



HOUSE OF COMMONS
CHAMBRE DES COMMUNES
CANADA

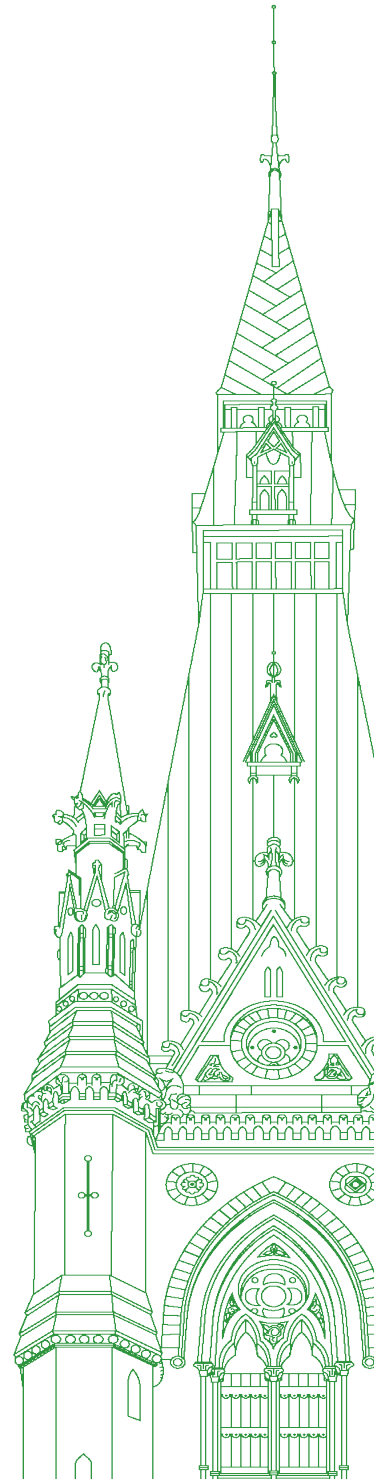
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Speaker: The Honourable Francis Scarpaleggia



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HOUSE OF COMMONS

Wednesday, June 11, 2025

The House met at 2 p.m.

Prayer

• (1400)

[English]

The Speaker: It being Wednesday, as has become the tradition at this time of year, the pages will lead us in the singing of the national anthem.

[Pages sang the national anthem]

STATEMENTS BY MEMBERS

[English]

YUKON GRADUATES

Brendan Hanley (Yukon, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, today I rise to honour the exceptional achievements of all Yukon graduates from across the territory.

[Translation]

I congratulate them. They worked incredibly hard and took on every challenge with courage and determination.

[English]

They have met the challenges of troubled times. They have shown determination and readiness to contribute to our territory and to our nation. Their academic journey reflects not only their perseverance, but also the collective commitment of Yukon educators, families and communities that invest in their future.

[Translation]

It really takes a village.

[English]

As the grads move ahead towards college, starting a new job, travelling the world or pursuing something completely new, they are shaping the Yukon's future.

Let us celebrate their achievements and all the possibilities ahead. Congratulations to all Yukon grads.

EDMONTON GRIESBACH

Kerry Diotte (Edmonton Griesbach, CPC): Mr. Speaker, I was the Conservative MP in Edmonton Griesbach from 2015 to 2021. Our team narrowly lost the 2021 election, but we won big in 2025, and it is great to be back.

Politics is a team sport, and I am grateful for all the people who helped us win. The nomination campaign itself took tremendous work. My team and I knocked on doors seven days a week for a year and a half. My thanks go to some of those nomination team members, in no particular order: Paul Currie, Burt Schoeppe, Carol Kozlevcar, Stella McNeill, Cheryl McCracken, Daphne Price, Heather Markland and Leo Huang. My thanks also go to Rhoda Lupaschuk, Beenadd Sebhat, Jason Steele, Mark Hillman, Justin Thomas, Elisabeth Talbot-Jones, Peng Wu and Patrick Stewart.

My thanks go to everyone who helped us win the main campaign. I thank my wife, Clare Denman, who always works on my campaigns, and a huge thanks to Edmonton Griesbach voters.

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• (1405)

[Translation]

YOUTH ACTIVITIES IN RIVIÈRE-DES-MILLE-ÎLES

Linda Lapointe (Rivière-des-Mille-Îles, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, I recently had the pleasure of attending the ceremony for the 785 Kiwanis Saint-Eustache Squadron and the end-of-the-year show at the Excel Gym Zodiak Club.

What I admire about cadets is that they are taught leadership, civic duty, respect and discipline. I congratulate the cadets. I really enjoyed their ceremony.

This year, the Excel Gym Zodiak Club is celebrating its 40th anniversary. Membership includes over 1,100 athletes between the ages of 4 and 18 from Saint-Eustache. I congratulate them on their memorable show.

I want to thank these two organizations for the invitation, and I congratulate the volunteers whose commitment makes events like this possible. Activities like cadets, gymnastics and sports help our children to grow. I thank the parents for supporting their children in these various disciplines.

*Statements by Members**[English]***SIMCOE—GREY**

Terry Dowdall (Simcoe—Grey, CPC): Mr. Speaker, I would like to thank the great people of Simcoe—Grey for again putting their trust in me to be their voice here in Ottawa. I am so thankful to my campaign team for their hard work and dedication, with special thanks to Duane McNabb, my campaign manager, and Karin Greig, my financial agent, who both filled such critical roles.

Springtime is a busy time in Simcoe—Grey with so many great events taking place.

First, congratulations to all the 2025 high school graduates.

I will be at the Georgian Triangle Humane Society this weekend for its walk for pets.

On June 21, I will be celebrating the 75th anniversary of the Everett Legion. Later that night, I will attend a banquet in honour of the 1909 Collingwood military police cadet corps' 25th anniversary.

On June 28, I will be part of the 50th anniversary celebration of the Blue Mountain Foundation for the Arts.

In July, I will be hosting the grand opening of my new Angus constituency office. Everyone here is welcome, even you, Mr. Speaker.

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HAMILTON TIGER-CATS

Aslam Rana (Hamilton Centre, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, I rise today to shine a light on a team that holds a special place in my riding of Hamilton Centre, the Hamilton Tiger-Cats. Formed in 1869, the Tiger-Cats is one of North America's oldest sports teams, bringing home 15 Grey Cup championships and countless memories for Hamiltonians.

Born in the shadows of Hamilton's two steel giants, Dofasco and Stelco, the Tiger-Cats have battled on the same turf for nearly a century, on a field that echoes with the pride of Hamilton's working class. More than a football team, the Tiger-Cats embody the toughness and resilience that define our city.

This Saturday, June 14, the Hamilton Tiger-Cats kick off their season against the Saskatchewan Roughriders. I wish them a fantastic season. I am proud to see the legacy of this great team and great city carry on. Go, Ti-Cats, go.

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FINANCE

Dave Epp (Chatham-Kent—Leamington, CPC): Mr. Speaker, as this is my first substantive opportunity to rise in this Parliament, I want to thank the residents of Chatham-Kent—Leamington for the honour once again.

By population, it is now the second-largest riding in Canada, and summer in Chatham-Kent—Leamington is a special experience. Whether camping and boating on Lake St. Clair in Mitchell's Bay or frequenting the beaches and birdwatching in Point Pelee National Park or many other locations, Canada's south is truly inspiring.

However, one thing I heard at the doors during the election was that the beauty of my riding cannot mask the fact that parents are struggling to feed their families. They know that pretty beaches or pretty speeches cannot feed their kids. My constituents know both families and businesses have to manage their budgets, and they expect their government to do the same. They want to know how the government will pay for all of its massive spending promises and how that will affect their bottom line.

Will the Liberals commit to transparency, and will they deliver a spring budget?

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BROCK UNIVERSITY 60TH ANNIVERSARY

Chris Bittle (St. Catharines, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, in 1957, the Allanburg Women's Institute asked the Ontario government to establish a university in Niagara, recognizing the immense value that a local university could provide to our youth and community.

Our community's conviction was so deep that members of the CAW Local 199 in Niagara made weekly contributions from their hard-earned paycheques to support the founding of what would become Brock University in 1964. They understood then what we continue to recognize today: that post-secondary institutions are cornerstones of building communities, economic growth and supporting the development of a vibrant arts and cultural sector. With over 100,000 graduates, a commitment to industry-driven research and economic programs designed to meet the needs of today's and tomorrow's workforce, Brock University continues to fulfill the vision of its early champions.

I extend my heartfelt congratulations to Brock University, its students, faculty, staff and alumni as they celebrate their 60th anniversary. Congratulations.

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● (1410)

RECONCILIATION

Ellis Ross (Skeena—Bulkley Valley, CPC): Mr. Speaker, on June 11, 2008, Conservative Prime Minister Stephen Harper apologized to indigenous people for Canada's past role in the residential school system.

Residential schools were a component of a system that created the issues that we are still trying to resolve today. I spent years reading Haisla archives on how first nations were treated and excluded conditionally from Canada's society and economy. I fully acknowledge our past. It is one of the biggest reasons I strive to build a better future for Canada overall. This is what I believe reconciliation should represent, and we are closer than ever before, with first nations charting their own destinies as individuals from all walks of life are presented with opportunities to build their own lives.

In short, reconciliation should mean bringing two groups back together. As the newly elected Conservative MP for Skeena—Bulkley Valley, I want to thank the Conservatives for starting this new path of reconciliation 17 years ago.

* * *

[Translation]

HENRI LABERGE

Claude DeBellefeuille (Beauharnois—Salaberry—Soulanges—Huntingdon, BQ): Mr. Speaker, Quebec has lost a fierce advocate for Quebec independence, the French language, workers' rights and state secularism. Henri Laberge passed away on May 2.

On behalf of the Bloc Québécois, I would like to offer my sincere condolences to his family and loved ones. Henri Laberge fought on all fronts for our nation, from the Rassemblement pour l'indépendance nationale to the Bloc Québécois, where he served as chair of the citizenship commission.

An strong advocate for the French language, he was chief of staff to Camille Laurin when Quebec was drafting Bill 101. He moved in working-class circles and, alongside Michel Chartrand and Fernand Daoust, he was an adviser to the Centrale de l'enseignement du Québec. His 30 years of involvement in the Mouvement laïque québécois helped modernize our society. We thank Henri Laberge for his tireless efforts in his quest for an independent Quebec, one that is proud of its values and also compassionate. Bolstered by his legacy, we will continue to fight the fight.

Thank you, Henri.

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[English]

100TH ANNIVERSARY OF DAVIS DAY

Mike Kelloway (Sydney—Glace Bay, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, today, June 11, we observe Davis Day, a solemn occasion of remembrance and reflection in Nova Scotia. This year marks the 100th anniversary of Davis Day, making it an especially significant moment to honour the sacrifices of coal miners who lost their lives in the struggle for safer working conditions and fairer treatment.

Davis Day commemorates the tragic death of William Davis, a miner who was killed during a 1925 strike while advocating for workers' rights and safety in Cape Breton Island. His courage and that of countless others laid the foundation for stronger labour protections that continue to support workers throughout Nova Scotia and across this great country.

Statements by Members

As we mark this important centennial, let us remember the courage and resilience of those who stood up for justice and dignity in the workplace. Their sacrifice is a powerful reminder of the importance of solidarity and our ongoing commitment to safe labour practices across this country.

* * *

HOUSING

Dalwinder Gill (Calgary McKnight, CPC): Mr. Speaker, just yesterday, the Auditor General confirmed that the Liberal government cannot be trusted to deliver on housing. It promised to convert empty federal offices into 4,000 units of affordable housing but has managed to complete only about 300 units so far. That is a total failure. It turns out that almost half the units are being built in areas that do not even need them. Now, after seven years and \$300 million spent, the former housing minister got promotions, while housing has become even more unaffordable.

Canadians need fewer broken promises and more homes built. The Conservative housing plan would quickly sell federal properties close to transit stations and jobs, in order to get affordable homes built faster for Canadians in communities that need them.

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FLEETWOOD—PORT KELLS

Gurbux Saini (Fleetwood—Port Kells, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, today I rise for the very first time, to thank the people of Fleetwood—Port Kells, and Canada, for placing their trust in me.

I came to Canada in 1970 as an immigrant from a small village in Punjab, with eight dollars in my pocket. I worked as a lumber piler, pursued my education and supported my family. With determination, my journey led me to 14 years as a councillor in Williams Lake.

Canada gave me the opportunity to work hard and give back, and now I stand proudly in the House of Commons to represent my community. I am humbled to be here, not only as a member of Parliament but also as proof that the Canadian dream is alive and well. I want to express not—

● (1415)

The Speaker: The hon. member for Windsor—Tecumseh—Lakeshore has the floor.

*Oral Questions***PUBLIC SERVICES AND PROCUREMENT**

Kathy Borrelli (Windsor—Tecumseh—Lakeshore, CPC): Mr. Speaker, time after time, the Liberal government must be held to account for its mismanagement of Canadian dollars. Now we have even more damning evidence showing that the Liberals have lost control over their spending on consultants. GC Strategies, which is linked to the arrive scam, got 106 contracts, worth \$93 million. The Auditor General has said that Liberals frequently disregarded procurement rules that promoted fairness, transparency and value for Canadians. There were consultants who did not have experience. There were massive security clearance failures, and there was proof that little to no work was ever done.

It is clear that the Liberals are out of touch with Canadians. They cannot be trusted with tax dollars, so how can anyone trust them to be in a position of power?

Will the Liberals support a Conservative motion to have GC Strategies pay back the \$64 million stolen from taxpayers?

* * *

AJ PLANT

Hon. Mona Fortier (Ottawa—Vanier—Gloucester, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, it is with a deep sadness and a heavy heart that I rise in the House today to mark the passing of a dear friend, A Plant: a respected entrepreneur and realtor, a community builder, a generous mentor and a tireless force for good in the national capital region.

[Translation]

AJ, a servant of God, dedicated his life to helping others by supporting local food banks and charities, helping families find a place to call home and always being there for his community.

AJ was a huge hockey fan. As a coach and the proud owner of the Gatineau Flames, he provided countless young athletes with opportunities to grow and succeed.

[English]

Alongside his wife, Chantal, AJ gave back in countless ways, most recently through the ongoing support of organizations like the Eastern Ottawa Resource Centre.

[Translation]

I extend my sincere condolences to Chantal and their four children, as well as to all those who knew and loved him.

[English]

Ottawa is better because of AJ. May he rest in peace.

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F-35 FIGHTER JETS

Costas Menegakis (Aurora—Oak Ridges—Richmond Hill, CPC): Mr. Speaker, the Auditor General's investigation into the Liberals' purchase of the F-35 fighter jets is deeply concerning. Costs have ballooned by more than 50%, and delivery is behind schedule, but it gets worse: The facilities to house the jets will not be completed until 2031. That is three years too late, and taxpayers will be left spending even more money on temporary hangars.

The investigation also confirmed that we do not have enough pilots. How does the Liberal government expect the planes to fly without pilots? In fact, the Liberals have flip-flopped. First, they opposed the F-35 program, then they supported it, then they sent it to review, and so on.

After the lost Liberal decade, Canadians are feeling anxious in an increasingly dangerous world. Out-of-control costs, repeated construction delays and lack of staff threatened to delay the replacement of the fighter jets. Now the Liberals want billions of dollars to waste.

The government promised change, but it is more of the same. Under the Liberals, Canadians have never paid so much for getting so little in return.

* * *

PEARSON CENTRE LAUREATE

Hon. Karina Gould (Burlington, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, I rise in the House to celebrate the Hon. Irwin Cotler, who is in Ottawa to be honoured by the Pearson Centre tonight for his lifetime of service to Canada and his work on human rights and justice.

He is a former member of Parliament and cabinet minister, an emeritus professor of law at McGill and an international human rights lawyer, and I am very proud to call him a friend. As minister of justice and attorney general, Irwin enacted same-sex marriage equality laws, appointed two women to the Supreme Court, tackled wrongful convictions and launched anti-racism initiatives.

In his so-called retirement, he founded and now actively chairs the Raoul Wallenberg Centre for Human Rights, which advocates for political prisoners, human rights, justice and democracy. He also served as Canada's first special envoy on combatting anti-Semitism. Irwin is today, as he has always been, a powerful advocate for the marginalized and a champion of progress and justice.

I speak for all Canadians when I thank Mr. Cotler for his incredible and ongoing service.

ORAL QUESTIONS

● (1420)

[English]

PUBLIC SERVICES AND PROCUREMENT

Hon. Andrew Scheer (Leader of the Opposition, CPC): Mr. Speaker, I have breaking news: Conservatives will force a vote here in the House of Commons to get Canadians their money back for the ArriveCAN scandal.

The Auditor General slammed the Liberal government for giving GC Strategies, the top arrive scam contractor, \$64 million in contracts since it took office. There was \$64 million given to a two-person IT company that did no IT work and is under RCMP investigation.

Instead of empty words like “We accept the Auditor General's findings”, how about the Prime Minister shows some concrete action, votes for our motion and gets Canadians their money back?

Right Hon. Mark Carney (Prime Minister, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, the government is focused on best-in-class procurement. That is why we have put in place a new Minister of Government Transformation. That is why we are putting in place new Department of National Defence procurement. It is to get taxpayer value for money and to build the strongest economy in the G7. That is how we get value for Canadians.

Hon. Andrew Scheer (Leader of the Opposition, CPC): Mr. Speaker, he is settling into old Liberal habits of not being bothered by wasting taxpayers' money and funnelling it to his friends.

The Prime Minister is trying to act like he is new to the job or he just got here. He was Justin Trudeau's senior economic adviser while the contracts were being handed out. The Minister responsible for Canada-U.S. Trade, the Minister of Jobs and the Minister of Foreign Affairs all have their fingerprints on the scandal, and he chose them to sit around his cabinet table.

Why is it that every time the Liberals get caught in a corruption scandal, Liberal politicians get rewarded and taxpayers get the bill?

Right Hon. Mark Carney (Prime Minister, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, as I just said, the government is laser-focused on best-in-class procurement. That is why we have a new Minister of Government Transformation. That is why we have a brave deputy, who fought for this country and who flew fighter jets, as the new Secretary of State for Defence Procurement.

We are going to get best value for Canadians' dollars. We are going to grow the economy. The member should come join us.

Mark Strahl (Chilliwack—Hope, CPC): Mr. Speaker, the Auditor General confirmed what we have been saying about the fraudsters behind the arrive scam app and about the failure of the Liberal government to protect taxpayers: GC Strategies was an IT firm that did not do IT, did not follow procurement rules, did not provide value for money and did not have valid security clearances. What it does have is 64 million ill-gotten tax dollars in the bank, and the Liberal government let it all happen.

When so many Canadians are struggling to make ends meet, why is the government making no effort to get those wasted tax dollars back?

Right Hon. Mark Carney (Prime Minister, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, I think it is important to follow details, including important details such as that there was just an election. Canada's new government was elected to focus on getting best value for Canadian taxpayer dollars and building the strongest economy in the G7. That is exactly what we are doing. We are focused on the future.

Oral Questions

• (1425)

Mark Strahl (Chilliwack—Hope, CPC): Mr. Speaker, the Liberals are not holding GC Strategies accountable. They are letting it keep the cash. The Auditor General confirmed that current Liberal ministers failed Canadians in this matter. They failed to protect tax dollars. They failed to check the qualifications of those doing the work. In half the contracts, they failed to even verify that work was done. Unbelievably, the Trudeau ministers responsible for arrive scam got promoted and have now been put in charge of critical Canada-U.S. foreign affairs and jobs files.

Why did the Prime Minister reward the failed Trudeau Liberals instead of holding them accountable for their incompetence?

Right Hon. Mark Carney (Prime Minister, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, the government, Canada's new government, is focused on best value for taxpayer dollars. We are running a process to review our programs. We are running a process to focus on results for Canadians, not on dollars in. We are running a process to integrate technology. We are running a process to get best value for the largest increase in defence spending in precedent, making up for the failures of the members of the Conservatives before us.

[Translation]

Luc Berthold (Mégantic—L'Érable—Lotbinière, CPC): Mr. Speaker, thanks to a Conservative motion, the Auditor General shed light on the ArriveCAN scandal. What she found was not pretty. GC Strategies, a two-person firm that operated out of a basement and had no IT experience, got \$64 million for doing nothing. According to the report, nobody knows who did the work, what was done, whether those people did anything or whether they were qualified to do it.

The Conservatives are going to take the next step. We are going to move a motion to get Canadians their money back.

Will the Prime Minister vote in favour of our motion to reimburse Canadians for his ministers' incompetence?

Right Hon. Mark Carney (Prime Minister, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, Canada's new government is focused on best-in-class procurement.

Oral Questions

That is why we have a new Minister of Government Transformation and new Department of National Defence procurement at a time when we are seeing the biggest increase in spending to defend our country.

Luc Berthold (Mégantic—L'Érable—Lotbinière, CPC): Mr. Speaker, he says he is new, but there might be something he is unaware of, so I will explain it to him slowly: The ministers who authorized those expenditures are members of his cabinet. They were not terminated like GC Strategies was, as the government's Minister of Government Transformation said yesterday. They were promoted. That is the truth.

The House has already demanded that the money paid to GC Strategies be returned. Unfortunately, we have not seen a dime of it yet. That \$64 million comes from income tax and other taxes paid by Canadians. The Liberal government has abused their trust.

Our motion is clear. Will the Prime Minister vote to protect his ministers or to ensure that Canadians get their money back?

Right Hon. Mark Carney (Prime Minister, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, every hour of every day, I intend to focus on best-in-class procurement for Canadians.

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CARBON PRICING

Yves-François Blanchet (Beloeil—Chambly, BQ): Mr. Speaker, yesterday, the member for Mirabel asked the Minister of Finance the following: “Were these carbon tax rebate cheques that were sent out in the middle of the election...in eight provinces delivered without the tax that funded them being collected?” The minister said no.

My question for the Prime Minister is this. Were the carbon tax rebate cheques that were sent out in the middle of the election delivered without the tax that funded them being collected?

Right Hon. Mark Carney (Prime Minister, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, the final carbon rebate payment was issued to help with the transition that millions of Canadian families are going through. All members agreed with our decision to scrap the consumer carbon tax.

Many families outside Quebec and British Columbia need a transition period. That is the reason.

Yves-François Blanchet (Beloeil—Chambly, BQ): Mr. Speaker, the votes in the House determine what we agree on.

The matter remained under the radar during the turmoil of the election campaign, but it is now becoming a big issue in Quebec. The truth needs to come out. By refusing to compensate Quebecers, the government is providing a carbon rebate to those who did not pay for it and failing to reimburse those who did.

I assume the Prime Minister is better than that at economics and basic accounting.

Will he compensate Quebecers?

• (1430)

Right Hon. Mark Carney (Prime Minister, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, the provinces and Quebec had the choice to impose their own carbon pricing system.

We respect Quebec's jurisdictions.

Yves-François Blanchet (Beloeil—Chambly, BQ): Mr. Speaker, we could get a plaque with that phrase etched onto it.

In short, the Prime Minister eliminated the carbon tax and gave Canadians \$4 billion up front to reimburse them for a tax that they will never pay. Meanwhile, he gave nothing to Quebecers. He admitted it. That \$4 billion is not linked to any revenue that would justify that money being paid back. That \$4 billion is being added directly to the deficit, just like the \$6 billion in tax cuts. The government is doing all of this without tabling a budget or providing an economic update.

Will the Prime Minister fix this obvious injustice against Quebecers?

Right Hon. Mark Carney (Prime Minister, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, there are different systems and different transitions.

This is not an injustice. We are being consistent.

* * *

[English]

NATIONAL DEFENCE

Blake Richards (Airdrie—Cochrane, CPC): Mr. Speaker, yesterday the Auditor General released a scathing report about the Liberal government's mismanagement of the F-35 contract. The Liberals flipped, they flopped and then they flipped again. Now they are trying to hide the real costs of their incompetence.

How can the men and women of the Canadian Armed Forces trust that the Prime Minister will actually deliver on his defence promises when it is clear that his own ministers are willing to mislead Canadians when it comes to defence?

Hon. David McGuinty (Minister of National Defence, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, we thank the Auditor General once again for her work.

In any procurement project of this size, as the member knows, it is normal for costs to change and vary over time, especially with the challenges encountered during the pandemic, such as supply chain disruptions and inflation. That is why National Defence is working hand in hand with industry now to make sure we get good value for Canadians.

We are making a generational investment in the air force, and we are going to get this right.

Blake Richards (Airdrie—Cochrane, CPC): Mr. Speaker, this is anything but normal. This is the Liberals trying to hide their own incompetence. They misled Canadians by not factoring in currency exchanges, inflation and project delays to pretend that they were saving costs, when in fact the F-35s were 50% over budget, because of the Liberals' incompetence. Worse yet, Trudeau's minister responsible for this creative accounting was promoted by the current Prime Minister.

Is it not true that the Liberals' so-called new defence spending is actually just the costs they were hiding from Canadians all along?

Hon. David McGuinty (Minister of National Defence, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, once again, I am going to thank the Auditor General for her work and her recommendations, many of which we are acting upon already.

National Defence officials are committed to being open and transparent, and they will keep Canadians updated every step of the way, without compromising operational security. National Defence officials are keeping a close eye on costs and working hand in hand with industry to make sure we get the best value for Canadians.

We are focused here, focused on supporting our top Canadian aviators as they work to keep Canada safe.

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PUBLIC SERVICES AND PROCUREMENT

Branden Leslie (Portage—Lisgar, CPC): Mr. Speaker, the Auditor General proved what Canadians already knew: The Liberals cannot run a lemonade stand, let alone the government. They funnelled tens of millions of dollars to their friends at GC Strategies, with nearly half of the contracts delivering little to no result. With respect to the Liberals' federal lands housing initiative, after seven years, they have not delivered even 8% of what they promised they would. The F-35 program is 50% over budget and plagued with construction delays and staffing shortages.

Here is a simple question: Why is it that Liberals can never deliver any project on time or on budget?

Hon. Joël Lightbound (Minister of Government Transformation, Public Works and Procurement, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, I want to be clear: We will always protect the integrity of our procurement process. We have been elected on a mandate to deliver best value for Canadians as we embark on an ambitious journey for this country. I am hoping Conservatives will get on board.

Michael Guglielmin (Vaughan—Woodbridge, CPC): Mr. Speaker, yesterday, the Auditor General revealed that Canadians are paying more and getting less. The Liberals have poured \$300 million into a housing program and missed their targets by 97%. With respect to the F-35 jets, it is nearly \$30 billion and 50% over budget, with no jets flying, no pilots ready and no facilities built. To top it off, the fraudulent arrive scam contractor, GC Strategies, has siphoned \$64 million from Canadian taxpayers.

If Liberals cannot be trusted to manage any of these projects, how can Canadians trust them to balance a budget?

● (1435)

Hon. Joël Lightbound (Minister of Government Transformation, Public Works and Procurement, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, let me be absolutely clear: We will never tolerate misconduct from our suppliers or their subcontractors. We will always hold bad actors to account so that we deliver the best value for Canadians. This is exactly what we are doing for Canadians.

Connie Cody (Cambridge, CPC): Mr. Speaker, the Auditor General reconfirmed what we already know: The Liberals are bad with Canadians' money.

Oral Questions

With respect to housing, the Liberals promised to build 4,000 units in six years, but the real number is a pathetic 309. The F-35 budget has exploded by \$14 billion, and there are no pilots to fly the jets. Worst of all, the Liberals funnelled \$64 million to arrive scam contractors, just two guys working from their basement, with no proof they did any real work.

They are the same Trudeau ministers, the same failures and the same old Liberals. Why did the Prime Minister promote the very ministers responsible for these scandals into his cabinet?

[Translation]

Hon. Joël Lightbound (Minister of Government Transformation, Public Works and Procurement, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, I want to thank the Auditor General for her work. I had an important conversation with her about office space, which is something that was included in the report she released yesterday. I would like to point that, in her report, she notes that we are on track to meet our targets for affordable housing on federal lands. That is good news for Canadians.

Richard Martel (Chicoutimi—Le Fjord, CPC): Mr. Speaker, the Liberals have no foresight, and they do not care about their exorbitant budgetary spending.

After 10 years of unacceptable and avoidable delays, we are now facing the real possibility that Canada will not have operational fighter jets. We know that our CF-18s will reach the end of their useful life in 2032 and that the delivery date for our F-35s is uncertain.

How is it that the Liberals keep spending money but can never deliver?

Hon. David McGuinty (Minister of National Defence, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, once again, we thank the Auditor General for her work.

In a procurement project such as this, it is normal for costs to change over time, especially given the challenges posed by the pandemic and inflation. The member knows that. National Defence is closely monitoring costs and working hand in hand with the industry to ensure value for money for Canadians. We are making the largest investment in the Royal Canadian Air Force in over 30 years.

*Oral Questions***STEEL AND ALUMINUM INDUSTRY**

Richard Martel (Chicoutimi—Le Fjord, CPC): Mr. Speaker, industry, businesses and workers in Saguenay—Lac-Saint-Jean are hurting because of American tariffs on steel and aluminum, which have now reached 50%. Hundreds of jobs in Saguenay are at risk.

I would remind the House that the Prime Minister was elected on a promise to stand up to Trump. On top of that, he was supposed to raise \$20 billion through countertariffs. Now we have learned that China just signed an agreement with the Americans. Why is China getting a deal before Canada?

Hon. Mélanie Joly (Minister of Industry and Minister responsible for Canada Economic Development for Quebec Regions, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, I am well aware of the situation, as are the Prime Minister and his cabinet.

We are well aware that the 50% tariff was imposed in a completely unacceptable, unjustified and illegal manner on aluminum workers in my colleague's riding, as well as on steel workers in the ridings of several other members here. That is why we are implementing very strong countermeasures. We are also in touch with industry and labour, and we are going to fight for the tariffs to be removed.

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CARBON PRICING

Jean-Denis Garon (Mirabel, BQ): Mr. Speaker, six days before the election, the Prime Minister sent out cheques, paid for by Quebecers, to almost everyone in Canada except Quebecers.

The Quebec National Assembly was unanimous: The Liberals need to reimburse us now. Quebecers are also suffering due to the cost of living. They should not have to hand over \$450 to families in Alberta or \$300 to Ontarians in the form of fake carbon rebates. The Liberals owe us \$814 million. If they do not pay us back, that is theft. Are they going to steal our money, or are they going to pay us back?

Hon. Steven Guilbeault (Minister of Canadian Identity and Culture and Minister responsible for Official Languages, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, my Bloc Québécois colleague knows I hold him in high esteem, but I think he is pushing his luck a bit today.

As he knows full well, Quebec's system is quite different from the federal system. Currently, Quebec's price per tonne is \$59, whereas the federal price is \$95. That means that, for years, Quebecers paid half as much for carbon pricing as all other Canadians were paying. He never mentions that.

● (1440)

Jean-Denis Garon (Mirabel, BQ): Mr. Speaker, the minister, whom I hold in high regard, knows full well that Canadians were not paying the carbon tax when they got their cheques.

The Prime Minister himself confirmed that he had eliminated the carbon tax on April 1 but that he had nevertheless issued the quarterly cheque for the period from April to June at the end of the month. If tax revenues were not used to cover those cheques, who paid for them? The Liberal Party called the cheques a transitional measure. We are calling them a gift to Canadians at the expense of

Quebec taxpayers. Will the Liberals pay back the \$814 million they owe Quebecers?

Hon. Steven Guilbeault (Minister of Canadian Identity and Culture and Minister responsible for Official Languages, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, I sincerely believe that we are comparing apples and oranges here.

The Quebec system is based on a cap-and-trade mechanism, not a pricing mechanism. The federal system, on the other hand, is based on a mechanism that sets a price per tonne, which sends a signal to the market and consumers to reduce their emissions. These are two completely different systems. The federal government has long recognized Quebec's leadership and, for several years, we have recognized that the Quebec system is equivalent to the federal system.

* * *

[English]

FINANCE

John Barlow (Foothills, CPC): Mr. Speaker, the Prime Minister said that he will be judged by prices at the grocery store shelf. Judgment has been rendered, and by his own metrics, the Prime Minister has failed. For the third month in a row, food prices have skyrocketed. Apples, oranges, rice, chicken and beef are all up by more than 20%, and the Prime Minister's response is to pour more fuel on the inflationary fire, with half a trillion dollars in new spending. That is more than Trudeau.

Will the Liberal minority government listen to the majority of this House and put a budget on the table, so Canadians can put food on theirs?

Hon. Patty Hajdu (Minister of Jobs and Families and Minister responsible for the Federal Economic Development Agency for Northern Ontario, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, first of all, I just want to say that over 22 million Canadians are receiving a tax credit as we speak, and I certainly hope that the Conservative member over there realizes that this is exactly what Canadians called for in the election: targeted support that will help them in these times.

I will also point out that the kind of spending the Conservatives are talking about is on the things they have been advocating for years. They should be happy that we are investing in our armed forces, for example. Are the Conservatives saying that the Canadian Armed Forces do not deserve a raise?

John Barlow (Foothills, CPC): Mr. Speaker, Canadians are struggling to put food on the table now, and it is because of the Liberals' inflationary spending. We all knew these were going to be the same old tax-and-spend Liberals, but we had no idea the Prime Minister was going to be worse. He promised Canadians he would cap increased spending at 2%; he has gone over 8%. That is putting Canadians in trouble, and they are the ones paying the price. We now have the highest food inflation in the G7.

Will the Prime Minister table a budget and end his inflationary spending so Canadians can afford to feed their families?

Hon. Patty Hajdu (Minister of Jobs and Families and Minister responsible for the Federal Economic Development Agency for Northern Ontario, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, every step of the way, we have worked to make sure that Canadians' costs go down and Canadians have more powerful paycheques, something the Conservatives have said time and again, and they have actually voted against it. Whether it is things like reducing the cost of child care, ensuring school food programs or increasing the Canada child benefit, which, by the way, is pegged to inflation so that families have what they need as they are raising their children, the Conservatives have voted against it. They should put their money where their mouth is and support a comprehensive policy that supports families.

Harb Gill (Windsor West, CPC): Mr. Speaker, after years of Liberal inflationary spending, Windsor families are struggling to keep up. Rent is unaffordable. Grocery prices are going through the roof. Many parents are skipping meals so their kids can eat. The Prime Minister says he wants to be judged by what Canadians pay at the grocery store. I can assure members that the Prime Minister will be judged harshly, as Canadians will be paying more than \$800 this year on food alone.

It should not be this hard to feed a family in Canada. Will the Liberal government table a budget this spring that actually reverses its inflationary policies?

Hon. John Zerucelli (Secretary of State (Labour), Lib.): Mr. Speaker, Canadians elected a new government to build a strong Canada and to protect programs that serve families. Families are strong when kids are healthy. Our national school meal program is delivering meals to hundreds of thousands of kids this year. It saves parents up to \$800 per year. We are committed to making this permanent. We made this commitment in the campaign, and I call on the member opposite to support us.

● (1445)

Jim Bélanger (Sudbury East—Manitoulin—Nickel Belt, CPC): Mr. Speaker, the Prime Minister said he wants to be held to account for what Canadians are paying at the grocery store, so let us do just that. Families in northern Ontario are struggling because of rising prices. Since the start of 2025, grocery prices in Canada have increased rapidly. The Prime Minister promised to cap government spending at 2%. Instead, he is increasing it by 8%.

Will the Liberals table a budget that reverses their inflationary policies so Canadians can afford to put food on the table?

Hon. Wayne Long (Secretary of State (Canada Revenue Agency and Financial Institutions), Lib.): Mr. Speaker, we met with the owners of Canada in the last election and clearly laid out our plan to cut taxes, to build homes, to build one Canadian economy and to protect Canadians against tariffs. Elections are job interviews, and Canadians resoundingly hired our Prime Minister. They fired the former member for Carleton.

Oral Questions

EMPLOYMENT

Garnett Genuis (Sherwood Park—Fort Saskatchewan, CPC): Mr. Speaker, the Liberals clearly get excited when they are talking about their own jobs, but half a million unemployed students this summer are concerned about theirs. The CBC is reporting that Canada faces the worst youth unemployment crisis in decades.

Students need jobs to pay for their education and gain vital experience and skills. Liberal inflationary spending and immigration failures are creating a generational unemployment crisis, approaching half a million unemployed students. How many more young Canadians need to go unemployed before the Liberals reverse course?

Hon. Patty Hajdu (Minister of Jobs and Families and Minister responsible for the Federal Economic Development Agency for Northern Ontario, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, I have great news for youth this summer: over 6,000 more jobs through Canada summer jobs. That is great news for all our constituents.

Canada summer jobs is an important program to help young people get the skills and experience they need for the next steps in their career. That is over 76,000 jobs this summer, and we certainly look forward to hearing about the youth experience all across our country.

* * *

LABOUR

Terry Sheehan (Sault Ste. Marie—Algoma, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, members of Canada's Building Trades Unions are here in Ottawa this week. They represent thousands of workers who are building Canada strong.

Can the Secretary of State for Labour please update the House on what this government is doing to support these very important construction workers and the unionized labour across this great country?

Hon. John Zerucelli (Secretary of State (Labour), Lib.): Mr. Speaker, I want to join the hon. member from the Sault in welcoming some of the most important unions and skilled trades to Ottawa today. These unions represent over one million good-paying jobs.

Our one Canadian economy plan will fast-track major projects so we can build across this country, brick by brick, with good Canadian steel and aluminum. It is time to build big, build bold and build now. Canada's building trades will get it done, and this government will always have their backs.

*Oral Questions***HOUSING**

Tamara Jansen (Cloverdale—Langley City, CPC): Mr. Speaker, yesterday, the AG delivered a damning report that exposed the truth. After 10 years of the Liberal government's housing promises, only 309 homes have been built under the federal lands initiative. It set a target of 4,000 and what Canadians got was smoke and mirrors: inflated numbers, misleading reporting and a government more focused on press releases than people.

Can the minister explain how, after a decade of delays, this scandal has left single moms and young families still without a place to call home?

Hon. Gregor Robertson (Minister of Housing and Infrastructure and Minister responsible for Pacific Economic Development Canada, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, those units remain under development. They will be developed. They will be built. Those homes will be delivered as promised.

We would appreciate the support of the other members of the House for all of these housing initiatives going forward, of which we have many. We have the most robust housing agenda in the history of this House. We expect robust support for that plan.

Tamara Jansen (Cloverdale—Langley City, CPC): Mr. Speaker, according to yesterday's AG report, the government built nearly 40% of its so-called affordable homes in the wrong places. We cannot make this up. Here is the truly shocking thing: It did not base affordability on income, not on what people actually earn. Instead, it used current market rent in the middle of a housing crisis. That means low-income families, seniors and newcomers cannot even afford the homes that were supposed to help them.

After 10 years of failure, will the minister admit that this plan has completely failed the people who need it most?

• (1450)

Hon. Gregor Robertson (Minister of Housing and Infrastructure and Minister responsible for Pacific Economic Development Canada, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, I will caution the member opposite that there are no wrong places to build housing in Canada. We are focused on building housing across this country. We are focused on building affordable housing across this country. The reason there are new ministers here like me is for our new plan to deliver affordable housing all across Canada in communities that need it.

Eric Melillo (Kenora—Kiiwetinoong, CPC): Mr. Speaker, the Liberals promised to sell surplus government properties to build 4,000 housing units by 2028, but a scathing report from the Auditor General has shown that after five years, they have only built 309 of those units.

Canadians are facing a housing crisis and the government is sitting on 5.9 million square feet of space. When will the Liberals finally fulfill their promise to Canadians and get more homes to market?

Hon. Gregor Robertson (Minister of Housing and Infrastructure and Minister responsible for Pacific Economic Development Canada, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, we are going to deliver the homes that are put forward in that plan. We are also going to use lands across Canada to build more affordable housing. Our goal is to roll out more affordable housing than this country has ever seen

before in the years ahead, and we expect the support of the members opposite. This is going to be a partnership across Canada, on federal lands, with our community partners.

Eric Melillo (Kenora—Kiiwetinoong, CPC): Mr. Speaker, TD Bank has cast doubt on those Liberal goals, saying that housing starts are actually going to decline next year rather than increase, as the minister would have us believe.

The Auditor General's report also found that the Liberals are failing to meet targets, failing to collect relevant data and failing to provide detailed, transparent reports. This is, on all accounts, a complete failure. Even their own Liberal member for Ottawa Centre has said that the government is not doing enough on housing, yet all of the ministers responsible for this crisis are still in cabinet. Why?

Hon. Gregor Robertson (Minister of Housing and Infrastructure and Minister responsible for Pacific Economic Development Canada, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, we are focused now, in this new government, on delivering housing. We are going to deliver the housing that Canadians elected us to deliver. We ran on the commitment to have the most aggressive housing plan the country has ever seen, and we are going to deliver on that plan.

[Translation]

Gabriel Hardy (Montmorency—Charlevoix, CPC): Mr. Speaker, in 2018, the government announced that it would create 4,000 affordable housing units by converting federal lands and buildings. To date, 309 units have been created, which is less than 50 per year.

In my riding, the Coopérative de développement immobilier de Charlevoix is launching a project to build affordable housing to help businesses attract and house workers. This initiative will create 24 units in one year in Charlevoix; meanwhile, the government is creating 50 per year across Canada.

Is the government better at building bureaucracy than it is at building housing?

Hon. Joël Lightbound (Minister of Government Transformation, Public Works and Procurement, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, I had a very good conversation with the Auditor General. We accept the recommendations in her report, but I would note that, if my colleagues will take the time to read it, it says very clearly that we are on track to meet our affordable housing targets.

I congratulate the member opposite on his arrival in the House, but I would like to point out that when his leader was in charge of housing, only six affordable housing units were built. That was after decades of federal government disengagement from housing under the Conservatives.

The Conservatives have nothing to teach us about affordable housing.

* * *

[English]

PUBLIC SAFETY

Frank Caputo (Kamloops—Thompson—Nicola, CPC): Mr. Speaker, 1,000 pounds was the amount of cocaine that was seized by Peel police according to media reports just yesterday. The public safety minister previously said that the bail system was sound, yet six out of nine of those arrested are already on bail.

Given what we see and hear when it comes to bail, does the public safety minister still think the bail system is sound?

• (1455)

Hon. Gary Anandasangaree (Minister of Public Safety, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, let me first of all thank the work of Peel Regional Police and also acknowledge the incredible work of the chief of police for the City of Toronto, who is in Ottawa today. Chief Demkiw is an incredible leader who has been working on the front lines, along with members of Peel police and law enforcement across Canada, to ensure that drugs are off our streets. This is a moment for us to ensure that we support them and continue to acknowledge the incredible work of our police services.

Michael Ma (Markham—Unionville, CPC): Mr. Speaker, Peel Region had the single largest drug bust in its history yesterday, with 1,000 pounds of cocaine worth \$47 million. This would be a cause for celebration if six out of the nine who were arrested were not already out on bail.

Liberal laws like Bill C-5 and Bill C-75 are the root cause of this madness. These Liberal laws put repeat criminals back into our communities.

Will the Liberals reverse their soft-on-crime policies to keep criminals behind bars?

Hon. Gary Anandasangaree (Minister of Public Safety, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, once again, it is important to recognize the incredible collaboration of Peel Regional Police and other police services, which had one of the greatest drug busts in Canadian history. Their work will continue with the support of the federal government and our agencies, which are working in tandem to ensure that drugs are off our streets.

Amarjeet Gill (Brampton West, CPC): Mr. Speaker, under the Liberal government, crime is at its peak and cities like Brampton are being hit hard. Peel police had the single largest drug bust in its history, but six out of nine drug dealers were out on bail.

Gun crime is up 116%. Gang homicide is up 78%. The only solution to control the crime wave is to repeal the soft-on-crime Liberal laws Bill C-5 and Bill C-75 and put repeat violent offenders in jail.

Will the Prime Minister reverse Liberal soft-on-crime laws so that drug dealers like these get jail, not bail?

Hon. Gary Anandasangaree (Minister of Public Safety, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, once again, it is important to acknowledge the work of Peel Regional Police, as well as their colleagues in the different po-

Oral Questions

lice services, who work together to ensure that drugs are off our streets.

This matter is going through the courts, and I know that our justice system is strong. We will ensure that there will be continued work, collaborative work, within police services so that we can constructively get drugs off our streets.

[Translation]

Joël Godin (Portneuf—Jacques-Cartier, CPC): Mr. Speaker, the Journal de Montréal reported today that crimes against persons in Montreal have gone up by an average of 28%. Worse yet, more than 20% of those crimes are committed in a context of domestic violence. Over the past 10 years, the Liberals lost control. This Liberal government must act quickly to keep the public safe.

When will the Liberals start cracking down on crime and finally protect the victims?

[English]

Hon. Ruby Sahota (Secretary of State (Combatting Crime), Lib.): Mr. Speaker, the new government is focused on making sure that victims are put first. Previously, bail reform was brought in to make it harder for perpetrators of domestic violence to be released. We will continue to do the important work needed to make laws stricter and make sure that bail is tougher to get.

* * *

[Translation]

THE ECONOMY

Giovanna Mingarelli (Prescott—Russell—Cumberland, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, the one Canadian economy act will remove federal barriers to internal trade and labour mobility, in addition to advancing essential projects of national interest to stimulate the growth of domestic productivity, develop our energy sector and keep this country safe.

Can the Minister of Industry tell the House about this bill, which was introduced last week?

Hon. Mélanie Joly (Minister of Industry and Minister responsible for Canada Economic Development for Quebec Regions, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, I want to thank my colleague for the question and congratulate her on her election.

Oral Questions

Canadians elected us with a clear mandate: to be bold and ambitious. That includes the important task of building the economy with the strongest growth in the G7. That is why we are moving forward. This important bill will help build one economy out of the 13 provincial and territorial economies. I hope that the opposition parties will answer Canadians' call and help fast-track this national interest bill.

* * *

● (1500)

[English]

OIL AND GAS INDUSTRY

Carol Anstey (Long Range Mountains, CPC): Mr. Speaker, the oil and gas industry is critical to Newfoundland and Labrador, making up 25% of our GDP and 41% of our exports. The province has targets to double oil and gas production and create thousands of good-paying jobs, but energy companies have made it clear that they will not invest while the Liberals' no new pipelines law, Bill C-69, as well as the oil and gas production cap, and the punishing industrial carbon tax, remain on the books.

Does the Prime Minister not realize that no one will build a pipeline under his anti-energy laws, or is it the plan to keep Canadian oil and gas in the ground?

Hon. Tim Hodgson (Minister of Energy and Natural Resources, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, as the hon. member knows, we presented the one Canadian economy bill to rapidly advance projects of national interest and build one Canadian economy, not 13. This bill would grow the economy and support our sovereignty to ensure we build the strongest economy in the G7.

Canada's new government will work with provinces, territories and indigenous partners to get projects built so Canada will be an energy superpower.

Jagsharan Singh Mahal (Edmonton Southeast, CPC): Mr. Speaker, 10 years of Liberal anti-energy laws have stopped pipelines from getting built. Energy companies will not build unless those Liberal laws are gone. To build pipelines, the Liberals need to repeal the suite of anti-energy laws: Bill C-69, the no new pipelines law; Bill C-48, the shipping ban; the job-killing oil and gas production cap; and laws such as the industrial carbon tax.

Is it the Prime Minister's plan to keep our oil and gas in the ground?

Hon. Tim Hodgson (Minister of Energy and Natural Resources, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, Canada's new government will get projects built, create high-paying jobs and bring prosperity to Canadians. That is why we presented the one Canadian economy bill, which would rapidly advance projects of national interest.

If my Conservative colleagues want to get projects built, they should support the bill.

* * *

MARINE TRANSPORTATION

Jeff Kibble (Cowichan—Malahat—Langford, CPC): Mr. Speaker, BC Ferries just announced that it will purchase four new full-sized ferries from a Chinese state-owned company rather than

from a proven Canadian shipbuilder, such as Seaspan in North Vancouver. The Liberals are set to hand over \$30 million to BC Ferries, while BC Ferries hands over critical jobs and investment in industry to China.

Will the Liberals attach a common-sense condition of buying Canadian-built ships to BC Ferries in order to receive its \$30-million subsidy?

Hon. Chrystia Freeland (Minister of Transport and Internal Trade, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, I absolutely share the member opposite's concern when it comes to government procurement at all levels. Now is a time when we need to support Canadian workers and Canadian industries, and we need to work closely with our allies and trade partners. That project was not a federal government project.

* * *

NATIONAL DEFENCE

Julie Dzerowicz (Davenport, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, defending Canadians is one of our government's top priorities. Given the increasingly volatile global landscape, it is vital that our Canadian Armed Forces are properly equipped to meet the challenges we ask them to face. It is urgent that we take immediate action to strengthen our armed forces and support those who are serving our country.

Can the Secretary of State for Defence Procurement update us on the government's plans to meet our NATO commitments and ensure we are doing everything possible to protect our country?

Hon. Stephen Fuhr (Secretary of State (Defence Procurement), Lib.): Mr. Speaker, since this is the first time on my feet in the 45th Parliament, I would like to thank the good people of Kelowna, B.C. for placing their trust and confidence in me and electing me to the House for the second time.

Yesterday, the Prime Minister confirmed that Canada will meet its NATO 2% targets this fiscal year, five years ahead of schedule, with an additional investment of \$9.3 billion. We are accelerating procurement, modernizing capabilities and ensuring the troops have the tools and equipment they need to protect Canada and Canadians.

FISHERIES AND OCEANS

Chris d'Entremont (Acadie—Annapolis, CPC): Mr. Speaker, the economy of Acadie—Annapolis in rural Nova Scotia relies heavily on a strong lobster fishery, yet this past season, it went from bad to worse. According to a Global News report on May 2, some harvesters in southwest Nova Scotia had to give up on their season because they could not fish profitably. There were no lobsters and no price, and this is unacceptable.

Will the Minister of Fisheries finally listen to commercial fishers, where her predecessors failed to act, to take unregulated and unreported fishing seriously and implement immediate measures to protect our lobster stocks before it is too late?

● (1505)

Hon. Joanne Thompson (Minister of Fisheries, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, I am very pleased to say that I was in Nova Scotia for the last couple of weeks. I met with harvesters and lobster fishers, and I want to assure the member opposite that I will continue to do this work. We need to ensure that we have balanced fisheries, and we need to ensure that we support authorised fishing.

* * *

PUBLIC SAFETY

Jenny Kwan (Vancouver East, NDP): Mr. Speaker, the so-called stronger borders act makes Harper's Bill C-51 look like child's play. Bill C-2 is a sweeping attack on Canadian civil liberties. It would allow the RCMP and CSIS to make information demands from internet providers, banks, doctors, landlords and even therapists, without judicial oversight. This is not about border security. It is about government overreach and Big Brother tactics, plain and simple. It is a violation of our privacy, and it will be challenged in court.

Will the Prime Minister do the right thing, respect the charter, and withdraw this dangerous bill?

Hon. Gary Anandasangaree (Minister of Public Safety, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, the strong borders act will help keep Canadians safe. The bill will go after transnational child sex offenders via information sharing with our international policing partners, give law enforcement the tools it needs, choke off organized crime's illegal profits with a crackdown on money laundering, grant our border officers provisions to search export containers and stop auto theft rings. We will do this while ensuring the charter rights of Canadians and due process to make sure that our civil liberties and privacy rights are protected.

GOVERNMENT ORDERS

[Translation]

BUSINESS OF SUPPLY

OPPOSITION MOTION—CANADA CARBON REBATE AND PAYMENT TO QUEBEC

The House resumed from June 10 consideration of the motion and of the amendment.

Business of Supply

The Speaker: It being 3:07 p.m., the House will now proceed to the taking of the deferred recorded division on the amendment to the motion of the member for Saint-Jean relating to the business of supply.

Call in the members.

The question is on the following amendment.

Shall I dispense?

Some hon. members: No.

[Chair read text of amendment to House]

● (1520)

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

(Division No. 6)

YEAS

Members

Barsalou-Duval
Blanchet
Bonin
Brunelle-Duceppe
Davies (Vancouver Kingsway)
Deschênes
Garon
Gazan

Idlout
Kwan
Lemire
McPherson
Perron
Savard-Tremblay
Ste-Marie

Beaulieu
Blanchette-Joncas
Boulerice
Champoux
DeBellefeuille
Fortin
Gaudreau
Gill (Côte-Nord—Kawawachikamach—Nitassinan)
Johns
Larouche
May
Normandin
Plamondon
Simard
Thériault — 30

NAYS

Members

Aboultaif
Aitchison
Albas
Allison
Anand
Anderson
Arnold
Auguste
Bailey
Baker
Bardeesy
Barrett
Beech

Bélanger (Sudbury East—Manitoulin—Nickel Belt)
Berthold
Bezan
Blair
Blois
Borrelli
Brassard
Brock
Caputo

Acan
Al Soud
Ali
Alty
Anandasangaree
Anstey
Au
Baber
Bains
Baldinelli
Barlow
Battiste
Belanger (Desnethé—Mississippi—Churchill River)
Bendayan

Bexte
Bittle
Block
Bonk
Bragdon
Brière
Calkins
Carney

Business of Supply

Carr	Casey	Lloyd	Lobb
Chagger	Chambers	Long	Louis (Kitchener—Conestoga)
Champagne	Chang	Ma	MacDonald (Malpeque)
Chartrand	Chatel	MacDonald (Cardigan)	MacKinnon (Gatineau)
Chen	Chenette	Mahal	Malette (Bay of Quinte)
Chi	Chong	Malette (Kapuskasing—Timmins—Mushkegowuk)	Maloney
Church	Clark	Mantle	Martel
Cobena	Cody	Mazier	McCauley
Connors	Cooper	McGuinty	McKelvie
Cormier	Coteau	McKenzie	McKinnon (Coquitlam—Port Coquitlam)
Dabrusin	Dalton	McKnight	McLean (Calgary Centre)
Dancho	Dandurand	McLean (Esquimalt—Saanich—Sooke)	Melillo
Danko	Davidson	Ménard	Mendès
Davies (Niagara South)	Dawson	Menegakis	Michel
Deltell	d'Entremont	Miedema	Miller
DeRidder	Deschênes-Thériault	Mingarelli	Moore
Desrochers	Dhaliwal	Morin	Morrison
Dhillon	Diab	Morrissey	Motz
Diotte	Doherty	Muys	Myles
Dowdall	Duclos	Naqvi	Nater
Duguid	Duncan	Nathan	Nguyen
Dzerowicz	Earle	Noormohamed	Ntumba
Ehsassi	El-Khoury	Oliphant	Olszewski
Epp	Erskine-Smith	O'Rourke	Osborne
Eyolfson	Falk (Battlefords—Lloydminster—Meadow Lake)	Patzner	Paul-Hus
Falk (Provencher)	Fancy-Landry	Petitpas Taylor	Powlowski
Fanjoy	Fergus	Provost	Ramsay
Fisher	Fonseca	Rana	Redekopp
Fortier	Fragiskatos	Reid	Rempel Garner
Fraser	Freeland	Reynolds	Richards
Fry	Fuhr	Roberts	Robertson
Gaheer	Gainey	Rocheffort	Romanado
Gallant	Gasparro	Rood	Ross
Généreux	Genuis	Rowe	Royer
Gerretsen	Gill (Calgary Skyview)	Ruff	Sahota
Gill (Brampton West)	Gill (Calgary McKnight)	Saini	Sarai
Gill (Windsor West)	Gill (Abbotsford—South Langley)	Sari	Sawatzky
Gladu	Godin	Scheer	Schiefke
Goodridge	Gould	Schmale	Seebach
Gourde	Grant	Sgro	Sheehan
Greaves	Groleau	Shipley	Sidhu (Brampton East)
Guay	Guglielmin	Sidhu (Brampton South)	Small
Guilbeault	Gull-Masty	Sodhi	Sousa
Gunn	Hajdu	Steinley	Stevenson
Hallan	Hanley	St-Pierre	Strahl
Hardy	Harrison Hill	Strauss	Stubbs
Hepfner	Hirtle	Sudds	Tesser Derksen
Ho	Hoback	Thomas	Thompson
Hodgson	Hogan	Tochor	Tolmie
Holman	Housefather	Turnbull	Uppal
Hussen	Iacono	Valdez	van Koeverden
Jackson	Jaczek	Van Popta	Vandenbeld
Jansen	Jeneroux	Vien	Viersen
Jivani	Joly	Villeneuve	Vis
Joseph	Kayabaga	Wagantall	Warkentin
Kelloway	Kelly	Watchorn	Waugh
Khalid	Khanna	Weiler	Wilkinson
Kibble	Kirkland	Williamson	Yip
Klassen	Kmieci	Zahid	Zerucelli
Konanz	Koutrakis	Zimmer	Zuberi— 310
Kram	Kramp-Neuman		
Kronis	Kurek (Battle River—Crowfoot)		
Kuruc (Hamilton East—Stoney Creek)	Kusie		
Lake	Lalonde		
Lambropoulos	Lamoureux		
Lantsman	Lapointe (Rivière-des-Mille-Îles)		
Lapointe (Sudbury)	Lattanzio		
Lauzon	Lavack		
Lavoie	Lawrence		
Lawton	LeBlanc		
Lefebvre	Leitão		
Leslie	Lewis (Essex)		
Lewis (Haldimand—Norfolk)	Lightbound		

PAIRED

Members

Solomon— 2

Majumdar

The Speaker: I declare the amendment lost.

The next question is on the following motion.

Shall I dispense?

Some hon. members: No.

[Chair read text of motion to House]

The Speaker: 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]

Hon. Mark Gerretsen: Mr. Speaker, I request a recorded vote.

● (1535)

[Translation]

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

(Division No. 7)

YEAS

Members

Barsalou-Duval	Beaulieu
Blanchet	Blanchette-Joncas
Bonin	Boulerice
Brunelle-Duceppe	Champoux
Davies (Vancouver Kingsway)	DeBellefeuille
Deschênes	Fortin
Garon	Gaudreau
Gazan	Gill (Côte-Nord—Kawawachikamach—Nitassinan)
Idlout	Johns
Kwan	Larouche
Lemire	May
McPherson	Normandin
Perron	Plamondon
Savard-Tremblay	Simard
Ste-Marie	Thériault— 30

NAYS

Members

Aboulttaif	Acan
Aitchison	Al Soud
Albas	Ali
Allison	Alty
Anand	Anandasangaree
Anderson	Anstey
Arnold	Au
Auguste	Baber
Bailey	Bains
Baker	Baldinelli
Bardeesy	Barlow
Barrett	Battiste
Beech	Belanger (Desnethé—Missinippi—Churchill River)
Bélanger (Sudbury East—Manitoulin—Nickel Belt)	Bendayan
Berthold	Bexte
Bezan	Bittle
Blair	Block
Blois	Bonk
Borrelli	Bragdon
Brassard	Brière
Brock	Calkins
Carney	Carr
Casey	Chagger
Chambers	Champagne
Chang	Chartrand
Chatel	Chen
Chenette	Chi
Chong	Church
Clark	Cobena
Cody	Connors

Business of Supply

Cooper	Cormier
Coteau	Dabrusin
Dalton	Dancho
Dandurand	Danko
Davidson	Davies (Niagara South)
Dawson	Deltell
d'Entremont	DeRidder
Deschênes-Thériault	Desrochers
Dhaliwal	Dhillon
Diab	Diotte
Doherty	Dowdall
Duclos	Duguid
Duncan	Dzerowicz
Earle	Ehsassi
El-Khoury	Epp
Ersine-Smith	Eyolfson
Falk (Battlefords—Lloydminster—Meadow Lake)	Falk (Provencher)
Fancy-Landry	Fanjoy
Fergus	Fisher
Fonseca	Fortier
Fragiskatos	Fraser
Freeland	Fry
Fuhr	Gaheer
Gainey	Gallant
Gasparro	Généreux
Genuis	Gerretsen
Gill (Calgary Skyview)	Gill (Brampton West)
Gill (Calgary McKnight)	Gill (Windsor West)
Gill (Abbotsford—South Langley)	Gladu
Godin	Goodridge
Gould	Gourde
Grant	Greaves
Groleau	Guay
Guglielmin	Guilbeault
Gull-Masty	Gunn
Hajdu	Hallan
Hanley	Hardy
Harrison Hill	Hepfner
Hirtle	Ho
Hoback	Hodgson
Hogan	Holman
Housefather	Hussen
Iacono	Jackson
Jaczek	Jansen
Jeneroux	Jivani
Joly	Joseph
Kayabaga	Kelloway
Kelly	Khalid
Khanna	Kibble
Kirkland	Klassen
Kniec	Konanz
Koutrakis	Kram
Kramp-Neuman	Kronis
Kurek (Battle River—Crowfoot)	Kuruc (Hamilton East—Stoney Creek)
Kusie	Lake
Lalonde	Lambropoulos
Lamoureux	Lapointe (Rivière-des-Mille-Îles)
Lapointe (Sudbury)	Lattanzio
Lauzon	Lavack
Lavoie	Lawrence
Lawton	LeBlanc
Lefebvre	Leitão
Leslie	Lewis (Essex)
Lewis (Haldimand—Norfolk)	Lightbound
Lloyd	Lobb
Long	Louis (Kitchener—Conestoga)
Ma	MacDonald (Malpeque)
MacDonald (Cardigan)	MacKinnon (Gatineau)
Mahal	Malette (Bay of Quinte)
Malette (Kapusking—Timmins—Mushkegowuk)	Maloney
Mantle	Martel
Mazier	McCauley

Privilege

McGuinty	McKelvie
McKenzie	McKinnon (Coquitlam—Port Coquitlam)
McKnight	McLean (Calgary Centre)
McLean (Esquimalt—Saanich—Sooke)	Melillo
Ménard	Mendès
Menegakis	Michel
Miedema	Miller
Mingarelli	Moore
Morin	Morrison
Morrissey	Motz
Muys	Myles
Naqvi	Nater
Nathan	Nguyen
Noormohamed	Ntumba
Oliphant	Olczewski
O'Rourke	Osborne
Patzer	Paul-Hus
Petitpas Taylor	Powlowski
Provost	Ramsay
Rana	Redekopp
Reid	Rempel Garner
Reynolds	Richards
Roberts	Robertson
Rochefort	Romanado
Rood	Ross
Rowe	Royer
Ruff	Sahota
Saini	Sarai
Sari	Sawatzky
Scheer	Schiefke
Schmale	Seebach
Sgro	Sheehan
Shipley	Sidhu (Brampton East)
Sidhu (Brampton South)	Small
Sodhi	Sousa
Steinley	Stevenson
St-Pierre	Strahl
Strauss	Stubbs
Sudds	Tesser Derksen
Thomas	Thompson
Tochor	Tolmie
Turnbull	Uppal
Valdez	van Koeverden
Van Popta	Vandenbeld
Vien	Viersen
Villeneuve	Vis
Wagantall	Warkentin
Watchorn	Waugh
Weiler	Wilkinson
Williamson	Yip
Zahid	Zerucelli
Zimmer	Zuberi— 308

PAIRED

Members

Majumdar

Solomon— 2

The Speaker: I declare the motion lost.

I would like to remind members that there will be a reception for members and pages in the Speaker's dining room between 5 p.m. and 7 p.m.

* * *

PRIVILEGE

CANADA CARBON REBATE

Jean-Denis Garon (Mirabel, BQ): Mr. Speaker, I wish to raise a question of privilege.

Yesterday, during consideration of the main estimates in committee of the whole, the Minister of Finance and National Revenue deliberately misled the House when he answered one of my questions. I asked him several times whether he acknowledged that the Canada carbon rebate cheques that were issued by the federal government in the middle of the election were sent to people before the tax was collected. The minister finally responded that no, they were not. I invite the Chair to consult the Hansard on the matter.

It seems that the minister did not see fit to admit the truth. If we refer to the events leading up to the Prime Minister's decision during the election campaign, an order was made to suspend carbon pricing and eliminate the system as soon as the new government was elected. However, the House will recall that Ottawa had decided to pay the \$3.7 billion to Canadians, with the notable exception of Quebecers, and that the sums ranging between \$220 and \$456 were paid out in eight Canadian provinces and territories.

Thus, the Canadian carbon rebate cheques that were sent out in April, which cost \$3.7 billion, were not funded by Canadian consumer carbon pricing and Canadians never paid the amounts they nevertheless received.

The Minister of Finance tried to mislead us by deliberately stating that the carbon tax rebate cheques issued during the election campaign in the form of the Canada carbon rebate were a result of consumer carbon pricing even though the tax had not been collected beforehand. In our view, such a statement constitutes a breach of parliamentary privilege, if not contempt of Parliament.

On page 82 of the third edition of *House of Commons Procedure and Practice*, one of the grounds for contempt is “deliberately attempting to mislead the House or a committee (by way of statement, evidence, or petition)”.

This point is also reiterated on page 112. According to *House of Commons Procedure and Practice*, it has been agreed on several occasions by successive Speakers that three criteria must be met to demonstrate that a member, in this case the Minister of Finance, has deliberately misled the House.

In a ruling on May 5, 2016, at page 2956 of the Debates, Speaker Regan reiterated these criteria. First, the statement needs to be misleading. Second, the member making the statement has to know that the statement was incorrect when it was made. Finally, it needs to be proven that the member intended to mislead the House.

I respectfully submit that the minister's response meets the criteria set out in *House of Commons Procedure and Practice*, namely, that the House has been misled following statements made in the House by one of its members, whether that member is an MP, a minister or even a prime minister.

First, the minister's answer is misleading because it implies that the rebates were made through the carbon pricing mechanism, when in fact the money came from the public purse, which is made up of taxes paid by Canadians among other things. The minister therefore seems to be saying that this money paid to Canadians does not come in part from the pockets of Quebecers, which is just not so.

Second, there is no doubt in our minds that the minister knew that his answer was likely to mislead the House. It is quite obvious that a minister with so much experience could not have thought that the Canada carbon rebate issued on April 22, after the deductions had been suspended, was part of the carbon pricing system put in place by the previous government, in which he was a minister. However, during the election, the media reported that a spokesperson for the Liberal Party of Canada had stated that the final rebate was “a transitional measure to prevent millions of households from suddenly losing their support.”

In response to the leader of the Bloc Québécois earlier today, the Prime Minister confirmed this position from the election. During question period today, the Prime Minister said that the final Canada carbon rebate payment was issued to help millions and millions of Canadian families through a transition period, adding that many families outside Quebec and British Columbia need this transition period. That is the reason being given for the amounts paid out as part of the Canada carbon rebate during the election.

Third, it seems entirely reasonable to believe that the minister intended to mislead the House, given that when he gave his answer, the finance minister had every reason to hide the fact that the money used had come from public funds. I asked the minister the same question many times before I got his answer. That suggests that the minister did not want to admit that the money had not come from administering the carbon pricing regime but had instead come from public funds, collected in part from Quebec taxpayers.

• (1540)

The fact that he himself is responsible for matters pertaining to appropriations and the budget suggests that he had a vested interest in keeping Canadians and Quebecers from finding out that the Canada carbon rebate payments had come out of the public funds to which Canadians and Quebecers contribute.

While I recognize that vigilance is required in these situations and that matters of this nature are not to be taken lightly before being found to be a prima facie breach of privilege, I still believe that this question of privilege warrants serious consideration. In my view, there is no dispute as to facts, opinions or conclusions to be drawn from an allegation of fact, which would ordinarily be a matter of debate.

I asked the minister, “Were these carbon tax rebate cheques that were sent out in the middle of an election to buy votes in eight provinces delivered without the tax that funded them being collected?” It was a very clear, direct and succinct question, and the minister's answer was no.

In conclusion, the Bloc Québécois believes that there is a prima facie breach of parliamentary privilege and that the matter should be referred to the Standing Committee on Procedure and House Affairs for study.

• (1545)

The Speaker: I will take the question of privilege under advisement.

The hon. member for Mégantic—L'Érable—Lotbinière.

Routine Proceedings

Luc Berthold (Mégantic—L'Érable—Lotbinière, CPC): Mr. Speaker, in the event that you find a prima facie case of privilege, we reserve the right to intervene on this matter at a later time.

[English]

Hon. Kevin Lamoureux (Parliamentary Secretary to the Leader of the Government in the House of Commons, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, we would like to respond to the issue at an appropriate time.

ROUTINE PROCEEDINGS

[English]

NATIONAL LIVESTOCK BRAND OF CANADA ACT

Steven Bonk (Souris—Moose Mountain, CPC) moved for leave to introduce Bill C-208, An Act to recognize a national livestock brand as a symbol of Canada and of western and frontier heritage.

He said: Mr. Speaker, it is with a profound sense of honour and deep personal connection that I rise in the House to table a private member's bill on behalf of my friend and colleague, the hon. member for Battle River—Crowfoot. We share not only a strong personal friendship but also a deep-rooted belief in the importance of honouring the people, values and traditions that helped shape this country, especially those born of the land.

I am proud to represent the good people of Souris—Moose Mountain, home to generations of ranchers, farmers, oil and gas workers, miners and manufacturers. These are the people whose livelihoods not only support our communities but also power this country. They are the builders of Canada in every sense of the word.

As a fifth-generation Canadian rancher, I say that this motion could not be more personal. For those of us who have lived the ranching life, a livestock brand is more than a practical tool; it is a legacy. It tells a story. It represents families who rose before dawn, worked through storms and endured hardships of the land with quiet determination and unwavering faith.

This motion seeks to formally recognize the livestock brand by adding it to the official inventory of Canadian national symbols, where it rightfully belongs, alongside the maple leaf, the beaver and the Mountie. In doing this, we honour the immense contributions of ranchers, farmers and indigenous peoples, and we affirm the enduring significance of our western and frontier heritage in shaping the Canadian identity. This symbol is a quiet but powerful reminder of who we are: resilient, rooted and proud.

I want to sincerely thank the hon. member for Wellington—Halton Hills North for seconding this motion.

Routine Proceedings

I thank all members of this House for their thoughtful consideration. Recognizing this symbol is not just a matter of history; it is a matter of national pride.

(Motions deemed adopted, bill read the first time and printed)

* * *

PETITIONS**HEALTH CARE WORKERS**

Brad Vis (Mission—Matsqui—Abbotsford, CPC): Mr. Speaker, I rise today to present a petition on behalf of British Columbians who are facing repeated closures of hospital emergency rooms. In my riding, some of those closures took place during the Chilcotin landslides, on the hottest day in 2024 and on many days since. While hospital closures are regularly blamed on staffing shortages, delays in recognition of foreign-trained health care workers and a critical lack of housing supply are exacerbating the issue.

The petitioners call on the Government of Canada to work with provincial counterparts to ensure that foreign-trained health care workers are notified within 60 days of their eligibility to practise and to address the severe lack of available housing for such workers.

CHARITABLE ORGANIZATIONS

Garnett Genuis (Sherwood Park—Fort Saskatchewan, CPC): Mr. Speaker, I have one petition to table today. This petition relates to recommendations 429 and 430 in the finance committee's pre-budget consultation report, which aim to remove the advancement of religion as a recognized charitable purpose and revoke charitable status from organizations with pro-life convictions. This would have the effect of stripping charitable status from vital faith-based organizations, such as food banks, seniors care facilities and those offering newcomer support, mental health outreach, youth programs, employment programs, etc. These communities promote hope, belonging, social cohesion and compassion, benefiting both their members and the broader public.

Further, the petitioners note the importance of freedom of religion in the charter and that singling out or excluding faith-based charities from the charitable sector based on religious beliefs undermines the diversity and pluralism foundational to our country. They call on the government to reject recommendations 429 and 430, refrain from including these recommendations in the federal budget or related legislation and affirm the charitable status of faith-based organizations, whose work flows from sincerely held beliefs and whose contributions serve the common good of Canada.

● (1550)

Mel Arnold (Kamloops—Shuswap—Central Rockies, CPC): Mr. Speaker, I rise today to present a petition on behalf of Canadians and the residents of Kamloops—Shuswap—Central Rockies.

The petitioners state that religious charities play a significant role in the charitable sector and the life of our country. More than 30,000 charities fall under the advancement of religion category, which is roughly 42% of the charitable sector.

The petition calls on the Government of Canada to reject the finance committee recommendations that would remove the advancement of religion as a charitable purpose.

Michael Guglielmin (Vaughan—Woodbridge, CPC): Mr. Speaker, I rise today to present a petition on behalf of my constituents. It is a petition that asks for recommendations 430 and 429 to be removed and scrapped; they aim to revoke charitable status from religious organizations. These organizations in our community provide benefit for seniors, including food banks. They support newcomers, youth programs and mental health outreach.

The petition calls on the government to reject recommendations 429 and 430, refrain from including these recommendations in the federal budget or any related legislation and affirm the charitable status of faith-based organizations, whose work sincerely helps the advancement of society.

* * *

QUESTIONS ON THE ORDER PAPER

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

The Speaker: Is that agreed?

Some hon. members: Agreed.

* * *

MOTIONS FOR PAPERS

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

The Speaker: Is that agreed?

Some hon. members: Agreed.

The Speaker: I wish to inform the House that because of the deferred recorded divisions, the time provided for Government Orders will be extended by 28 minutes.

GOVERNMENT ORDERS

[English]

MAKING LIFE MORE AFFORDABLE FOR CANADIANS ACT

The House resumed from June 6 consideration of the motion that Bill C-4, An Act respecting certain affordability measures for Canadians and another measure, be read the second time and referred to a committee.

Doug Eyolfson (Winnipeg West, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, I will be splitting my time with the member for Burnaby Central.

Today I rise in this House to speak to Bill C-4, the making life more affordable for Canadians act, a piece of legislation that stands at the heart of our government's commitment to build an economy that works for everyone, not just for the privileged few.

During the election campaign, I heard a clear message from voters; they want a government that delivers real results, not three-word slogans. Today, through Bill C-4, we are doing just that. Bill C-4 addresses one of the most pressing and immediate challenges facing Canadians in every corner of the country: affordability. The cost of living has risen sharply in recent years, whether for groceries, gas or rent. These are not abstract issues. They are the everyday realities faced by families, seniors, students and workers alike. These are the conversations unfolding in homes across every province and territory.

Our government was elected on a promise to build the strongest economy in the G7 and to strengthen the middle class and support those working hard to join it. Bill C-4 is a crucial step in fulfilling that promise. It would deliver on three key priorities announced in the Speech from the Throne: a middle-class tax cut, which would provide relief for nearly 22 million Canadians; the elimination of the goods and services tax for first-time homebuyers purchasing new homes valued up to \$1 million; and the removal of the consumer carbon price. While each of these initiatives stands on its own merit, together they form a cohesive strategy aimed at reducing the everyday financial burden on Canadians and restoring a stronger sense of economic security.

Let me begin with the middle-class tax cut. Canada's personal tax system is structured on the principle of progressivity: Those who earn more pay a higher share. However, even within this structure, we know that relief at the lowest tax bracket has the widest reach. That is why we are reducing the lowest federal personal income tax rate from 15% to 14%, a change that would directly benefit nearly 22 million Canadians. To put this into perspective, with the full effect of this measure taking hold, individuals would save up to \$420, and two-income families would see up to \$840 in tax relief. That is not just a number. It is tangible, meaningful relief.

We are not waiting to act. The Canada Revenue Agency would update its deduction tables by July 1, 2025, ensuring that paycheques reflect this change immediately. This means more money in people's pockets now, not just next year during tax season. Lowering the tax rate is not just a fiscal move. It is a statement of principle. It sends a clear signal. This government is taking action so that Canadians can take care of what matters most: their families, their future and their peace of mind.

Government Orders

For far too many Canadians, the dream of owning their first home has become a distant and daunting goal. The soaring prices and limited availability in our housing market have created barriers that seem insurmountable. We understand all too well the deep frustration and disappointment felt by those who have worked tirelessly, scrimping and saving for years, only to find that their hard-earned savings still fall short of turning their hopes into reality. That is why Bill C-4 introduces the first-time homebuyer GST rebate, a bold and transformative measure designed to lift a significant barrier for those striving to enter the housing market.

This rebate offers 100% relief of the GST on new homes priced up to \$1 million, while homes valued between \$1 million and \$1.5 million qualify for partial GST relief. In real terms, this translates into up to \$50,000 in tax savings for first-time buyers, a substantial financial boost that could make the dream of home ownership a reality.

Recently, I spoke with people in my riding of Winnipeg West, who are working hard and saving diligently but feeling overwhelmed by the rising costs and mounting fees just to get their foot in the door. This rebate would make a world of difference for them, turning their hope of owning a home into a real possibility. It would be a powerful catalyst that acknowledges the perseverance and discipline required to save for a first home and rewards that commitment by making housing more affordable and accessible. Moreover, this initiative would send a strong signal to real estate developers, incentivizing the construction of a broader range of housing types, from townhouses and semi-detached homes to condominiums, co-operative housing and even mobile homes, with the aim of expanding supply where it is needed most.

Since day one, our government's mission has been unwavering: to confront the housing crisis head-on by building more homes, building smarter and building affordably. This measure is one of the key steps that would deliver just that.

Government Orders

● (1555)

Finally, I want to address a measure that has sparked significant discussion across the country, namely the removal of the consumer carbon price. As part of the legislation, our government is proposing to permanently repeal the fuel charge framework outlined in part 1 of the Greenhouse Gas Pollution Pricing Act. This repeal would be carefully and responsibly implemented in four phases, beginning with a retroactive repeal of charging provisions, effective April 1, 2025, and concluding with a full wind-down by April 1, 2035.

Why are we taking this significant step? It is because responsible government must be attentive and responsive to the lived realities of its citizens. We have listened closely to the voices of Canadians from coast to coast to coast, from hard-working farmers in rural heartlands to families in remote communities and small business owners who face mounting expenses. We understand that the rising cost of fuel, driven in part by the consumer carbon price, has disproportionately impacted these groups, creating additional financial strain that makes day-to-day life more challenging.

Let me be clear. Repealing the consumer carbon price does not signal a retreat from our climate commitments. Part 2 of the act, which includes the output-based pricing system for large industrial emitters, remains firmly intact. Our commitment to reducing emissions, advancing clean energy and achieving our net-zero targets remains unwavering and focused. However, for everyday Canadians, especially in communities without reliable transit options or alternative heating sources, this measure would deliver much-needed certainty and relief from rising costs, helping to ease the financial burden while we continue to build a cleaner, more sustainable future.

I want to emphasize that the measures outlined in Bill C-4 are not isolated actions and are part of a comprehensive affordability agenda being rolled out by our government. From early learning and child care investments such as the national school food program to national pharmacare and the Canada dental plan, we are taking a balanced approach, one that defends fiscal responsibility while making smart, targeted investments in the lives of everyday Canadians.

We also recognize that economic uncertainty persists, exacerbated by geopolitical tensions, shifting global trade dynamics and, more recently, tariff threats from our international partners. In the face of these challenges, our government is choosing action.

Bill C-4 would ensure that we are proactively reducing costs for Canadians at a time when external pressures are rising. We are not waiting for the perfect moment or for uncertainty to pass. We are acting decisively now to protect the financial well-being of families and workers across the country. By cutting taxes, supporting first-time homebuyers and easing energy costs, Bill C-4 offers real, tangible relief that Canadians can feel in their daily lives.

Our commitment is clear: to build a stronger, more resilient economy that works for everyone, even in the face of global economic uncertainty and trade challenges. Together, we are laying the foundation for a future where every Canadian has the opportunity to thrive.

● (1600)

Andrew Lawton (Elgin—St. Thomas—London South, CPC): Madam Speaker, I thank the hon. member for finally acknowledging what Conservatives have been talking about for years, which is how harmful the consumer carbon tax is for a great many Canadians. I appreciated very much his willingness to explain exactly how the increase to the price of fuel has been hurting people.

I am a little confused, though, because I brought this up to the very same member last week, and he said that he defended and supported the consumer carbon tax and that it was a “victim of misinformation”. When Conservatives said what the member just said, it was misinformation, but when he says it, it is supposed to be a reflection of the government's commitment to affordability.

Which is it? Was the consumer carbon tax making things less affordable for Canadians or is that just a conspiracy theory?

Doug Eyolfson: Madam Speaker, it is interesting to hear the member of the party across talk about conspiracy theories. I will say that it was a product of its time. At the time, it was doing what it was supposed to do. We have a changing economy, and we heard from Canadians that they want a change.

[Translation]

Patrick Bonin (Repentigny, BQ): Madam Speaker, I appreciate seeing the extent to which the Liberals have decided to abandon the fight against climate change and are rushing, with their first bills, to eliminate consumer carbon pricing and, above all, to not replace it with anything. Since they have formed government, they have been slowly dismantling the climate change action plan that the previous government had passed and that was already flawed and not nearly ambitious enough. What is the carbon tax being replaced with given that, once eliminated, emissions reductions will automatically cease?

Can the Liberals and the member explain to me why the government is backing away from the fight against climate change, while western Canada is in flames and it is directly related to climate change? Are they really abandoning Canadians and Quebeckers?

● (1605)

[English]

Doug Eyolfson: Madam Speaker, I live in Winnipeg. I have been inhaling the remains of much of northern Manitoba for the last two weeks, and I appreciate the catastrophic fires we are dealing with.

We are not backing down on our climate commitments. We have made one change to our carbon pricing system. We are still holding large industrial polluters responsible by having them pay a carbon price, and we are going to be investing heavily in non-polluting forms of energy.

[Translation]

Tim Watchorn (Les Pays-d'en-Haut, Lib.): Madam Speaker, when I was door knocking in my riding, people spoke to me about the increased cost of living. Can my hon. colleague tell us how the tax cut from 15% to 14% will help people with their everyday purchases?

[English]

Doug Eyolfson: Madam Speaker, we know that those in the lower tax brackets with the lowest incomes are the ones most disproportionately affected by affordability problems. This will give meaningful financial relief to people in the lowest income brackets to help them make ends meet. This is how we are going to continue to improve the lives of Canadians, particularly those who are struggling most.

Rhonda Kirkland (Oshawa, CPC): Madam Speaker, the member said that he felt the carbon tax did what it needed to do for the time that we had it. Can he tell me exactly how much the emissions were lowered as a result of the carbon tax?

Some hon. members: Oh, oh!

Doug Eyolfson: Madam Speaker, in response to the heckling, it was not zero. I will admit I do not know the number.

Wade Chang (Burnaby Central, Lib.): Madam Speaker, I rise today in the House of Commons to deliver my very first speech deeply humbled and honoured. I want to begin by thanking the people of Burnaby Central for giving me this extraordinary privilege. I am grateful for their trust, confidence and belief in me. The seat I occupy in this chamber belongs to them.

I would like to take a moment to thank Jagmeet Singh for his years of service to our community and to Canada. His passion for justice, compassion for working families and commitment to equality have left a meaningful legacy. While we come from different political paths, I deeply respect his contributions, so I thank him.

I would also like to extend my heartfelt thanks to my amazing volunteers and campaign team, who worked tirelessly to ensure that Burnaby Central had a strong Liberal voice in Ottawa. Most of all, I would like to thank my dear husband Van and our beloved fur baby Marshmallow for their unwavering support, understanding and sacrifices as I take on this responsibility to serve.

As the first gay Asian member of this House, I stand on the shoulders of those who came before me. I carry with me the hopes and dreams of countless immigrant families who came to Canada with so little, yet gave everything to build a better life.

When I knocked on doors in Burnaby Central, I heard the same message: The cost of living needs to come down. That is why our government is committed to a middle-class tax cut and targeted investments that make life more affordable. We are building more homes, growing the number of high-quality jobs and cutting costs for everyday Canadians. That is what it means to build Canada strong: an economy that works for everyone from coast to coast to coast.

I am here for Burnaby Central and I am here because of Burnaby Central. Allow me to share some stories of Burnaby Central.

Government Orders

One story that I carry with me to this House is of a biracial same-sex couple. Cindy and Debra first met as classmates in junior high school, and although life took them in different directions, they reconnected decades later at their 30-year school reunion in 2010. At that time, both were married to men and raising children. Their lives were full, but not truly fulfilling. That reunion sparked a reconnection that would eventually change everything.

Fifteen years later, they are now retired from meaningful careers in health care and share a home in my riding. What they cherish most is the freedom to live openly, honestly and without judgment in a community that accepts and embraces them. Their story is one of courage, love and the quiet strength of being seen. Happy Pride, Canada.

Next, I would like to talk about the British Columbia Institute of Technology. Located in the heart of my riding, BCIT has been delivering flexible, relevant and future-focused education for over 60 years. BCIT prepares learners to lead innovation in their workplaces and communities, and its impact is felt across B.C. and beyond.

Polytechs like BCIT are uniquely positioned to support this government's mandate to make Canada strong. To meet the demand for housing, infrastructure and major projects across the country, we need BCIT's apprentices. To deliver vital health care, cybersecurity and AI services, we need BCIT's graduates. To move goods across provinces and territories, we need BCIT's transport training in rail, air, marine and land.

As one of B.C.'s largest post-secondary institutions, its students work on innovative solutions in areas such as energy efficiency, agricultural technology and robotics. This is proof that the future of Canadian innovation is in good hands. BCIT, along with its remarkable students and faculty, is empowering people, shaping B.C. and Canada and inspiring global progress. I am proud that it calls Burnaby Central home.

Government Orders

Burnaby is also home to many vibrant immigrant families whose stories are deeply woven into the fabric of Canada. One of those stories belongs to Monica Tsai, a proud resident of my riding and the chairperson of the Taiwanese Canadian Cultural Society. Since 1991, this association has been a tireless champion for cultural exchange, civic participation and community building. The association brings people together. It offers language classes, senior services, youth programs and cultural events that celebrate Taiwan's rich history and heritage, while helping newcomers find their place in this beautiful country of Canada.

Whenever I visit the association, I see reflections of my own journey. I see new immigrants learning English while holding on to their mother tongue. I see volunteers preparing for the Lunar New Year celebration, Latin festivals and Canada Day flag-raising ceremonies, all under one roof. That is what Canada looks like.

• (1610)

I also want to extend my heartfelt thanks to Christine Cunningham for her thoughtful support during my campaign and for her deep passion for protecting Burnaby's natural environment. Christine has been a tireless advocate for biodiversity. Her leadership has inspired so many of us in the community, including me. She reminds us that loving wildlife also means protecting the ecosystem that it and we rely on.

One of my constituents, Rose, a first-generation Italian-Canadian, has proudly called Burnaby home for over 25 years. She moved here seeking not just a house but a community, one where opportunity, belonging and dignity could thrive. From her childhood roots on east Vancouver's Commercial Drive to raising her daughter in Burnaby, Rose found what so many newcomers hope for: a place where neighbours still greet each other with warmth, where diversity is not just accepted but celebrated and where families can build life with stability and purpose. Her story is a powerful reminder that Burnaby is not just where we live; it is where we grow, connect and dream.

I would like to share a personal story to conclude my speech. In 2010, my mother noticed blood in her urine. The doctors thought she could have bladder cancer. What followed was a long series of delays and tests. There were delays in referrals, delays in diagnosis and delays in getting answers. Then came the MRI. It changed everything. It was not bladder cancer; it was stage 3 cervical cancer.

Nothing prepares someone for news like that. My family watched my mom fight through rounds of chemotherapy and radiation. We prayed. We hoped. Less than two years later, she was gone. She was the heart of my family. Her life was far too short, but she left behind something powerful: her example. As a child, I believed I could be anything. Through every challenge, my mom would remind me to be the blessing that others need. That is why I became a lawyer; I wanted to help people, especially those who could not fight for themselves, and that is why I am here in the House of Commons today. I want to use every skill I can, every hardship I have lived through, to be a voice for those who are still waiting for change.

This is the power of immigrant families. We endure hardship, but we pass on hope. We come to this country with almost nothing, but then we build something better, not just for ourselves but also for

our communities and for our future generations. As Professor Dumbledore said in Harry Potter, "Happiness can be found, even in the darkest of times, if one only remembers to turn on the light." I am here to help turn on the light for Burnaby Central and for every Canadian still waiting in the dark. Let us do this together.

This is her story. This is his story. This is my story. Above all, it is our Canadian story, the story of a nation built on courage, compassion and the strength of many voices coming together as one.

• (1615)

Michael Guglielmin (Vaughan—Woodbridge, CPC): Mr. Speaker, the member's speech was touching. I congratulate him on his election to the House of Commons.

Could the member share some thoughts on his late mother and how she would think of his operating in the chamber and serving his country?

Wade Chang: Madam Speaker, Canadians are working harder than ever, but so many feel as if they are falling behind. In Burnaby Central, I have spoken to families struggling with rising rent, students worrying about groceries and seniors stretching every dollar. That is why our government is focusing on real, measurable relief by lowering taxes for the middle class, investing in housing and in child care, and helping people hold on to more of what they earn, because a strong economy is measured not just in numbers alone; it is measured in whether people can build a good life for themselves and their family.

[Translation]

Mario Beaulieu (La Pointe-de-l'Île, BQ): Madam Speaker, I commend my colleague for his speech.

I want to pick up on what my colleague from Repentigny was saying. The Liberals did away with the carbon tax and their measures to fight climate change. However, during the election campaign, they promised to increase the carbon tax for big industry. However, there is nothing about that in this bill.

Do they intend to do something, particularly since the European Union is planning to charge countries, like Canada, where it is free or does not cost much to pollute?

[English]

Wade Chang: Madam Speaker, our government is attracting investment, growing our resource sector and protecting our environment. At the same time, it is using Canadian innovation and Canadian technology to create more Canadian jobs.

In my riding of Burnaby Central, there are many companies focused on carbon capture technology, renewable energy and solar power. These companies are hiring hundreds of Canadian workers in Burnaby. The choice between the environment and the economy is a false one. We are focused on growing Canada into an energy superpower while protecting our environment at the same time, and that is what Canadians expect us to do.

Maggie Chi (Parliamentary Secretary to the Minister of Health, Lib.): Madam Speaker, I first want to congratulate my colleague and friend on his election and on his first speech in the House. As we in the chamber all know, and also as the member alluded to in his speech, multiculturalism is not just something we value; it is part of who we are as Canadians. Could the member speak to how our diversity continues to be one of our country's greatest strengths, not just socially but also economically?

• (1620)

Wade Chang: Madam Speaker, as a gay Asian Canadian, I know what it means to live in a country where inclusion is not just principle but a lived promise. In Burnaby Central, I see promise every day in churches, temples, mosques, Pride parades, seniors homes, newcomer classes and small businesses run by people whose first language is not English or French.

Multiculturalism is not a side project of the Canadian government; it is essential to who we are and how we grow. Our government will continue to support programs, protections and partnerships that ensure that everyone can live safely, speak freely and participate fully in Canadian life. That is how we build a country where no one is asked to choose between who they are and where they belong.

Hon. Kevin Lamoureux (Parliamentary Secretary to the Leader of the Government in the House of Commons, Lib.): Madam Speaker, I compliment the member on his speech. I really enjoyed his comments. He is no doubt going to be a very strong advocate not only Burnaby but also for the province of British Columbia.

I would just like to hear the member's thoughts in regard to why it was important that the Prime Minister's first legislation was dealing with the issue of a tax break for Canadians. It is bill C-4.

Wade Chang: Madam Speaker, I share the hon. member's concerns. These are the issues that I hear about very often when I speak with residents of Burnaby Central. Whether it is public safety, affordability or building a stronger economy, our government is focused on practical solutions that deliver real, measurable results for Canadians. People expect—

The Assistant Deputy Speaker (Alexandra Mendès): Resuming debate, the hon. member for Calgary East.

Jasraj Hallan (Calgary East, CPC): Madam Speaker, I will be splitting my time with my very good friend, someone who is a very hard worker and a very patriotic Canadian, the hon. member for Calgary Skyview.

As the The Who says in its song *Won't Get Fooled Again*:

Meet the new boss
Same as the old boss.

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If the bill is any indication of how the government intends to make its legislation, we are going to see a repeat of all its old boss's habits of governing by platitudes and poorly thought-out legislation.

Do not get me wrong. Conservatives always support tax cuts; we are the party of tax cuts. In typical Liberal fashion, the Liberals' new boss tried to plagiarize Conservative policies, but just like the old guy, failed to do it right.

We all know that imitation is the best form of flattery. The fact that the Liberals are copying Conservative policies is a compliment to the hard work our members on this side of the House have been doing over the last few years. I cannot think of a better team than the Conservative MPs, staff and stakeholders who have put together world-class policies for the Liberals to steal.

I want to take this time to give a special thanks to Conservative leader Pierre Poilievre for finally getting the consumer carbon tax repealed once and for all, for all Canadians. After an eight-year fight, Conservatives axed the carbon tax scam for all Canadians, leaving more of Canadians' hard-earned money in their pockets, where it should have been in the first place.

In October 2024, we announced our GST rebate on new homes to save all homebuyers the cost of the GST on newly built homes. After the Liberals' disastrous job-killing capital gains tax hike announcement, Conservatives promised a “bring it home” tax cut for all Canadian workers, including an income tax cut. These were all things we included in our Conservative platform in the last election. Now we see in the bill we are debating today that the Liberals have taken a lot of our ideas but once again have not implemented them properly.

Let us go through the parts of the bill that we are concerned about. Part 1 of the bill would save Canadian workers only 1% on the lowest tax bracket, which for the average worker amounts to about \$420 a year. In contrast, Conservatives proposed cutting income tax by 15%, which would lower the first tax bracket to 12.75%. That would save the average worker \$900 a year. That is more than double what the Liberals have.

Thanks to Liberal inflation, interest rate hikes, other taxes and the skyrocketing cost of living, wages have not kept up with the rising cost of food, shelter or clothing. Canadians are spending more on taxes than on food, shelter and clothing combined. Families are paying \$10,000 more in taxes than they did in 2015. The average family will pay an extra \$800 on food just this year, making the annual bill for groceries this year for an average family about \$17,000.

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Young Canadians are giving up on the dream of home ownership. Young Canadians are paying for basic necessities by borrowing more and more on their credit card. Now, more than ever, there are more missed credit card payments and mortgage delinquencies, and business insolvencies are on the rise. Household debt in Canada has reached \$2.5 trillion, up from \$1.9 trillion in 2015. Unemployment is on the rise; it is currently at 7% and could go higher, according to TD Bank, but of course the Liberals think a 1% tax cut will make all of that go away.

The Conservative plan to restore affordability more than doubled the income tax cut, and it also included lowering the cost of government, unleashing the economy and energy sectors, and axing the industrial carbon tax. Part 3 of the bill would eliminate only the consumer carbon tax. That would still leave the tax on the producers of oil and gas that powers everything from our trucks to our tractors. An industrial carbon tax means steel and aluminum manufacturers, loggers, natural gas producers and the agricultural sector will all continue to be burdened by this tax, and that tax will be passed down to the end user.

• (1625)

It makes these industries less competitive and less attractive for investment, and it affects their bottom line. That cost is again passed on to the economy through weaker production, less job creation, higher prices and lower productivity.

If Liberals truly wanted to make life more affordable for Canadians, they would have adopted the full Conservative plan, which is to lower the first income tax bracket to 12.75% and finally get rid of the industrial carbon tax for good. This is the same carbon tax, the industrial carbon tax, that has made sure investment has left the country.

It is the energy industry killing policies like the ones in Bill C-69, the new pipelines bill, that have made Canada weaker and more dependent on others. It is policies like the ones in Bill C-48, the tanker ban, where we can get our product to the west coast, but it cannot go anywhere because of a tanker ban. As well, there is of course the job-killing oil and gas cap, which, according to Deloitte, will kill around 110,000 good-paying energy sector jobs.

Only Conservatives will continue to stand up for our world-class energy sector, which will not only make Canada an energy superpower but also allow it to become independent so we can sell our product. What we have under our feet in Canada is what the world needs. It is good for the environment, and it is great to give Canadians good powerful paycheques.

The last part of the bill that I want to go over is the GST rebate for first-time homebuyers purchasing a new home. The Building Industry and Land Development Association in the GTA said:

Unfortunately, this limitation to first-time buyers only will have a very small impact, as very few new home buyers are first time buyers. It will not substantially help address affordability, nor will it help significantly stimulate sales and construction.

That too is what the Parliamentary Budget Officer said this morning in his report. Only 140,000 new homes a year will be up for sale, and in the housing market, only 20% of homebuyers are first-time buyers. This means few homes will be eligible for this GST rebate.

There is also a time limit on the Liberal plan, as it is for homes purchased before 2031, construction started before 2031 and construction substantially completed by 2036. Conservatives proposed a much broader plan to include more Canadians buying new homes, for all homebuyers, which proposed that homes could be up to \$1.3 million and would save homebuyers around \$65,000 on the purchase of a new home. The plan would also boost the number of new homes built each year by 36,000 new homes annually.

House prices under the Liberals have skyrocketed, but housing starts cannot keep up with the out-of-control immigration system their new boss and Justin Trudeau supported. Even finance officials admitted the Liberal GST rebate could be inflationary as demand for homes continues to climb but not enough new homes are being built in this country. Meanwhile, the Conservatives' plan would lower home prices for all buyers and spur the construction of new homes.

The new boss is just like the old boss, and this bill makes this very clear.

Conservatives will support the tax relief Canadians need, but we want it to go even further. We need to get this country back on track. After 10 years of these Liberals, whether it was the old guy or this new guy, the policies are all the same and the ministers who sat around the old cabinet table and now sit around the new one are all the same, and this does not change anything.

The cost of living is higher than it has ever been before. Housing prices are higher than they have ever been before. Under the Liberals, housing prices have doubled, whether someone rents or has a mortgage. The cost of groceries is higher than it has ever been before. It is the highest cost in the entire G7.

We can then talk about other things, such as the crime that is out of control. These failed Liberal policies have caused all this devastation on Canadians and changed the look of what Canada has become.

When it comes to Bill C-4, we will propose common-sense amendments to make sure this bill actually provides Canadians with the relief they desperately need.

• (1630)

Hon. Kevin Lamoureux (Parliamentary Secretary to the Leader of the Government in the House of Commons, Lib.): Madam Speaker, the Conservatives need to realize that this is a new government. There is a new Prime Minister, and that Prime Minister has made it very clear that we are going to build Canada strong to make it the strongest nation in the G7, and that is good for all of us.

We have already seen significant signs of this, whether it is by bringing first ministers together in Saskatchewan or bringing forward legislation, such as Bill C-4, before the House, to give a tax break to 22 million people in Canada. We are going to repeal the consumer carbon tax. We are going to provide tax relief for first-time homebuyers in eliminating the GST, which will cause more homes to be built. We have a new Prime Minister, a new government.

Will this old Conservative opposition agree to support Bill C-4?

Jasraj Hallan: Madam Speaker, just because there is a new leader, it does not mean there is a new government. It is the same ministers sitting around the table, who caused the last 10 years of pain and misery for Canadians, who doubled the cost of housing, who made food prices go up and who made crime out of control in this country.

The policies have not changed. The cabinet table has not changed, and neither will these Liberals. They are going to continue to make promises they can never deliver on, and that is why Canadians need a change now. We need to get this country back on track. If the Liberals keep following their failed broken record, Canadians will never have it any better.

[Translation]

Simon-Pierre Savard-Tremblay (Saint-Hyacinthe—Bagot—Acton, BQ): Madam Speaker, I tend to agree with my colleague in that, although we may have a new Prime Minister, we are still dealing with the same old government.

Make no mistake about it. Once the honeymoon is over and reality kicks in, we will see how true it is that we are still dealing with the same old worn-out government. That being said, there is one thing that I do not understand.

In his remarks, my colleague said something that seemed to make sense. Not so long ago, we would have heard the Conservatives proposing such things and we would have seen the Liberals rejecting their proposals in earnest.

I do not understand why the Conservatives are upset about the Liberals stealing their program.

[English]

Jasraj Hallan: Madam Speaker, we are not angry at all. In fact, we told the Liberals that, if they are going to steal some of our ideas, why not just take all of them? This is what would get this country back on track. When it comes to the income tax cut, Conservatives proposed a bigger income tax cut that would have let families keep double, more than double, the amount the Liberals have in their plan. In fact, it would have been a 12.75% total, which means there would have been \$900, on average, a Canadian would have been able to keep in their pocket at the end of the year.

The Liberals' housing plan, according to the industry, does not go far enough. Of course, instead of taking our idea of getting rid of the consumer carbon tax, they should get rid of the industrial carbon tax as well, so we make Canada once again competitive on the world stage.

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• (1635)

Michael Guglielmin (Vaughan—Woodbridge, CPC): Madam Speaker, it seems the only thing new about the government is the new and creative ways the members avoid answering questions and accountability.

My question for my hon. colleague is, given the tariff threats and the threats to our economy, if the Liberal government is going to steal half of the Conservative policy in removing the consumer portion of the carbon tax, should they not go the whole way and remove the entire carbon tax for good?

Jasraj Hallan: Madam Speaker, I would add that I think the biggest threat to the Canadian economy is the Liberal government, because it put in place bills that are continuing to kill our energy industry, such as Bill C-69, the “no new pipelines” bill; Bill C-48, the tanker ban; the oil and gas cap, which, according to Deloitte, will kill around 110,000 jobs here in Canada; and this industrial carbon tax. We need to get rid of that, too.

I fully agree with the member. If the Liberals wanted to steal some of our ideas, why not just take all of them and let us get this country back on track to make it an energy superpower, like it once was?

Amanpreet Gill (Calgary Skyview, CPC): Madam Speaker, it is with deep humility and great honour that I rise in the chamber today to deliver my first speech as the member of Parliament for Calgary Skyview.

First and foremost, I would like to thank my wonderful wife Jaspreet Kaur Gill, my son Daya Singh Gill, and lovely daughter Ekam Kaur Gill for their unwavering love and support. It is their strength that carries me through every challenge.

I also want to express my deepest gratitude to the voters and supporters who placed their trust in me. I promise I will not let them down.

I would especially like to remember my late father Sadar Amritpal Singh Gill, whose memories continue to inspire me each and every day. I also thank my mother Gurcharan Kaur Gill for her endless love and encouragement.

I thank the tireless volunteers who knocked on doors in rain and shine, the dedicated sign team who made sure our message was seen across the riding, and the community leaders who guided and inspired us every step of the way. Their hard work, passion and belief in our vision made this victory possible. Together, we will work to build a strong and fair community where everyone has a chance to succeed.

Government Orders

I came to Canada as a teenager, with my family, carrying a dream, like many newcomers who still arrive in this country today. I worked nights, went to school during the day, and through hard work and sacrifice, I achieved my goals. I punched above my weight class every step of the way, becoming a small business owner, raising my children on safe streets and teaching them the values of discipline, responsibility and respect. However, today, I stand here deeply concerned that the Canada that once gave immigrants like me a fair shot at success now feels out of reach, even for those born and raised here. Young Canadians cannot afford to buy homes. Wages are not keeping up with inflation, and good-paying jobs are harder to come by.

The Liberal government increased the immigration level with no plan on housing or infrastructure, and no job strategy. This is not just an immigration issue. It is a national failure of leadership. It is unfair to Canadians who are watching their dreams pushed further out of reach in their own country. It is unfair to newcomers who arrived with hope, but find only struggles. We need a responsible, balanced approach to immigration, one that puts jobs, housing and economic security first.

There were 1.6 million unemployed Canadians in May, which is an increase of 13.8% from this time last year. Things are projected to get even worse. TD forecasts that there will be 100,000 job losses by the third quarter of this year. It is clear that the same Liberal ministers, with the same Liberal policies, are delivering even worse results. Canadians need a real plan to unleash Canada's economic potential and deliver powerful paycheques for our people.

I come from Alberta, a province built on grit, resilience and determination. For over a decade, Albertans have been overlooked by Liberal governments that have failed to understand who we are, what we contribute and what we stand for. They attacked our energy sector with Bill C-48, blocked our pipelines with Bill C-69 and cost our working families their livelihood.

Let me be clear, we do not back down. We roll up our sleeves, and we get the job done no matter the odds. In Calgary Skyview, we may have dirty hands, but our money is clean. It is earned through early mornings, long days and honest sweat. We believe in hard work, not handouts. We believe that the people who built, drive and power this country deserve respect, not red tape.

I also stand here with deep pride in my Punjabi Sikh heritage and in the sacrifices of those who came before me. My grandfather and my wife's great-grandfather both fought bravely alongside the allied forces in World War I and World War II, wearing their dastar with honour and serving with courage, loyalty and unwavering commitment. They stood for freedom, justice and the values we hold dear as Canadians.

● (1640)

Their legacy lives on in me. Just as they wore their dastars with pride and fought with honour on the battlefield, I will wear mine in the House of Commons and fight with the same spirit for Canadians and for the principles of my Sikh faith: equality, courage, justice and service. I carry their strength with me every day as I rise to represent Calgary Skyview. I will never forget who I am or where I come from.

I would also like to take a moment to remember the horrific first week of June 1984, when the Indian army attacked Darbar Sahib, the Golden Temple complex, which is the holiest shrine of the Sikh faith. Thousands of innocent Sikhs were murdered in those days. I was seven years old at the time, and it affected me deeply. Even today, the scars of that assault remain deeply engraved in the hearts of Sikhs around the world, reminding us of the importance of religious freedom and protecting human rights.

Albertans and all Canadians deserve better. They deserve a government that emphasizes their hard-earned dollars, the dignity of hard work and the importance of safe streets, a government that supports energy workers, builds pipelines and strengthens our economy, instead of tearing it down.

That is why I stand here today as a proud member of the Conservative Party, committed to jail, not bail, for repeat offenders. This means holding criminals accountable and ensuring that justice is served swiftly and fairly. It means investing in communities, supporting law enforcement and making our streets safer for all Canadians.

It is clear that the Liberals are out of touch with the needs of Canadians. We need a government that focuses on job creation, economic growth and fiscal responsibility. It is time for a government that puts our economy back on track and secures a brighter future for all Canadians. It is time for action. It is time for the Liberals to put Canada first and introduce a budget that supports Canadians now.

Our vision is clear: a Canada where the economy is strong, families are supported and communities thrive, a Canada where government spending is accountable, taxes are fair and opportunities are abundant for all.

I came to this House to work. I came with a clear mandate backed by my commitment to serve, to lead and to deliver real results. I came here to stand up for the hard-working people of Calgary Skyview and for every Canadian who feels left behind by Liberals who have failed to deliver on their promises. I will fight every day to ensure that others get a chance to live in safe communities, to build better lives and to raise families with dignity and pride.

I will bring the voices of my riding into every debate and every decision, grounded in values of service, fairness and accountability. I am here because I believe in a Canada that is full of potential and opportunities, not one held back by broken promises and a lack of actions.

Let us rise to the moment, work together and build the strong, united and free Canada that we all deserve.

• (1645)

Will Greaves (Victoria, Lib.): Madam Speaker, I must say it is disappointing to hear our Conservative colleagues yet again attacking this government's environmental record, including policies that are vital to us in the real west, living on the Pacific coast in British Columbia, who have seen full well the government's commitment to both environmental protection and energy extraction.

However, we know the Conservatives are not entirely opposed to environmental policy, because they love recycling. Currently, they are in the process of recycling their leaders. The current Leader of the Opposition is also the former leader of the opposition, having been judged and rejected by the Canadian public in 2019. The former member for Carleton is in the process of being recycled, though I do not know if this is upcycling for the people of Battle River—Crowfoot.

My question for the hon. member opposite is this: Will he stand up and stand with this government's commitment to both growing Canada's energy sector, our energy economy, and protecting our environment?

Amanpreet Gill: Madam Speaker, we do not believe in killing the energy sector. We want to create jobs and grow the economy while also protecting our environment, cutting down coal and sending our LNG to Asia. We believe it is possible to do both.

Grant Jackson (Brandon—Souris, CPC): Madam Speaker, earlier in this debate, the member for Winnipeg North made some outrageous comments about this being an entirely new government, which of course Canadians know is patently ridiculous, given the fact that 80% of the cabinet is the same as in the Trudeau era. It is sad that the member for Winnipeg North did not make the cut. Despite the only cabinet member from Manitoba abusing her staff, he still did not make the cut.

I wonder if my colleague from Calgary Skyview could possibly comment about how ridiculous these comments are and how the failed record of the Liberal government is impacting the financial security of Canadians.

Amanpreet Gill: Madam Speaker, we can give many of our ideas to the Liberals. They can even cut the industrial carbon tax, because they are stealing half of our ideas. They can take all of our ideas; we do not mind. As long as they are good for Canadians, that is what matters.

[Translation]

Patrick Bonin (Repentigny, BQ): Madam Speaker, I would like to congratulate my hon. colleague on his election.

I know that we do not agree on everything, including what to do to help our society transition. How fast should we go while following the science and fighting climate change to limit things like the forest fires we are currently seeing?

I would like him to talk about the possibility of a pipeline project being imposed on Quebec. I understand that your leader was proposing that the federal government could impose a pipeline project—

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The Assistant Deputy Speaker (Alexandra Mendès): I would remind the hon. member that he must address his questions through the Chair.

The hon. member for Calgary Skyview.

[English]

Amanpreet Gill: Madam Speaker, our economy relies heavily on the energy sector, and we want to support it while also exploring new opportunities for growth.

Hon. Kevin Lamoureux (Parliamentary Secretary to the Leader of the Government in the House of Commons, Lib.): Madam Speaker, I know the Conservatives do not like to hear it, but there is a new Prime Minister.

At the end of the day, the Conservatives have some pretty dumb ideas, too. One of those dumb ideas is that they want to cut CBC/Radio-Canada. These are the types of ideas that the Conservatives need to reflect on, not to mention the industrial price on pollution. Do they not realize we are looking at expanding trade to the world? Let us look at Europe. If we do not have industrial carbon pricing, we will end up having additional tariffs on exports to those countries.

Does the Conservative Party not realize that it does not fully understand how to build a strong and healthy economy? Canadians did, and that is why 8.5 million people voted for the Liberal Party.

• (1650)

Amanpreet Gill: Madam Speaker, we pushed for the carbon tax to be eliminated, and it is great news for Canadians. We would not mind if the Liberals eliminate the industrial carbon tax as well.

[Translation]

Jacques Ramsay (Parliamentary Secretary to the Minister of Public Safety, Lib.): Madam Speaker, I will be sharing my time with the member for Hamilton West—Ancaster—Dundas.

Since this is my first speech in the House, I would first like to acknowledge the voters of La Prairie—Atateken and thank them for putting their trust in me. I very humbly accept the role they have given me. I am committed to representing them to the best of my ability and to reporting on their concerns as accurately as I can here in the House of Commons. Although La Prairie—Atateken is a great place to live, there are still many challenges to ensuring that our communities develop harmoniously.

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I would like to take a few seconds to extend my warmest thanks to everyone who volunteered for my election campaign. Many of these friends and volunteers gave countless hours for the Liberal cause. I owe my victory to them, because it literally took the efforts of an entire team to have any hope of winning. Of all those volunteers, I will just single out one today. My son, Paul Ramsay-Vejens, worked by my side for the 35 days of the campaign. It is a joy to raise our children, but it is no less a joy to be supported by them in turn.

[*English*]

La Prairie—Atateken is within unyielded first nation land. I recognize that the Kanien'kehà:ka nation is the steward of the lands and waters in our riding. First to settle this land, the Mohawks have made Kahnawake a vibrant place with a rich cultural legacy. Kahnawake is a proud community where the words resilience, perennality and self-determination resonate loudly.

[*Translation*]

In addition to Kahnawake, La Prairie—Atateken is a large riding comprising seven cities: Sainte-Catherine, Saint-Constant, Delson, Candiac, La Prairie, Saint-Philippe and Saint-Mathieu.

Together, we embrace the principle of meaningful reconciliation with our indigenous neighbours that is rooted in a social and economic reality.

The history of our riding is bound up with major projects that brought people together and shaped our sense of community. In the 19th century, the construction of the Lachine Canal, the use of steamboats between Montreal and its south shore, and the opening of the very first railway in Canada, which linked La Prairie and Saint-Jean-sur-Richelieu, turned La Prairie into a prime hub for trade between Montreal and New England. Proximity strengthened those ties over the years.

In 1860, the opening of the Victoria Bridge further to the east relocated the transit point to Longueuil and slowed my region's economic development, but the construction of the Honoré Mercier Bridge on Kahnawake territory in 1934 and of the Champlain Bridge in 1962 stimulated the local economy, bringing in a growing wave of new residents who could now get to work in Montreal quickly.

In fact, the riding's population has increased fivefold since 1960, which is not without consequences today, as we will see later. This population explosion has nevertheless taken place while preserving a significant amount of agricultural land, giving our territory a mix of both urban and rural character, as a place where residents can always count on a nearby supply of farm products.

I am providing this historical background to show how, throughout its history, La Prairie—Atateken experienced spectacular growth whenever the authorities believed in its vitality and invested in its infrastructure. Today, when co-operation with the United States is under threat, what comes to mind is another, even older piece of infrastructure. In the 16th century, when the Jesuits were granted the seigneurie of La Prairie and came to settle in the region, farmers quickly joined them. They did so because there was a mill where they could grind their grain, but above all because, very early on, a high palisade made of ash, cedar and pine stakes was erect-

ed to protect them from enemies, in this case an army of mercenaries from New England. With the introduction of the recent tariffs, our country is once again facing an attack from our American neighbours, this time in the form of an economic war.

● (1655)

Once again, the people of La Prairie—Atateken, along with the rest of the country, will stand strong and protect our sovereignty. We will protect our economic interests. We will protect our agriculture, our language, our culture, our schools and our health care system. Above all, we will protect our institutions, the rule of law and our democratic values, which are at the heart of our identity.

The time has come once again to take decisive action. At a time when U.S. tariffs are posing a serious threat to our economy, we must act on several fronts, of course. In particular, I would like to mention the major project to build 500,000 homes a year, including several thousand in my riding, which will be launched quickly to help our economy recover.

On the campaign trail, I heard time and again how hard it is to find housing, much less affordable housing. The housing shortage is driving up prices, and our young people are struggling to buy their first home. The government recognizes this problem and wants to take action. We need housing to house Canadians.

The affordability bill will exempt first-time homebuyers from paying GST on new homes, saving them up to \$50,000. This measure will definitely help get new affordable housing built using local materials such as lumber, aluminum and steel.

Housing construction meets an urgent need while providing a major economic stimulus, both for the construction and modular home industry and for primary industries such as the lumber, aluminum and steel industries. This is a strategic move that will help create good, well-paying jobs while addressing the housing shortage and stabilizing prices. It will kill two birds with one stone. Incidentally, expanding the housing stock will also help get seasonal labour programs back on track. Without them, many economic sectors, including agricultural businesses in La Prairie, would struggle to function.

Our government is serious about the economic health of Canadians who are already struggling. Even though the government has succeeded in bringing inflation below 2%, it is being proactive and showing leadership without waiting for the effects of tariffs to be felt. To do that, the government is lowering taxes for 22 million Canadians by up to \$800 per household. That is on top of other measures that are already in place. For example, over the next five years, until 2031, \$9.8 billion will be paid to Quebec to fund the child care program, which will enable many families to earn additional income. Needless to say, child care is crucial for single-parent families and, until recently, it has contributed to the financial empowerment of many women.

There are also the 4.8 million Canadians aged 18 to 64, who recently joined the ranks of those who may be eligible for free dental care. Again, those are substantial savings.

Since 2016, our government has been funding the Canada child benefit, the same benefit that was criticized by our Conservative colleagues. Depending on family income, that can mean up to \$7,437 per year for each child under the age of six and up to \$6,275 per year for each child between the ages of six and 17. The Liberal Party is reducing child poverty.

[English]

The strategy of this government has two prongs. On one hand, this government will foster investment and preserve jobs in spite of the unpredictable climate blowing from the south. To invest in infrastructure is a strategy that will benefit Canadian workers and families. The electors of La Prairie—Atateken have no problem understanding this because this is how their economy was built. On the other hand, this government is making sure nobody is left behind by protecting the buying power of Canadians.

• (1700)

[Translation]

Although we are facing many challenges, the intelligence, skills and enthusiasm of the people in La Prairie—Atateken give me a lot of hope for the future.

Alexis Brunelle-Duceppe (Lac-Saint-Jean, BQ): Madam Speaker, I congratulate the member for La Prairie—Atateken on his election.

In his speech, he said that he and his government would protect our economic interests. Today, that same MP had the opportunity to walk the talk by protecting Quebec's economic interests and by asking the federal government to repay the \$814 million that it stole from Quebec.

The Bloc Québécois is not the only one saying it. The Quebec National Assembly unanimously called on the government to pay that money back. All the elected officials in the Quebec government and the Quebec National Assembly are asking for that money back.

How does it feel to be a Quebec MP who is going against the will of the Quebec National Assembly?

Jacques Ramsay: Madam Speaker, today during question period, it was clearly explained that we were dealing with two com-

pletely different programs: the one in Quebec, which is excellent by the way, and Canada's system, which met different criteria.

That is the history of our federation. Sometimes, Quebec has benefited from certain measures, and other times, the other provinces have benefited from other measures.

Pauline Rochefort (Parliamentary Secretary to the Secretary of State (Rural Development), Lib.): Madam Speaker, thank you for this opportunity to congratulate my colleague on his election and his recent appointment as parliamentary secretary.

If I understand correctly, the La Prairie—Atateken riding has changed colours. I would like to know which of the highlights of the plan for a strong Canada made the people in his riding inclined to vote for my dear colleague.

Jacques Ramsay: Madam Speaker, the people of La Prairie—Atateken, like many others in Canada, were concerned about the economy. They stepped up when the Prime Minister asked them to build the strongest economy in the G7 with him. That is what we are doing.

According to what I am hearing from La Prairie—Atateken, people are very satisfied with the speed at which our government is moving.

[English]

Jagsharan Singh Mahal (Edmonton Southeast, CPC): Madam Speaker, the member says that Liberals are building one economy and are working on it. How can they build one economy when they are not taking into consideration the oil and energy sector of Alberta?

[Translation]

Jacques Ramsay: Madam Speaker, I do not think my colleague is reading the same news as I am. What I heard was that the premiers who met with Mr. Carney were all thrilled—

The Assistant Deputy Speaker (Alexandra Mendès): I understand that the hon. member is new to the House, but we must not use the names of other colleagues in this chamber.

The hon. member has the floor.

Jacques Ramsay: Madam Speaker, all the premiers who were at the meeting with our Prime Minister were delighted with the outcome. They drew up a list, and they will go through it in the coming days and weeks.

The Prime Minister was clear about the fact that nothing was off the table. Projects will be judged on their merit based on possible investments, social licence and the returns they will generate.

• (1705)

Alexis Brunelle-Duceppe: Madam Speaker, there is talk of social licence when it comes to this government's energy projects, such as running a pipeline through Quebec.

Government Orders

Do the government's plans include giving public money to oil companies to build pipelines?

Jacques Ramsay: Madam Speaker, first of all, I have not heard of any project for a pipeline going through Quebec. I do not know where my colleague is getting that from.

Second, I have no information to provide at this point, as there are no plans concerning any investments that the federal government could—

[*English*]

John-Paul Danko (Hamilton West—Ancaster—Dundas, Lib.): Madam Speaker, I rise today in full support of Bill C-4, a cornerstone of our government's promise to make life more affordable for hard-working Canadians.

As the member of Parliament for Hamilton West—Ancaster—Dundas, I have heard first-hand from families, workers and small business owners who are feeling the pressure of rising costs. These challenges are compounded by the economic and political uncertainty caused by the Trump government in the United States. As Canadians, it is impossible to ignore the troubling and increasingly chaotic actions of the Trump White House as we confront the new reality that we can no longer rely on the United States as a stable and reliable trading partner. However, we must take immediate action to control our own future here in Canada.

Bill C-4, the making life more affordable for Canadians act, is our new government's immediate response to the rising cost of living in Canada. It is a comprehensive, targeted and responsible plan to deliver real relief and make life more affordable for Canadians. We promised immediate action during the campaign, and today we are delivering tax relief.

In this House, I previously spoke about the challenges facing people in Hamilton: the cost of housing, gas, groceries and daily essentials. I also spoke about the pride we take in our local industries, especially Hamilton's steel sector, and the resilience of our workers. The making life more affordable for Canadians act addresses both realities. It puts money back into the pockets of Canadians while strengthening our economic foundations.

Let us begin with the tax relief measures in this bill. We are cutting the lowest personal income tax rate to 14.5% in 2025, then cutting it again down to 14% in 2026 and beyond. This is an immediate tax cut for 22 million Canadians. For a typical family, that is up to \$840 in annual savings. These savings would help pay for groceries, a child's school supplies, utility bills and more.

We are also making housing more affordable. The making life more affordable for Canadians act introduces a GST rebate for first-time homebuyers purchasing new homes up to \$1 million. This tax cut for first-time homebuyers is essential for young families, and it will help to stimulate new construction, enabling jobs and increasing housing supply. In Hamilton, housing affordability is a daily concern, and this policy will make a real difference for young families.

We have already repealed the consumer carbon tax, which will save Canadians an average of 18¢ per litre off the cost of gas. However, our government remains committed to climate action. By

maintaining the output-based carbon pricing system for large emitters, continuing to invest in green energy such as nuclear, hydro and renewables, and supporting green housing and public transit, we are helping to ensure a smooth transition to an electric future and reduce Canada's dependence on fossil fuels. This is a balanced approach, one that supports both affordability and environmental sustainability.

I want to speak about economic resilience and the importance of standing up for Canadian workers. On June 6, I had the honour of joining the Minister of Industry, the CEO of ArcelorMittal Dofasco, Hamilton members of Parliament, the mayor of the city of Hamilton, and the Hamilton Chamber of Commerce president and CEO for a visit to one of our local Hamilton steel mills. ArcelorMittal Dofasco and Hamilton's steel producers are the heart of the steel industry in Canada.

The visit by the Minister of Industry was in direct response to the imposition of the Trump administration's 50% tariff on Canadian steel and aluminum. These latest Trump tariffs are illegal, unjustified, harmful and a threat to the entire North American steel industry. Our government is taking this extremely seriously. The minister's visit was a demonstration of our commitment to defending Canadian jobs and industries and retaliating as needed.

The conversations we had at ArcelorMittal Dofasco were powerful. Workers expressed pride in their work and concern about the future and what this means for their families. The CEO emphasized the importance of stable trade relationships. The chamber of commerce called for coordinated action. The mayor of the city of Hamilton underscored the need for federal assistance and federal leadership. The making life more affordable for Canadians act is part of that leadership. By supporting Canadian families and industries, we are building resilience against external shocks like these tariffs.

The income tax cut is a meaningful first step, especially when combined with the cost-saving programs already in place, such as \$10-a-day child care, dental care and the Canada child benefit. We repealed the consumer carbon tax because our government is listening to Canadians. We are adapting our policies to meet their needs without abandoning our environmental sustainability goals.

● (1710)

Cutting the GST on homes up to \$1 million would save the average Hamilton first-time homebuyer more than \$40,000, and this is just one piece of a broader housing affordability strategy. Our government is working with provinces and with municipalities to unlock stalled developments, invest in affordable housing, support renters and get builders building again.

I also want to acknowledge our government's commitment to meeting NATO's defence spending target of 2% of GDP years ahead of schedule. This historic investment in our national defence is not only a reaffirmation of our global responsibilities but also a strategic move to bolster our domestic economy. Defence spending will create thousands of high-quality jobs, stimulate innovation in Canadian industries and strengthen our supply chains.

Hamilton is home to one of the largest shipbuilders in Canada, for shipbuilding that employs thousands of workers in the skilled trades and uses Canadian steel. Increasing defence spending would complement the affordability measures in the making life more affordable for Canadians act by reinforcing economic security and resilience.

The announcement sends a clear message: our government can make bold, forward-looking decisions on both domestic and international fronts. While we invest in affordability and housing at home, we are also stepping up to meet our global commitments. These are not competing priorities; they are mutually reinforcing pillars of a strong, secure and prosperous Canada.

The making life more affordable for Canadians act is not just a budgetary measure; it is a statement of values. It says that we believe in a Canada where hard work is rewarded, where families can thrive and where no one is left behind. It says that we are willing to make tough decisions to support Canadians in the face of global uncertainty.

As the member of Parliament for Hamilton West—Ancaster—Dundas, I am proud to support the bill. I am proud to stand with my colleagues, with our government and with the people of Hamilton, and I am proud to say that the making life more affordable for Canadians act would deliver on the promises we made during the election. In Hamilton, we are already seeing the impact of federal investments in housing projects that use Canadian steel and lumber and create good-paying local jobs.

Let us pass the bill. Let us deliver for our constituents. Let us build a stronger, fairer, more resilient Canada.

When I previously stood in the chamber, I spoke about the challenges facing families in Hamilton and across Canada. I spoke about affordability, not as a political slogan but as a lived experience for so many of our constituents. I spoke about the parents who told me they are worried about putting food on the table, about young people who fear they will never own a home and about seniors who felt left behind by the rapidly changing economy.

These are not abstract policy issues; these are real people with real struggles, and that is why the making life more affordable for Canadians act matters. The bill recognizes the urgency of the moment and responds with tangible solutions.

Government Orders

During the campaign, I knocked on thousands of doors. I listened to stories that were both difficult and inspiring, from, for example, a mother who works night shifts and still finds time to volunteer at her child's school, recent immigrants working multiple jobs to pay rent while studying in post-secondary education, retired residents on a fixed income who have lived in the same home for 40 years but are now struggling to pay property taxes and heating bills, and especially young families working hard but struggling to provide their children with the lifestyle they deserve.

These stories have stayed with me, and they guide my work. The making life more affordable for Canadians act is our new government's first step to reduce cost of living across Canada. It builds on the Canada child benefit, which has lifted hundreds of thousands of children out of poverty, and it complements our investments in \$10-a-day child care, which is already saving Canadian families thousands of dollars. This is a strong step forward.

Affordability is not a Liberal issue, a Conservative issue, a Bloc issue nor an NDP issue; it is a Canadian issue. I have heard the exact same concerns about affordability consistently from members of every political party, and I think Canadians expect us to work together.

I have had constructive conversations with members from all parties who share a deep concern for their constituents, and I believe that we all share a common goal: to make life better for the people we serve. That is why I urge all members of the House to support the making life more affordable for Canadians act.

● (1715)

Rhonda Kirkland (Oshawa, CPC): Madam Speaker, I can appreciate the member opposite's talking about affordability. We all heard this from our constituents as we walked the campaign trail.

My question is an honest one. He mentioned that the large emitters should still be paying an industrial carbon tax. I am wondering whether he can tell me what he thinks. Does he believe that the large emitters will pay that carbon tax, or does he think the carbon tax will be passed down to consumers?

Government Orders

John-Paul Danko: Madam Speaker, steelmaking is one of the largest industries in Hamilton. It is also one of the largest emitters. Our government is making significant investments in the steel industry in Hamilton. Hundreds of millions of dollars are being invested in an electric arc furnace to convert steelmaking from a polluting fossil fuel-dependent, coal-dependent industry, reducing emissions. It will not only reduce emissions but also reduce the carbon footprint, and, most importantly reduce cancer-causing emissions, soot and particulates in the environment.

This is a win-win situation. By investing in a cleaner future, we are investing in a better future for all Canadians.

[Translation]

Simon-Pierre Savard-Tremblay (Saint-Hyacinthe—Bagot—Acton, BQ): Madam Speaker, the provisions of the bill on access to home ownership are not that bad. We more or less agree with them. However, one of the biggest challenges for most households and families is to come up with a down payment. There is nothing about that in the bill.

Would my colleague be in favour of the idea of introducing a measure to provide an interest-free loan to allow first-time homebuyers to come up with a down payment? That would not cost the government very much. For example, given that the government would cover only the interest costs of the loan and it can borrow money at rates as low as 3.7%, it would cost \$370 a year for a \$10,000 loan. It is really not that expensive.

Does my colleague have any interest in that idea?

John-Paul Danko: Madam Speaker, I thank the hon. member for the question. I am sorry that my French is not very good, but I am learning.

[English]

I do agree with the hon. member. Down payments are a significant challenge for many people, especially young families that are trying to enter the housing market and might not have access to generational wealth and to the credit they would need to pay for a down payment. We want to avoid a situation where young families have to save and work really hard for 10 or 20 years just to afford a down payment if they do not have access to generational wealth, so I would absolutely be very happy to work with our Bloc colleagues on suggestions for options to help young families with a down payment.

Pauline Rochefort (Parliamentary Secretary to the Secretary of State (Rural Development), Lib.): Madam Speaker, I was very interested in what our colleague described in terms of the meetings that were held with the Minister of Industry. I would be interested in better understanding how the business community in Hamilton reacted to the outcomes of those meetings.

John-Paul Danko: Madam Speaker, everyone in Hamilton knows somebody who works in the steel industry. It employs over 10,000 workers directly and another 40,000 people in indirect jobs. The tariffs are an existential threat to steelmaking in Canada, and Hamilton is the heart of steelmaking.

I know from speaking with workers that there are generational workers, second- and third-generation steelworkers, who are proud of what they do. They are proud of the job they hold, and they are

literally building the foundation of Canada. Having the Minister of Industry there shows the steelworkers that we care and that we stand up for Canadian jobs in the steel industry and in aluminum. All measures are on the table, and we, as the federal government, are showing leadership to support Canadians, to support workers and do everything that is necessary.

● (1720)

Gaétan Malette (Kapuskasing—Timmins—Mushkegowuk, CPC): Madam Speaker, the question was asked for producers of steel in the Hamilton region, and I did not understand the answer. Will the carbon tax be removed, yes or no?

John-Paul Danko: Madam Speaker, the industrial carbon tax is part of a global carbon pricing system. Steel producers in Hamilton and across Canada do pay the industrial carbon tax. It is traded, and it is an important incentive to reducing emissions. As I spoke about, switching over to electric steel production to reduce the reliance on coal, reduce emissions—

The Assistant Deputy Speaker (Alexandra Mendès): The hon. member for London West is rising.

* * *

BUSINESS OF SUPPLY

Hon. Arielle Kayabaga (London West, Lib.): Madam Speaker, there have been discussions among the parties, and if you seek it, I believe you will find unanimous consent for the following motion:

That notwithstanding the order adopted on May 27, 2025, regarding the consideration of estimates in committee of the whole for the supply period ending June 23, 2025,

(a) at the conclusion of the time provided for the debate, on the fourth designated day, the estimates shall not be deemed reported back to the House; and

(b) Thursday, June 12, 2025, be designated as a fifth day for the consideration of estimates, for a duration of two hours, provided that proceedings be otherwise governed pursuant to the other applicable provisions of the order adopted on May 27, 2025, and that, at the conclusion of the time provided for the debate, or when no member wishes to speak, whichever comes first, the committee shall rise, the estimates shall be deemed reported back the same to the House, the debate pursuant to Standing Order 38 shall not take place, and the House shall immediately adjourn to the next sitting day.

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

[Translation]

There being no dissenting voice, it is agreed.

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

(Motion agreed to)

[English]

MAKING LIFE MORE AFFORDABLE FOR CANADIANS ACT

The House resumed consideration of the motion that Bill C-4, An Act respecting certain affordability measures for Canadians and another measure, be read the second time and referred to a committee.

Billy Morin (Edmonton Northwest, CPC): Madam Speaker,

[*Member spoke in indigenous language and provided the following text:*]

Neegan ninaskomon Nohtwaynan anoch, Tansi Niwakakakanak, Maskekosihk Ochi Okimaw Natokipoi nitseekason. Representative Amiskwacyi waskigan Keewatinok paksimotahk.

[*Member provided the following translation:*]

First I acknowledge our creator and bring greetings to all my relations. My name is Sacred Rider Chief Billy Morin from Enoch Cree Nation, now the MP for Edmonton Northwest.

[English]

I have risen in this House before in short moments, so in this extended time allocation, please allow me to acknowledge those who helped me get here: my family, *nikâwiy* Charlene, *nohtâwiy* William, and all my extended family and community from the Enoch Cree Nation. I thank my roots in the Blackfoot territory, Kainai territory, Treaty 7 territory and southern Alberta and my Métis family. I thank my wife Felecia and our children, William, Wilton, Walker and Ashtrid, and my many grandparents, *nimotsumak* and *nokumak*. Of course, I thank the good people of Edmonton Northwest, notably our grassroots campaign team.

Edmonton Northwest is a place where people come. Since time immemorial, first peoples have gathered in Edmonton Northwest to live in Amiskwaciwâskahikan, or Beaver Hills House, the Cree name for the region. It was a place of peace; conflict and conflict resolution through treaty making; traditional ceremony; sustenance; and community. It was a place where the North Saskatchewan River flowed mightily and the buffalo and the game were plentiful.

Right down the middle of my riding is the Anthony Henday highway. Anthony Henday is acknowledged as one of the first explorers to come to Edmonton. Over the next centuries since Anthony Henday, they still came. Many came from Europe to start, and in those early days, our collective ancestors made treaties nation to nation, which are upheld by the Canadian Constitution. These agreements are the basis for all peoples and Canadians to live in harmony for as long as the sun shines, the grass grows and the rivers flow, as written in treaty.

In those early days, many came driven by hunger and hope. Those fleeing from persecution came. Those looking for a place they could build in came. Those looking for a place where hard work pays off came. Those looking for a place to build an income, a family and a living came. They came from all continents. Today, we have a huge population from the Middle East, the Philippines, eastern Asia, India, eastern Europe, Hispanic America, Africa, South America and more.

Government Orders

People still come today in droves, with 60,000 per year over the last three years on average. Why do they come? Why have they been coming for hundreds of years? Why do they stay? Simply put, they come for affordability, opportunity, jobs, energy and safety. Edmonton's identity is built around this.

All the big Canadian cities have their identities. I have been in conversations where some struggle to identify what Edmonton means and what Edmonton's identity is. To me, the most Edmonton thing that someone can do is work hard, buy a home, raise a family and become a part of the community. Having small-town roots in the big city is still a thing in Edmonton.

However, this is under attack, and a root cause of this attack is the federal government's negligence. Homes are becoming increasingly more unaffordable, and this is not just a campaign talking point. I ran into many young people who, with humility, took time out of their day to tell me they could not afford a home. They said they had no way to have a family or grow their family.

The number of young Canadians who see home ownership and starting a family as unaffordable and unattainable is growing in my riding. Grocery prices are rising, lineups at food banks are getting longer and energy to move a family around is becoming more expensive. High taxes for seniors are pricing them out of their own homes, the spaces that are intended for them to spend time with their grandkids.

Despite powering this country for decades, our energy sector is villainized. The industrial heartland of Alberta and Canada is in my hometown of Edmonton, Alberta. Health care equality is systematically getting worse. Crime is out of control. The number of people struggling with addictions and mental health issues is worsening. Jobs for young people are getting scarce. As much as I acknowledge people coming to make a home in the traditional territory of my people in Edmonton Northwest, mismanaged immigration by the federal government is putting stress on all systems.

• (1725)

I grew up a proud Canadian. I grew up singing the national anthem in my school on Enoch Cree Nation. I grew up knowing this country has the best potential in the world. Today, I have heard and empathize with Canadians who came here a generation ago wanting that same feeling of pride, knowing that if they followed the rules, worked hard and learned what it meant to be a Canadian, they too could live in that potential and hope. However, over the last decade, in what some have described as this country being a postnational state, somewhere pride among Canadians has waned.

Government Orders

The government has made the mosaic of Canada a divider, not a unifier. It has pitted Canadian against Canadian. It has attacked the basic affordable family fundamentals for which everyone strives. Despite these attacks on the people in Edmonton and Edmonton Northwest, people still come. Why? It is because those who come to call that place home are resilient people.

In my language we say *âhkamêyimok*, or “never give up”. We know despite the federal government's attacks on the west, the best is yet to come. We will always fight for the entrepreneurship of our home and the energy culture of the industrial heartland of Alberta, Canada and Edmonton. We will build upon educational institutions. Newcomers quickly learn, with the help of their fellow Edmontonians, how to handle the tough times in the cold and feeling left out.

Edmonton still has the best potential for any city in this country. It can still be the freest city in the world. It can be a small town community with unity. Edmonton is still the city of champions, which is not just about sports success, but about how Edmontonians know how to work hard, know how to give back and know that they will always fight for safe communities and affordable homes.

For thousands of years, my ancestors knew there was something special about the land. They knew there was something special about the water. They knew about the air and about the home that is Edmonton and Edmonton Northwest. Before coming to this House, I was given the task by my elders to continue to build bridges between all peoples. I was asked to share these values and to think win-win with all peoples on behalf of Edmonton Northwest.

This revolves around the conversations and words spoken in this House today and during this Parliament about affordability. I am here to work on behalf of the people who put me here and to honour our past by investing in our future today, because I heard from them directly that buying a home, raising a family and contributing to community are the most Edmonton thing they can do—

• (1730)

The Assistant Deputy Speaker (Alexandra Mendès): On a point of order, we have the hon. member for Northumberland—Clarke.

Philip Lawrence: Madam Speaker, I am so sorry to interrupt the member's speech, but I believe he meant to split his time with the member for Souris—Moose Mountain.

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

The hon. member for Edmonton Northwest may continue.

Billy Morin: Madam Speaker, I heard from my constituents directly that buying a home, raising a family and contributing to community are still the most Edmonton thing they can do. This is worth standing up for.

Hai hai. Kinana'skomitina'wa'w.

Chris Malette (Bay of Quinte, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, I want to congratulate the member opposite for his election and his eloquent speech in the House today.

The member mentioned specifically basic family fundamentals in his address. Does he believe that with the making life more affordable for Canadians act, the ability for first-time homebuyers to

make a purchase without the burden of GST addresses basic family fundamentals?

Billy Morin: Mr. Speaker, on this side of the House, we agree that home buying and making it more affordable, especially for young families, are very important. I believe that might have been an idea from this side of the House, but we do not mind when our good ideas are taken from that side of the House.

With this bill, the number quoted is roughly \$800 per year. If we talk to the average family and really do the math, is a weekly stop at Timmy's or Starbucks going to make a difference in their lives? I think most Canadian families, especially those in my riding, are going to say no. I would like to see more breaks for families and affordability taken more seriously.

[*Translation*]

Patrick Bonin (Repentigny, BQ): Mr. Speaker, I would like to know what the member has to say about the fact that he and his colleagues just defeated a motion to respect a unanimous resolution by the National Assembly of Quebec calling on the government to return the \$814 million that was stolen from Quebecers.

What does he think of his leader's idea that a province should have no veto power so, for example, it could not say no to a pipeline that might be imposed by the federal government?

[*English*]

Billy Morin: Mr. Speaker, as a first nations person, I know that sovereignty and where we stand in Confederation are always coming into question, so I do empathize with the notion of nationhood and finding a balance in Canada.

As for the vote that happened today, that has already been explained in this House a number of times. Quebec does enjoy a level of nationhood, and sometimes those distinctions mean differences in how things are voted on in this House.

When it comes to consensus on building things in this country, I believe in things getting done and built. The economy has suffered for quite some time now, and I think the members opposite, as much as they have put forward some initiatives lately, have to prove that it is not just rhetoric and that there is going to be action for Canadians.

Hon. Kevin Lamoureux (Parliamentary Secretary to the Leader of the Government in the House of Commons, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, Bill C-4 is a critical piece of legislation. Our new Prime Minister has made clear that it takes up aspects of the election platform and ultimately delivers on the issue of affordability.

What is really important for all of us to note is that the tax break being proposed is going to take effect on July 1. For us to have that tax break, we need to see the legislation passed.

Does the member agree that we should pass this legislation before the House rises?

• (1735)

Billy Morin: Mr. Speaker, as mentioned, on this side of the House, we are always for tax breaks, but is this really a serious tax break? Can we go further with it?

The amount that has been quoted by the Liberals and some other studies, which is a lower amount, in my opinion is not enough. I talk to my constituents, and they have less for a coffee run or can only fill a quarter of their tank. That is not enough for Canadians. I would look to that side of the House to do more than just a small tax break.

Philip Lawrence (Northumberland—Clarke, CPC): Mr. Speaker, I welcome the new member to the House. I just want him to reflect on, if he could, the importance of this House and being able to spell “Parliament”.

Billy Morin: Mr. Speaker, I take great pride in being here, and I mentioned how much my family and friends have contributed to my success, constituents as well.

Sitting in this House as an indigenous leader is something to behold and to be proud of. It is not always the story in Canada that first nations feel included. From that particular point of view, I am very happy to stand here to uphold the best definition of treaty, which is that it is a higher calling, not a division in Canadian law, that Canadians work hard together in partnership. That is what I reflect upon, to the member's question.

Steven Bonk (Souris—Moose Mountain, CPC): Mr. Speaker, it is a great honour to rise in the House today for my first speech as the elected member of Parliament for Souris—Moose Mountain.

I want to share a few reflections on where I came from, whom I serve and the responsibilities we all carry as members of this chamber. I am deeply humbled to represent a region that is rooted in hard work, resilience and unshakable community spirit.

First and foremost, I want to thank the people of my riding. I am here because of them. They entrusted me to be their voice in this chamber, and I will work every day to be worthy of that trust.

I also want to acknowledge those who came before me. Ed Kormarnicki and Robert Kitchen served this region with integrity, thoughtfulness and strength of conviction. Their example has set a high bar.

I would not be here today without the support of my family. My wife, Candace, is my greatest partner and source of strength. Through every challenge, every sacrifice and every long stretch of road, she remained unwavering in her support and grace. Her belief in me never faltered, and I am endlessly grateful for her love, insight and patience. My daughter, Emma, reminds me daily of what truly matters. She is thoughtful, courageous and wise beyond her years. Her quiet encouragement has been one of the most steadying forces in my journey thus far. I am also grateful to my parents, who taught me not only to work hard but to work with purpose. They instilled in me the importance of character, integrity and perseverance. The examples they set are my guiding light.

Government Orders

I am also thankful to the many volunteers whose dedication and sacrifice helped make this journey possible. Their belief in our cause and their tireless efforts are a humbling reminder that public service is never done alone.

I was humbled to receive the highest percentage of the vote of any candidate in Canada during this election, but let me be clear: This is not about me. It is a testament to the people of Souris—Moose Mountain and their belief in our message, which is rooted in principle: a respect for hard work, for resource development, for freedom and for limited but accountable government.

I grew up on a farm in Saskatchewan, where I learned early that complaining would not get me very far. If something is broken, we fix it. If something matters, we stand up and speak out. Life on the land teaches us patience, persistence and humility. It also teaches us that when we make a promise, we keep it, because our word is often the only thing we have. Those lessons have never left me.

I remember when I was a teenager and a federal issue was affecting cattle prices. My father said to me, “If it matters enough to talk about, it matters enough to do something about.” I wrote a letter to our MP. That simple act of engagement was the first step in my realizing that democracy works only when people participate. It taught me that government, at its best, should be accessible and responsive, not distant and dismissive.

Years later, I had the opportunity to live and work in post-Soviet Eastern Europe for nearly a decade, immersed in countries still navigating the aftermath of authoritarian rule. I was involved in international trade and economic development, working with businesses and governments as they sought to rebuild their economies and re-establish democratic norms after generations of state control. What I witnessed was both inspiring and sobering.

In many of these countries, privacy had once been non-existent. Information was power, and that power had too often been abused. Surveillance was used to silence dissent. Trust in public institutions had been deeply damaged, and though democracy had arrived, the scars of its absence lingered. In some places, people were still afraid to speak freely, still hesitant to believe that the change was permanent. It was there, in conversations with small business owners, young reformers and cautious civil servants, that I saw the true cost of lost public trust. Once trust is broken, it takes generations to rebuild.

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When I returned to Canada, I brought those lessons home with me, into my business, my community and eventually into public service. I later had the honour of serving as a cabinet minister in Saskatchewan's provincial government, in which I was responsible for portfolios on economy, trade and innovation. That experience deepened my belief that when government works well, it creates opportunity, not barriers, for people to grow, contribute and succeed.

I reflect on all of this when I consider part 4 of Bill C-4, which addresses the question of how privacy laws apply to federal political parties. At face value, this provision seems narrowly focused. It would retroactively assert that provincial privacy laws do not apply to federal political parties, reinforcing exclusive federal jurisdiction. However, beneath this technical language lies a more profound question about the relationship between citizens and their democratic institutions.

• (1740)

When Canadians provide their personal information to political parties, whether signing up for a newsletter, attending a town hall or simply expressing support, they are placing trust in us. They expect that information to be treated with care, confidentiality and respect. When that expectation is not met, the harm is not just legal or administrative. It is democratic.

The bill may clarify federal jurisdiction, but it also takes provincial privacy commissioners out of the picture. These offices have built strong, effective systems to address complaints and hold organizations accountable. By removing that layer of oversight, we risk weakening the transparency and trust that Canadians expect and deserve.

There is also the risk of reinforcing cynicism. When people see legislation rushed through Parliament, particularly as part of a broader omnibus bill, they may feel that their concerns are being managed, not addressed. When they discover that their personal data, collected for political purposes, exists outside the scrutiny applied to most other private entities in Canada, it raises a troubling double standard. We should ask ourselves what example we are setting as federal political actors. If we expect businesses, charities and provincial governments to uphold privacy rights, should we not hold ourselves to at least that same standard?

I believe that we can do better. Rather than simply assert jurisdiction, we should be using this moment to create a clear, principled and enforceable privacy framework tailored to the political context, one that respects constitutional boundaries but does not sacrifice accountability. Canadians should not be asked to choose between federal clarity and democratic transparency. They deserve both. There is a real opportunity here to lead by example.

As federal lawmakers, we can take a proactive approach. We can establish minimum privacy standards for political parties, standards that ensure Canadians know exactly how their data is collected, stored and used, so that the publication of a privacy policy becomes more than a symbolic check box. We must restore trust and credibility, and we must strengthen our democracy from within. While the legislation does address the jurisdictional gap, it should not be mistaken for a comprehensive solution.

The real solution lies in demonstrating that political parties are willing to play by the same rules as everyone else, that we are not seeking exemption but embracing transparency. This is our chance to get it right, not just for today but for the next generation of voters, many of whom are already deeply skeptical of political institutions. Let us give them a reason to believe that we are listening and that we are willing to hold ourselves to the same standard we expect of others, one that respects constitutional boundaries but does not sacrifice accountability.

Canadians should not be forced to choose between federal clarity and democratic transparency. They deserve both. This is why, as we debate legislation like this, we must ask not only whether it meets constitutional muster but also whether it strengthens public trust, whether it improves how we serve and whether it brings citizens closer to the institutions that represent them.

I saw, in eastern Europe, what happens when governments stop listening, when citizens lose faith in the institutions that are meant to serve them. I can say, without hesitation, that rebuilding trust is far harder than maintaining it. Canadians deserve transparency and clarity, and they deserve to know that the people they elect are subject to rules and are not above them.

I did not come to Ottawa seeking applause. I came here to do the work, to advocate for those who feel unheard, to push for common sense in public policy and to serve with humility. The people of Souris—Moose Mountain are not looking for platitudes. They are looking for leadership that understands the value of work and the weight of their worries. They deserve to know that their privacy, their voices and their values matter.

As I rise from my first speech in the House, I do so not as a politician but as a proud Canadian, shaped by my prairie roots, informed by global experience and guided by the belief that government exists to serve, not to control. I will return again to that image of myself as a teenager, writing that first letter, guided by my father's words. If something matters enough to complain about, it matters enough to do something about. I intend to do something about it, not just today but every day that I have the honour to serve in the House.

• (1745)

Viviane Lapointe (Sudbury, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, I would like to congratulate the MP on their first address in the House. I have to tell members that both my parents and grandparents grew up on farms. They were proud farmers. I too have values similar to the ones the member stated. My father repeated to me often that my word is everything.

As it relates to Bill C-4, we are offering a tax break for young families trying to buy their first home. I am wondering if the member supports that move in helping those young families attain their first home.

Steven Bonk: Mr. Speaker, Conservatives always support every tax cut, but, in typical Liberal fashion, it is too little. Liberals say one thing and do another.

The Conservatives want to give a tax break to all people buying homes, not just first-time homebuyers, but if the members opposite want to steal Conservative ideas when it comes to affordability, please, by all means, take our ideas.

[Translation]

Patrick Bonin (Repentigny, BQ): Mr. Speaker, I hear the Conservatives talking about eliminating carbon pricing. I hear them talking about pipelines, increasing oil and gas production and scrapping the emissions cap.

I would like to know whether the Conservatives and the member are essentially looking to get rid of every last measure to reduce greenhouse gas emissions, every last measure to combat climate change.

Would that make them happy?

[English]

Steven Bonk: Mr. Speaker, I am very happy for that question. I have had the privilege of travelling and working on four continents and I have been to other places that produce energy across the world. One thing I know is that if other jurisdictions in the world adopted the same environmental policies as we have in Saskatchewan, for example, there would be a reduction of 25% in greenhouse gases globally.

Canada is a world leader. We should be proud of what we are doing. Our industry should be praised, not vilified.

Grant Jackson (Brandon—Souris, CPC): Mr. Speaker, what a pleasure it is to hear the speech from my colleague for Souris—Moose Mountain. Of course, both of our constituencies are named after the proud Souris River that flows from his constituency in the west into mine in the east, and it is a pleasure to have him as a neighbour.

As neighbours, we both have the same economies in our region. I would like the member for Souris—Moose Mountain to highlight just a little more about how terrible the Liberal government's policies over the last 10 years have been for affordability in our region, how they have suppressed our fertilizer industry, our natural resources industry and the ag sector, with disastrous policies that have resulted in tariffs on canola and the pulse crops from India, and what a disaster that has been for affordability measures in Souris—Moose Mountain and Brandon—Souris.

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Steven Bonk: Mr. Speaker, I would like to thank my colleague for that question because it highlights the fact that in our region, agriculture makes up a large part of our GDP. As we know, most agriculture commodities are priced globally, on the global market.

Just south of both of our constituencies is the United States. They also share the same region as we do. They produce the same crops and have the same industries, but they are not paying a carbon tax. We have about a 40% higher cost of production than my neighbours do in the States. This is a self-imposed harm that the Liberal government has put on the people in my constituency for the past 10 years. It was a carbon tax that we never asked for and did not want, and it did not work. I am so happy that the Liberals removed it.

The next thing they should do is take off the industrial carbon tax, because that affects all of our inputs, all of our crop supplies and is something that really hurts our industries.

• (1750)

Elizabeth May (Saanich—Gulf Islands, GP): Mr. Speaker, I want to congratulate the hon. member for Souris—Moose Mountain. He has raised something that I have been concerned about, which is this: What the heck does part 4 of the bill, changes to the Canada Elections Act, have to do with affordability?

I want to know if the member has any comment on another section. I am sure he noticed it. Section 49, which we can call the “time machine” section, says the bill would come into force, in terms of the sections around the privacy of election information, 25 years ago. Does he have any comment on that?

Steven Bonk: Mr. Speaker, I have not read the bill in enough detail. I just got it yesterday, so I have not had a chance to really go over the fine detail of it.

One thing I can say is that any time we are dealing with people's private information, it is very important that we take privacy concerns extremely seriously. I have seen what happens when governments do not.

[Translation]

Guillaume Deschênes-Thériault (Madawaska—Restigouche, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, I would like to inform you that I will be sharing my time with the member for Vancouver Kingsway.

On April 28, Canadians came together to give our new Liberal government a strong, historic mandate. We were elected on a commitment to build a strong economy that works for everyone. Over the past few weeks, our government has taken concrete steps to deliver on our plan to make life more affordable for Canadian families.

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Bill C-4 delivers on three of the government's earliest announcements: cutting taxes for the middle class, eliminating the GST on new homes for first-time homebuyers and repealing the pollution pricing act.

I have mentioned the tax cut several times in the House because it is excellent news. This measure will lower the tax rate of the first income tax bracket from 15% to 14%. This change will benefit more than 22 million people across the country. Individuals will be able to save up to \$420 per year, and dual-income families will be able to save up to \$840 per year. We are taking meaningful action to put money back in the pockets of Canadians.

During the election campaign, when we were knocking on doors or making phone calls, we heard people say that access to home ownership was a challenge, especially for young people. That is why we want to bring in the GST rebate for first-time homebuyers. The goal is both to help individuals entering the housing market for the first time and to encourage developers to increase the housing supply. The rebate will provide GST relief on new homes at or under \$1 million. In other words, this means a maximum relief of \$50,000 on the purchase of new home by a first-time homebuyer.

We are a government that listens to the people. Many Canadians asked for a climate policy that transcends political divisions, and we listened. From day one, our new government eliminated consumer carbon pricing. We are already seeing the impact. This has resulted in lower fuel prices. This is another meaningful action that helps Canadian families. Bill C-4 repeals the provisions on consumer carbon pricing.

The three measures proposed in Bill C-4 are part of a broader effort to help families deal with the rising cost of living. That is a very important thing to understand. The best way to make life more affordable for Canadians is to get to work on building a strong economy. It just so happens that our government has a plan to build the strongest economy in the G7 by investing in productivity and innovation, getting more Canadians into the workforce and eliminating interprovincial trade barriers. A strong economy will ensure the sustainability of programs that help make life more affordable for Canadians and save families thousands of dollars a year.

Over the next few minutes, I am going to give a few examples of the measures and programs I am referring to.

Of course, there is the Canada child benefit, which for nearly nine years has been helping low- and middle-income families meet the costs of raising a child. These are monthly tax-free payments made to parents and, since it was rolled out, this benefit has lifted nearly 650,000 children across the country out of poverty. In my riding of Madawaska—Restigouche, more than \$40 million a year is paid to parents in our community to help them provide for their children.

I would also like to mention our affordable child care program. Since its launch in 2021, this program has become a cornerstone of Canada's social infrastructure. More than 900,000 children are benefiting from quality child care services. Families across the country are saving thousands of dollars a year, paying on average one-third of what they paid in 2021. During the election campaign, we made a commitment to protect and strengthen this important program. We

understand that our workforce is stronger because parents, and primarily mothers, no longer have to choose between the cost of child care and their careers. When families are strong, the economy is strong, and we are making Canada stronger.

● (1755)

I am also thinking of the national school food program, a meaningful measure to make life more affordable. This program is a direct investment in the middle class. It makes life easier for hard-working families. It is also a safety net for children who do not always get enough to eat at home. No child should go to school on an empty stomach because it is much harder for kids to focus when they are hungry. We have entered into school food agreements with all the provinces and territories. That means that the national school food program is fully operational. Under the agreement with my province, New Brunswick, the Government of Canada is investing roughly \$11.2 million over the next three years to expand and improve access to the national school food program at the schools in the province. That means being able to fund breakfast programs at 160 additional schools across New Brunswick. In all, more than 57,000 children in New Brunswick will benefit from these programs during the current school year.

I would also like to mention the Canadian dental care plan. It is a very important program as we try to help families cope with the cost of living. In May, we expanded eligibility for this program to all age groups. The program is now available to about eight million Canadians and saves them about \$800 a year to get the affordable dental care they need. This is an important measure because during the election campaign, when I was knocking on doors and making phone calls, I heard over and over again how important this program is. I am thinking of the example of one constituent who told me that he has had tooth pain for years and that he could not afford dental care. Now, thanks to the expansion of the program we announced in May, that person will be able to access the care he needs. This is extremely important and makes a difference in the lives of the people we represent.

Last month, the people in my riding and elsewhere in the country expressed the desire to see the cost of living go down. We heard them. Thanks to measures set out in Bill C-4, our government is making changes to cut taxes, decrease costs and put money back in the pockets of Canadians. These changes are in addition to efforts by our government to build a strong economy and ensure the sustainability of programs that already help families save thousands of dollars each year.

I am proud of my government. This government understands the importance of having a strong economy to make life more affordable, and it is guided by the conviction that the economy is only truly strong when it serves everyone. I look forward to voting in favour of Bill C-4 to make life more affordable for Canadians, including the people in my riding of Madawaska—Restigouche.

[English]

Helena Konanz (Similkameen—South Okanagan—West Kootenay, CPC): Mr. Speaker, child care is very important in communities throughout Canada, including my own community of Penticton. British Columbia announced a \$10-a-day child care program almost a decade ago. Unfortunately, there has been difficulty with the program because of a lack of child care workers. Without child care workers, we cannot have child care, even if it is free.

I was wondering if the member would explain how he would fill the new child care centres with child care workers when there is a lack of them throughout the country.

• (1800)

[Translation]

Guillaume Deschênes-Thériault: Mr. Speaker, we are moving forward with the affordable child care spaces program in collaboration with the provinces and territories. The challenges and issues may vary from place to place, but what is important is maintaining a good working relationship with all jurisdictions across the country to strengthen this program that is extremely important and changes the lives of Canadian families. It ensures that parents do not have to choose between paying for child care and having a career.

Our government continues to work with the provinces and territories to strengthen this very important program.

Mario Beaulieu (La Pointe-de-l'Île, BQ): Mr. Speaker, I congratulate my colleague on his speech.

We agree in principle with a tax cut and eliminating the GST on new homes. That said, it brings the spending up to about \$30 billion. The problem is that there is no budget. We do not know where that money is going to come from. Will it come from a reduction in health transfers? Is the government going to abandon the measures to compensate workers in the current context of tariff threats?

Where is the money going to come from?

Guillaume Deschênes-Thériault: Mr. Speaker, during the election, people told us that they wanted concrete and swift action to help them deal with the cost of living and to strengthen the Canadian economy. That is why we returned to the House of Commons so quickly. Ours was the second-fastest post-election return to the House of Commons in Canadian history. We want to take the time to do things right.

As my colleagues have already mentioned, a budget will be presented in the fall. In the meantime, we still want to take concrete action to help people deal with the cost of living. People have asked us to do that, and we want to deliver. We are starting by cutting income taxes, eliminating the GST on new homes, and doing away with consumer carbon pricing.

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[English]

Kent MacDonald (Cardigan, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, I would like to welcome my colleague from Madawaska—Restigouche to the House. I know, from discussions with him, that our ridings are very similar in their makeup, or their mosaic.

The message I heard when I was going door to door was that we had to make life more affordable. Our government has put this bill forward. I would like him to expand his thoughts on that and what he heard at the doors.

[Translation]

Guillaume Deschênes-Thériault: Mr. Speaker, yes, we both represent rural ridings, and the areas we cover are large. When we go door to door, sometimes the distance between two homes is greater than it is in a city centre.

The cost of living is also a challenge in rural areas. People have asked for meaningful action, and they welcome the news about the tax cut. There have also been repeated calls to expand the Canadian dental care plan to include all age groups. When I was knocking on doors, people told me that they wanted the Canadian dental care plan to be expanded and that they wanted concrete measures on housing. A first step was announced today with the elimination of the GST on the purchase of a first home.

However, let us not forget that our platform includes one of the most ambitious housing plans that Canada has ever seen. We will get to work quickly to meet Canadians' expectations. I am not worried. After just a few weeks, I think we can see that the results are there. We are taking action to make life more affordable and address the concerns of Canadians.

[English]

Don Davies (Vancouver Kingsway, NDP): Mr. Speaker, it is a true honour to rise today to deliver my first speech of the 45th Parliament. I do so with great humility and immense gratitude to the people of Vancouver Kingsway for once again placing their trust in me to represent them. I want to recognize all those who stepped forward as candidates in the last election. Their commitment to public service and to our democratic process is vital to the strength and resilience of our country.

Being re-elected to serve in Parliament is an incredible privilege, one that would not have been possible without the unwavering support of my campaign team. Their hard work, passion and steadfast belief in our shared vision helped us overcome every challenge. From the bottom of my heart, I thank them. I thank the people of Vancouver Kingsway for allowing me to carry their voices, ideas, dreams and aspirations to Ottawa once again. I will work tirelessly each and every day to honour that trust and help build a brighter future for our community and for all Canadians.

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I also want to express my sincere thanks to my colleagues in the New Democratic Party for the great honour of serving as our party's leader for an interim period. It is a responsibility I take on with a deep sense of duty to our country, our values and the people we serve. Finally, there is my family. As we all know in this place, none of us could discharge our duties without the love, support and understanding of those closest to us.

The New Democratic Party was built by and for working people to fight for fairness, dignity and opportunity for everyone. As leader, I will work hard to ensure the NDP remains the party that puts workers and their families at the heart of everything we do, because now, more than ever, workers need a strong voice in Parliament, one that will forcefully and effectively advocate for their rights, their livelihoods and their futures.

It is clear that Canada is at a crossroads. Many Canadians are struggling and uncertain about their and their families' futures. We are facing multiple overlapping crises that require immediate and decisive action. Fully half of all Canadians are living paycheque to paycheque, and one in four parents has cut back on their own food consumption to ensure their children have enough to eat.

Eighty per cent of Canadians now believe that owning a home is only for the rich. Among those who do not own a home, 70% have given up ever owning one. Rent prices have more than doubled since 2015. In major cities across Canada, tenants are regularly paying over 50% of their income on shelter, which is a crushing and unsustainable burden.

Canada's health care system is under serious strain, with long wait times, inadequate access to essential services and high levels of burnout among health care workers. Millions of Canadians do not have a family doctor, which is critical to accessing our health care system. Across Canada, working families are under pressure. Right-wing governments are attacking public services, undermining collective bargaining and promoting privatization.

Now we are facing unprecedented external threats. The Trump administration has launched a reckless trade war against Canada, imposing sweeping tariffs on our exports and targeting key sectors of the Canadian economy. Even more disturbing are the inflammatory and deeply disrespectful remarks suggesting Canada should be annexed as the 51st state, an affront to our sovereignty and our identity as a proud, independent nation.

At a time when Canadians are already grappling with economic uncertainty, these threats only deepen our resolve. We will not be intimidated. We will stand united as Canadians in defence of our democracy, our values and our future.

That brings me to Bill C-4, the making life more affordable for Canadians act. While it is not perfect, New Democrats will support this bill at second reading, because it contains measures that provide immediate relief to Canadians who are struggling.

The reduction of the marginal personal income tax rate on the lowest tax bracket, from 15% to 14.5% this year and to 14% in 2026, would be a step toward easing the financial burden on millions of Canadians.

• (1805)

The new GST rebate for first-time homebuyers, which offers a full rebate on homes up to \$1 million and a partial rebate on homes up to \$1.5 million, is a welcome measure for many families trying to enter an increasingly inaccessible housing market. The elimination of the consumer carbon tax provides an opportunity to create a more effective mechanism to reduce carbon and to fight climate change, in my view the defining issue of our planet and our times.

However, let us be clear: This bill, while helpful, can and should be improved. The biggest benefits of the tax cut would go to higher-income earners. According to David Macdonald, senior economist with the Canadian Centre for Policy Alternatives, 98% of those making over \$129,000 would benefit, while only 14% of those living in poverty would see any gain at all. In fact, the average benefit for someone living in poverty would be just \$11 a year. For the middle 30% of Canadians, the average benefit would be \$151 a year, but for the richest among us, the average benefit would be \$310 a year. Ultimately, only 1% of tax filers would reap the full hypothetical benefit of \$412 per person that the Liberals touted in the last election when they proposed this tax cut.

More troubling are the unintended consequences of this tax measure: It would reduce the value of critical tax credits. This is because many non-refundable tax credits, like the Canada caregiver credit, the age amount and the disability tax credit, are calculated as a percentage of the lowest federal income tax rate. When that rate is reduced, the dollar value of these credits also decreases. This is not just a technical oversight; it would hurt the financial security of some of the most vulnerable people in our country.

The National Disability Network has raised the alarm, warning that more than 900,000 Canadians who rely on the disability tax credit and the medical expense tax credit could be negatively affected. For many low- and modest-income individuals with disabilities, this tax cut could actually function as a tax increase. These are people who already face higher daily costs due to disability, costs that are not optional. Reducing their tax credits or increasing their overall tax burden is not tax relief; it is a step backwards. That is unacceptable, and I call on my colleagues to work with New Democrats to fix it.

New Democrats will work to fix these flaws. We will propose amendments at committee to ensure that no one, especially those living with disabilities, is left behind. We will work to protect the value of these essential credits so that affordability measures reach those who need them most.

I am also hearing from constituents who will not qualify for the GST rebate on their new home purchase simply because of the closing date of their transaction. New Democrats will also propose amendments to address this gap.

I hope that my colleagues on all sides of the House will examine these flaws of the bill and, if satisfied that they exist, join me and my New Democrat colleagues to pass these constructive amendments to improve this bill and, I think, address the real objective of it, which is to give all Canadians a break at this time, a time that is so difficult for so many of them.

Canadians are looking to this Parliament for leadership. They are looking for unity. They are looking for action that matches the scale of the challenges they face. Bill C-4 is a start, but it is not enough. New Democrats will support this bill at second reading, because Canadians need help now, but we will not, should not and cannot stop there. We will push for improvements not only to this bill but to every other aspect of life that will help address and improve affordability for Canadians. Whether that is help with grocery prices, help with utility prices or help with home affordability prices, all of these areas are in crying need of assistance for Canadians who live in every community, every province and territory, and every corner of our great country.

Let us work together to fight for fairness and to help raise the living standard of every Canadian in our country. We will continue, as New Democrats, to work together with our colleagues and stand up for working people in every corner of this country to realize their dreams.

• (1810)

Kent MacDonald (Cardigan, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, I thank the member opposite for his support of this bill.

We have heard the opposition call for the removal of the industrial carbon price. I would like to hear the member's views on that. The party on this side of the House thinks that we have to charge heavy polluters, which is why we are maintaining that part of the bill. Could he give his views on that?

• (1815)

Don Davies: Mr. Speaker, that was a thoughtful question.

As I said in my speech, I think the climate crisis is the defining issue of our times. There are thousands of issues in politics, but some are existential, and the climate crisis is one of those. I think it is incumbent upon us as a Parliament to take effective measures that reduce Canada's carbon emissions in an effective way and meet the international obligations that we have committed to in treaty. That means looking for every single mechanism that we can to reduce carbon in a way that protects our planet and our environment and operates in a fair manner.

New Democrats believe that the price on pollution is one measure in that regard. I think it is also time for us to explore other

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mechanisms, like the cap-and-trade system, which has worked well to reduce the sulphur dioxide problem in the Great Lakes. As well, we need to work with industries to make sure that we can adopt technologies so that industries can start making the reductions in carbon that are so necessary to protect our planet.

Helena Konanz (Similkameen—South Okanagan—West Kootenay, CPC): Mr. Speaker, I think we all agree, at least on this side of the aisle, that this bill does not go far enough in a lot of its policies.

I want to ask the member this. How does Bill C-4 address the multiple tent cities that have been created over the last 10 years in communities across Canada because of Liberal policies?

Don Davies: Mr. Speaker, I think the short answer is that this bill does very little, if anything, to address the homelessness issue in this country. It does give some targeted relief to someone who can afford to buy a home up to \$1.5 million, but that is not going to address the tens, maybe hundreds, of thousands of Canadians who are living homeless or couch surfing across this country, especially young people. I think one of the primary goals of this Parliament, from all sides of the House, should be to tackle the housing crisis.

It is unacceptable, in a G7 country, that Canadians would not have a dignified, secure, affordable place to call home. To me, that is a promise of this country. Every Canadian should have access to that. We should address that issue with everything we have in this House.

[*Translation*]

Patrick Bonin (Repentigny, BQ): Mr. Speaker, I want to congratulate my colleague on his election and on his first speech in the House in this new Parliament.

The Bloc Québécois also considers it important to fight inflation and protect consumer purchasing power. This bill eliminates consumer carbon pricing.

Both the government and the Parliamentary Budget Officer were very clear: More than 90% of Canadians were receiving more money from the rebate than what they were paying, and less fortunate and middle-class Canadians were receiving even more than what they were paying.

I would like my colleague to explain how he thinks supporting the elimination of carbon pricing will improve the cost of living.

*Government Orders**[English]*

Don Davies: Mr. Speaker, my hon. colleague asked an excellent question. I think I saw the carbon tax in this House reduced to what I would call nursery rhyme politics. It was used as an affordability issue, and most Canadians, frankly, were left underinformed about how the carbon tax worked and what its benefits and costs were. The truth is that this is where we are at right now. The carbon tax has been eliminated because people think that this will help save them money.

It is our job as parliamentarians now to put our nose to the grindstone, find other effective ways to reduce carbon, and also address the very serious affordability issues that are affecting Canadians from coast to coast to coast.

William Stevenson (Yellowhead, CPC): Mr. Speaker, I will be splitting my time.

It is with the deepest humility and honour that I rise in this chamber as the member of Parliament for Yellowhead for my maiden speech. It was a privilege to witness His Majesty King Charles III deliver the throne speech in the Senate chamber.

However, a throne speech is more than who delivers the words. It is a promise made by the Liberal government to Canadians. The promise to make life more affordable for Canadians needs to be our immediate focus. This was the number one concern I heard from voters during the last election.

The removal of the consumer carbon tax was the first step in addressing the economic disaster the Liberal government created over the last lost decade. The industrial carbon tax must also go. Millennials and gen Z cannot afford the costs of home ownership.

There is a meagre attempt made in Bill C-4 to gaslight Canadians by saying the Liberals are eliminating the GST for first-time homebuyers on new homes, but it would impact such a small segment of the market, that proposed changes would not create any real change at all. The proposal included in the bill would help fewer Canadians than what our party campaigned on during the last election, and the Liberals actually want to cap this in six years' time, whereas we would have made it permanent.

The Liberal government copied our Conservative policies, but only in half measures: the reduction in personal income taxes was less; the proposed GST rebate on new homes is less; and the impacts of this bill do not go far enough when addressing the affordability needs of Canadians today.

It is an honour to represent the thousands of people who call Yellowhead home, and I am committed to doing everything I can to help make life affordable for my constituents. As a father, I want to ensure the future generations can continue to call Yellowhead the best place to live, work and raise a family.

I can confidently say that we live in the most beautiful riding in the entire country. At more than 83,600 square kilometres, Yellowhead is bigger than the province of New Brunswick and the entire country of Ireland. It stretches from the Rocky Mountains following the Cowboy Trail, from the Willmore Wilderness area and Grande Cache in the north to Kananaskis country in the south, and

everything in between, including Canada's crown jewels, Banff National Park and Jasper National Park.

My riding consists of many communities made up of hard-working Albertans, including Springbank, Rocky View County, Banff, Canmore, Exshaw, Dead Man's Flats and the Bow Valley. Going north on the Cowboy Trail, there is Waiparous, Cremona and Sundre. We have the hidden gem of David Thompson country, which includes Clearwater County, the Municipal District of Bighorn, Caroline, Rocky Mountain House and Nordegg. Even further north, there is the Yellowhead County, the namesake for my riding. There is also Edson, Hinton, Jasper, Grand Cache and the parts of the Municipal District of Greenview. Last but not least, we have Mountain View County, Rocky View County, Carstairs and Crossfield, where I, along with my loving wife Bev, have raised my two incredible daughters on our farm near the hamlet of Madden.

Madden is home to my local Lions Club, where I have been a member for more than 20 years, and I want to congratulate its members on the great work they do. I have a long history in this area, since my family homesteaded near Crossfield in the 1880s.

Yellowhead is also located on Treaty 6, 7 and 8 lands and includes the indigenous peoples of the first nations of Bears paw, Chiniki, Goodstoney, O'Chiese, Sunchild First Nation, as well as the people of the Métis nation of Alberta.

These communities in Yellowhead make Alberta and Canada such an incredible place to live, work and play. Every year, millions of people travel from around the world to come see the breathtaking nature Yellowhead has to offer. Our riding is an economic powerhouse, with businesses both big and small employing thousands in the agriculture, forestry, mining, energy and tourism sectors.

I would like to extend my heartfelt thanks to each person who helped me get elected, from those working behind the scenes on the campaign, to the volunteers who were at the doors putting up signs.

● (1820)

I want to thank Kalee, Linda, Sadiq, Leigh, Paul, Colleen, Roland, Ralph, Bruce, Jeff, Gordon, Glen, Dino, Judy, Barry, Angela, Patti, Barb, Peggy, Carole, Bob, Jim, Nancy, Rob, Curtis, Tony, Dale, Doug, Wally, Sue and so many more. Their hard work and dedication did not go unnoticed, and I deeply appreciate everything they did and continue to do.

Of course, I especially want to thank my family, my daughters Ashley and Emily, my parents Mary, Mike, Ross and Margaret, and my nephews. I thank them for their unwavering support. They are what truly fuels my dedication to this role. I could not have done it without them, and I am incredibly grateful for their patience and support.

I especially want to thank my wife Bev. We first met at a political event for my MLA Carol Haley in Crossfield, where Stockwell Day, then the provincial treasurer of Alberta, was our guest speaker. Since then, Bev has been by my side through everything for the past 26 years. I would not have made it here without her love and support. I thank her.

I also want to acknowledge my predecessors who represented the people of Yellowhead and the communities within Yellowhead's new boundaries. The Right Hon. Joe Clark was the first member of Parliament to serve for Yellowhead in 1979. He also served as prime minister. There have been many members since him who have served my riding with dedication and integrity, including Jim Eglinski, the Hon. Rob Merrifield, Gerald Soroka and Cliff Breitzkreuz. I am also proud to be serving many of the communities that were previously represented by Louise Feltham, Earl Dreeschen and the late Myron Thompson.

I would be remiss not to mention my current colleagues who represented parts of the new Yellowhead riding in previous parliaments, including the member for Foothills and the member for Air-drie—Cochrane. I look forward to working closely with them.

As a chartered professional accountant, I look forward to using my 26 years of public practice experience with personal and small business tax to help shape reforms to the tax system. We need to ensure that our nation's tax system works for everyday Canadians and not against them. As a proud Conservative, I stand for the principles that have long guided our party: free enterprise, individual liberty and the rule of law. I believe in a small government that serves the people, not one that grows at their expense. Canadians deserve low taxes, fiscal responsibility and the unwavering protection of their rights and freedoms, including property rights.

In Yellowhead, we understand the value of hard work. Our communities are built by farmers, ranchers, energy workers, outdoorsmen, forestry workers, small business owners and tourism operators. We understand what true stewardship of our natural resources means for responsible resources and conserving our beautiful lands and wildlife, yet too often rural voices are overlooked and policies are crafted without consideration for the impact on their way of life. This must change.

It is my priority to advocate for the rights of Alberta and provinces, develop the resources, oppose any regulations and taxes that would harm rural Canadians and support the agriculture sector, which is facing rising costs and federal overreach. I will advocate for our veterans to give them the respect and support they deserve after they have dedicated their lives to our country, and I will protect the rights of responsible firearms owners, hunters and sports shooters, by opposing the unrealistic overreach restrictions that have been imposed on them over the last decade.

As a responsible firearms owner, a sports shooter and a hunter, I would like to highlight the six shooting ranges in Yellowhead and how proud I am of their ongoing efforts to ensure that responsible firearms owners have a place to call their own. Firearms are part of our heritage. They help people like myself put food on the table, and they are the backbone of numerous international renowned sporting events.

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I want to reassure the constituents of Yellowhead, as well as all Albertans and Canadians, that I will continue to defend the rights of firearms owners. I will work with groups such as the Canadian Coalition for Firearm Rights and the Canadian Shooting Sports Association to ensure these rights continue to be respected. Responsible firearms owners have faced unbelievable pressure and uncertainty under the Liberal government, which has continued, over the last lost decade, to impose outrageous restrictions that do nothing to improve public safety.

● (1825)

As I take my seat in the chamber, I do so with a clear purpose to put Canadians first, defend their values, build this country and ensure Yellowhead has a robust voice in shaping Canada's future to make our country the best place to live, work and raise a family.

God bless Yellowhead. God bless Alberta. God bless Canada.

Hon. Wayne Long (Secretary of State (Canada Revenue Agency and Financial Institutions), Lib.): Mr. Speaker, I congratulate the member opposite. As I have said before, I encourage the member to enjoy every minute in the House. It is a privilege for all of us to be here.

I also have a little bit of advice for the member, though. When we start naming names, as I have learned, we always leave one out, and we always hear about it when we are done our speech. All in all, that was a great speech.

We are a government of action. We are a government that is cutting taxes. We cut the tax for 22 million Canadians, have permanently cut the carbon tax and also cut tax for first-home homebuyers.

I would like to know what the member thinks about those bold moves we have made as a government, and I thank him in advance for his support.

● (1830)

William Stevenson: Mr. Speaker, as a CPA who has dealt with a lot of taxes for the last 26 years, I have witnessed many occasions when the government makes a big announcement, just like a lot of these ones here. They make a lot of hay out of how much it will change things, but in the end, it really makes little difference.

On the GST, if the Liberals actually have some stats on how many people are new homebuyers who are buying a brand new home, I am sure they would find that it is very few. The effect they are touting is not going to be very effective.

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Andrew Lawton (Elgin—St. Thomas—London South, CPC): Mr. Speaker, I send my heartfelt congratulations to my colleague in the House. My riding does not have the Rockies, which my colleague's does, but we do have a significant agricultural base, as I know his does.

In his remarks, he mentioned farmers in his riding. I was wondering if he could speak to the connection he has to that and what he brings to this chamber now as he takes a role as MP.

William Stevenson: Mr. Speaker, I think I stated in my speech that my family has actually homesteaded in Alberta since the 1880s. After I finished my university degree, I moved to the family farm and raised cattle for 10 years.

At a certain point, I moved to being just an accountant, but I know and appreciate the hard work of the farmers who live off the land and take all of their income from the land, and how hard it is for them, so I can have that appreciation. Also, over the last 26 years, I have been doing taxes for a lot of my local farmers, so I can appreciate everything that they have to offer our communities.

[Translation]

Guillaume Deschênes-Thériault (Madawaska—Restigouche, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, in the last election, Canadians made it clear that they want us to take concrete action to help them with the cost of living. With Bill C-4, we are delivering by lowering taxes, eliminating the GST on the purchase price of a first home and eliminating the consumer carbon price.

Will my colleague work with us to do what Canadians have asked us to do and meet their expectations quickly? Will he commit to working with our government to get these measures passed before the summer?

[English]

William Stevenson: Mr. Speaker, with my 26 years in public practice, I have seen a lot of tax changes that had very little effect. I intend fully, over the next Parliament, to help in whatever committees I can to encourage meaningful tax changes. Bill C-4 has a few that are starting, but they are a long ways from actually having an effective change for individual Canadians, so I think we have a long way to go. This has just barely tipped the iceberg, and I hope that we can have lots of co-operation to make further cuts to benefit Canadians.

Rhonda Kirkland (Oshawa, CPC): Mr. Speaker, first, I want to congratulate the member for Yellowhead on his election win.

A member opposite mentioned something about permanently cutting the carbon tax, but of course not the industrial carbon tax. It is certainly just the consumer carbon tax. The member opposite did not answer, so maybe the member can.

Do we think the industrial carbon tax is going to be passed down to consumers, or are the big emitters just going to pay for it themselves?

William Stevenson: Mr. Speaker, from my perspective, I do not think it is possible that these costs are not going to be passed down to all Canadians. The only ones that are not going to be seen are with foreign companies, and we are not going to get the benefits in our industries here in Canada.

• (1835)

Tamara Jansen (Cloverdale—Langley City, CPC): Mr. Speaker, Bill C-4 is being presented to Canadians as a solution, a path toward affordability and relief in a time of real struggle, but when we peel back the layers, it becomes painfully clear that this bill is not a bold plan but a political strategy. It is a collection of half measures cobbled together from Conservative ideas, watered down and repackaged by a government that has spent the last 10 years creating the very problems it is now trying to solve.

Canadians are smart. They know when they are being sold a talking point instead of a real fix, and they know that these issues, the cost of living, the housing crisis, the damage done by the carbon tax, did not come out of nowhere. They were caused by the very people now claiming to fix them.

Let us look at what is really in Bill C-4. Let us talk about the removal of the consumer carbon tax. The bill proves what Conservatives have been saying all along: The carbon tax is driving up the cost of living. The Liberals basically copied it straight out of the Conservative election platform, finally admitting what they spent years denying, that the carbon tax is hurting Canadians. It is making life more expensive, especially for the people who can least afford it.

They did not suddenly have a change of heart; they had a change in polling. Canadians were fed up, and in all honesty, it is Pierre Poilievre who made this a national fight. It was that pressure that forced the Liberals to act, not principle. Here is the problem, though. They did not scrap the tax; they just made the visible part disappear. That is it. They are removing the part that shows up on the receipt, hoping that if people cannot see it, they will not notice that it is still buried in the price of everything else. The reality is that the tax is still here. From the farmer growing the food to the truck delivering it and the shelf at the grocery store, every single step still gets hit, and Canadians still pay.

This is not relief; it is optics. It was an election year, and it is a gimmick dressed up as a policy. After years of punishing working Canadians, the Liberals now want credit for copying our plan while leaving the pain in place. How is that anything but a slap in the face?

There is a tax cut in Bill C-4, which, unfortunately for Canadians, is all smoke and no fire. I have talked to a lot of families who are barely getting by, and now the Liberals want people to believe that this tax cut will fix things. Let us be honest. It is a weak copy of the Conservative tax cut we promised in our platform, and it does not even start until halfway through the year. That means the cut is only 0.5% in 2025. Most people will get about \$420 back. That is not help; it is barely enough for a coffee a day.

Meanwhile, the Liberals are spending money like there is no tomorrow. They are handing out billions in consulting contracts, even though the Auditor General just exposed that many of these contracts cannot even prove value for money. Canadians are being squeezed at every turn, and the government keeps throwing cash at well-connected firms while offering working families crumbs.

In fact, when we add this all up, including the billions it plans to spend on fancy consultants, which will cost families around \$1,400, Canadians will be losing ground, so while they are getting back \$420, they are paying more than triple to fund Liberal waste. That is not a tax break; it is a bad joke. This tax cut is not about helping Canadians. The Liberals did not do this because it is good policy. They did it because they were losing support and hoping Canadians would not notice. Canadians actually know the real thing when they see it, and this is not it.

Now we come to the GST rebate. It sounds nice, but it helps almost no one. The Liberals say they are helping first-time homebuyers by giving them a new GST rebate, but the truth is that it will not help most people. According to the Parliamentary Budget Officer, this program will cost \$1.9 billion over six years. That sounds like a lot, but only about 5% of new homes will actually qualify. That means more than nine out of 10 Canadians will not get any help at all.

● (1840)

Also, it is only for first-time homebuyers, so if a family is growing and they need a bigger place, too bad. If they have gone through a divorce and need to start fresh, sorry, they are not included. That is not fair. That is not real help.

Even for newcomers to Canada, if they are a Canadian citizen or a permanent resident and have not owned or lived in a home anywhere in the world in the last five years, they can qualify. If they are still waiting for their permanent residency, even if they have never owned a home, they are out of luck. Even for those who do qualify, this applies only to brand new homes, not resale homes and not older homes, which might have been more affordable for someone. People who are hoping to rent out a suite to help pay the mortgage do not qualify either.

This rebate is like offering a life jacket to a handful of people while the rest are left to tread water in a sea of rising prices and shrinking hope. I have talked to families in my riding who are doing everything right. They are working hard and saving what they can, but they still feel like home ownership is slipping further and further out of reach. This plan will not fix that. It barely even tries.

It is clear. The Liberals copied our homework, but they got the answers wrong. Canadians deserve better than this half-baked rebate. Canadians are exhausted. They are working harder than ever,

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and they are falling further behind. Instead of bold action, Bill C-4 gives them a series of half measures that copy Conservatives' ideas without the conviction or the follow-through: a carbon tax that is half removed, a tax cut that barely buys a daily coffee and a housing rebate that helps one in 20. This is not leadership. It is damage control. The government has spent 10 years creating a cost of living crisis, and now it wants credit for tossing out a few band-aids. Canadians do not want slogans. They want solutions, and Conservatives are the ones who will deliver.

[Translation]

Natilien Joseph (Longueuil—Saint-Hubert, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, with all due respect to my colleague, I am sorry that this question falls on her. The Conservatives keep saying that the government is spending too much, but they never tell us where budget cuts should be made.

Can my colleague tell us where budget cuts should be made if we are spending too much? Should we cancel the tax cut? Should we eliminate dental care? We are told we are spending too much, but we need to know where we are spending too much. We will stop doing that.

[English]

Tamara Jansen: Mr. Speaker, I can tell members where Canadians are making cuts. I have had conversations with families in my riding who are cutting back on groceries, skipping meals and putting off their bills. The government wants them to believe that a few tweaks to these policies are going to make the difference, but the truth is that the pain is still here. The carbon tax is still driving up prices. The debt is still ballooning, and the bill does nothing to stop that. Canadians need relief that lasts, not just relief that polls well.

Michael Guglielmin (Vaughan—Woodbridge, CPC): Mr. Speaker, I would like to thank my hon. colleague for her excellent synopsis of the bill that we are debating today. Any discussion around affordability and improving one's standard of living has to come with energy and resource development.

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Does my hon. colleague not think that the Liberals should join us in passing a real sovereignty law that gets rid of Bill C-69, the industrial carbon tax, the shipping ban and the energy cap?

• (1845)

Tamara Jansen: Mr. Speaker, we have been watching the legislation come through the House. It has harmed the entire Canadian economy, and we have asked over and over that the Liberal government, this old Liberal government, actually reverse those painful and destructive bills. The hon. member is absolutely right. We need to get rid of the tanker ban. We need to make sure that we can build pipelines. We need to get our energy to market. Yes, we need to get the Liberals to actually do the right thing. That would be the way to get our economy back on track.

[*Translation*]

Simon-Pierre Savard-Tremblay (Saint-Hyacinthe—Bagot—Acton, BQ): Mr. Speaker, we hear the government announcing even more spending. Earlier this week, it announced a whopping \$9 billion in spending. Now we are looking at a bill that includes incentives, tax cuts and some fairly significant tax measures.

I would like to ask my colleague if she is as eager as I am to see a budget or, at the very least, an economic statement. Presenting a budget would be the least the Liberals could do.

[*English*]

Tamara Jansen: Mr. Speaker, we have been asking constantly to finally have a budget. It is with a budget that we would better understand where the money is going and how we are going to pay for it, and it would let Canadians truly understand the actual situation that we are facing.

Will Greaves (Victoria, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, as a fellow member from British Columbia, I wonder if the hon. member for Cloverdale—Langley City would recognize the significant investments in infrastructure and fossil fuel development that have happened in our province in the last 10 years: not only the Trans Mountain pipeline expansion but also LNG Canada, the largest private sector investment in this country's history, of \$40 billion, and the Coastal GasLink pipeline.

Contrary to the hon. member's statements, there has been a lot of growth and investment in this sector. Will the member acknowledge it?

Tamara Jansen: Mr. Speaker, it was the previous Liberal government, which is now the new Liberal government, that turned away eight countries when they asked for LNG, so, no, I am sorry, we do not have what we need. We have been turning away many dollars, and we need to actually get our resources to market.

Elizabeth May (Saanich—Gulf Islands, GP): Mr. Speaker, I appreciate the chance to speak to Bill C-4. First of all, I want to make a couple of observations about the legislation we are seeing in this place under the new government.

I am distressed. It may be a manageable issue, and maybe I am the only one who is noticing that almost every bill that comes before us is in omnibus form; in other words, many different bills are addressed within the same bill. Some of the issues are connected one to the other, which makes it a legitimate omnibus bill, and some seem to be for the purpose of convenience, to save the gov-

ernment time. For instance, in Bill C-2, the strong borders act, there are some aspects that do not really have to do with borders at all, and there is significant concern from people who are in the refugee law community, and from Amnesty International.

We are looking at Bill C-4 tonight, and I will give it more detail, but briefly, Bill C-5 should have been two different pieces of legislation. Part 1 deals with interprovincial barriers between labour mobility and recognizing different kinds of restrictions to moving goods. Part 2 is the building Canada act, which is entirely different. Part 1 has drawn attention from the Canadian Cancer Society, as it is concerned the bill may lead to a weakening of standards across the country. Meanwhile, part 2 needs massive study, appears, at least to me, to give unprecedented levels of unfettered political discretion to cabinet, and is unprecedented in its scope.

On Bill C-4, before I go to the affordability section, let me just point to the anomalous inclusion of changes to the Canada Elections Act. The Canada Elections Act and privacy concerns for Canadian citizens under the Elections Act have no connection whatsoever to affordability. However, here we have it: part 4, Canada Elections Act amendments that are similar to what we saw in the previous Parliament in Bill C-65, which I do wish had carried before we went into the last election, as it would have certainly expedited the collection of signatures for candidates and their chances of getting nominated candidates onto ballots.

This is weaker than that, but it does have some connection to what we saw in Bill C-65 in relating to restrictions on political parties' ability to save information and violate Canadians' privacy. It does not belong in an affordability act at all. We have heard at least one other MP tonight, the hon. member for Souris—Moose Mountain, mention the issue that we want to protect personal information and that privacy laws should extend to political parties.

Unusually, in Bill C-4, new subsection 446.4(1) would assert an ability for federal legislation to negate provincial privacy laws and what provincial privacy laws can say about federal political parties. That is questionable at best. It also, to me, is somewhat offensive, or very offensive I suppose, that clause 49 of part 4 of Bill C-4 deals with the date of coming into force.

Experienced members of this place who look at statutory interpretation, which we do, and I hope we all read the legislation and all bills carefully, know certainly that coming into force is usually a date in the future. A bill would pass through the House, pass through the Senate and then come into force, sometimes at a date that is certain. I have a pretty good memory. I may have forgotten that there was ever a bill like this one, but within my ability to remember everything I have ever read in legislation, I do not think I have ever seen a bill that purports to come into force 25 years before the date on which it is passed.

Members who are learning this for the first time, if they look at clause 49 of Bill C-4, will find that the date on which the bill we are discussing today, June 11, 2025, would have come into force is May 31, 2000. This would exempt federal political parties from any offences they may have committed in failing to obey provincial legislation to which we were subjected, by going all the way back, resetting the clock, to May 31, 2000.

● (1850)

In this place, we like time travel; let us face it. We do like seeing the clock at midnight when it is not midnight, and we can do that in this place. We can say, "Gee, I wish it were midnight. I am ready to go home. Let us all agree we see the clock at midnight."

I do not know whether anyone has ever tried a trick like seeing the year at 25 years ago. I am worried about this, and I do not know that we will have time, but I certainly hope we will properly study Bill C-4 in committee, and maybe we can persuade the government that part 4 should be pulled apart and studied separately from the rest of the bill.

The rest of the bill is tax measures. There is only part of the tax measures I would want to address at this point, and I am cognizant of the time. I know we are coming near a point where I should close to avoid being interrupted, but I do not mind interruptions, certainly for unanimous consent motions, because I think we are unanimous on that.

However, let us just say I am probably the only remaining member of Parliament who will stand up and say that the consumer carbon price was a good idea. It is a shame to see such cowardice on all sides of the House from the parties that used to support using market mechanisms, which is actually from the right-wing tool kit invented by Republicans in Washington, D.C., of how we can reduce emissions of whatever. Air pollutants in the area around Los Angeles is one of the first places market mechanisms were used.

Carbon pricing is being accepted by economists around the world as having a more efficient economic impact, reduced transactional costs of implementing the regulatory approach. Generally, people on the right do not like regulation. That is a choice: If we are going to reduce emissions of greenhouse gases, we could use a regulatory approach. We could use the Canadian Environmental Protection Act, part 4, which already exists, and put in place regulated, required hard caps on emissions of any pollutants, thus bringing them down sharply without having to use the more complex measures of pricing.

I would rather see the consumer carbon price used as what is called, in the literature, carbon fee and dividend, in other words,

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maintaining pollution taxation as revenue-neutral. A key feature in good, solid gold-standard carbon pricing is that the government should not live on pollution as a source of revenue to government. We want to make sure that whatever we take in on a carbon price is rebated as efficiently as possible to those who paid it.

To the idea that we do not want to have this, I just add again that according to the commissioner of the environment and sustainable development—

● (1855)

The Assistant Deputy Speaker (John Nater): The hon. parliamentary secretary to the government House leader is rising.

Hon. Kevin Lamoureux (Parliamentary Secretary to the Leader of the Government in the House of Commons, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, there have been discussions among the parties, and if you seek it, I believe you will find unanimous consent for the following motion.

I move:

That the debate on the second reading motion of Bill C-4, an Act respecting certain affordability measures for Canadians and another measure, be deemed concluded and the Speaker proceed to put the question

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

It is agreed.

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

(Motion agreed to)

The Assistant Deputy Speaker (John Nater): Accordingly, pursuant to order made earlier today, it is my duty to put forthwith every question necessary to dispose of the second reading stage of the bill now before the House.

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.

Hon. Kevin Lamoureux : Mr. Speaker, I would request a recorded vote, please.

The Assistant Deputy Speaker (John Nater): Pursuant to Standing Order 45, the division stands deferred until Thursday, June 12, at the expiry of the time provided for Oral Questions.

Pursuant to order made on Tuesday, May 27, the House will now resolve itself into a committee of the whole to study all votes in the main estimates and the supplementary estimates (A) for the fiscal year ending March 31, 2026.

I do now leave the chair for the House to resolve itself into committee of the whole.

*Business of Supply***BUSINESS OF SUPPLY**

MAIN ESTIMATES AND SUPPLEMENTARY ESTIMATES (A), 2025-26

(Consideration in committee of the whole of all votes in the main estimates and supplementary estimates (A), John Nater in the chair)

The Assistant Deputy Chair: Pursuant to order made on Tuesday, May 27, the committee of the whole convenes today for the sole purpose of asking questions to the government in regard to the estimates. The first round will begin with the official opposition, followed by the government and the Bloc Québécois. After that, we will follow the usual proportional rotation.

● (1900)

[Translation]

Each member recognized by the Chair will be allocated 15 minutes. These periods may be used for both debate and for posing questions. Should members wish to use this time to make a speech, it can last a maximum of 10 minutes, leaving at least five minutes for questions to the minister or the parliamentary secretary acting on behalf of the minister. When members are recognized, they shall indicate to the Chair how the 15-minute period will be used, in other words, what portion will be used for speeches and what portion for questions and answers. Members who wish to share their time with one or more members shall indicate it to the Chair.

When the time is to be used for questions, the minister's or parliamentary secretary's response should reflect approximately the time taken to ask the question, since this time will count toward the time allotted to the member.

[English]

The period of time for the consideration of the estimates in committee of the whole this evening shall not exceed four hours. I also wish to indicate that, in committee of the whole, comments should be addressed through the Chair. I ask for everyone's co-operation in upholding all established standards of decorum, parliamentary language and behaviour.

In addition, pursuant to order made on Tuesday, May 27, no quorum calls, dilatory motions or requests for unanimous consent shall be received by the Chair.

The hon. member for Parry Sound—Muskoka has the floor.

Scott Aitchison (Parry Sound—Muskoka, CPC): Mr. Chair, I will be splitting my time three ways.

Does the minister believe that Canada is in a housing crisis?

Hon. Gregor Robertson (Minister of Housing and Infrastructure and Minister responsible for Pacific Economic Development Canada, Lib.): Mr. Chair, I am honoured to be here today.

Canada is definitely in a housing crisis, and it has been building over decades.

Scott Aitchison: Mr. Chair, would the minister agree that Canada's housing crisis is about supply and therefore also about affordability of homes?

Hon. Gregor Robertson: Mr. Chair, Canada's housing crisis is definitely related to a lack of supply over many decades and also to

the lack of the Government of Canada's being directly involved in building affordable supply.

Scott Aitchison: Mr. Chair, on May 14, the minister said that he did not think that prices of homes should come down; then, on June 9, the minister said in the House that he believes the cost of homes needs to come down.

Which of those statements is correct, and which one does the minister believe?

Hon. Gregor Robertson: Mr. Chair, the overall price of housing needs to come down across Canada. We need to have more affordable housing in this country. We are not talking about intervening in the market to change individual home prices; the market sets those prices. The Government of Canada should be building more affordable housing to bring the overall cost down.

Scott Aitchison: Mr. Chair, does the minister know what percentage of the cost of a new home, in the GTA for example, is government charges and fees?

Hon. Gregor Robertson: Mr. Chair, the cost of homes, in terms of housing infrastructure and the infrastructure required to build homes on, varies around the GTA. It varies with the building typology. It varies with the—

The Assistant Deputy Chair: The hon. member has the floor.

Scott Aitchison: Mr. Chair, I will help the minister. The average is about 25% of the cost of every new home in the GTA, 25% in government charges and fees.

I will ask a similar question closer to home: Does the minister know the average cost of government on a new home in Vancouver?

Hon. Gregor Robertson: Mr. Chair, development cost charges in Vancouver obviously vary depending on the metro region and the municipality applying those. Typically they are cost recovery for the infrastructure required to build the homes.

● (1905)

Scott Aitchison: Mr. Chair, the cost of government charges and fees in Vancouver is about 20% as well. Would the minister agree, though, that if the cost of homes has to come down, the cost of government needs to come down on those homes?

Hon. Gregor Robertson: Mr. Chair, first and foremost, governments need to invest in the housing infrastructure, and local governments typically make that investment and recover the cost through development charges. This government is looking at helping those—

The Assistant Deputy Chair: The hon. member has the floor.

Scott Aitchison: Mr. Chair, I recognize that municipalities need to invest in infrastructure. I was a mayor myself at one point and did the exact same thing.

My question was this: Does the cost of government need to come down on the cost of a new home?

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Hon. Gregor Robertson: Mr. Chair, I am not sure what the phrase “the cost of government” indicates, but development cost charges need to be covered for the housing infrastructure, and how that is split between governments—

The Assistant Deputy Chair: The hon. member has the floor.

Scott Aitchison: Mr. Chair, when the minister was mayor of Vancouver, over his tenure, the city increased development charges by 141% in that time period. Does the minister agree that this made housing more expensive in Vancouver?

Hon. Gregor Robertson: Mr. Chair, the price of housing is set by the market. What we need to focus on as a government in Canada is affordability and making sure there is a supply of affordable homes.

Scott Aitchison: Mr. Chair, does the minister recognize that the cost of development charges a city charges to a developer is passed on to the purchaser and, therefore, becomes part of the purchase price?

Hon. Gregor Robertson: Mr. Chair, the cost of the housing infrastructure can affect it, depending on the market across Canada. The market in some markets, such as Toronto and Vancouver, is much higher than the percentage-driven—

The Assistant Deputy Chair: The hon. member has the floor.

Scott Aitchison: Mr. Chair, does the minister realize that, while he was mayor, house prices in Vancouver went up a whopping 149% and that part of the reason for that was the cost of government charges and fees?

Hon. Gregor Robertson: Mr. Chair, we have seen the prices of housing escalate across the country and in many cities around the world. This is a global challenge but one we have to—

The Assistant Deputy Chair: Resuming debate, the hon. member for King—Vaughan has the floor.

Anna Roberts (King—Vaughan, CPC): Mr. Chair, since becoming Minister of Housing and Infrastructure, has the minister ever visited a homeless shelter?

Hon. Gregor Robertson (Minister of Housing and Infrastructure and Minister responsible for Pacific Economic Development Canada, Lib.): Mr. Chair, I spent 10 years as mayor of Vancouver and a lot of time in homeless shelters and opening homeless shelters—

The Assistant Deputy Chair: The hon. member has the floor.

Anna Roberts: Mr. Chair, when the minister was mayor, he promised to end homelessness by 2018. Instead, it increased by 40%. Why should Canadians believe anything he says?

Hon. Gregor Robertson: Mr. Chair, I am proud of the work that the city did to house thousands of people who were homeless in Vancouver and build social and supportive housing.

Anna Roberts: Mr. Chair, can the minister tell us what age group has the highest rate of chronic homelessness?

Hon. Gregor Robertson: Mr. Chair, homelessness is a huge challenge across the country, and that is why it is a top priority for us to tackle it with affordable housing.

Anna Roberts: Mr. Chair, let me help the minister: It is seniors. At what rate do seniors experience chronic homelessness?

Hon. Gregor Robertson: Mr. Chair, it is important that nobody of any age is forced to be homeless, and the investment needs to be made—

The Assistant Deputy Chair: The hon. member has the floor.

Anna Roberts: Mr. Chair, according to a report by the minister's own department, 40% of seniors experience homelessness. Does he really think that is acceptable?

Hon. Gregor Robertson: Mr. Chair, as I have said, homelessness is something that we all need to tackle together. We need to work together at all levels of government to solve this.

Anna Roberts: Mr. Chair, two seniors in my community of Vaughan were forced to live in their car throughout the winter.

If the minister does not know the answer to my questions, what will he tell them?

Hon. Gregor Robertson: Mr. Chair, I will tell them we are about to make the biggest investment in tackling homelessness that Canada has ever seen, and we hope to have their support.

Anna Roberts: Mr. Chair, do you know what the current population of seniors in Canada is?

The Assistant Deputy Chair: Questions go through the Chair.

The hon. minister has the floor.

Hon. Gregor Robertson: Mr. Chair, I do not have the number at my fingertips, but we have to make sure seniors are not at risk of homelessness.

Anna Roberts: Mr. Chair, as of July 1, 2023, 18.9% of the population, or 7.6 million people, were seniors. By 2030, that number will rise to 22.5%. What is the plan to make sure that there is affordable housing for seniors?

Hon. Gregor Robertson: Mr. Chair, the plan is to build more affordable housing across Canada than ever before in Canadian history.

● (1910)

Anna Roberts: Mr. Chair, if the minister cared about seniors, he would know the critical information.

Why has he done nothing to bring the price of homes down for seniors?

Hon. Gregor Robertson: Mr. Chair, the Liberals are very focused on rolling out this plan. We have already delivered a GST cut for first-time homebuyers, and we will continue that work.

Anna Roberts: Mr. Chair, according to TD, the government's housing target of 500,000 new starts per year is unrealistic. The minister is already known for breaking promises.

Does he agree with TD?

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Hon. Gregor Robertson: Mr. Chair, the Liberals have a big endeavour ahead of us to get to 500,000 housing starts a year, but we are committed to getting there, working with industry and all the provincial and—

The Assistant Deputy Chair: The hon. member.

Anna Roberts: Mr. Chair, Vancouver became the least affordable housing market in North America during the minister's disastrous tenure as mayor.

Why should Canadians trust him to be in charge of the housing industry nationally?

Hon. Gregor Robertson: Mr. Chair, for the first seven years of my mayorship, it was a Conservative government that did not invest in affordable housing in Canada and made it very difficult for mayors.

Anna Roberts: Mr. Chair, let us not pass the buck. Let us take responsibility for actions. As mayor of Vancouver, he raised taxes by 141%; home prices shot up 149%, and overdoses went up 600%.

Given this information, how can Canadians trust the minister to be in charge of anything that he does in housing?

Hon. Gregor Robertson: Mr. Chair, I have the honour of being elected to come here, representing the hard work that happens in cities, to deliver on the federal government's behalf, which is not what Conservative governments in my time were delivering.

Anna Roberts: Mr. Chair, I come from the private sector, and in the private sector, if we do not do our job, we get released.

How will the minister continue to do a job that he was not successful at doing in Vancouver? How is he going to improve it nationally?

Hon. Gregor Robertson: Mr. Chair, we are very focused on rolling out the most ambitious housing plan in Canadian history. "Build Canada homes" will deliver a doubling of construction.

Tamara Kronis (Nanaimo—Ladysmith, CPC): Mr. Chair, after 10 years of Liberal governments, their housing record boils down to double trouble: doubled rents, doubled down payments and doubled mortgage costs. Who does the Prime Minister then appoint as housing minister? It is the former mayor of Vancouver, who doubled housing prices and broke promises to end homelessness.

I have a few questions for the minister.

Does the minister know the average price of a single detached home in Nanaimo?

Hon. Gregor Robertson (Minister of Housing and Infrastructure and Minister responsible for Pacific Economic Development Canada, Lib.): Mr. Chair, the prices of homes have escalated across Canada, and that is why we need to build a more affordable supply.

Tamara Kronis: Mr. Chair, let me help the minister: It was \$859,292 to buy a home in Nanaimo as of May 2025, up from \$362,000 in 2015.

Does the minister know the current median household income in Nanaimo?

Hon. Gregor Robertson: Mr. Chair, while I am curious as to whether the members opposite blame the mayor of Nanaimo for

that housing price increase, or perhaps the premier of B.C., in this House, we all need to take responsibility for building affordable housing.

Tamara Kronis: Mr. Chair, let me help the minister with that again. The median income now is \$87,987. That is up from \$62,349 in 2015.

While incomes are up just 41% in the last decade, home prices in Nanaimo have more than doubled.

Can the minister explain how that is affordable?

Hon. Gregor Robertson: Mr. Chair, there are two parts to this. One is to build the strongest economy in the G7 and raise incomes. The other is to focus on building affordable housing.

Tamara Kronis: Mr. Chair, does the minister think that a couple making \$90,000 and paying rent can realistically save up for a down payment for a home in Nanaimo, yes or no?

Hon. Gregor Robertson: Mr. Chair, it is very difficult right now for people to afford to buy homes in Canada, and that is why we have to focus on affordable supply.

Tamara Kronis: Mr. Chair, let me help the minister again. It would take that couple 35 years to save for a 20% down payment or 17 years for a 10% down payment, which would add an extra \$700 a month to their mortgage.

Does the minister think that is a good outcome, yes or no?

Hon. Gregor Robertson: Mr. Chair, the focus here needs to be on increasing supply across Canada. Building affordable homes people of all walks of life can afford, with less than 30% of their income, is our goal.

● (1915)

Tamara Kronis: Mr. Chair, talking about affordable homes, when the minister was the mayor of Vancouver, homelessness went up by 38%. Is that the same model he is bringing to the rest of Canada?

Hon. Gregor Robertson: Mr. Chair, our focus with "build Canada homes" will be on tackling homelessness and investing in the most affordable housing we can for people who are homeless.

Tamara Kronis: Mr. Chair, housing starts in Vancouver fell 25% while the minister was in office as the mayor. Why should Canadians trust him now?

Hon. Gregor Robertson: Mr. Chair, we are the Government of Canada. We need to send the signal and deliver on the action to build more homes across Canada that are affordable.

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Tamara Kronis: Mr. Chair, if we are talking about signals, a typical home in Nanaimo now costs nearly 10 times the median income. Does that strike the minister as sustainable housing policy, yes or no?

Hon. Gregor Robertson: Mr. Chair, sustainable housing policy is focusing on delivering affordable housing across Canada, which I hope the members opposite will support.

Tamara Kronis: Mr. Chair, Vancouver's price-to-income ratio doubled, going from 6:1 to 13:1, when the minister was the mayor of Vancouver. Does he think that record is going to earn him the respect of Canada's mayors?

Hon. Gregor Robertson: Mr. Chair, on my side of the House, we are focused on partnering with mayors, at all levels of government, as partners delivering affordable housing, not on insulting them.

Tamara Kronis: Mr. Chair, it is the minister's record as a mayor that is an insult to this country. There we have it. This is the guy whom the Liberals have chosen to solve the housing crisis. He did not know the facts; he did not answer my questions, and he certainly does not understand the hardship of either a 23-year-old with six roommates or a senior living in their car.

What does the minister have to say?

Hon. Gregor Robertson: Mr. Chair, I will remind the members opposite that they have not supported a single affordable housing initiative over the past decade. That was at a time when the federal government needed to deliver more and more, working in partnership with provinces, territories and communities.

Tamara Kronis: Mr. Chair, if excuses were bricks, the minister would build a whole community overnight. When is the government going to stop talking and start building?

Hon. Gregor Robertson: Mr. Chair, this government is currently delivering hundreds of thousands of affordable homes across Canada, and we will scale that up. We will double that.

Sima Acan: Mr. Chair, I would like to talk about the work of Housing, Infrastructure and Communities Canada, and specifically, how this work is helping build complete communities for Canadians across the country, including in my riding.

Hon. Arielle Kayabaga: Mr. Chair, I rise on a point of order. I just want to apologize that we got the speaking order wrong. I think the minister was supposed to speak first. We can go back to the member afterward.

The Assistant Deputy Chair: The hon. Minister of Housing and Infrastructure.

Hon. Gregor Robertson (Minister of Housing and Infrastructure and Minister responsible for Pacific Economic Development Canada, Lib.): Mr. Chair, I am thankful for this opportunity to share some remarks and thankful to my colleague for giving me the space to do that.

[Translation]

I am very pleased to be here and to have the opportunity to discuss the 2025-26 main estimates for the Department of Housing, Infrastructure and Communities, and how these investments are supporting Canadians across the country.

[English]

Housing and public infrastructure have always been and will continue to be key drivers of Canada's success as a nation. They play a vital role in building strong communities and supporting economic competitiveness, both at home and abroad. Our government is committed to unleashing our success as a nation through investment in affordable housing and nationwide infrastructure. Communities are the foundation of our country. When we look around our neighbourhoods, there are homes, apartments and different sorts of housing, and they include a complex network of transit systems, active transportation, roads, water and waste-water infrastructure, cultural facilities and so much more.

Our government helps build our communities and the critical infrastructure that goes with them, and I am honoured to be the minister partnering with governments at all levels to ensure that this important work gets done. Our work reaches into every community and touches every Canadian. It enables our businesses to thrive locally and globally, makes life more affordable for Canadians and helps protect our environment. Canadians know that members on this side of the House will always support infrastructure, affordable housing and building up our great nation. This is something that everyone in this House should be able to get behind.

Housing, Infrastructure and Communities Canada investments support affordable housing, modern climate-resilient infrastructure, better public transit, effective and reliable water and waste-water facilities and important community spaces. Reinvesting in our country and our economy in the face of an uncertain world means investing in Canadians. I think of how our programs have prevented almost 150,000 people from becoming unhoused in recent years. We will not stop here. Every person should have a safe and secure home.

In the 2025-26 main estimates, the department is seeking just over \$16 billion in total portfolio authorities for investments in housing; public transit; and northern, green and sustainable rural and major infrastructure projects across the country. This is to deliver on a suite of priorities. New investments announced in budget 2024 include the Canada housing infrastructure fund; funding through programs like Reaching Home, Canada's homelessness strategy; the green and inclusive community buildings program; the investing in Canada infrastructure program; and funding for Canada Mortgage and Housing Corporation programs, notably for the affordable housing fund, the urban, rural and northern indigenous housing strategy and the housing accelerator fund.

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Today, I am here to talk about how important it is that the department has the sufficient funding to fulfill its priorities and has the spending authority to cover the period until the main estimates receive royal assent. Given the dissolution of Parliament on March 23, the Governor General's special warrants of just over \$2.75 million have been issued to cover the period from April 1 to June 29 to ensure that Canadians will continue to have access to the programs that support their communities.

The department remains committed to delivering an unprecedented level of programming to support housing and infrastructure needs across the country, including by investing in essential programs such as the Canada community-building fund. This is a transfer-based program that provides stable, upfront funding to provinces and territories. In turn, they flow this funding to 3,700 communities for projects that meet local needs. In the coming year, the department will deliver \$2.5 billion in Canada community-building fund funding.

We will continue to implement programming to improve housing affordability and take action to reduce and prevent homelessness, including through measures such as the unsheltered homelessness and encampments initiative. Also, this year, we are investing \$1.1 billion in the housing accelerator fund. The fund is creating better housing outcomes for Canadians by incentivizing municipalities to cut red tape and increase housing densification. The Government of Canada has already signed more than 200 agreements under the housing accelerator fund with local governments that have committed to increasing housing opportunities through zoning, streamlining, permitting and approvals. These actions are expected to support the construction of over 800,000 new homes over the next decade. Thanks to this fund, homes are being built across provinces, territories and indigenous communities.

• (1920)

We are also making significant investments in critical water and waste-water infrastructure to support the construction of new homes through the Canada housing infrastructure fund. This is critical to doubling the rate of homebuilding in Canada. Under the housing infrastructure fund, 10 agreements have now been signed with provinces and territories, totalling almost \$370 million in federal contributions, and this is just the beginning. The housing infrastructure fund will ensure the reduction of development charges, as a member questioned earlier, which are typically used for local housing infrastructure.

Through initiatives like the Canada public transit fund, we continue to support efficient public transit, which is vital to building strong communities prepared to meet the economic and environmental realities of the future. This is about making sure that people are connected in their communities and have access to affordable transportation. In a very real way, it opens up opportunities for jobs and opportunities available to future generations and builds vibrant economic hubs. Going forward, the public transit fund will ramp up to an average of \$3 billion a year in permanent funding. This funding will respond to local needs by ensuring housing and transportation are planned together, by improving access to public transit and by supporting the development of more affordable communities.

My department invests in structural and natural infrastructure projects that increase community resilience to natural disasters and extreme weather events. These investments are essential to protecting homes, businesses and critical infrastructure from natural disasters, which are, unfortunately, more and more frequent. In this moment, I think of all those impacted by the wildfires in the Prairies, and now in B.C. as well. I think of the impacts they will have and the impacts that natural disasters have increasingly had across Canada, whether they are floods, fires or heat waves. We have seen devastating impacts across Canada, and we need to build resilience into our communities going forward. Under the disaster mitigation and adaptation fund, we have already invested around \$2.5 billion to strengthen the resilience of communities against the threat of natural disasters to keep Canadians safe and local economies strong.

Through these efforts, our government's programs are making tangible differences in the lives of Canadians. In the year ahead, my department will lead efforts to deliver on the most ambitious housing plan in Canadian history, a housing plan that includes infrastructure and transit and addresses the need for nation-building projects.

As outlined in the Speech from the Throne, our government is committed to addressing housing affordability and working at scale to drive supply up to bring housing costs down for Canadians. Our government will remove barriers to building homes through new measures such as reducing municipal development charges for multi-unit housing in communities across Canada.

I want to end by highlighting one of the most important actions we will take in the coming months. Our government will create a new federal entity, "build Canada homes", which will provide financing to affordable home builders. It will also use public lands and leverage public-private partnerships to modernize a new housing industry to lead the way on housing construction innovation and building technologies that scale up the prefabricated, off-site construction and modular housing market.

The response to the challenges we face begins at home. We remain committed to building the housing and infrastructure that are the foundation of strong, affordable communities. Providing a healthy supply of homes supported by resilient public infrastructure is essential to securing our future and long-term economic prosperity. The main estimates presented here today will support the department in delivering on its commitments to Canadians and addressing the housing crisis head-on.

• (1925)

[Translation]

I look forward to questions.

Tim Watchorn (Les Pays-d'en-Haut, Lib.): Mr. Chair, I was the mayor of a municipality in my riding, and we were able to build 30 housing units for seniors aged 75 and over, with the collaboration of the Government of Quebec and the Government of Canada. It took us five years, which is a very long time. We even had a housing summit. The findings are clear: People are unable to find housing in our region because it is too expensive. Young people, workers and the less fortunate are unable to find housing.

I would like to know if the minister can tell us how important an agency like “build Canada homes” is for meeting the needs of the people of Les Pays-d'en-Haut and all Canadians.

Hon. Gregor Robertson: Mr. Chair, I will respond in English.

[English]

That is a very important question about making sure young people have the opportunity to find affordable housing across Canada.

I will reference the largest, most ambitious housing plan that Canada has ever seen. We will see it take shape around “build Canada homes”, a new entity that will focus on scaling up construction and the building of affordable housing across Canada. It will double construction across the whole spectrum of housing, but will focus on affordable housing and tackling homelessness and the supportive social housing that is critical for that. We will also make sure that we deliver housing in the missing middle and for the younger generations so they can get into the housing market. We will put all of our tools on the table and will put them to work to deliver more affordable housing for Canadians of all ages.

• (1930)

Hon. Arielle Kayabaga (London West, Lib.): Mr. Chair, I want to first of all congratulate the minister for taking a seat in the House and becoming the Minister of Housing.

Housing is really important to a lot of people across the country. We heard it at the doors, and I can say the same thing for my riding of London West. It is especially important for young people, people in our generation.

I believe the minister was a mayor before he came to this House. I was on city council, and I know how important the work of housing is for people who work at the municipal level. I think of all the important work we learn to do when managing budgets in municipal government and the wealth of knowledge we bring to the House. I like to joke around sometimes and say that people who want to come to the House should start at the municipal level to

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make sure they learn how things work at the city level so they can bring it to the national level and bring it all together.

Maybe the minister can talk to us about his experience in his time as the mayor of Vancouver at the city level, the importance of managing budgets at the municipal level and how he is going to tie all that experience into his new role as the housing and infrastructure minister in the House of Commons.

Hon. Gregor Robertson: Mr. Chair, it has been a challenging time across Canada for decades. Certainly, in Vancouver during my time as mayor, we were at the very front end of what has become a housing crisis across Canada. The lack of affordability has permeated the country over several decades.

That is why, with this new government, part of the reason I am standing here, elected by my constituents, is to bring out the learnings I had as a mayor, and formerly an MLA, in understanding how the system works at the city and provincial levels. I had challenges in my time working with previous federal governments that were not committed to affordable housing at the scale that was required. It was certainly the case with the Conservative governments I was dealing with from 2008 to 2015. It was very difficult to get any support for affordable housing from the federal government.

The new Government of Canada is very focused on delivering—

The Assistant Deputy Chair: The hon. member, for about 30 seconds.

Hon. Arielle Kayabaga: Mr. Chair, I appreciate the response and the comment on how difficult it was for the minister when he was a mayor to work with the federal government at the time.

Maybe the minister can talk about the importance of having one Canadian economy and how important it will be in his file to create jobs and make sure that housing is built in a faster way, plus anything else he wants to add.

Hon. Gregor Robertson: Mr. Chair, having one Canadian economy is really essential to meeting this moment, this great time of challenge for Canada with the unjust tariffs from the U.S.

Housing is critical to our economy, and we need to scale up the housing industry across Canada to create jobs. We need to use Canadian materials and create the jobs that will turn our economy and make it stronger—

The Assistant Deputy Chair: Resuming debate, the hon. member for Jonquière.

*Business of Supply**[Translation]*

Mario Simard (Jonquière, BQ): Mr. Chair, I wonder whether the minister knows how much in countervailing duties from the forestry industry is currently sitting on deposit in the United States. Does the minister know how much money is currently in the United States?

[English]

Hon. Tim Hodgson (Minister of Energy and Natural Resources, Lib.): Mr. Chair, I have worked in the forestry sector for years and know how important the sector is to families and communities across this country. The American tariffs on our softwood lumber industry hurt both our countries and are completely unjustified. As we fight the American tariffs, we will diversify trading partners and build resilience in our forestry sector to reduce reliance on the U.S.—

The Assistant Deputy Chair: The hon. member.

[Translation]

Mario Simard: Mr. Chair, the correct answer is \$10 billion.

Does the minister know how much in countervailing duties paid by Quebec is currently sitting in the United States?

[English]

Hon. Tim Hodgson: Mr. Chair, the premise of the member's question seems to be that I am not familiar with how to get projects built. Let me assure the member that in my private sector life, I worked tirelessly in the forest products sector to build—

[Translation]

The Assistant Deputy Chair: The hon. member.

• (1935)

Mario Simard: Mr. Chair, I do not doubt the minister's capabilities and qualifications.

Currently, \$2 billion in countervailing duties paid by Quebec is sitting in the United States. That is beyond compare. This industry is not getting any support from the federal government.

For Quebec alone, \$2 billion is sitting in the United States. Does the minister have a strategy to provide people in the forestry sector with access to liquidity?

[English]

Hon. Tim Hodgson: Mr. Chair, the Minister of Industry has spoken in the House about the ongoing negotiations around the softwood lumber situation. The hon. member will have an opportunity to debate that with the minister. It is a live, ongoing discussion; we are not going to talk about that in public.

[Translation]

Mario Simard: Mr. Chair, there has been a crisis in the forestry sector since 2017. We have never seen the government undertake serious negotiations. The U.S. government is threatening to increase countervailing duties to 34% next year. The only natural resource sector with the potential to reduce Canada's carbon footprint is the forestry sector.

I have the following question for the minister: Would he agree to implement a liquidity program to support the forestry sector?

[English]

Hon. Tim Hodgson: Mr. Chair, we are in our fifth version of a trade war with the Americans on forest products. Every time, the government has addressed the situation. We are in the process of discussing these things with the Americans right now. It is an ongoing discussion being led by the Minister of Industry. The hon. member should address his question to the Minister of Industry.

[Translation]

Mario Simard: Mr. Chair, there is appalling inequity. People in the forestry sector are so afraid of the Americans that a forestry company whose main market is Quebec or Canada cannot access funding from Canada Economic Development for Quebec Regions, or CED.

My question for the minister is very simple. Does he think that is normal? Does he think it is normal that an industry cannot receive CED funding?

[English]

Hon. Tim Hodgson: Mr. Chair, we will always stand with forestry workers and defend the forestry sector. The Americans' current position hurts both Canadian and American businesses and increases the cost of wood products and homes in the United States. We will continue to work to resolve this issue with the Americans.

[Translation]

Mario Simard: Mr. Chair, I have been here since 2019. We have been hearing for many years about a grand program to plant two billion trees. I have yet to see those two billion trees. It seems to me that there were discussions between Quebec City and Ottawa about using the two billion tree program to carry out silviculture in Quebec.

Is this a solution that the minister would be willing to consider?

[English]

Hon. Tim Hodgson: Mr. Chair, we have been planting trees for quite some time. We are continuing to plant trees. We will plant more trees.

[Translation]

Mario Simard: Mr. Chair, there was a whole imbroglio involving the woodland caribou issue. The Liberal government threatened to shut down entire villages back home in Saguenay—Lac-Saint-Jean.

Does the minister agree with me that the woodland caribou issue falls specifically under provincial jurisdiction and not Ottawa's?

[English]

Hon. Tim Hodgson: Mr. Chair, I will have to get an answer for the member. I am not familiar with that issue.

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[Translation]

Mario Simard: Mr. Chair, the “build Canada homes” program has been mentioned a number of times.

What we are asking the government to do is include the carbon footprint in the tendering process to prioritize wood as a material, since it has a lower carbon footprint. Is this a solution that the minister is prepared to consider as part of the “build Canada homes” program?

[English]

Hon. Tim Hodgson: Mr. Chair, my understanding is that the “build Canada homes” program is intended to use Canadian wood and Canadian-engineered wood products.

[Translation]

Mario Simard: Mr. Chair, is the government prepared to ensure that wood will be the preferred material?

• (1940)

[English]

Hon. Tim Hodgson: Mr. Chair, I believe that the Prime Minister has been quite clear that in the “build Canada homes” program, we will build with Canadian lumber and Canadian-engineered wood products.

[Translation]

Mario Simard: Mr. Chair, the Liberal government paid \$34 billion to expand an existing pipeline because there were no proponents. Now they are telling us that they want to build new oil and gas infrastructure.

Does the minister know if there are any developers for this new oil and gas infrastructure?

[English]

Hon. Tim Hodgson: Mr. Chair, in Saskatoon, the Prime Minister and the premiers got together and proposed five criteria for encouraging new projects of national interest. When the bill is passed, those five criteria will be used to get proponents to make proposals for projects of major interest.

[Translation]

Mario Simard: Mr. Chair, we want to send a strong signal to the oil and gas sector. I find it hard to understand why no proponent wanted to get involved in the Trans Mountain expansion. It took a \$34-billion investment. I do not see why, today, someone would be prepared to invest in “pipeline” infrastructure. Perhaps the minister can explain that to me.

We know that demand for oil will drop in the coming years. It is unavoidable. Worse still, the Parliamentary Budget Officer has said that, for a project like Trans Mountain to turn a profit, it will have to be used at its full potential for 40 years.

How can an oil infrastructure project be profitable today? I would like the minister to explain that to us.

[English]

Hon. Tim Hodgson: Mr. Chair, the premise of the one Canadian economy act is that, together with the premiers, indigenous peoples and proponents, we would have a two-year window for the ap-

proval process. That two-year window would give the private sector the certainty it needs to put money to work to build projects of national interest.

[Translation]

Mario Simard: Mr. Chair, I think the government clearly announced its intent to invest in carbon capture and storage.

In the past, as part of the Standing Committee on Natural Resources, I had many discussions with oil and gas executives. They told us that, without public investment, those projects were not profitable.

I have a very simple question for the minister. Does he believe that low-carbon oil is profitable from a business perspective? He is familiar with projects in the financial and business sector. Does he believe that low-carbon oil is profitable?

[English]

Hon. Tim Hodgson: Mr. Chair, in the global fight against climate change, we need to use all the tools we can get. Carbon capture technologies have an important role to play in reducing emissions, including in heavy industries like cement and steel. Carbon capture has been used around the world for a long time and works to reduce emissions.

Our plan is clear: spur innovation in the energy sector, get projects built in a sustainable way and make Canada an energy superpower while fighting climate change.

[Translation]

Mario Simard: Mr. Chair, Rich Kruger, the CEO of Suncor, came before the committee to say that, in his opinion, his company was putting too much emphasis on the energy transition. I do not think that was a clear indication by people in the oil and gas industry that they want to champion carbon capture and storage strategies.

To the minister's knowledge, are any oil and gas companies interested in those technologies in the absence of public funding?

[English]

Hon. Tim Hodgson: Mr. Chair, I think the member is referring to the Pathways Alliance. This project will deliver tremendous emissions reductions in Canada's conventional oil sector.

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Canada's new government supports this carbon capture project as a way to spur innovation in the energy sector, lower emissions and strengthen our economy. We will fight climate change while building the strongest economy in the G7. It is with ambitious projects like this one that we will make Canada an energy superpower while lowering emissions.

[Translation]

Mario Simard: Mr. Chair, is the government going to invest in the Pathways Alliance?

[English]

Hon. Tim Hodgson: Mr. Chair, in Saskatoon, the Prime Minister and the premiers came up with five criteria for developing projects of national interest. As those projects come forward, we will look at that opportunity and we will invest where it makes sense. I would like to draw the example of the natural gas industry, where a relatively small amount of—

● (1945)

The Assistant Deputy Chair: The hon. member.

[Translation]

Mario Simard: Mr. Chair, I have a hard time grasping the logic of ending carbon pricing while asking sectors like the natural gas industry to reduce their carbon footprint.

If a given industry's carbon footprint is reduced, then we can be sure it has to do with carbon pricing. Is there not a disconnect there?

[English]

Hon. Tim Hodgson: Mr. Chair, Canada's new government will build projects of national interest. If my colleague would like to rapidly advance major projects in Quebec or other places, I encourage him to support the one Canadian economy bill.

[Translation]

Mario Simard: Mr. Chair, I am prepared to support the economies of all the provinces.

Our goal is not to make anyone poorer, but we need to keep in mind that the government bought a pipeline for \$34 billion. If we look at previous budget years, there are \$82 billion in projected tax breaks for 2024-35. Does the minister not think that is a bit much for a single industry?

[English]

Hon. Tim Hodgson: Mr. Chair, we are not here to look backward; we are here to look forward. We have agreed to a plan with the premiers about how to get new projects built, new projects of national interest. There are five criteria for doing it. I am happy to lay them out for the hon. member. We will build the strongest economy in the G7.

[Translation]

Mario Simard: Mr. Chair, I agree with the minister that we need to look forward.

For me, though, as I look forward, what I see is climate change. Looking forward, I see the government being complacent toward the industry, which raked in record profits in 2022. In 2022, big oil

made record profits of \$200 billion. However, from 2024 to 2035, Canada plans to give them \$82 billion in tax benefits. Can the minister tell me if there is another natural resource sector in Canada that is benefiting from such largesse?

[English]

Hon. Tim Hodgson: Mr. Chair, this discussion about major projects is about so much more than just one type of project; it is about building the strongest economy in the G7 and protecting Canada's prosperity in the face of the U.S.-launched trade wars. I would encourage the member to get on board with the one Canadian economy act.

[Translation]

Mario Simard: Mr. Chair, in the last Parliament, we talked a lot about a Canadian strategy for the production of green hydrogen, broadly based on carbon capture and storage technologies.

However, Siemens Energy experts candidly admitted to us that it was too technologically risky to go in that direction. Does the minister believe that green hydrogen from gas still has potential?

[English]

Hon. Tim Hodgson: Mr. Chair, Canada has a number of fantastic technologies to reduce carbon and produce low-carbon fuels. We will continue to support that industry.

The Assistant Deputy Chair: The minister is still on his feet and can resume debate.

Hon. Tim Hodgson (Minister of Energy and Natural Resources, Lib.): Mr. Chair, hon. colleagues, it is an honour to rise in the House today, which is located on the unceded territory of the Algonquin Anishinabe peoples, to discuss the 2025-26 main estimates for the Department of Natural Resources.

Before I begin, I would like to acknowledge the firefighters, first responders, Canadian Armed Forces members and volunteers fighting wildfires and bravely serving Canadians, working tirelessly, often at great personal risk, to protect lives and property.

In the estimates we are here today to discuss, Natural Resources Canada is seeking \$5.1 billion, which is an 8% decrease from last year. At this pivotal time in Canadian history, these estimates are more than numbers on a ledger. I would like to zoom out and talk about the moment in which we find ourselves.

Today, we are in what the Prime Minister calls a “hinge moment”. Global economies and markets are volatile. American tariffs are disrupting trade, threatening Canadian jobs and industry and rewriting the rules of the game. We did not ask for this trade war, but we are going to win it. To use the metaphor of a card game, if we are going to sit across the negotiating table from any other country, we need to hold Canada's best cards. That means being able to sell our energy and natural resources to the world and securing sovereignty and security for ourselves right here from coast to coast. It means protecting our landscapes, making life more affordable, expanding our trading partners and modernizing our infrastructure. This is why the government is working with every province, territory and indigenous partner and reaching across the aisle with one goal: retool our economy and strengthen Canada's hand.

Ultimately, though, this is not a card game. Jobs and livelihoods are at risk in every corner of this great country that those of us in this room have the honour to serve: from miners in Saskatchewan to forestry workers in British Columbia, from rigs in Alberta and Newfoundland to Ontario's plants and Quebec's factories. Business as usual no longer serves us well. We need to be bold and meet the moment.

The Prime Minister has laid out a clear strategy. We will be masters in our own home. We will not bow to economic aggression. We will defend our workers, our industries and our values, and we will build a new foundation, one that delivers the strongest, most resilient economy in the G7. That means reframing the national conversation: no more asking, “Why build?” The real question is, “How do we get it done?”

Last week, we took a bold first step by tabling our “one Canadian economy” legislation, which will break apart barriers to internal trade and remove red tape so that we can advance national projects of interest. The legislation calls for us to do this responsibly from the very start, meeting our duty to consult and protecting our environment.

This brings me to these estimates. What looks like numbers on a page is really our statement of intent for the coming year. Our plan is to deliver. It is the foundation of the actions we are taking to secure our nation's prosperity, resilience, security and leadership in the world for decades to come. It is how we will make Canada an energy superpower.

At the core of NRCan's vision to make Canada an energy superpower are three intersecting priorities.

First is regulatory efficiency: making it quicker and more predictable to get nation-building projects off the ground. Canadians have been clear: We cannot afford five-year reviews for projects that are critical to our economic, energy and environmental future. As someone who used to allocate capital, I can tell members that Canadians are right.

The second priority is market diversification. In an era shaped by global competition and protectionism, it is not enough to simply produce world-class energy, minerals or timber. We must ensure that these Canadian products reach global customers to get the best prices for Canadians. That is why these estimates put real resources

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behind diversifying our infrastructure and trading with those who share our values, not just our borders.

● (1950)

Our third priority is partnership with indigenous peoples. These estimates support indigenous participation, partnership and ownership, notably through an expanded indigenous loan guarantee program, giving communities the ability to finance and benefit from major nation-building projects.

These estimates are not just about overcoming today's challenges; they are about seizing tomorrow's opportunity. At last week's first ministers' meeting, the Prime Minister and every premier from coast to coast to coast made it clear that the time to build and secure our future is now. That is our mandate from Canadians, and we are united in that mission. This is for our sovereignty, economy and security.

I also want to repeat something Premier Kinew said last Monday that deeply resonated with me: “It is a generational opportunity for Canadians, but it is also a generational opportunity for some of the poorest communities in our country.... If we can put the road, transmission and pipe infrastructure to build out those opportunities, this country is not just going to be better off in terms of the GDP growth; we are going to be better off in terms of making sure every Canadian kid can reach their full potential”. That is exactly what this session today, what our plan, through these estimates, is about. It is about building our backbone, not just for the next four years, but for the next 40 years, and ensuring that every Canadian is part of it.

We will build new careers in the resource sector, including in the skilled trades. We will continue to work on reconciliation. We will help our allies break their dependence on less reliable suppliers and put Canadian expertise at the centre of the world's industrial, economic and environmental transformation.

These estimates back up this vision with real investment. I want to highlight five of the bigger grants and contributions representing our commitment to Canadians in every community and sector.

At the top are grants for home retrofits. These would go directly to Canadians, empowering them to upgrade their homes, making life more affordable, lowering energy bills, supporting cleaner construction and creating jobs in the construction sector.

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Next, we have earmarked more than \$222 million for smart renewables and electrification pathway programs. These dollars would build projects that bring more clean, affordable, reliable power to Canadian communities. My experience in the private sector taught me that our grids are the backbone of Canadian energy security and industrial development, and we need to continue to boldly lead in the electricity sector.

In the mining space, we know that Canada has the critical minerals the world needs, and we are stepping up to deliver. In these estimates, we are asking for \$218 million to support mining production and infrastructure. This would include funding to deliver the critical minerals infrastructure fund, which would support the projects that will accelerate Canadian supply of critical minerals and allow us to process and refine here at home and build domestic and global value chains that compete in the 21st century.

Further, we are earmarking nearly \$196 million for the production and use of low-cost, low-risk, low-carbon fuels like advanced biofuels, hydrogen and renewable natural gas. Powering our vehicles, ships and industries with clean Canadian fuel helps reduce pollution, create export opportunities and secure our supply chain in a volatile world, keeping our economy competitive for today and tomorrow.

Last, we are supporting a sector I have called “the canary in the coal mine” when it comes to the trade war in which we find ourselves: forestry. Canadian companies continue to face unjustified duties while exporting lumber to the U.S., impacting everyone from workers and home builders to consumers. While we continue to work toward a long-term resolution, these estimates support the forestry sector's innovation and transformation, so Canadian lumber and timber can be used to build for our ambitious new housing strategy and beyond.

These estimates are about more than just spending; they are about investing in Canadians, their communities, their jobs and their future.

• (1955)

They would deliver on our commitment to strengthen our sovereignty and advance environmental imperatives and reconciliation with indigenous peoples. They would drive innovation in every sector and put us squarely on the path to building the strongest economy in the G7.

We need to be bold to deliver on the mandate that Canadians gave us. We need to build things in this country again. We need to secure our rightful place as a true conventional and clean energy superpower. I hope that this mission and every—

The Chair: The minister's time has elapsed.

Questions and comments, the deputy government House leader.

Hon. Arielle Kayabaga (London West, Lib.): Mr. Chair, I appreciate the minister's really great speech around the things that Canadians sent us to do in this House. Obviously, we all just came off the campaign trail and we ended up on this side of the House, so I congratulate the minister.

The Americans are threatening Canada's sovereignty and our economy. We all heard collectively at the doors that Canadians

want us to deliver on this. What role do natural resources play in protecting our country, and what is the government going to do to get these projects built?

• (2000)

Hon. Tim Hodgson: Mr. Chair, we can all think back to Mr. Trump in the White House explaining to other leaders that they do not have any cards. In that card game, we have some really good cards. When the President says they do not need our lumber, our potash, our uranium and our autos, we know what Mr. Trump is really saying: They need our lumber, they need our uranium, they need our potash and they need our autos.

We can make more good cards. This is all about preparing ourselves for a new world order. That is what the one Canadian economy act is designed to do. It is designed to identify projects of national interest that will retool our economy, grow our economy and give us the cards we need, whether we are dealing with Mr. Trump, whether we are dealing with China or whether we are dealing with any other nation that has shifted from a post-Bretton Woods world to the mercantilist world we are in today.

Hon. Arielle Kayabaga: Mr. Chair, one of the things that make Canada a really great country is the opportunity that we have taken in our path to reconciliation. Many people have bragged about Canada being a leader in our process of working with the indigenous communities across Canada. Obviously, indigenous communities are leaders in natural resources and their upkeep. We are all very thankful for the land they have kept for so long.

Can the minister tell us the importance of the role that he has to play in bridging and continuing that relationship with indigenous leaders and making sure that this collaboration remains and that we keep that reputation?

Hon. Tim Hodgson: Mr. Chair, in the private sector, I had the opportunity to build many projects with indigenous communities. The observation that I have is that when consultation is done well, it accelerates projects; it does not slow projects down.

The company that I used to be involved with, Hydro One, was building more transmission lines in the province of Ontario than any other jurisdiction in North America. That was happening because of consultation and economic reconciliation, not in spite of it. The company was building projects and getting them done ahead of schedule and under budget because first nations wanted to partner with the company.

Our bill is designed to make sure indigenous communities are part of the solution. By doing that, we would accelerate projects and get them done more quickly and more economically.

Hon. Arielle Kayabaga: Mr. Chair, we obviously see that there are multiple impacts of climate change across our country and around the world. In order to be an energy superpower, we need to be able to fight climate change and build more renewable energy projects.

What role will the minister's department play in supporting renewable energy?

Hon. Tim Hodgson: Mr. Chair, when we were together in Saskatoon with the Prime Minister and the premiers, we talked about many, many potential projects in the renewable space.

I will highlight one in particular, the eastern energy partnership, which would involve up to 50 gigawatts, potentially, of offshore wind. That power would be used in conjunction with the incredible resources of Hydro-Québec and its dams, essentially turning the dams into large batteries. Those batteries would allow us to deliver more baseload power to other jurisdictions to earn more money for Canadians. They would facilitate the building of green hydrogen for our allies in Europe, which they are interested in—

The Chair: Resuming debate, the hon. member for New Tecumseth—Gwillimbury.

Scot Davidson (New Tecumseth—Gwillimbury, CPC): Mr. Chair, I will be splitting my time three ways.

Why is it so hard for Canadians to afford a home?

Hon. Gregor Robertson (Minister of Housing and Infrastructure and Minister responsible for Pacific Economic Development Canada, Lib.): Mr. Chair, housing prices are historically high in Canada, and incomes need to be increased with a stronger economy.

• (2005)

Scot Davidson: Mr. Chair, which party has been in government for the past decade?

Hon. Gregor Robertson: Mr. Chair, the member is asking questions he already knows the answer to, but it has been Liberal governments for three terms.

Scot Davidson: Mr. Chair, what is the price of a home in Ontario?

Hon. Gregor Robertson: Mr. Chair, again, the members opposite are asking questions that they have prepared and know the answers to.

Scot Davidson: Mr. Chair, what is the average household income in Ontario?

Hon. Gregor Robertson: Mr. Chair, I believe that the member has the answer to that question, so he can answer it for himself.

Scot Davidson: Mr. Chair, this is what frustrates Canadians. We ask a question and expect an answer, and I know that the minister can answer the question, so we are going to try again.

There are two clocks in here. What time is it?

Hon. Gregor Robertson: Mr. Chair, it is time to build.

Scot Davidson: Mr. Chair, it certainly is. We do need action.

Does the minister understand that home prices have skyrocketed far beyond what most Canadians can afford?

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Hon. Gregor Robertson: Mr. Chair, home prices have skyrocketed, and that is why we need to be building affordable housing across Canada.

Scot Davidson: Mr. Chair, the minister said to all Canadians that house prices do not need to go down. Why does preserving high real estate values matter more to him than ensuring that people can afford a home?

Hon. Gregor Robertson: Mr. Chair, what matters to me is building more affordable housing, and members on this side of the House will put all efforts into that.

Scot Davidson: Mr. Chair, what percentage of homes in Canada are owned by investors?

Hon. Gregor Robertson: Mr. Chair, homes need to be for living in; they need to be for residents and not investors.

Scot Davidson: Mr. Chair, the number is 30%. That is up 50% since 2015, since the Liberal government has been in power.

How many investment properties does the minister own?

Hon. Gregor Robertson: Mr. Chair, investment is secondary to people's living in homes. We need to build homes that people live in, not invest in.

Scot Davidson: Mr. Chair, I was looking for the number. How many investment properties does the Minister of Housing own?

Hon. Gregor Robertson: Mr. Chair, I think the focus here needs to be on building homes for people to live in, not building homes for investors to own.

Scot Davidson: Mr. Chair, how many rental units does the Minister of Housing own?

Hon. Gregor Robertson: Mr. Chair, I am here to answer questions on behalf of my department for the investment in affordable housing across Canada, and infrastructure and housing.

Scot Davidson: Mr. Chair, these are important questions that Canadians need answers to.

Will the creation of “build Canada homes” just lead to more red tape and government bureaucracy?

Hon. Gregor Robertson: Mr. Chair, “build Canada homes” is going to focus on building affordable housing across Canada at a scale that is unprecedented.

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Scot Davidson: Mr. Chair, since there has been no budget from the Liberal government, how much money is being allocated to “build Canada homes”?

Hon. Gregor Robertson: Mr. Chair, at this stage, we are designing the future for “build Canada homes”. It is not an entity that exists yet, but I hope the members opposite will support the investment to scale affordable housing—

The Chair: The hon. member has the floor.

Scot Davidson: Mr. Chair, could the minister point to where I would find that out in the estimates, please?

Hon. Gregor Robertson: Mr. Chair, “build Canada homes” is not specifically in the infrastructure and housing estimates at this stage.

Scot Davidson: Mr. Chair, how many new public servants will be hired for the agency?

Hon. Gregor Robertson: Mr. Chair, at this point, we are dealing with the estimates for the current programs that the housing and infrastructure department is putting out.

Scot Davidson: Mr. Chair, the minister spoke so much tonight about housing but answered no questions. Hopefully he can give Canadians an answer to this: On what date, what exact date, will the average Canadian who is priced out of a home right now be able to afford one? Just—

The Chair: The hon. minister has the floor.

Hon. Gregor Robertson: Mr. Chair, we have delivered a \$50,000 savings to first-time homebuyers already with votes in the House, and we will continue to deliver affordability measures.

Leslyn Lewis (Haldimand—Norfolk, CPC): Mr. Chair, in the main estimates, the government has allocated \$9 billion for infrastructure. How much of this is allocated for new roads?

• (2010)

Hon. Gregor Robertson (Minister of Housing and Infrastructure and Minister responsible for Pacific Economic Development Canada, Lib.): Mr. Chair, I welcome the member.

Infrastructure investments in the department are typically through provinces and territories, and their priorities are part of where that spending goes. Some of that is into roads. It is into all sorts of different infrastructure: water, waste water and transportation infrastructure.

Leslyn Lewis: Mr. Chair, can the minister tell Canadians how many new roads need to be built in order to accommodate the 500,000 new homes in the government's plan?

Hon. Gregor Robertson: Mr. Chair, transportation infrastructure is a part of the housing infrastructure investment that happens through the department, working in partnership with provinces, territories and local governments that lay out the planning in the community scale.

Leslyn Lewis: Mr. Chair, the Liberal government plans to build 500,000 new homes. To meet that plan, the government would have to build 1,370 homes every single day. Did the government build 1,370 homes today?

Hon. Gregor Robertson: Mr. Chair, with reference to roads and highways that have received funding over the past decade, more

than 58,000 kilometres of roads and highways have received funding from the department.

Leslyn Lewis: Mr. Chair, did the government meet its goal of building 1,370 homes today, yes or no?

Hon. Gregor Robertson: Mr. Chair, there have been many more homes than that built across Canada, in part with funding from the department.

Leslyn Lewis: Mr. Chair, has the government met its goal of building any of the 1,370 homes in any day the minister has been in charge of housing, yes or no?

Hon. Gregor Robertson: Mr. Chair, the department has funded, through the Canada Mortgage and Housing Corporation, hundreds of thousands of homes in these recent years. The scale is significant, and it needs to double from here.

Leslyn Lewis: Mr. Chair, how many homes have the Liberals built in the last 29 days, since the minister has been in charge of housing?

Hon. Gregor Robertson: Mr. Chair, the department funds provinces, territories and local governments to help them in the process of building. The government is not directly building, but we should be in the business of that going forward to make sure affordable housing is getting built.

Leslyn Lewis: Mr. Chair, to be on target, the government would have to have funded the building of 39,730 homes within the last 29 days. Has it met its target, yes or no?

Hon. Gregor Robertson: Mr. Chair, the target around doubling housing construction in Canada is for the years to come. We need to scale up from the current level. The goal is to double construction across Canada, and we will use every tool we have available to us to do that.

Leslyn Lewis: Mr. Chair, do young people deserve the right to own a conventional home like their parents did, yes or no?

Hon. Gregor Robertson: Mr. Chair, we want all Canadians to have access to safe and secure housing. Certainly the younger generation needs more opportunities to afford homes; that is why we are doing the doubling of construction across the country.

Leslyn Lewis: Mr. Chair, did the Liberal government allocate more than \$26 billion to prefab container homes through the new Crown corporation, yes or no?

Hon. Gregor Robertson: Mr. Chair, that is not part of the current estimates, the budget estimates we are discussing here today. That is a commitment going forward that the government will tackle, and it hopes to have support on it from the members opposite.

Leslyn Lewis: Mr. Chair, does “build Canada homes” include the government's developing and owning homes for Canadians, yes or no?

Hon. Gregor Robertson: Mr. Chair, as said, we need to use every tool we can that is available to us. Certainly, federal land is an opportunity, working with partners.

Brad Vis (Mission—Matsqui—Abbotsford, CPC): Mr. Chair, does the Government of Canada condemn BC Ferries' decision to purchase ferries from a state-owned enterprise in Communist China?

• (2015)

Hon. Gregor Robertson (Minister of Housing and Infrastructure and Minister responsible for Pacific Economic Development Canada, Lib.): Mr. Chair, I am not clear how this has anything to do with the Housing and Infrastructure department.

Brad Vis: Mr. Chair, will the Government of Canada continue its \$30-million subsidy of BC Ferries?

Hon. Gregor Robertson: Mr. Chair, the BC Ferries investment is not part of the ministry's estimates.

Brad Vis: Mr. Chair, will the ferries from China be subject to tariffs like Chinese EV tariffs put in place by the government?

Hon. Gregor Robertson: Mr. Chair, again, the member should direct those questions to the appropriate minister; they are not related to the department.

Brad Vis: Mr. Chair, table 176 of the main estimates outlines \$2.4 billion in transfer payments to the Department of Housing, Infrastructure and Communities. What portion will be allotted to British Columbia?

Hon. Gregor Robertson: Mr. Chair, I can get the member that detailed answer shortly. I do not have it at my fingertips, but I can do that.

Brad Vis: Mr. Chair, in table 176, \$440 million is allocated to the disaster mitigation and adaptation fund. How much will British Columbia receive?

Hon. Gregor Robertson: Mr. Chair, the disaster mitigation and adaptation fund has already provided almost \$3 billion in support across Canada to—

The Chair: The hon. member has the floor.

Brad Vis: Mr. Chair, what portion of the \$16 million of the supporting climate resilient infrastructure initiative will British Columbia receive?

Hon. Gregor Robertson: Mr. Chair, the typical coverage across the country is per capita, but there are variations in that depending on the province and certainly the issues, the disasters.

Brad Vis: Mr. Chair, the Liberal Party's platform promised additional funding for disaster mitigation and recovery. What is the total, and how much will B.C. receive?

Hon. Gregor Robertson: Mr. Chair, for this time period, \$643.8 million is the amount that is put forward for the disaster mitigation and adaptation fund.

Brad Vis: Mr. Chair, does the minister agree that the federal government has a responsibility in aiding communities that have

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suffered from a natural disaster and need additional infrastructure funding?

Hon. Gregor Robertson: Mr. Chair, certainly the government is committed to supporting communities. That is why the fund exists: to be able to make the infrastructure more resilient and to support communities—

The Chair: The hon. member has the floor.

Brad Vis: Mr. Chair, does the minister agree that Abbotsford plays a critical role in B.C.'s food security?

Hon. Gregor Robertson: Mr. Chair, I used to farm very close to Abbotsford, so I am keenly aware of the challenges in the Fraser Valley and the disasters that have affected the region.

Brad Vis: Mr. Chair, does the minister acknowledge that CN Rail, CP Rail, an international airport, Southern Railway, a border crossing and Highway 1 are all present in Abbotsford and are critical to Canada's natural interests and the operation of our supply chains?

Hon. Gregor Robertson: Mr. Chair, I appreciate the member's pointing out the critical importance of the infrastructure in the Fraser Valley on the south coast of B.C. and how important it is to the rest of Canada.

Brad Vis: Mr. Chair, is the minister aware that Abbotsford was impacted by floods in 2021, one of the most costly disasters in the history of Canada? Is the minister aware that in the fall economic statement of the previous Parliament, over \$5 billion was allocated to disaster recovery efforts in the province of British Columbia?

Hon. Gregor Robertson: Mr. Chair, I am aware there has been funding allocated for disaster mitigation and adaptation in the Fraser Valley, which has obviously been through some tough disasters in recent years.

Brad Vis: Mr. Chair, would the minister agree that Abbotsford should be aided by the federal government to rebuild its infrastructure to account for natural disasters and climate change?

Hon. Gregor Robertson: Mr. Chair, I think we can all agree that communities affected across Canada, including Abbotsford and the Fraser Valley—

The Chair: The hon. member.

Brad Vis: Mr. Chair, can the minister please outline to the House which government program Abbotsford should apply to to receive its portion of the main estimates being debated here tonight?

Hon. Gregor Robertson: Mr. Chair, I just outlined that the disaster mitigation and adaptation fund is for the prevention of these disasters and there is more resilient infrastructure to prevent future problems.

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● (2020)

Sima Acan (Oakville West, Lib.): Mr. Chair, I would like to talk about the work of Housing, Infrastructure and Communities Canada, and specifically, about how this work is helping to build complete communities for Canadians across the country, including in my riding.

Besides my experience and background in electronics and engineering over two decades, I have also been involved in the housing industry as a licensed professional for a decade, which gives me a personal understanding of the importance of creating inclusive, livable and sustainable communities for families.

Public transit is a key component of connected communities. It provides Canadians with affordable and accessible options in both urban and rural communities. By investing in the public transit that Canadians rely on, the department is helping Canadians get to where they need to go, whether it be work, school or simply to be active in their communities. Through the investing in Canada infrastructure program, the federal government has invested in more than 900 public transit projects. This includes supporting the purchase of more than 6,600 new buses, including over 1,600 zero-emission buses.

Announced in 2024, the Canada public transit fund would provide municipalities, transit authorities and other groups with the resources to plan and implement key public transit projects over the long term. Active transportation is another key component of building well-connected communities. By foot or by bike, it gives residents convenient access to multi-use pathways, trails and sidewalks. The federal government has already invested in approximately 1,350 kilometres of bikeways, pathways and sidewalks across Canada.

As Oakville residents, we know, first-hand, the value of this work. With over 260 kilometres of bikeways, 46 kilometres of beautiful trails and more than 1,000 kilometres of sidewalks right here in our town, my family and I, like so many others in Oakville, enjoy every step we take along these trails, making memories together, while staying active and connected to nature.

The investments being made not only get Canadians from A to B, but also support the buildings and facilities that house culture, recreation and sport, the heart of vibrant communities. The federal government has invested in more than 2,000 inclusive and accessible cultural and recreational spaces.

In Oakville, these investments have helped enhance local cultural and recreational facilities, making them more accessible to people of all ages and abilities. Such investments not only enrich the quality of life in communities, such as my beautiful riding of Oakville West, but also contribute to local economic growth by attracting visitors and supporting local businesses tied to tourism and recreation.

In the face of growing climate events, there is a critical importance in building resilient infrastructure for both safety and good economic sense. To better protect Canadians in the face of extreme weather events, the government has invested more than \$3.78 billion through the disaster mitigation and adaption fund and the investing in Canada infrastructure fund to strengthen the resilience of

communities against climate change and to keep Canadians, their businesses and their homes safe.

Increasing the housing supply in Canada requires building up the essential water and solid waste infrastructure. This is why the government is investing in infrastructure to enable housing through the Canada housing infrastructure fund.

Through the Canada housing infrastructure fund's direct delivery stream, as well as agreements with provinces and territories, we are helping communities build the drinking water, stormwater and waste-water infrastructure that literally forms the foundation for more homes. To date, Housing, Infrastructure and Communities Canada programs have supported more than 2,500 kilometres of drinking water, waste-water and stormwater assets, and close to 6,600 facilities. By helping deliver drinking water to communities and building waste-water treatment infrastructure, Housing, Infrastructure and Communities Canada is helping to provide residents with access to safe and clean water.

The federal government is continuing to leverage its investments in community infrastructure to cut red tape and incentivize housing. Funding provided through the national housing strategy and Canada's housing plan is helping to improve housing outcomes and restore affordability for Canadians, particularly among vulnerable populations, including seniors, students and indigenous communities.

The government is working together to build more homes by investing in Canada's home-building industry. To date, funding through national housing strategy programs has reduced or eliminated housing needs for more than 660,000 households. Additionally, over 166,000 new housing units have been created or committed. Over 322,000 units are currently under construction or have been repaired or built.

While the federal government is investing in housing supply for the longer term, it is also working to prevent and reduce homelessness in our communities through Reaching Home, Canada's homelessness strategy. To date, Reaching Home has supported over 9,500 projects. The program has helped more than 94,000 people find more stable housing and has provided over 170,000 with prevention services, such as short-term rental assistance or landlord mediation and much more.

● (2025)

The federal government will continue to work alongside all its partners to build strong and safe Canadian communities. I especially look forward to the impact this will have in my community and for my constituents.

I would like to ask the minister, how are funding allotments decided between provinces and territories?

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Hon. Gregor Robertson (Minister of Housing and Infrastructure and Minister responsible for Pacific Economic Development Canada, Lib.): Mr. Chair, Housing, Infrastructure and Communities Canada utilizes different funding models to meet specific goals and outcomes. While, in some cases, there are allocations that are based on population, the department also deploys competitive and merit-based models, or even combined funding models, depending on what outcomes are sought.

Needs for the different types of infrastructure vary across the country. Obviously, the cost of infrastructure is different in some locations, particularly in the north. There is no individual jurisdiction receiving a direct share of our department's available funding that aligns with their share of national population, but instead the funding is based on an approach that best meets the needs of the desired outcomes on housing and infrastructure.

Sima Acan: Mr. Chair, could the minister let us know why the federal government invests in infrastructure and does not always give the money to the provinces and territories to invest themselves.

Hon. Gregor Robertson: Mr. Chair, I neglected to congratulate the member on her election and her constituents for electing her here to do the good work on behalf of Oakville. As with me, she is new in the House.

The federal government has a responsibility to taxpayers to ensure that their money produces results, and that means we work with the provinces, territories, local governments and third parties directly, depending on the program, whether it is supporting building a new subway station or creating a firebreak to protect against wildfires. In all cases, we work with our partners to ensure that the funding is going to the purpose intended and is achieving the results that Canadians expect.

Sima Acan: Mr. Chair, could the minister explain why the government is tying infrastructure funding to conditions such as housing.

Hon. Gregor Robertson: Mr. Chair, Canada is grappling with significant housing challenges. Housing needs vary across the country, depending on province, territory or neighbourhoods, and they are very distinct to those local needs. A collaborative approach is needed to address the current housing crisis where all the levels of government are participating.

Housing and infrastructure are intertwined. They go hand in hand. The infrastructure needs to be in place in order for people to be housed there and for people to live their lives. The infrastructure needs to be in a state of good repair. We cannot build new housing or densify neighbourhoods if we do not have that base of water, sewers, transportation infrastructure, roads and transit, as well as community buildings to support the residents in place when they move in. That is why the government is bringing very direct and concrete links between housing and infrastructure funding.

Investments will be aimed at developing complete, livable and inclusive communities that support jobs, economic productivity, environmental sustainability and enhance the quality of life in a way that really reflects the strategic long-term objectives of building climate resilience; supporting communities transitioning towards net

zero, being energy efficient and clean; and helps communities identify their public infrastructure needs.

● (2030)

Sima Acan: Mr. Chair, given the frequency and severity of natural disasters, such as the recent wildfires, why is Housing, Infrastructure and Communities Canada not funding more resilient infrastructure?

Hon. Gregor Robertson: Mr. Chair, resilient infrastructure does not just make good economic sense, it is critical to keeping Canadians and our communities safe. That is why we have committed almost \$4 billion, through programs such as the disaster mitigation and adaptation fund, the infrastructure Canada investment program and the national infrastructure fund, to help mitigate and adapt infrastructure to the impacts of natural hazards, like forest fires and floods. More than this, we are building resilience into all of our programs to ensure that strong measures for climate resilience are the foundation of program design.

The impacts are very real. We are seeing it on the prairies right now. We have seen it, from our previous conversation here, related to the floods in B.C. and the Fraser Valley in 2021. These are massive impacts, very disruptive to community and to our economy, and we need to make sure, through the department's work, that we are encouraging the use of nature-based solutions, such as green roofs and coastal wetland restoration, to mitigate the effects of flooding, erosion and urban heat islands. We saw the unprecedented impact and loss of life in B.C. in 2021 from the heat wave.

All new infrastructure investments are required to incorporate resilience guidelines, standards and codes. Our department also conducts research to develop the tools, the technologies and the guidance for public infrastructure management and to inform the code standards and specifications for climate resilience. The department has also developed a climate tool kit to support infrastructure that is more resilient to climate change.

Currently, the Climate Help Desk is open and offers direct technical support to communities. Public infrastructure owners and operators responded to the inquiries on the best practices in their sectors for low-carbon and resilient infrastructure projects. This is an important partnership in which the department can answer questions about the department's climate requirements for funding programs, promoting our best practices for the infrastructure assets and providing the technical guidance, support and advice to incorporate climate-smart solutions into the projects.

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Sima Acan: Mr. Chair, many indigenous communities face inadequate housing, water systems and transportation infrastructure. What is Housing, Infrastructure and Communities Canada doing to address the infrastructure gaps?

Hon. Gregor Robertson: Mr. Chair, Housing, Infrastructure and Communities Canada acknowledges the infrastructure gap in many indigenous communities that needs to be addressed. To help address that, we have many supports in our programming to ensure that indigenous communities can benefit from our programs. For example, programs have funding minimums that are dedicated to indigenous communities: higher cost shares, sometimes up to 100% for indigenous applicants; broader eligibility; and longer intakes and capacity supports during the application process. We also have programs such as the rural transit solutions fund, which are targeted toward rural and remote communities.

Sima Acan: Mr. Chair, historically, Canada has focused on projects that overlook the needs of rural communities. What steps is Canada currently taking to prioritize investments in rural areas?

Hon. Gregor Robertson: Mr. Chair, the department has several programs that will benefit rural, remote and indigenous communities and organizations that consider their unique needs. Examples are programs that integrate flexibilities, such as rolling intakes for smaller communities, and flexibility for indigenous recipients. Our program officials work very closely with the potential recipients to provide application support.

• (2035)

[Translation]

Jason Groleau (Beauce, CPC): Mr. Chair, I will be sharing my time with two of my colleagues.

The Liberals caused the housing crisis in Beauce and across Canada. Many families can no longer afford a place to live. Over the past five years, rent has increased by over 50% in some cities.

How many new homes need to be built per year to solve this crisis in Canada?

Hon. Gregor Robertson (Minister of Housing and Infrastructure and Minister responsible for Pacific Economic Development Canada, Lib.): Mr. Chair, I thank the member for his question. I will answer in English.

[English]

In terms of how many we are building, currently, 220,000 homes a year, approximately, is the pace.

[Translation]

Jason Groleau: Mr. Chair, what is the target for housing construction in Canada in 2025?

[English]

Hon. Gregor Robertson: Mr. Chair, the goal across Canada for us is to build more homes and to be ramping up to doubling the current rate.

[Translation]

Jason Groleau: Mr. Chair, how many new rental units have been built in Canada in the past 12 months?

[English]

Hon. Gregor Robertson: Mr. Chair, approximately 225,000 units were built in the last year.

[Translation]

Jason Groleau: Mr. Chair, of those 225,000 units, how many went through a CMHC program in the past 12 months?

[English]

Hon. Gregor Robertson: Mr. Chair, I would be happy to provide the member with the detailed data on that as soon as possible.

[Translation]

Jason Groleau: Mr. Chair, is the minister familiar with the MLI Select program, yes or no?

[English]

Hon. Gregor Robertson: Mr. Chair, I am familiar with the program, yes.

[Translation]

Jason Groleau: Mr. Chair, what is the purpose of that program?

[English]

Hon. Gregor Robertson: Mr. Chair, the MLI select program is part of CMHC.

[Translation]

Jason Groleau: Mr. Chair, how long does it take to process a CMHC application?

[English]

Hon. Gregor Robertson: Mr. Chair, it really varies with the application through CMHC. There is quite a range depending on the scale of the project for CMHC.

[Translation]

Jason Groleau: Mr. Chair, the answer is six months.

What are the program criteria? What is the percentage of financing? How many years is the maximum amortization period for this program?

[English]

Hon. Gregor Robertson: Mr. Chair, on the MLI select program, I can get the member some detailed information about those questions. I would be happy to do that.

[Translation]

Jason Groleau: Mr. Chair, is it true that, if an owner increases the cost of rent, the CMHC gives them more funding?

[English]

Hon. Gregor Robertson: Mr. Chair, I am not clear on what the member is asking through that question. If he could clarify—

The Chair: The hon. member.

[Translation]

Jason Groleau: Mr. Chair, the program represents 25% of all construction in Canada. I am rather surprised that the minister cannot answer my questions.

Is it an inflationary program, yes or no?

[English]

Hon. Gregor Robertson: Mr. Chair, as far as I know, this is not an inflationary program.

[Translation]

Jason Groleau: Mr. Chair, given the CMHC's poor performance when it comes to costs, delays and red tape, will the minister cut bonuses for CMHC executives?

[English]

Hon. Gregor Robertson: Mr. Chair, CMHC has been very successful in rolling out programs, particularly over the past 12 months, with very expedited funding for affordable housing across Canada.

[Translation]

Jason Groleau: Mr. Chair, I will help the minister answer. It takes six months to process applications, financing up to 95% is available and the maximum amortization period is 50 years. Furthermore, if owners raise their tenants' rent, then they get more funding under this program. Yes, it is an inflationary program.

[English]

Hon. Gregor Robertson: Mr. Chair, our focus is on building affordable housing. The MLI select program is working right now. We are going to focus on building more affordable housing.

• (2040)

[Translation]

The Chair: The hon. member has time for a quick question.

Jason Groleau: Mr. Chair, there are many programs that focus on big cities. Does the minister think that we need to invest more in the regions?

[English]

Hon. Gregor Robertson: Mr. Chair, I understood the member's question to be whether rural areas are served by this program. That is correct.

Ned Kuruc (Hamilton East—Stoney Creek, CPC): Mr. Chair, through you to the hon. minister, what is his definition of affordable housing?

Hon. Gregor Robertson (Minister of Housing and Infrastructure and Minister responsible for Pacific Economic Develop-

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ment Canada, Lib.): Mr. Chair, I think the general definition of affordable is that it is less than 30% of people's income.

Ned Kuruc: Mr. Chair, when the hon. minister created the Vancouver affordable housing agency, he promised 500 units. How many were delivered?

Hon. Gregor Robertson: Mr. Chair, I am proud of the work the Vancouver affordable housing agency did in catalyzing thousands of units across the city. That is why I am focused now, here in the federal government, on delivering on behalf of all of Canada.

Ned Kuruc: Mr. Chair, 40 were built. Do you consider that a success?

The Chair: The member must go through the Chair.

The hon. minister.

Hon. Gregor Robertson: Mr. Chair, I think the member opposite has the facts all wrong. He can check the City of Vancouver website for data on the affordable housing delivered.

Ned Kuruc: Through you, Mr. Chair, does the hon. minister know what the average cost of a home in Hamilton is?

Hon. Gregor Robertson: Mr. Chair, I am sure the member already has the answer to the question being asked, or he would not be asking it.

Ned Kuruc: Through you, Mr. Chair, I know I am just a rookie here, a simple guy from Hamilton who made it to Parliament, but I was told that we ask the questions and the minister answers them. I want to know if he knows the answer. Again, does he know what the average cost of a home in Hamilton is?

Hon. Gregor Robertson: Mr. Chair, I would say, whether it is Hamilton or Vancouver, we need to bring the overall cost of housing down and do that by building affordable housing.

Ned Kuruc: Mr. Chair, the answer is \$790,000. Does the hon. minister consider that affordable?

Hon. Gregor Robertson: Mr. Chair, that is not affordable to many Canadians. That is why we need to build more affordable housing and look for the support from the members opposite.

Ned Kuruc: Mr. Chair, does the hon. minister know what the average rent for a one bedroom is in Hamilton?

Hon. Gregor Robertson: Mr. Chair, across the country, we need to be able to see rents come down for Canadians. I am sure that is the case in Hamilton, as it is in many cities across Canada.

Ned Kuruc: Mr. Chair, it is \$1,824. Does the hon. minister consider that affordable?

Hon. Gregor Robertson: Mr. Chair, it all depends on people's income, but for most Canadians, that is a challenge. That is why I hope the member will support us with our new housing plan.

Ned Kuruc: Mr. Chair, through you to the hon. minister, how many homes were built by the housing accelerator?

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Hon. Gregor Robertson: Mr. Chair, the housing accelerator has agreements with over 200 communities across Canada that will unlock over 800,000 homes in the future.

Ned Kuruc: Mr. Chair, to the hon. minister, how much money was spent?

Hon. Gregor Robertson: Mr. Chair, the housing accelerator fund has invested \$4.4 billion to eliminate the barriers to development and build homes faster.

Ned Kuruc: Mr. Chair, if \$4.4 billion will be spent with no account of how many homes will be built, does the hon. minister have a problem with that?

Hon. Gregor Robertson: Mr. Chair, on this side of the House, we are very committed to transparency. We will be tracking and working with the local governments to see how they are progressing on delivering the housing units they are rezoning for.

Ned Kuruc: Mr. Chair, this is a so-called new government running old, failed Liberal programs. How does this help Hamilton?

Hon. Gregor Robertson: Mr. Chair, I have outlined the scale of investment that is happening through this department. We are talking about \$16 billion of hard-working Canadians' money that is being invested in affordable housing and infrastructure. We hope to have the member's support for that.

Ned Kuruc: Mr. Chair, from what I have heard today, nothing will change. It is just more Liberal lip service and broken promises. The Liberals and the minister will just add to the housing hell in Hamilton.

• (2045)

Hon. Gregor Robertson: Mr. Chair, I am clear that the members opposite have not supported any of these affordable housing programs in recent years. I hope, based on these questions, that there is going to be a change of approach here, and the members opposite will support scaling up these investments in affordable housing.

Scott Aitchison (Parry Sound—Muskoka, CPC): Mr. Chair, I wonder if the minister could comment on a report from the Auditor General. A federal lands initiative of \$200 million was given to CMHC to be spent at an increment of \$20 million a year for 4,000 units. That has subsequently been transferred over to the Department of Housing, Infrastructure and Communities, and only 309 units of the 4,000 have been built.

Can the minister tell us how much of the \$200 million has been disbursed to build those 309 units?

Hon. Gregor Robertson (Minister of Housing and Infrastructure and Minister responsible for Pacific Economic Development Canada, Lib.): Mr. Chair, certainly we are looking forward to leveraging federal lands, going forward, to get a lot more housing built across Canada. Part of “build Canada homes” is to use federal lands. In this case, most of those units under development currently will be delivered in the years ahead.

Scott Aitchison: Mr. Chair, does the minister realize that it currently takes about six years to dispose of federal lands to be developed into housing? What does he plan to do to speed that process up?

Hon. Gregor Robertson: Mr. Chair, I am certainly looking forward to speeding this process up. The idea with “build Canada

homes” is that all the different departments and agencies of government are working in unison to deliver affordable housing across the country, leveraging federal land.

Scott Aitchison: Mr. Chair, can the minister tell this House how long it will take for his department to create this new federal agency that will be a developer?

Hon. Gregor Robertson: Mr. Chair, I am buoyed by this interest in “build Canada homes”. Certainly, on this side of the House, we want to make sure this effort is quick and nimble. We are focused on building these affordable homes as soon as possible, using all the tools of government.

Scott Aitchison: Mr. Chair, has the minister ever heard of the Canada Lands Company?

Hon. Gregor Robertson: Mr. Chair, yes.

Scott Aitchison: Mr. Chair, is the minister aware that the Canada Lands Company does not just own the CN Tower and the port of Montreal but in fact is a land developer and is wholly owned by the federal government?

Hon. Gregor Robertson: Mr. Chair, yes, I am aware of Canada Lands, its different functions and the assets that are held for Canadians.

Scott Aitchison: Mr. Chair, Canada Lands is currently developing a number of residential housing projects, in Downsview Park, for example, in Toronto. Also here in Ottawa it has a number of projects on the go.

Is the minister aware of those?

Hon. Gregor Robertson: Mr. Chair, I am certainly aware of this, and our department works with Canada Lands in some cases, to help with the development. We look forward to doing a lot more of that in the future.

Scott Aitchison: Mr. Chair, I wonder if the minister could tell the House why he sees fit for the federal government to create a third federal housing agency to become a land developer, when it already owns one.

Hon. Gregor Robertson: Mr. Chair, I think there is an opportunity to build affordable housing across the country, and there are many different tools needed to do that. Certainly, Canada Lands Company manages an inventory of lands and does some building activity there. CMHC does a lot of finance and mortgage work, but there remain gaps in the system to scale up the affordable housing we need to deliver.

Scott Aitchison: Mr. Chair, the minister told the House in one of the earlier questioning rounds that “it is time to build”. This is what I am wondering: If, in fact, he believes it is time to build, why not have the agency he already owns, which is already building, build more instead of creating more bureaucracy?

Hon. Gregor Robertson: Mr. Chair, we are going to be focused on building in partnership with all levels of government, and with the public and private sectors and non-profit developers as well. We need a broad set of partnerships here. I am not talking about more bureaucracy; I am talking about great partnerships and more support for affordable housing.

Scott Aitchison: Mr. Chair, the minister talks about partnering with mayors. One of the challenges, of course, that the Canada Lands Company has in trying to get more homes built is dealing with municipal planning departments. It takes them years to get things approved.

What does he plan to do to solve that problem?

• (2050)

Hon. Gregor Robertson: Mr. Chair, I think we have seen good success now with the housing accelerator fund and giving incentives to local governments, mayors and their councils to—

The Chair: The hon. member.

Scott Aitchison: Mr. Chair, the government gave \$478 million of its housing accelerator funding to the City of Toronto, which turned around and increased its development charges by 42%, making housing more expensive.

Will the minister ask for the money back?

Hon. Gregor Robertson: Mr. Chair, we have housing accelerator fund agreements with over 200 communities in cities across Canada, and we are working on advancing those partnerships to deliver results.

[Translation]

Claude Guay (Parliamentary Secretary to the Minister of Energy and Natural Resources, Lib.): Mr. Chair, I rise today to speak to the main estimates at a pivotal moment in Canadian history. As a country, we have been at this crossroads before, at times that required more than political calculations, at times that called on us to build boldly together. We answered that call after the Second World War. We responded by connecting this vast country through the Trans-Canada Highway.

Today, we are being called upon again because, once again, the world has changed. We are entering an era of urgency, a global race for resources, resilience and strategic advantages. We need to redefine ourselves in a world where many certainties are now in flux, where we can no longer take for granted the systems, organizations and partners we once relied on.

At the heart of this global race are materials that do not immediately spring to mind for most Canadians. Their importance will shape the future of our economy, our climate and our sovereignty. I am talking about critical minerals such as lithium, nickel, copper, graphite, cobalt and rare earth minerals. They are essential for the electric vehicles we drive, for the solar panels on our roofs, for the semiconductors that power our devices, for the military technology

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that keeps us safe and for the batteries that support our energy transition.

Canada, the country that we are privileged to serve in the House, is one of the most richly endowed countries on earth. We are literally sitting on the solution that the entire world is rushing to find, secure and control. However, being rich in resources is not enough. Having mineral wealth is not the same as building and progressing.

[English]

We cannot mine what we have not mapped; we cannot deliver to our allies what we cannot move, and we cannot lead the world if we are content to stand on the sidelines while opportunity passes us. This is what the 2025-26 main estimates are about. They are not just a financial exercise. They are part of our national agenda to build, to trade and to lead.

Worldwide, China holds a dominant position in the production and refining of six core critical minerals: lithium, graphite, cobalt, nickel, copper and rare earth elements. These are the building blocks of clean technology, modern manufacturing and advanced defence systems, and right now, too much of that supply chain depends on one single country.

In fact, China controls over 75% of global production and refining for graphite, cobalt and rare earth elements. In addition, across all six core minerals, China accounts for roughly two-thirds of the world's processing and refining capacity. These are not just statistics; these are warning signs. They are strategic vulnerabilities for Canada and for allies around the world.

[Translation]

When Canada and its allies are forced to choose between energy security and ethical procurement, that is a problem. When Canadian manufacturers cannot access the materials they need without looking abroad, that is a problem. It is time to develop the wealth beneath our feet in a responsible, sustainable way, with the full co-operation of indigenous communities and in accordance with the ethical standards and environmental protections we are so proud of. It is time to sell our products not only to those who share our borders, but also to those who share our values.

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● (2055)

[English]

This is why we are making real, tangible investments, starting with the critical minerals infrastructure fund. These main estimates propose \$141.37 million to build the roads, power lines and transport links that would unlock our mineral wealth and connect it to the world.

In Labrador, in Sudbury, in the Athabasca Basin, in the north of Quebec and across the Northwest Territories, these investments would make the difference between resource potential and becoming an economic powerhouse.

[Translation]

We have already announced a fund of over \$300 million for 31 projects across the country, including a number led by indigenous communities. This fund is not just for resource extraction. It seeks to connect those resources to the right partners in order to generate prosperity for Canadians through infrastructure, good jobs and sustainable community development.

[English]

However, building is not enough. We must look ahead and ask how Canada will compete and win in the decades to come. That is why these estimates invest \$5.77 million in the critical minerals global partnership initiative. The world is not asking just for more minerals; it is asking for better minerals that are responsibly sourced, ethically managed and environmentally sound.

[Translation]

This initiative allows Canada to be a leader, rather than a follower, in the development of global environmental, social and governance, or ESG, standards. It allows us to build resilient and transparent supply chains with our allies in the Americas, Europe and the Indo-Pacific. It guarantees Canada a seat at the table, not just as a producer but also as a trusted partner in the global clean economy. That is how we build confidence in Canadian minerals. That is how we attract investment. That is how we develop markets where Canadian values and products can thrive.

The future belongs to innovators. That is why we propose to allocate \$10.34 million for the critical minerals technology and innovation strategy so that Canada can lead the world not only in terms of what it mines, but how it mines. Already, Canadian researchers are making breakthroughs in cleaner processing, higher-performance battery materials, and recycling technologies that reduce waste and pollution. This funding will allow us to speed up the lab-to-mine and patent-to-product transition. That means more Canadian intellectual property, more domestic innovation and more jobs, not just in mining but also in engineering, clean technology and advanced manufacturing. That is how we will strengthen our position in the global value chain. That is how we will stop exporting raw potential and start selling finished products.

[English]

Let us not forget the foundation beneath it all, literally. These estimates include \$4.8 million to support geoscience research and data initiatives. From geomapping in the north to exploration support in partnership with provinces and indigenous governments, this

work would help us access the minerals we need to power our future.

In just the past few days, more than 70 projects have been supported through this work, fuelling discoveries, advancing exploration and de-risking investment. These are quiet programs, but they are critical elements of our nation-building tool box, and we are using them.

● (2100)

[Translation]

This is all part of a broader economic plan, one that includes the prospective one Canadian economy act, which was introduced last week. This new legislation will speed up the implementation of major strategic projects, simplify the automation process and remove the internal trade barriers that are hindering our businesses and workers. It will reduce the time taken to review major projects from five years to two years, while respecting our duty to consult and to protect the environment. It will help us open more mines—

The Chair: Order. The time allotted to the hon. member for his speech has expired. I now invite him to ask the minister a question.

Claude Guay: Mr. Chair, the development of critical minerals will be crucial to the Canadian economy. The entire world is searching for them, especially given the uncertainty surrounding the global supply. Considering the trade war with the United States, implementing critical mineral projects will increase our resilience and strengthen our sovereignty.

Can the minister talk about the importance of critical minerals and the work the Government of Canada is proposing to accelerate their development?

[English]

Hon. Tim Hodgson (Minister of Energy and Natural Resources, Lib.): Mr. Chair, critical minerals are a key part of this global challenge we are facing right now. We did not ask for the world's trading system to be changed. We did not ask for the end of the Bretton Woods era. We did not ask for a mercantilist world, but that is what we are in.

The President of the United States seems to be very focused on critical minerals. We all watched what he did to Ukraine in the White House. Unlike a lot of countries, we have some very good cards. We have the critical minerals the world is looking for. We need to develop those critical minerals.

We have critical minerals that will help with AI. They will help with power and clean technology, and they will help with climate change. We have the ability to support new mines, new refineries and new refining processes. We intend to do this in a responsible way, in a sustainable way and in partnership with first nations. We are investing \$3.8 billion in our critical minerals strategy to give us the hand that we need with the rest of the world.

Claude Guay: Mr. Chair, throughout the debate, the Minister of Energy and Natural Resources has been clear that indigenous people must be consulted when it comes to energy projects, as well as projects of national significance.

Can the minister explain how these estimates help advance reconciliation and support indigenous communities' participating in these energy projects and projects of national significance?

Hon. Tim Hodgson: Mr. Chair, there is money allocated in the main estimates to support capacity building on the part of first nations. We do that directly with particular first nations where there are critical mineral opportunities.

We also do it in supporting a group called the First Nations Major Projects Coalition. It represents over 180 first nations. There are many specific critical mineral opportunities where the First Nations Major Projects Coalition is providing the capacity to negotiate strong ownership opportunities for first nations and accelerate the development of these critical mineral opportunities.

[Translation]

Claude Guay: Mr. Chair, the third question I have for the minister concerns what we can do to advance critical minerals projects. Getting new mines approved in Canada takes far too long. This inefficiency hinders critical mineral development.

We know that we are working on a new, more efficient process for issuing mining permits.

Can the minister give us more details on what the new Government of Canada plans to do to advance critical minerals projects?

• (2105)

[English]

Hon. Tim Hodgson: Mr. Chair, under the one Canadian economy act, we would be developing a major projects office. That major projects office would accelerate the process of getting critical mineral projects approved within a two-year time frame. We will also be negotiating bilateral agreements with each of the provinces so we can have “one project, one review” processes. These would all accelerate the development of critical mineral processes.

[Translation]

Claude Guay: Mr. Chair, how will the projects be selected by the government?

[English]

Hon. Tim Hodgson: Mr. Chair, I did not hear exactly what—

Claude Guay: Mr. Chair, how are we going to select the projects?

Hon. Tim Hodgson: Mr. Chair, we will select the projects based on the five criteria that were worked out with the Prime Minister and the premiers. The five criteria are laid out in the proposed act.

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Shannon Stubbs (Lakeland, CPC): Mr. Chair, why does Bill C-5 allow for exemptions from the Conflict of Interest Act?

Hon. Tim Hodgson (Minister of Energy and Natural Resources, Lib.): Mr. Chair, we are here today to talk about how the new government will get projects built—

The Assistant Deputy Chair: The hon. member.

Shannon Stubbs: Mr. Chair, when will the government repeal Bill C-69?

Hon. Tim Hodgson: Mr. Chair, what the government will do is get the one Canadian economy act passed. That is how we will get projects built. If the members across the aisle would like to see—

The Assistant Deputy Chair: The hon. member.

Shannon Stubbs: Mr. Chair, when will they repeal the “never build anything, no new pipelines” bill, Bill C-69?

Hon. Tim Hodgson: Mr. Chair, that is not what the Prime Minister and the premiers seem to think. They got together, and they thought this was a great idea. They laid out the five criteria, which are in the act. That is how we will get projects built. That is how we will make Canada an energy superpower.

Shannon Stubbs: Mr. Chair, that is an admission that Bill C-69 blocks projects. The government would not need Bill C-5 if it worked.

What specific projects will be of national interest?

Hon. Tim Hodgson: Mr. Chair, the Prime Minister and the premiers got together, and they laid out five criteria. I can go through the five criteria if the member would like.

Shannon Stubbs: Mr. Chair, what specific projects will be of national interest?

Hon. Tim Hodgson: Mr. Chair, the hon. member seems to be confused. The projects come after the bill is put in place. The bill would provide the certainty to unlock the conversations between—

The Assistant Deputy Chair: The hon. member.

Shannon Stubbs: Mr. Chair, how do political, hand-picked projects give investors certainty?

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Hon. Tim Hodgson: Mr. Chair, the politicians do not pick the projects. The projects come up through a consultation between our government, the provincial governments, indigenous peoples and proponents. When those four groups come together to put a project together, it gets considered for national interest.

Shannon Stubbs: Mr. Chair, there are 28 energy and critical mineral projects in federal review, stuck, right now. Why not fast-track those?

Hon. Tim Hodgson: Mr. Chair, if the hon. member would like to see these projects accelerated, we hope the Conservatives support the one Canadian economy bill, and we will get going on those projects.

Shannon Stubbs: Mr. Chair, is the Crawford nickel-cobalt mine in the national interest?

Hon. Tim Hodgson: Mr. Chair, the Prime Minister and the premiers got together and unanimously agreed on the five criteria. We will run—

The Assistant Deputy Chair: The hon. member.

Shannon Stubbs: Mr. Chair, is the Troilus gold and copper mine?

Hon. Tim Hodgson: Mr. Chair, again, the hon. member is proposing some hypothetical—

The Assistant Deputy Chair: The hon. member.

Shannon Stubbs: Mr. Chair, is the Rook I uranium mine?

Hon. Tim Hodgson: Mr. Chair, again, the member seems to be confused that we are talking about hypothetical projects. The projects that will come forward are specific projects with the support of—

Shannon Stubbs: Mr. Chair, the minister seems to be confused. What I am talking about are current, real projects being proposed by real proponents stuck in the regulatory mess right now.

Is the Denison Mines project in the national interest?

Hon. Tim Hodgson: Mr. Chair, as soon as we get the one Canadian economy act passed, we will run it through the process and we will make that determination. We hope the members across the aisle will help us get that done so we can build the strongest economy in the G7.

Shannon Stubbs: Mr. Chair, will the minister release the national interest project list?

Hon. Tim Hodgson: Mr. Chair, what will happen is that once the bill is passed, hopefully with the support of our colleagues, projects will be designated and they will be published.

• (2110)

Shannon Stubbs: Mr. Chair, why is the government's claim of the two-year target for project approvals not in Bill C-5?

Hon. Tim Hodgson: Mr. Chair, the Prime Minister has been very clear that the projects would be approved from the federal government's perspective within two years or less. He has given those KPIs to all of the ministers. We understand that is what—

The Assistant Deputy Chair: The hon. member.

Shannon Stubbs: Mr. Chair, uranium and energy projects in the U.S. are approved as quickly as between 16 and 28 days. How does Canada compete?

Hon. Tim Hodgson: Mr. Chair, through this consultation, we have been speaking with CEOs of mining companies and CEOs of energy companies, and they tell us that if we can deliver approvals within two years, that would—

The Assistant Deputy Chair: The hon. member.

Shannon Stubbs: Mr. Chair, that is for the hundreds or thousands of workers who lost their jobs after all the Liberals' anti-development policies.

The Liberals say new pipelines only if there is a national consensus. What is a national consensus?

Hon. Tim Hodgson: Mr. Chair, at the first nations meeting 10 days ago, there was consensus to advance projects of national interest. Our government will work with the premiers, work with—

The Assistant Deputy Chair: Order. The time has expired for that round.

I now call on the hon. member for Edmonton Northwest.

Billy Morin (Edmonton Northwest, CPC): Mr. Chair, the Liberal government talks tough about standing up to the United States and defending our sovereignty as a country. Does an oil and gas cap strengthen the Canadian economy, sovereignty, resilience and security?

Hon. Tim Hodgson (Minister of Energy and Natural Resources, Lib.): Mr. Chair, we will introduce a bill to get major projects built in Canada. Our government will rapidly advance projects of national interest and approve them within two years. We will build the strongest low-cost, low-risk, low-carbon economy in the G7.

Billy Morin: Mr. Chair, the Parliamentary Budget Officer estimates that the oil and gas cap will reduce nominal GDP by \$20.5 billion and kill 54,000 jobs. Will the minister scrap the oil and gas cap?

Hon. Tim Hodgson: Mr. Chair, what the government will do is pass the one Canadian economy act to grow our economy through delivering projects of national interest. We hope the members will get onside.

Billy Morin: Mr. Chair, green energy producers say the oil and gas cap deters investment and undermines employment. If the government keeps the cap, is the minister saying that Canada's largest energy investors are wrong?

Hon. Tim Hodgson: Mr. Chair, for the last several weeks, we have been in conversations with many of the CEOs in the energy sector, both conventional and renewables, and they are quite supportive.

Business of Supply

Billy Morin: Mr. Chair, now more than ever, working together to build major projects is critical, including with first nations. The minister has said that the government has reached out to first nations to consult on major project legislation. What indigenous peoples, coalitions or entities has the government consulted with?

Hon. Tim Hodgson: Mr. Chair, I would be happy to give the member a copy of the First Nations Major Projects Coalition press release, on the day the bill was announced, supporting the government's initiatives.

Billy Morin: Mr. Chair, legislation says rights holders are to be consulted.

Is the First Nations Major Projects Coalition a rights holder?

Hon. Tim Hodgson: Mr. Chair, we have been speaking with the Assembly of First Nations. I spoke with the chief of the Assembly of First Nations today. We also have a consultation process—

The Assistant Deputy Chair: The hon. member.

Billy Morin: Mr. Chair, is the Assembly of First Nations a rights holder?

Hon. Tim Hodgson: Mr. Chair, the First Nations Major Projects Coalition—

The Assistant Deputy Chair: The hon. member.

Billy Morin: Mr. Chair, is the Assembly of First Nations a rights holder?

Hon. Tim Hodgson: Mr. Chair, the rights holders are the first nations and indigenous governments. Those people are members of the First Nations Major Projects Coalition.

Billy Morin: Mr. Chair, there are 600-plus first nations communities in this country. How many has the minister consulted?

Hon. Tim Hodgson: Mr. Chair, over the next several days, we will be increasing the consultations. I have scheduled meetings with 180 different first nations.

Billy Morin: Mr. Chair, on behalf of first nations, I think the Liberal government has continued to show it is all about reconciliation rhetoric and not about actual change and taking first nations seriously.

What does the minister believe consensus is on a major project?

Hon. Tim Hodgson: Mr. Chair, I have worked extensively, in my private sector life, with indigenous groups to get projects built. We have done it very successfully. We will continue to do that. That is the goal—

The Assistant Deputy Chair: The hon. member.

Billy Morin: Mr. Chair, if a consortium of indigenous nations wanted to build an oil pipeline like the northern gateway, would the minister approve it?

Hon. Tim Hodgson: Mr. Chair, I am not going to talk about hypothetical projects. If a project comes forward with a proponent that is supported by first nations, we will run it through the process, and if it meets the process, it will get designated.

• (2115)

Billy Morin: Mr. Chair, will the government get one new, cross-provincial pipeline to tidewater?

Hon. Tim Hodgson: Mr. Chair, when we were in Saskatoon talking with the various premiers, we talked about many, many projects, including—

The Assistant Deputy Chair: The hon. member.

Billy Morin: Mr. Chair, yes or no?

Hon. Tim Hodgson: Mr. Chair, we are not talking about hypothetical situations. We are talking about real projects coming—

The Assistant Deputy Chair: The hon. member.

Billy Morin: Mr. Chair, how many major projects have been killed in the lost Liberal decade?

Hon. Tim Hodgson: Mr. Chair, this is a new government. I am not—

An hon. member: New?

Hon. Tim Hodgson: Mr. Chair, I happen to be new.

The Assistant Deputy Chair: Order.

The hon. member.

Billy Morin: Mr. Chair, between 2015 and 2020 alone, Canada cancelled 16 major energy projects, resulting in a \$176-billion hit to our economy.

What is the dollar amount needed to make Canada an energy superpower in the next two years?

Hon. Tim Hodgson: Mr. Chair, again, the hon. member is looking backwards. If the hon. member wants to see major projects built, we hope the Conservatives will support the one Canadian economy act and get building.

Billy Morin: Mr. Chair, I asked the member, for the next two years, what is the number of projects and the dollar amount?

Hon. Tim Hodgson: Mr. Chair, the list is an ongoing list that is getting developed. As new projects come on, they will be added to the list.

Blaine Calkins (Ponoka—Didsbury, CPC): Mr. Chair, how many crude oil pipeline projects did the Liberal government inherit from the Harper government?

Hon. Tim Hodgson (Minister of Energy and Natural Resources, Lib.): Mr. Chair, we are here to focus on moving forward, not backwards. We have an opportunity to build Canada strong. We have an opportunity to pass the one Canadian—

The Assistant Deputy Chair: The hon. member.

Blaine Calkins: Mr. Chair, how many non-nationalized projects has the Liberal government completed to date?

Business of Supply

Hon. Tim Hodgson: Mr. Chair, again, the hon. member seems to be looking backwards. We are looking forward. That is what Canadians elected us to do, to look forward and build Canada strong.

Blaine Calkins: Mr. Chair, the same people who have been in cabinet for the last 10 years are in cabinet today.

How many crude oil pipelines have been proposed to the government since 2015?

Hon. Tim Hodgson: Mr. Chair, I am confused; I think I am new.

The member keeps looking backwards. We have an opportunity to build new projects. We really hope members will get on board.

Blaine Calkins: Mr. Chair, I am not sure where the minister has been for the last 10 years. Apparently, no bankers lost their jobs.

How many of the crude oil pipeline projects that were applied for since 2015 have been completed to date?

Hon. Tim Hodgson: Mr. Chair, let me tell the hon. member where I have been. I have been at organizations that have built roads, built ports, built transmission lines and built pipelines. We will do that. That is why I am here.

Blaine Calkins: Mr. Chair, if that were the case, the minister should be able to name them. Can he name them?

Hon. Tim Hodgson: Mr. Chair, at Ontario Teachers', we own roads, we own ports, we—

An hon. member: He said pipelines. What pipelines?

The Assistant Deputy Chair: Order.

The hon. member.

Blaine Calkins: Mr. Chair, how many of these oil and gas pipelines are in the construction phase?

Hon. Tim Hodgson: Mr. Chair, again, the hon. member seems to be looking backwards. We are about looking forward. This is a new government. We are here to talk about building. We are here—

The Assistant Deputy Chair: The hon. member.

Blaine Calkins: Mr. Chair, Canada did not start on April 28. How many of these pipelines are at final investment decision phase?

Hon. Tim Hodgson: Mr. Chair, the goal of this new government is to get Canada building. The goal of this government is to get the one Canadian economy act done. We hope—

The Assistant Deputy Chair: The hon. member.

Blaine Calkins: Mr. Chair, how many LNG export terminals did the government inherit from the Harper government in 2015?

Hon. Tim Hodgson: Mr. Chair, this government has been—

Some hon. members: Oh, oh!

The Assistant Deputy Chair: Order.

The hon. opposition leader has a point of order.

Hon. Andrew Scheer: Mr. Chair, there is a lot of noise over there on the Liberal benches, and it is kind of hard to listen to the exchange, so I would ask the Liberals to settle down a bit so we can—

Some hon. members: Oh, oh!

The Assistant Deputy Chair: Order. There is noise coming from both sides of the chamber. I would ask hon. members to please control themselves and we will have a little order.

The hon. minister has a few seconds left to address the question.

Hon. Tim Hodgson: Mr. Chair, we are looking forward. We are very proud of the work that has been done in the LNG—

• (2120)

The Assistant Deputy Chair: The hon. member.

Blaine Calkins: Mr. Chair, how many of these LNG projects were completed without having to bypass the laws passed by the previous government, Bill C-69 and the carbon tax?

Hon. Tim Hodgson: Mr. Chair, again, we are looking forward. We have seen good development in the LNG sector, and with the one Canadian economy act, we will see even more. We are excited about it. We hope the member will join us.

Blaine Calkins: Mr. Chair, if that were the case, there are a whole bunch of projects that the previous government inherited. How soon is it until all of those projects are completed?

Hon. Tim Hodgson: Mr. Chair, we look forward to watching the ribbon-cutting for LNG Canada later this month.

Blaine Calkins: Mr. Chair, that is one, and it needed an exemption from Bill C-69, Bill C-48 and the carbon tax.

I am going to ask the minister this again. How many projects are they going to be cutting the ribbon for that did not need an exemption from the laws of the Liberal government of the last 10 years?

Hon. Tim Hodgson: Mr. Chair, again, the Conservatives are looking backwards. We are looking forward. We are trying to pass the one Canadian economy act to accelerate and speed up projects. We really hope, if they are so interested in seeing projects—

The Assistant Deputy Chair: The hon. member.

Blaine Calkins: Mr. Chair, how much did the Government of Canada spend to buy the Kinder Morgan expansion pipeline?

Hon. Tim Hodgson: Mr. Chair, I am not sure how that is relevant for moving forward. What we are focusing on is how we move forward.

Blaine Calkins: Mr. Chair, what did Kinder Morgan have budgeted to complete that project?

Hon. Tim Hodgson: Mr. Chair, we are focused on moving forward. We are focused on building new projects of national interest. We are focused on ports, roads—

The Assistant Deputy Chair: The hon. member.

Blaine Calkins: Mr. Chair, did the Government of Canada spend \$34 billion to build a pipeline that Kinder Morgan was going to build for \$9 billion?

Hon. Tim Hodgson: Mr. Chair, again, we are looking backwards. We are trying to look forward. The one Canadian economy act would accelerate the development of projects of national interest. If the Conservatives want—

The Assistant Deputy Chair: The hon. member, for the final question.

Blaine Calkins: Mr. Chair, does the minister think there is a business case for LNG exports to Japan, Germany, Poland and Greece?

Hon. Tim Hodgson: Mr. Chair, there are very good opportunities for LNG. Canadian LNG is the best in the world.

Some hon. members: Oh, oh!

The Assistant Deputy Chair: Order. There has been a lot of back-and-forth. I will ask members to try to keep the back-and-forth to a minimum if they do not have the floor.

Resuming debate, the hon. Parliamentary Secretary to the Minister of Energy and Natural Resources.

Corey Hogan (Parliamentary Secretary to the Minister of Energy and Natural Resources, Lib.): Mr. Chair, when we talk about wildfires in this House, we are not talking about distant headlines in some far off place, we are not speaking in hypotheticals and we are not debating future possibilities. We are talking about the lived, tangible experiences tragically experienced by Canadians across this great country over the last several years. Canadians have woken up to orange skies and smoky air thousands of kilometres from the nearest fire. Canadians have had to flee their homes, neighbourhoods and communities. Canadians have risked their lives as first responders to extinguish flames.

We are talking about children in my home province of Alberta who cannot play outside because the air is orange, including my own. We are talking about entire towns in northern Ontario, Saskatchewan and Manitoba that have had to evacuate with just minutes to spare, homes left behind, schools closed, family pets crated in back seats and highways jammed with uncertainty. We are talking about flames sweeping across forests and grasslands from Jasper to Gaspé, consuming not just trees and brush but also memories, livelihoods and entire communities.

Just two years ago, wildfires shattered every known Canadian record. Fifteen million hectares of land burned, an area larger than England and roughly the size of Tunisia. Over 230,000 Canadians were forced from their homes. Nearly 11,000 domestic and international firefighters were deployed, and eight Canadian firefighters tragically lost their lives. Annual national costs for fighting those fires totalled over \$1 billion, which represents a 60% increase to the annual average from 1980 to 2009.

Business of Supply

Just last year, in my home province of Alberta, the Jasper wildfire burned approximately 32,700 hectares, making it the largest blaze in the park in over a century. It devastated about one-third of the town's structures, tragically killed one firefighter and forced a mass evacuation of 25,000 residents. Now, in 2025, earlier than expected and in regions we once thought immune, it is beginning again.

Canada is facing two interconnected crises, twin challenges that strike at the heart of our communities and identity. The first is the climate crisis. A warming planet is no longer just a projection and a report; it is our lived reality. Our fire seasons now start sooner and end later. They burn hotter, move faster and stretch deeper into once-untouched regions. What were once once-in-a-century fires are now annual events. What was once predictable is now erratic.

The second is a crisis of sovereignty, where global volatility, unjustified trade actions and fragile supply chains test our ability to remain self-reliant and strong. When wildfires shut down transportation corridors, we all feel it. When pulp and paper mills close because forests are scorched or inaccessible, towns lose both jobs and community. When foreign tariffs hit our resource exports, it weakens not just industry but our national independence. We cannot afford to treat these as separate problems. We must face both, together and head-on.

That is why the 2025-26 main estimates are not just an administrative exercise. They are not just columns on a spreadsheet. They are a blueprint for resilience, a statement of values and a declaration of action. They represent the government's resolve to protect Canadians, not just from the fires of today but from the risks of tomorrow. Through these estimates, we are investing where it counts: in people, in preparedness and in prevention.

We are supporting the brave firefighters who suit up when everyone else is running the other way by funding modern gear and expanding training. We are empowering indigenous fire stewardship, recognizing that traditional knowledge and land-based practices are not just cultural heritage but critical science. We are investing in data, early warning systems, predictive modelling and real-time mapping, because when seconds count, so does every bite of information. We are also supporting communities before fire ever strikes, with education, FireSmart retrofits and land-management strategies to stop sparks from becoming infernos.

Business of Supply

These are not abstract commitments. They are line items in this year's estimates: \$52.53 million for the wildfire resilient futures initiative, funding proactive strategies to manage risk and build national preparedness; \$81.65 million for fighting and managing wildfires in a changing climate, training frontline firefighters in partnerships with provinces and indigenous governments; \$1 million for the Canadian Interagency Forest Fire Centre, coordinating vital information and equipment sharing between jurisdictions; \$2 million for wildland fire resilience, focusing on building community and landscape resilience to wildfires with prevention, mitigation and preparedness efforts; and \$10.5 million for the spruce budworm early intervention strategy, addressing pest outbreaks, more likely because of climate change, that turn forests into tinderboxes, particularly in Quebec and the Atlantic.

• (2125)

Together, these investments total over \$147 million, but their value cannot be measured by dollars alone. They are a recognition that resilience must be built before disaster strikes and that the price of inaction is far greater than the cost of preparation.

I want to speak for a moment not just about programs and policy, but about people: about the firefighter in British Columbia who worked 28 straight days sleeping in a tent and eating from ration packs to keep the fire line from breaching a town; about the indigenous elder in northern Quebec who taught community members how controlled burns used to protect their land and how they can again; about the Red Cross volunteers who set up cots, sorted blankets and offered hugs to evacuees; and about the business owner in Manitoba who, without being asked, kept their café open to feed weary fire crews and displaced neighbours. This is who Canadians are, and if they show up time and again, then so can we, as a government, as parliamentarians and as a country.

Let us also be honest about the stakes. In 2024, insured losses from extreme weather events in Canada reached an all-time high of \$8.5 billion. That is not just infrastructure. That is homes, memories and generational wealth. Natural Resources Canada projects that if we do not adapt, wildfire suppression costs could double by 2040, surpassing \$2 billion annually.

While we face fires at home, our global competitiveness is being tested. Canada's forestry sector, a cornerstone of many rural and indigenous economies, continues to be targeted by unjustified American tariffs. We are not only fighting fires; we are fighting for our place in the world, for our workers, for our industry and for our sovereignty.

That is why these estimates also support Canada's long-term strength. We are creating new careers in emergency response, fire science, forestry and clean energy. We are coordinating across provincial and territorial borders so that when one jurisdiction needs help, others can answer. We are centring reconciliation, funding indigenous-led stewardship and governance that reflect deep-rooted wisdom and shared leadership. We are also investing in infrastructure to rebuild with resilience and modernize how goods, people and ideas move across this country. This is what 21st-century sovereignty looks like: not just military strength or economic might, but the ability to protect land, people and our future.

I do not rise today just as a parliamentary secretary. I rise as someone who represents communities that have seen the sky turn grey at noon. I rise as an Albertan whose province knows intimately the ties between the forests and our future. I rise as a Canadian who believes deeply in this country's ability to lead, not in spite of our challenges, but because of them.

I will close with this. We cannot change the winds, but we can adjust our sails, and that is what this government is doing. We are steering toward a more resilient Canada, a safer Canada and a stronger Canada. Let us move forward not as individuals or parties, but as one country united in purpose and ready to meet these twin crises with clarity, compassion and courage.

I urge all members to vote in favour of the 2025-26 main estimates so we can fight wildfires, fight climate change and protect the sovereignty of this great nation we all serve.

I would like to ask the minister about wildfires. This season's wildfires have already been devastating, and it is only June. This is the third year in a row that the severity and intensity of wildfires are clear. There is no doubt the frequency and intensity of these fires are a result of climate change. We need to urgently fight climate change to protect the Canadian way of life, but we must also protect ourselves from the impacts that are already being felt.

Will the minister tell this House about what is included in the main estimates that would help Canada fight wildfires? What will the minister do moving forward to protect Canadians?

• (2130)

Hon. Tim Hodgson (Minister of Energy and Natural Resources, Lib.): Mr. Chair, the wildfires are a difficult situation today. We are going to give an update tomorrow. It is a very challenging situation. My thoughts are with all those impacted by wildfires.

We will be there for Canadians. We have deployed the armed forces where the provinces have asked for them. We need to support our fellow Canadians.

We have two threats right now to our way of life. We have climate change and we have American tariffs. We have to fight both. We have to fund both. This government is committing \$1 billion in the estimates to the purchase of wildfire-fighting equipment and the training of wildfire fighters. That is what we are doing in the main estimates.

Corey Hogan: Mr. Chair, the increasing severity of wildfires has not just destroyed communities, but also impacted supply chains, Canadian industries and our forestry sector. Many communities across Canada, including communities in my home province of Alberta, rely on our forests to make a living and to feed their families. These wildfires have taken away these economic opportunities that generations of Canadians have relied upon. They have put a strain on our important forestry sector at the worst time possible.

Simultaneously, Canada's softwood lumber industry is under attack from the United States' unjustified and unacceptable tariffs. This industry has been put under siege from American economic policies for years, and it is ramping up significantly under the current President of the United States.

Can the minister share with Canadians who are worried about the future of our forest industry what is included in these estimates and how we can help them move forward?

Hon. Tim Hodgson: Mr. Chair, the situation for our forest products industry is indeed challenging. As I have said in many of my comments, it is the canary in the coal mine. The forest products industry is currently on its fifth version of trade wars with the United States. We have contested this in adjudication, and we have won four times. They just keep coming back.

We will support the forest products industry, but this is what Donald Trump is doing systematically across all of the economy today. We will provide, in these estimates, \$1 billion of support for the forest products industry in terms of innovation, data collection, wildfire fighting and pest control.

Corey Hogan: Mr. Chair, Canada has been the closest friend and ally of the United States for over 100 years. This relationship has delivered unmatched prosperity on both sides of the border and strengthened people-to-people ties as much as it has our economies. Unfortunately, this old relationship we once had with the United States is over. It has launched an unjustified and devastating trade war against us, targeting its closest friend first by imposing tariffs on almost all of Canada's economy. Canadians are feeling the impact of these tariffs already, with many of our industries, communities and livelihoods under threat. We today find ourselves in a more uncertain and dangerous world. We cannot rely on the United States for our defence or our economic security any longer. This requires Canada to build now, to protect our economy and our sovereignty.

Can the minister tell this chamber how Canada will build the strongest economy in the G7?

• (2135)

Hon. Tim Hodgson: Mr. Chair, by passing the one Canadian economy act, we will build projects of major significance. We will support industries like the forest products industry. We will help them retool. We will provide them the liquidity support they need to deal with these unjustified tariffs.

Business of Supply

Since 2017, over \$10 billion of duties have been collected against the forest products industry, an unjust and inappropriate duty that is inconsistent with the current free trade agreement. We will continue to support the forest products industry and help it through this unjust and unfair trade war.

Corey Hogan: Mr. Chair, I wonder if the minister would be able to inform the House of other ways that the supplementary estimates support the forestry industry and the people of the west in particular.

Hon. Tim Hodgson: Mr. Chair, one of the things we are doing is funding first nations communities that are interested in increasing their ownership in the forest products industry. We have seen first nations ownership in the industry increase meaningfully over the last several years, and we will continue to support that opportunity.

John Barlow (Foothills, CPC): Mr. Chair, I will be splitting my time three ways.

Through you, does the minister know what Bill C-50 is?

Hon. Tim Hodgson (Minister of Energy and Natural Resources, Lib.): Mr. Chair, Bill C-50 is the Canadian Sustainable Jobs Act.

John Barlow: Mr. Chair, how many energy jobs will be lost as a result of the just transition?

Hon. Tim Hodgson: Mr. Chair, the Sustainable Jobs Act will create good-paying Canadian jobs, not kill them. Workers in the—

The Assistant Deputy Chair: The hon. member.

John Barlow: Mr. Chair, how many jobs in agriculture will be lost as a result of the just transition?

Hon. Tim Hodgson: Mr. Chair, the Sustainable Jobs Act will create good-paying Canadian jobs, not kill them.

John Barlow: Mr. Chair, how many jobs in the construction industry will be lost as a result of the just transition?

Hon. Tim Hodgson: Mr. Chair, the assertion the member is making is incorrect. The sustainable jobs program—

The Assistant Deputy Chair: The hon. member.

Business of Supply

John Barlow: Mr. Chair, that is interesting, because according to a memo from his own department, the minister has said that the just transition will cost 200,000 jobs in energy, 290,000 jobs in agriculture and 1.4 million construction jobs. That is from his own ministry. That is 2.7 million jobs in Canada that will be lost to the just transition.

Does the minister support a bill that is threatening 13.5% of Canada's workforce?

Hon. Tim Hodgson: Mr. Chair, what this government is doing is focusing on getting this economy going again and retooling it and rebuilding it. We are focused on getting the one Canadian economy act. When we build these projects of national interest, it will put hundreds of thousands of Canadians to work. Good jobs, good pay—

The Assistant Deputy Chair: The hon. member.

John Barlow: Mr. Chair, will the minister repeal Bill C-50, knowing it will cost 2.7 million jobs?

Hon. Tim Hodgson: Mr. Chair, what this government will do is pass the one Canadian economy act, which would grow our economy, create jobs—

The Assistant Deputy Chair: The hon. member.

John Barlow: Mr. Chair, some of our most important allies came to Canada to sign LNG agreements, but the Liberal government said no.

Can the minister tell me who Germany signed an LNG agreement with?

Hon. Tim Hodgson: Mr. Chair, this is a new government with a new plan. We are proposing that we work on the one Canadian economy act—

The Assistant Deputy Chair: We have a point of order.

The hon. member for Oakville West.

Sima Acan: Mr. Chair, I cannot hear what the minister is saying. If there is a question on the floor, I would like to hear the answer.

An hon. member: Use the earpiece.

The Assistant Deputy Chair: Order. We will have a little order.

The minister has a couple of seconds.

Hon. Tim Hodgson: I have a hearing issue, so if you would like to pick on my ear, please go ahead.

Mr. Chair, I have forgotten the question.

• (2140)

John Barlow: Mr. Chair, I can answer for him: Qatar.

Who did Japan sign an LNG agreement with?

Hon. Tim Hodgson: Mr. Chair, this government is focused on passing the one Canadian economy act. That will help us grow our LNG.

John Barlow: Mr. Chair, the answer is Japan, if the minister cannot answer those questions. What would have been the revenue to the Canadian federal government had it signed those LNG agreements with Germany, Japan, Greece and Poland?

Hon. Tim Hodgson: Mr. Chair, this government is focused on moving forward, not backward. This new government is proposing, with the support of all the premiers, to pass the one Canadian economy act. That will have us—

The Assistant Deputy Chair: The hon. member.

John Barlow: Mr. Chair, what would have been the revenue to the federal government had the Trudeau Liberals signed those LNG agreements with our most trusted allies: Germany, Japan, Poland and Greece?

Hon. Tim Hodgson: Mr. Chair, the member seems to be implying that by coming up with these sorts of numbers, it affects our ability to get projects done. I would like to let the member know I have built major projects throughout my career.

John Barlow: Mr. Chair, the LNG agreement between Japan and the United States is 5.5 million cubic feet of LNG every single year.

What is the value of that, in Canadian dollars, had Canada had that agreement?

Hon. Tim Hodgson: Mr. Chair, I believe yesterday the value of natural gas closed on AECO-C at \$1.01. Obviously, that is not how these projects work. They have long-term contracts and are set with suppliers, but we are focused on—

The Assistant Deputy Chair: The hon. member.

John Barlow: Mr. Chair, Japan has signed a long-term agreement for LNG with the United States, our number one competitor.

What would the value of that have been to Canadian taxpayers and revenue to the federal government had that agreement been signed with Canada?

Hon. Tim Hodgson: Mr. Chair, he can do the math if he wants to tell me the amount of product that is sold in the long-term contract; we can figure that out. We are not focused on going back—

The Assistant Deputy Chair: The hon. member, final question.

John Barlow: Mr. Chair, he should be focused on this. This is lost jobs and revenue for Canadians because of the government's ideological position on Canadian LNG.

Does the minister believe that to reach consensus, any province, territory or group has a veto on a national infrastructure project?

Hon. Tim Hodgson: Mr. Chair, what we believe is that the Prime Minister and the premiers got together in Saskatoon with a shared vision. What the Prime Minister has said is that consensus is better than not having consensus. We will pass the one Canadian economy act. We will get consensus—

The Assistant Deputy Chair: Resuming debate.

The hon. member for Kenora—Kiiwetinoong.

Business of Supply

Eric Melillo (Kenora—Kiiwetinoong, CPC): Mr. Chair, mining is critical to our economic independence, yet the Liberals have continually put up roadblocks to development every step of the way.

How long does it take to approve a mine in Canada today?

Hon. Tim Hodgson (Minister of Energy and Natural Resources, Lib.): Mr. Chair, under the one Canadian economy act, the intention is that all the federal permits would be delivered within two years or less.

Eric Melillo: Mr. Chair, how long does it take to approve a mine in Canada today?

Hon. Tim Hodgson: Mr. Chair, today, it takes far too long; I think we have all admitted that. What the one Canadian economy act would do is speed things up dramatically. If that is what the members want, they should support us in—

The Assistant Deputy Chair: The hon. member has the floor.

Eric Melillo: Mr. Chair, the Mining Association of Canada states that it takes up to 15 years for a mine to be approved in Canada today. The minister says that this is too long. I agree.

There are 42 projects awaiting approval through the current impact assessment process. Why not start with approving those projects?

Hon. Tim Hodgson: Mr. Chair, over the last several weeks, I have been meeting with many of the CEOs of the largest mining companies in Canada. They are very supportive of the one Canadian economy act. They think it is how we will move forward. If the hon. member would like to see things move forward, he should support us in passing the bill.

Eric Melillo: Mr. Chair, the northern road link that has been proposed by Marten Falls First Nation and Webequie First Nation has been under assessment for two years. As I mentioned, during the lost Liberal decade projects have been stalled through the impact assessment process.

On what date will the northern road link project be approved?

• (2145)

Hon. Tim Hodgson: Mr. Chair, if they help us get the one Canadian economy act—

Some hon. members: Oh, oh!

Hon. Tim Hodgson: Mr. Chair, we are working with local provincial governments. The goal is to have one project, one review, and all reviews would be done within two years or less—

Some hon. members: Oh, oh!

The Assistant Deputy Chair: Order.

The hon. member has the floor.

Eric Melillo: Mr. Chair, the Crawford nickel project is located north of Timmins. It has been under assessment for three years. On what date will that project be approved?

Hon. Tim Hodgson: Mr. Chair, as soon as we get the one Canadian economy act done and the agreements negotiated with the Province of Ontario, we will get them done as quickly as possible.

Eric Melillo: Mr. Chair, the gold project northeast of Red Lake has been under assessment for seven years. On what date will that project be approved?

Hon. Tim Hodgson: Mr. Chair, this history lesson is wonderful, but what we are focused on is moving forward. If we move forward by passing the one Canadian economy act, we will get things done in two years or less.

Eric Melillo: Mr. Chair, the minister is embarrassed about the history of the Liberal government, which has been in power for the last 10 years. It has created economic uncertainty and investment uncertainty for major projects across the country.

Does the minister agree that the current impact assessment process is unnecessarily delaying the approval process for major resource projects?

Hon. Tim Hodgson: Mr. Chair, the new Prime Minister has been clear: The current process takes far too long. That is why we are proposing the one Canadian economy act to speed things up. We have committed to getting approvals done within two years or less.

Eric Melillo: Mr. Chair, does the minister realize that the Liberal government has been in power for the last 10 years?

Hon. Tim Hodgson: Mr. Chair, what I understand is that there is a new Prime Minister, and the Conservatives' leader does not seem to be here anymore.

Eric Melillo: Mr. Chair, the minister has previously said that there is no investment certainty in Canada. Does he realize that it was the policies of 10 years of Liberal incompetence that led to this fact here in Canada?

Hon. Tim Hodgson: Mr. Chair, under the new Liberal government, we have committed to getting approvals done within two years. That will provide the certainty to have proponents commit capital to get projects done.

The Conservatives should be supporting the bill if that is what they are—

The Assistant Deputy Chair: The hon. member has the floor.

Eric Melillo: Mr. Chair, the minister and the government are making a lot of big promises about getting major projects built, but they are laughable after their record of 10 years.

I went through some very specific projects across northern Ontario that would support jobs, our growth and our economic independence. The government has neglected those for years.

I would like to ask a question about forestry as well. The previous Conservative government got a softwood lumber deal done in 80 days, but the Liberals have allowed the dispute to persist. What specific actions has the minister taken himself to eliminate the unjustified softwood lumber tariffs?

Business of Supply

Hon. Tim Hodgson: Mr. Chair, the member seems to be quite confused. We did not launch the trade war on the softwood lumber industry. The Americans have launched five trade wars over the last 10 years.

Some hon. members: Oh, oh!

Hon. Arielle Kayabaga: Mr. Chair, on a point of order, I am sitting right next to the minister and I am not able to hear him.

The Assistant Deputy Chair: I thank the member for the intervention. We will have order here, or else we will be taking a lot more time than we need to.

The hon. minister.

Hon. Tim Hodgson: Mr. Chair, the Americans have put five unjust trade wars against the forestry industry.

We have been working hard to do this. The Minister of Industry and—

Some hon. members: Oh, oh!

[Translation]

Natilien Joseph: Mr. Chair, I rise on a point of order.

Would my colleagues please behave like adults?

[English]

The Assistant Deputy Chair: We will move on.

The hon. member for Terra Nova—The Peninsulas.

Jonathan Rowe (Terra Nova—The Peninsulas, CPC): Mr. Chair, can the minister guess which province has the highest GDP dependence on oil and gas?

Hon. Tim Hodgson (Minister of Energy and Natural Resources, Lib.): Mr. Chair, I think he is suggesting that it is Newfoundland and Labrador.

Jonathan Rowe: Mr. Chair, yes, it is second to Alberta.

Does the minister know the annual royalties of Newfoundland offshore oil and gas?

• (2150)

Hon. Tim Hodgson: Mr. Chair, they are in the main estimates. It is a pass-through. It changes each year based on the value. I can get the number for this past year—

The Assistant Deputy Chair: The hon. member.

Jonathan Rowe: Mr. Chair, it is roughly \$1.5 billion each year or 15% of our budget.

Does the minister know how many oil rigs are in offshore Newfoundland?

Hon. Tim Hodgson: Mr. Chair, I am not interested in the past. I am interested in the future. When we get this bill passed, we will have more rigs working in the offshore and we will make Newfoundland—

The Assistant Deputy Chair: The hon. member.

Jonathan Rowe: Mr. Chair, I am glad they are looking at the future, and so am I.

Does the minister know how many jobs are created when an oil rig is built in Newfoundland?

Hon. Tim Hodgson: Mr. Chair, I assume that depends on the size of the rig. I have worked in the oil and gas industry. Every rig is different. This is a silly question.

Jonathan Rowe: Mr. Chair, there should be over 5,000 jobs per oil rig, sometimes up to 7,500, depending on how big it is. Will this—

Some hon. members: Oh, oh!

The Assistant Deputy Chair: Order on both sides.

The hon. member.

Jonathan Rowe: Mr. Chair, why did the government allow the top sides of the West White Rose extension project to be built in the U.S.A. rather than in Newfoundland, more specifically the Burin Peninsula and the Bull Arm fabrication site?

Hon. Tim Hodgson: Mr. Chair, this government has been very clear. It will work hard under our one Canadian economy act to bring more jobs to Canadian steel and Canadian aluminum. That is the intention of this government.

Jonathan Rowe: Mr. Chair, I am glad to hear that.

Will the minister commit that the next offshore project will be constructed in Newfoundland?

Hon. Tim Hodgson: Mr. Chair, the member seems to be confused. Governments do not build offshore projects; private sector proponents do. When we pass the one Canadian economy act, we will facilitate the private sector to—

The Assistant Deputy Chair: The hon. member.

Jonathan Rowe: Mr. Chair, I do not expect many jobs. Is it true that there were no bids placed on offshore exploration in over two years?

Hon. Tim Hodgson: Mr. Chair, I do not know the answer to that question.

Jonathan Rowe: Mr. Chair, is it true that there were numerous companies considering exploration, but once Bill C-49 was tabled, they pulled up their anchors and pulled out?

Hon. Tim Hodgson: Mr. Chair, what is true is that when we pass the one Canadian economy act, we will bring certainty back to this process, and we will make it possible for more drilling to happen in the offshore of Newfoundland and Labrador.

Jonathan Rowe: Mr. Chair, how does the minister plan to entice investors when even the Liberal government of Newfoundland has major concerns with sections 19, 61 and 62, which triple the timeline and add the Impact Assessment Act to an already lengthy review?

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Hon. Tim Hodgson: Mr. Chair, in Saskatoon, I was with the Premier of Newfoundland and Labrador, and they were quite supportive of the one Canadian economy act.

Jonathan Rowe: Mr. Chair, how does the minister plan to attract these long-term investments, with a 25-year cap on licenses in Bill C-49?

Hon. Tim Hodgson: Mr. Chair, projects of national interest will go through the one Canadian economy act. If they are in the national interest, they will get approved. We will build.

Jonathan Rowe: Mr. Chair, my hon. colleague on the other side mentioned the future. Is it true that by 2050, 50% of our offshore will be a marine protected area?

Hon. Tim Hodgson: Mr. Chair, I cannot predict what the future offshore protected area will be, so I cannot answer that question.

Jonathan Rowe: Mr. Chair, it has been announced that by 2030, it will be 30%, with expectations by 2050 of 50%. Is it true that if an area is becoming a marine protected area, even in the future, the federal government has the power to terminate the lease?

Hon. Tim Hodgson: Mr. Chair, the discussion around marine protected areas, I assume, happened two days ago at the discussion with the Minister of Environment. That question should have been asked there.

Jonathan Rowe: Mr. Chair, I think the hon. minister should refer to clause 28 of that which does make reference to the 2050 powers. I think this is a very powerful veto card and that the government does not foresee this sort of power will risk politicians—

The Assistant Deputy Chair: I need to give the minister a brief opportunity to respond.

Hon. Tim Hodgson: Mr. Chair, under the one Canadian economy act, we would get major projects built. We are interested in making Canada a conventional and renewable energy—

• (2155)

The Assistant Deputy Chair: The hon. member for Saanich—Gulf Islands has the floor.

Elizabeth May (Saanich—Gulf Islands, GP): Mr. Chair, I will be sharing my time with the hon. member for Winnipeg Centre.

I want to start with my questions to the Minister of Housing, and welcome him, a fellow British Columbian member of Parliament, to the House of Commons. I want to ask him whether he is aware of the work of Dr. Carolyn Whitzman, who found that CMHC has six different definitions of affordable housing, and whether he would not agree that it would be good to confirm and unify one definition of affordable housing.

Hon. Gregor Robertson (Minister of Housing and Infrastructure and Minister responsible for Pacific Economic Development Canada, Lib.): Mr. Chair, I think Canadians generally agree on the definition of affordable housing as being less than 30% of one's income, but there are certainly more specific affordability targets built into various programs that CMHC and the department have that are very focused on what those programs can deliver.

Elizabeth May: Mr. Chair, we could commit to ensuring not what Canadians generally agree on but what the department and CMHC will stick to as the unified definition: that affordability and deeply affordable housing is 30% of before-tax household income.

Hon. Gregor Robertson: Mr. Chair, it is really about the cost of housing, the household operations, relative to household income. That does change depending on the projects and the programs. That is why there are some different definitions depending on the projects or the programs.

Elizabeth May: Mr. Chair, I have questions for the Minister of Natural Resources. I do not want to appear rude, but I have been hearing what the minister has been saying. I need to ask him whether he has read the one Canadian economy act.

Hon. Tim Hodgson (Minister of Energy and Natural Resources, Lib.): Mr. Chair, yes, I have.

Elizabeth May: Mr. Chair, I am asking because I took notes of the minister's saying, "politicians do not pick the projects."

Hon. Tim Hodgson: Mr. Chair, for a project to get through, one of the criteria is this: "have a high likelihood of successful execution". To have a high likelihood of successful execution, we need a private sector proponent to put up the money. Those private sector proponents will ultimately be the deciders of—

The Assistant Deputy Chair: The hon. member has the floor.

Elizabeth May: Mr. Chair, is the minister aware that none of what he just said would have any force in law under Bill C-5?

Hon. Tim Hodgson: Mr. Chair, if there are no proponents for projects, the projects will not come forward; that is the fundamental basis on which the legislation works.

Elizabeth May: Mr. Chair, on the fundamental basis on which the legislation works, I refer the minister to clause 5 of the act, which shows that the decision-maker is the cabinet, and the cabinet is made up of politicians. Does he not agree?

Hon. Tim Hodgson: Mr. Chair, assuming proponents bring projects forward, they will go to the designated minister, as the member says. They will use the criteria that was agreed by the Prime Minister—

The Assistant Deputy Chair: The hon. member.

Elizabeth May: Mr. Chair, the minister refers repeatedly to the criteria as if they have some force in law. Does he not understand his own act, in that there could be no reference to any of those factors and still follow the law?

Hon. Tim Hodgson: Mr. Chair, what I understand is that the projects that come forward for consideration will be supported by provinces, indigenous peoples and private sector proponents. That is how they will get to consideration of the major projects office.

Elizabeth May: Mr. Chair, none of what he has just said is actually what Bill C-5 says. There is no requirement for consensus, nor is there any legal requirement that any of the factors that are listed are actually considered by cabinet.

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• (2200)

Hon. Tim Hodgson: Mr. Chair, I have read the bill. These are the factors that the government will use. I am sorry, I disagree with the interpretation of the hon. member.

Elizabeth May: Mr. Chair, it is very clear in the proposed act, and I refer the minister to the language of the act, which is, “Governor in Council may consider any factor that the Governor in Council considers relevant”.

Does the minister understand the legal meaning of the word “may”?

Hon. Tim Hodgson: Mr. Chair, the member will have an opportunity to debate the bill in the House. I am here to discuss the main estimates.

Elizabeth May: Mr. Chair, the minister should understand his own legislation. Most of what has been said in the media about this bill, most of what the minister has said, constitutes unenforceable promises and press releases.

Hon. Tim Hodgson: Mr. Chair, the member should raise her questions in the House directly to the Minister of Intergovernmental Affairs.

Elizabeth May: Mr. Chair, the minister has mentioned in the media nuclear projects. The only time in the history of this country that a debate was scheduled to discuss nuclear energy, its pluses and minuses, was under the former minister of energy, Ray Hnatyshyn, in the government of Joe Clark.

Would the minister care to commit to having an open debate on nuclear energy in the House of Commons?

Hon. Tim Hodgson: Mr. Chair, this government supports the development of the nuclear energy industry in this country. It is clean energy. It will help us deliver on being an energy superpower. That is what we are committed to doing, and that is why we are passing the one Canadian economy act.

Elizabeth May: Mr. Chair, is the minister aware that the former SNC-Lavalin, now AtkinsRéalis, is behind the small modular reactor projects?

Hon. Tim Hodgson: Mr. Chair, I do not think that is actually correct. I believe OPG is using a Hitachi technology.

Leah Gazan (Winnipeg Centre, NDP): Mr. Chair, to the Minister of Resources, has Bill C-5 been subjected to a charter challenge test, as required by the Department of Justice Act, section 4.2?

Hon. Tim Hodgson (Minister of Energy and Natural Resources, Lib.): Mr. Chair, that will be debated in the House, and the hon. member will have an opportunity to debate that in the House.

Leah Gazan: Mr. Chair, yes or no?

Hon. Tim Hodgson: Mr. Chair, she can ask that question in the House.

Leah Gazan: Mr. Chair, is the minister aware that Bill C-5 violates section 35 of the Constitution Act 1982, yes or no?

Hon. Tim Hodgson: Mr. Chair, the member will have an opportunity to debate that in the House.

Leah Gazan: Mr. Chair, through numerous Supreme Court of Canada decisions, the court has determined a constitutional obligation

to consult and accommodate indigenous peoples, including the obligation to obtain full consent. Is the minister aware that Bill C-5 fails to uphold that constitutional obligation, yes or no?

Hon. Tim Hodgson: Mr. Chair, indigenous consultation is at the centre of the one Canadian economy bill. Our government will always respect indigenous rights and engage in robust consultations. The fourth criteria of the one Canadian economy bill is “advance the interests of Indigenous peoples”.

Leah Gazan: Mr. Chair, why is FPIC, free, prior and informed consent, left out of Bill C-5?

Hon. Tim Hodgson: Mr. Chair, the bill recognizes the charter rights of first nations. The bill talks about having an indigenous leaders group with feedback for the major projects office—

The Assistant Deputy Chair: The hon. member.

Leah Gazan: Mr. Chair, how will the government uphold its commitment to fight the climate crisis in Bill C-5 when a minister in cabinet can override legislative assessment processes, including the environmental protections contained in the Impact Assessment Act?

Hon. Tim Hodgson: Mr. Chair, today Canada faces two very real threats to our way of life: climate change and the American tariffs. We have to fight both head-on. That is why we will continue to reduce emissions across our economy and build energy—

The Assistant Deputy Chair: The hon. member.

Leah Gazan: Mr. Chair, the minister seems to be having difficulty answering any of my questions, although he seemed to be able to answer questions when he felt like it.

Is the Minister of Natural Resources aware of the risk of increased violence against indigenous women and girls that will result from fast-tracking extraction and oil and gas projects without putting in place safety plans for communities hosting companies, which is something the national inquiry noted in its calls for justice?

• (2205)

Hon. Tim Hodgson: Mr. Chair, we are here to talk about the main estimates. I am not sure how that is relevant. What I would like to point out is that the First Nations Major Projects Coalition put out a press release the day that—

The Assistant Deputy Chair: The hon. member.

Leah Gazan: Mr. Chair, is the minister aware of the House of Commons Standing Committee on the Status of Women report titled “Responding to the Calls for Justice: Addressing Violence Against Indigenous Women and Girls in the Context of Resource Development Projects”, yes or no?

Hon. Tim Hodgson: Mr. Chair, I am aware that it exists, and I will certainly look at it after this meeting.

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Leah Gazan: Mr. Chair, is the minister aware that this report and the National Inquiry into Missing and Murdered Indigenous Women and Girls called on the government to hold resource extraction companies accountable for violence against indigenous women and girls occurring around resource extraction projects or in “man camps”, temporary villages that are set up to house workers?

Hon. Tim Hodgson: Mr. Chair, as I said before, indigenous consultation is at the centre of the one Canadian economy bill. We are committed to indigenous consultation and to working on economic reconciliation with all first nations.

Leah Gazan: Mr. Chair, the minister seems to be totally absent and not to understand the issue of gender-based violence. He has not taken any of those factors into account.

Moving forward, would Bill C-5 put in place measures to hold resource companies accountable in cases where workers perpetrate violence against indigenous women and girls, or is that still off his radar?

Hon. Tim Hodgson: Mr. Chair, that seems like an issue around law enforcement, which is a very important issue, but it is not part of the main estimates.

Leah Gazan: Mr. Chair, the minister has been very clear that safety for communities where resource extraction occurs is a non-issue.

Is the minister aware that modern land claim agreements provide for environmental assessment and review procedures that require direct indigenous involvement and participation, yes or no?

Hon. Tim Hodgson: Mr. Chair, as I said, indigenous consultation is at the centre of the one Canadian economy act. We will be consulting with first nations. We take our duties to first nations extremely seriously.

Leah Gazan: Mr. Chair, is the minister aware that Bill C-5 would usurp the authority of modern land claim agreements and legally transfer that authority to ministers in cabinet, without the consent of indigenous signatories?

Hon. Tim Hodgson: Mr. Chair, I disagree with that assertion. The member will have an opportunity to debate that in the House of Commons.

Leah Gazan: Mr. Chair, the James Bay and Northern Quebec Agreement provides for multiple environmental assessments and review processes. Has the minister received consent from the Grand Council of the Crees and Cree Nation Government in the creation of the bill, yes or no?

Hon. Tim Hodgson: Mr. Chair, the bill creates the framework; actual projects get consent.

Our government is committed to building projects in an environmentally responsible way in consultation with indigenous peoples—

The Assistant Deputy Chair: The hon. member.

Leah Gazan: Mr. Chair, any sort of shift within the Constitution, which the bill does, requires consent.

Moving on, does the minister agree that the government must uphold its constitutional obligations set out in treaties, yes or no?

Hon. Tim Hodgson: Mr. Chair, yes, we do.

Leah Gazan: Mr. Chair, does the minister agree that infringing upon constitutional obligations will result in projects ending up in court rather than resulting in the creation of jobs, yes or no?

Hon. Tim Hodgson: Mr. Chair, I disagree with the assertion the member is making. The consultation process that we are laying out will lead to the quicker approval of projects, projects that get done on time and on budget—

The Assistant Deputy Chair: The hon. member.

Leah Gazan: Mr. Chair, the minister clearly does not understand the concept of free, prior and informed consent, meaning that the consultation has to occur prior to decisions being made, including in the development of a bill.

Moving forward, does the minister agree that the ability of the minister and cabinet to throw out the Impact Assessment Act procedure is overreaching at a time when we are seeing an increase in extreme weather events, yes or no?

• (2210)

Hon. Tim Hodgson: Mr. Chair, I will read the fifth criteria for the hon. member: “Contribute to clean growth and to Canada’s objectives with respect to climate change.”

We will honour our obligations with respect to climate change.

Todd Doherty (Cariboo—Prince George, CPC): Mr. Chair, what is consensus?

Hon. Tim Hodgson (Minister of Energy and Natural Resources, Lib.): Mr. Chair, in Saskatoon, the Prime Minister and the premiers all agreed that these would be the five criteria we use.

Todd Doherty: Mr. Chair, Premier Eby said that there would be no new pipelines through B.C. Does the minister agree with this, yes or no?

Hon. Tim Hodgson: Mr. Chair, at the first nations meeting 10 days ago, there was consensus to advance projects of national interest. Our government will work with the premiers, indigenous peoples and the private sector to get projects—

The Assistant Deputy Chair: The hon. member.

Todd Doherty: Mr. Chair, can any premier veto any project on a whim?

Hon. Tim Hodgson: Mr. Chair, as I said, we are working with these five criteria. The premiers have all agreed that these are the criteria that will be used. When actual projects come up, we will—

The Assistant Deputy Chair: The hon. member.

Todd Doherty: Mr. Chair, can any premier veto any project on a whim?

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Hon. Tim Hodgson: Mr. Chair, what we are here to do is get Canada building again. What I see over there is an attempt to divide, an attempt to obstruct. If we want to get things—

The Assistant Deputy Chair: The hon. member.

Todd Doherty: Mr. Chair, with all due respect, it is the minister's file and he should know these answers.

How many LNG projects were on the books in B.C. when the Liberals came to power in 2015?

Hon. Tim Hodgson: Mr. Chair, I am a new minister. I am here to look forward. This is a new government. It is here to look forward. We are here to pass the one Canadian economy act and build new projects of national interest, which will—

The Assistant Deputy Chair: The hon. member.

Todd Doherty: Mr. Chair, the answer is 20.

How many were completed?

Hon. Tim Hodgson: Mr. Chair, I am not sure what the assertion is. If the assertion here is that somehow I am not familiar with building major projects, I would like to tell the member that in my private sector life, we built many—

The Assistant Deputy Chair: The hon. member.

Todd Doherty: Mr. Chair, I will be splitting my time three ways.

The minister said that he has completed a number of projects, and then he backtracked and said that he was part of a number of projects. I hope he can get his answers correct.

Does the minister consider a 5% completion rate successful?

Hon. Tim Hodgson: Mr. Chair, I do not understand the question: 5% of what?

Todd Doherty: Mr. Chair, there were 20 LNG projects and only one was done.

Hon. Tim Hodgson: Mr. Chair, again, the member seems to be looking backwards. This government, the new government, is focused on looking forward. That is why we are focused on the one Canadian economy act.

Todd Doherty: Mr. Chair, when was the last time Canada had a softwood lumber agreement with the U.S.?

Hon. Tim Hodgson: Mr. Chair, Canada has a free trade agreement with the United States, which the United States has consistently violated. We are on our fifth version of that violation now. Every time, we have stood up for—

The Assistant Deputy Chair: The hon. member.

Todd Doherty: Mr. Chair, that was 2015. It has been 10 years since the government has been in power and had the opportunity to secure a softwood lumber agreement, but it failed each time.

How much has the American government collected in tariffs in Canadian softwood since 2015?

Hon. Tim Hodgson: Mr. Chair, I think I answered that question about 10 questions ago.

Since 2017, it is \$10 billion.

Todd Doherty: Mr. Chair, why has the government allowed American tariffs to gut the B.C. forestry industry for 10 years?

Hon. Tim Hodgson: Mr. Chair, the assertion is absurd. The United States has declared trade wars on us. We did not ask for this trade war; it was declared on us. The government is focused on winning. Part of winning is getting the—

The Assistant Deputy Chair: The hon. member.

Todd Doherty: Mr. Chair, how many mills have closed in B.C. since the minister's party came to power in 2015?

Hon. Tim Hodgson: Mr. Chair, as a result of the unjust and unfair trade wars the United States has put on our forest process, too many mills have closed in British Columbia.

Todd Doherty: Mr. Chair, the actual number is 35. Eleven mills have closed in my riding alone.

How many job losses have there been in the forestry industry since the government came to power?

Hon. Tim Hodgson: Mr. Chair, the member seems to think I am not sensitive to the challenges in the industry. I grew up in a small logging town on the northern end of Vancouver Island. I am quite familiar with the hardships that are going on.

The government is focused on dealing with those unfair trade wars. Part of dealing with those unfair—

The Assistant Deputy Chair: The hon. member.

Todd Doherty: Mr. Chair, over 40,000 jobs have been lost. These are friends, colleagues and family members in my riding.

• (2215)

Hon. Tim Hodgson: Mr. Chair, they are my friends too.

Todd Doherty: Mr. Chair, how will the government stop the mill closures in northern B.C.?

Hon. Tim Hodgson: Mr. Chair, getting the one Canadian economy act passed will give us the ability to get projects going. We will focus on putting money to work in retooling and rebuilding our economy.

Todd Doherty: Mr. Chair, what is the value of softwood lumber exports?

Hon. Tim Hodgson: Mr. Chair, I do not have that number at my fingertips, but I can get it for the member within a couple of seconds.

Marilyn Gladu (Sarnia—Lambton—Bkejwanong, CPC): Mr. Chair, Sarnia—Lambton—Bkejwanong is home to three refineries, multiple plastics facilities and major energy infrastructure, so my questions will pertain to that.

Since the no more pipelines bill, Bill C-69, was put in place, Canada has cancelled 16 major energy projects, resulting in a \$176-billion hit to our economy. Will the minister repeal Bill C-69?

Hon. Tim Hodgson (Minister of Energy and Natural Resources, Lib.): Mr. Chair, as I said multiple times tonight, what the government will do is pass the one Canadian economy act. That will get this country building again. That will get projects built. If that is what you are interested in, we would appreciate your support in passing the bill.

The Assistant Deputy Chair: The minister must speak through the Chair.

The hon. member.

Marilyn Gladu: Mr. Chair, the one Canadian economy act allows the government to choose which projects will be exempted from Bill C-69 and the non-competitive industrial carbon tax. If the government is going to exempt some projects, why not exempt them all?

Hon. Tim Hodgson: Mr. Chair, as we have indicated, the way the bill works is that there will be five criteria. Any project that meets those five criteria will be considered.

At the same time, we are negotiating agreements with each province, so we will have one project—

The Assistant Deputy Chair: The hon. member.

Marilyn Gladu: Mr. Chair, no proponent will come forward if they do not get an exemption to Bill C-69, the uncompetitive industrial carbon tax and the emissions cap. On the emissions cap, the Parliamentary Budget Officer said that it will reduce nominal GDP by almost \$21 billion and kill almost 55,000 full-time jobs.

Will the minister repeal the emissions cap?

Hon. Tim Hodgson: Mr. Chair, what we have been doing over the last several weeks is meeting with the leaders of the energy proponents all across this country, renewables and conventional. They are telling us that they are supportive of the one Canadian economy act and would like these members to support it.

Marilyn Gladu: Mr. Chair, to reduce our dependency on the U.S., we have to export our oil. In order to do that, we have to increase production. We cannot do that because there is an emissions cap, which is really a production cap. Will the minister repeal the emissions cap?

Hon. Tim Hodgson: Mr. Chair, we are not going to negotiate in public. Our plan is to reduce Canada's emissions while building the strongest economy in the G7. This includes lowering emissions in the conventional energy sector by supporting technologies such as carbon capture and methane abatement.

Marilyn Gladu: Mr. Chair, does the minister agree with the projections of the Canada Energy Regulator that the demand for electricity will double by 2050?

Hon. Tim Hodgson: Mr. Chair, I am very familiar with those estimates, and yes, I agree.

Marilyn Gladu: Mr. Chair, Ontario Power has been given a mandate by the province to build electrical capacity in the former Lambton generating station in my riding to address the gap. Will

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the minister commit to federal support and to fast-track using the new one Canadian economy act to accelerate that project?

Hon. Tim Hodgson: Mr. Chair, assuming that our colleagues help us pass the bill, we will absolutely consider any projects that come through. We will evaluate them against the criteria. We will negotiate with the provinces for one project, one review, and we will get the projects—

The Assistant Deputy Chair: The hon. member.

Marilyn Gladu: Mr. Chair, how much money and how many people will be hired in the new major projects office?

Hon. Tim Hodgson: Mr. Chair, that is still to be determined. We need the support of our members across the aisle to get the project done and get the bill done.

Marilyn Gladu: Mr. Chair, let us talk about plastics. My riding has multiple plastics factories. The former radical environment minister tried to have plastics classified as toxic and tried to eliminate single-use plastics in food packaging, which would drive the cost of groceries even higher.

Will the minister stop the war on plastics?

Hon. Tim Hodgson: Mr. Chair, I believe the Minister of Environment was here two days ago. I think that is a question for the Minister of Environment.

Marilyn Gladu: Mr. Chair, the government got sued by plastics producers, and the courts agreed that plastics are not toxic. It is a natural resource, and there are multiple plants in my riding.

Will the minister stop the war on plastics?

• (2220)

Hon. Tim Hodgson: Mr. Chair, as I said, that is under the jurisdiction of the Minister of Environment. That question should have been asked two days ago.

Marilyn Gladu: Mr. Chair, single-use plastics are important for things like medical supplies and disaster response. Will the minister protect the use of plastics for single use?

Hon. Tim Hodgson: Mr. Chair, we are here to talk about the main estimates and how we can grow the economy with the one Canadian economy act. If the hon. member—

The Assistant Deputy Chair: The hon. member, for a very brief final question.

Marilyn Gladu: Mr. Chair, will the minister repeal Bill C-69, the emissions cap and the uncompetitive industrial carbon tax so that proponents will actually come forward to—

The Assistant Deputy Chair: The hon. minister, with a very brief response.

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Hon. Tim Hodgson: Mr. Chair, as I have said many times tonight, what this government will do is pass the one Canadian economy act. That is how we will get Canada building again.

Shannon Stubbs (Lakeland, CPC): Mr. Chair, will the Liberals repeal the industrial carbon tax?

Hon. Tim Hodgson (Minister of Energy and Natural Resources, Lib.): Mr. Chair, what we will do is pass the one Canadian economy act.

Shannon Stubbs: Mr. Chair, how many OPEC countries have a carbon tax?

Hon. Tim Hodgson: Mr. Chair, I am the Minister of Energy in Canada. I am focused on how we get Canada building again.

Shannon Stubbs: Mr. Chair, it is none.

Does the U.S. have a federal industrial carbon tax?

Hon. Tim Hodgson: Mr. Chair, I am not sure any of us are excited about the way the U.S. is running its country today.

Shannon Stubbs: Mr. Chair, does the minister agree with the Prime Minister that we are in a crisis with the U.S.?

Hon. Tim Hodgson: Mr. Chair, what the Prime Minister has said is that we are in a trade war. We did not ask for this trade war; the Americans declared it on us.

Shannon Stubbs: Mr. Chair, the U.S. does not have a federal industrial carbon tax. It is Canada's biggest customer and also biggest competitor because of the Liberals' antidevelopment laws.

How can it be possible that it would want to continue to tax Canadians when the U.S., Saudi Arabia and Iran, for example, do not have federal industrial carbon taxes?

Hon. Tim Hodgson: Mr. Chair, what the Prime Minister has said is that we need to retool and rebuild our economy. We need to create new markets for our resources. We need to create new cards. That is what the one Canadian economy act will do.

Shannon Stubbs: Mr. Chair, do the top five countries competing with Canada in mining have an industrial carbon tax?

Hon. Tim Hodgson: Mr. Chair, what we are focused on here tonight is talking about the main estimates and talking about how we get our country going again. How we do that is we approve—

The Assistant Deputy Chair: The hon. member.

Shannon Stubbs: Mr. Chair, does China have an industrial carbon tax?

Hon. Tim Hodgson: Mr. Chair, I am focused on Canada, not on China. We will let the Chinese decide how they want to—

The Assistant Deputy Chair: The hon. member.

Shannon Stubbs: Mr. Chair, does Brazil?

Hon. Tim Hodgson: Mr. Chair, again, I am focused on getting Canada building. I am focused on the one Canadian economy act.

Shannon Stubbs: Mr. Chair, does Russia?

Hon. Tim Hodgson: Mr. Chair, this is a great exercise. My answer will remain the same. I am focused on getting Canada going again.

Shannon Stubbs: Mr. Chair, how on earth can the minister say that he is focused on getting Canada going again, and getting com-

panies and workers building our country, when he wants to maintain an industrial carbon tax that punishes Canadian workers and businesses, when none of our competitors in oil and gas or mining have them?

Hon. Tim Hodgson: Mr. Chair, I have had the privilege of speaking with many different proponents, such as first nations interested in oil and gas, and in the industry. They are supportive of the one Canadian economy act. They think it is how we will get the country going again. I really hope the members will join them in supporting the bill.

Shannon Stubbs: Mr. Chair, the Liberals' oil and gas cap will cut production by about 5% and \$21 billion from Canada's economy.

If the minister agrees we are in a national economic crisis, does the U.S. have a federal oil and gas cap?

Hon. Tim Hodgson: Mr. Chair, I do not think any of us are interested in being like the United States.

Shannon Stubbs: Mr. Chair, does Iraq? Does Saudi Arabia? Does Libya? Does Iran?

Hon. Tim Hodgson: Mr. Chair, we have been through half the world at this point. My answer will remain the same: I am focused on Canada.

Shannon Stubbs: Mr. Chair, the Liberals can keep laughing. The point is that they are saying they want to build Canada, but their antidevelopment policies make Canada, our workers and our businesses unable to compete globally. Actually, they are not going to help build Canada at all.

What will the minister say to the families of the more than 50,000 people who will lose their jobs because of the only-one-in-the-world Canadian oil and gas cap?

• (2225)

Hon. Tim Hodgson: Mr. Chair, if this act gets approved, we will build many projects of national interest. We will build roads. We will build ports. We will build renewable energy. We will build transmission lines. Yes, we will likely build some pipelines. We will build some pipelines, with the Conservatives' support. I hope they will get on board and support the bill.

Business of Supply

Shannon Stubbs: Mr. Chair, what does “consensus” mean?

Hon. Tim Hodgson: Mr. Chair, as we talked about in Saskatoon, the Prime Minister and the premiers agreed on a process for approving projects of national interest. The five criteria are laid out. As people bring those projects—

The Assistant Deputy Chair: The hon. member, a very brief final question.

Shannon Stubbs: Mr. Chair, the minister said he got lists from the provinces and will receive more.

Will he release the lists? Does he agree with the consensus of 79% Canadians and 80%—

The Assistant Deputy Chair: The hon. minister, a brief response.

Hon. Tim Hodgson: Mr. Chair, when the projects are designated, they will be made public.

[Translation]

Marilène Gill (Côte-Nord—Kawawachikamach—Nitassinan, BQ): Mr. Chair, my questions are for the Minister of Housing and Infrastructure.

I would like to start by saying a few nice things about my colleague, Denis Trudel, who was not re-elected, but who worked on the housing file. He said quite a few things that the Minister of Housing might find interesting. Those were some of the same things I heard from people during the election campaign about improving housing construction and affordability.

According to the Auditor General's latest report on converting underused federal office space into housing, the current criteria for housing affordability in general were not developed to maximize access for the lowest-income households. That is something the Bloc Québécois has been speaking out against for years.

In its plan, will the government be adjusting its affordability criteria along with the definition of that term?

Hon. Gregor Robertson (Minister of Housing and Infrastructure and Minister responsible for Pacific Economic Development Canada, Lib.): Mr. Chair, I thank the member for her question. I will answer in English.

[English]

Affordability is defined as less than 30% of someone's income after taxes. That is the measure of all the shelter affordability, the cost related to housing, utilities, mortgage and rent payments, etc. That is the general guideline for affordability that gets applied to projects across government.

[Translation]

Marilène Gill: Mr. Chair, that does not actually answer my question. It sounds as though they are not going to change anything.

What concrete measures will the minister take to review the affordability criteria to create housing that is truly affordable for the least well-off households and to maximize the initiative's effectiveness? When will he do that?

[English]

Hon. Gregor Robertson: Mr. Chair, we will stand by the affordability definitions as they have been applied, but the focus with “build Canada homes” going forward is going to be on doubling the amount of affordable housing. We have heard the Prime Minister speak very clearly about the need to focus that funding on solving homelessness, and the most vulnerable in our population will need that support. Members on this side of the House—

The Assistant Deputy Chair: The hon. member.

[Translation]

Marilène Gill: Mr. Chair, the government is boasting about making federal buildings available to organizations and entrepreneurs so that they can be converted into affordable housing.

However, will the government change the rule that requires the Canada Lands Company to sell its facilities at market value?

[English]

Hon. Gregor Robertson: Mr. Chair, we will certainly be working with Canada Lands Company to ensure we can maximize the amount of affordable housing that we can build on federal lands. There is a big opportunity to increase the affordability and the opportunity for people to get deeper affordability on federal land.

[Translation]

Marilène Gill: Mr. Chair, a number of stakeholders in Quebec's housing sector have been saying that housing programs are too complex for a long time.

The Bloc Québécois strongly believes that federal programs need to be simplified and aligned with Quebec programs, since Quebec has jurisdiction over housing. Are discussions being held with the Government of Quebec to make sure that federal programs do not hinder the transfer of funds or make it harder for organizations to apply for programs?

● (2230)

[English]

Hon. Gregor Robertson: Mr. Chair, the government has had significant success in working in partnership with the Quebec government. I note that we have, through the national housing strategy, 365 projects in Quebec, worth over \$3 billion, with over 26,000 units. Other programs as well are contributing significantly, with the Quebec government in the lead.

[Translation]

Marilène Gill: Mr. Chair, I wanted to know whether discussions were under way with the Government of Quebec.

[English]

Hon. Gregor Robertson: Mr. Chair, yes, there are ongoing discussions, certainly, on both housing and infrastructure, with the Government of Quebec.

*Business of Supply**[Translation]*

Marilène Gill: Mr. Chair, what steps are being taken to cut through red tape, speed up housing starts and ensure that federal funds are transferred to Quebec with no strings attached?

[English]

Hon. Gregor Robertson: Mr. Chair, we are seeing a great up-take with the housing accelerator fund. Quebec has worked with the federal government to the tune of almost \$1 billion, and 26,000 units of affordable housing are the target. We will work to support the Quebec government to deliver on those housing targets.

[Translation]

Marilène Gill: Mr. Chair, the Bloc Québécois is proposing that all federal investments in housing be accompanied by an equivalent increase in essential municipal infrastructure, such as water, electricity and waste water treatment infrastructure.

How does the minister plan to ensure that municipalities have the necessary resources to accommodate new housing projects while respecting Quebec's jurisdictions?

[English]

Hon. Gregor Robertson: Mr. Chair, I agree with the member that it is very important that there is a combination of housing funding, which we see with the national housing strategy as well as the housing accelerator fund. We are also looking at partnership on housing infrastructure with the Quebec government, and those are active discussions that are in play right now.

[Translation]

Marilène Gill: Mr. Chair, the Bloc Québécois would like to see measures to curb the financialization of housing, in particular by combatting house flipping and facilitating the transfer of federal lands at reduced prices for social projects.

What concrete action has the minister taken to achieve these objectives? At this time, the appropriations only provide for additional aid for short-term rentals, but nothing else for the measures I just mentioned.

[English]

Hon. Gregor Robertson: Mr. Chair, I certainly agree with the member on the importance of putting housing first and well ahead of investment. That has certainly been a concern in my community. Measures were taken by both the city and the province to make sure that investment does not skew the housing market any more than it already has. We look forward to partnerships with Quebec to achieve that same goal.

[Translation]

Marilène Gill: Mr. Chair, earlier the Bloc Québécois addressed the issue of homelessness and the minister addressed it as well.

Many community groups are speaking out about the chronic underfunding of homelessness programs in Quebec. We are critical of that too. The Parliamentary Budget Officer estimates that there is roughly a \$3.5-billion shortfall annually to achieve the goal of reducing homelessness by 50%.

Beyond the \$121 million announced in the estimates for all of Canada, will the upcoming Liberal budget include a substantial and permanent increase in homelessness transfers to Quebec?

[English]

Hon. Gregor Robertson: Mr. Chair, we are looking at a very significant doubling of housing. The investment in homelessness in particular is what is envisioned with “build Canada homes”, which I hope the member and her colleagues will support. That is the kind of scale we need to tackle homelessness across Canada and certainly in Quebec. We will be looking at doubling the resources that go into homelessness.

[Translation]

Marilène Gill: Mr. Chair, can the minister guarantee that the sums will be indexed and paid with no strings attached, and that Quebec's full jurisdiction over the fight against homelessness will be respected?

• (2235)

[English]

Hon. Gregor Robertson: Mr. Chair, I think the partnership between the federal government and Quebec has been delivering, with respect and with speed, on the housing front. My expectation is that we will continue that partnership very strongly, to deliver results on the ground with affordable housing.

[Translation]

Marilène Gill: Mr. Chair, that is all.

[English]

Todd Doherty (Cariboo—Prince George, CPC): Mr. Chair, I will be splitting my time three ways.

When the minister first became mayor of Vancouver in 2008, he promised affordable housing, fewer drug overdoses, lower crime and to end homelessness by 2015. How did that work out?

Hon. Gregor Robertson (Minister of Housing and Infrastructure, Lib.): Mr. Chair, when I first became mayor, it was a Conservative federal government. For seven years, it was all but impossible to get any investment from the federal government on homelessness and affordable housing. We fought the federal government at the time—

The Assistant Deputy Chair: The hon. member for Cariboo—Prince George.

Todd Doherty: Mr. Chair, for the last 10 years, the Liberal government has been in power. Overdose is the leading cause of death for youth aged 10 to 18 in our province. What are the minister's thoughts on that?

Hon. Gregor Robertson: Mr. Chair, the overdose crisis is a terrible tragedy across Canada. Certainly, we felt that from the very beginning of it, a decade ago in Vancouver, when the emergency was declared.

Business of Supply

Todd Doherty: Mr. Chair, over 50,000 Canadians have lost their lives to overdose. Our province of British Columbia is one of the worst. It is experiencing the worst opioid crisis in our country. The minister is now a member of the government. What will be his actions to represent our province at the cabinet table?

Hon. Gregor Robertson: Mr. Chair, I am certainly thankful to be elected by my constituents in Vancouver Fraserview—South Burnaby. I am here to represent my province as well. With my knowledge from serving at the city and provincial levels, I will do all I can to deliver positive change and a lot of affordable housing in our home province.

Todd Doherty: Mr. Chair, does the minister still feel the same way about decriminalizing drugs?

Hon. Gregor Robertson: Mr. Chair, I do not know where the drug policy fits within the estimates for Housing, Infrastructure and Communities Canada.

Todd Doherty: Mr. Chair, the minister is on record as saying decriminalizing illicit drugs would be a life-saving shift. Does he still feel the same way?

Hon. Gregor Robertson: Mr. Chair, again, we are here to focus on budget estimates for the Department of Housing and Infrastructure.

Todd Doherty: Mr. Chair, how many rental properties does the minister have?

Hon. Gregor Robertson: Mr. Chair, we are here to talk about the actions and the budget of the federal government on affordable housing and infrastructure.

Todd Doherty: Mr. Chair, it is easy to say, “I have none.” If he has none, why does he not declare it?

Hon. Gregor Robertson: Mr. Chair, I am here to answer questions about the budget for the federal government on housing and infrastructure, and I welcome questions on that.

Todd Doherty: Mr. Chair, I will ask again, how many rental properties does he have?

Hon. Gregor Robertson: Mr. Chair, again, we are here to talk about the budget estimates for the Department of Housing and Infrastructure, and I welcome the member's questions. It is about \$16 billion of taxpayer money that is focused on housing and infrastructure.

Todd Doherty: Mr. Chair, is the minister comfortable with his record as the mayor of Vancouver in terms of the cost of housing over the course of his tenure?

Hon. Gregor Robertson: Mr. Chair, I will say that no single elected official is responsible for the prices in the housing market, and the federal government needs to do everything it can to bring the overall cost of housing down across—

The Assistant Deputy Chair: The hon. member.

• (2240)

Todd Doherty: Mr. Chair, the minister is on record saying, “Factors such as the impact of the [drug injection] site on crime rates and expressions of community support or opposition should not be relevant to the Federal Government’s approval process.” Does he still feel the same way?

Hon. Gregor Robertson: Mr. Chair, again to the member opposite, I am here to talk about the budget estimates for the Department of Housing and Infrastructure. I would remind the member to keep us focused on the budget estimates.

Todd Doherty: Mr. Chair, safe injection sites disrupt communities and devalue properties. The minister's radical policies have contributed to Vancouver's housing hell. Is the minister proud of that?

Hon. Gregor Robertson: Mr. Chair, again, the member opposite is veering off into misinformation that has been spread by his party relentlessly, twisting around proven science and Supreme Court decisions that defended the actions of the city.

Tamara Kronis (Nanaimo—Ladysmith, CPC): Mr. Chair, the Prime Minister said he wants to build big projects. Does the minister agree?

Hon. Tim Hodgson (Minister of Energy and Natural Resources, Lib.): Mr. Chair, what the Prime Minister has said is that he wants to build projects of national importance.

Tamara Kronis: Mr. Chair, does the minister consider an order for four ferries to be a big project?

Hon. Tim Hodgson: Mr. Chair, projects of national interest are defined by the five criteria that have been laid out. If that is something that the hon. member wants to talk about, they should put it forward and we will review—

The Assistant Deputy Chair: The hon. member.

Tamara Kronis: Mr. Chair, is the minister aware that the Prime Minister called Beijing the biggest security threat to Canada?

Hon. Tim Hodgson: Mr. Chair, I am not sure what that has to do with the main estimates. We are here to talk about the main estimates tonight.

Tamara Kronis: Mr. Chair, does the minister know how much the federal Liberal government has sent to BC Ferries so far this year?

Hon. Tim Hodgson: Mr. Chair, I am not sure that is relevant to my main estimates.

Tamara Kronis: Mr. Chair, is the minister aware that BC Ferries intends to purchase four new vessels from a Chinese Communist Party state-owned enterprise?

Hon. Tim Hodgson: Mr. Chair, I am assuming that is a question for the Premier of British Columbia. The best I understand is that it is not an agency of the federal government.

Tamara Kronis: Mr. Chair, the minister is a senior minister, and he grew up in British Columbia. Has he ever taken a ferry?

Hon. Tim Hodgson: Mr. Chair, I have taken many ferries across from Tsawwassen. I have taken them from Horseshoe Bay, and I have taken them up from Port McNeill.

Business of Supply

Tamara Kronis: Mr. Chair, if the government wants to build big projects, why is the government letting B.C. give away a major project for unionized Canadian steel and shipbuilding workers?

Hon. Tim Hodgson: Mr. Chair, the hon. member seems to be confused. BC Ferries is a Crown corporation of the B.C. government, not of the federal government.

Tamara Kronis: Mr. Chair, if this were resource infrastructure instead of ferries, would the minister accept Beijing's state-owned firms' undercutting Canadians?

Hon. Tim Hodgson: Mr. Chair, we are not going to deal with hypotheticals. That is clearly not the case, so why would we talk about it?

Tamara Kronis: Mr. Chair, does the minister believe that Canadian taxpayer dollars should be supporting Chinese state-owned enterprises at the expense of Canadian workers?

Hon. Tim Hodgson: Mr. Chair, I am not sure what that has to do with the main estimates.

Tamara Kronis: Mr. Chair, if the minister is going to keep passing the buck, maybe I should ask the housing minister, who is a senior minister from British Columbia and the former mayor of Vancouver. It is astonishing that no minister of the government is capable of denouncing the deal.

Hon. Gregor Robertson (Minister of Housing and Infrastructure and Minister responsible for Pacific Economic Development Canada, Lib.): Mr. Chair, as my colleague just stated, the B.C. government is responsible for the decision. BC Ferries is a Crown agency of the B.C. government.

Tamara Kronis: Mr. Chair, the more the ministers dodge, the clearer it is that the government is soft on Beijing. The minister is a former MLA, and when he was an MLA, he never claimed that BC Ferries was provincial when he was asking the federal government for money.

When will the government stop passing the buck?

Hon. Gregor Robertson: Mr. Chair, it is an issue of B.C. jurisdiction, and in Canada, we respect jurisdiction among federal, provincial, territorial, local and indigenous governments. We work in partnership, but this is the B.C. government's jurisdiction.

• (2245)

Tamara Kronis: Mr. Chair, would the minister put conditions on the almost \$40 million transferred to BC Ferries?

Hon. Gregor Robertson: Mr. Chair, the member opposite needs to be a little more specific about what transfer she is speaking of.

Tamara Kronis: Mr. Chair, on election night, the Prime Minister committed to creating an industrial strategy that makes Canada more competitive. How does handing over Canadian shipbuilding jobs to Beijing make Canada more competitive?

Hon. Gregor Robertson: Mr. Chair, Canada will be more competitive when we focus on one Canadian economy: all 13 of our provinces and territories with the federal government, working in partnership on major projects and building housing across this country.

Tamara Kronis: Mr. Chair, how does the minister not believe that the contract should go to Canadian shipbuilders? There is a

Seaspan shipbuilding yard in Vancouver. How can the minister ship the jobs of the people he represents to Beijing?

Hon. Gregor Robertson: Mr. Chair, again, the member opposite is talking about a B.C. government decision, not a federal government decision, and certainly not one related to the Ministry of Housing and Infrastructure.

Shannon Stubbs (Lakeland, CPC): Mr. Chair, the minister spoke earlier about the importance of critical minerals in Canada. Can he confirm that all critical mineral development currently under way or planned will be subject to Canadian regulations, priorities and benefits, not directed by foreign governments or foreign laws?

Hon. Tim Hodgson (Minister of Energy and Natural Resources, Lib.): Mr. Chair, we will develop our critical minerals in a way that benefits Canada. We will work with our allies to develop those critical minerals where it is appropriate and in Canada's interest.

Shannon Stubbs: Mr. Chair, to be clear, is there any scenario where a foreign government would be allowed to select, fund or control Canadian mining or processing projects on Canadian soil without full Canadian oversight and control?

Hon. Tim Hodgson: Mr. Chair, the Prime Minister has been clear that we will work with our allies to develop critical minerals in a way that benefits Canada.

Shannon Stubbs: Mr. Chair, can we just get real here?

Can the minister explain what is different between the 2022 critical minerals strategy and the 2025 critical minerals pathway of the current government, which cannot actually develop or produce mines in time nor be competitive with other countries? What actually is the difference, and why should Canadians believe the Liberals now?

Hon. Tim Hodgson: Mr. Chair, under the bill, if we designate something as a project of national interest, which many critical minerals are likely to be, we would make sure the projects are approved within two years or less.

Shannon Stubbs: Mr. Chair, the minister said earlier, and kept trying to claim, that he does not approve projects, but his own bill says he does. Is that not true?

Hon. Tim Hodgson: Mr. Chair, I think what we said is that we do not pick the projects. As I explained, projects bubble up from consultations between the federal government, provincial government, indigenous peoples and most importantly—

The Assistant Deputy Chair: The hon. member.

Shannon Stubbs: Mr. Chair, the point is, as was exactly in that minister's answer, that he would pick the projects. It would be a select list from select leaders, and they would pick the projects of national interest. How would that give certainty and confidence to all project proponents and investors, including all of the projects stuck in their federal queue right now that they should fast-track?

Hon. Tim Hodgson: Mr. Chair, the member seems to have the assumption that only one project of a kind will get picked. The whole premise of this is that, if there are multiple projects, like if there are multiple wind projects, if there are multiple transmission lines, if there are multiple—

The Assistant Deputy Chair: The hon. member.

Shannon Stubbs: Mr. Chair, I have asked the minister a number of questions about all the sectors in natural resources, so he does not need to patronize me.

Does he know which sectors have lost the most jobs since May?

Hon. Tim Hodgson: Mr. Chair, I think that is a question for the Minister of Jobs and Families.

Shannon Stubbs: Mr. Chair, I will give the minister one more chance. Does he know which sectors have lost the most jobs since May?

• (2250)

Hon. Tim Hodgson: Mr. Chair, I am not sure how that is relevant to the main estimates.

Shannon Stubbs: Mr. Chair, it is relevant because it was forestry, fishing, mining, quarrying, and oil and gas workers in Canada who lost the most jobs of any sectors in the entire Canadian economy since May last year and over the past last lost anti-development Liberal decade.

Hon. Tim Hodgson: Mr. Chair, I am very glad the members on the opposite side of the aisle are worried about jobs. They should help support the one Canadian economy act, so we can get building again and put people back to work.

Shannon Stubbs: Mr. Chair, as the minister was told before, jobs will be risked in all these sectors by Bill C-50. Since 2.7 million of those jobs are at risk, will the minister just tell us how many Canadians have to lose their jobs for him to consider the just transition, phasing out oil and gas in Canada, a success?

Hon. Tim Hodgson: Mr. Chair, again, I disagree with the premise. The Sustainable Jobs Act will create jobs, not kill them.

Shannon Stubbs: Mr. Chair, the minister can disagree with the premise all he wants, but it is his own government memo that says 2.7 million livelihoods in construction, energy, transportation, agriculture and manufacturing will be lost because of that bill, which is on the books. What we have really seen here tonight is no details, no transparency, no plan and an admission, with the Liberals' own Bill C-5, that all of their anti-development bills are holding Canada back and killing Canadian jobs. They are driving projects away and driving half a trillion dollars into the U.S.

How can Canadians believe anything the Liberals say now?

Hon. Tim Hodgson: Mr. Chair, in our consultations with premiers, indigenous peoples and proponents, they are excited about the one Canadian economy act. They are excited about the opportunity

to build again quickly, at paces we have never done before. We really hope the member will support us in getting this act on the books.

Business of Supply

Karim Bardeesy (Parliamentary Secretary to the Minister of Industry, Lib.): Mr. Chair, I am pleased to speak to the Housing, Infrastructure and Communities Canada estimates. I will put some questions to the minister at the end.

I am glad to have a group of colleagues here who are from ridings outside of Toronto. I want to tell them about my riding and the housing experiences and challenges we have and engage in a bit of dialogue and exploration around how the items in the estimates and some of the current government actions might support some of the housing challenges and opportunities.

I will start with one of the areas of my riding, which is in the name of the riding, Parkdale. Parkdale is just to the east of High Park. It is a destination for people who have arrived from all parts of the world, people in need who have found a community in that particular part of west Toronto.

Two weekends ago, I spent some time at 30 Springhurst, which is a building built in 1964. Springhurst Avenue, in fact, is an avenue that became developed because of a different development. Many people in this chamber would have travelled on the Gardiner Expressway. It resulted in the removal of a number of housing units in the old part of South Parkdale.

The city of Toronto in the early 1900s was a destination for lots of tourists. Members might be familiar with Sunnyside Pavilion, which still has a pool. There was a very old and large housing development in South Parkdale, and when we built the Gardiner Expressway, that neighbourhood was removed and we ended up building housing and rental housing farther up north of where the Gardiner Expressway was being built.

One of those buildings was 30 Springhurst Avenue. It goes by the name Edge Water Tower. I went to that building a few weeks ago because there is a group of tenants gathering to try to form a tenant group there for the first time. Edge Water Tower at 30 Springhurst is like a lot of buildings in Parkdale, in the High Park area and in west Toronto generally, where there are a lot of purpose-built rental buildings. It is a bit of an older building with good bones, but the stock is becoming a bit aged. The kinds of new buildings being built are not being built in the same way that the older buildings were built. We are seeing more of the smaller, single-unit condos and single-person condos. We are not seeing the kind of development needed for the population in the riding.

Business of Supply

Recent census figures show that the population of the Parkdale part of our riding has actually gone down. The net number of constituents living in Parkdale has gone down. That is because not only are we not building enough purpose-built rentals, but the larger multi-residential units, the mansions that used to house the business class of the riding, which then became multi-unit residential, have been turned back into single-family homes. Therefore, the population of the Parkdale part of the riding is going down.

The tenants of 30 Springhurst were coming together to find ways to advocate for themselves, as we are seeing such a great spirit of tenant activity and, in fact, community activity all around Parkdale. We are seeing these buildings and are seeing folks in our riding looking for other residential options, other places to provide themselves with housing.

Another part of my riding is what we call High Park North, which is actually one of the most dense communities in Canada. People are probably familiar with High Park, a destination for baseball players, birders and people to check out the cherry blossoms. We are very blessed to have a number of buildings, a number of towers, again generally built in the postwar era, just north of High Park. There are about two dozen towers there on Mountview, Oakmount, Pacific, Quebec, Bloor West, Glen Lake and High Park Avenue. There is some new building happening there too.

We also have a blessing of different kinds of housing. We have purpose-built rentals, we have some Toronto community housing and we have some different kinds of ownership options there. However, again, we have needs developing in the riding, as they are in a lot of places in west Toronto, and we need a renewal of housing stock. This is generally an older housing stock, especially for families and for people who just need a place to stay, a place they can call home. We are also seeing, as we are seeing in lots of different parts of urban Canada, residents and constituents who have a complex set of health needs or other needs who need more attention.

• (2255)

I took the decision to stand for this riding and to help represent this community in order to represent the wide variety of people and the wide range of housing needs and the wide range of health care needs that people might have that can be supported through different kinds of housing. I am really pleased to report some of the things that are now happening in Taiaiko'n—Parkdale—High Park, thanks to federal government investments. I know that the minister has some awareness of this because of the great work of my predecessor, Arif Virani.

I spoke to the different kinds of needs that my constituents have, and we have some needs. We have some residents who have complex health needs who need not only their housing supports but also a good place to live and other kinds of health care supports.

I want to point out two specific projects in my riding that are being supported by the rapid housing initiative. One is the 90 Dunn Avenue site, which has 51 rent-geared-to-income supportive housing units and a \$14-million federal government investment, the first of its kind in Canada. It has a partnership between the University Health Network, the Fred Victor centre, United Way Greater Toronto and the city.

These are 51 lives, 51 families that are going to be changed by this project. This project is now built, and we have residents in that site at 90 Dunn.

We have the 11 Brock Avenue site, which is going to be under construction, with 42 rent-geared-to-income supportive housing units, supported by \$21.6 million in rapid housing funding. We have this work that is happening, that is being supported by the work shown in the estimates. That is making a real difference in Taiaiko'n—Parkdale—High Park.

We also have other needs beyond supportive housing. We need that affordable housing, and we need the promise of home ownership, which we need to bring back to more Canadians, to more people, in particular in west Toronto. I am very pleased to hear about the “build Canada homes” initiative that will support development at scale, which Canada needs right now, using public lands, catalyzing a new national housing industry and providing significant financing to affordable home developers.

We have a vote, I believe, tomorrow. We are looking forward to hearing what is going to happen on the other side of the House. I know the residents in my riding, especially those first-time homebuyers in my riding, are very much looking forward to the prospect of the complete elimination of the GST for new homes up to \$1 million and a cut for new homes between \$1 and \$1.5 million.

We did hear on the other side, earlier in the week, that one Conservative member thought that this should be available to all homebuyers, not just first-time buyers. I think that it is the responsible choice to limit it to first-time homebuyers. I am looking forward to seeing how that vote will go tomorrow.

The GST cuts also, again, support that affordable housing industry, ensuring purpose-built rentals, with GST off new rental buildings.

These are some of the initiatives that are in these estimates. I know that there are also initiatives that have agreements signed with provinces and municipalities under the housing accelerator fund, and they are expected to support the construction of more than 750,000 new homes over the next decade. I know that this is a result of what is in the estimates, but I think a lot of people on this side of the aisle and, really, Canadians across the country and people in my riding, are really excited about the prospect of the local jobs that are going to come from this housing construction activity.

Business of Supply

I heard on the other side of the aisle, earlier this week, the comparison of modular housing with tents. I do not think that this is what we see. I am from a town where there was a proud history of people growing up in modular homes, in trailer homes, places that are decent places to live. We know that this can catalyze an industry and that can create jobs right here in Canada. I am very excited to hear about how that will roll out through the “build Canada homes” program.

I think the set of issues and initiatives that we see in the estimates, that we see in the work that has been done, is having an immediate impact in Taiaiaiko'n—Parkdale—High Park.

I look forward to asking the minister for a few more details.

● (2300)

The Assistant Deputy Chair: It being 11:02 p.m., pursuant to order made earlier today, it is my duty to end the proceedings. The debate in committee of the whole will continue on the next designated day. The committee will now rise, and I will now leave the chair.

The Assistant Deputy Speaker (John Nater): The House stands adjourned until tomorrow at 10 a.m., pursuant to Standing Order 24(1).

(The House adjourned at 11:02 p.m.)

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