumps, making the average heat pump free for low- and medium-income Canadians.

The strengthened oil to heat pump affordability program will partner with interested provinces and territories to increase the amount of federal funding eligible for homeowners so they can receive not just \$10,000 but up to \$15,000 for installing a heat pump in their house, adding to an additional \$5,000 in grant funding to match provincial contributions in jurisdictions where programs are co-delivered.

Low- to medium-income households who heat their homes with oil and sign up to participate in the OHPA program to switch to a heat pump will also receive an upfront payment of \$250. On average, homeowners who switch from oil to cold climate heat pumps to heat and cool their homes save between \$1,500 to \$4,700 per year on their home energy bills. That is a whopping \$125 to \$400 per month of savings. That is a sizeable affordability measure that will help Canadians who are struggling to heat their homes and are using oil to do so. They are obviously subject to some of the highest costs to do that.

The idea is to provide households with funding to help make the transition from heating oil to more efficient, environmentally friendly electric heat pumps that much easier. This new heat pump funding is in addition to what we already were doing to support Canadians in these uncertain times.

I also want to talk about a few of the climate measures our government has put in place that are funding all kinds of other important initiatives. I do not mean to give the impression that this one program is all we are doing, or the newest measure we have announced is the only thing we are doing. There are many other aspects of the federal government's plan to fight climate change, build a stronger economy and reduce emissions.

• (1310)

Under the low-carbon economy fund, for example, a new intake for one of our funding streams has just opened. It is called the low-carbon economy challenge. The Government of Canada remains committed to supporting projects that reduce Canada's greenhouse gas emissions, generate clean growth, build resilient communities and create good jobs for Canadians. So far, the low-carbon economy challenge is providing more than \$250 million to support 94 projects that invest in proven low-carbon technologies to reduce greenhouse gas emissions.

I want to take this opportunity to highlight some projects we recently funded through the low-carbon economy fund. We have supported a range of projects, including replacing oil-fired boilers with electric models at a YMCA in St. John's, Newfoundland and Labrador; waste emissions reduction projects in Alberta; SaskPower's northern first nations home retrofit program in Saskatchewan; and home heat pump retrofits in Atlantic Canada, starting this year. Projects like these support the local economy, drive clean innovation and help Canada achieve net-zero emissions by 2050.

The fund also supports climate action by indigenous peoples. We recently funded some indigenous-owned and indigenous-led renewable energy, energy efficiency and low-carbon heating projects. There is the Peavine community solar farm project, which will offset a portion of Peavine Métis Settlement's electricity needs, thanks to a solar photovoltaic system. There is the Tl'etinqox community bio-heat project, which will displace 100% of the propane used in six community buildings, a church building and a healing centre in that community.

We have also funded projects through the climate action and awareness fund. The fund is investing over \$206 million over five years to support Canadian-made projects that help to reduce Canada's greenhouse gas emissions. This fund focuses on supporting youth climate awareness and climate research as well as ad-

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vancing climate change science and technology. I think about projects like Science North's touring and stationary innovative climate change experience for young Canadians.

Under this fund, the Government of Canada is also funding projects that are focused on strengthening Canada's science capacity to identify, accelerate and evaluate climate mitigation solutions and strategies. The idea is to create jobs for Canadians who work in science and technology, academia and at the grassroots community level. These jobs are critical as we continue to build knowledge, skills and a sustainable net-zero emissions economy by 2050.

I also want to highlight the climate action fund, which was in existence from 2018 to 2020. It provided up to \$3 million annually to support projects delivered by students, youth, indigenous peoples, non-profit organizations, small and medium-sized enterprises, and research and educational institutions. They are projects like the Green Building Council's work on redesigning our architectural landscape, Random Acts of Green's mobile app, and Agriculture in the Classroom Saskatchewan. These projects show us that Canadians are ready to take action against climate change in their everyday lives.

These are only a few examples of funding initiatives that the Government of Canada has put in place to support Canadians as well as organizations and businesses in the fight against climate change. By taking the lead on climate action, Canada can become a leader in many of the new technologies the world will need to support action on climate change while unlocking economic growth and trade opportunities.

We have seen many other projects. Some of the most prominent ones are the major investments made in incentivizing private investment in our electric vehicle battery supply chain as well as automobile manufacturing. Those are big, exciting announcements, but there is a lot more going on at different scales within our economy.

Canadians have asked us to take action on climate change, really because they know that our economic growth and prosperity depend upon it. It is the biggest opportunity for our economic growth, and it helps us address the affordability challenge because climate change, in fact, is the biggest contributor to inflation that we have today globally.

We have listened on all fronts, and we are delivering on all fronts.

• (1315)

Mr. Warren Steinley (Regina—Lewvan, CPC): Mr. Speaker, I am happy to take to my feet today to ask this random Liberal from Whitby a question.

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I will give him credit. He is one of the only Liberals who told the truth recently, when he looked in the camera and said that Canadians are going to feel pain because of the Liberals' costly carbon tax. He was honest. The pain has come forward. There is an affordability crisis after eight long years of this NDP-Liberal government because of its policies.

He went through a litany of programs where they are trying to give the money back to Canadians through different programs. Why take it in the first place? Leave it in their pockets. Canadians can spend their own money better than the government can.

One program that he did not mention was the oil to heat pump affordability program that came out in March 2023. Provinces joined Newfoundland and Labrador in June 2023.

How many heat pumps have actually been delivered in this country since March 2023? The number is 43.

They failed on the environment. The environment commissioner said they will not meet their targets. This is a tax plan, not an environmental plan and they have never reached a target.

When will the Liberals admit their carbon tax has failed Canadians?

• (1320)

Mr. Ryan Turnbull: Mr. Speaker, I think the member and I stand on opposite sides of this debate, as always, in the House.

The Conservatives do not seem to really understand that climate change is real. They deny the science and they do not understand what it means to invest in Canadians and take advantage of the clean growth opportunities that, really, our economic prosperity depends on for generations to come.

We know that the price on pollution has been documented numerous times to give back more to 80% of the population and, specifically, to low-income and middle-income families. That has been documented by the Parliamentary Budget Officer.

We also know it is the most cost-effective market-based mechanism for incentivizing and disincentivizing the kinds of changes that we need to see in order to fight climate change.

I am sure I do not have more time, but I would love to debate it with the member perhaps at committee.

Ms. Bonita Zarrillo (Port Moody—Coquitlam, NDP): Mr. Speaker, I really appreciate this opportunity to ask the member a question, because I am receiving emails. I want to speak specifically about a member in my riding who has been waiting seven months for the Canada greener homes grant.

They were informed that they were eligible, based on the report and the required heat pump that they installed. Their grant is worth \$4,600 and they have been waiting seven months for it. They have made calls but have not been able to reach anyone.

Will the government reach out to my office, reach out to me, and make sure that this Canadian, who has taken the steps to take advantage of the opportunity and do their part, as the member said, to move forward on climate action, gets the results?

The government has to stop announcements and start acting. Will the government respond to my constituent?

Mr. Ryan Turnbull: Mr. Speaker, I know that some members of communities have had challenges with the administration of the Canada greener homes grant and program. I know there are constituents in my riding who have also taken full advantage of that program and have been able to access both components of it. They have retrofit their homes to get as close to net zero as possible. That included installing an extreme cold climate heat pump, as well as solar panels on the roof and a two-way meter so that they can feed into the grid.

That seems to be the recipe for getting a lot of Canadian households as close to net zero as possible. Remember that this saves them hundreds and hundreds of dollars per month on their home energy bills.

I would be happy to look into the member opposite's specific question. Obviously, I do not know that specific case and what might be holding up the application of that member of her constituency. I would be happy to look into it.

Mr. Frank Caputo (Kamloops—Thompson—Cariboo, CPC): Mr. Speaker, it is always a pleasure to rise on behalf of the people from Kamloops—Thompson—Cariboo.

The member spoke at length about heat pumps. Can he please tell this House, in 10 or 15 seconds, how heat pumps work in, say, Alberta, Saskatchewan and Manitoba?

Mr. Ryan Turnbull: Mr. Speaker, my understanding is that extreme cold climate heat pumps work in Canada. There are examples of them working all the way up as far north as one can get.

They are actually very effective, far more efficient in terms of the use of energy. Really, I cannot think of a better solution for wider adoption that Canadians can take advantage of to get those cost savings on their energy bill.

The member opposite does not seem to understand the technology. Maybe he should do his homework.

• (1325)

Mr. Richard Cannings (South Okanagan—West Kootenay, NDP): Mr. Speaker, I will be sharing my time with the wonderful MP for Edmonton Griesbach.

I am very honoured, and frankly excited, to stand here this afternoon to speak to the NDP motion that sets out a truly fair, common-sense approach to deal with two of the most important issues of our time: the climate catastrophes we are living through every year across this country and the struggle that many Canadians are facing just to get by.

In a nutshell, the motion recognizes that Canadians are facing increasing costs, both the financial costs and human costs of the climate crisis. At the same time, they are facing rising fuel costs for gas at the pumps and in their home heating, while the fossil fuel companies that are charging them those costs are reaping record profits. On top of that, both oil and gas heating are contributing to the carbon emissions that are fuelling the climate crisis.

The NDP motion proposes three straightforward solutions to that situation: to take the GST off home heating; to provide heat pumps for free to lower- and medium-income families in an easily accessible program; and to fund the program with a windfall tax on the record profits made by fossil fuel companies.

Listeners at home may quickly realize that this motion is a reaction to both the Liberals' bungled program to provide relief to some Canadians by taking the carbon tax off home heating oil and the Conservatives' motion to extend that relief to natural gas for home heating as well. Both those ideas fail the fairness test of this Canadian federation.

The Liberal program benefits predominantly people in Atlantic Canada, where many homes are heated with oil, while the Conservative motion leaves British Columbians and Québécois out in the cold since families in those provinces do not pay a federal carbon tax. I have yet to hear a single Conservative from B.C. admit that fact in this place.

The NDP is proposing to take the GST off home heating bills. The GST is not supposed to be paid on the necessities of life. We do not pay GST on food. I think everyone would agree that home heating is a necessity of life in Canada, but right now, everyone across the country has to pay it. Removing the GST from home heating bills would save everyone across the country money on their energy bills, helping people to get by in a truly fair way.

We have had bad years for extreme weather and wildfires for the past eight years or so, but this year was in a different league of catastrophes. It started with a hot, dry spring that sent fires in Nova Scotia, Quebec and Alberta raging through forests and communities. As the season progressed, we had fires explode in British Columbia and the Northwest Territories. Several of those fires in B.C. were in the coastal rainforest where it is usually hard enough to start a campfire, let alone destroy a forest. Then Nova Scotia, which was still recovering from two catastrophic fires, suffered a devastating flood.

I live in the dry interior of British Columbia in the South Okanagan Valley. We all held our breath as we saw fires springing up in northeastern B.C., central B.C., then Kamloops and the Shuswap. At the end of July, the fires began in the Okanagan Valley and Similkameen Valley. One came within inches of destroying a large neighbourhood in Osoyoos.

In mid-August, the Shuswap fires swept out of the wilderness and burned through Celista, Scotch Creek and Squilax, communities that I used to live in during the summers of the 1970s. A fire in the mountains west of Kelowna roared down to devastate neighbourhoods on the west side of Okanagan Lake and then jumped across the lake two kilometres to terrorize neighbourhoods on the east side.

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People struggled to breathe across the country this summer. Hundreds of thousands had to leave their homes in hastily planned evacuations, including the entire city of Yellowknife. People lost their homes. Some people unfortunately died. This was a summer that marked another shift in public opinion. It was public awareness that climate change is not a theoretical event somewhere in the future. We are living it today and we have to adapt to it.

The climate data back that up. This year has been literally off the charts. Air temperature records were shattered every day around the world. Ocean temperatures were so high that scientists could barely believe what was happening.

• (1330)

This year was even worse than 2021. That year British Columbia, there was a heat dome in late June followed by an unprecedented atmospheric river event in November. The Town of Lytton burned down after reporting Canada's record-high temperature three days in a row. The cost of the climate destruction in 2021 in B.C. alone was over \$5 billion. However, even as we said that 2021 was the worst year ever, and now people are saying that 2023 is the worst year ever, the projections are saying that these will actually be the best years for the rest of our lives. Extreme weather events will only get worse as we pump more carbon dioxide into the atmosphere.

What many people forget, or do not even know, is that 619 people died in Metro Vancouver in one week during the heat dome of 2021, which was the real tragedy of that year. What most of those people had in common was that they lived in the lower-income parts of the city in neighbourhoods with no access to shady, cool, green areas and in apartment complexes with no air conditioning. They died with their windows closed against the stifling heat. We cannot let this happen again. We need to provide people, especially lower-income Canadians, with air conditioning, even in places like Vancouver and Halifax, where maybe they did not need it very often in the past. They will need it in the future. That would save hundreds of lives during future heat events.

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If we do that with heat pumps, switching out oil and gas heating units, it would not only save lives but would also cut emissions, and people, including landlords, would save significant money on their energy bills all year round. At the same time, we must make it easy for people to properly insulate their homes. We have to make sure we are not building new buildings, new housing, with fossil fuel heating infrastructure. New builds should have electric heat, preferably heat pumps. There is a growing movement in cities across Canada to ban fossil fuel infrastructure to heat new homes and buildings. Montreal and Nanaimo have done that. Vancouver almost did it but then backed off to a partial ban. It is being discussed by communities in my riding.

While Canadians are struggling to pay for fuel costs, fossil fuel companies are raking in record profits. The top five companies in Canada posted \$38 billion in profits last year alone. Meanwhile, Canadians saw prices at the pump go up almost a dollar a litre over the last three years. The Conservatives' big bogey man, the carbon tax, went up five cents over that time. The fossil fuel companies are not paying any more to make gasoline or natural gas; they are just benefiting big time from a rise in world oil and gas prices. These are windfall profits. The Parliamentary Budget Officer has determined that a windfall tax on these profits would bring in over \$4 billion. The NDP has been calling for such a tax for over a year but has gotten no support from either the Liberals or the Conservatives. Therefore, we are proposing today to bring in a windfall tax on the profits of fossil fuel companies and use that money to fund our proposal for an easily accessible program that would install free heat pumps in Canadian homes.

The Liberals are handpicking what regions get help with the cost of living, and leaving the rest of Canada behind. The Conservatives have absolutely no climate plan. For over a year, the NDP has called on the government to remove the GST from home heating and help everyone across the country, but the Liberals and Conservatives have ignored those calls. The NDP wants to make eco-energy retrofits and heat pumps free and easy to access for low- to middle-class Canadians, regardless of their initial home heating energy source. We are calling on the government to fund those changes by finally implementing a windfall profits tax on the excess profits of oil and gas companies.

These are common-sense, effective ideas that would save all Canadians money and save lives and heartache from climate disasters in an increasingly dangerous future. I am sure all members here will support this motion to help all Canadians from coast to coast.

Mr. Kevin Lamoureux (Parliamentary Secretary to the Leader of the Government in the House of Commons, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, I am wondering whether the member could provide some clear indication of what the NDP policy actually is. Is the NDP proposing to get rid of the GST on all aspects of home heating, everything from electricity to oil, propane and natural gas, permanently and even during the summertime? Is that the intent?

• (1335)

Mr. Richard Cannings: Mr. Speaker, it is kind of obvious. Yes, that is what the New Democrats are proposing. I said in my speech that the GST was never meant to be charged on the necessities of

life. We do not pay GST when we go to grocery stores and buy food.

However we heat our homes in Canada, and we have to do so, we pay energy bills, whether to electricity companies, natural gas companies or oil companies. We pay GST on that, and we should not. Yes, the NDP is asking that we take the GST off our home heating costs, even in the summer. Maybe in Winnipeg, people have to heat their homes in the summer. I do not usually in British Columbia. That is what we are proposing.

Mr. Chris Lewis (Essex, CPC): Mr. Speaker, there has been a lot of discussion this morning about heat pumps. I have not yet heard anybody bring up the installation of heat pumps. There is a portion that goes outside the house and a portion that goes inside the house, and then there are pipes underground. Not that long ago, I introduced a private member's bill, Bill C-241, regarding a deduction of travel expenses for skilled trades. As we need heat pumps across the country, we will not have people to install them.

All but one Liberal member voted against Bill C-241. The NDP was good enough to vote for it. Would the member agree with me that, indeed, the Liberals should have voted for Bill C-241?

Mr. Richard Cannings: Mr. Speaker, Bill C-241, as I understand it, was an NDP bill before the member, thankfully, took it up and brought it forward again and it was passed. That is what we should be doing: supporting tradespeople across the country who have to travel. Any other business people can charge their travel expenses.

As the member mentioned, we will need more tradespeople to do all of this work. Not only do heat pumps have to be installed, but homes also need to be retrofitted to make sure they are properly insulated. That is one of the first things that need to be done. I just finished doing that in my house, and now I am going to turn my thoughts to the heat pump part. We will need tradespeople for that, and sometimes it is difficult to find enough tradespeople because they are doing a lot of work in this regard.

Yes, we should be training tradespeople to do that. There is a program for it at Okanagan College in Penticton. It is one of the leading sustainable building trades programs in the country. We have to support people going into those programs and then once they come out.

[Translation]

Mr. Yves Perron (Berthier—Maskinongé, BQ): Mr. Speaker, I have a lot of respect for my colleague, who sits next to me and often discusses things with me. I would like to ask him a very pragmatic question.

The proposal before us today seems well intentioned. Unfortunately, the numbers do not add up. The estimated cost of giving heat pumps to everyone would be at least \$75 billion, if not \$100 billion. The proposed tax might generate up to \$1 billion. Where will the rest of the money come from?

[English]

Mr. Richard Cannings: Mr. Speaker, we just had a conversation about tradespeople and how important it is to have enough of them. This is not going to happen in one year; it will happen over a number of years.

I would have to do some quick math, but, yes, \$4 billion can buy only maybe 400,000 heat pumps. There might be three million households in Canada, so it would take maybe five or 10 years to get through the program, but we have to start it now. This is a very common-sense, easy-to-understand approach with a funding mechanism, a clear goal and clear benefits for all Canadians.

• (1340)

Mr. Kevin Vuong (Spadina—Fort York, Ind.): Mr. Speaker, I will say right off the bat that I will vote in support of the NDP's motion. I think a lot of Torontonians will struggle to heat, and hopefully keep, their homes this winter.

However, I have trouble reconciling this position with the fact that there is only one opposition party that can compel the government to do anything, and that is the NDP. Instead of putting forward a motion to try to score political points, why will it not just compel the government, through the supply and confidence agreement, to actually do it?

Mr. Richard Cannings: Mr. Speaker, maybe the member does not really understand how confidence and supply agreements work. There is an agreement between the parties. The Liberals say they will do X, Y and Z that the NDP would like done, and we will see if that is enough to provide our support in confidence agreements. In this case, there is a list of 20, 25 or 27 things the Liberals said they would do. It was good enough for us to say that we want that, that we want dental care, pharmacare, anti-scab legislation and on and on.

Maybe not everything was in there. There were other things we would have loved to have had in there. This is not what we would put forward if we were in government, but it was good enough for us. We will keep pressing the Liberal government to do better. This is an example of that.

Mr. Blake Desjarlais (Edmonton Griesbach, NDP): Mr. Speaker, Canadians are facing the double crisis of affordability and climate change. It is no secret that Canadians from coast to coast to coast have been demanding action in the face of extreme weather events. There are countless numbers of families right across this country who were disproportionately impacted by wildfires, floods and terrible natural disasters that shocked entire communities. Those instances are not just one-offs. This is truly a pattern of disaster that is growing in intensity and growing in costs. I mean that. When I say costs, they are huge. Those are some of the largest costs in relation to our GDP that we have seen in decades.

According to the Parliamentary Budget Office, for example, extreme weather events caused our GDP to be 0.8% lower than it

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should have been if we had combatted climate change more appropriately. That equals to about \$20 billion to \$25 billion less on reported GDP. That is funding that could have gone to supports for people, such as seniors and young people, and to supports for hospitals. It is nearly Remembrance Day, and it could have gone to supports for veterans. That is real capital, real money, that is just being drained because the government lacks the courage and the will to implement real climate solutions.

On the other side, we have an official opposition party, with an official opposition leader who denies climate change even exists. That is plummeting us even further into a deficit. Imagine if we had, for example, even worse outcomes next year. God forbid we would have worse outcomes with worse wildfires and floods, and the number would get worse. It would be even worse if human lives were lost. I hope we can prevent that. We need real climate solutions and real serious leadership when it comes to climate change.

I would be lost if I did not mention that this is not the first time New Democrats have called for real solutions to climate change in addition to real solutions to fight poverty. There were many times and many occasions when we tried to do that.

It is not lost on me that Remembrance Day is coming very soon. I want to remind Canadians about a defining moment in our history when we rose to the challenges of global crises like we are seeing in terms of climate change. We do not have to look that far in our past to know that we have the solutions to combat things that would take away our future. That includes combatting the climate crisis.

Canada, early on, when it was a young country, was seen as a relatively small and poor country, a country that could not levy resources in order to tackle huge issues, but we proved the world wrong once before. Canada can play a role in being a global leader and ensuring everyone has a dignified, clean and safe future.

Tommy Douglas reminds us of a story of great Canadians who enlisted in our military in 1939 when Canada declared war on the terrible, fascist Nazi regime in Germany. For the first time in our history, we utilized the Bank of Canada and made it financially, fiscally and materially possible to feed, clothe and arm over a million men and women, and we put them in uniform.

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At home, we did something even greater: We put everyone to work. The government organized over 100 Crown corporations. We manufactured things that had never been manufactured before. We gave our farmers and our fishermen guaranteed prices, and we produced more food than we had ever produced in peacetime. In addition, we created one of the largest merchant navies in global history. We did all that without borrowing even one dollar from outside Canada. We were able to do that. Our collective consciousness, our united effort and our true Canadian spirit were unified in order to fight the terrible fascist regime in Germany.

If we can utilize and restore our own will to ensure that we use the same resources to fight against poverty, social injustice and, yes, climate change, then we can in fact change our future for the better. We can change it for the next generation. New Democrats are calling, in this motion, for very serious solutions to very serious problems. It is no secret that climate change is having disproportionate impacts on our economy. It is also no secret that Canadians are struggling to get by. They are struggling to make ends meet and to pay the basic bills, which they have been working hard to pay their entire lives.

● (1345)

We are talking about something as simple as home heating in Canada, which we all need. The previous New Democratic member spoke about the important differentiation between needs and wants of Canadians. It is important that we delineate what those needs are and that we provide relief so those needs are met.

One relief measure is to ensure that the GST is removed from home heating. That is important because we made a tax commitment in this country to ensure all necessities would not have a tax burden on them. People need to eat and also need to heat. We need to make sure those important measures are dealt with.

I invite my colleagues, from both the Liberal and the Conservative benches, to think about that critically and to say that we can do something good for Canadians. Earlier this week, New Democrats supported a motion by our Conservative colleagues that called for the removal of the carbon tax from home heating oil.

We hope the Conservatives would support the removal of GST from all home heating as well. We think that is a better and a stronger policy. It would also ensure that more Canadians would have more money in their pockets, which is something that Conservatives talk about very often. I would invite them to support that very important measure.

When it comes to making sure we have a plan to reduce our liability and to reduce our dependence on higher forms of carbon-emitting fuels, it is important that we utilize technology. Every time we talk about or debate climate change in the House, the Conservatives rise to say their solution is “technology” without ever mentioning what that “technology” is.

When we have technology present for Canadians, like a heat pump, for example, that is growing in popularity, use and weatherability in Canadian climates, we see Conservatives reject those proposals. Why?

The NDP has real proposals and real solutions on the table that could save Canadians thousands of dollars, and our country millions and billions as decades move forward.

Finally, it is so important that we finance this, but we cannot finance this crisis on the backs of Canadians. Canadians did not make this crisis. They are showing up to work every single day and doing the hard work. They are trying to make ends meet for their families and doing everything right, but they are falling further behind.

All the while, those who claim to play by the rules get away scot-free by evading taxes. It is time that our country does what is right, and reins in the huge windfall profits of oil and gas companies. We have seen that kind of courage in this world once already. During the pandemic, we saw the Conservative government in the United Kingdom bring in a windfall tax because they saw what we all saw. The fact is that we are seeing unstable oil prices and, currently, some of the highest commodity prices in a long time, which are increasing huge revenues for governments, but not enough, apparently, to invest in real climate solutions to mitigate what could be future damages to our economy.

I would remind members that not long ago we saw massive issues in British Columbia. There were floods that essentially cut off an entire province by way of the supply chain to the rest of Canada. That had a real cost to Canadians. The impact was in the billions of dollars.

On top of that, we also saw consequential seasons of wildfires, drought and serious related issues that continue to exacerbate the economic impact of climate change on Canadians. This costs Canadians real money. Real, tangible money in their pockets is being lost because these disasters continue to destroy communities and ways of life.

We have the ability in our country to be as courageous as those veterans, years ago, who said they would serve our country so that tomorrow would be a better day. We have a chance to honour those commitments, to do what is right today for the next generation and to ensure that this motion passes. Then, we could have real, tangible solutions so that our kids would know we are taking the climate crisis seriously, so that our economy could stabilize by ensuring we have good revenues, and we could finally see a day when the affordability crisis would be under wraps from the efforts of this chamber.

Then, we could show Canadians that we can unite and do what is right. I invite all members to do what is right. Our children are watching.

• (1350)

Mr. Kevin Lamoureux (Parliamentary Secretary to the Leader of the Government in the House of Commons, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, in looking at the NDP motion, one of the first things that comes to my mind is that the biggest benefactor of the motion is actually Canada's wealthiest 1%. When we think about what they are proposing, we would be giving the biggest break on GST to Canada's 1% wealthiest.

Would my New Democratic friends recognize that as being factual? The government has demonstrated, through the grocery rebates, that there are other ways we could support Canada's middle class. Why would the New Democrats want a permanent disposal of the GST on home heating when the biggest benefactor would be Canada's wealthiest 1%?

Mr. Blake Desjarlais: Mr. Speaker, I find it disingenuous for a member to rise in this place and to speak as if New Democrats would be attempting, in some way, shape or form, to ask for a break for Canada's 1% when speaking to the direct need Canadians have in relation to the price of heating their homes. The member is fully aware of the fact we already do this for groceries. One can go into any grocery store today and see there is no GST on any of those groceries. We, as Canadians, understand that is a need. Canadians need to feed their families, and that is so important to their survival.

The same is true with heating. We need to see GST removed from home heating so Canadians can heat their homes. The consequence of not doing that is their pennies would be even further pinched. The risk from that is they would fall behind. The ultimate risk is they would not have a home that is heated. New Democrats stand against that and invite the member to join us.

Mr. Damien Kurek (Battle River—Crowfoot, CPC): Mr. Speaker, I find it incredibly disingenuous that now, all of a sudden, the NDP members claim, along with their coalition partners, to somehow be standing up for affordability for Canadians. Over the last number of years, such as in February 2022, we have seen them consistently vote against a measure that would have reduced costs for Canadians. In April 2022, it was the same thing, and they voted against a common-sense measure to reduce costs for Canadians. In June 2022, it was same thing. They voted against a measure the Conservatives brought forward to reduce costs. In October 2022, again, they voted against a measure to reduce costs. In December 2022, and in February, June and October of this year, they voted against.

Then, suddenly, we find that they are concerned about the impact the carbon tax has on affordability for Canadians. Can they at least admit they are wrong and maybe join with Conservatives to axe the tax so Canadians can keep the heat on?

Mr. Blake Desjarlais: Mr. Speaker, the member seems to conflate two important issues and principles in this debate. One is the equality of Canadians and ensuring that when there are taxes, those taxes are applied equally and fairly. What we saw with the move by the Liberals was to not do that proportionally for all Canadians. We disagree with that move.

On the other hand, we do believe in carbon pricing, which is something the member who just rose campaigned on. Conservatives campaigned to have a carbon price that was worse than the

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Liberals' carbon price. When talking about disingenuous, I would say the Conservative Party of Canada, which flip-flops on whether climate change is real, is the most disingenuous in Canada.

• (1355)

[Translation]

Mrs. Julie Vignola (Beauport—Limoilou, BQ): Mr. Speaker, the Parliamentary Budget Officer says that a wealth tax could generate a little over \$1.05 billion per year, which is \$4.2 billion over five years. That is less than the government would save if it were to reduce the subsidies, tax credits and tax avoidance measures it gives to oil companies.

Why is the NDP settling for a measure that will not cover the cost of its ideas when it could tackle cleaning up the budget to fund more direct and equitable support for people?

[English]

Mr. Blake Desjarlais: Mr. Speaker, that is one of the better questions asked today, because it contemplates the revenue side of Canada's economy. I would like to suggest to the member to think about this in two ways. One, yes, there would be revenue generation from the windfall taxes on oil and gas companies that would amount to \$4 billion to \$5 billion. As a matter of fact, when we invest that amount of money in Canadians in terms of looking at the difference between the investment versus the impact to our economy if we did not do those things, we would see that is actually a larger amount.

To put it in perspective, if we can prevent a climate disaster, for example, by mitigating the increase in our global temperatures by 1.5°C ideally or by 2°C maximally, we could save Canadians billions of dollars if we take action on that now. It is not only a question of revenue but also a question of how much we could save in terms of the direct impact to our infrastructure and to Canadians' way of life in future years.

I agree with the member. There need to be more solutions to the revenue side of things, and I welcome co-operation between the Bloc Québécois and the New Democrats to find those solutions.

Mr. Daniel Blaikie (Elmwood—Transcona, NDP): Mr. Speaker, I thank my hon. colleague from Edmonton Griesbach for making some important distinctions and bringing some clarity to an otherwise obfuscated debate. I wonder if he wants to take a just little more time to elaborate on why removing GST from home heating would be a better idea and on the problem the Liberals have created by introducing a regional schism into the carbon pricing program.

Mr. Blake Desjarlais: Mr. Speaker, I thank the hon. member for Elmwood—Transcona for his hard work and his incredible contributions in this chamber. To my own knowledge, in much of this, he is a good teacher and a very wise person. I am sure that many in the chamber have benefited from his wise advice.

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To make it very clear, New Democrats believe that taking GST off home heating is important because we represent Canadians as far north as Nunavut, for example, and as far south as Victoria, as well as everywhere in between. What we know about those Canadians and their experience is that winters get cold. Those cold winters imply that we need to ensure that the cost of heating is as low as possible. One way to do that is to remove GST from home heating.

That is going to affect more Canadians, put more money back into Canadians' pockets and actually ensure that home heating is as low as it can possibly be. The government, at that time, will stand with Canadians.

New Democrats, especially, stand with Canadians. We hope that the government and the Conservatives will also stand with Canadians as we contemplate removing GST.

STATEMENTS BY MEMBERS

[English]

PUBLIC SAFETY

Mr. Kevin Vuong (Spadina—Fort York, Ind.): Mr. Speaker, I want to bring attention to a critical issue that is threatening the safety of our children and communities. The matter involves the Liberal government providing exemptions for the operation of safe injection sites that would otherwise be illegal under the Criminal Code.

There are four pillars of an effective drug strategy, but harm reduction without enforcement, prevention or treatment does nothing to break the cycle of addiction. There are 35 addiction experts who made a letter public that they wrote to the Minister of Mental Health and Addictions calling for safe supply to be reformed or abolished.

National failures have local consequences. Downtown Toronto has become a war zone of increasing violence and danger. If the government provides exemptions that endanger children and communities, it must provide the funds to ensure that neighbourhoods that host such sites have the resources to keep them safe.

In the absence of that, it is time for the Liberal government to listen to the experts and either reform or abolish safe supply.

* * *

● (1400)

CARBON PRICING

Ms. Viviane Lapointe (Sudbury, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, while the Conservatives offer anger to Canadians, our government offers solutions. Recognizing that rural Canadians everywhere need relief, we have doubled the pollution pricing rebate. We are also working with provinces to make heat pumps essentially free.

Homeowners who switch from oil save up to \$2,500 each year. This is welcome news for the almost 300,000 people in Ontario, including northern Ontario, who heat with oil. We know that oil is the most-polluting form of home heating; it is also the most expensive. Years ago, we helped Canadians get off coal, and now we are doing the same for people who heat with oil. We are increasing what is in their pocketbooks while decreasing harmful emissions.

While the Conservatives lack any strategy to protect Canadians against climate change and are content to watch Canadian communities burn, I will continue to stand behind measures that address climate change and make life more affordable for the people in my riding of Sudbury.

* * *

REMEMBRANCE DAY

Mr. Damien Kurek (Battle River—Crowfoot, CPC): Mr. Speaker, on Remembrance Day, Canadians honour the sacrifice made by past and present members of our Canadian Armed Forces. One such sacrifice is that of Flying Officer John Earl Stillings, known to our family as Jack, who was in the RCAF during World War II.

He was on voluntary redeployment when the Lancaster bomber he was in was lost over the North Sea on a training mission. To memorialize my great, great Uncle Jack's death, his brother Blake wrote the poem *Ode to Jack*, which I share with members today:

Your mortal frame must ever lie
In some deep cavern of the sea
Unknown to man, by human eye
Unseen, for all eternity.
But from that prison dark and cold,
Unfettered, from its bonds set free
Your living spirit bright and bold
Shall soar, to course the sunlit skies
Where you gave all for liberty.

All of us, indeed all Canadians, owe our existence to those who sacrificed, from the soldiers who went to fight wars overseas to the CAF members stationed locally at camp Wainwright, across Canada, and around the world.

On behalf of Canada's Conservatives, I saw this: may God bless our troops, may God bless all those who sacrificed and let us commit to always remembering. Lest we forget.

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[Translation]

SUSTAINABLE HEATING

Mr. Stéphane Lauzon (Argenteuil—La Petite-Nation, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, the people of my riding, Argenteuil—La Petite-Nation, are deeply committed to their children's future and to environmental responsibility.

The fact remains that 450,000 households in Quebec are still heating with oil, an expensive method that is harmful to the environment. The cost of acquiring and installing heat pumps, which are cleaner and more cost-effective, is a barrier for many Quebecers, especially in rural and remote communities. Although the \$10,000 in direct assistance provided by the oil to heat pump program is commendable, it is clear that additional assistance is needed.

I applaud the government's commitment to increasing its assistance and to working with Quebec to provide the additional support our families need for sustainable heating solutions. Unlike the Conservatives, who have no plan to protect us from the climate crisis, we are committed to making the transition to a clean economy in a way that leaves no one behind.

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NARGES MOHAMMADI

Mr. Alexis Brunelle-Duceppe (Lac-Saint-Jean, BQ): Mr. Speaker, the Nobel Peace Prize for 2023 was awarded to Narges Mohammadi, a 51-year old Iranian journalist who has been imprisoned since 2011 for her involvement in the Defenders of Human Rights movement. She is fighting against the death penalty, against the oppression of Iranian women and against the mandatory hijab law. She was able to send a message of gratitude for this prize through her daughter, who has fled to France.

However, for this activist, who has been sentenced to 31 years in prison and 154 lashes, this is no time to celebrate. We found out yesterday that she has begun a hunger strike from her prison cell to protest the lack of medical care for inmates and the requirement for women wanting to receive care to wear a hijab.

To her family, who are concerned about her health, the Bloc Québécois wishes to express its solidarity. To this woman, who is standing up against the authoritarian regime of Tehran, we add to our congratulations for her Nobel Peace Prize our deepest admiration for her courage.

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● (1405)

CARBON PRICING

Mr. René Arseneault (Madawaska—Restigouche, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, while remaining focused on the fight against climate change and recognizing the unequal impact this fight can have on rural communities, our government has decided to double the pollution price rebate for rural communities from 10% to 20%.

[English]

Furthermore, we have instituted a temporary, three-year pause to the federal price on pollution on deliveries of heating oil for the provinces and territories that receive the climate action incentive payment.

[Translation]

Eligible Canadians will be able to access federal and provincial programs within the next three years to switch to heat pumps. This means that my constituents in Madawaska—Restigouche, for ex-

Statements by Members

ample, will benefit from added financial support to meet their energy needs and compensate for their limited access to public transit.

[English]

This policy is a huge step forward for rural communities as we aim to ensure that carbon pricing is fair and balanced across the country.

[Translation]

Now that is a real common-sense government initiative.

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[English]

HUNTING

Mrs. Shelby Kramp-Neuman (Hastings—Lennox and Addington, CPC): Mr. Speaker, for many Ontarians, this week marks the beginning of the deer hunt. For rural communities across the country, hunters and anglers represent a much-needed and valued group of Canadians. They are stewards of the land and its animals, keeping wildlife populations in check, while providing food and sustenance to many. However, these people cannot carry out this tradition if they do not have their long guns.

I have proudly voted against the Liberal-NDP government's attempt to punish law-abiding firearms owners who play by the rules. The vast majority of gun crimes involve firearms that were smuggled into our country. None of that will be solved by banning hunting rifles. On top of this, there is the bureaucracy of renewing a PAL licence; it is ridiculous. Canada's Conservatives will continue to protect people's rights and go after criminals to keep our communities safe.

To those taking part in the hunt this season, I say good luck. I hope they enjoy the fellowship and stay safe. We will always stand with them.

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CARBON PRICING

Mr. Kody Blois (Kings—Hants, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, two weeks ago, the government introduced important adjustments to the national carbon pricing plan that matter across the country, including for the people I represent.

First, we are doubling the rural supplement from 10% to 20%. This will mean that, on average, a family living in Kings—Hants will receive \$200 more a year than those living in the city. This change is to ensure that those who do not have the same ability to change behaviour are better represented under the national program.

Statements by Members

We are also focused on heating oil, which costs upwards of four times the amount to heat one's home and is worse from an environmental perspective. We are pausing the carbon price and expanding a national program to help people make the switch to a heat pump. The carbon price pause will save, on average, \$300 a year this winter and ultimately thousands of dollars a year for those who use home heating oil in their houses.

I contrast that with the Conservatives. They are not offering long-term solutions to my constituents in Kings—Hants to help them save thousands of dollars a year. However, we will continue to focus on affordability and environmental progress at the same time.

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[Translation]

SUSTAINABLE HEATING

Mrs. Brenda Shanahan (Châteauguay—Lacolle, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, families in Châteauguay—Lacolle are very aware of the climate crisis and they want to act responsibly to protect the environment. We know that one good option is to use heat pumps rather than oil for home heating because they are greener and more cost-effective.

However, the cost of a heat pump may stop some households, particularly those with lower incomes, from making the switch. I therefore commend the federal government for the direct assistance it is providing to help people switch from oil to heat pumps. This program has already proven to be effective in my riding.

I am pleased to learn that Quebec is continuing to work with our government to provide the additional support that families need to transition to sustainable heating solutions. Unlike the Conservatives, who have no plan to protect us from the climate crisis, we are committed to making a responsible and just transition to a clean economy that supports all Canadians.

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[English]

CHILD SAFETY

Mr. Frank Caputo (Kamloops—Thompson—Cariboo, CPC): Mr. Speaker, a Canada-wide warrant has been issued for high-risk sex offender, Randall Hopley.

His lengthy criminal record includes three sex offences against children. He served six years for kidnapping. He is such a risk that he was designated as a long-term offender, meaning he had a supervision order for years after completing his sentence. He was charged with breaching that order. Rather than jail, he got bail to a halfway house. The protection is an ankle bracelet. Unlike a jail cell, ankle bracelets can be cut, and that is exactly what happened.

Even the NDP premier, an ally of the Prime Minister, has raised alarm bells. He said, "Everybody with a four-year-old in their life is thinking about that child right now and the fact that this man is at large."

The government needs to take child safety more seriously: no more bail for sex offenders, no more house arrest for pedophiles. The time has come and gone for the government to act. If the gov-

ernment does not want to act, then it can get out of the way because we will.

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● (1410)

CLIMATE CHANGE

Mr. Darrell Samson (Sackville—Preston—Chezzetcook, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, we know that putting a price on pollution and rebating all the proceeds back to Canadians remains the most effective way to fight climate change. In Canada, we are reducing emissions faster than any of the G20 nations.

In Atlantic Canada, reliance on heating oil, which has gone up in price by 75% this year alone, and the rural nature of our regions creates added challenges to our families.

That is why we are increasing the oil to heat pump affordability grants for low and medium-income Canadians for homeowner installing a heat pump, which saves them up to \$2,500 a year.

Finally, the doubling of the rural top-up rebate and the temporary three-year pause on the price on pollution for home heating oil will help support Canadians in the transition to cleaner energy.

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CARBON TAX

Mr. Branden Leslie (Portage—Lisgar, CPC): Mr. Speaker, yesterday, Manitoba Liberal MPs voted against our common-sense Conservative motion to scrap the carbon tax on home heating, proving once again that the Prime Minister just is not worth the cost.

After the vote, the new NDP Premier of Manitoba, Wab Kinew, declared that the carbon tax was "not a silver bullet when it comes to climate change." The Conservatives have been saying this for years, that the carbon tax is a tax plan and not an environmental plan.

If the Liberal government will not listen to the Conservatives, maybe it will listen to Manitoba's newest NDP premier and the 12 other ones who are opposing this inflationary tax scheme. The premier went on to say that the reality was this, "During this inflationary moment right now, people are suffering." I could not agree more.

After eight years of the NDP-Liberal coalition, people can no longer afford to live. It is time for the Liberal government to take the tax off and keep the heat on for all Canadians, not just for those who vote Liberal.

[Translation]

BLOC QUÉBÉCOIS

Mr. Pierre Paul-Hus (Charlesbourg—Haute-Saint-Charles, CPC): Mr. Speaker, Quebec, in collaboration with all the provincial premiers in Canada, supported a joint statement sent to the Prime Minister calling for a pause on the carbon tax on home heating.

Although the Bloc Québécois claims to work in the interests of Quebec and in collaboration with the Quebec government, it opted to turn against the Premier of Quebec, who supported the Council of the Federation. Instead, the Bloc Québécois decided to support this Liberal Prime Minister. Imagine, a separatist party working hand in hand with the Liberal Party of Canada. I could not make this up.

It is strange, though, considering that in 2021, the Bloc Québécois was calling on the Prime Minister to resign. Today, it wants to be his best friend and dance partner. The Bloc Québécois does not represent the interests of Quebecers. It has its own agenda. The leader of the Bloc Québécois has formed a coalition with the Prime Minister that will keep the worst government in history in power for another two years. For a separatist party, that makes no sense.

It would be interesting to know what the Prime Minister offered the Bloc Québécois to let him hold onto power, because right now, a vote for the Bloc Québécois is costly.

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[English]

CLIMATE CHANGE

Mr. Robert Morrissey (Egmont, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, two weeks ago, we announced that for rural Canadians we doubled the quarterly carbon pricing rebate, and we are in discussions with provinces to make heat pumps essentially free for low and middle-income households.

On average, homeowners who switch from oil to heat pumps to heat and cool their homes can save up to \$2,500 per year on their energy bills. This is good for families facing affordability challenges.

It is important to have a clear plan toward clean energy that will protect Canadians from the devastating impacts of climate change and ensures that farmers and fishers can continue to produce the food to feed Canadians and the world.

We are committed to transitioning to a clean economy in a way that ensures no one is left behind.

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KIDS CENTRE CO-OP NURSERY SCHOOL

Mr. Daniel Blaikie (Elmwood—Transcona, NDP): Mr. Speaker, I rise today to celebrate 50 years of service to the Transcona community by the Kids Centre Co-Op Nursery School.

The centre began in 1973 as a University of Manitoba student project and quickly transformed into a neighbourhood co-op run by

Statements by Members

a parent board. Today, it supports 76 children out of its location in Raddison School.

I am proud to say that my own family has benefited from the exceptional learning environment offered by the co-op.

I want to give a big thanks to all the parents and staff who have made the co-op a success. I know many teachers at the co-op, including Director Selenia, are former parents or students. This is a testament to the quality of their work and the supportive environment it creates.

I am proud to have run on a commitment for a national child care strategy and to have pushed the current government to implement one. It takes many people to make such a strategy successful.

I thank the people at the Kids Centre Co-Op and the child sector generally for their work. I thank the public servants who are administering the child care agreements, including a competent and dedicated team at early learning and child care Manitoba. Our future will be brighter for the work they do.

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● (1415)

[Translation]

PIERRE TURGEON

Mr. Sébastien Lemire (Abitibi—Témiscamingue, BQ): Mr. Speaker, today, this little guy from Rouyn-Noranda is very pleased to rise to honour one of his childhood idols, Pierre Turgeon, who will finally be inducted into the Hockey Hall of Fame.

Born in Rouyn-Noranda, Pierre Turgeon was not just a good hockey player. He led our town to the Little League Baseball World Series in 1982. This terror on the mound could have been quite the baseball star had he not chosen hockey.

Pierre Turgeon is the fifth person from Abitibi-Témiscamingue to be inducted into the hall of fame, after Dave Keon, Jacques Laperrière, Serge Savard and Rogatien Vachon. When we think of Pierre Turgeon, we think of how he scored 1,327 points in 1,294 games, including 123 points in a single season. We think of how he was awarded the Lady Byng trophy and how he was the team captain who carried the torch when the Montreal Canadiens moved from the Forum to the Molson Centre. He has had an incredible career.

Trained by the Citadelles, Pierre Turgeon will always be a full-fledged member of our community. Our young people still look up to him today. His sports career, modesty, talent and determination make him a great role model. The “magician from Rouyn” made us dream, and that is why number 77 will live on in our hearts forever.

*Oral Questions**[English]***CARBON TAX**

Mrs. Karen Vecchio (Elgin—Middlesex—London, CPC): Mr. Speaker, after eight years of the NDP-Liberal government, it is clear that the Prime Minister is not worth the cost.

According to a recent Statistics Canada report, one in three Canadians live in a household experiencing financial difficulties. Despite these difficulties, the Prime Minister decided to respond to his declining polls and the revolt of the Atlantic caucus and axe the tax for only 3% of the population residing in Atlantic Canada.

However, it is cold across all of Canada. I have heard from people who are saying that the cost of living has increased so rapidly that it greatly exceeds their income, so they can only afford food that is on sale. Others are going without meals totally.

Canadians deserve better. When an opportunity came to help Canadians, we saw just yesterday that the people in Thunder Bay were not being heard. They elected a Liberal, the MP for Thunder Bay—Superior North, who was proud to vote against this motion.

After eight years, Canadians want and need a new government that takes care of the people.

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CLIMATE CHANGE

Mr. Kevin Lamoureux (Winnipeg North, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, I would like to provide a reality check for the leader of the Conservative Party today. Climate change is real; it is actually happening. As I have pointed out, the Conservatives like to flip-flop all over the place on the issue.

I want to emphasize a point here for the member across the way. When it comes to the financing of oil, electricity and natural gas, which one does he think is the most costly for Canadians? It is oil. One of the ways we can make a good difference is by getting Canadians to look at heat pumps. With the greener homes program, tens of thousands of Canadians are now using heat pumps.

My question for their leader is this. When will the Conservatives wake up, listen to Canadians and realize they need to care about the environment?

ORAL QUESTIONS*[Translation]***CARBON PRICING**

Hon. Pierre Poilievre (Leader of the Opposition, CPC): Mr. Speaker, after eight years, this Prime Minister is not worth the cost.

Now, he is in a panic to save not only the carbon tax, but his political career, and the Bloc Québécois has swooped in to help. The Bloc voted to keep the tax on home heating, and we learned from La Presse that the Bloc wants to keep the Liberals in power for two years. On top of that, La Presse revealed that there was a call between the Bloc Québécois leader and the Prime Minister about saving this Liberal government's agenda.

In the interest of transparency, will the Prime Minister tell Canadians all the terms of this costly new coalition?

● (1420)

Right Hon. Justin Trudeau (Prime Minister, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, as everyone in this room knows, I am always here to work with anyone who wants to do more to fight climate change and with anyone who wants to do more to help Canadian families during these difficult times.

I am very pleased that the Bloc Québécois recognizes that one of the best ways to fight climate change is to put a price on pollution and help families with the associated costs. That is what we are doing.

I have regular conversations with the Bloc Québécois leader, but we have not discussed this subject recently. The last time we spoke was about Israel and the Middle East. It was a very important conversation with other party leaders.

[English]

Hon. Pierre Poilievre (Leader of the Opposition, CPC): Mr. Speaker, the panicking Prime Minister is desperate to save his carbon tax, especially on heat. He started by giving a temporary pause to some people in a region where he was plummeting in the polls and his caucus was revolting. Then he found that the entire country was in revolt and he needed a new coalition partner to save him from my common-sense confidence vote to take the tax off the heat. He got that support from the Bloc Québécois.

We now learn that he has been in discussions with the Bloc to help him stay in power for two years. What did he promise the separatists for them to enter into this costly carbon tax coalition?

Right Hon. Justin Trudeau (Prime Minister, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, contrary to the divisive rhetoric that the Leader of the Opposition is putting forward, the measures we announced on transitioning people on oil to heat pumps apply right across the country. The doubling of the rural top-up applies right across the country. We are going to continue to work with Canadians to phase out home heating oil, which is dirtier and more expensive.

I want to recognize that we are willing to work with anyone in the House who will step up in the fight against climate change. I thank the leader of the Bloc Québécois for continuing to be firm on building a better future for all our kids, on fighting against climate change on this and in other occasions.

I welcome all parliamentarians to stand up in the fight against climate change.

Oral Questions

Hon. Pierre Poilievre (Leader of the Opposition, CPC): Mr. Speaker, now he is thanking the separatists for helping him save his carbon tax and support his plan to quadruple the tax on heat, gas and groceries.

The Prime Minister is playing a very dangerous game. First, he divided Canadians by giving a temporary pause to some people in a region where he was plummeting in the polls and his caucus was revolting. When all Canadians then revolted against this divisive plan, he turned to the separatists, who say that they are going to keep him in power for two years and that the leader of the Bloc has had a call with the Prime Minister to do it.

In the interest of transparency, will the Prime Minister reveal what he promised the separatists for them to join in this costly carbon tax coalition?

Right Hon. Justin Trudeau (Prime Minister, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, the level of divisiveness in the rhetoric of the Leader of the Opposition is truly unfortunate.

The vast majority of Canadians, like the vast majority of members in the House of Commons, recognize that climate change is real. They recognize that we need to continue to step up in the fight against climate change, not just for the well-being of the planet and future generations but for families' bottom lines, for families' jobs and careers as well. We will continue to do that.

As members of the House of Commons know, I exchange regularly with leaders of different political parties. I have not spoken recently with the leader of the Bloc except on the issue of the Middle East, but I am always open to talking to any party leader who wants to talk about fighting climate change.

Hon. Pierre Poilievre (Leader of the Opposition, CPC): Mr. Speaker, he tried to divide and distract from the fact that Canadians, after eight years of his government, cannot eat, heat or house themselves. However, in a strange way, he united all Canadians at the premiers' conference, who all agree.

All 10 of them unanimously disagree with the Prime Minister's approach to take the tax off temporarily for only some. They have said that the federal carbon tax policy treats Canadians differently and they expect a change.

Will the Prime Minister pull together all the premiers in an emergency carbon tax conference, so we can take the tax off and keep the heat on?

• (1425)

Right Hon. Justin Trudeau (Prime Minister, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, the measures we announced a couple of weeks ago help any Canadian everywhere across the country to get off home heating oil and toward using a heat pump, which is cleaner, less expensive and better for our future. These are things we have done right across the country.

Only the Conservatives would think that taking serious action on climate change and supporting Canadians right across the country with affordability measures would be divisive. It is divisive if one thinks that climate change is fake, but everybody else other than the Conservative Party knows that we can come together to fight climate change.

Hon. Pierre Poilievre (Leader of the Opposition, CPC): Mr. Speaker, Canadians know that the only thing fake is the Prime Minister.

Today, the NDP members flip-flopped on their flip-flop. First, they voted 16 times in favour of the carbon tax on home heating. Then they voted to quadruple the tax. Then yesterday, they panicked, flip-flopped and voted for my plan to take the tax off home heating, admitting that they were wrong all along. Now today, they said they are in favour of the tax on home heat by refusing my amendment.

Will the Prime Minister tell us, at 2:26 p.m., what the NDP position is on the carbon tax right now?

The Speaker: I am not certain if that question has to do with the administration of the House, but I see the right hon. Prime Minister is rising.

Right Hon. Justin Trudeau (Prime Minister, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, what is clear is that the Conservatives are all ready to try to divide Canadians, one against the other, in any possible way they can, when the reality is that the only division around climate change is that Conservative politicians still doubt whether it is real or not and certainly do not think we should be doing anything to fight climate change. However, everybody else across the country, in all different parties, knows that it is a real issue that we are going to continue to step up and fight, unlike the Conservatives, who continue to look to divide and hide from the reality of climate change.

* * *

[Translation]

CANADIAN HERITAGE

Mr. Yves-François Blanchet (Beloeil—Chambly, BQ): Mr. Speaker, the call that the Leader of the Opposition is talking about never happened, and the only true thing he said is that we are separatists.

Speaking of the opposition leader, he spent \$3,300 on 14 Facebook ads between August 1 and November 1. The Conservative Party spent another \$80,000, the Liberal Party spent \$8,500 and the Prime Minister spent \$20,000 on Facebook at a time when social media players are bullying the media in Canada and Quebec.

Why?

Right Hon. Justin Trudeau (Prime Minister, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, what is very clear is that, regardless of our political stripes and regardless of whether we are federalist or separatist, we are all concerned about the future of our grandchildren and about protecting the environment. We will continue to work with anyone wants to work with us.

With respect to social media and news for Canadians, we continue to stand very strong against Facebook and Google, which are reluctant to pay journalists for their work. We will continue to do whatever it takes to make sure Canadians are informed about this and other issues, but we still have a lot of work to do.

Oral Questions

Mr. Yves-François Blanchet (Beloeil—Chambly, BQ): Mr. Speaker, we want the government to take a strong stand. We would support a strong stand from the Canadian government. A few days ago, we learned that over 500 people had lost their jobs at TVA Group. Those 500 people lost their jobs because social media platforms are essentially stealing ad dollars from legitimate media. Meanwhile, the Conservatives and the Liberal government are encouraging them by handing over tens of thousands of dollars every month.

What message does that send to people, and to Meta, which does not respect anyone?

• (1430)

Right Hon. Justin Trudeau (Prime Minister, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, we have been extremely clear about our concern over the behaviour of Meta in particular, which indeed refuses to support democracy and allow journalists to do their rigorous work, which is essential to the proper functioning of our institutions and our democracy. We will continue to defend the media against the web giants, whom the Conservatives never miss an opportunity to defend. We will continue to do everything we can to keep Canadians informed at the same time.

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[English]

TAXATION

Mr. Jagmeet Singh (Burnaby South, NDP): Mr. Speaker, we all know that the Prime Minister's plan on home heating is cynical and divisive, but the Conservatives are no better. They are more interested in playing games than actually helping people. If they were genuine about helping people, they would support our plan to take GST off home heating for all Canadians, to help people access clean and affordable ways to heat their home and to make the big oil and gas companies pay for it.

We know that the corporate Conservatives will never stand up to big oil and gas. Will the Prime Minister support our plan to help all Canadians?

Right Hon. Justin Trudeau (Prime Minister, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, on this side of the House, we know that one of the things that help Canadians is fighting climate change and supporting them in that fight against climate change.

I know the New Democrats used to support phasing out coal. It is surprising to me that they are not supportive of phasing out heating oil, because that is exactly what we are doing. We are phasing out home heating oil because it is dirtier and more expensive for homes right across the country. We are facilitating the delivery of heat pumps, including for free for low-income Canadians in provinces that choose to step up and participate.

We are going to continue to fight climate change. I really wish the NDP were as unequivocal as that.

[Translation]

Mr. Jagmeet Singh (Burnaby South, NDP): Mr. Speaker, the question we will have to answer tomorrow is whether we want to offer a rebate to all Canadians while continuing to fight the climate crisis. The Conservatives do nothing but recite slogans, and we will

see tomorrow if their CEO friends will allow them to vote to help Canadians. The Liberals just want to pit regions against each other.

Will the Prime Minister acknowledge his mistake and offer all Canadians a break on home heating?

Right Hon. Justin Trudeau (Prime Minister, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, we are offering more than just a rebate. We are offering millions of Canadians across the country the chance to abandon heating oil, because it is dirtier and more expensive and there are too many low-income Canadians who rely on it. Helping them get heat pumps is a good policy for Canadians and a good policy for fighting climate change.

We will continue to be there to help Canadians, and we hope that all parliamentarians will join us.

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[English]

CARBON PRICING

Ms. Melissa Lantsman (Thornhill, CPC): Mr. Speaker, the Prime Minister paused the pain of his carbon tax for 3% of families in a region where he is plummeting in the polls. The Liberal minister from Newfoundland said that if people in other regions wanted the same pause, they should have elected Liberals. People in York Region elected Liberal MPs, in fact seven of them, yet their constituents are not getting the pause.

Yesterday, these MPs could have voted to take the tax off for the residents of York Region, but they voted with the Prime Minister. Can anybody from York Region stand up and explain their choice to leave their constituents in the cold?

Hon. Jonathan Wilkinson (Minister of Energy and Natural Resources, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, as I have said a number of times in this House, we have taken action that addresses affordability for particularly vulnerable Canadians. Heating oil costs two to four times that of natural gas. It accelerated by 75% in 2022.

We have done this in a manner that addresses the climate crisis at the same time, and ensures affordability for people going forward. They will save \$2,500 a year. It applies to people who live in every province and territory in this country, so long as provinces and territories step up.

The shame in this chamber is that the Conservative Party has no plan to address the climate crisis. I do not even know if the Conservatives believe in it, but they certainly do not act as though they think it is important.

Oral Questions

Ms. Melissa Lantsman (Thornhill, CPC): Mr. Speaker, it certainly has not helped the people in Newmarket, Aurora, Richmond Hill, Woodbridge, Markham, Stouffville or North York. All of these communities were sold out by their Liberal MPs, and they cannot even tell people why. They had a choice to stand with their communities, and instead they stood with the Prime Minister. Now they are hiding and hoping that everybody forgets.

If these MPs will not listen to their constituents, will not advocate for them in the House of Commons and will not even stand to defend their vote, then what are they even doing here?

• (1435)

Hon. Jonathan Wilkinson (Minister of Energy and Natural Resources, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, this policy choice is about both affordability and ensuring that we are addressing the climate crisis. I call on all provinces and territories to join us. Certainly the Government of Ontario has indicated an interest in moving forward with co-delivering this project, which will be enormously important going forward.

Yesterday, the Leader of the Opposition essentially said that he will walk away from Canada's climate targets, eroding Canada's credibility in the international community and eroding the ability of the world to address the climate crisis. This is enormously reckless. It is an enormous risk for the future of our children. Shame on him.

Mr. Scott Aitchison (Parry Sound—Muskoka, CPC): Mr. Speaker, the Prime Minister paused the pain of his carbon tax for 3% of Canadians in regions where he was plummeting in the polls. Then the Liberal rural affairs minister said that if people in other regions wanted the same pause, well, they should elect Liberals. The people of Sudbury did elect a Liberal MP, yet her constituents are not getting a break.

Yesterday, she could have voted to pause the carbon tax on all forms of home heating for the residents of Sudbury, but she voted no. Why is the government so committed to quadrupling its carbon tax that it forced the member for Sudbury to leave her constituents out in the cold?

Hon. Jonathan Wilkinson (Minister of Energy and Natural Resources, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, we have a serious plan, a real policy, that addresses affordability and addresses the climate crisis. The leader of official opposition has no plan. He mouths tag lines like “technology, not taxes”. This is coming from a guy who has zero background in technology and zero background in business. This is coming from somebody who has been opposing the deployment of offshore wind technology through the passage of Bill C-49, which is supported by the Conservative Premier of Nova Scotia and the Premier of Newfoundland and Labrador.

Shame on them for having no plan for climate change and having no plan for the economy of the future.

The Speaker: Colleagues, I am having some difficulty hearing members ask questions and answer them. I would ask members to please not engage in conversations across the aisle until they have the floor.

The hon. member for Parry Sound—Muskoka.

Mr. Scott Aitchison (Parry Sound—Muskoka, CPC): Mr. Speaker, just this morning the environment commissioner con-

firmed that the government's so-called climate plan is nothing more than a punishing tax on heat, gas and groceries. After yesterday's vote, it is crystal clear that the NDP-Liberal government has no plan to make life more affordable either.

Yesterday, the member for Sault Ste. Marie could have voted to pause the carbon tax on home heating for all the residents in the Sault and all of northern Ontario, but he voted no. Why is the government so committed to quadrupling the carbon tax that it forced the member for Sault Ste. Marie to leave his constituents out in the cold?

Hon. Seamus O'Regan (Minister of Labour and Seniors, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, there is an equality and equity thing happening here. Treating all folks equally when they start out unequal just perpetuates an inequality.

It costs four times as much to heat one's home on heating oil as it does on natural gas, and that is a particular problem when one lives in a region like mine that does not have access to natural gas. Let us pick up for those people hardest hit. Let us make sure they get the break they deserve.

The Speaker: I am going to ask the member for South Shore—St. Margarets and his neighbour to please take the floor when a question comes to them. Then we can listen to the answer without any problem.

The hon. member for Kenora.

• (1440)

Mr. Eric Melillo (Kenora, CPC): Mr. Speaker, the Prime Minister has paused the pain of his carbon tax for 3% of families in areas where he is plummeting in the polls. The Liberal rural affairs minister says that if others wanted a similar pause, well, they should have elected more Liberals. The people of Thunder Bay—Rainy River did elect a Liberal MP, yet they are not seeing this pause.

Just yesterday, that member had an opportunity to vote to take the tax off and keep the heat on, but he voted against our common-sense motion. Why is the government so committed to quadrupling the carbon tax that the member for Thunder Bay—Rainy River left the people of northern Ontario outside in the cold?

Hon. Jonathan Wilkinson (Minister of Energy and Natural Resources, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, as I have said before, we put forward a plan that addresses affordability in the long term for vulnerable Canadians who are suffering from high costs associated with home heating oil, which have accelerated significantly in the last two years. We have done it in a manner that is consistent with the fight against climate change, a fight that is not just Canadian but is also happening in countries around the world.

Oral Questions

I would say that it is the height of hypocrisy for the member opposite to be talking about this, a price on pollution that they endorsed in their campaign platform. It was part of the basis on which he was elected to the House.

Mr. Eric Melillo (Kenora, CPC): Mr. Speaker, after eight years, they have absolutely no plan for affordability, which must be why the Prime Minister has paused his carbon tax pain for 3% of families. However, people in Thunder Bay—Superior North want to know why their MP, a Liberal minister, was not able to get the same pause for people across northern Ontario. Just yesterday, she had the opportunity to vote to keep the heat on and take the tax off for people across northern Ontario.

Again, why is the government so committed to quadrupling its carbon tax that the member for Thunder Bay—Superior North was forced to leave the people of northern Ontario out in the cold?

Hon. Jonathan Wilkinson (Minister of Energy and Natural Resources, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, as I have said a number of times, it is shameful that the party opposite has no plan to address a crisis that is facing all of humanity. I would tell colleagues that, in the modern age, having recognition and acceptance of the realities of climate change is critical to having an economic plan that can be relevant for the future.

What we hear is that the Leader of the Opposition will cancel the Volkswagen battery manufacturing plant, that he opposes offshore wind and hydrogen development in Newfoundland and Nova Scotia, that he would get rid of the Canada Infrastructure Bank and that he would eliminate the small modular reactor project at Darlington. He is opposed to everything. At the end of the day, he has no plan for the economy and he has no plan for the environment—

Some hon. members: Oh, oh!

[*Translation*]

The Speaker: I urge all members to listen to their whips' instructions about keeping quiet in the House.

The hon. member for Drummond.

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CANADIAN HERITAGE

Mr. Martin Champoux (Drummond, BQ): Mr. Speaker, 547 people working at TVA lost their jobs on Thursday, the darkest day in the history of Quebec television.

The federal government has to realize that Bill C-11 and Bill C-18 will not be enough. The government has to launch a \$50-million emergency fund for news media. It has to hold a summit next spring at the latest with all industry stakeholders to find long-term solutions to ensure the survival of our media outlets. Their future is at stake, and the time to act is now.

Will the minister create an emergency fund and hold a summit?

Hon. Pascale St-Onge (Minister of Canadian Heritage, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, over the past few years, we have witnessed the impact of the crisis on media outlets across the country. That is why we introduced support programs.

I am obviously very shaken by the news of the 547 jobs lost. We will keep working on the various proposals. We are examining every option for supporting the media.

We now see the results of the Conservatives' constant filibustering in an attempt to prevent us from modernizing our laws. Had we been able to do it in 2020, when we first introduced the bill, those jobs might not have been lost. That is entirely on the Conservatives.

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IMMIGRATION, REFUGEES AND CITIZENSHIP

Mr. Alexis Brunelle-Duceppe (Lac-Saint-Jean, BQ): Mr. Speaker, the Bloc Québécois supports successful immigration. We are saying it loud and clear. That is why we want immigrants to be able to find housing. We want them to have access to a family doctor. We want their children to go to school in nice classrooms, with all the professional support they need. We want them to be able to learn French, because that is the key to flourishing in Quebec. That is what integration capacity is all about, all of that.

Will the Liberals finally understand that they are jeopardizing all that by setting immigration targets that are in no way in line with our integration capacity?

● (1445)

Hon. Jean-Yves Duclos (Minister of Public Services and Procurement, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, I want to say a big thank you to our colleague for raising the issue of housing. It is both important and timely.

This morning, we announced that Canada Lands Company will build 28,000 new homes over the next five years, including 5,000 new affordable housing units, which is twice the amount that has been built in the past 30 years.

This is a clear example of how municipalities, non-profit and for-profit organizations and the Canadian government can work together to create more affordable housing for more people in this country.

Mr. Alexis Brunelle-Duceppe (Lac-Saint-Jean, BQ): Mr. Speaker, the Liberals have no idea what Quebec's integration capacity is. Why is that? For one thing, they did not consult the Government of Quebec before coming up with their immigration targets. For another, because of the Canada-Quebec accord, they are refusing to consult any Quebec organization that does not have a Canada-wide mandate.

As a result, only 6% of the groups that were consulted were from Quebec. The Liberals refuse to talk to Quebec and Quebecers, so it should come as no surprise that their immigration targets are out of sync with our integration capacity. Will the minister go back and do his homework?

Hon. Marc Miller (Minister of Immigration, Refugees and Citizenship, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, not only is the member out of touch with Quebecers, but he is out of touch with the news. Today we learned that Quebec is in need of workers. How can we address the labour shortage? Immigration. It is not the only solution, and I agree with the member that it needs to be successful immigration, but according to today's news, Quebec's GDP is lower than expected because of the worker shortage. The solution to the labour shortage is immigration, which will most certainly be successful.

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CARBON PRICING

Mr. Pierre Paul-Hus (Charlesbourg—Haute-Saint-Charles, CPC): Mr. Speaker, the Bloc Québécois separatists joined the Liberals yesterday in voting down our motion to axe the carbon tax on home heating for all Canadians. Quebec, however, endorsed a statement released jointly with the other provinces that supported our initiative.

The Bloc Québécois is working against the Premier of Quebec and for the Prime Minister of Canada. Who would have thought it possible? What concessions did the Bloc Québécois get to keep this incompetent and costly Prime Minister in power?

Hon. Steven Guilbeault (Minister of Environment and Climate Change, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, I am a big fan of *Infoman*. Last week's program featured a segment on half-truths told by the Conservative Party of Canada. Not once but twice during the program, *Infoman* found that a statement made by the Conservatives was false. The Conservatives say that carbon pricing has a 16% impact on inflation, but that is untrue. According to *Infoman*, that impact is 0.15%. The program corrected a number of falsehoods. It is well worth watching.

Mr. Pierre Paul-Hus (Charlesbourg—Haute-Saint-Charles, CPC): Mr. Speaker, that is funny. Now *Infoman* is guiding the federal government. Hello to *Infoman*.

The problem is that after eight years of this Liberal government, a new coalition formed yesterday, the Bloc-Liberal coalition. The Liberal-NDP coalition was bad enough. Now we are stuck with a coalition of sovereignists and separatists who are supporting the Liberal government to keep it in power for another two years.

Canadians and Quebecers have had enough of this government's extravagant spending. What did the Bloc Québécois get in compensation for agreeing to make a deal with the Liberal Party?

Hon. Steven Guilbeault (Minister of Environment and Climate Change, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, it is true that there is a coalition in the House: There is the Liberal Party of Canada, the Bloc Québécois, the Green Party and the New Democratic Party, who all believe that climate change is an existential challenge. The one party in the House that does not believe it is the Conservative Party. There are four parties in the House who think we should do something to fight climate change, that we should put a price on pollution, that we should encourage clean technology and the electrification of transportation. There is one party in the House who does not believe in any of that and that is the official opposition, the Conservative Party of Canada.

Oral Questions

• (1450)

Mr. Jacques Gourde (Lévis—Lotbinière, CPC): Mr. Speaker, voting for the Bloc Québécois is costly, and we proved it again yesterday. The costly new Bloc-Liberal coalition voted against our common-sense motion that would have enabled Canadians across the country to stay warm this winter. We cannot say it enough: The Liberals and the Bloc voted together to radically increase the carbon tax on the backs of Canadians. They are not worth the cost. Voting for the Bloc Québécois is costly. What concessions did the Bloc Québécois win by agreeing to keep this incompetent Prime Minister in power?

Hon. Pablo Rodriguez (Minister of Transport, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, look who has come out of the woodwork. Where was our colleague this summer when the rivers were overflowing? Where was he this summer when the forest fires were burning? Where was he when people were being displaced pretty much everywhere? The Conservatives, with their regressive policies and their climate change denial, want to try to set us back. They want to take us back to the Stone Age.

Mr. Jacques Gourde (Lévis—Lotbinière, CPC): Mr. Speaker, after eight years of this incompetent Prime Minister, he has found a new partner. Yesterday, the costly new Bloc-Liberal coalition voted to keep the carbon tax on home heating for all Canadians. It is truly shameful.

For the second time, what concessions did the Bloc Québécois get to keep this incompetent Prime Minister in power?

Hon. Pablo Rodriguez (Minister of Transport, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, we will take no lessons from people who think that human beings and dinosaurs coexisted or that *The Flintstones* TV show is a documentary.

We are going to fight climate change. The Conservatives want to make us backtrack on fundamental rights, guns and the environment. They want to take us back to the Stone Age.

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CLIMATE CHANGE

Mr. Alexandre Boulerice (Rosemont—La Petite-Patrie, NDP): Mr. Speaker, we are seeing announcements at every turn, photo ops and great speeches, but despite all that, the commissioner of the environment is giving the Liberals a failing grade on the climate crisis. Canada is going to miss its target because we are still waiting for the oil and gas emissions cap. Under the Liberals, more public money is going to fossil fuels than in any other G20 country. That is unbelievable.

When will the Liberals wake up and take this crisis seriously? Will that be when the planet goes up in smoke?

Oral Questions

Hon. Steven Guilbeault (Minister of Environment and Climate Change, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, if my hon. colleague bothered to actually listen to the commissioner of the environment and sustainable development's press conference he would have heard him say—and these are his words—that the plan we presented last year is the best plan to fight climate change in the history of this country. I did not say that, the commissioner of the environment and sustainable development did.

Can we do more to fight climate change? Of course. Would I be pleased to work with him, with the Bloc Québécois and with the Green Party so that Canada can move faster and go further in the fight against climate change, in spite of the Conservative Party of Canada? Absolutely.

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[English]

HOUSING

Ms. Jenny Kwan (Vancouver East, NDP): Mr. Speaker, the Liberals are out of touch with Canadians struggling to find a home they can afford. They just handed over six parcels of federal land to wealthy developers, and only a small fraction of the homes built will be affordable. We are in a housing crisis. Rent is through the roof. Canadians are having to make impossible choices. Some end up living in cars or on the street.

Canada needs at least two million non-profit homes, so why are the Liberals, yet again, putting profits over people having an affordable home?

● (1455)

Hon. Jean-Yves Duclos (Minister of Public Services and Procurement, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, I thank our colleague for raising the importance of investing in more housing. The good news is that we did that just this morning. This morning, with Canada Lands Company, we announced the construction of 28,000 additional new homes in the next five years, 20% of which, at least, will be affordable homes. That is five times the number of affordable homes we have constructed in the last 30 years. There is more to do, including with non-profit housing providers. We are going to do that.

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CLIMATE CHANGE

Mr. Brendan Hanley (Yukon, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, even as my constituents weather high prices and tough economic times, they remain deeply concerned about climate change. That is why Yukoners welcome actions from the government to reduce fossil fuel emissions while conserving energy and reducing costs. Contrary to a common misconception, Yukon-based studies have shown that heat pumps can operate efficiently in very cold climates. The Prime Minister has invited all interested provinces and territories to join the codelivery program for heat pumps.

Can the Minister of Energy and Natural Resources update the House on the progress in bringing this program to my riding in the Yukon?

Hon. Jonathan Wilkinson (Minister of Energy and Natural Resources, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, I do want to thank my colleague from Yukon for his tireless advocacy for his constituents.

Heat pumps have been well-tested and adopted in northern climates for years. That is why we are working to deploy more cold climate heat pumps across the territory to reduce ongoing energy bills and to reduce emissions. In fact, heating oil actually serves over 50% of the population in Yukon, making it a pressing issue of affordability and climate.

I had a conversation recently with the Premier of Yukon. He is extremely interested in moving forward on a joint delivery, and I expect we will have good things to say very soon.

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[Translation]

CARBON PRICING

Mr. Joël Godin (Portneuf—Jacques-Cartier, CPC): Mr. Speaker, yesterday, we saw the Bloc Québécois's true colours. They once again turned their backs on Quebecers by voting with the Liberals.

People say that voting for the Bloc Québécois is costly, and we saw further proof of that yesterday. The Bloc Québécois voted against removing the tax on all forms of home heating in Canada for all Canadians. That is unbelievable. This costly new Bloc-Liberal coalition is not doing anything good for Quebecers.

What did the Prime Minister give the Bloc Québécois in exchange for staying in power for another two years?

Hon. Steven Guilbeault (Minister of Environment and Climate Change, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, last week, after asking what my former Greenpeace colleagues thought of my work, my hon. colleague changed his mind and asked what Equiterre thinks.

I have here for him a quote from Equiterre about our climate change action plan: “this is the first time that we have such a detailed strategy to reach a target that we have set.” Would my colleague like a quote from the David Suzuki Foundation? “This plan has a better chance of success than any of Canada’s previous climate plans.” Would he like a quote from Greenpeace? “The government’s new plan marks the first time that the oil and gas sector is being asked to significantly reduce emissions”.

We have been looking for positive comments about the Conservatives' plan. I have not found any.

[English]

Mr. John Barlow (Foothills, CPC): Mr. Speaker, what is the Prime Minister's Christmas gift to 97% of Canadians? Merry Christmas. They are going to have a carbon tax on home heating this winter.

The Prime Minister literally gave Canadians a lump of coal by voting against the common-sense Conservative motion to take the tax off and keep the heat on. We thought the Liberal-NDP carbon tax coalition was bad, but there is a new addition to the carbon tax naughty list. The Bloc joined the Liberals and voted to keep the carbon tax on home heating this winter.

Which gift did the Prime Minister leave under the separatists' tree to protect his government for two more years?

Hon. Jonathan Wilkinson (Minister of Energy and Natural Resources, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, as I have said a number of times, it is important to actually have a plan to address critical affordability issues in a long-term way, but also to continue to address the climate crisis. Those are the measures that we have put into place.

I have to say again that I find it the height of hypocrisy that my hon. colleague across the way, who ran on a platform that included putting a price on pollution, gets up in the House today and actually says what he is saying. It is the height of hypocrisy.

Mr. John Barlow (Foothills, CPC): Mr. Speaker, the Prime Minister joined the separatists to divide Canadians. Those Canadians will have to pay a carbon tax on their home heating over the winter, and 3% of Canadians will get a pause on the pain. It is clear that for the Liberals and the Bloc, their Christmas gift to Canadians is to punish families for heating their homes this winter. They voted against a common-sense Conservative motion to take the tax off for every single Canadian.

Again, what Christmas wish did the Prime Minister grant the separatists for the Liberals to avoid an election on the carbon tax?

• (1500)

Hon. Jonathan Wilkinson (Minister of Energy and Natural Resources, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, I think every party in this House is concerned about affordability issues, but the only party in this House that does not care about the climate crisis is the Conservative Party of Canada. It is the only party that actually has no plan to address it and does not even believe that climate change is real.

Yesterday, the Leader of the Opposition essentially said he would walk away from Canada's climate targets. He would walk away from every member of the international community. He would walk away from our children's future. He would walk away from a clean economy that would actually create jobs and economic opportunity across the country. Shame on him.

Mr. Rick Perkins (South Shore—St. Margarets, CPC): Mr. Speaker, after eight years, the revolting Atlantic caucus and the panicking, plummeting Prime Minister now have two coalitions with which to flip Canadians the bird. There is the costly coalition with the NDP to drive the cost of everything up. Unfortunately, Canadians know too much about that. The other, according to the Quebec media, is with the separatist Bloc that committed to keep the Liberals in power for another two years.

The costly coalition Prime Minister is not worth the cost. Will the Prime Minister release his full carbon tax coalition agreement with the separatist Bloc?

Hon. Jonathan Wilkinson (Minister of Energy and Natural Resources, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, my hon. friend across the way used the word "revolting". What is revolting are the tactics and the cir-

cus act that are going on in the natural resources committee, blocking the passage of Bill C-49. It is endangering the health and safety of the translators in that committee. It is an enormous waste of taxpayer money. It is opposing the Conservative Premier of Nova Scotia and the Premier of Newfoundland and Labrador. The bill would create jobs and economic opportunity for the future in a manner that is consistent with fighting the climate crisis. Shame on him.

* * *

[Translation]

SMALL BUSINESS

Mrs. Caroline Desbiens (Beauport—Côte-de-Beaupré—Île d'Orléans—Charlevoix, BQ): Mr. Speaker, the situation in Beauport—Côte-de-Beaupré—Île d'Orléans—Charlevoix is very serious.

In my riding, 142 SMEs have announced that they will go bankrupt if the federal government does not extend the repayment deadline for CEBA loans by one year without the loss of the forgivable portion of the loan. The situation is the same in the entire national capital region. Our SMEs need more time. While the Liberals are asleep at the wheel and the Conservatives are defending oil companies, our small and medium-sized businesses are on the verge of bankruptcy.

When will the government finally give them the one-year extension they so desperately need?

Hon. Rechie Valdez (Minister of Small Business, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, I would like to inform my hon. colleague that nearly 900,000 small businesses benefited from the CEBA.

That is why we recently announced a one-year extension on the term loan repayment deadline, more flexibility on refinancing and more time to access loan forgiveness. We also increased the Canada child benefit and implemented \$10-a-day child care, thus enabling more women than ever to enter the workforce.

Mrs. Julie Vignola (Beauport—Limoilou, BQ): Mr. Speaker, a wave of bankruptcies is coming for our SMEs if the federal government does not defer repayment of the Canada emergency business account without the loss of any subsidies.

According to the Canadian Association of Insolvency and Restructuring Professionals, more companies filed for insolvency in the last quarter than in the previous 10 years. In Beauport—Limoilou alone, 154 businesses have said they are at risk of bankruptcy.

How can the Liberals sacrifice everything they have, when all these companies are asking for is a one-year deferral, not 18 days?

Oral Questions

● (1505)

Hon. Chrystia Freeland (Deputy Prime Minister and Minister of Finance, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, we are proud to have created that program, which paid out \$49 billion to Canadian small businesses during one of the worst economic challenges they have ever faced.

I thank the Bloc Québécois for supporting these crucial programs, especially when the Leader of the Opposition called our pandemic support measures “big, fat government programs”. What matters today is to point out that SMEs now have until December 31, 2026, to pay.

* * *

[English]

CARBON PRICING

Mrs. Tracy Gray (Kelowna—Lake Country, CPC): Mr. Speaker, yesterday, the Liberals voted down our common-sense Conservative motion to axe the carbon tax on all forms of home heating for all Canadians. The NDP leader said his NDP MPs would be supporting our Conservative motion to keep the heat on. However, not all British Columbia NDP MPs voted to take the carbon tax off. After eight years of this NDP-Liberal government, the Prime Minister is just not worth the cost.

Will the Prime Minister quit forcing on British Columbians his carbon tax rates which he plans to quadruple on home heating?

Hon. Jonathan Wilkinson (Minister of Energy and Natural Resources, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, as I have been saying, we have a plan to ensure long-term affordability for particularly vulnerable Canadians. The cost of heating oil is two to four times that of natural gas, depending on which province one lives in. It has accelerated over 75% in 2022. It is a plan that actually addresses that in a way that will give savings to people over the long term. It will do it in a manner that fights climate change.

I had the opportunity to speak with Premier Eby about it last week, and I believe that the people in British Columbia will have access to exactly the same proposal as people will have everywhere else.

Mrs. Rachael Thomas (Lethbridge, CPC): Mr. Speaker, the Prime Minister paused the pain of his carbon tax on 3% of Canadian families in the areas where his polls were the lowest. The Liberal rural affairs minister said that if people in other regions wanted to see a pause as well, then they needed to vote Liberal. However, the people in Calgary Skyview did vote for a Liberal member of Parliament, who yesterday could have voted to keep the heat on and take the tax off, but instead voted no to the people of Calgary Skyview.

Why is the government so hell-bent on quadrupling its carbon tax that the member for Calgary Skyview left his constituents out in the cold?

Hon. Jonathan Wilkinson (Minister of Energy and Natural Resources, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, as I have said, we are moving forward on a program that will ensure long-term affordability for people who utilize heating oil and that they do so in a manner that is consistent with addressing climate change. I have reached out to my counterpart in the Government of Alberta, and we will be hav-

ing conversations about how Alberta can participate in this project moving forward.

However, I would say once again that it is time, and Canadians expect it, for the Conservative Party to at least tell folks that it believes in climate change and it has a plan for addressing the climate crisis in a manner that is consistent with long-term economic prosperity and affordability.

Some hon. members: Oh, oh!

The Speaker: Order. I was not able to hear who said a certain comment, but every member who is recognized to speak has the right to do so until the time expires and the Speaker lets that person know.

The hon. member for Lethbridge.

Mrs. Rachael Thomas (Lethbridge, CPC): Mr. Speaker, what I heard from the member opposite is that the government is committed to picking winners and losers, and the winners are the 3% who use oil to heat their homes. They will not have to pay a carbon tax for the next three years, but the rest of Canada will.

When the minister for rural affairs was asked about this, she said that people need to vote more Liberals in and then they will give them their attention, referring to those in other parts of the country, of course. Those who live in the constituency of Edmonton Centre did elect a Liberal member of Parliament, and yet they were not shown that favouritism. They were not given the benefit of having the carbon tax removed.

My question is simple. Why is the government so hell-bent that the people of Edmonton Centre still have to pay the carbon tax on their home heating?

Some hon. members: Oh, oh!

The Speaker: I would like to remind members that I am quite aware of the time members have to pose and respond to questions. I politely decline their reminders as to how to do that.

The hon. Minister of Health.

● (1510)

Hon. Mark Holland (Minister of Health, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, the members opposite know that more than eight out of 10 Canadians get more back than they pay. Why we are hell-bent on this is that our planet demands it.

Fifteen thousand is the number of Canadians who died prematurely as a result of air pollution in the country. That cost is \$114 billion, and it will escalate if we refuse to take action on this. Not only do we have a moral and fiscal imperative, but we also have an obligation to ensure the party opposite does not return to attacking climate policies across the world and move back to an aggressive state where we cease making progress on climate action.

[Translation]

THE ENVIRONMENT

Mrs. Sophie Chatel (Pontiac, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, more than 400,000 homes in Quebec still heat with oil. Quebeckers are ready for a green transition, but the reality is that not everyone can afford to replace their heating system. That is why greener homes programs and heat pump subsidies are so important.

Can the Minister of Environment tell us how these grants and programs are being used?

Have there been any discussions with Quebec about enhancing these programs?

Hon. Steven Guilbeault (Minister of Environment and Climate Change, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, I thank my hon. colleague for her question.

As we know, oil is the dirtiest and most expensive form of heating. Moreover, it has seen the biggest price jump over the past year. Obviously, that is because of everything that is happening on the world markets.

Our heat pump program aims to save every family that installs a heat pump \$2,500, on average, across the country. We are working with the provinces so we can roll out this program as quickly as possible to eliminate oil heating across the country.

* * *

[English]

CARBON PRICING

Mr. James Bezan (Selkirk—Interlake—Eastman, CPC): Mr. Speaker, Manitoba's new NDP premier has joined the course calling on the Liberals to pause the carbon tax.

After eight long years, everyone knows that the Prime Minister is just not worth the cost and that his Liberal MPs in Winnipeg are failing Manitobans. Yesterday, the member for Winnipeg North could have voted to take the tax off and keep the heat on for Manitobans; instead, he voted to leave his constituents out in the cold. Now the Liberals want to quadruple the carbon tax.

Why does the member for Winnipeg North always follow orders from the Prime Minister at the expense of his own constituents?

Hon. Jonathan Wilkinson (Minister of Energy and Natural Resources, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, as I have said a number of times, this is a policy that is about addressing affordability for folks who are suffering from the fact that heating oil is a much more expensive way to heat their homes. We will use it in a manner that will enable us to continue the fight against climate change and help folks in the long term with affordability concerns.

I would tell the member that we have had discussions with the Government of Manitoba. I look forward to being able to move forward on a joint basis with the Government of Manitoba. I am pleased to see the government in Manitoba actually recognizing the existence of climate change, something the opposition does not do.

Mr. Ted Falk (Provencher, CPC): Mr. Speaker, after eight years we now have the socialists, the separatists and the Prime Min-

Oral Questions

ister, who is just not worth the cost. They are all part of this costly carbon tax coalition that is leaving Canadians out in the cold.

The rural affairs minister recently told Manitobans that, if they wanted the tax break, they had to elect more Liberals. The folks in Saint Boniface—Saint Vital elected a Liberal, but they are still paying the carbon tax. Yesterday, the member for Saint Boniface—Saint Vital had a chance to vote to keep the tax off and the heat on for his constituents. Why did he choose to leave the people of Saint Boniface—Saint Vital in the cold?

The Speaker: I would like to remind all members, in terms of their preparation of questions, that the questions should be directed toward the government, parliamentary secretaries or committee chairs and related to the business of the government or the House. A question posed to a member is not normally recognized.

The minister is standing up on this issue. If he wishes to answer the question, he certainly can.

The Minister of Environment and Climate Change.

• (1515)

Hon. Steven Guilbeault (Minister of Environment and Climate Change, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, I am a Liberal and proud socialist, but this reminds me of when Prime Minister Harper talked about the fight against climate change as a socialist plot. That is what the Conservative Party thinks.

Here it is. We have it again. Conservatives do not believe that climate change is an issue. They do not believe we should do anything about it. They oppose the electrification of transportation. They oppose deals such as Volkswagen, Stellantis and Northvolt. They oppose offshore wind development in Newfoundland and Nova Scotia. They have no plan to fight climate change. They have no plan for the economy. They have no plan for the future of Canada.

Mr. Dan Muys (Flamborough—Glanbrook, CPC): Mr. Speaker, the leader of the NDP said that his caucus would be voting against the divisive decision by the Prime Minister to pause the pain of the carbon tax for just 3% of Canadians, while doing nothing for the rest. However, in yesterday's vote, the member for Hamilton Centre did not even bother to vote. If the NDP member for Hamilton Centre will not do his job, Conservatives will.

Will the Prime Minister quit forcing Ontarians to pay a quadrupled carbon tax on their home heating?

The Speaker: I would like to point out that, although the preamble to that hybrid question dealt with a member who was not from the government, the final part was directed toward the Prime Minister.

The hon. minister.

Oral Questions

Hon. Karina Gould (Leader of the Government in the House of Commons, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, if the member opposite is so concerned about helping Ontarians, then he should be asking the Premier of Ontario to join the program to provide free heat pumps to the hundreds of thousands of Ontarians who would qualify.

As he knows, and as every member in the House knows full well, this is a program that applies across the country to transition folks away from home heating oil, so they do not have to use dirty, more expensive ways to heat their home. We can do this for cheaper. We can help Canadians, both with affordability and with fighting the existential threat of climate change, something the Conservatives continue to deny.

* * *

NATURAL RESOURCES

Mr. Patrick Weiler (West Vancouver—Sunshine Coast—Sea to Sky Country, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, 85,000 British Columbians still rely on oil to heat their homes, an extremely polluting fuel that is up to four times as expensive as natural gas.

Recently, the Government of Canada announced a new affordability package that would help Canadians ditch expensive and polluting oil furnaces for heat pumps. This would save them money on their home heating bills and fight climate change.

The Premier of British Columbia, David Eby, was seen at the premiers meeting, proudly donning an “I love heat pumps” shirt.

Can the Minister of Energy and Natural Resources provide an update to the House on the progress being made to bring this important affordability measure to British Columbians?

Hon. Jonathan Wilkinson (Minister of Energy and Natural Resources, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, I want to acknowledge the question from my colleague and neighbour. I recognize his ongoing advocacy for the environment and the people of West Vancouver—Sunshine Coast—Sea to Sky Country.

Canada works best when Canadians work together. We are reaching out, proactively, to every province and territory to discuss participation in this important program to address affordability issues in a manner consistent with fighting climate change.

We have had very good discussions with Premier Eby and Minister Osborne. I expect we will have good things to say for the people of British Columbia in the very near term.

* * *

FAMILIES, CHILDREN AND SOCIAL DEVELOPMENT

Ms. Leah Gazan (Winnipeg Centre, NDP): Mr. Speaker, Winnipeg's Christmas Cheer Board is anticipating record demand for its hampers because of the cost of living crisis. There have been 19,000 requests so far this year.

While big corporations are jacking up food prices, the Liberals throw up their hands and the Conservative leader, the corporate champion from Carleton, stays silent.

The Christmas Cheer Board does not know if it can meet the demand for help. Will the government support the NDP's bill to lower food costs and give Winnipeg families the help they need?

● (1520)

The Speaker: I would like to remind all members that referring to a particular member using a mock title is not considered parliamentary.

The hon. minister.

Hon. Jenna Sudds (Minister of Families, Children and Social Development, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, I appreciate the question from my colleague. We know that, right now, many Canadians are having a hard time putting food on the table.

That is exactly why we continue to do the hard work on this side of the House to support Canadian families and organizations doing that work. Whether that is from the community services recovery fund or whether that is the work that we are doing to develop the national school food policy among our partners, we are here to support Canadian families.

* * *

INDIGENOUS AFFAIRS

Ms. Lori Idlout (Nunavut, NDP): *Uqaqtittiji*, the gap for first nations infrastructure is at \$350 billion.

The government committed to end the gap for first nations by 2030, but the Liberals have spent under 3% of what is needed. This does not even include funding for Métis and Inuit, which would make the gap even more extreme.

Indigenous communities remain neglected, despite the calls for action. When will the government recognize indigenous peoples' capacity and work with them to fill these gaps?

Hon. Patty Hajdu (Minister of Indigenous Services and Minister responsible for the Federal Economic Development Agency for Northern Ontario, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, I thank my colleague from Nunavut for this really important question. In fact, after a decade of no investments in first nations communities under the Harper government, our government got to work with first nations partners to start to close that infrastructure gap on things such as clean water, where boil water advisories had been left unattended for a decade, and things such as housing, community centres, health centres and schools.

I agree with the member opposite. The gap is huge, but we are making progress with indigenous leadership. I am very proud of that.

POINTS OF ORDER

ORAL QUESTIONS

Mr. Ted Falk (Provencher, CPC): Mr. Speaker, I rise on a point of order. After I asked my question, you indicated that the question should be directed through you to a minister of the Crown and not just to any random Liberal. In fact, I was asking my question to the member for Saint Boniface—Saint Vital, who is a minister of the Crown. He is the Minister of Northern Affairs, and he did not vote in favour of reducing home heating bills for his constituents. It was actually a—

The Speaker: I would like to thank the member for Provencher for pointing that out.

As the Speaker, I would like to apologize to the member for making that declaration. I did not make the connection between the member's name and the role he plays in government, so I convey my apologies to the hon. member for Provencher.

Mr. John Nater (Perth—Wellington, CPC): Mr. Speaker, as you would know, Standing Order 17(a) provides that all members must rise in their own place to be recognized by the Speaker. Today, during question period, a Liberal member of Parliament flagrantly violated that rule, yet was recognized. I would like to know why the Liberal member for Pontiac was recognized when she was not in her seat.

The Speaker: I would like to thank the hon. member for raising this issue. I will take a look at that and get back to the House if necessary. I thank the member for Perth—Wellington.

[*Translation*]

The hon. member for Portneuf—Jacques-Cartier on a point of order.

Mr. Joël Godin: Mr. Speaker, during Oral Questions earlier, the Minister of Environment misled the House.

I would like to request unanimous consent to table newspaper articles stating that Equiterre is suing the minister—

Some hon. members: Oh, oh!

The Speaker: I would like to continue with the member's question but, unfortunately, I have already heard several indications that consent is not unanimous. I thank the hon. member for Portneuf—Jacques-Cartier.

The hon. member for Elmwood—Transcona on a point of order.

• (1525)

[*English*]

Mr. Daniel Blaikie (Elmwood—Transcona, NDP): Mr. Speaker, following the question from the member for Winnipeg Centre, you commented on the use of mock titles. I would remind you, Mr. Speaker, that “NDP-Liberal government” or “Liberal-NDP coalition” are also mock titles. If you need evidence, we now have the same members referring to a Liberal-separatist coalition. They did not call it a coalition when they voted with the Liberals on Motion No. 79.

They are raising the question of—

Some hon. members: Oh, oh!

Points of Order

The Speaker: I would like to thank the member for Elmwood—Transcona for raising this issue. It is an important issue to clarify for all members who are here.

When a member of Parliament, an individual, is referred to with a mock title, a mock name or a mock riding name, that is considered unparliamentary. When referring to a party or to the group, as much as I personally do not find it very helpful, it has been the tradition of this place to allow those comments, which are not being directed towards an individual member, to be considered acceptable in the House.

I would like to take this opportunity to remind all members, in order to ensure that there is decorum in the House, as well as to show fundamental respect to all parties, which are composed of members, to please exercise great restraint when referring to a group of folks in a tone that could be interpreted as mocking.

Mr. Mike Morrice (Kitchener Centre, GP): Mr. Speaker, I am seeking your clarification on the same point of order. I believe that the member for Elmwood—Transcona spoke to mock names and also to the use of terms such as “coalition”. For example, today, there was talk of a “Liberal-Bloc coalition” when they voted together. Yesterday, the NDP voted with the Conservatives. Is that a new “coalition”, and are we going to be allowed to use the word “coalition” when two parties simply vote the same way?

I would appreciate your clarification, Mr. Speaker.

The Speaker: I would like to thank the member for Kitchener Centre. As a matter of fact, this issue was raised by the member for New Westminster—Burnaby last week. The Chair is currently considering this matter, and I will be coming back to members in the days to follow.

I am going to recognize the member for Lakeland, but I would ask her to try to make her point of order very brief so that we can move on to the business of the House.

Mrs. Shannon Stubbs (Lakeland, CPC): Mr. Speaker, I will try to do this efficiently.

As you deliberate on what we can and cannot say here, and on what kind of topics we can or cannot ask about, I just have a question about if, in the process of all of that, you could also consider questions that are clearly on provincial policies or provincial governments, or that are partisan and are clearly about topics that are not government policy. I assume all of that will be going into your deliberations and that you will get back to all of us on that too.

An hon. member: Oh, oh!

The Speaker: Would the hon. member for Timmins—James Bay please take a seat? I will recognize him in due order.

I would like to thank the member for Lakeland for raising this issue. That is part of my reflections, but I can mention that it is a long tradition in the House that sometimes questions might take the form of a hybrid method.

Government Orders

From time to time, Speakers have tried to curtail this. I know that my predecessor from Regina—Qu'Appelle tried to do this as well, to get people to not ask questions that start off in one direction and then, at the last minute, switch into a matter of government administration. This is something that is being considered. I will get back to all members, as I have promised to get back to the member for New Westminster—Burnaby.

The hon. member for Timmins—James Bay is rising on a point of order.

• (1530)

Mr. Charlie Angus: Mr. Speaker, I appreciate your reflection on that. In question period, if you check Hansard, the minister for environment claimed he was a Liberal and a socialist. I would like to ask him to withdraw those comments as they are deeply offensive.

The Speaker: It is always good to have a bit of levity, but that is not a point of order.

GOVERNMENT ORDERS

[*English*]

NATIONAL SECURITY REVIEW OF INVESTMENTS MODERNIZATION ACT

The House resumed from November 6 consideration of Bill C-34, An Act to amend the Investment Canada Act, as reported (with amendments) from the committee, and of the motions in Group No. 1.

The Speaker: It being 3:30 p.m., pursuant to order made on Monday, November 6, the House will now proceed to the taking of the deferred recorded divisions on the motion at report stage of Bill C-34.

Call in the members.

And the bells having rung:

[*Translation*]

The Speaker: The question is on Motion No. 1. A vote on this motion also applies to Motion No. 2.

• (1545)

(The House divided on Motion No. 1, which was agreed to on the following division:)

(*Division No. 442*)

YEAS

Members

Aboultiaf	Aitchison
Albas	Aldag
Alghabra	Ali
Allison	Anand
Anandasangaree	Angus
Arnold	Arseneault
Arya	Ashton
Atwin	Bachrach
Badawey	Bains
Baker	Baldinelli
Barlow	Barrett
Barron	Barsalou-Duval
Battiste	Beaulieu

Beech	Bennett
Bergeron	Berthold
Bérubé	Bezan
Bibeau	Bittle
Blaikie	Blair
Blanchet	Blanchette-Joncas
Blaney	Block
Blois	Boissonnault
Boulerice	Bradford
Bragdon	Brassard
Brière	Brock
Brunelle-Duceppe	Calkins
Cannings	Caputo
Carr	Carrie
Casey	Chabot
Chagger	Chahal
Chambers	Champagne
Champoux	Chatel
Chen	Chiang
Chong	Collins (Hamilton East—Stoney Creek)
Cooper	Cormier
Coteau	Dabrusin
Dalton	Damoff
Dancho	Davidson
Davies	DeBellefeuille
Deltell	d'Entremont
Desbiens	Desilets
Desjarlais	Dhaliwal
Dhillon	Diab
Doherty	Dong
Dowdall	Dreeshen
Dubourg	Duclos
Duguid	Duncan (Stormont—Dundas—South Glengarry)
Dzerowicz	Ehsassi
El-Khoury	Ellis
Epp	Erskine-Smith
Falk (Battlefords—Lloydminster)	Falk (Provencher)
Fast	Ferreri
Fillmore	Findlay
Fisher	Fonseca
Fortier	Fortin
Fragiskatos	Fraser
Freeland	Fry
Gaheer	Gainey
Gallant	Garon
Garrison	Gaudreau
Gazan	Généreux
Genuis	Gerretsen
Gill	Gladu
Goodridge	Gould
Gourde	Gray
Green	Guilbeault
Hajdu	Hallan
Hanley	Hardie
Hepfner	Hoback
Holland	Housefather
Hughes	Hutchings
Iacono	Idlout
Ien	Jaczek
Jeneroux	Johns
Jowhari	Julian
Kayabaga	Kelloway
Kelly	Khalid
Khanna	Khera
Kitchen	Kmiec
Koutrakis	Kram
Kramp-Neuman	Kurek
Kusie	Kusmierczyk
Kwan	Lake
Lalonde	Lambropoulos
Lametti	Lamoureux
Lantsman	Lapointe
Larouche	Lattanzio

Lauzon	Lawrence
LeBlanc	Lebouthillier
Lehoux	Lemire
Leslie	Lewis (Essex)
Lewis (Haldimand—Norfolk)	Lightbound
Lloyd	Lobb
Long	Longfield
Louis (Kitchener—Conestoga)	MacAulay (Cardigan)
MacDonald (Malpeque)	MacKinnon (Gatineau)
Maguire	Majumdar
Maloney	Martel
Martinez Ferrada	Masse
Mathysen	May (Cambridge)
Mazier	McCauley (Edmonton West)
McDonald (Avalon)	McGuinty
McKay	McKinnon (Coquitlam—Port Coquitlam)
McLean	McLeod
McPherson	Melillo
Mendès	Mendicino
Miao	Michaud
Miller	Moore
Morantz	Morrice
Morrison	Morrissey
Motz	Muys
Naqvi	Nater
Ng	Noormohamed
Normandin	O'Connell
Oliphant	O'Regan
Patzer	Paul-Hus
Pauzé	Perkins
Perron	Petitpas Taylor
Poilievre	Powlowski
Qualtrough	Rayes
Redekopp	Reid
Rempel Garner	Richards
Roberts	Robillard
Rodriguez	Rogers
Romanado	Rood
Rota	Ruff
Sahota	Sajjan
Saks	Samson
Sarai	Savard-Tremblay
Scarpaleggia	Scheer
Schiefke	Schmale
Seeback	Serré
Sgro	Shanahan
Sheehan	Shields
Shipley	Sidhu (Brampton East)
Sidhu (Brampton South)	Simard
Sinclair-Desgagné	Singh
Small	Sorbara
Soroka	Sousa
Steinley	Ste-Marie
Stewart	St-Onge
Strahl	Stubbs
Sudds	Tassi
Taylor Roy	Thériault
Therrien	Thomas
Thompson	Tochor
Tolmie	Trudeau
Trudel	Turnbull
Uppal	Valdez
Van Bynen	van Koeverden
Van Popta	Vandal
Vandenbeld	Vecchio
Vidal	Vien
Viersen	Vignola
Villemure	Virani
Vis	Vuong
Wagantall	Warkentin
Wagh	Webber
Weiler	Wilkinson
Williams	Williamson

Government Orders

Yip	Zahid
Zarrillo	Zimmer
Zuberi — 323	

NAYS

Nil

PAIRED

Members

Drouin	Godin
Joly	Liepert — 4

The Speaker: I declare Motion No. 1 carried. I therefore declare Motion No. 2 carried.

The next question is on Motion No. 3.

[*English*]

The question is as follows. May I dispense?

Some hon. members: No.

[*Chair read text of motion to House*]

● (1555)

[*Translation*]

(The House divided on Motion No. 3, which was negated on the following division:)

(*Division No. 443*)

YEAS

Members

Aboultaif	Aitchison
Albas	Allison
Angus	Arnold
Ashton	Bachrach
Baldinelli	Barlow
Barrett	Barron
Berthold	Bezan
Blaikie	Blaney
Block	Boulerice
Bragdon	Brassard
Brock	Calkins
Cannings	Caputo
Carrie	Chambers
Chong	Cooper
Dalton	Dancho
Davidson	Davies
Deltell	d'Entremont
Desjarlais	Doherty
Dowdall	Dreeschen
Duncan (Stormont—Dundas—South Glengarry)	Ellis
Epp	Falk (Battlefords—Lloydminster)
Falk (Provencher)	Fast
Ferreri	Findlay
Gallant	Garrison
Gazan	Généreux
Genuis	Gladu
Goodridge	Gourde
Gray	Green
Hallan	Hoback
Hughes	Idlout
Jeneroux	Johns
Julian	Kelly
Khanna	Kitchen
Kmiec	Kram
Kramp-Neuman	Kurek
Kusie	Kwan
Lake	Lantsman

Government Orders

Lawrence	Lehoux	Gould	Guilbeault
Leslie	Lewis (Essex)	Hajdu	Hanley
Lewis (Haldimand—Norfolk)	Lloyd	Hardie	Hepfner
Lobb	Maguire	Holland	Housefather
Majumdar	Martel	Hutchings	Iacono
Masse	Mathysen	Ien	Jaczek
Mazier	McCauley (Edmonton West)	Jowhari	Kayabaga
McLean	McPherson	Kelloway	Khalid
Melillo	Moore	Khera	Koutrakis
Morantz	Morrison	Kusmierczyk	Lalonde
Motz	Muys	Lambropoulos	Lametti
Nater	Patzer	Lamoureux	Lapointe
Paul-Hus	Perkins	Larouche	Lattanzio
Poilievre	Rayes	Lauzon	LeBlanc
Redekopp	Reid	Lebouthillier	Lemire
Rempel Garner	Richards	Lightbound	Long
Roberts	Rood	Longfield	Louis (Kitchener—Conestoga)
Ruff	Scheer	MacAulay (Cardigan)	MacDonald (Malpeque)
Schmale	Seeback	MacKinnon (Gatineau)	Maloney
Shields	Shipley	Martinez Ferrada	May (Cambridge)
Singh	Small	McDonald (Avalon)	McGuinty
Soroka	Steinley	McKay	McKinnon (Coquitlam—Port Coquitlam)
Stewart	Strahl	McLeod	Mendès
Stubbs	Thomas	Mendicino	Miao
Tochor	Tolmie	Michaud	Miller
Uppal	Van Popta	Morrice	Morrissey
Vecchio	Vidal	Naqvi	Ng
Vien	Viersen	Noormohamed	Normandin
Vis	Vuong	O'Connell	Oliphant
Wagantall	Warkentin	O'Regan	Pauzé
Waugh	Webber	Perron	Petitpas Taylor
Williams	Williamson	Powlowski	Qualtrough
Zarrillo	Zimmer— 140	Robillard	Rodriguez

NAYS

Members

Aldag	Alghabra
Ali	Anand
Anandasangaree	Arseneault
Arya	Atwin
Badawey	Bains
Baker	Barsalou-Duval
Battiste	Beaulieu
Beech	Bennett
Bergeron	Bérubé
Bibeau	Bittle
Blair	Blanchet
Blanchette-Joncas	Blois
Boissonnault	Bradford
Brière	Brunelle-Duceppe
Carr	Casey
Chabot	Chagger
Chahal	Champagne
Champoux	Chatel
Chen	Chiang
Collins (Hamilton East—Stoney Creek)	Cormier
Coteau	Dabrusin
Damoff	DeBellefeuille
Desbiens	Desilets
Dhaliwal	Dhillon
Diab	Dong
Dubourg	Duclos
Duguid	Dzerowicz
Ehsassi	El-Khoury
Erskine-Smith	Fillmore
Fisher	Fonseca
Fortier	Fortin
Fragiskatos	Fraser
Freeland	Fry
Gaheer	Gainey
Garon	Gaudreau
Gerretsen	Gill

Rogers	Romanado
Rota	Sahota
Sajjan	Saks
Samson	Sarai
Savard-Tremblay	Scarpaleggia
Schieffe	Serré
Sgro	Shanahan
Sheehan	Sidhu (Brampton East)
Sidhu (Brampton South)	Simard
Sinclair-Desgagné	Sorbara
Sousa	Ste-Marie
St-Onge	Sudds
Tassi	Taylor Roy
Thériault	Therrien
Thompson	Trudeau
Trudel	Turnbull
Valdez	Van Bynen
van Koeverden	Vandal
Vandenbeld	Vignola
Villemure	Virani
Weiler	Wilkinson
Yip	Zahid
Zuberi— 183	

PAIRED

Members

Drouin	Godin
Joly	Liepert— 4

The Speaker: I declare Motion No. 3 lost.

Hon. François-Philippe Champagne (Minister of Innovation, Science and Industry, Lib.) moved that the bill, as amended, be concurred in at report stage with further amendments.

The Speaker: The question is on the motion.

If a member participating in person wishes that the motion be carried on division, or if a member of a recognized party participating in person wishes to request a recorded division, I would invite them to rise and indicate it to the Chair.

[English]

Mr. Kevin Lamoureux: Mr. Speaker, we request a recorded vote, please.

• (1605)

[Translation]

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

(Division No. 444)

YEAS

Members

Aboultiaf	Aitchison
Albas	Aldag
Alghabra	Ali
Allison	Anand
Anandasangaree	Angus
Arnold	Arseneault
Arya	Ashton
Atwin	Bachrach
Badawey	Bains
Baker	Baldinelli
Barlow	Barrett
Barron	Barsalou-Duval
Battiste	Beaulieu
Beech	Bennett
Bergeron	Berthold
Bérubé	Bezan
Bibeau	Bittle
Blaikie	Blair
Blanchet	Blanchette-Joncas
Blaney	Block
Blois	Boissonnault
Boulerice	Bradford
Bragdon	Brassard
Brière	Brock
Brunelle-Duceppe	Calkins
Cannings	Caputo
Carr	Carrie
Casey	Chabot
Chagger	Chahal
Chambers	Champagne
Champoux	Chatel
Chen	Chiang
Chong	Collins (Hamilton East—Stoney Creek)
Cooper	Cormier
Coteau	Dabrusin
Dalton	Damoff
Dancho	Davidson
Davies	DeBellefeuille
Deltell	d'Entremont
Desbiens	Desilets
Desjarlais	Dhaliwal
Dhillon	Diab
Doherty	Dong
Dowdall	Dreeshen
Dubourg	Duclos
Duguid	Duncan (Stormont—Dundas—South Glengarry)
Dzerowicz	Ehsassi
El-Khoury	Ellis
Epp	Erskine-Smith
Falk (Battlefords—Lloydminster)	Falk (Provencher)
Fast	Ferreri
Fillmore	Findlay

Fisher	Fonseca
Fortier	Fortin
Fragiskatos	Fraser
Freeland	Fry
Gaheer	Gainey
Gallant	Garon
Garrison	Gaudreau
Gazan	Généreux
Genuis	Gerretsen
Gill	Gladu
Goodridge	Gould
Gourde	Gray
Green	Guilbeault
Hajdu	Hallan
Hanley	Hardie
Hepfner	Hoback
Holland	Housefather
Hughes	Hutchings
Iacono	Idlout
Ien	Jaczek
Jeneroux	Johns
Jowhari	Julian
Kayabaga	Kelloway
Kelly	Khalid
Khanna	Khera
Kitchen	Kmiec
Koutrakis	Kram
Kramp-Neuman	Kurek
Kusie	Kusmierczyk
Kwan	Lake
Lalonde	Lambropoulos
Lametti	Lamoureux
Lantsman	Lapointe
Larouche	Lattanzio
Lauson	Lawrence
LeBlanc	Lebouthillier
Lehoux	Lemire
Leslie	Lewis (Essex)
Lewis (Haldimand—Norfolk)	Lightbound
Lloyd	Lobb
Long	Longfield
Louis (Kitchener—Conestoga)	MacAulay (Cardigan)
MacDonald (Malpeque)	MacKinnon (Gatineau)
Maguire	Majumdar
Maloney	Martel
Martinez Ferrada	Masse
Mathysen	May (Cambridge)
Mazier	McCauley (Edmonton West)
McDonald (Avalon)	McGuinty
McKay	McKinnon (Coquitlam—Port Coquitlam)
McLean	McLeod
McPherson	Melillo
Mendès	Mendicino
Miao	Michaud
Miller	Moore
Morantz	Morrice
Morrison	Morrissey
Motz	Muys
Naqvi	Nater
Ng	Noormohamed
Normandin	O'Connell
Oliphant	O'Regan
Patzer	Paul-Hus
Pauzé	Perkins
Perron	Petitpas Taylor
Poilievre	Powlowski
Qualtrough	Rayes
Redekopp	Reid
Rempel Garner	Richards
Roberts	Robillard
Rogers	Romanado
Rood	Rota
Ruff	Sahota

Government Orders

Points of Order

Sajjan	Saks
Samson	Sarai
Savard-Tremblay	Scarpaleggia
Scheer	Schiefke
Schmale	Seeback
Serré	Sgro
Shanahan	Sheehan
Shields	Shipley
Sidhu (Brampton East)	Sidhu (Brampton South)
Simard	Sinclair-Desgagné
Singh	Small
Sorbara	Soroka
Sousa	Steinley
Ste-Marie	Stewart
St-Onge	Strahl
Stubbs	Sudds
Tassi	Taylor Roy
Thériault	Therrien
Thomas	Thompson
Tochor	Tolmie
Trudeau	Trudel
Turnbull	Uppal
Valdez	Van Bynen
van Koeverden	Van Popta
Vandal	Vandenbeld
Vecchio	Vidal
Vien	Viersen
Vignola	Villemure
Virani	Vis
Vuong	Wagantall
Warkentin	Waugh
Webber	Weiler
Wilkinson	Williams
Williamson	Yip
Zahid	Zarrillo
Zimmer	Zuberi — 322

NAYS

Nil

PAIRED

Members

Drouin	Godin
Joly	Liepert — 4

The Speaker: I declare the motion carried.

* * *

● (1610)

[English]

POINTS OF ORDER

ORAL QUESTIONS

Hon. Steven MacKinnon (Gatineau, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, I am rising to add my voice to the point of order raised on Thursday, November 2, and Friday, November 3, by the member for New Westminster—Burnaby, respecting our rules and practices, that questions posed by members during Oral Questions must be within the administrative responsibilities of the government or of the individual minister addressed in the question.

Let me start by stating that I agree with the member for New Westminster—Burnaby on this point.

The member has raised excellent precedents to support his argument and I would like to summarize these precedents and add my own perspective to the matter before the House.

The member raised rulings from the member for Regina—Qu'Appelle when he was Speaker. I will submit that the member for Regina—Qu'Appelle has been consistent in his approach on this matter when he was in the Chair and more recently.

On January 28, 2014, the Speaker ruled with respect to this matter:

...as Speaker Milliken stated in a ruling on June 14, 2010...“...the use of [...] preambles to questions to attack other members does not provide those targeted with an opportunity to respond or deal directly with such attacks.” Thus, unless a link to the administrative responsibilities of the government can be established early in the question to justify them, such questions can be and indeed have been ruled out of order by successive Speakers....

...we have witnessed a growing trend: we hear preambles to questions that go on at some length to criticize the position, statements, or actions of other parties....

What we have, therefore, is an example of a hybrid question, one in which the preamble is on a subject that has nothing to do with the administrative responsibility of the government but which concludes in the final five or ten seconds with a query that in a technical sense manages to relate to the government's administrative responsibilities....

...it would be helpful if the link to the administrative responsibility of the government were made as quickly as possible.

I would now like to address the question of consistency on the matter by the member for Regina—Qu'Appelle, raised earlier in my submission.

I draw the attention of the House to the question raised during Oral Questions on Wednesday, June 21, at 3:10 p.m., by the member for Kings—Hants, respecting the Conservative Party.

As you and all members of the House can see from the video of this question at 3:11 p.m., the member for Regina—Qu'Appelle was standing beside the Speaker in heightened agitation, pointing his finger and admonishing the Speaker that this was an inadmissible question.

I agree with the member on the facts but certainly not on the approach. In this case, the Speaker did rule that the question from the member for Kings—Hants did not qualify as a question.

Following Oral Questions that day, the Speaker ruled at 3:28 p.m. and stated:

This is not to explain my answers but so everyone here will know why I said it was not a valid question.

The point I was looking at is on page 509 of *House of Commons Procedure and Practice*, which states, “ask a question that is within the administrative responsibility of the government or of the individual Minister addressed.”...

The reason I did that is there was a long preamble that really had nothing to do with administration....

That is the reason I said it was not a valid question. When members are putting their questions together, I ask both sides to put something together that has to do with administration and, if they can, to make my life easier, to make it clear that it has to do with administration right from the beginning.

In conclusion, there are many clear precedents to support that questions during Oral Questions must be within the administrative responsibilities of government. There is no doubt on this matter. We must all abide by these rules if we have any hope of restoring the dignity of this place and better comport ourselves in this august House of Commons.

[Translation]

The Speaker: I would like to thank the hon. Chief Government Whip for his intervention. I would also like to thank everyone who participated and added their comments on this matter. I will take all of that under advisement and come back to the House with my comments.

[English]

Mr. John Nater: Mr. Speaker, I am rising on a different point of order.

I am being a bit of a stickler today. I would not normally point this out on behalf of my own colleagues, but during the recent votes, a colleague walked out before the vote announcement, therefore negating his vote. This was done on purpose because the member was to be paired with a minister and was not supposed to vote. Therefore, I would ask that the vote of the member for Portneuf—Jacques-Cartier not count for Motions Nos. 1 and 2 in Group No. 1 at the report stage of Bill C-34.

• (1615)

The Speaker: I thank the hon. member for Perth—Wellington for bringing this to the attention of the House. It was very honourably done.

Because the vote has already been tabulated and reported to the House, we would require the unanimous consent of the House to remove that vote. Does the member have unanimous consent?

Some hon. members: Agreed.

* * *

BUSINESS OF SUPPLY

OPPOSITION MOTION—REDUCING HOME HEATING COSTS

The House resumed consideration of the motion.

Mr. Jagmeet Singh (Burnaby South, NDP): Madam Speaker, I will be splitting my time with the member for Elmwood—Transcona.

I am very happy and proud to debate our plan to save all Canadians money this winter and to fight the climate crisis. Heating our homes in Canada is essential. Canadians are already faced with the high cost of living, and looking at a cold winter, they are deeply concerned about increased costs.

For the Liberals, it seems like home heating is only an issue if their seats are at stake. For the Conservatives, it is all a political game. They are not serious about helping people. If they were, they would be supporting our plan, but the reality is they are not going to support our motion to take GST off home heating for all Canadians to help Canadians find more affordable and cleaner ways to heat their homes.

We want to take on big oil and gas, and corporate Conservatives will not stand up to big oil and gas. Establishment Liberals are so out of touch that they think they need to divide the country, and corporate Conservatives are so beholden to the big oil and gas lobby that they will not stand up for all Canadians.

Business of Supply

If we want to take on the climate crisis, it is going to require everyone coming together. It is going to require everybody working together to make life more affordable, to create good jobs and to fight the climate crisis. However, climate-delay Liberals and climate-denying Conservatives both want to divide the country. We have climate-delay Liberals dividing the country based on who voted for them, and climate-deny Conservatives do not even believe we have a problem in the first place.

Our plan is to stand up for all Canadians. Our plan is to take the GST off home heating for all Canadians, help everyone have heating that is clean and affordable and make the big oil and gas companies pay for it. That is our plan. The challenge is this: Will the corporate Conservatives finally stand up to their CEO and big oil and gas lobbyists, or will they continue to cave in and do their bidding? Will the establishment Liberals stop dividing Canada and support our plan, which helps everyone?

[Translation]

If the Conservatives really want to help people instead of reciting cute little slogans, they will support our motion.

That is because our plan, unlike theirs, will lower all Quebecers' bills. It will make it easier to get heat pumps installed, especially for those most in need. It will also make the big oil companies pay for it.

Unfortunately, we know that the Conservatives are just here to play games. It is too bad because Quebecers deserve help too.

[English]

The leader of the Conservative Party loves his slogans, but today he has a chance to axe the GST tax on home heating. What is he going to do? He is not going to support this motion because corporate Conservatives are beholden to the big oil and gas lobby. It is very informative that the reason they are going to vote against it is that we want to help all Canadians have access to cleaner and more affordable ways to heat their homes and want big oil and gas companies to pay for it by taxing their excess record profits. The corporate Conservatives do not have the guts to stand up to their corporate masters.

Why is it the case that the corporate Conservatives are so beholden to the oil and gas lobby? It is not hard to figure out why. Half of the governing body of the Conservative Party is made up of oil and gas and other lobbyists for greedy CEOs. The governing body is made up of lobbyists who want to continue to defend the billions of dollars in profits of oil and gas and other corporate sectors rather than stand up for Canadians. That is why the Conservatives will not be voting for this motion today.

The Conservatives are very quick to cut services for Canadians and take away the services they need but are so reluctant to make the big corporations finally start paying what they owe to put money back into the pockets of Canadians and pay for the services they need. It is not surprising, because corporate Conservatives will always side with big lobbyists, big CEOs and big corporations.

Business of Supply

• (1620)

Last year alone, the biggest oil and gas companies in Canada brought in \$38 billion in revenue. People are struggling to heat their homes and fuel their cars while those companies rake in record profits. How is that fair? It should not be a surprise, as our system has been designed by establishment Liberals and corporate Conservatives to continue to benefit those at the very top, to the detriment and harm of working Canadians. They are going to do everything they can to protect the status quo. Last year, the establishment Liberals and the corporate Conservatives teamed up to defeat a motion we had that would have made the big oil companies pay what they owe.

The New Democrats have the backs of people. We are not backing down. We believe Ottawa should work for them, not for CEOs and not for corporate Canada. That is why today we are calling for the elimination of GST from home heating, a measure that would help all Canadians in all regions. We want to make it easier for families to have access to clean and affordable ways to heat their home, and we want to tax the excess profits of big oil and gas companies to pay for it. This plan is fair, saves all Canadians money when it comes to heating their homes and helps us continue the fight against the climate crisis.

The Speaker will find this amusing but very sad. This summer, the leader of the climate-denial Conservatives had to cancel his climate-denial tour because of climate disasters. After all the scientific evidence and the concrete and devastating impacts of the climate crisis here in Canada, how is it possible that Conservatives continue to deny this reality? It is because climate action hurts the pockets of big oil companies. It hurts their profits.

As we all know, 50% of the Conservative party's governing body is made up lobbyists for these big oil and gas companies and other corporations. The Conservatives do not want to take action on the climate crisis because it is going to hurt the profits of their corporate masters. They are not interested in helping all Canadians save money, which is what our motion would do, because it would take on their big oil and gas masters. They are just here to continue to support the oil and gas sector and other corporate sectors.

While Canadians are squeezed between Mr. Climate Delay and Mr. Climate Deny, the New Democrats are showing another option, one that unites the country, makes life more affordable and continues our fight against the climate crisis together.

• (1625)

[Translation]

Now that they are worried about losing seats, the Liberals have decided to help some Canadians deal with the cost of heating. Unfortunately, the help is going only to the seats the Liberals want to save. Climate action works when it is fair, not when it is divisive, not when the government plays favourites.

During these tough times, all Canadians deserve help paying their heating bill. If the government wants better environmental results, it needs to do even more to help people make choices that are good for their wallets and good for the planet by providing better subsidies.

That is the NDP plan: help people pay their heating bill, support them so that they make better choices for the planet, and make the big oil companies pay.

[English]

Mr. Adam van Koeverden (Parliamentary Secretary to the Minister of Environment and Climate Change and to the Minister of Sport and Physical Activity, Lib.): Madam Speaker, I could not agree more with the leader of the NDP that climate change is not some passing fad. It is the crisis of our generation. It is an emergency. I also could not agree more that the Conservative big oil lobby is on display every single day in this House, denying that climate change exists, denying that climate change is human-caused and denying that it is a priority for the government and Canadians.

I was disappointed yesterday, to be very frank, that the NDP decided to vote with the Conservatives on a motion to reduce the integrity of carbon pricing in Canada. I was glad to see a few NDP members, I think it was six, abstain from the motion. It was heartening.

How can the leader of the NDP justify his efforts to scale back our priority, which is pricing carbon and reducing emissions, while at the same time bringing a very similar motion forward today?

Mr. Jagmeet Singh: Madam Speaker, what the Liberal government did was present a plan that divides our country and creates unfairness. There is no way we can fight the climate crisis and make life better for people if we pit regions against each other. We voted against that unfairness.

Let us be clear. While I absolutely agree that the climate denial of the Conservative Party hurts the efforts to protect the future for our kids and our present when we are faced with extreme weather, the climate delay of the Liberals is also harming that effort.

I want to say to Canadians that they do not have to choose between climate delay or climate denial. New Democrats have a path for supporting our country together, helping everyone save money when it comes to the cost of heating their homes this winter, helping everyone when it comes to choosing better alternatives that are cleaner and more affordable and continuing the fight to protect our planet.

Mr. Scot Davidson (York—Simcoe, CPC): Madam Speaker, I want to try to find common ground. I think the leader of the NDP and I would both agree that the carbon tax disproportionately affects rural Canadians more than urban Canadians.

Business of Supply

My riding of York—Simcoe is now classified as urban. I think the leader of the NDP knows my riding as the soup and salad bowl of Canada, the ice fishing capital of Canada and the home of the Chippewas of Georgina Island. According to the Liberals, we are now classified as part of the city of Toronto, being 70 miles outside of Toronto. We have no streetcars. We have no subways. We have no Uber. As unbelievable as this is, we have no hospital. We have to drive 40 minutes to get to a hospital.

How does the leader of the NDP think it is fair that we do not get the rural top-up or the doubling of the rural top-up, as meagre as it is? It is helpful to some, but we do not get it.

Mr. Jagmeet Singh: Madam Speaker, it is very problematic that the hon. member's riding does not have access to health care or a hospital. I wonder who the provincial government is in the riding the member represents. I am pretty sure that government is in power for a second term, and it has continued to neglect the good people of York—Simcoe.

I hope the people of York—Simcoe remember that they have been let down by the provincial government when it comes to what the member is raising as a serious concern, which is not having a hospital. It is in power with a majority for a second term and it still has not addressed the problem the hon. member raised. The provincial Conservative government has a lot to answer for, but this points out what people get when they vote Conservative.

• (1630)

[Translation]

Ms. Andréanne Larouche (Shefford, BQ): Madam Speaker, I would like to bring the NDP leader's attention to a certain aspect of today's motion. This weekend, I met someone in Quebec who is originally from France and who is well versed in environmental issues in Europe. He told me that we cannot keep thinking that everything will be fine with the environment if we do not take drastic action.

Let me explain. We cannot continue to fund the oil companies. He told me that the countries that have seen a real drop in greenhouse gas emissions are the ones that have invested in transition technologies and not in their oil industry.

I would like my colleague to say a few words about funding change by implementing a tax on the excess profits of big oil and gas companies. That would be a way of quietly saying that we are taxing them and trying to phase them out, not giving them billions of dollars in subsidies.

Mr. Jagmeet Singh: Madam Speaker, I could not agree more.

It is really problematic, what our country is doing. We continue to subsidize oil and gas companies with public money. That is unacceptable. What we need to do is use that money to invest more in clean energy, in opportunities to create the economy of the future in order to create good jobs and reduce our emissions.

That is why today's motion includes the idea of making oil companies pay their fair share to fund measures that help people reduce their emissions—

[English]

The Assistant Deputy Speaker (Mrs. Alexandra Mendès): I wish to inform the House that, because of the deferred recorded divisions, Government Orders will be extended by 36 minutes.

[Translation]

It is my duty pursuant to Standing Order 38 to inform the House that the questions to be raised tonight at the time of adjournment are as follows: the hon. member for Dauphin—Swan River—Neepawa, Carbon Pricing; the hon. member for Renfrew—Nipissing—Pembroke, Carbon Pricing; the hon. member for Regina—Lewvan, Carbon Pricing.

[English]

Mr. Daniel Blaikie (Elmwood—Transcona, NDP): Madam Speaker, I am very pleased to rise to contribute to what I think has become a really convoluted debate about the carbon tax, and I hope to offer a little clarity.

To start, I want to be very clear about what today's motion is about, which is to remove the GST from all forms of home heating, to make eco-energy retrofits and heat pumps free and easy to access for low-income and middle-class Canadians regardless of their initial home heating energy source, and to finance these changes by putting in place a tax on the excess profits of big oil and gas corporations. We have heard a lot about the carbon tax so far, and it is important to say that carbon pricing is an important tool in combating climate change. It is something the New Democrats have long supported and continue to support.

However, serious damage was done to the majority consensus on carbon pricing in Canada when the Liberals decided to introduce regional division into the program. That is not fair, and it does not pass the smell test for Canadians across the country. For people who care about the long-term future of carbon pricing in Canada, it is important to maintain majority consensus, which we cannot do with regional schism baked right into the program. That is why New Democrats were willing to vote for the Conservative motion the other day that said the pause that applied on home heating oil should apply to all forms of home heating, including natural gas. We think it is important that we maintain a majority consensus and not introduce a sense of regional grievance. The Liberals said it was inconsistent of us to do, but that is not true. In fact, as I say, I believe it is a critical part of maintaining a majority consensus for carbon pricing.

Business of Supply

It was wrong of the Liberals to introduce that level of regional division. How do we know? If anyone had any doubt, when a Liberal cabinet minister from Newfoundland went on CTV News and said that the reason they were doing it was to cover their own political rear in the Atlantic region, and that people who wanted a break on the carbon tax should be voting Liberal, it was very clear that this was a regional policy motivated by the partisan political interests of the Liberal Party. Did New Democrats support that? Absolutely not, and that is why we did not vote to support the Conservative motion to extend the pause to other forms of heating.

Do the Conservatives have it right? No, because they want to get rid of carbon pricing altogether, and that is the wrong response. Do they have it right when it comes to the New Democratic motion on the GST? No, because if they were concerned about getting it right from an affordability point of view, they would be supporting our proposal on the GST instead of harping on the carbon tax as they have been doing. Why is that? It is because a break on the GST for home heating would be consistent with the long-standing policy of not charging GST on essentials.

It would be better because it would apply to Canadians across the country. The federal backstop on the carbon tax applies only in provinces that do not have their own provincial price on carbon. B.C. does and Quebec does, and a number of other provinces do. They will not see any relief as far as they are concerned, but what they do pay, even if they have a provincial carbon tax, is the GST. If the Conservatives were really interested in lowering taxes for all Canadians, they would support our proposal on the GST. This is not a new proposal of the NDP on the GST; it goes back to early days of the leadership of Jack Layton, who was elected leader of the NDP almost 20 years ago.

Furthermore, Conservatives should be interested in supporting our proposal because the GST is charged on the carbon tax. Any other day of the week, Conservatives would be upset about a tax on the tax, but when New Democrats say we should remove the tax that makes sense because it would get rid of that tax for all Canadians and would no longer be a tax on the carbon tax, they say, "No, no, the NDP is flip-flopping and we will not support it", even though it is an opportunity to do something for Canadians.

The other important reason for supporting the removal of the GST instead of the carbon tax is that it applies to all forms of home heating. We know there are cash-strapped Canadians who are already doing the right thing by using methods of heating their homes that do not burn carbon and do not contribute to emissions. There are a lot of Canadians who would like to be in that boat but do not have the resources to be. That is why we are talking about the government's expanding the program in order to make heat pumps available to low- and middle-class Canadians, but the people who have already managed to make that transition should not be punished as they would be under the Conservative proposal to simply get rid of the carbon tax. If the Conservatives would agree to eliminate the GST instead, Canadians who already have low- or no-emission heating sources in their home would likewise get a break, and they too are deserving of assistance in a time of economic hardship.

• (1635)

Of course, we know that we can pay for increased access to heat pumps for low- and middle-income Canadians because we can levy a tax on the excess profits of oil and gas companies. Why would we do that? Profits in the oil and gas industry in Canada, between 2019 and 2022, a simple three-year period, increased by 1,000%. That is billions of dollars that could be reinvested in lowering emissions and reducing home heating bills for Canadians by transitioning to more efficient forms of heating. Is it some kind of red-eyed socialist idea to go around taxing oil and gas companies? I do not think so. Boris Johnson and the Conservatives in the U.K. implemented a windfall tax on the oil and gas industry there. This is not about whether one is on the right wing of the spectrum or the left wing of the spectrum; it is about whether one is motivated by a fundamental sense of fairness.

I must say that the Conservative leader, who goes around the country saying he has the backs of working people, should be explaining to them why he does not support the removal of GST on home heating, because that is what it would mean to have the back of every working Canadian in this country, whether they heat their homes with electricity, natural gas or home heating oil, and whether they do it in Newfoundland, Manitoba, British Columbia or the Northwest Territories. However, he is not who he says he is. He is not the champion of working-class people in Canada. He is an oil and gas lobbyist working in the House of Commons. That is who the leader of the Conservative Party is, and it is why he will not get behind a very common-sense proposal to help Canadians with their affordability challenge to reduce emissions. The oil and gas companies have really been putting the squeeze on Canadians. They did not get a 1,000% increase in profits over a few years without unfairly gouging their customers. That is exactly what oil and gas companies have been doing.

Looking at the extent to which increases in prices for oil and gas, versus the carbon tax, are responsible for inflation, I have to say that oil and gas prices are a much higher driver of inflation than the carbon tax is, despite the Conservatives saying in here that the Bank of Canada said it contributes to inflation. Yes, it is 0.6% one time. We could get a one-time, one-year reduction of inflation by 0.6% if we were to remove the carbon tax. After that, it would continue to go up. I also had the opportunity to question the Governor of the Bank of Canada about that at committee. I think it is important to note that the one-time 0.6% reduction in the carbon tax assumes that oil and gas companies are not going to raise their prices.

Any Canadian who has been observing the oil and gas market knows full well that if it thinks there is any room to increase prices, it is going to do it. I humbly submit that although we do not know how much the oil and gas companies would raise their prices, I think we know they would. That means we know that the one-time saving on inflation is a lot less than 0.6%. We should wonder why we were concerned about it at all when there is a perfectly good, and better, proposal to eliminate the GST from home heating that would actually do more for all Canadians.

I think what members can see is that the NDP has a perfectly consistent position. We are advocating a measure that we have been advocating for a long time. Why are we? We are advocating it because it is the fairest way to do it and because it is consistent with a tradition of not charging sales tax on essential items. In the context of the carbon tax, it is the fairest way to do it because it applies to people no matter where they live in the country. We have been consistently advocating that.

I remember when the Conservatives had carbon tax motions. They named some of them as examples of our voting against their motion to axe the tax. For sure, I think there should be a carbon price, absolutely. I just think it has to be applied fairly across the country and that the Liberals screwed it up by enacting a policy that meant that it is not. Yes, I support carbon pricing. I remember when we proposed amendments to their carbon price motions and said that if they really wanted to get rid of a tax on home heating, they should work with us to get rid of the GST. Do members know what they said when we proposed that amendment? They said no. Did members know that in the House, if there is an opposition day motion, a member cannot move an amendment without the permission of the mover? That meant we never did get to have a vote on that. We did not get to have a vote because the Conservatives vetoed a vote on getting rid of the GST on home heating.

• (1640)

The so-called champions of tax reduction for Canadians would not know a working partner if they came up and slapped them in the face. Some of us have had the idea to do that, but we have not, because we would prefer to preserve a good working relationship to get something done for Canadians. That is why we are here. It is what we are going to do every day of the week, and it is why we have made another attempt today with this motion. I urge them to finally support it.

Mr. Damien Kurek: Madam Speaker, on a point of order, I am sure the NDP House leader in particular and certainly all parliamentarians would be very interested to ensure that there is quorum in this place on what is their opposition day, and so I would ask for a quorum call.

And the count having been taken:

The Assistant Deputy Speaker (Mrs. Alexandra Mendès): We have to suspend until quorum is met.

And the bells having rung:

• (1645)

The Assistant Deputy Speaker (Mrs. Alexandra Mendès): We now have quorum.

Points of Order

The hon. parliamentary secretary to the government House leader.

Mr. Kevin Lamoureux: Madam Speaker, does there have to be a Conservative member in the House to have quorum?

The Assistant Deputy Speaker (Mrs. Alexandra Mendès): There is a Conservative member in the House.

We are resuming with questions and comments for the hon. member for Elmwood—Transcona.

The hon. parliamentary secretary to the government House leader.

Mr. Kevin Lamoureux (Parliamentary Secretary to the Leader of the Government in the House of Commons, Lib.): Madam Speaker, I think there is some confusion in regard to the positioning that the NDP had taken in regard to the vote from yesterday. When we take a look at the move towards trying to reduce the reliance on oil in order to heat homes, the national program that was announced by the federal government would, in fact, incentivize people to move away from oil to heat their homes.

I am wondering if the member could explain why the NDP does not seem to recognize the true value of encouraging people to convert to home heating pumps.

Mr. Daniel Blaikie: Madam Speaker, first of all, I would just like to say in respect to the quorum call that it is not the first time Conservatives have gone scurrying under their desks when I rise to speak, and I am sure it will not be the last. In respect to the question—

Some hon. members: Oh, oh!

Mr. Daniel Blaikie: Some Conservatives may not fit under their desk, but it does not stop them from trying—

The Assistant Deputy Speaker (Mrs. Alexandra Mendès): The hon. member for Mégantic—L'Érable is rising on a point of order.

* * *

POINTS OF ORDER

ORAL QUESTIONS

Mr. Luc Berthold (Mégantic—L'Érable, CPC): Madam Speaker, I am rising to respond to the point of order raised by the hon. member for New Westminster—Burnaby late last week seeking to constrain the Conservative Party from holding the NDP-Liberal government to account.

As the Speaker will recall, Conservatives asked a number of questions about the opposition motion to provide relief from the carbon tax for all Canadians' home heating regardless of the source of heat, which was debated on Thursday and voted upon yesterday afternoon.

Points of Order

Canadians are struggling with the cost of living. They are looking to their Parliament to address this concern and provide the relief they need to get through the winter, especially with the skyrocketing cost of heat, which is driven by the Prime Minister's unaffordable carbon tax.

Canadians who are looking to their politicians to take action and axe the tax want to know whether the government will, or whether the government will use its immense powers and tools to protect itself. This is unquestionably a concern of the administration of the government.

Indeed, the Speaker's initial reaction Thursday afternoon provides a pretty good answer here. Ministers and parliamentary secretaries rose to answer each and every one of the questions of concern of the NDP. If the government itself did not feel obliged to answer, surely it would not have.

The NDP House leader centred much of his argument around the January 2014 ruling by the Speaker's predecessor, the hon. member for Regina—Qu'Appelle. When the Speaker reflects on that ruling, it is important to understand the context that precipitated it. There had been a number of questions from both sides of the House concerning senators as well as the internal operations of the other place, political parties and MPs' offices.

Furthermore, there was one key passage the NDP House leader omitted from the January 2014 ruling, which he otherwise quoted extensively: "The principle of responsible government is that the government has to provide an accounting for where the money goes and to provide reasons for why decisions are made."

As I pointed out in my initial comments, we have a right to understand how the confidence and supply agreement between the Liberal and New Democratic parties will apply to key budget decisions and to important parliamentary decisions.

The agreement itself reads, "The agreement will mean that the NDP agrees to support the government on confidence and budgetary matters – notably on budgetary policy".

The carbon tax represents a huge chunk of money taken out of taxpayers' pockets. It is indisputably a question of budgetary policy, and one where the government is starkly offside the views and needs of Canadians whom it governs. That is why the official opposition, through its questioning, was looking for the government to explain the reasons the decision has been made.

As for the arguments advanced by the hon. member for Kingston and the Islands and the hon. member for Elmwood—Transcona, I would submit they were sidetracked by the description of the NDP-Liberal coalition.

Just yesterday, in fact, we saw the New Democrats vote in support of Liberal time allocation or closure for a 37th time under the leadership of the member for Burnaby South. Throughout the CCF and NDP's history prior to its current leader, I believe they had only supported time allocation or closure a total of 14 other times. It has been 37 times now, and only 14 times before.

At the start of this week, I understand the New Democrats voted with the Liberals 296 times during the past 306 votes. That is 97% support. In fact, I would not be surprised if the chief government

whip actually considers the NDP caucus to be more reliable in their votes than the member for Beaches—East York.

● (1650)

On the narrowest point about cabinet seats, which the deputy government House leader and the member for Elmwood—Transcona made, it is true that the NDP clearly failed in its negotiation to secure caucus representation at the cabinet table. However, all of the signs point to a cohesive team acting in concert for chamber and committee business.

The facts are quite clear that the confidence and supply agreement amounts to a parliamentary coalition, complete with obligations to consult, to discuss voting intention, to provide parliamentary support to the government and is complete with various mechanics like leaders meetings, House leaders meetings, whips meetings and a special stock-taking committee, which also meets regularly. I believe the member for Elmwood—Transcona might actually be a member of the last group.

Seeing how spectacularly the Liberals and the Prime Minister have been tumbling in public opinion lately, it is little surprise that the New Democrats bristle at the coalition label.

The concerns about what label to apply to this relationship between the Liberal and New Democratic parties amount to a question of debate.

We have a lot of those during question period. I am sure you would agree with that. No matter how you cut it or which term from the dictionary you prefer, we are talking about two entities coming together to collaborate in pursuit of common goals.

Whether you prefer to call that a joint endeavour, a common venture, a partnership or a coalition, that choice is ultimately a question of debate.

It should not be for the Speaker to police debate in the House with a dictionary to enforce the preferred message discipline of any given side.

Debate itself has always been useful in shedding light on the truth, and it should continue to be so.

In closing, the questions which Conservatives have been raising are important and fall squarely within the administration and conduct of the government. These are the questions that many Canadians, including the constituents of Liberal and NDP members, have long been asking.

When will the government take the tax off so Canadians can keep the heat on?

● (1655)

The Assistant Deputy Speaker (Mrs. Alexandra Mendès): That is duly noted.

*Business of Supply**[Translation]***BUSINESS OF SUPPLY**

OPPOSITION MOTION—REDUCING HOME HEATING COSTS

The House resumed consideration of the motion.

Mr. Daniel Blaikie (Elmwood—Transcona, NDP): Madam Speaker, before we start the clock again, I would like to make a brief comment to the hon. member for Mégantic—L'Érable. I will do so in French to make sure he understands.

Usually, when a member rises on a point of order regarding an issue that was raised a few days or weeks earlier, he or she waits until the member who has the floor has finished speaking. It is a matter of etiquette and a courtesy that we usually extend to our colleagues in the House. I find it disappointing that he did not wait for me to finish my speech—that is, about 30 seconds—before rising on this point of order.

[English]

On the question itself, the issue that the member for Winnipeg North raised is fair in the sense that we do absolutely support and, in fact, the motion here today supports helping people transition off of home heating oil.

His colleague in the Liberal cabinet made it very clear on CTV News that what they were doing had everything to do with partisan Liberal politics in a particular region of the country and very little to do with good policy.

Better policy on the affordability front would be to remove the GST, to make sure that we do not introduce regional schism to the carbon pricing program and that it applies equally to all the people, including people who do not create any emissions to heat their home but nevertheless are struggling in a time of affordability.

That is the answer to the question.

Mr. Damien Kurek (Battle River—Crowfoot, CPC): Madam Speaker, I find it very interesting and somewhat tragic, actually. The Liberals have admitted their carbon tax simply does not work. The New Democrats are now scrambling to try to differentiate themselves from their coalition partners. The implications that this has for Canadians are truly the most tragic part of all.

In the last couple of years in this Parliament, dating back to February 2022, we saw the member and all the members of the coalition vote against a Conservative motion that would have, in part, removed GST from home heating fuels. They voted against it at that point in time. They did not care about affordability there. That was a great tragedy for Canadians.

The same thing took place on April 4, 2022, when the NDP voted with its coalition partners in the Liberal Party against an affordability measure put forward by common-sense Conservatives. Again, on June 7, 2022, the NDP voted against a Conservative measure that would have addressed some of these affordability challenges. On October 24, 2022, the New Democrats and the Liberals voted against a Conservative measure. On December—

The Assistant Deputy Speaker (Mrs. Alexandra Mendès): Can I ask if there is a question? We have to give time to other members to ask questions.

Mr. Damien Kurek: Madam Speaker, there are numerous other examples, and it is unfortunate that I cannot get through them all. That is how great the hypocrisy of that member is, so—

The Assistant Deputy Speaker (Mrs. Alexandra Mendès): I will let the hon. member for Elmwood—Transcona comment on the comment.

Mr. Daniel Blaikie: What is tragic, Madam Speaker, is that any time we have reached out to work with Conservatives to reduce the tax on home heating in a way that is actually fair, they have said no. Why is that? It is because they have built a political campaign around the carbon tax. The importance of that campaign to them and their own electoral fortunes trumps doing anything for Canadians in a tangible sense; otherwise, the Conservatives could have worked with us on any of those votes to eliminate the GST from home heating. As I said, that is a position they know the New Democrats have held for close to 20 years now and one that we actually tried to introduce into their motions, with amendments that they refused.

Therefore, if we want to talk about tragedy and who is really committed to trying to make life more affordable for Canadians, the tragic thing is that Conservatives refuse to have a working partner. They want to go to Canadians and tell them that everything is broken. To the extent that things are broken around here, the Conservatives are breaking them. It is dishonest to break things here and then go to Canadians and tell them that somehow the people with the answers are the ones who are breaking them.

• (1700)

Ms. Heather McPherson (Edmonton Strathcona, NDP): Madam Speaker, every time the member stands up in the House, I learn so much from him and so much about the ways that the New Democrats are working very hard to make sure the affordability crisis and the climate crisis are both dealt with.

We talk a lot about how the Conservatives are in the pockets of big oil and gas. One thing that I find very shocking in Alberta is that we lost 1,500 jobs at the same time as these oil and gas companies were raking in massive profits. Could the member talk about why the Conservatives never want to talk about the jobs that we lost in Alberta because of oil and gas?

Mr. Daniel Blaikie: Madam Speaker, it is true: As oil and gas profits have skyrocketed over the last number of years, employment in the oil and gas sector has gone down. We see Conservatives say they want more business investment in Canada, but Conservative premiers such as Danielle Smith have been turning down billions of dollars of investment in renewable energy that could also create a lot of employment for Canadians. That is why the Conservatives are not who they say they are and their leader is not who he says he is.

Mr. Kevin Lamoureux (Parliamentary Secretary to the Leader of the Government in the House of Commons, Lib.): Madam Speaker, I would like to address today's NDP motion in a couple of ways.

Business of Supply

One thing that is overlooked and underestimated, in terms of the damage, is a concern related to the environment. This is the case whether it is this particular opposition day motion or the previous one that the Conservatives brought forward last week, which we actually voted on yesterday.

When I think of the environment, it really highlights an area where the Conservative Party leadership is missing the point. When people say there are climate deniers in society, I look across the way and see that in the lack of action and policy enunciations coming from the Conservative Party. Those things could provide assurances to Canadians that Conservatives, as a political entity in the House, take the environment seriously. I believe there are indeed climate deniers within the Conservative caucus. They seem to be winning the day. It is unfortunate.

I believe that the Conservative Party is being very irresponsible. When we think about their policies regarding the environment, if people hunt and find something, they will find that it is exceptionally reckless, and nothing more so than the price on pollution. To demonstrate just how reckless the Conservative Party is on this issue, all one needs to do is look at the history inside the chamber and the leadership of the Conservative Party.

Stephen Harper was saying one thing on one day, but then the Conservatives changed their position, and a new Conservative leader came in and took a totally different position. In fact, that position was incorporated into the election platform of the Conservative Party in the last election, just two years ago.

As all members would know, because I have talked about it and other members have talked about it in the past, at that time, the Conservatives talked about the importance of a price on pollution. That is when every political party inside the House of Commons seemed to recognize that what had taken place in Paris in 2015 made a whole lot of sense. A big part of that, coming out of the Paris conference, was that the countries around the world, and many of their provincial or state entities, started to adopt a price on pollution.

At one time, it was actually very encouraging. We had all political entities in the House recognizing that. How far we have fallen from a time in which we had 338 Conservative candidates going out with an election platform and saying that they supported a price on pollution. Today, they have a shiny new leader who says that Conservatives do not believe in a price on pollution anymore; instead, they are taking the bumper sticker policy of axing the carbon tax. That is what the Conservative Party of today is saying.

That is what I mean by reckless. To get a sense of the degree to which the Conservatives are reckless, and taking a heck of a risk, people should just look at the environment and what the Conservatives are saying or not saying in regard to it. I would like to think that the Conservative Party would be a little more reflective, in terms of what everyone else is talking about in regard to the environment. There is an expectation.

I am disappointed, and I think many Canadians are disappointed, in the huge vacuum in the Conservative Party today in regard to the environment.

• (1705)

Yesterday, we had a vote, about which the Conservative Party is trying to portray a false narrative. Its members are actually spreading misinformation in order to justify that false information and manipulation of a particular vote. I will expand on that.

Members can think about a time when people would heat their homes with coal. In fact, in many of those wartime houses, we can see steel plates where the coal would go into the home. Many years ago, people realized that there were alternatives to coal and started to gravitate toward them.

We can fast-forward to today, and we have heating oil, propane, natural gas and electricity. These are the options we have to heat 99% of homes. Where does heating oil fit in? Heating oil is exceptionally more costly as a way to heat one's home. Natural gas and propane would probably be next in line in terms of cost. What has been clearly established is that using electricity and heat pumps is far more energy-efficient and better for the environment. Thousands of Canadians have recognized that.

Members will remember the false information I spoke about. I have heard members opposite say that, as a government, we saw maybe a couple of hundred people changing over to heat pumps. As with many other things, this is misinformation; it is just not accurate. Through the greener homes program, we have seen tens of thousands of people take advantage of the program and convert to alternatives in terms of replacing heating oil, for example, with heat pumps. However, Conservative members, in one swoop, just kind of wave that aside, because it does not fit their narrative.

If we look at the policy announcement, it is a national announcement. The Conservatives, even today during question period, try to regionalize it, as if it were there for one region of the country. That is just not true. They can read into it all they want and try to spread misinformation. However, the bottom line is that, much like the greener homes program, it is a national program. Every region of the country is going to be affected by that program.

It is important to recognize that the province that has the biggest potential to benefit from this is the province of Ontario, which has a quarter of a million households that are actually heating their homes via oil. Therefore, when the Conservatives try to give misleading and false information to Canadians in order to cause division, I find that somewhat regrettable.

• (1710)

I believe that the program is sound from an environmental perspective. That is why I have expressed disappointment with my New Democratic friends because I think they are sending a mixed message. We can look at the heating pump policy that has been established. Putting a pause on the tax and making heating pumps virtually free anywhere in Canada where provinces are participating in the program will cause more people to look at this program as a national program. We will continue to see Canadians buying in and recognizing that changing over is a smart thing to do. The math says that, if someone invests in heating pumps, the cost is substantially less, and over time they will actually save considerably more money than the cost of putting in a heat pump. That is very clear. We have demonstrated that in the past.

We know that there is a high level of interest from Canadians because they have looked to programs, such as the greener homes program, as a mechanism. We know that today other provinces are now looking at ways they can get on board. I hope the Province of Ontario, through Premier Doug Ford, will realize the benefits of encouraging that conversion by participating in it.

Getting back to the reckless attitudes of the Conservative Party, the other day, when the leader of the Conservative Party was addressing the House, I posed a question on the issue of taxes. He had indicated to the House that we should get rid of all taxes on home heating, implying that it is not just the carbon tax he was referring to, but all taxes, including the GST. It was members of the Conservative Party who put the GST on home heating.

Now the refreshed far right elements of today's Conservative Party are changing, again in that reckless fashion. Conservatives are not necessarily concerned about sound policy that is in the best interests of Canadians, whether it concerns the environment or the issue of taxation. That is an important issue. After all, that is the way we finance and fund the many different programs that are out there. They are more concerned about that bumper sticker. That is where their concern is. They want to make sure that they can fit something on a bumper sticker. They go around saying they are going to do this or that, throwing in common sense and then talking about bringing it home. That is what the Conservative Party today is all about. It is all a game; it is all manipulation.

I think they underestimate the importance of when it is time to present something. I do not know how long we have been waiting for the Conservative Party to come to the table and share with Canadians through the House, or in a meeting, what they are going to do on the environment. We are all waiting to see something come from the Conservative Party of Canada on the issue.

• (1715)

When we look at the policy, and combine the issue of affordability with the issue of supporting the purchasing, acquiring and installing of heat pumps, we see that it is a sound policy. As I indicated in the question that I put to my New Democratic friends, how do the Conservatives justify not supporting that particular policy? It sends a mixed message.

Earlier today, I posed a question on the GST. Today, the New Democrats are kind of buying in to some of the things the Conservatives have been saying. They just want to get rid of the GST on home heating. Let us think about what that actually means. They say the purpose of getting rid of the GST on electricity and on natural gas is so there can be more money for individuals who want to be able to heat their homes. The problem is that, when people purchase their electricity, it is for more than just heating homes.

In the summer in Winnipeg, we do not need to heat our homes. When it is 35°C outside, I do not think there are any furnaces, electric or natural gas, that are being used to heat homes. We have all kinds of items that use utilities in a house, such as a PlayStation, a toaster and lights, and those are not used to heat homes. Are we saying that, for example, if people consume natural gas and electricity, and they have a propane tank, all of those would be exempt for that one household? That is in essence what the New Democrats are saying.

Business of Supply

Who would be the biggest benefactors of that policy? I would suggest it would not be the middle class. Do members remember that, in the last budget, we brought in the grocery rebate? Where did the money come from to support that? It was through the GST. That is what allowed us to provide that particular support. By doing that, whom did we help the most? We helped 11 million-plus Canadians, including the middle class and those with lower-end incomes, to get money directly into their pockets so that they would be in a better position to have a higher disposable income to purchase groceries.

What is the NDP proposing today? Someone pointed out that Mr. Weston would be one of the biggest benefactors. He has a fairly big house, not to mention other luxury items. The 1% of the wealthiest in Canada would probably get the biggest reward on the motion the NDP has brought forward. Let us think about a senior on a fixed income living in an apartment versus the 1% wealthiest and where they might be living and the type of resources that they would be spending in consuming electricity, propane and natural gas.

What about pointing out how this policy would help? I would suggest that there is a better way to support Canada's working class and those aspiring to be a part of it. They are those whom we want to help in a more direct way. We have seen a national government over the years lift children and seniors and people with disabilities out of poverty because of targets.

I would suggest that this is irresponsible of the New Democrats, and I think it is, unfortunately, because they are being heavily influenced by the Conservative Party. They need to get a bit more distance from the Conservative Party to have a healthier party in the future.

• (1720)

Mr. Taylor Bachrach (Skeena—Bulkley Valley, NDP): Madam Speaker, I tried to follow that stream of consciousness, and I was struggling. At one point, I believe the parliamentary secretary was trying to make the case that somehow the GST is a progressive tax, yet nothing could be further from the truth. The GST, as a consumption tax, imposes a higher burden on low-income people as a percentage of their income.

Does he not agree, or would he like to take his two-minute response time to talk about how he does not understand what a progressive tax versus a regressive tax is as a concept?

Mr. Kevin Lamoureux: Madam Speaker, I want the member to think about what he just said.

If that is the case, if he truly believes that, then why would the NDP support the GST? What the member is saying is that he wants to see the GST taken off home heating. If he really believed what he just said, he would be articulating that we should be getting rid of the GST, period.

Business of Supply

However, what he just finished saying is not true. If we factor in the GST rebates, it is a progressive form of taxation because of the rebates. I do not think that was explained to the member, or maybe he believes that all GST should be taken away, period. Would he apply that to the provincial sales tax, which many New Democratic governments have put in place, supported and increased? At least we provide a rebate that makes it progressive.

Mr. Scot Davidson (York—Simcoe, CPC): Madam Speaker, I always enjoy listening to the member for Winnipeg North.

From a York—Simcoe perspective, since 2018, we are still waiting for the \$40-million commitment for the Lake Simcoe cleanup fund. We still do not have it. We are still waiting on the freshwater action plan. Municipalities are calling me about that money. We are still waiting for our trees to be planted. In York—Simcoe, and I am proud of this, we have planted more than 5,000 trees at Canada Day barbecues right across the riding.

We know that rural Canadians are disproportionately affected by the carbon tax. The people of York—Simcoe were shocked to learn that we are now considered as part of Toronto. We are the soup and salad bowl of Canada, the ice fishing capital of Canada. I know I have invited the member to come ice fishing, and he has not taken me up on that. We have all that, and all the rural farms in Pefferlaw, but we are not going to get the rural top-up, the meagre rural top-up.

Could the member comment on how he thinks that is fair for the residents of York—Simcoe?

Mr. Kevin Lamoureux: Madam Speaker, the member started off by talking about Lake Simcoe and concerns for the lakes in his community.

I know when I was in opposition, I had a great deal of concern for lakes around the world. Stephen Harper then cut funding to the Experimental Lakes project, which had a profound, negative impact in the area of science and research on the health of lakes, not only in small communities, but also in communities throughout the world.

I am glad to say that it is one of the things we quickly did after forming government. We re-established the importance of lakes in Canada. Today, the Experimental Lakes project is doing exceptionally well, and the government has taken a very proactive approach to protecting ocean waters and doing what we can to support municipalities in making sure that we have good, quality water.

• (1725)

[Translation]

Ms. Andréanne Larouche (Shefford, BQ): Madam Speaker, I thank my colleague for his speech. However, I would like to bring the debate back to help for households with the lowest incomes.

I have here a letter from Efficiency Canada that proves that federal environmental programs overlook the fact that Quebec mainly uses electricity, a cleaner form of energy. I am wondering whether the same problem exists with the green fund. Let me explain. The executive director of the Centre d'action bénévole de Farnham, which serves Ange-Gardien and other communities in my riding of Shefford, would have liked to be able to get money from the green

fund to do some renovations. The city had given the organization a nice building, but it needed some TLC. These people did their research into whether they could apply to the green fund. From what they saw, this funding is being distributed in other places, but not in Quebec.

Why not have a program that will really help households and organizations in Quebec? Why not have an environmental program to help make buildings more energy efficient, a program that takes into account other factors besides the fact that the building is heated with electricity? The whole building envelope could be included in programs to really help organizations and individuals in Quebec.

[English]

Mr. Kevin Lamoureux: Madam Speaker, I am afraid my colleague is underestimating the commitment that comes from the people of Quebec in terms of conversions. Quebec is leading the country in taking up the greener homes program, which is a wonderful program going to thousands of people in Quebec who have recognized the value of heat pumps. I see that as a very strong thing. The Government of Canada is providing good, sound national programs to encourage people to take conversion very seriously.

With the national program, I would encourage people to look at Quebec and the people taking the province up on the program. The number of people in Quebec is far higher than any other province in Canada, including Ontario, from what I understand, under that program.

Mr. Mike Morrice (Kitchener Centre, GP): Madam Speaker, one aspect of the speech by the member for Winnipeg North that I really appreciated was helping to articulate, to my surprise as well, that when we talk about removing GST from home heating, there is nothing about income-testing on it in today's motion. I was surprised to see that. I am unsure why that was the case. It makes it more difficult for me to consider supporting it.

My question to the member is specifically on the third part of the motion with respect to a windfall profits tax on oil and gas companies. As he knows, the carbon tax went up only two cents a litre last year and there are rebates attached to that expense. When it comes to the profits of oil and gas companies, though, the carbon tax went up 18¢ a litre and there are no rebates attached. It is part of why oil and gas companies are making record-breaking profits, and a windfall profits tax could generate \$4.2 billion for climate solutions.

Does the member support a windfall profits tax on oil and gas companies' excess profits?

Business of Supply

Mr. Kevin Lamoureux: Madam Speaker, to be completely honest, I am not too sure of the details in what the member is referencing. I do know that we believe in fair taxation and people should be expected to pay their fair share of taxes.

For example, in the budget, we brought in the temporary Canada recovery dividend, which applied to banks and insurance companies, that will generate several billions of additional dollars from excess profits. We are looking at caps regarding emissions, oil and so forth. I just do not know the details to the degree that I can confidently comment on it.

Mr. Damien Kurek (Battle River—Crowfoot, CPC): Madam Speaker, what I find very interesting is when we unpack a bit of what the member said. I suggest that maybe the Liberals should stop handing out tinfoil hats in the Liberal lobby because there are conspiracies that abound when it comes to what they are accusing Conservatives of. The fact is that the environment commissioner recently released a report that definitively said, and could not have been clearer, that the Liberals are failing.

The member made some pretty significant accusations about members of the Conservative Party. I wonder if he would be willing to name any so-called climate deniers within our caucus. If he is going to throw out accusations like that, I would ask that he name them to stand behind his words or is he just fearmongering like the rest of them?

• (1730)

Mr. Kevin Lamoureux: Madam Speaker, there are five political parties in the chamber. There is only one political party that continues to deny climate change.

The member referred to tinfoil hats. Really? It is the Conservative Party—

Some hon. members: Oh, oh!

The Assistant Deputy Speaker (Mrs. Carol Hughes): The hon. member had an opportunity to ask a question and other members seems to want to either answer or comment. I would ask them to please wait until the appropriate time to do so.

Mr. Damien Kurek: Madam Speaker, I rise on a point of order. The member is very specifically demeaning the integrity of others in this place, and I believe if you would—

The Assistant Deputy Speaker (Mrs. Carol Hughes): That is a point of debate. The hon. member will please sit down.

The hon. parliamentary secretary.

Mr. Kevin Lamoureux: Madam Speaker, the other thing I have to respond to is that the member made reference to tinfoil hats. Well, there is a monopoly on tinfoil hats, and it is on that side of the House in the left corner, better known as the Conservative Party, where they take this and that point, bring it all together and somehow it is something really bad. It is called fake news, false facts or whatever members want to call it. However, the tinfoil hats are always on sale at Amazon, and I recommend that is where the member should look for his.

The Assistant Deputy Speaker (Mrs. Carol Hughes): Order. If hon. members want to have conversations, they should take them outside this chamber.

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

Mr. Patrick Weiler (West Vancouver—Sunshine Coast—Sea to Sky Country, Lib.): Madam Speaker, it is an honour to rise again in the House.

I will be splitting my time with the member for Milton.

It is a little frustrating that again we have a motion where we are debating the carbon tax in this place. As I suggested in a speech last Thursday, when we keep talking about the carbon price in this way, it gives the false impression that it is the price on pollution that is actually leading to the large increases we are seeing on home heating fuels across the country.

Today, we are debating an opposition day motion that has been put forward by the NDP. What I do appreciate about the motion is that it actually does identify what is causing the record increases in fuels that we are seeing within Canada. By way of example, since 2020, we know that with the increase in the price of home heating oil in Atlantic Canada, only 12¢ of that is from the price on pollution and actually 63¢ is because of the massive excess profits that are being made by the fossil fuel sector.

However, it is important that we recognize why that is happening. Of course, with natural gas and oil, these are global markets, and what we are seeing right now is instability throughout the world, particularly with the illegal and unjustified Russian invasion of Ukraine, which has caused significant disruption to the global energy market. We are also seeing the actions of OPEC, which is constricting the supply of energy across the world. We are seeing massive increases in the cost of energy in Canada as a result.

Just since 2022, the oil and gas sector in Canada has made a \$30-billion increase in profits, which is a 1,000% increase since 2019. At the same time we are seeing these record profits take place, we are seeing thousands of jobs being cut right across the country. I do appreciate that the motion that the NDP put forward looks at this as the problem. Unfortunately, it goes beyond this.

While I think there is a very good discussion to be had about putting in an excess profits tax on oil and gas companies and being able to use the profits from that to invest in the transition that is taking place, it is very important that as part of the motion there is discussion on ensuring that this financing goes to support things like heat pumps and other ways of reducing home heating bills for Canadians. As the parliamentary secretary said earlier, there are issues with how the motion has articulated scrapping the GST on home heating fuels, given that actually might not assist the most vulnerable in Canadian society right now.

However, what I really find frustrating is that, just yesterday, the mover of the motion, the NDP, in fact voted for scrapping the price on pollution for all home heating fuels right now. Again, I think this sends the wrong message right now. It focuses on the price on pollution as a problem when really it is such a small portion of that.

Business of Supply

We know that having a price on pollution is the most efficient way of reducing emissions and the most cost-effective way. The province I come from, British Columbia, has had one for over 15 years. Of course, this was a price on pollution that was brought in by the right-of-centre government at the time. While the federal system does not apply in British Columbia, the federal system that we have put forward actually provides rebates that are sent out quarterly to Canadians so that eight out of 10 Canadians get more back than they pay into it. Importantly, when we are talking about cutting the price on pollution for these fuels, it is actually going to reduce the rebates that people are getting and so in many ways it actually undermines the affordability measure that is there.

It is through measures like this that Canada has been able to make significant progress in recent years on reducing emissions. In fact, from 2019 to 2021, emissions in Canada have gone down more than in any other G7 country. Obviously, we have a lot more to do, but our price on pollution is a very important part of Canada's emissions reduction plan to make sure that we get there.

• (1735)

It is fundamental that we do not do things that undermine the price on pollution. For this mechanism to be effective, Canadians need to know that it is going to be in place for the long term and that it will be increasing over time as well. Without it, individuals will not make the investments in measures to reduce emissions and, at the same time, save on their pocketbooks.

Similarly, it is incredibly important that we not only have certainty with the price on pollution for individual consumers, but also at the industrial level. In that regard, we are moving forward with the Canada growth fund, which among other things will be able to bring in carbon contracts for differences that will provide the certainty for industry so even if there is a change in the carbon price over time they will have that security in making those investments. It is incredibly important that we have this because we are not seeing the type of investment at the business level in abatement of emissions. Last month, at the finance committee, we heard from witnesses that over the last two years, while the oil sands have been making record profits, there has been zero new investment in mitigation of emissions. Therefore, it is critically important that the private sector and industry play their part, so we need to make sure we have the system in place to ensure they are able to do that and are pushed to do that.

Another measure that we are in the process of developing right now is a regulation that will cap emissions from the oil and gas sector. Again, this is critically important so that those companies that are making record profits right now while cutting jobs invest in measures to reduce emissions.

I am having a bit of déjà vu here with the provincial NDP. I remember back in 2009, when the provincial NDP ran its entire campaign on axing the carbon tax. Therefore, I think it is critically important that we focus at this point on reducing emissions while we are there to support affordability for Canadians.

I am heartened that we are having the type of conversation we are having about heat pumps. We know they are an incredibly good way of reducing our emissions at the household level. That is why we have announced a new program that is going to provide free

heat pumps for people in the three provinces that have already signed up for it so they can move from the highest-emitting fuels, which are also up to four times more expensive than natural gas, to heat pumps. I have seen in an analysis that a family in Halifax can save over \$1,400 a year by doing this. We are putting the call out to all provinces for this program so they can work with us on being able to provide heat pumps for people to transition from home heating oil.

Just yesterday, I was very proud to see my premier, David Eby, wearing an "I love heat pumps" shirt, so I know there is buy-in at the provincial level in British Columbia. We need to work together so we can save Canadians money, as well as reduce emissions at the same time.

It is not just about reducing our emissions at the household level and saving Canadians money that way; we also need to assist Canadians with solutions in decarbonizing across the board. A key measure we have been working on for several years now is ensuring that we are decarbonizing transportation in Canada. As part of this, we are now providing a \$5,000 incentive for people to switch to electric vehicles. Just last week, I was very pleased to be able to take advantage of that program as well. I am part of the 18% of new vehicle purchasers in British Columbia who have moved forward with an electric vehicle.

Whether it is with respect to decarbonizing transportation or home heating, we need to do all we can to support Canadians to make greener choices while having an effective price signal in place. I think it is critically important that we do both those things at the same time. What is imperative in that is ensuring that we have a robust carbon price so Canadians know that it is going to be there in the future.

• (1740)

Ms. Heather McPherson (Edmonton Strathcona, NDP): Madam Speaker, I would just like to make one quick comment to my colleague on his speech. It was very interesting. When he talks about the wrong messages being sent, I have to say that, as an Albertan, hearing a minister from the Maritimes, the Atlantic provinces, say that if they would elect more Liberals they would get more support was very painful for my constituents. It was very difficult for Albertans to hear.

I wanted to ask him about this. We are looking for ways to deal with the climate crisis. We know that people across the country want to deal with the climate crisis, aside from the Conservative Party, of course. However, we are also seeing this across the country, and in my province of Alberta, for example, the premier has chased away \$33 billion of investment in renewable energy that could be used. Alberta should be a leader in the world in renewable energy, yet we have a Conservative government that has chased away \$33 billion worth of investment that will not come back.

Therefore, I am curious as to what the member has to say about that, and perhaps what we could do to help places like Alberta when we have such backward Conservative governments.

Mr. Patrick Weiler: Madam Speaker, frankly, moves like that give new meaning to the term “cancel culture”. It is just incredible to see a government that prides itself on being pro-business introduce that type of uncertainty to a sector that has so much promise in Alberta. Alberta has the greatest potential for solar energy and for wind energy of any province in the country. To see those types of measures literally put a moratorium on bringing in that type of electricity while at the same time saying that Alberta cannot meet the clean electricity standard is just incredible. Frankly, it really undermines any credibility in that statement that Premier Smith made.

• (1745)

Mr. Scot Davidson (York—Simcoe, CPC): Madam Speaker, the carbon tax, we know, disproportionately affects rural Canadians. I think we can all agree with that. I think even the member for Milton would agree with that. The government has come up with a meagre top-up. My riding of York—Simcoe includes all the farms and small communities like Pefferlaw, which is very north of Toronto, and we are not included now in that rural top-up.

We have no choice but to drive to hospitals. We do not have a subway. We have very limited public transit. We do not have any streetcars, so we do not have those choices. I have a first nation in my riding where people have to get back and forth from home, and the choices are limited. How does my colleague think that it is fair for us to be excluded?

Mr. Patrick Weiler: Madam Speaker, certainly folks who live in rural areas have challenges that people who live in urban areas do not when it comes to decarbonizing their lifestyles. I represent a semi-rural riding as well, and people do not have access to the same types of public transit opportunities. That is why we increased the rural top-up. I cannot speak to the specifics of the member's riding, but it is something that we need to look at on the supply side to make sure those options are there. It could be through transit, particularly regional transit where there are large gaps in the country. We need to make sure that we work with provinces, municipalities and other organizations as well to deploy things like electric vehicle charging stations, and others, so that people have the opportunity to make those changes.

[Translation]

Mr. Martin Champoux (Drummond, BQ): Madam Speaker, I was a little reluctant to participate in this debate because, as we find ourselves saying over and over to make sure our Conservative colleagues from Quebec remember and understand, the carbon tax does not apply in Quebec. Quebec has its own carbon exchange.

That option is available to all the provinces. Any of them can set up a carbon pricing system like Quebec and British Columbia have done in partnership with California and other U.S. states that are in the process of joining.

Earlier, my colleague from York—Simcoe talked about his region's unique circumstances. That is the case everywhere in Canada. I wonder if my Liberal colleague thinks things would be a lot simpler and we could avoid a lot of dissent in the House if every province adopted a carbon pricing system that suits its own circum-

stances rather than having to accept the federal government's carbon tax.

I would like to hear my colleague's comments on that.

Mr. Patrick Weiler: Madam Speaker, I agree with my colleague.

Every province and territory can come up with a system that suits its circumstances. They can develop a system that defines rural regions differently. I think that, if this is a problem, we should talk to the provinces about it. Every part of the country is different, and it is hard to come up with a system that works for everyone. That is why we set it up this way.

[English]

Mr. Adam van Koeverden (Parliamentary Secretary to the Minister of Environment and Climate Change and to the Minister of Sport and Physical Activity, Lib.): Madam Speaker, it is an honour to rise to speak to this opposition day motion today.

As the opposition notes, Canadians across the country are facing more and more dramatic impacts from climate change. They are also struggling with the sharp increases in the cost of living.

That is why we have put in place a comprehensive emissions reduction plan, which is the most comprehensive national climate plan ever implemented not just here in Canada but anywhere. It is very ambitious, and its aim is threefold: to reduce carbon pollution, to stop climate change, and to grow our economy and to position Canada to be a leader on the clean technology front as well as keeping life affordable for all Canadians.

My riding, as one of the previous speakers noted, is a semi-rural riding. I have hundreds of neighbours who use home heating oil. These recent measures take that into consideration, recognizing that home heating oil is by far the most expensive way to heat one's home, and it is also the most emissions-intensive way to heat one's home.

We are going to get people off home heating oil. We are going to get them the heat pumps that their systems need. We have highly polluting oil heat that we want to phase out, just like our efforts to phase out coal-fired energy, and we are going to do that in favour of clean and efficient cold-climate-adapted heat pumps.

I am a big proponent of heat pumps because I have one myself. That means that I am currently heating my house with electricity and not with natural gas.

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If it gets very cold, I can turn on my natural gas system. It is important that this is about lowering emissions at this stage and not about completely eliminating our reliance on fossil fuels.

I would like to talk a little about carbon pollution pricing because it seems like, in the House, we spend a lot of time debating whether we fight climate change not how we fight climate change, and that is truly unfortunate.

• (1750)

The Assistant Deputy Speaker (Mrs. Carol Hughes): It being 5:51 p.m., it is my duty to interrupt the proceedings and put forthwith every question necessary to dispose of the business of supply.

The question is as follows.

Shall I dispense?

Some hon. members: No.

[Chair read text of motion to House]

[Translation]

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

[English]

Mr. Peter Julian: Madam Speaker, on this important NDP action plan, we would like a recorded vote.

[Translation]

The Assistant Deputy Speaker (Mrs. Carol Hughes): Pursuant to Standing Order 45, the recorded division stands deferred until Wednesday, November 8, at the expiry of the time provided for Oral Questions.

* * *

[English]

BUSINESS OF THE HOUSE

Mr. Kevin Lamoureux (Parliamentary Secretary to the Leader of the Government in the House of Commons, Lib.): Madam Speaker, I rise on a point of order.

There have been discussions amongst the parties, and if you seek it, I think you will find unanimous consent to adopt the following motion.

I move:

That, notwithstanding any Standing Order or usual practice of the House:

(a) when the House adjourns on Thursday, November 9, 2023, it shall stand adjourned until Monday, November 20, 2023, provided that, for the purposes of Standing Order 28, it shall be deemed to have sat on Friday, November 10, 2023;

(b) any standing, standing joint, special, and special joint committees, as well as their subcommittees, shall not be empowered to sit on Friday, November 10, 2023; and

(c) on Friday, November 10, 2023, a minister of the Crown may transmit to the Speaker a message from Her Excellency the Governor General recommending Supplementary Estimates (B) for the fiscal year ending March 31, 2024, provided that

(i) the Speaker shall inform the House of the receipt of such message and the tabling of the estimates thereon by causing them to be published in the Journals, and the said estimates shall be for all purposes deemed tabled before the House,

(ii) the votes therein shall be referred to a relevant standing committee or committees.

The Assistant Deputy Speaker (Mrs. Carol Hughes): All those opposed to the hon. parliamentary secretary's moving the motion will please say nay.

It is agreed.

[Translation]

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

(Motion agreed to)

[English]

Mr. Kevin Lamoureux: Madam Speaker, I rise on a point of order. I suspect if you were to canvass the House, you would find unanimous consent to see the clock at 6:06 p.m. so we could begin private members' hour.

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

Some hon. members: Agreed.

PRIVATE MEMBERS' BUSINESS

• (1755)

[English]

CITIZENS' ASSEMBLY ON ELECTORAL REFORM

Ms. Lisa Marie Barron (Nanaimo—Ladysmith, NDP) moved:

That:

(a) the House recognize that,

(i) representative democracy is a fundamental part of Canadian society,

(ii) in Canada's current electoral system, the majority of voters cast ballots for a candidate who does not get elected, and many voters feel that election results do not accurately reflect their views,

(iii) a Leger poll conducted in September 2020 showed that 80% of Canadians support the idea of striking a non-partisan, independent citizens' assembly on electoral reform,

(iv) many Canadians are concerned with the health of Canada's democracy, including voter distrust and disengagement, low voter turnout, and the polarization of politics,

(v) all politicians, and all parties, are widely perceived by the public to have a vested interest in the design of the electoral system,

(vi) citizens' assemblies have considerable legitimacy and public trust because they are independent, non-partisan, representative bodies of citizens,

(vii) citizens' assemblies have been used successfully in Canada, Australia, Belgium, France, Ireland, Scotland, the Netherlands, and the United Kingdom to tackle difficult issues through nuanced public deliberation,

(viii) a citizens' assembly on electoral reform would give citizens a leadership role in building consensus on a specific model for electoral reform for Canada; and

(b) in the opinion of the House, the government should create a Canadian citizens' assembly on electoral reform, which would,

(i) consist of citizens selected by sortition, an impartial selection process to ensure the assembly's independence and non-partisanship,

(ii) reflect the diversity of the Canadian population, including a representation and meaningful participation of age groups, genders, ethnicities, languages, socioeconomic backgrounds, and geographic regions including from First Nations, Inuit and Metis peoples,

(iii) determine if electoral reform is recommended for Canada, and, if so, recommend specific measures that would foster a healthier democracy.

She said: Madam Speaker, I am honoured today to rise for the first hour of debate on a motion on a vitally important issue: Motion No. 86 calls on the government to implement a national citizens' assembly on electoral reform.

First, I want to thank all those who were tirelessly pushing to have electoral reform and to increase representation in the House of Commons far before I had the honour to serve as the member of Parliament for Nanaimo—Ladysmith. There are so many community advocates and organizations, but I will name just a few: Fair Vote Canada, Apathy is Boring, The Council of Canadians, Equal Voice and Citizens for Public Justice.

We know that the way in which Canadians elect their representatives matters, and the impacts are felt by all Canadians. We are living with the impacts of a climate crisis. More and more people are struggling to get by to have good, healthy food on the table, a place to call home and an income that pays the bills. Canadians no longer have time to wait for those who represent them to take real action. This is why I have brought forward Motion No. 86.

Canada has been using the same electoral system since Confederation in 1867. I am sure everyone in the House will agree that much has changed since Canada was first formed. The first-past-the-post electoral system implemented by those often referred to as “Canada's founding fathers” was put into place many generations before women even had the right to vote or were even considered persons, which happened in 1929. This was before indigenous people were able to vote without losing status, which happened in 1960. Canada was a much different place, and the rights and voices of so many were not included. We have come very far, but also, not far enough.

The first-past-the-post electoral system we are all familiar with is one where the winner takes all, meaning that the candidate who gets the most votes wins all the power. This was very evident in the last two elections, where our outdated voting system allowed one party to win 100% of the power with just 39% of the vote. We see the impacts first-hand of what happens when the majority of Canadians do not see their votes represented. Canadians are sharing with me that they are feeling increasingly disengaged, and this is seen in the consistently decreasing voter turnout.

Another result of the first-past-the-post system can be seen when we look around us in this exact chamber. It is evident that those elected across Canada do not match our communities. As one example, currently, elected members in the House of Commons are 30% women, despite women accounting for just over 50% of the Canadian population. This is the highest representation of women elected to represent federally that we have ever seen in Canada, yet it is clearly nowhere near where it should be. It is important to note that, despite the steady and small increases in women's representation in the House of Commons, Canada ranks at an embarrassing 58th place on the world stage, and this number seems to just keep

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getting worse. The pace of the work happening to address this gap is not keeping up with the need.

A 2018 report of the Standing Committee on the Status of Women, titled “Elect Her: A Roadmap for Improving the Representation of Women in Canadian Politics”, includes sound recommendations for the government regarding concerns that remain today. The report discusses the ways in which increased political representation results in improvements in economic, political and social outcomes for everyone.

We know that having more women in politics means increased collaborations. I cannot even begin to count how many times I have heard from constituents in my riding of Nanaimo—Ladysmith as they express frustrations with the endless delay tactics and partisan games happening in this chamber. My constituents and Canadians across the country are asking for necessary solutions to be implemented, which means working together. Encouraging an environment of respect with diverse opinions on important topics is considered an essential component of an effective democracy. This means putting aside political games, working across party lines and doing what is right not for the benefit of the next election but for those we serve.

To make matters worse, only 2.4% of members of Parliament identify as Black, while 3.3% identify as indigenous. It is clear that Parliament also lacks in representation of 2SLGBTQIA+ people, people living with disabilities, people living with low incomes, and I could go on. Those elected to the House of Commons do not match our communities, which means that important voices are being left out of decisions that more often than not have the biggest impact on those who were not part of the decision-making process in the first place.

● (1800)

Finally, as a result of the first-past-the-post system, we all too often see Canadians being left with no choice but to rely on what is called strategic voting. I hear from Canadians that they are strategically voting for a candidate to ensure another does not get elected, not because they believe that candidate would be the best person to represent their values, but because they do not want to see another candidate getting in.

People want to be inspired to vote for the candidate who best aligns with the vision they see for the future. They want to see their vote count. Implementing a national citizens' assembly on electoral reform offers Canadians the opportunity to ensure Canada's democracy is strong, not only by looking at how votes are counted but also by reviewing all factors that may impact our democracy, including the voting age, access to online voting and roadblocks to the full participation of Canadians.

Private Members' Business

Today is the time to see all members of this House come together and move forward with a national citizens' assembly on electoral reform. Canadians no longer trust that politicians will do what is necessary, and rightly so. Canadians watched as the Liberals campaigned in 2015 on electoral reform, promising it would be the last election using the first-past-the-post system, but this promise was clearly broken.

Since then, my colleague, the NDP MP for Elmwood—Transcona, was able to get support from members of all official parties in the last Parliament to agree to a study on electoral reform at the procedure and House affairs committee. Unfortunately, when the 2021 election was called by the Liberals, this much-needed study was not conducted. My colleague from the Green Party, the MP for Kitchener Centre, then carried the baton by bringing forward Motion No. 76, calling for a citizens' assembly on electoral reform.

When I found out I would have the opportunity to bring forward private member's business for debate, I knew carrying on this important work was the right path to take. I have had other bills and motions tabled in this House, all of which are very important, but at such a troubling time for so many, much work needs to be done. As I touched on before, we are in a housing crisis. We are losing loved ones at a tragic rate from toxic substances. Forest fires, droughts and floods are impacting us all across the country and around the world as a result of the climate crisis. Innocent civilians, including over 4,000 children, have been killed by bombs, as we speak, in Gaza. All require our immediate attention.

These are problems that require strong, honest, effective and representative leadership. In order to have that leadership, we need to strengthen our democracy.

I feel the frustrations being shared by so many Canadians. We cannot keep doing what we have always done. We cannot keep cycling through the same political parties so they have all the power, attracting the same types of candidates, making it easy for this cycle to continue with a first-past-the-post system and expecting a different result.

The decisions made today will decide all our futures and, based on what I am seeing today, whether we will have a future at all. I bring forward Motion No. 86 for debate because we need to see a Parliament that encourages collaborations, real solutions and honest debate. We need the electoral systems to work for all Canadians, not just the few elite.

Although many in this House would like to deny it, we know that lining the pockets of rich CEOs is not helping everyday people across Canada. It is time that the decisions made are reflective of the views and experiences of Canadians, not of lobbyists, who only have profits in the front of their minds. It is for all these reasons and more that I without hesitation decided to bring forward a tangible solution that can move us forward in a positive direction to begin addressing the existential threats we are faced with.

There is reason for Canadians to be optimistic. Through strengthening our democracy, Canadians can see their voices heard and can see solutions that put the planet and the people who rely on it at the forefront. With all members coming together and doing what is

right for Canadians, we can see a happier, healthier and more sustainable future.

● (1805)

I would like to share the words of Shoni Field, a member of the former British Columbia Citizens' Assembly on Electoral Reform. Ms. Field said to me, "A citizens' assembly is a critical health check for our democracy that can re-engage a distrustful electorate, renew confidence that our democracy can be both stable and responsive to a changing world and give voters hope that there can be a way for them to meaningfully engage in the political process to make our communities and country a better place." Those are strong words.

A national citizens' assembly would give Canadians the tools, through an independent, non-partisan assembly, that would provide its findings and solutions to government as the best path forward. Citizens' assemblies have been used successfully in countries around the world.

There are various forms of proportional representation, but one thing they all have in common is that voter support aligns with those who are elected. Proportional representation is used effectively in countries such as Norway, New Zealand, Switzerland, Scotland and Germany to name just a few. What we do know is that when we compare countries that use a first-past-the-post system, like Canada and the United States, to those using a system of proportional representation, we see, on average, lower income inequality, more success moving forward with necessary and real climate action and higher scores on the UN's Human Development Index that measures health, knowledge and standard of living.

I am pleased to share that Canadian citizens from all political parties are expressing support for a national citizens' assembly on electoral reform. As a matter of fact, according to a poll taken in 2022 by EKOS Research Associates and Fair Vote Canada, 76% of Canadians from all political backgrounds support this move forward. When the poll was conducted, the majority of respondents from all political parties, including Liberal, Conservative, NDP, Bloc Québécois and Green, were in favour of a national citizens' assembly on electoral reform.

We are here today because, unfortunately, we saw the Liberals run on a promise of electoral reform and then never follow through with that promise. This is an opportunity for all members of Parliament to come together to listen to Canadians across the country who are saying that now is the time for change. It is the time for us to be uniting to implement real solutions for people, because we are in very troubling times. The motion before us is more applicable now than it has ever been, because it is clear that continuing to cycle through the exact same processes that we have used in the past is not working. Therefore, it is essential that we all take the time to listen to our constituents, implement a national citizens' assembly and look at having representation that matches our communities.

With that, I hope that members of Parliament in all parties will come together to vote in favour of this motion. I look forward to answering any questions that members have.

• (1810)

Mr. Chandra Arya (Nepean, Lib.): Madam Speaker, with respect to certain remarks that the member made, both in her motion text and in her speech, she said that the low voter turnout is due to the current first-past-the-post system. In my riding of Nepean and in many other ridings in Ottawa, the turnout has been consistently about 70% in the last three elections.

The member also said that this is not a proper system for our country, but our country has been one of the best countries in the world in every single measurable index. A citizens' assembly would be an attempt at an entry through the back door into a proportional system. We have seen many countries with proportional systems, like Israel. Because of the proportional system, Israel cannot come to an agreement with Palestine. The biggest and oldest democracies in the world, like Canada, are doing well.

Ms. Lisa Marie Barron: Madam Speaker, I did not quite hear the question there, but I would be more than happy to comment on what I just heard.

First and foremost, something that I did not mention in my speech is that there was a Liberal convention recently. As members know, political parties have conventions. The Liberal members at the Liberal convention actually voted in favour of a national citizens' assembly on electoral reform. Therefore, I would ask the member to lean on his membership and perhaps move forward with what it is that his members are asking him to do.

The other thing is that, absolutely, we have a strong democracy here in Canada, but there is so much room for improvement. If we look around Parliament in the chamber today, we will see just that. We know also that out of the world's 35 most robust democracies, 25 use a proportional representation, and another six have adopted an intermediate solution. There are proportional representation systems used throughout—

The Assistant Deputy Speaker (Mrs. Carol Hughes): I have to go to other questions.

Questions and comments, the hon. member for Lanark—Frontenac—Kingston.

Mr. Scott Reid (Lanark—Frontenac—Kingston, CPC): Madam Speaker, paragraph (b) of the motion's text states that “a Canadian citizens' assembly on electoral reform” would *inter alia*:

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...reflect the diversity of the Canadian population, including a representation and meaningful participation of age groups, genders, ethnicities, languages, socioeconomic backgrounds, and geographic regions including from First Nations, Inuit and Metis peoples....

The question I have relates to how we achieve this in the context of the fact that some of these groups are demographically rather small. There are, for example, only 70,000 Inuit people in Canada. To have one Inuit person on there, it would have to have 500 members, unless it overrepresents them. This would be true for other groups as well.

How does the hon. member suggest dealing with this?

Ms. Lisa Marie Barron: Madam Speaker, first and foremost, what comes to mind is, if we look around the chamber, it does not match what we see in our communities. We know that we have over 50% women, for example, in our communities, but only 30% women in the House of Commons, which is the highest it has ever been. However, when we look on the world stage, the increase in gender parity in our House of Commons does not match the pace it is increasing across the world. We are in 58th place currently, which is very low. My hope is that we will see House of Commons representatives match our communities, which is currently what we do not have in place.

• (1815)

[Translation]

Mr. Martin Champoux (Drummond, BQ): Madam Speaker, I congratulate my colleague from Nanaimo—Ladysmith on her speech and her remarks.

I am struck by the argument that women make up about 50% of Canada's population but they are under-represented here, in the House of Commons. Although we are talking about the electoral system, I am sure that a lot of other factors play a part in the fact that women may be less interested in politics. It may be the way that we practice politics. Perhaps we should dig a little deeper, specifically to try to attract people who better represent the demographic landscape of Canada and Quebec.

I would like to know what my colleague thinks on this matter, because I am not sure that reforming the voting system alone is enough to ensure that more women or under-represented groups will end up here, in the House of Commons.

[English]

Ms. Lisa Marie Barron: Madam Speaker, absolutely, there is a lot of work that needs to happen in order to increase the number of women represented in the House of Commons. Electoral reform is one piece of that bigger parcel of solutions that need to be implemented. I am working on other components as well but, ultimately, if we look at strengthening our democracy, we will see increased gender parity and increased representation from all those who are in our communities.

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Mr. Patrick Weiler (West Vancouver—Sunshine Coast—Sea to Sky Country, Lib.): Madam Speaker, it is a pleasure to rise in the House this evening to participate in the debate on Motion No. 86, which would create a citizens' assembly on electoral reform. I am one of the 20 members who has seconded this motion. I would note that members of all parties, with the exception of the Bloc, have seconded it. I want to commend the member for Nanaimo—Ladysmith for putting this forward, as well as the member for Kitchener Centre, who put forward a motion that was nearly identical to this previously. In fact, more than three-quarters of Canadians support having a citizens' assembly on electoral reform. Importantly, 69% of the voters of every single party in Canada, any party, support this type of measure.

What is a citizens' assembly? It is a non-partisan, independent and trusted group of citizens who are selected at random. It is a group of Canadians who are broadly representative of the diversity of the population, who are given the opportunity to learn from experts on a particular topic, thoughtfully consider the options, and issue and make recommendations based on their work. This motion would task creating a citizens' assembly to review our electoral system; to investigate how it could be improved, if it could be improved at all; and then to make recommendations based on their work.

On an issue that is as fundamental as how we constitute who represents us and who gets to govern our country, it is essential that this process be free from politics and any partisan influence and interests. Political parties will be biased in any recommendation they offer. Parties such as the Conservatives, which have shown that they cannot work with other parties, will want to keep the first-past-the-post system so that they can shoot for a majority and impose their minority will on Canadians. Big tent parties such as the Liberal Party would seek some sort of a ranked ballot, so parties that appeal broadly get rewarded. Single-issue parties such as the Greens will want proportional representation, so a smaller vote share in many ridings across the country will lead to their having greater representation. We know that the NDP is in favour of mixed member proportionality, where it would be able to leverage some single-issue, single-stakeholder matters, as well as taking advantage of some regional strengths. Of course, the Bloc would likely prefer to keep the system as it is right now, as they have much greater representation than their vote share at this point.

Quite frankly, that is why none of us here are trustworthy on this matter. We would all be blindly self-interested in choosing a system that would work best for our given party. Even after a system is chosen by a citizens' assembly, it is absolutely critical that the public have the opportunity to vote for or against it in a referendum. Just as democracies have the right to vote for who represents us, we especially should have the right to vote for or against any system that would completely change this process. Otherwise, the system will not be seen to have any legitimacy. Therefore, I suggest that this be included in this motion; perhaps it can be included if this motion gets debated at committee.

Like the member who proposed this motion, I am a British Columbian who has experienced what a citizens' assembly can look like. The province launched a citizens' assembly in response to a provincial NDP victory in the 1996 election, where the NDP

formed government but only had a minority of the vote, at under 40%. In the subsequent election, the B.C. Liberals ended up winning a huge majority based on the first-past-the-post system; however, to their credit, they proceeded with moving forward on a citizens' assembly for electoral reform in 2004, despite having gotten that huge majority. I think there is much that we could learn from this process. Unfortunately, there was a citizens' assembly on electoral reform that chose a system, but when they put it to a referendum, they chose a threshold of 60% to reach, before any change could be made.

● (1820)

In this referendum, 57% ended up voting in favour of choosing single transferable votes as the new system for British Columbia, which is very significant, given that this was not a system that many Canadians or many British Columbians knew at that time.

We see similar examples at the federal level in Canada, where majority governments are delivered with about 40% of the vote. This is especially the case when we see poor voter turnout. This leaves much of the country feeling disenfranchised. It has contributed to dramatic policy shifts that we see in our country, which cause vast uncertainty and impede progress on some critical things, like on climate change. It also brings in some political risk that actually impedes business investment.

I think we can do better than this with our democracy. In fact, we must do everything we can to revitalize democracy in this country. As we see, it is under threat from foreign interference, from disinformation both foreign and domestic and also from the tactics of the Conservatives who are seen to make democracy look so ugly that people lose confidence, stay home and do not vote.

I want to recognize the work of so many advocates on this matter. In fact, I hear from my constituents frequently about electoral reform. As my constituent Erich tells me, the current voting system is “pushing people away from participating in elections, is very unhealthy for our democracy and I daresay even dangerous in this day and age of misinformation.”

Theodora says that we need this advanced so that “all people and their ideas are well included and given respect for their ideas and new, beneficial approaches.”

That is why many Canadians, including so many I have met in my riding, were swayed by the promise made in 2015, that it would be the last election held under the first-past-the-post system.

In fact, I participated in a consultation that was coordinated by the current Minister of Health, who, at the time, was the parliamentary secretary for democratic reform. I remember the consultation being robust and it definitely touched on the different positives and negatives of different political systems. I thought it was very well done.

While the government of the day made some very important advances in improving our democracy, particularly with delivering an independent Senate, I was disappointed that the decision to pursue electoral reform was not followed through because there was not consensus at the time.

I do believe that the system was, in fact, doomed to failure from the beginning. Frankly, we should be grateful that the decision to move ahead with a system like ranked ballot was not chosen by the government and instituted before the next election. It would not have allowed for an unbiased decision and it would not have given the choice for people to choose one political system or another for elections. I believe that campaign promise was actually the wrong one.

It is not just me. The Prime Minister, in a question and answer period in my riding earlier this year, said that not acting on electoral reform was one of the things that he regretted most.

This represents an opportunity to change that. My hope is that this motion will pass and that a citizens' assembly would be launched as soon as possible. Frankly, it would not likely be able to be launched before the spring of next year. I would like to see a citizens' assembly be formed and for it to have a mandate to undertake a study and deliver it by early 2025.

Assuming that there is an election in September 2025, it would be possible to align the election vote with the referendum vote on any change that is recommended by such a body, to change the electoral system.

That way, with regard to the 2025 electoral votes, parties would have the opportunity to decide whether they commit to change the electoral system for the following election.

I believe that setting it up in this timeline would allow enough time for Canadians to learn about the changes that are proposed. The government should also provide resources for third parties to educate Canadians about the chosen system so that they are properly informed.

Importantly, I believe that a referendum on any change that is proposed should be set at a threshold of 50% plus one vote.

• (1825)

Mr. Scott Reid (Lanark—Frontenac—Kingston, CPC): Madam Speaker, I rise today to address Motion No. 86. Knowing the sincerity and good will with which this motion was put forward by the member for Nanaimo—Ladysmith, it pains me to have to vote against it. I will devote my remarks to explaining the reasons why I will be doing so.

Motion No. 86 proposes to create a citizens' assembly on electoral reform. A citizens' assembly is an ad hoc assembly of people selected by lottery from the general population, much as a jury is selected. Its ephemeral nature, in that it is called together to deal with a single matter and then disperses, is also similar to a jury. The purpose of this citizens' assembly, as the text of the motion explains, is to, "Determine if electoral reform is recommended for Canada, and, if so, recommend specific measures that would foster a healthier democracy."

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This proposal is half right, but it is also half wrong. Specifically, I agree that a citizens' assembly can play a useful role in designing what Motion No. 86 refers to as "specific measures". More precisely, a citizens' assembly can engage in the detailed design of one or more electoral systems, which could then be offered as alternatives to Canada's status quo first-past-the-post electoral system.

However, I disagree with the motion in that I believe it is not appropriate to ask a citizens' assembly to "determine if electoral reform is recommended for Canada". Canadians, themselves, should make this determination, and they should do so via referendum.

I would have been much happier if the motion had explicitly stated that the role of a citizens' assembly is to propose one or more alternative electoral systems for Canadians to vote on in a referendum. Citizens' assemblies have been used twice in Canada for the purpose of designing electoral systems: once in British Columbia in 2004 and once in Ontario in 2006. On both occasions, the resulting proposal was submitted to the voters for final approval in referendums.

However, Motion No. 86 does not contain any reference to a referendum, and given how the NDP strenuously objected to any referendum when electoral reform was being seriously considered back in 2016, I worry that, if I were to vote in favour of Motion No. 86, I would subsequently be told that I had approved a process under which the citizens' assembly would determine the outcome, as opposed to merely proposing potential outcomes.

As well, it would be unhelpful to have a citizens' assembly that provides merely a general outline of the electoral systems it is proposing, as appears to be advocated here, with the expectation that parliamentarians would then fill in the details later on.

We all know the old saying that the devil is in the details, and by necessity, any proportional or preferential electoral system contains enough details to hide a considerable amount of devilry, which could have the effect of producing an electoral outcome very different from what the voters had thought they were buying into.

There is no need to repeat, in this anticipated future process, a version of what happened in the 2015 election, when voters naively supported an electoral promise by the current Prime Minister, the then leader of an opposition party, that the election then under way would be the last to be held under the first-past-the-post system, only to learn, after it was too late to retract their votes, that the only alternative to the status quo that the new Prime Minister was willing to consider was a preferential ballot, a system which would, very predictably, have greatly enhanced the electoral success of a centrist party such as the Liberals.

This kind of bait and switch could be carried out, although admittedly at a less Wagnerian level, with the details of an assembly-approved proposal being proffered without spelling out the details, an option such as multi-member proportionality.

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To get the idea of just how much variation there can be within the umbrella term “multi-member proportionality”, I invite colleagues to peruse pages 84 to 94 of the report of the House of Commons Special Committee on Electoral Reform, which provide details of some of the potential variations under that rubric that could produce meaningfully different implications.

To be clear, it would not be the members of the citizens' assembly who would engage in this sleight of hand. It would be us, the politicians, sorting out the details after the assembly has done its work. The only solution is to leave no drafting work to be done by the politicians after the approval process. My view is that a citizens' assembly could make a useful contribution if it is utilized at an early stage of a consultation process that culminates in a referendum.

The citizens' assembly should take place at a stage that is roughly analogous to the committee stage in the normal parliamentary legislative process. It is at this point in the process that the assembly could engage in the detailed work of designing alternatives to the status quo or in reviewing and approving designs prepared by subject matter experts.

• (1830)

As an ad hoc body whose membership is composed of non-politicians who have no partisan interest to defend, the citizens' assembly is likely to put forward models for potential approval that will transparently not contain hidden elements that benefit this political party or that political party. However, it is the referendum itself that is the essential backstop preventing any attempts at manipulation from ultimately succeeding. It is not enough to rely upon the citizens' assembly alone, and it would be perverse to regard the work of the assembly as being so morally prescriptive as to require Parliament to simply enact that which has been determined by the assembly. Only a referendum can give this kind of moral weight.

There are several ways of conducting such a referendum. Based on the history of the past 20 years, it would seem that a referendum structured as a preferential ballot, in which voters rank the various options designed by a citizens' assembly, is the likeliest to produce a mandate for changing away from first past the post. However, such a result will not be legitimate unless first past the post is one of the options on that referendum ballot. This was the process used in Prince Edward Island for a referendum that took place in 2019. P.E.I.'s 2019 referendum was one of seven referenda on the subject of electoral reform that have taken place in this country over the past two decades, with a mixed record of success.

It might be helpful for me to devote my remaining time to running through the results of all of these referenda.

In British Columbia, voters have cast ballots in three referenda on whether or not to adopt a new electoral system. The first of B.C.'s three referenda took place in 2005, and 57.6% of participating voters supported the adoption of an electoral system known as single transferrable vote, or STV. The STV model had been designed a year prior to the referendum by an ad hoc group known as the B.C. Citizens' Assembly on Electoral Reform. I suspect that the 2004 B.C. Citizens' Assembly is probably the inspiration for the one proposed in the motion we are debating today.

However, the new electoral system was not adopted into law in consequence of a provision in the province's electoral law requiring any referendum measure to win a supermajority of at least 60% in order to be adopted. Therefore, to deal with this troubling result, a second referendum was held in 2009 on the very same STV electoral system versus the status quo, but this time only 39% of voters supported the single transferrable vote system. There was a very similar voter turnout in both referenda, 2.8 million votes in the first versus 2.9 million cast in the second, so the only possible explanation for this change is that over the course of four years, voters had cooled to this option.

In 2018, a third referendum was held. This time, there were two questions on the ballot. First, voters were given a choice between changing to a new electoral system or sticking with the status quo, and second, voters were asked to rank three alternative electoral systems. This two-question structure was designed to ensure that in the event of a vote in favour of change, even voters who supported the status quo would have an equal voice in choosing the new system. It was anticipated by many observers, me included, that a two-question ballot would result in a higher percentage of voters feeling comfortable with changing to the new system and therefore voting yes to change. However, the opposite happened and less than 39% of voters voted for change.

In P.E.I., voters have cast ballots in three referenda on adopting a new electoral system. The first of these referenda, held in 2005, showed change being firmly rejected. Only 36% of participating voters endorsed the alternative proposal. Provincial leaders concluded from this experience that in any simple head-to-head popularity contest between the status quo and any particular alternative, the new alternative is at a disadvantage because advocates of different new alternatives, who might not much care for the status quo, will nonetheless vote for it in the hope that in a later contest, they will be able to get their own preferred system set in place.

A second referendum was held in 2016, with voters being asked to rank four options, including the status quo and three alternatives. The result would indicate this worked out very well for the designers of the referendum, as 52.4% of participating voters endorsed a new system. However, this did not lead to P.E.I.'s system changing, because only 37% of voters actually cast ballots, which cast legitimacy on this very small majority. P.E.I. normally has a very high voter turnout, around 80%, so the premier decided it would make sense to have another referendum. This was done and it produced a much lower result, with just under half of voters endorsing a new system.

There was also a referendum in Ontario in 2007. This followed a convention of the sort discussed in this motion, but it nonetheless failed, which means there is no guarantee of success just because we tried to use a citizens' assembly.

• (1835)

[Translation]

Mr. Martin Champoux (Drummond, BQ): Madam Speaker, I want to applaud Motion No. 86, moved by our NDP colleague from Nanaimo—Ladysmith.

It is an interesting motion. This is not the first time that proposals to reform the electoral system have appeared on the political landscape, whether at the provincial government level, in Quebec, or here in the House of Commons. We rarely see these reform projects accomplish anything, and the reason is simple. It requires a little something that is often lacking in politics: courage.

It is clear that our electoral system inevitably favours the party that wins the election. Consequently, the party that wins an election thanks to this system is unlikely to announce that it will immediately change the system for the better, switching to a formula that may put it at a disadvantage in future elections. We saw a bit of that in 2015 when the Liberals came to power, saying that the country had just seen the last election with this first-past-the-post voting system and that they were going to reform it. The government held consultations and received a report afterwards. It did not take long for the government to install a brand new shelf to toss the report on and forget about it.

I find it very interesting that this is being proposed today, and that we have the opportunity to debate it. I hope that members will have a little more courage this time and that we will heed this call. Many groups and communities in Quebec and Canada have been calling for this for one very simple reason: Many citizens, many voters, do not feel properly represented. That is true. As the mover of the motion pointed out earlier, only 30% of those elected to the House of Commons are women, even though we know that the proportion of women in Canada's population is much higher than that, probably around 50%. There are reasons for this. Obviously, this is not just about the voting system.

As long as we are opening up the debate and studying the issue, we must also ask ourselves some other questions. We have to take a long, hard look in the mirror and ask ourselves how we are engaging in politics. Is our system still suited to life in 2023, 2024, 2030 and beyond? Perhaps we could look at how debates are conducted. Perhaps we could examine whether time is being used effectively in the House of Commons. I fully support having a citizens' assembly to review the electoral system, but at the same time, let us have a citizens' assembly to hold consultations on how we should engage in politics.

I will give the example of young people. It is nothing new that young people are not interested in politics, but they are getting less and less interested and that is no small thing. We must be doing something wrong. There must be something we could do better to ensure that young people are better represented in politics at every level. A citizen's assembly that would look at the issue and focus on listening and coming up with solutions would certainly be beneficial. This would be a way of making politics more interesting and attractive to groups of people who are currently not interested because they do not relate to or are concerned about the debates being held and because these debates are not properly communicated to

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them. This breeds cynicism and we all end up paying the price, because in a democracy there is nothing worse than cynicism.

That is why the Bloc Québécois is going to vote in favour of Motion No. 86. It may not be perfect, but it will start a debate, a discussion, that I think will be highly beneficial. Of course, as soon as the consultation ends and the report is presented in the House, we must not rush to put this report on the shelf right beside the one produced in 2016. We would be making the same mistake twice. It would be a terrible shame to repeat this mistake time and time again simply because we lack the courage to undertake a major reform of our existing system.

A while ago I was talking about young people's disengagement from politics. That bothers me, and I am sure it bothers every one of my colleagues in the House. In fact, when we meet with young people in our ridings, we see something different; we see that they are interested in politics. They are interested in all kinds of issues, like social inequality, the environment, the homelessness crisis, the current housing crisis and problems related to our health care systems.

• (1840)

Young people are wondering what kind of society we are leaving for them. They say they are going to be stuck with a great big mess when it is time for them to take the reins, and they are absolutely right. They take a stand and often make their voices heard at demonstrations. When I meet these young people and hear their comments and concerns, I tell them straightaway that they are being political. They are taking a political stance. They tell me that no matter how much they complain and want to change things, the current political system means that things will not change. They really feel that the system will not do anything to help them fulfill their dreams or implement the changes they would like to see in society for their own future.

This idea of holding consultations to ask people how they see things and how we can get them interested in getting more involved so that there will one day be better representation of all the different communities here in the House of Commons, as well as in other legislatures across Canada and Quebec, is a golden opportunity. I am very hopeful that some of the things in the motion will come to fruition once we get to the committee stage.

Earlier, during the speech of my colleague from West Vancouver—Sunshine Coast—Sea to Sky Country, a riding whose name I love to say, I believe I heard him say that the Liberals are going to support Motion No. 86. I am happy about that because it shows that we are going to end up in committee discussing, debating and improving it. There are certainly a number of things that will need to be clarified. I am very happy to see that, again, we are acknowledging that the participation of the first nations will be necessary during this consultation. However, I think we will need to take into account the characteristics of Quebec. Not every voting system will ensure that Quebec's specificity is protected and will allow Quebec to be well represented in a model like the ones that might be proposed.

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These are things we will certainly have an opportunity to discuss in committee. I am confident that common sense will prevail and that, when all is said and done, we will end up with a process that benefits democracy. Let us hope so. Maybe I am a bit of an idealist or over-optimistic. I get called out on that sometimes. I may have a natural inclination to see the world through rose-coloured glasses, but I think this process could really generate more public interest in what we do here. I sincerely hope so.

I hope that this motion will be adopted. I am confident that it will. Once the recommendations have been presented following the consultations, I hope that the government in power at the time will have the courage to implement them. I hope that this common-sense initiative will see the light of day thanks to the courage of the politicians who are in the House of Commons on that day.

● (1845)

[English]

Mr. Daniel Blaikie (Elmwood—Transcona, NDP): Madam Speaker, I want to start by saying a big thanks to the member for Nanaimo—Ladysmith. Electoral reform is an important issue in Canada and it is important we keep it an issue on Parliament Hill. By choosing to move ahead with this motion, the member for Nanaimo—Ladysmith has caused us to be talking about it on the floor of the House and brought it to the attention of all members.

That is something the Prime Minister was hoping would not happen after he crassly broke his promise after throwing out a great set of recommendations by a special committee on parliamentary reform that was set up, notwithstanding the fact it was a majority government at that time, on a proportional basis. Opposition parties at that time came together in a way the government frankly did not expect and did find a path forward for electoral reform, one the government quickly threw in the bin.

I do not want to repeat all the arguments I have made elsewhere on the record and the member for Nanaimo—Ladysmith eloquently made today about the nature of representation in Parliament, which is surely a very important argument. She presented some facts and figures about the ways that Canadians are not adequately represented, whether it is women or different racial minorities in Canada. People living with disabilities are not adequately represented in the chamber. She also talked about some of the disillusionment with politics that is occurring and a sense by people that their vote does not really count, or that they have to vote against what they do not want instead of voting for what they do want.

Those are all themes that, as people who knock on doors and talk to people about political engagement, we are very aware of. It is not a limited phenomenon in Canada. It is one of the reasons voter engagement is going down in Canada instead of up, as people feel more alienated from the system. Surely, the Prime Minister breaking what was a very clear promise in the 2015 election was an important moment for many Canadians, and unfortunately, not a positive one. It was not one that drew people to politics. It was not one that caused people to feel that when politicians make promises and rally behind them there is the promised outcome on the other end of that.

That is why it is important now to put the emphasis on a citizens' assembly, because there is a fair amount of broken trust, a trust the

Prime Minister himself is responsible for having broken. It was not just once, though. It was not just after the 2015 election and the subsequent report by the special committee and the crass kind of dismissal of that report. He did it again recently after Liberal Party members passed a resolution at their own convention calling for an examination of the electoral process and a move away from the first-past-the-post system.

The Prime Minister came out the very next day to talk about this. The convention was not even over and he was already talking about how that would not proceed and there was no consensus. It is very easy to stand up and say there is no consensus when one is the person who is getting in the way of there being a consensus.

Opposition parties, in the 42nd Parliament, showed that even between parties as disparate and which disagree even on the matter of electoral reform to the extent Conservatives, the Bloc, New Democrats and Greens sometimes do disagree on these matters, and if we each were able to pick our ideal system it probably would not be the same system, we nevertheless worked together to form a majority consensus on that committee.

Opposition parties in Canada showed very clearly where there is a will there is a way. The person who has been standing in the way of that consensus, and the only reason there is not a consensus on how to move forward, is the Prime Minister. He has refused to accept the consensus other parties have shown that they are able to come to in order to move forward on this most important issue.

Why is it that the Prime Minister says there should be no consensus? Why is it he does not agree? It is because he says that proportional representation is divisive. Let us take a look at what the first-past-the-post system has created in this place. Is it a place of unity? Is it a place of respectful discourse? No, it is a place of incredible division, where we are routinely saturated with misrepresentations like, for instance, that there is an NDP-Liberal coalition.

There is a supply and confidence agreement. It is published online. Anyone who wants the details of that can go online; it is a fully transparent document. We have shown time and time again, whether it is on a public inquiry on foreign interference or just recently on the Conservatives' own carbon tax motion, we are prepared to disagree with the government and not support it on important issues of the day. Why? It is because we are not the government. We are not a part of that government.

● (1850)

We are willing to work with the government on issues like dental care and increasing funding for housing, and a number of other things that are in the supply and confidence agreement, which Canadians right now who are watching can google and read online. That much is true.

Do the Conservatives say in French that there is an NDP-Liberal coalition? Not any more, because it does not suit their political interests. Instead, they say that there is a Liberal-Bloc coalition.

[Translation]

When members are speaking English, they often call it an NDP-Liberal coalition. When they are speaking French, they call it a Bloc-Liberal coalition. Which is it? It has to be one or the other if we are talking about a government made up of two political parties.

[English]

However, the truth is that it is neither. The Bloc is not in a coalition with the government, and we are not in a coalition with the government. We just voted with the Conservatives again on an important issue of the day: expanding the pause on the carbon tax to avoid regional division within the carbon pricing system. Is that a Conservative-NDP coalition? It is not, but I suppose we could call it that.

Thus, there is a Liberal-NDP coalition and there is a Conservative-NDP coalition. There is a Bloc-Liberal coalition, and I have seen the Bloc vote with the Conservatives; surely that is a coalition, so I guess there is a Conservative-Bloc coalition. I watched, on an important matter of democracy that had to do with abuses of confidences and prorogation in the House, the Liberals and Conservatives stand up together to maintain the power of the Prime Minister to shut this place down. That was a Liberal-Conservative coalition, I guess. We just call it a coalition any time parties happen to agree on any issue. When I voted in Parliament with the Conservatives on Bill C-2 to disallow the wage subsidy to companies that were paying dividends, perhaps that was a coalition. When I worked with the member for Sarnia—Lambton on important pension reform, and the Bloc was part of that, I suppose that was a coalition. Who is running the country? It depends I guess what vote one decides to use to evaluate who is running the country.

My point in all of this is that the first-past-the-post system sure as heck has not created a more unified body politic. It has not stopped division; in fact, it has encouraged it, because of what motivates the dishonest portrayal of the confidence and supply agreement between the NDP and Liberals, or sometimes the Bloc and the Liberals, as I said, if one is speaking in French. It depends on the day. The Conservative leader, of course, is not who he says he is. He is one guy in French and another guy in English. Never mind; there are other examples but I will not go on, because I want to bring it back to the motion.

The fact of the matter is that Conservatives are misrepresenting the truth on any day of the week, because they are chasing 40% of the vote. It is because we have an electoral system in this country where one can fight tooth and nail, and not to win the hearts and minds of the majority of Canadians, but just to get 40% or even 39% of the vote of Canadians. These are Canadians who, despite being disgusted with the state of political discourse, still show up to vote. However, if one can get 39% of those votes, and if one can use dishonesty and other misrepresentation to drive well-meaning Canadians away from polling stations, then one can get 100% of the power with just 39% of the votes.

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The culprit in all of this is the Prime Minister, who refuses to accept that our voting system encourages division. It is simply untrue to say that a proportional system would sow more division and discontent than we see in our current system. We could not pack more into an electoral system in terms of division and nasty politics than we are seeing in Canadian politics today. Yes, the Conservative leader is responsible for his fair share of that, but the motion before us is one of the things that we could do structurally in order to encourage better behaviour and more collaboration between parties despite the fact that they disagree. I am proud of the fact that New Democrats have been modelling collaboration with both the Liberals and the Conservatives, depending on the issue. We want a system that encourages that, rather than one that encourages the opposite.

I think we have a lot of evidence to say that preserving the current voting system is not standing up against divisive, nasty politics. In Canada today, it is precisely the opposite, which is why we should support the motion from the member for Nanaimo—Ladysmith.

• (1855)

The Assistant Deputy Speaker (Mrs. Carol Hughes): The time provided for the consideration of Private Members' Business has now expired and the order is dropped to the bottom of the order of precedence on the Order Paper.

ADJOURNMENT PROCEEDINGS

A motion to adjourn the House under Standing Order 38 deemed to have been moved.

[English]

CARBON PRICING

Mr. Dan Mazier (Dauphin—Swan River—Neepawa, CPC): Madam Speaker, over the last eight years, the Prime Minister told Canadians that if they just paid the costly carbon tax, the NDP-Liberal government would meet their environmental targets. Today, the environment commissioner revealed that, despite the punishing carbon tax, the Liberals will fail to achieve their own emission targets. After eight years under the Prime Minister, it is all pain and no gain. If the Liberals are forcing Canadians to pay their costly carbon tax, Canadians should know how many emissions it will reduce.

My question is simple: How many emissions have been directly reduced from the carbon tax? I just want the number.

Mr. Adam van Koevorden (Parliamentary Secretary to the Minister of Environment and Climate Change and to the Minister of Sport and Physical Activity, Lib.): Madam Speaker, I appreciate the question from my hon. colleague, although I reject the premise. Climate change is real, and it is having really devastating impacts in Canada. Again this year, communities across our country were severely impacted by catastrophic storms, wildfires and floods. In fact, 2023 has indeed been the hottest year on record.

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Some hon. members: Oh, oh!

Mr. Adam van Koeverden: Madam Speaker, regardless of how loudly the Conservatives would like to yell at me, climate change is indeed—

The Assistant Deputy Speaker (Mrs. Carol Hughes): I just want to remind members that these are the late shows, so there is only an opportunity to speak by the person raising the question and the member of the government who is actually going to respond. I would ask members to be respectful and not interrupt.

The hon. parliamentary secretary.

Mr. Adam van Koeverden: Madam Speaker, 2023 saw the worst wildfire season on Canadian record. It was also the hottest and driest year ever on record, leading to hundreds of thousands of Canadians being evacuated from their homes. It is our firm belief that decisive actions need to be taken in order to mitigate these impacts and better protect our environment and communities for generations to come.

In the face of that, the Conservatives still stand in the House every day and refuse to even acknowledge the human contributions of climate change. Their only contribution to this conversation is that they think we should get rid of carbon pricing in this country. Fortunately, that remains an efficient way to combat climate change, and pollution pricing is, in fact, working. Contrary to what the hon. member said, Canada's emissions have dropped by 6% since 2005. Now, they often also say that we have missed every target. However, the first target is in 2030, and we are on the path to reach that target. We need to move faster, in fact, to meet it.

I know one thing for sure: If we stop pricing carbon, if we stop pricing pollution, if we do not put a cap on oil and gas emissions, then there is no chance we will reach those targets.

Our system encourages innovation, reduces emissions and promotes greener behaviour. What is more, it gives Canadian households flexibility. It gives businesses opportunities to decide how and when they want to make those changes.

Another thing that the Conservatives always avoid talking about is our rebate program. I would encourage anybody watching to look at their bank account statements from October 13; if they are in a province whose premier does not have a plan to fight climate change, then they will be subject to the federal backstop program. On October 13, they would have received one of their quarterly payments for the climate action incentive program.

Experts agree that this form of carbon pricing is the best way to get results and lower our emissions. Since 2005, despite 10 years of Harper's inaction on climate change and even refusal to accept that it existed or admit that human activity was causing it, we have seen a 6% reduction in our emissions. That has largely been since 2015.

I would like to continue to remind the opposition that our pollution pricing system is providing more money back to the majority of households than it costs them. With the pollution pricing rebates in provinces where the federal system applies, a family of four can now receive payments of up to \$1,500 a year under our plan.

When it comes to our government's decision to temporarily pause the carbon price on deliveries of home heating oil, we did

that because it is the most expensive form of home heating. We want to make sure that we are working with those families to get them off home heating oil and on to a heat pump, which is an efficient electric way of heating one's home. It reduces emissions. However, for the 1.3 million households across the country that rely on home heating oil, it is also extremely costly.

● (1900)

Mr. Dan Mazier: Madam Speaker, the Liberals did not answer my question. The question is very simple, so I will ask it again.

How many emissions have been directly reduced exclusively from the carbon tax, just a number?

Mr. Adam van Koeverden: Madam Speaker, here we go. Conservatives are pretending as if a carbon tax is going to stop a hurricane in its tracks. That is the type of rhetoric we hear from these Conservatives: How many hurricanes has this carbon tax reduced; how many emissions; how many tonnes of carbon has the tax removed from the environment? Obviously, the members opposite are unwilling to do a bit of reading to inform themselves or look up a climatologist or economist who works on these types of things.

Economists around the world are unanimous that if we want to fight climate change we have to price carbon. We have to put a price on pollution to reduce our emissions.

I will say again very clearly, because the member opposite was looking for a number, that it is 6%. The goal is between 35% and 40%, so we have a lot more work to do. We have to reduce those emissions and we have seven years to do.

I know one thing for sure, laughing about it and pretending it does not exist—

The Assistant Deputy Speaker (Mrs. Carol Hughes): The hon. member for Renfrew—Nipissing—Pembroke.

CARBON PRICING

Mrs. Cheryl Gallant (Renfrew—Nipissing—Pembroke, CPC): Madam Speaker, after eight years, this tired NDP-Liberal government has become increasingly desperate. The Prime Minister has come to resemble one of those wacky, waving, inflatable tube guys outside car dealerships. His hands flail about as the political winds push him around randomly.

Year after year, the Prime Minister has claimed that if he did not punish low-income Canadians with higher energy prices, it would lead to the extinction of the human race. In reality, his regressive carbon tax has become a meteor headed for the Liberal Party. That is the only reasonable explanation Canadians can take away from the decision to cut the carbon tax on home heating oil. He only cares about the survival of the Liberal Party.

Canadians can see through the Liberal talking points and simplistic slogans. They know the Prime Minister is being inauthentic when he talks about affordability. Even the Liberals know it. Why else would the former parliamentary secretary provide fake numbers to this House about the cost of the Prime Minister's third family vacation in a year?

What is even more remarkable is that the Liberals knew what the impact of bringing in the carbon tax and carbon tax 2 would mean for Canadians struggling to put food on the table. They knew it and they did it anyhow. These Liberal ministers knew it would hurt Atlantic Canadians. They spelled it out in black and white. I know because I quoted it back to them.

This is what I said during an adjournment debate one year ago

The Liberals' new fuel standards regulations clearly state that the cost will be borne disproportionately by rural Atlantic Canadians, yet Liberals claim that nobody uses home heating oil any more. The Liberals are clearly gaslighting Atlantic Canadians, then charging them a carbon tax on that same gas.

Before any of the Liberals get up to spread more misinformation, I challenge them to read their own regulatory analysis. This is not Conservatives saying it, and it is not the Parliamentary Budget Officer. These are the Liberal government's own words. It said:

It is estimated that provinces in Atlantic Canada would be more negatively affected by the proposed Regulations. This is largely because the Atlantic Provinces use more [light fuel oil] for home heating than other provinces.

It later said:

This may be most acute for seniors living in the Atlantic provinces, where they account for a higher share of the total population compared to other Canadian provinces and are also more likely to experience some of the highest energy expenditures in Canada proportional to income.

The NDP-Liberal government knew the second carbon tax would hammer Atlantic Canada. The radical socialist environment minister knew his policy would hurt seniors on fixed incomes. He knew his policy would hurt lower-income Canadians. He knew it and he did it anyway. What did he do when the price of energy shot up in Atlantic Canada this summer? He claimed that this was all the fault of the companies and not his carbon tax and clean fuel regulations. It is another example of Liberal gaslighting, except this time it was the Liberal caucus who were taken for a ride.

The environment minister has known for years that his energy regulations would hammer Atlantic Canadians. He knew the costs would be passed onto consumers. He knew it and he pushed them through anyhow.

The socialist environment minister has devoted his entire life to putting his radical vision for the environment ahead of people. At least he is honest about it. What excuse do the Liberal caucus and the parliamentary secretary have for adopting this regressive policy?

• (1905)

Mr. Adam van Koeverden (Parliamentary Secretary to the Minister of Environment and Climate Change and to the Minister of Sport and Physical Activity, Lib.): Madam Speaker, I do not even know where to start with the only MP who voted against the Paris Agreement. She always has more climate denial and conspiracy theories in this House than I can handle.

I would remind the members opposite that they all ran on a similar plan in 2021 to price carbon. In fact, the Tories reprimanded the

member of the Conservative caucus over her comments on climate change. The Conservative Party told the media that the member was told to take down videos from her YouTube channel that were spouting those conspiracy theories—

An hon. member: Oh, oh!

The Assistant Deputy Speaker (Mrs. Carol Hughes): Order. The hon. member had an opportunity to ask her question. She is going to have an opportunity to respond. I would ask her to wait until then.

The hon. parliamentary secretary.

Mr. Adam van Koeverden: Madam Speaker, the member continues to yell that it is a big conspiracy and it is censorship to tell her to take those videos down. I did not tell her to take those videos down. The Conservative Party told her to take her videos down because they were full of nonsense, misinformation and conspiracy theories about climate lockdowns and about governments that were going to put into place certain restrictions, like those imposed by COVID-19.

It is like the member gets all of her news from the National Enquirer and brings it into this House to spread misinformation and disinformation throughout her riding. It is extremely disappointing. However, this is not the first time we have heard blatant climate denial from the member. I hope for the sake of her caucus that they ask her, as they did in 2021, when they all ran on a plan to price carbon, to maybe tone the rhetoric, conspiracy theories and climate denial a bit, because as the member for Wellington—Halton Hills has stated, no party without a viable climate plan to reduce emissions is ever going to get elected. I could not agree more.

Like the member opposite, a lot of my community members use home heating oil in order to heat their homes. It is akin to using coal. These products were used in the 1800s to heat homes, and we can do a lot better in 2023. Rural Ontarians will hopefully get a deal from Premier Ford whereby we can help subsidize their home heating through a heat pump, which is an efficient way to heat a home. It is an effective way to heat a home. It also drastically reduces emissions.

The members opposite continue to yell at me that I do not work in the cold, but it is not true. It gets cold where I live, and I use a heat pump that works just fine. There are also cold-adjusted ones that use a mix of various technologies, which I would say is the only word the Conservatives have used to describe their climate policy. They say they are just going to use technology to drive down all emissions, and they are going to meet some fictitious target with the kind of technology we have invested in, like carbon capture, use and storage.

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The Conservatives do not have a plan to fight climate change. They have absolutely no leadership in their party. They have stopped talking about climate change altogether, and it is really disappointing.

As to affordability, the vast majority of those living in provinces like Ontario, where the member and I are both from, who go about their lives and pay the price on pollution receive a rebate. I would encourage anybody who is curious about that rebate to check their bank statement from October 13. They will see one of their four quarterly amounts, with up to \$244 for a family of four, which is \$946, if my math is correct. That is part of the rebate program.

The Conservatives will never talk about it, because they do not want to accept that our program, which is a consumer-based revenue-neutral program, is better than theirs. If members recall, in their 2021 election platform, they had some sort of Zellers-style catalogue, and people could choose something from it, like a bike or another green product. That would not work and that is why they did not win that election. As the member for—

• (1910)

The Assistant Deputy Speaker (Mrs. Carol Hughes): The hon. member for Renfrew—Nipissing—Pembroke.

Mrs. Cheryl Gallant: Madam Speaker, none of my YouTube videos were taken down. That is more misinformation from the Liberals.

After eight years, Canadians know the truth. Higher prices are the official government policy for the NDP-Liberal government. The goal of the carbon tax is to make energy unaffordable.

The environment minister says they have to make energy more expensive so they can reach net zero by 2050. It is the same minister who says that we need a mandatory target of cutting 30% of nitrogen emissions from fertilizer by 2030. It is the same minister who worked with the Communists to control China by setting a land grab target of 30% by 2030. It is the same minister who set an electric vehicle sales target of 30% by 2030.

He wants energy to be more expensive. He wants food to be more expensive. He wants land to be more expensive. He wants cars to be more expensive. The Prime Minister who appointed the Liberal minister is just not worth the cost.

Mr. Adam van Koeverden: Madam Speaker, this denial is beyond just climate change denial. The member was indeed instructed to take videos off of her YouTube feed, and she did take those videos down. There was one, a particularly disgusting video the member put up, that included an image of the Prime Minister with a noose around his neck.

The member opposite can continue to yell and bring into the House news that is not even fit for the National Enquirer. It is a challenge that we all have to face in this place, that some people are elected on the basis of their misinformation, disinformation and tabloid-style campaigns.

I was heartened to see that Erin O'Toole, in the last election campaign, told his Conservative caucus that, if they do not get on board with fighting climate change, they are not welcome in their caucus. I guess they showed him because, as soon as they did not get elect-

ed, they showed somebody who is willing to talk about climate change the door.

CARBON PRICING

Mr. Warren Steinley (Regina—Lewvan, CPC): Madam Speaker, it is a pleasure to join in and try to get some answers for the question I asked the Minister of Energy and Natural Resources last week. I am happy that the parliamentary secretary is here because he has said a few things tonight that I would really like to delve into. We will do just the facts if he is okay with that, and if he can manage to answer some things straightforwardly.

One is that they have always said that the carbon tax, after eight long years of this NDP-Liberal government, was an environmental plan. They have also said that the carbon tax is revenue-neutral. They have also said that eight out of 10 Canadians get more money back, which the Parliamentary Budget Officer has said is not true. He said that 60% of Canadians get less money back after they pay the carbon tax. That is what the Parliamentary Budget Officer has said about their carbon tax plan.

If the carbon tax was revenue-neutral and was an environmental plan, why was there the flip-flop last week? Why do they now say that they had to exempt home heating oil from the carbon tax as an affordability measure?

Both of those statements cannot be true. It is impossible. The carbon tax cannot be revenue-neutral and eight out of 10 Canadians, as they falsely claim, get more money back if they have to flip-flop with what they say is a nationwide program to say, with their NDP colleagues, that they need to do this as an affordability measure. I would love to hear from the parliamentary secretary if he can square the circle that this is an affordability measure now. It is actually impossible. Everyone across Canada knows this, and 3% of Canadians now get an exemption from the carbon tax, while 97% do not.

They have said, all week, that this is a nationwide exemption. It is not true. Most of these exemptions are where the Prime Minister was getting decimated in the polls, in Atlantic Canada, and the Liberals are desperate to stop the bleeding in their polling numbers. This flip-flop had nothing to do with environmental science and everything to do with political science. I am excited to hear the answers to a few of these questions.

While I am on the topic, he is talking about the carbon tax being an environmental policy, which we all know is not true, as it is a tax policy, because, today, the environment commissioner said that, with their carbon tax as their flagship policy, they will not meet one environmental target they have made. They will not make their emissions target by 2030.

His good friend, the member for Whitby, said that Canadians will feel pain because of this carbon tax. They were exactly right. They felt the pain with zero environmental gain, and two million people in this country line up at a food bank every month. That is their record. I would love to see how the carbon tax can be an environmental plan when it is actually a tax plan, which is revenue-neutral, but they had to flip-flop to make sure it is now an affordability measure. Could he please explain that to Canadians because I cannot?

• (1915)

Mr. Adam van Koeverden (Parliamentary Secretary to the Minister of Environment and Climate Change and to the Minister of Sport and Physical Activity, Lib.): Madam Speaker, I can tell that the member opposite cannot explain to his constituents concepts like a market-based instrument or how a revenue-neutral carbon pricing scheme works, because he cannot explain it in the House, and he could not explain it at the doors in 2021 when he ran for the Conservative Party. Therefore, allow me to.

Yes, indeed, our carbon pricing plan is revenue-neutral. That means that all of the money that comes in from the carbon tax, as the member would like to call it, goes back to families in our communities. In fact, a family of four in Saskatchewan will receive \$1,360. That is a number they will not see in an email that the member has sent to a constituent. He will not remind them that it is a revenue-neutral program. He will not say that they are actually getting a refund or a rebate every single year, and that it is tax-free.

The reason that the price is on pollution is that Saskatchewan, like some other provinces, continues to use coal to generate all of its electricity. Therefore, even if someone is using an electric car or a heat pump, unfortunately a lot of their electricity is still coming from coal. In 2005, Ontario also generated a lot of electricity using coal, and, like Saskatchewan, it had a lot of smog days. There are smog days in Saskatchewan now, and a lot of it has to do with burning coal. Coal is bad for the environment and it is bad for our health.

Some hon. members: Oh, oh!

The Assistant Deputy Speaker (Mrs. Carol Hughes): I want to remind members that if they do not have the floor, they need to listen. If they have anything to say, unfortunately they are not going to be able to participate, except for the hon. member who asked the question, who will have the floor. I ask members to please be respectful.

The hon. parliamentary secretary.

Mr. Adam van Koeverden: Madam Speaker, I will say it again: The rebate of \$1,360 is what families of four in Saskatchewan receive through the climate action rebate.

The member might wave his hands and say that is just hogwash. Two members from Saskatchewan are now waving their hands at me as if \$1,360 were irrelevant to their constituents. I think it actually is quite relevant and it is quite a lot of money, money that will be well spent by families who need it. Despite the fact that those colleagues all ran on a similar plan to price carbon in 2021, they do not want anybody to know that because they want families to feel like they have always been against environmental policies to reduce

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our reliance on fossil fuels and to fight climate change. However, since 2015, the Liberal Party and the government have been there for Canadians. We have been relentless in our pursuit of solutions to make life more affordable for families in our country, and we are also doing that while fighting climate change.

As the commissioner said, the fight on climate change needs more ambition; it needs stronger targets and more action. That is what we are doing. We are redoubling our efforts to fight climate change and lower our emissions in Canada, while the Conservatives have zero ambition, zero targets and no plan. I am curious to know from the member what his plan to fight climate change might be. I have never actually heard the member say “climate change”, so I would encourage him to talk about climate change a bit in this debate and tell Canadians and people in his riding what his plan is to fight it.

In a year when wildfires burned out of control, hundreds of thousands of Canadians were forced out of their homes and it has been the hottest year ever on record, inaction is certainly not an option for our government. We need to move faster. We need to be more ambitious in fighting climate change. There is just no way around it. We have to take action now to fight climate change. Our pollution pricing system is one of the best ways to do so and is a component of any serious plan to fight climate change, as Erin O'Toole put in the Conservatives' plan to fight climate change in 2021.

With regard to our decision for a temporary pause, I will come back in the rebuttal.

• (1920)

Mr. Warren Steinley: Madam Speaker, I am glad that the member brought up the rebate. I talk about our climate policies all the time because in Saskatchewan, we have lowered our per capita emissions more than any other province in Canada has over the last five years, with carbon capture and sequestration and new technologies. The new technologies in farming have sequestered more carbon, and we are doing a wonderful job of ensuring that we have climate sustainability in the province of Saskatchewan. With respect to a smog day in Saskatchewan, that is how out of touch the member is. What a ridiculous comment that is. We are the land of blue skies, and we have a beautiful province.

I would just like to say that the member is so incompetent. He says that people get \$1,200 back, but with carbon tax 1 and carbon tax 2, the people of Saskatchewan pay \$2,600 a year in carbon tax. Therefore, if he can tell me how \$1,200 is more than \$2,600, I would love it. I would love it if he could tell me how that math works out, but he is not very good at telling the truth in the chamber.

Adjournment Proceedings

Mr. Adam van Koeverden: Madam Speaker, I do not want to avoid answering the question, but the member just called into question whether or not I can be honest in this chamber, and I think that goes against parliamentary procedure. That was unparliamentary language, and I would ask him to stand and apologize.

The Assistant Deputy Speaker (Mrs. Carol Hughes): Hon. members have to be extremely careful in how they describe someone or indicate whether someone is telling the truth.

I will give the hon. member an opportunity to withdraw his statement.

Mr. Warren Steinley: Madam Speaker, I apologize for saying that he cannot figure out math or for being unable to square the circle of the carbon tax—

The Assistant Deputy Speaker (Mrs. Carol Hughes): That is not an apology. The hon. member knows full well that we have to be very careful with some of the language we use in the House. I would ask him whether or not he wants to apologize for saying the member is dishonest.

Mr. Warren Steinley: I apologize for the comments I made, Madam Speaker.

Mr. Adam van Koeverden: Madam Speaker, our government has been there to support Canadians. I want to point out that when

colleagues opposite suggest certain people are paying more for certain things, it really does a disservice to the debate and the quality of the conversations we have in this House.

I want to point out that the quintile of Canadians who might receive less back in the climate action incentive than they pay are the wealthiest Canadians. They are the top quintile of earners. It just goes to show that the Conservatives are always here to fight for millionaires and big oil. When it comes to fighting for affordability or the middle class, they are literally nowhere to be seen.

Since I am by myself in the chamber, I will finish there.

The Assistant Deputy Speaker (Mrs. Carol Hughes): The hon. member cannot say whether there are or are not members in the chamber.

[*Translation*]

The motion to adjourn the House is now deemed to have been adopted. Accordingly, the House stands adjourned until tomorrow at 2 p.m. pursuant to Standing Order 24(1).

(The House adjourned at 7:23 p.m.)

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