



HOUSE OF COMMONS  
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CANADA

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# House of Commons Debates

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Wednesday, September 17, 2025

Speaker: The Honourable Francis Scarpaleggia



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# HOUSE OF COMMONS

Wednesday, September 17, 2025

The House met at 2 p.m.

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*Prayer*

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● (1400)

[English]

**The Speaker:** Today, the member for Fort McMurray—Cold Lake will be leading us in the singing of the national anthem.

[Members sang the national anthem]

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## STATEMENTS BY MEMBERS

[English]

### PAUL STEWART

**Doug Eyolfson (Winnipeg West, Lib.):** Mr. Speaker, I rise to offer a tribute to a community advocate and close friend, Paul Stewart.

For years, Paul was a tireless advocate for those affected by prostate cancer and a volunteer and participant in Ride for Dad, an annual motorcycle parade that raises funds for research and has improved treatment for prostate cancer. I have had the privilege of joining Paul and thousands of other riders in Winnipeg on the Ride for Dad on several occasions and can attest to the positive impact Paul had on those around him.

Sadly, Paul died on June 15, less than one year after being diagnosed with prostate cancer. I offer my sincerest condolences to his wife Jane, his son Donald and the numerous extended family members and close friends whose lives will never be the same without him.

Paul has left the world a better place. May his final ride be easy and may the road stretch far and wide.

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### CHILDHOOD CANCER AWARENESS MONTH

**Andrew Lawton (Elgin—St. Thomas—London South, CPC):** Mr. Speaker, September is Childhood Cancer Awareness Month, the time to honour the children and their families facing cancer. MPs today are wearing gold pins to emphasize the importance of awareness, hope and research for childhood cancer, the leading cause of death by disease for Canadian children.

Dave and Maureen Jenkins from Belmont, Ontario, provided these pins in memory of their daughter Maggie, who passed away at just 12 years old. I am grateful for Childcan in London, an invaluable resource for families across southwestern Ontario grappling with childhood cancer, whether it is by lending a supportive ear or covering unexpected expenses.

I would like to recognize Tamy Bell here on the Hill today. She founded the Golden Society and has raised over \$725,000 for CHEO and cancer research in memory of her brave son Griffin, who she lost to cancer last year at age six.

At 7 p.m. this evening, Parliament Hill will shine gold for Childhood Cancer Awareness Month. I hope all members will join me in honouring the courageous children and families affected by childhood cancer.

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### MOHAMMED IQBAL CHEEMA

**Sukh Dhaliwal (Surrey Newton, Lib.):** Mr. Speaker, I rise today to honour the life of Mr. Mohammed Iqbal Cheema, a true pioneer of Pakistani and Muslim communities in B.C.

Born in Faisalabad, Mr. Cheema arrived in Canada in 1972 with his young family and went on to build a legacy of service, generosity and community leadership. Over the past several decades, he welcomed newcomers at the airport, offered them shelter and worked tirelessly for organizations such as the BC Muslim Association, the Pakistan-Canada Association and the National Federation of Pakistani-Canadians.

Mr. Cheema's dedication to service, family and community has inspired generations. He will be deeply missed, but his memory will live on as a blessing to all of us.

*Statements by Members***INTERNATIONAL CIVIL AVIATION ORGANIZATION**

**Michael Cooper (St. Albert—Sturgeon River, CPC):** Mr. Speaker, as the 42nd ICAO Assembly sets to convene in Montreal, Canada's democratic ally Taiwan continues to be excluded from ICAO. Taiwan's exclusion is about one thing and one thing only, bending to Beijing's bullying, and it has to stop.

Taiwan is the 11th largest aviation market in the world and serves as a vital global hub. Excluding one of the world's largest and most responsible airspace managers creates a dangerous gap. It undermines global aviation safety and, frankly, makes a mockery of ICAO's stated mission. It is time for ICAO to stop placating the Beijing dictatorship, put global aviation safety first and invite Taiwan to participate at the assembly.

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● (1405)

[Translation]

**MAJOR INFRASTRUCTURE PROJECTS**

**Angelo Iacono (Alfred-Pellan, Lib.):** Mr. Speaker, this summer, in Alfred-Pellan, I met with company representatives and citizens who are worried about the effects of U.S. tariffs on our economy. Now that Parliament has resumed, I can reassure them that our government has indeed heard their comments.

With our new industrial strategy, we will diversify our markets, support our SMEs and focus on reskilling our workers so we can build a Canadian economy that is stronger, more resilient and more competitive. In terms of infrastructure, the Major Projects Office will play a key role in accelerating investments across the country. The number of major projects, like the Contrecoeur container terminal or the timely implementation of the Alto high-speed train, will increase, which will create thousands of jobs.

In Alfred-Pellan and across Canada, our government will provide tangible, quick and ambitious solutions.

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[English]

**TOWNSHIP OF PUSLINCH**

**Hon. Michael Chong (Wellington—Halton Hills North, CPC):** Mr. Speaker, this year, in Wellington County, the Township of Puslinch celebrates its 175th anniversary.

Older than Confederation, Puslinch was established in the Province of Canada in 1850 under the municipal corporations act of 1849, which had been introduced by the great ministry of Robert Baldwin and Louis-Hippolyte LaFontaine. Named after a place in England, the township is filled with history from early pioneers: the English, Highland Scots, Germans and Irish Catholics.

The township played a key role in early Canadian agriculture, with Dr. Frederick Stone bringing to Puslinch the first Hereford cattle breed and other cattle breeds. His farm eventually became the Ontario Agricultural College at the University of Guelph.

I congratulate Mayor Seeley and the township council for continuing the 175-year tradition of local democratic governance.

**LONDON WEST**

**Hon. Arielle Kayabaga (London West, Lib.):** Mr. Speaker, as we open this new session, I want to welcome my colleagues back to the House of Commons. We are here because Canadians expect us to get things done. For me, that means delivering for the people of London West.

Londoners have been very clear that they want affordable housing, good jobs and support for their families, which is why I welcome the new housing investments that will speed up construction, bring down costs, and put young people and skilled workers on the job.

With the new work relief measures, we are making sure that families have the help they need right now through the tough times. We are also seeing major CAF investment, which means stable and long-term jobs for Canadians while strengthening our economy and protecting our country.

London is at the centre of growth in southwestern Ontario, and my focus is to make sure that Ottawa continues to match that ambition by investing in people, industries and the future that all Canadians want.

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**GROCERY INDUSTRY**

**Michael Guglielmin (Vaughan—Woodbridge, CPC):** Mr. Speaker, the Prime Minister once said that Canadians would judge him by the cost of groceries. Well, beef is up 33%, coffee is up 22% and sugar is up by 20%. Food inflation has risen by 40%. Canadians in Vaughan—Woodbridge and across the country feel the pinch every single time they walk into the grocery store.

A new report shows that over 25% of households are struggling to afford food, which is up from 18% in 2023. At Toronto's food bank, it took nearly four decades to reach one million visits, yet in only three years, demand has quadrupled to four million visits. The poverty rate has climbed for the third straight year, and is now sitting at 9.9%, increasing by 38% from just two years ago. That is not just a number. It is a crisis that is unfolding in real time.

Canadians deserve a government that will cut wasteful spending so they can afford to put food on their tables.

*Statements by Members***NATURAL RESOURCES***[Translation]***PATRICK CHARBONNEAU**

**Jean-Denis Garon (Mirabel, BQ):** Mr. Speaker, on July 1, we learned of the sudden death of Patrick Charbonneau, the mayor of Mirabel, at the age of 46. Patrick was more than an elected official; he was a caring, passionate man with a real desire to serve his community. After entering politics in 2013, he always worked with integrity, vision, compassion and an approachable warmth. Patrick was a friend, an ally, a trusted partner who always showed up, a person who was deeply human, ambitious, funny and committed. He wanted to change things, and he did it with the big heart he was known for. Above all, he was a loving father and a devoted family man. He often talked about his children with unaffected tenderness. His love for them was palpable.

We will remember him for his laugh, his quick wit, his generosity and everything he accomplished for Mirabel and the region. On behalf of the people of Mirabel, the House and the Bloc Québécois, I would like to express my deepest condolences to Annick, Olivia, Maël, Mr. and Mrs. Charbonneau and Mayor François Bélanger. May his work continue to inspire us.

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● (1410)

*[English]***NATIONAL PAYROLL WEEK**

**Hon. Mona Fortier (Ottawa—Vanier—Gloucester, Lib.):** Mr. Speaker, each year, during the third week in September, we celebrate National Payroll Week, which is a moment to recognize the professionals who ensure Canadian workers are paid accurately and on time.

*[Translation]*

The pay cycle is more than just an administrative process; it is a cornerstone of employee well-being. It guarantees accuracy, transparency and trust, enabling workers to meet their daily needs, plan for the future and build their financial security.

*[English]*

I thank all designated payroll professionals for their integrity and the essential work they do to keep Canada paid and to strengthen financial confidence.

*[Translation]*

I would also like to thank the volunteers at the National Payroll Institute, who support these efforts through their activities and services.

*[English]*

Finally, I want to recognize the leadership of Brian Burgess, chair of the board, and Peter Tzanetakis, president and CEO of the National Payroll Institute, who are both here today. Their guidance supports employee well-being and organizational success.

**Jeremy Patzer (Swift Current—Grasslands—Kindersley, CPC):** Mr. Speaker, it has been six months and the so-called new Liberal government seems like it is the same as the old one. At first, the Prime Minister sounded different from Justin Trudeau, but we are finding, as time goes by, that the Liberals are using the same old Liberal playbook. He hinted about a fast track to build a pipeline. What actually happened? He created a major project bureaucracy instead of trying to fast-track big projects. Not a single pipeline is on the major projects list, as the Liberals have reannounced previous projects that are already under construction. They kept in place bad anti-energy policies from the Trudeau era: Bill C-69, Bill C-48, the oil and gas production cap and the industrial carbon tax, to name a few.

Enbridge, a Canadian energy company, is building a \$700-million pipeline project. The problem is that it is not in Canada. It is in the United States of America.

Canadians will have to wait for a Conservative government to support our world-class energy sector that will cut bad Liberal policies, build a strong economy to get the job done and restore the promise of our great country.

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**PUBLIC SAFETY**

**Sonia Sidhu (Brampton South, Lib.):** Mr. Speaker, I rise today to reflect on a wonderful summer in Brampton South. I would like to use this opportunity to share my sincere thanks to all residents who joined me at my annual summer barbecue. This summer, I attended many community events and heard one message clearly: Public safety remains a top priority.

As the Prime Minister said, we will strengthen bail reform and impose tougher sentences on home invasion, extortion and repeat violent offenders. We will invest directly in our law enforcement.

Keeping our communities safe requires every level of government to do its part. Provinces must provide resources to courts and law enforcement to keep dangerous offenders behind bars. Together, we will build safer streets for Brampton and for all Canadians.

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**FINANCE**

**Grant Jackson (Brandon—Souris, CPC):** Mr. Speaker, Canadians are paying the price for the Prime Minister's reckless spending, which has skyrocketed 8.4% since he took office. Spending on high-priced consultants is up by 37% to \$26 billion, while spending on the bureaucracy itself is up another 6% to \$63 billion.

### Oral Questions

Experts are clear that the spending is out of control. Yesterday, at committee, the top financial watchdog stated, “At this point, it's impossible for us, and for you as parliamentarians, to assess the likelihood or probability of the government hitting any fiscal target.” Yikes. It does not stop there. The watchdog went further, slamming the Liberals' lack of accountability, saying, “I don't know that the government currently has fiscal anchors, which...causes...a considerable degree of concern”. No kidding. Canadians are concerned as well.

With more spending, more debt and more bureaucracy piling up every year, when will the government finally show restraint and put Canada back on a responsible fiscal track, or is that just another broken Liberal promise?

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### NORTH BAY'S CENTENNIAL

**Pauline Rochefort (Nipissing—Timiskaming, Lib.):** Mr. Speaker, please join me in wishing the city of North Bay a happy 100th birthday. Even if it is only 100 years old, it is still a city that is just getting started. This is why: With its modern infrastructure, higher-level education centres, strategic location at the crossroads of Highway 11 and Highway 17, and access to rail and air transportation, North Bay, nicknamed “your gateway to opportunity”, is truly a gateway to east-west domestic trade and international markets.

People who have been there know it is a beautiful city. It has breathtaking scenery, wonderful recreational amenities and much more. Most important are the citizens of the city of North Bay, the wonderful people. For 100 years, they have shaped this great city. It now offers a high quality of life and is, therefore, a great place to raise a family and build a future.

The city's centennial celebration has mobilized hundreds of volunteers who have highlighted the contributions of many sectors, and the celebration will continue.

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• (1415)

### PRIME MINISTER OF CANADA

**Garnett Genuis (Sherwood Park—Fort Saskatchewan, CPC):** Mr. Speaker, the Liberal Prime Minister promised change. Like Liberals before him, he is breaking his promises. He promised the fastest-growing economy in the G7. He has actually delivered the fastest-shrinking economy in the G7. He promised to “build, baby, build”, but he continues to support Bill C-69, the block, baby, block act. He promised to double the pace of construction, but homebuilding is actually declining. He promised jobs and opportunity and then delivered an unemployment crisis. He promised less spending, but he is spending more. He promised elbows up and then he put his elbows down.

The Prime Minister said the things he thought Canadians wanted to hear during the election, and then he did the opposite. During his time as a temporary foreign worker in the United Kingdom, the Prime Minister was famously called the “unreliable boyfriend”. Six months into this relationship, Canadians are starting to see why. Canada, it turns out that “he is just not that into you”.

### STEEL INDUSTRY

**Lisa Hepfner (Hamilton Mountain, Lib.):** Mr. Speaker, Hamilton is known as Steeltown for many reasons, including its long-standing role as the centre of steel production in Canada. Stelco and ArcelorMittal Dofasco still produce steel in Hamilton, and we have derivatives like Walters Group on Hamilton Mountain, which creates beautiful architectural steel, including the beautiful tree-inspired beams that hold up the ceiling of this very room.

Thousands upon thousands of workers across the Golden Horseshoe rely on the steel industry, but steel production is crucial for all of Canada. We need a steel industry in order to be a viable G7 nation. The 50% U.S. tariffs have been a massive challenge to our previously integrated industry. I meet regularly with those affected and I know how serious and engaged the government and the Prime Minister have been. Sustaining Canada's steel industry is a top priority.

We will get through this, and with Canadian steel, we will build the strongest economy in the G7.

## ORAL QUESTIONS

[Translation]

### FINANCE

**Hon. Pierre Poilievre (Leader of the Opposition, CPC):** Mr. Speaker, how big is the Liberal deficit?

**Right Hon. Mark Carney (Prime Minister, Lib.):** Mr. Speaker, first of all, I would like to welcome the new pages here to Parliament on behalf of all members.

There will be a new government budget on November 4. It will be an investment budget, with the largest investment in Canada in a generation.

[English]

**Hon. Pierre Poilievre (Leader of the Opposition, CPC):** Mr. Speaker, how big is the deficit that the Prime Minister is running?

**Right Hon. Mark Carney (Prime Minister, Lib.):** Mr. Speaker, I am looking forward, with the Minister of Finance, to releasing the budget on November 4. That budget will contain the biggest investment in this country's future in a generation: building homes, building new port infrastructure, new trade corridors and new energy infrastructure, and building the strongest economy in the G7.

• (1420)

[Translation]

**Hon. Pierre Poilievre (Leader of the Opposition, CPC):** Mr. Speaker, the government is supposed to present the deficit at the beginning of the fiscal year. That was six months ago, and we still do not know the size of the deficit. The uncertainty has driven out \$50 billion in investment and killed 86,000 jobs. This is the first time in the history of the country that a prime minister cannot tell us what the deficit is six months into the fiscal year.

He says he is a leading financial expert. Does he know the size of his deficit, yes or no?

**Right Hon. Mark Carney (Prime Minister, Lib.):** Mr. Speaker, I thank the Leader of the Opposition for the compliment. Yes, I am a leading financial and budget expert. Yes, I am a leading expert, thank you.

I know that in the current economic situation here in Canada, the great uncertainty comes from the tariff war. We need to control what we can control, which is investing in Canada's future.

[English]

**Hon. Pierre Poilievre (Leader of the Opposition, CPC):** Mr. Speaker, surely, if he is such an expert, he would know the size of his own deficit. It is now halfway through the fiscal year. Six months have gone by, and he has announced \$40 billion of additional spending. Deficits drive up inflation, grocery prices, housing costs and interest rates. They drive investment out of our country and create uncertainty that destabilizes our economy. That is why every other prime minister in Canadian history has announced the deficit at the beginning of the fiscal year.

We are six months in. Does the Prime Minister even know the size of his own deficit?

**Right Hon. Mark Carney (Prime Minister, Lib.):** Mr. Speaker, I know many things. The member opposite, the Leader of the Opposition, just mentioned interest rates. One thing I know is that Canadian interest rates are much lower than American interest rates. They are lower because this country's fiscal situation is strong and because this government has a plan to grow this economy. We will keep doing it.

**Hon. Pierre Poilievre (Leader of the Opposition, CPC):** Mr. Speaker, the collapsing economy is bringing down interest rates, but the financial expert does not even know what his own deficit is.

Another financial expert spoke yesterday. The Parliamentary Budget Officer said, "the deficit will absolutely be higher" because of "additional spending". He said that he does not know what the government's fiscal anchors are because they do not exist. He says, "the labour market sucks" and "wages are not going up".

Is this why Liberal members on the committee who heard those truth bombs threatened that the Prime Minister would fire the Parliamentary Budget Officer after 166 days?

**Right Hon. Mark Carney (Prime Minister, Lib.):** Mr. Speaker, I do not recognize that characterization. I just appointed the Parliamentary Budget Officer, and this government does have fiscal anchors. We are going to spend less so the country can invest more. We are going to balance the operational budget in three years. We

### Oral Questions

are going to have a declining level of debt. We are going to do all of that because we are building the strongest economy in the G7 for Canadian families.

**Hon. Pierre Poilievre (Leader of the Opposition, CPC):** Mr. Speaker, the Prime Minister made the appointment of the Parliamentary Budget Officer temporary so that he could hold a sword over his head and threaten him if he speaks the truth about the financial mess the Prime Minister has made. To a government that does not know how to count, there is nothing more terrifying than a man armed with a calculator. The Prime Minister wants to silence the Parliamentary Budget Officer from telling the truth about the fiscal mess that he has created under his watch.

Will he legalize math, make the Parliamentary Budget Officer's position permanent and tell us how big the deficit is?

**Right Hon. Mark Carney (Prime Minister, Lib.):** Mr. Speaker, with respect to consultations on making the Parliamentary Budget Officer's position permanent, I look forward to speaking to the Leader of the Opposition, the leader of the Bloc Québécois and the leaders of other parties in Parliament so we have a consensus on that appointment. I welcome that opportunity.

**An hon. member:** Oh, a consensus. Is that what you were looking for?

**Right Hon. Mark Carney:** Yes, because this is the new spirit of collaboration that has been put forward by the member opposite.

\* \* \*

• (1425)

[Translation]

### JUSTICE

**Yves-François Blanchet (Beloeil—Chambly, BQ):** Mr. Speaker, this is an opportunity for collaboration. In the last few hours, there has been much speculation that the government might table what will essentially be an attack on the notwithstanding clause in the Constitution, but we do not really know yet what it will contain. That said, a poll shows there is a very broad consensus in Quebec about the importance of state secularism.

Is the Prime Minister committed to respecting the right of Quebec and the provinces to invoke the notwithstanding clause, even pre-emptively?

**Right Hon. Mark Carney (Prime Minister, Lib.):** Mr. Speaker, one of the most important responsibilities of the Government of Canada is to defend the Canadian Charter of Rights and Freedoms. It is up to the Supreme Court of Canada to determine whether the repeated use of the notwithstanding clause is legal. We will see what the court decides.

**Yves-François Blanchet (Beloeil—Chambly, BQ):** Mr. Speaker, the notwithstanding clause is enshrined in the 1982 Canadian Constitution, which Quebec never signed. René Lévesque included the notwithstanding clause in every one of his bills after the Constitution was signed by all of the provinces except Quebec. The Prime Minister is attacking the legacy of Pierre Elliott Trudeau.

Is he asking judges to come down harder on Quebec and do more damage to it than Pierre Elliott Trudeau did?

*Oral Questions*

**Right Hon. Mark Carney (Prime Minister, Lib.):** Mr. Speaker, that is simply not the case. The Supreme Court of Canada will rule on the appropriate use of the notwithstanding clause. It is that straightforward.

**Yves-François Blanchet (Beloeil—Chambly, BQ):** Mr. Speaker, in 43 years, no Quebec government has ever signed the Canadian Constitution. At this point in time, the Constitution does not allow the government to attack the French language and the Quebec value of secularism the way it wants to, so it appears to be trying to hide behind the court and a government by judges. It is asking the justices to change the Canadian Constitution on its behalf.

Will the Prime Minister respect the consensus in Quebec? If he wants to open up the Constitution, I am very open to that.

**Right Hon. Mark Carney (Prime Minister, Lib.):** Mr. Speaker, there is the legislative branch and the judicial branch. The decision will be made by the Supreme Court, not by the members of Parliament from Quebec or anywhere else in Canada.

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[English]

**FINANCE**

**Kelly Block (Carlton Trail—Eagle Creek, CPC):** Mr. Speaker, the Prime Minister promised to cap spending but is now set to double the deficit. This is another broken promise, another Liberal bait and switch.

Here is what the PBO, Canada's financial watchdog, said about the PM's economic record: "the deficit will absolutely be higher", "I don't know that the government currently has fiscal anchors" and "the labour market sucks, wages are not going up".

My question is this: How high will the deficit go and what is the government's fiscal guardrail?

**Hon. François-Philippe Champagne (Minister of Finance and National Revenue, Lib.):** Mr. Speaker, I am so happy to see that our Conservative colleagues are so eager to see the great budget we are going to present on November 4. This is good news for Canadians indeed. It is going to be a generational investment in the future of this nation. We are going to build our country. We are going to protect our communities. We are going to empower Canadians. We are going to build the strongest economy in the G7. We are going to build like never before. We are going to build a Canada of the 21st century because we are the true north strong and free.

• (1430)

**Kelly Block (Carlton Trail—Eagle Creek, CPC):** Mr. Speaker, the PBO confirmed the deficit will be higher. Reports indicate it could even push \$100 billion. Canadians know that massive Liberal deficits drive inflation. They pay for it at the grocery store, as food inflation is 70% above target. As a result, 25% of households cannot afford to put food on the table.

Will the Prime Minister admit that having no fiscal anchor and doubling the deficit will only drive inflation higher?

**Hon. François-Philippe Champagne (Minister of Finance and National Revenue, Lib.):** Mr. Speaker, I would like to thank my colleague for giving me the opportunity to share good news with the House. The rate has gone down to 2.5% today. The Bank of

Canada just announced it. The Conservatives should celebrate. Consumers are celebrating. Businesses are celebrating. Canada is celebrating. One thing it tells all Canadians is that our plan is working. We are going to build the strongest economy in the G7.

**Raquel Dancho (Kildonan—St. Paul, CPC):** Mr. Speaker, the PBO, Canada's top budget watchdog, has painted a dismal picture of the Prime Minister's economic record, saying, "the labour market sucks, wages are not going up". It gets worse for the Prime Minister, with his big plan to split the budget into operating and capital. The PBO is not fooled by the smoke and mirrors. He said, "The bottom line of the government will not change. The international public sector standards that everyone uses to measure the deficit and levels of debt will not change."

As it turns out, debt is debt, so can the Prime Minister tell us just how much Liberal debt he is adding to Canada's bottom line?

**Hon. Patty Hajdu (Minister of Jobs and Families and Minister responsible for the Federal Economic Development Agency for Northern Ontario, Lib.):** Mr. Speaker, in the last election, only six months ago, Canadians chose a Liberal government. They chose a Liberal government because they know they need investment. They need investment in the big projects that are going to drive great jobs all across the country. They need investment in the skills training that helps evolve the next generation of workers. They need investment in food for kids, in dental care for adults and in the many ways that our government can support Canadians.

**Raquel Dancho (Kildonan—St. Paul, CPC):** Mr. Speaker, however the Liberals want to try to spin their massive deficits, the top financial watchdog in the country says there is only one bottom line, and we will trust the PBO's word over 10 years of Liberal deficits any day. With the plan to split the budget, it is as if the Prime Minister has forgotten that it is all linked to the same bank account, and there is really only one taxpayer.

With the deficit set to double, let us just call a spade a spade. Will the Prime Minister admit he is really just cooking the books and hoping Canadians do not notice?

**Hon. Mélanie Joly (Minister of Industry and Minister responsible for Canada Economic Development for Quebec Regions, Lib.):** Mr. Speaker, there is good news today. The Bank of Canada has reduced the interest rate to 2.5%. This is something that all entrepreneurs and all businesses are taking note of, and obviously consumers as well.



We are focused on jobs, and we heard across the country this summer that we need to be there for businesses that are trying to pivot and adapt. That is why we put \$5 billion on the table to help them. Meanwhile, we are going around the world attracting foreign direct investments because we need to build Canada strong.

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### EMPLOYMENT

**Lianne Rood (Middlesex—London, CPC):** Mr. Speaker, the Parliamentary Budget Officer, Canada's top financial watchdog, just ripped the Liberal job record, saying, "the labour market sucks, wages are not going up". Eighty-six thousand Canadians have lost their jobs since the Liberals took office. Youth unemployment is over 14%, and Canada now has the second-highest unemployment in the G7. This is another classic Liberal bait and switch.

I have one simple question: Does the Prime Minister have the guts to admit that his so-called jobs plan has completely failed Canadians?

**Hon. Anna Gainey (Secretary of State (Children and Youth), Lib.):** Mr. Speaker, with everything going on in the world, we understand the pressures that Canadians, particularly young Canadians, are facing. This new government is getting busy with nation-building projects, which will create quality jobs, quality careers and opportunities, in particular for youth, across this country, including 18,000 jobs during the construction of a new Darlington nuclear project in Ontario, for example, and hundreds of jobs in critical minerals and mining in Saskatchewan and British Columbia. Building the strongest economy in the G7 means more opportunities for youth and for all Canadians across the country.

\* \* \*

• (1435)

[Translation]

### FINANCE

**Luc Berthold (Mégantic—L'Érable—Lotbinière, CPC):** Mr. Speaker, the Liberal Prime Minister promised to cap government spending, but he is doubling the deficit. This is another broken promise, another Liberal bait and switch.

Yesterday, the Parliamentary Budget Officer issued a scathing indictment of the latest Liberal Prime Minister's first six months in office. "The deficit will absolutely be higher", he said. "I don't know that the government currently has fiscal anchors", he said. He said there is no clarity, no structure.

Even the independent Parliamentary Budget Officer does not know these things. Can anyone in this government tell us how far into the Liberal red the latest Prime Minister's deficit will go?

**Hon. François-Philippe Champagne (Minister of Finance and National Revenue, Lib.):** Mr. Speaker, it is nice to see that the Conservatives are looking forward to November 4. We are looking forward to it too, because, on November 4, we will present a generational investment plan for Canada's future.

We are going to build our country. We are going to protect our communities. We are going to build the Canadian economy. Together with Canadians, we will build the strongest economy in the

### Oral Questions

G7. I look forward to seeing the Conservatives vote with the government to build the country of tomorrow. Long live Canada.

**Luc Berthold (Mégantic—L'Érable—Lotbinière, CPC):** Mr. Speaker, do my colleagues know what the Parliamentary Budget Officer said about November 4?

The Parliamentary Budget Officer has confirmed that the deficit is going to be a lot higher. Reports indicate that it could reach as high as \$100 billion. Canadians know that massive Liberal deficits fuel inflation. They are the ones paying the price at the grocery store. Food inflation is 70% higher than the target.

Instead of bullying the Parliamentary Budget Officer by constantly reminding him that his appointment is only temporary or pointing out how many days he has left until his term of office ends, will the Prime Minister admit that doubling the deficit without any fiscal anchors will raise inflation and punish families?

**Hon. Joël Lightbound (Minister of Government Transformation, Public Works and Procurement, Lib.):** Mr. Speaker, Canadians have given us a clear mandate to increase their purchasing power and unleash Canada's economic potential.

We are increasing Canadians' purchasing power by lowering taxes for 22 million Canadians. We are increasing young Canadians' purchasing power by eliminating the GST on new homes for first-time buyers. We are unleashing Canada's economic potential by unifying Canada's economy, resulting in \$215 billion in GDP benefits, according to the Montreal Economic Institute.

We are building major projects right across the country. We are creating good jobs for Canadians and young Canadians in Conterecœur, Saskatchewan, Ontario and everywhere else in Canada.

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### JUSTICE

**Rhéal Éloi Fortin (Rivière-du-Nord, BQ):** Mr. Speaker, the Judges Act is clear. Section 3 states, and I quote:

3 No person is eligible to be appointed a judge of a superior court in any province unless ... that person

(a) is a barrister or advocate of at least 10 years' standing at the bar of any province

However, Robert Leckey has been appointed a judge of the Superior Court of Quebec even though he has been a member of the Barreau du Québec for just seven years.

My question for the minister is simple. Does he believe that Robert Leckey meets the legal criteria to be a judge on the Quebec Superior Court, yes or no?

**Hon. Sean Fraser (Minister of Justice and Attorney General of Canada and Minister responsible for the Atlantic Canada Opportunities Agency, Lib.):** Mr. Speaker, we are aware of the legal challenge to the appointment of this judge to the Quebec Superior Court.

### Oral Questions

Canada has a very robust and independent judicial appointment process, and we want to keep it that way. Judicial independence is an important foundation of our democracy. It protects the rule of law. To say otherwise undermines those principles. We will always defend the independence of our courts.

**Rhéal Éloi Fortin (Rivière-du-Nord, BQ):** Mr. Speaker, let us talk about their robust and independent judicial appointment system. The appointment of Robert Leckey, done through that very system, violates Canada's Judges Act.

We believe that he was appointed precisely because he is a Liberal. The Liberals expect him to defend Liberal positions on secularism and the French language within Quebec's courts. Quebec should get to select the judges who serve in Quebec courts.

Will the minister immediately relieve Justice Leckey of his duties?

[English]

**Hon. Sean Fraser (Minister of Justice and Attorney General of Canada and Minister responsible for the Atlantic Canada Opportunities Agency, Lib.):** Mr. Speaker, the member will appreciate that we have a different perspective. We expect the justice to make decisions independently based on the law. The rule of law in this country is a fundamental pillar of our democracy, with which we may not show compromise. We must insist that we have an independent process based on recommendations by people who can assess the validity of the nominations that come before us. We appoint judges based on their quality and on their merit, not on their partisan affiliation. I hope all members will support the independence of this essential process in a democracy.

\* \* \*

• (1440)

### THE ECONOMY

**Scot Davidson (New Tecumseth—Gwillimbury, CPC):** Mr. Speaker, the Liberals' talk is as empty as Canadians' cupboards. It took 40 years before Toronto's largest food bank saw one million annual visits. However, under the Liberal government, demand has exploded. It had two million, then three million and now four million visits from hungry Canadians. The Prime Minister says to judge him on food prices, and Canadians are judging him as they stand in the longest food bank lines this country has ever seen.

How many more people will be forced to go there when he doubles the deficit?

**Hon. John Zerucelli (Secretary of State (Labour), Lib.):** Mr. Speaker, one of the best ways to deal with food inflation is to give Canadians real opportunities. That is what we are doing by building a strong economy, a building economy. We are building big, building bold and building right now. We are building with major projects.

I was pleased to stand with the Prime Minister last week in Edmonton, where we announced the first tranche of projects through the Major Projects Office. We announced our plan to build homes using Canadian steel, Canadian lumber and Canadian unionized workers. This will create hundreds of thousands of new jobs, apprenticeship opportunities, training opportunities and real careers.

We are optimistic about the future of this country, and I hope the opposition gets on board.

**Scot Davidson (New Tecumseth—Gwillimbury, CPC):** Mr. Speaker, the minister should go to a food bank and tell Canadians lining up there just how good they have it. While he pats himself on the back, food bank workers on the front lines are calling the situation horrific. One in four households is struggling to afford food. Parents are skipping meals so their kids can eat. While families go hungry, Liberal spending keeps driving grocery prices even higher.

Will the Liberal government keep spending until every single table in this country is empty?

**Hon. Wayne Long (Secretary of State (Canada Revenue Agency and Financial Institutions), Lib.):** Mr. Speaker, while the Conservative leader was spending the summer trying to get his job back, we criss-crossed the country getting feedback from Canadians with respect to what they want to see in this budget. Their message was resoundingly clear. They want us to spend less on government operations and invest more in our economy, in national projects and in nation building. That is exactly what we are doing. We are going to build the strongest economy in the G7.

**Laila Goodridge (Fort McMurray—Cold Lake, CPC):** Mr. Speaker, the Prime Minister said Canadians would judge him on the cost at the grocery store. He is failing. Grocery prices are 70% above their own targets. Since the Liberals took office, food inflation has skyrocketed by 40%. It is another broken Liberal promise. Families are struggling to keep up. I do not know if the ministers shop for groceries themselves, so I will put this simply: Beef is up 33%, canned soup is up 26% and potatoes are up 16%.

Will the Prime Minister admit that doubling the deficit will make food inflation worse?

**Hon. Patty Hajdu (Minister of Jobs and Families and Minister responsible for the Federal Economic Development Agency for Northern Ontario, Lib.):** Mr. Speaker, the Conservatives propose cuts, but we are building over on this side and they should get on board with that. Every time they have a chance to stand with Canadians, whether it is to vote for child care, whether it is to support food programs or whether it is to make sure that families get what they need to thrive and survive, including the investment in skilled trades, the investment in unions and the investment in actual Canadian work, they fail because they have no vision. Their vision is to cut, cut, cut.

**Laila Goodridge (Fort McMurray—Cold Lake, CPC):** Mr. Speaker, families cannot eat the word salad served up by the minister, unfortunately.

Food inflation is rising and one in four families is currently struggling to put food on the table. Meanwhile, Liberal deficits are fuelling inflation, driving prices even higher. Liberals are more interested in feeding bureaucracies in Ottawa than in tackling the serious problems facing Canadian families that are struggling to put nutritious food on the table and in their kids' lunch boxes. Food banks and school lunch programs are band-aids. We need real solutions to the real root cause of the problem: rising food costs. Will the minister cut the deficit so food—

**The Speaker:** The hon. Secretary of State for Seniors.

**Hon. Stephanie McLean (Secretary of State (Seniors), Lib.):** Mr. Speaker, this government is protecting Canadians, and that includes seniors: their safety, their right to housing, their retirement security. Seniors are living longer. They are living healthier lives than ever. This government will always support and empower Canadian seniors. They are an important part of this economy. We are showing action, such as cutting red tape and constructing purpose-built housing so seniors can age with dignity in their own communities. We are ensuring that seniors have the funds they need to retire and to be able to afford groceries through such programs as old age security.

• (1445)

[Translation]

**Joël Godin (Portneuf—Jacques-Cartier, CPC):** Mr. Speaker, my question is for the Prime Minister.

For 10 years, under this Liberal government, Canadians have been struggling with the ever-rising cost of living. Right now, housing, grocery and energy costs are taking their toll on the wallets of families, seniors and young people. Like everywhere else in Canada, people in Portneuf—Jacques-Cartier are feeling discouraged and extremely worried about the future.

What does the Prime Minister have to say to families, seniors and young people to ease this burden and give them a little hope?

**Hon. Joël Lightbound (Minister of Government Transformation, Public Works and Procurement, Lib.):** Mr. Speaker, we are committed to making life more affordable and increasing Canadians' purchasing power. That is the mandate that Canadians gave us. That is why one of the first things that we did was to lower taxes for 22 million Canadians. That is why we eliminated the GST for first-time homebuyers to make it easier for young Canadians to buy a home.

However, we are not stopping there. With the investments that we are making to build Canada and create good, well-paying jobs, we will be able to not only make our economy the strongest in the G7, but also fund important social programs, such as the Canada child benefit and housing investments that help Canadians across the country, including those in Portneuf—Jacques-Cartier.

\* \* \*

[English]

## LABOUR

**Jessica Fancy (South Shore—St. Margarets, Lib.):** Mr. Speaker, as this government focuses on nation-building projects that will connect our country, trade workers will be in high demand. They

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need to be able to move freely and have their skills recognized across provinces and territories if we are going to deliver on building a stronger, more inclusive economy.

Can the Minister of Jobs and Families update the House on how our government is working to support and improve labour mobility across the country?

**Hon. Patty Hajdu (Minister of Jobs and Families and Minister responsible for the Federal Economic Development Agency for Northern Ontario, Lib.):** Mr. Speaker, that is a great question. As the Conservatives laugh over there, it is clear that many of them have never met a labourer who actually has barriers to crossing the country to get to good jobs. In fact, we have worked diligently with the provinces and territories to make sure that, no matter where the work is, if there is a worker who wants to do it, they can get there and take that job. The Conservatives can laugh all they want, but we are doing the hard work over here.

\* \* \*

## PUBLIC SAFETY

**Larry Brock (Brantford—Brant South—Six Nations, CPC):** Mr. Speaker, crime, chaos and fear are ravaging communities right across Canada after 10 years of the Liberals' prioritizing soft-on-crime laws. In Saskatchewan, a man out on release after 59 prior convictions murdered 11 people. In Peel Region, half the suspects in a violent carjacking ring were out on bail. In Vancouver, just 40 repeat offenders were arrested 6,000 times, yet the government takes no action.

Why are the Liberals clinging to laws that let dangerous criminals back on the streets instead of keeping Canadians safe?

**Hon. Ruby Sahota (Secretary of State (Combatting Crime), Lib.):** Mr. Speaker, the second bill we introduced in the House was Bill C-2, our stronger borders measure, which gives police the tools to deal with many issues, including organized crime.

The next thing we are going to do is stiffen bail and make sentencing a lot stricter. We are going to partner with police services across the country to fight organized crime, make it tougher for violent offenders to get bail and impose stricter sentences. We are taking action on this front to make sure that Canadians are safe.

**Larry Brock (Brantford—Brant South—Six Nations, CPC):** Mr. Speaker, we have been listening to that for five months: empty promises, empty words.

*Oral Questions*

Last year, 256 people were charged with homicide while on release. That is, 256 Canadians would be alive today if these violent criminals had been behind bars. If Conservatives' "three strikes and you're out" law were in place, these repeat offenders would have been in jail and not destroying families. Nearly five months after taking office, the Prime Minister has failed to act. If he truly wants to crack down on violent crime, he will back our common-sense Conservative law to keep criminals in jail and to restore safe streets. Will he do that?

**Hon. Sean Fraser (Minister of Justice and Attorney General of Canada and Minister responsible for the Atlantic Canada Opportunities Agency, Lib.):** Mr. Speaker, dangerous people who commit serious crimes should not be walking freely in our streets if they pose a public safety threat to Canadians. I have good news—

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

• (1450)

**The Speaker:** After the first couple of seconds, I could not hear.

Would the minister like to start from the top?

**Hon. Sean Fraser:** Mr. Speaker, I thank my Conservative colleagues for the applause. I hope they will meet that with their votes when it comes time to support the legislation we will be advancing this fall.

I have good news for my friend opposite. This legislation would include serious reforms to make stricter bail conditions for people who are repeat violent offenders. It would have harsher sentences for those people who would pose risks to the public's safety.

We will do what we can to strengthen Canada's laws. We will do what we can to bring the provinces along with us. My hope is only that all members of this House will do the right thing and vote for the legislation when it comes forward.

\* \* \*

**JUSTICE**

**Fred Davies (Niagara South, CPC):** Mr. Speaker, Daniel Senecal raped and choked a 12-year-old boy in my riding. He was sentenced to 18 months but was released six months early. While on parole, this monster attacked and sexually abused his next victim, little E, a three-year-old little girl, almost killing her and leaving her fighting for her life before the firefighters arrived on the scene.

Failed Liberal justice policies have allowed repeat child sex offenders to be let out early. Will the Liberals introduce changes to the Criminal Code today and bring home justice for victims like little E?

**Hon. Sean Fraser (Minister of Justice and Attorney General of Canada and Minister responsible for the Atlantic Canada Opportunities Agency, Lib.):** Mr. Speaker, I sincerely thank my hon. colleague for raising this question on the floor of the House of Commons. Such horrific acts can be met only with condemnation from members of Parliament on both sides of the aisle.

As we seek to move forward with legislation, we will be restricting conditional sentence orders when it comes to sexual crimes and sexual crimes against children. We will do what we can to make

sure that we work with provinces so that they can fund their systems properly, as well as to ensure that we work together to keep Canadians safe.

My hope is that crime and horrific circumstances such as these will not be used as partisan fodder. I will work sincerely with my colleague opposite to advance the kinds of changes that will keep children safe in this country.

[Translation]

**Pierre Paul-Hus (Charlesbourg—Haute-Saint-Charles, CPC):** Mr. Speaker, the Conservative leader has announced that he would put an end to the wave of violent crime created by the Liberals by adopting a "three strikes and you're out" law. This law would prevent criminals who have been convicted of three serious offences from getting bail, probation, parole or house arrest. What is more, it would keep violent criminals behind bars longer to keep them away from their victims and off our streets.

Does the Prime Minister need some good ideas for fighting crime? If so, will he adopt the opposition leader's law?

[English]

**Hon. Sean Fraser (Minister of Justice and Attorney General of Canada and Minister responsible for the Atlantic Canada Opportunities Agency, Lib.):** Mr. Speaker, when it comes to good ideas, I can assure my colleague opposite that I have been taking them from law enforcement, from provincial governments and from stakeholders in the public safety space since the day of my appointment to this position.

We will be introducing legislation that would strengthen Canada's bail system, making it harder for repeat violent offenders and for those who commit serious crimes with organized criminal organizations, including auto theft and home invasion. The Conservatives will have to wait a matter of weeks before this legislation comes forward. My hope is that they will support the common-sense measures that would help keep communities safe in every part of this country.

[Translation]

**Pierre Paul-Hus (Charlesbourg—Haute-Saint-Charles, CPC):** Mr. Speaker, in recent years, we have witnessed the implementation of Bill C-5, which amends the Criminal Code and allows sentences to be served at home, and Bill C-75, which makes it very easy for offenders to be released on bail. These bills were put in place by the former justice minister, David Lametti, who is currently an adviser to the Prime Minister's Office.

Will the Prime Minister listen to David Lametti, or will he listen to reason and listen to the Conservatives?

[English]

**Hon. Sean Fraser (Minister of Justice and Attorney General of Canada and Minister responsible for the Atlantic Canada Opportunities Agency, Lib.):** Mr. Speaker, this is the second time this week I have received a question about a piece of legislation that the questioner has seemingly not read. Bill C-5, among other things, actually restricts the use of conditional sentencing orders for serious crimes, such as attempted murder and advocating genocide. We want to continue to put measures in place that will have harsher sentences for repeat violent offenders. We will also advance reforms that would make it harder to get bail for people who pose a public safety threat.

I would ask that all members of the House pull the partisan rhetoric out of such a serious issue as public safety and get together to advance reforms that will protect—

**The Speaker:** The hon. member for Thornhill.

\* \* \*

### HOUSING

**Melissa Lantsman (Thornhill, CPC):** Mr. Speaker, the Prime Minister promised Canadians that he would build 500,000 homes a year, doubling housing starts. Instead, housing starts are down 16%, and his \$13-billion brand new bureaucracy might someday, maybe, build a grand total of 4,000 homes. That is 1.6% of what we already build. It is a rounding error.

Is this really the government's housing strategy: to hope that Canadians do not know basic math?

• (1455)

**Hon. Gregor Robertson (Minister of Housing and Infrastructure and Minister responsible for Pacific Economic Development Canada, Lib.):** Mr. Speaker, the Conservatives seem a little confused, so let me help here. First, the projects that we announced were just the start. Second, they can support up to 45,000 new affordable homes. Third, we have many more projects on the way.

This is not the first time the Conservatives have gotten the numbers wrong, so I would like to invite them to take a moment and rework their talking points. We have no intention of slowing down. It is time to build.

**Melissa Lantsman (Thornhill, CPC):** Mr. Speaker, only in Liberal land do we solve the housing crisis by blowing \$13 billion on a fourth bureaucracy after the first three already failed. Those numbers are right.

Who is leading the master plan? It is the former mayor of Vancouver. He doubled rents and jacked up home prices by 150%. Just to make the circus more complete, he handed a key role to his buddy from Toronto, the same person who slapped a 700% hike on development charges and oversaw home prices double when she was there.

Is this really the definition of success for the minister?

**Hon. Gregor Robertson (Minister of Housing and Infrastructure and Minister responsible for Pacific Economic Development Canada, Lib.):** Mr. Speaker, once again we hear the Conservatives trashing local officials and government. It is unbelievable.

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They are talking about mayors, they are talking about councillors and they are talking about public servants, rather than looking at themselves. Many of us who have served at the local level have dealt with Conservative governments that did nothing for affordable housing and did nothing to improve affordability for Canadians.

We are taking action and working with our partners at the local level.

**Tamara Kronis (Nanaimo—Ladysmith, CPC):** Mr. Speaker, the Prime Minister promised to double housing starts, but they are down 16%. It is no surprise when we see who is in charge. The housing minister oversaw a 150% surge in home prices and doubled rents in Vancouver, while the new \$13-billion housing czar helped hike Toronto homebuilding taxes by 700%.

When will the Prime Minister admit that all he is doubling are gatekeepers and deficits?

**Hon. Gregor Robertson (Minister of Housing and Infrastructure and Minister responsible for Pacific Economic Development Canada, Lib.):** Mr. Speaker, I will just remind the members opposite that we are focused on building affordable housing at a scale never seen before, certainly not by Conservative governments, which vacated the field on affordable housing for their decade in power. That set us back enormously.

We are now building back. We are looking forward. We are going to employ Canadians in building affordable housing at a scale that is unprecedented. We expect the members opposite to support our work.

[Translation]

**Gabriel Hardy (Montmorency—Charlevoix, CPC):** Mr. Speaker, in Montmorency—Charlevoix, the housing crisis is very real. We are not the only ones affected. Families across Quebec are struggling. A recent study showed that families now spend more than 30% of their income on housing. Low-income families spend as much as 70%. The direct impact is a loss of \$4.2 billion for the Quebec economy.

The Prime Minister promised to double construction, but housing starts are down 16%. That is not surprising, given all the bureaucracy and red tape developers are facing.

Will the Prime Minister start building homes, not bureaucracy?

*Oral Questions*

**Hon. Joël Lightbound (Minister of Government Transformation, Public Works and Procurement, Lib.):** Mr. Speaker, it is true that the housing crisis is hitting young Canadians particularly hard. That is why we not only eliminated the GST for first-time homebuyers, but also announced “build Canada homes”, together with my colleague, the Minister of Housing and Infrastructure. An initial investment of \$13 billion will create the leverage to build thousands of affordable homes across the country.

Incidentally, I would note that, when my colleague's leader was a minister, only six housing units were built on his watch. We are going to build on a much larger scale. I would say that my colleague, the Minister of Housing and Infrastructure, is off to a good start.

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**CANADA REVENUE AGENCY**

**Linda Lapointe (Rivière-des-Mille-Îles, Lib.):** Mr. Speaker, my constituents have been telling me and my team how frustrated they are with the delays they experience when they try to contact the Canada Revenue Agency. We know that the dedicated employees of CRA provide invaluable services to Canadians, but the facts are clear: Demand has increased significantly in recent years and the system needs to be improved.

Can the Minister of Finance and National Revenue inform the House of the measures the government is taking to improve the CRA's service delivery?

• (1500)

**Hon. François-Philippe Champagne (Minister of Finance and National Revenue, Lib.):** Mr. Speaker, first, I want to thank my colleague for her excellent question.

The level of service provided by the CRA is unacceptable. That is why I asked the CRA to present a 100-day plan to improve the services that Canadians have a right to expect.

I also want to thank all of the CRA agents for their hard work. We will give them the technology, processes and support they need to deliver the highest level of service that Canadians have a right to expect.

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*[English]***IMMIGRATION, REFUGEES AND CITIZENSHIP**

**Hon. Michelle Rempel Garner (Calgary Nose Hill, CPC):** Mr. Speaker, the question is for the immigration minister.

New housing completions are at record lows, but the Liberals are welcoming unprecedented numbers of people under every immigration stream. On top of this, there are potentially millions of people who have expiring visas, and the Liberals do not even know if they will leave.

Why is the immigration minister letting in people faster than the Liberals are building homes to house people who are already here in Canada?

*[Translation]*

**Hon. Lena Metlege Diab (Minister of Immigration, Refugees and Citizenship, Lib.):** Mr. Speaker, our measures are working. Yes, they are working.

In the first quarter of 2025, Canada experienced the lowest non-pandemic demographic growth since the Second World War. We are continuing to implement our plan on immigration levels, a plan that reduces our temporary resident population by hundreds of thousands and reduces our permanent resident target by over 20%.

Our objective is clear: to make our system viable and attract the best talent.

*[English]*

**Hon. Michelle Rempel Garner (Calgary Nose Hill, CPC):** Mr. Speaker, the minister just claimed that there is no problem, that everything is okay. She is spreading misinformation, because the Parliamentary Budget Officer's report says that the Liberal's current immigration plan, the one that she just said is working, leaves a massive housing gap, because the minister is still setting levels way too high.

If Canada is to be a place where everyone can succeed, we need to ensure that everybody has a place to live and to call home, so why is the minister spreading misinformation while still welcoming unsustainable numbers of people to Canada when Canada is in the middle of a housing crisis?

**Hon. Lena Metlege Diab (Minister of Immigration, Refugees and Citizenship, Lib.):** Mr. Speaker, let me repeat it in English so she and other members of her party understand: Our measures are working. In the first quarter of 2025, Canada recorded the smallest non-pandemic population gain since the government started to keep records in 1946. We are following through on our immigration plan, and that is reducing our temporary resident number and our permanent resident number by 20%.

Our plan is clear: Bring sustainability to our system and attract best talent.

Our student and temporary worker admissions are down by 50%. Asylum claims are down by a third, and—

**The Speaker:** The hon. member for Oshawa has the floor.

**Rhonda Kirkland (Oshawa, CPC):** Mr. Speaker, we have a serious situation. The Liberals have welcomed unsustainable levels of international students to Canada every year but did not think about where they would live. Things are so bad that this year a CBC investigation uncovered extreme abuse by landlords, who were in some cases offering free or discounted rent in exchange for sexual services. This is not fair to anyone.

The Liberals broke the immigration system. When will the abuse end?

**Hon. Lena Metlege Diab (Minister of Immigration, Refugees and Citizenship, Lib.):** Mr. Speaker, Canadians gave our government a mandate just a few months ago: to return the international student program to sustainable levels, and we are doing exactly that.

Almost 90,000 fewer students arrived between January and June 2025, compared to the same period in 2024, and the latest numbers show 100,000 fewer study permit holders in Canada compared to the end of 2024.

We want to attract the best and the brightest talent to Canada. We will do that, but we will also protect the students who are here.

\* \* \*

### NATURAL RESOURCES

**Ron McKinnon (Coquitlam—Port Coquitlam, Lib.):** Mr. Speaker, our government will win the trade war thrust upon us, by making Canada an energy superpower, diversifying our exports and building the strongest economy in the G7, all while working with first nations rights holders. Selling our resources responsibly will generate revenues needed to deliver the programs Canadians rely on, while helping our allies shift away from higher-emissions fuel sources, and taking cards away from autocrats and giving them back to Canadians. It is a win-win.

Can the Minister of Energy and Natural Resources share an update with the House about Canada's work to achieve these objectives?

• (1505)

**Hon. Tim Hodgson (Minister of Energy and Natural Resources, Lib.):** Mr. Speaker, I have good news for everyone. This week, we are putting “one project, one review” into action. This week, British Columbia and the federal government jointly approved the new Ksi Lisims LNG export terminal, led by the Nisga'a Nation, with a first nations-owned pipeline attached. That project will be the second-largest project in the history of the country. We have LNG Canada phase 1, Cedar LNG, Woodfibre LNG and Ksi Lisims LNG. We are building the strongest economy in the G7.

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### FORESTRY INDUSTRY

**Gaétan Malette (Kapuskasing—Timmins—Mushkegowuk, CPC):** Mr. Speaker, for more than 45 years, communities in northern Ontario have endured the devastating impact of U.S. tariffs on their forestry sector. In Kapuskasing, Kap Paper is a vital link for five sawmills, and if that link breaks, more will be challenged. That is thousands of jobs on the line.

While the federal government has committed to over \$1.2 billion to support the industry, it has failed to follow through. When will it help the workers at Kap Paper?

**Hon. Tim Hodgson (Minister of Energy and Natural Resources, Lib.):** Mr. Speaker, I grew up in a logging town. I know exactly what the softwood lumber industry is going through. We allocated \$1.2 billion in three different programs to the softwood lumber industry. We are helping retool the industry and rebuild the

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industry for the reality that is going on in the economy today. We will make the industry strong again.

\* \* \*

[Translation]

### FOREIGN AFFAIRS

**Alexandre Boulerice (Rosemont—La Petite-Patrie, NDP):** Mr. Speaker, since Monday, there have been people on the Hill reading the names of the 18,000 children of Gaza who have been killed in the genocide that is unfolding right before our eyes. Some of these children were killed by a sniper on their way to pick up food. An entire week will not be enough time to read all of these names.

This tragedy requires serious action. It is time to stop the sale of weapons to the Netanyahu regime. Tough sanctions must be imposed. International law must be respected. The Liberals must act. The entire world is looking at us and our children will be asking us how we responded.

**Hon. Anita Anand (Minister of Foreign Affairs, Lib.):** Mr. Speaker, the situation that Palestinians are facing is intolerable. This matter is before the court and we will be closely following the situation as it develops.

Canada is putting pressure on all parties to agree to an immediate ceasefire. We will not wait to act. We have sanctioned extremist settlers, including ministers. We have provided \$355 million in assistance and we also intend to recognize the state of Palestine next week.

**Yves Perron:** Mr. Speaker, I rise on a point of order.

In response to a Conservative member, the Minister of Immigration said that she would answer her in English to be sure she was understood. I would just like to remind my colleagues, and perhaps the minister as well, that we are free to speak in the official language of our choice in the House, and perhaps that underestimated the very high quality of our interpreters' work. I would like that to be withdrawn.

**The Speaker:** That is duly noted.

The hon. member for Drummond.

• (1510)

**Martin Champoux:** Mr. Speaker, I see that you were going to move on to the next item, but my colleague from Berthier—Maskinongé requested that the minister withdraw her remarks.

**Hon. Steven MacKinnon:** Mr. Speaker, I see no reason why the minister should apologize. She cited numbers that the member opposite did not understand, so she repeated them.

[English]

**Hon. Michelle Rempel Garner:** Mr. Speaker, we are at a time when I think we need to bring some decorum to this place, and what the minister said undermined the seriousness of the debate. It made light of it, and to my Bloc colleague's point, she did not do her job as the minister, so I would like an apology too.

*Tributes**[Translation]*

**Jean-Denis Garon:** Mr. Speaker, I understood from my colleague's previous intervention that she wanted an apology.

My colleague from Berthier—Maskinongé did not ask for an apology. He asked for a simple correction from the minister. Her comments were unbecoming of a minister and unworthy of the status of French as an official language in the House. I think that, in the Liberals' supposed spirit of co-operation, she should just withdraw her statement.

**The Speaker:** I understand that it is a matter of respect and decorum, but, in my opinion, it is an idiomatic expression, so to speak. I will leave it at that.

The member for Portneuf—Jacques-Cartier.

**Joël Godin:** Mr. Speaker, it is important to promote both official languages which, for everyone except the Liberals, are French and English.

I think the request from my Bloc colleague is justified, and I invite our colleague to simply withdraw her comments. That way, we can move on, and it will demonstrate that the Liberals respect both French and English.

**The Speaker:** Since the minister does not wish to respond, we will continue. We must be careful with the language we use. In this case, as I said, it is an idiomatic expression, even if it is not necessarily the most polite expression.

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**HON. KEN DRYDEN**

**The Speaker:** It being 3:13 p.m., pursuant to order made on Tuesday, September 16, 2025, I invite all hon. members to stand to observe a moment of silence in honour of our former colleague, the Hon. Ken Dryden.

*[A moment of silence observed]*

*[English]*

**Right Hon. Mark Carney (Prime Minister, Lib.):** Mr. Speaker, I rise today to honour a national hero and a personal idol. Earlier this month, we lost the Hon. Ken Dryden. Ken's story is profoundly Canadian. He was born in Hamilton, grew up in Islington and was the son of a builder and kindergarten teacher. He joined the Islington Hornets in Toronto as a goaltender at the age of seven.

● (1515)

*[Translation]*

He entered the NHL as a player for the Montreal Canadiens 16 years later.

*[English]*

Ken was the reason I became a goalie, although I never mastered his ability to lean on his stick or to keep the puck out of the net. Ken Dryden was a six-time Stanley Cup champion and five-time Vezina Trophy winner, and he was the only person, and I say this with confidence, who will ever win the Conn Smythe Trophy for most valuable player in the playoffs before they have won the Calder Memorial Trophy as rookie of the year.

When Ken Dryden entered the NHL, he was already pursuing a law degree at McGill. His former teammates were in awe of Ken's work ethic, bringing textbooks into the dressing room and going to lectures after practice. Exam time and the playoffs overlapped, and in the spring of 1973, a few weeks after winning his second Stanley Cup, he graduated from McGill.

*[Translation]*

I remember. I was eight years old, and Ken was at the top of his game. He had put his hockey career on hold to go to school and write his bar exams. After he was called to the bar, he won the Stanley Cup another four times.

Few players retire from the National Hockey League to become lawyers, writers, politicians and public servants. After hanging up his skates, Ken dedicated his life to public service. That is why Ken was unique. He dreamed big dreams and pursued them with the kind of focus and determination that served him well.

Some of my dear colleagues here today had the privilege of serving alongside Ken. As a member of Parliament, he served the people of York Centre for seven years. His leadership and dedication to advocating for affordable child care paved the way for future leaders, such as the member for University—Rosedale, to finally institute the system available to families today.

Yes, Ken Dryden believed in solidarity, and that is something we all owe to one another.

*[English]*

Ken Dryden challenged us to dream big and to be bold for our future. As parliamentarians and as Canadians, let us work toward that future with Ken's values of hard work, solidarity and ambition. Few Canadians have given more or stood taller for our country. Ken Dryden was big Canada. Ken Dryden was best Canada.

My deepest condolences to Ken's wife, Lynda, and their two children, Sarah and Michael. Our thanks to them for sharing their husband and father with our country.

May we pick up Ken's torch and hold it high, and may he rest in peace.

**John Brassard (Barrie South—Innisfil, CPC):** Mr. Speaker, I too rise to pay tribute to a remarkable Canadian whose contributions have transcended the arenas of sport, public service and social advocacy, the Hon. Ken Dryden. I do so not just as a member of Parliament, but as a kid who grew up in Montreal watching Ken Dryden play for the Canadiens. I have a personal connection to the Dryden family by way of my wife's family, who lived not too far from Murray, Margaret, Ken, Dave and Judy's home in central Etobicoke on Pinehurst Crescent. My mother-in-law Jean Berry served on the board of Ken's dad's charity, Sleeping Children Around the World, and edited Murray's book *With God Nothing is Impossible*.



When Lynda and Ken moved back to Toronto, my wife Liane babysat their two children while they searched for a home. I had the occasion to visit Dryden's childhood home several times in Islington with my mother-in-law, and the home later became a warehouse of bed kits for Murray's charity. What struck me was that Murray had paved the backyard so young Ken and Dave could hone their skills in net with the neighbourhood kids, who, as I was told by Murray, would gather often to play ball hockey and ice hockey in the winter. The nets were still there when I visited. Members can imagine how I felt seeing the very spot where my hockey hero, the member for Foothills's hero and many of our Quebec colleagues' hero learned the art of being a goaler.

Dave Stubbs of NHL.com wrote that Dryden was “never a conventional goaltender. Not with his lanky, even gangly body type, accentuated even more by his stand-up style of play”. I thought about that as I stood in the Dryden backyard. In fact, his style was so unconventional that “legendary Boston Bruins and New York Rangers sniper Phil Esposito...during the 1971 Stanley Cup Playoffs was so frustrated by Dryden stoning the Bruins in an NHL Quarterfinals upset that he grumbled about the goalie having ‘arms like a giraffe.’” More than half a century later, Esposito revisited the confusing comparison to a giraffe's anatomy after Dryden's death and said, “OK, maybe [he had] the legs of a giraffe.”

Much has been said about his hockey accomplishments since his passing on September 5: the Stanley Cups he won, the Vezina Trophy, the Conn Smythe Trophy, the 1972 Summit Series and being drafted by the Boston Bruins in the 1964 NHL draft, which he did find out until the mid-seventies because it was a much simpler time back then, with no cellphones, no Internet and no hockey database websites. However, it is what he accomplished outside of playing hockey that has been so intriguing.

The legendary American broadcaster Al Michaels, who Dryden was sitting beside during the Miracle on Ice, when arguably the greatest call in sports history was made, referred to Ken recently on a podcast as a “Renaissance man” who knew everything about everything.

Father Raymond J. de Souza, in the National Post, said of Dryden, “In team sports, no one ever packed so much achievement into as few years (only eight seasons) as did Dryden—six Stanley Cups plus the 1972 Soviet series.” He said, “Only Michael Jordan was comparable, but the 1992 U.S. basketball ‘dream team’ was not nearly as important as the 1972 series.”

• (1520)

[Translation]

Surprisingly, Ken Dryden was at his best and most impressive off, not on, the ice. There are many excellent hockey players out there, but none was as skilled at analyzing the public sphere and, ultimately, at serving the public within the federal cabinet.

[English]

J. de Souza noted that Ken Dryden “spent a year...in classrooms as Ontario's youth commissioner to more fully understand the challenges of education.” He went on to say:

He moved into a middle-class home for a week to observe what life was like for a typical Toronto family in the early '90s. His novel of that experience, “The Moved

### *Tributes*

and the Shaken”...[was] a reminder in public policy, in journalism, in culture, to pay attention not only to the movers and the shakers, but those whom they move and shake.

We would be wise to let that be a reminder to all of us as we contemplate the decisions we make and the impact they have on our fellow Canadians.

[Translation]

Like every kid growing up back when Ken Dryden was goalie for the Montreal Canadiens, he inspired countless people to play that position in the streets or on the ice, and to strike the Dryden pose when resting, blocker against stick, as immortalized by statues in Montreal and in the Hockey Hall of Fame.

[English]

As de Souza wrote this week, “What other sports figure is sculpted at rest rather than in action? It's the sports version of Auguste Rodin's ‘The Thinker’ because Dryden was the great sportsman-thinker of his time, perhaps any time.”

[Translation]

There was never any doubt about the way that Ken Dryden lived his life or that he believed in miracles. A larger-than-life figure, he was curious, humble and respectful of the many people he met along his miraculous journey, including a young boy who grew up on 6th Avenue in Verdun and idolized Ken Dryden. He loved Canada and everything that Canada aspired to be.

[English]

Finally, having met his dad, Murray, on several occasions, and knowing the impact he had on so many lives around the world, I am not surprised Ken lived his life the way he did. Murray and Margaret Dryden taught Ken well, and it showed in who he was as a person and in everything he did.

On behalf of our Conservative team and our leader, with great respect and admiration for a truly remarkable Canadian, and Canadian, we send our condolences to Lynda and the entire Dryden family. May Ken rest, in his famous pose, in peace.

• (1525)

[Translation]

**Martin Champoux (Drummond, BQ):** Mr. Speaker, my childhood memories, like the childhood memories of hundreds of thousands of Quebecer children, are filled with winter nights on streets where the hard snow had made a perfect surface for us to play hockey. Sometimes three-on-three, sometimes four-on-four, one goalie, and two or three players on offence. There was no one on defence when we played in the street.

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At that time, it did not cost an arm and a leg to play hockey. There was no need to rent a skating rink and no need for expensive equipment. It was enough to have a pompom toque, mittens, a wooden stick that was not even curved, and a head full of dreams. “Guy Lafleur picks up the puck. He is alone; he shoots—He scores!” That is what all the young boys would shout on the street—that, and the familiar and endless calls of “Car!” The goal would be shoved to the side of the road. They would wait for the car to pass, put the goal back in place and carry on. Then we heard, “Guy Lafleur takes the puck back; he is in the zone, and—Save by Ken Dryden! Ken Dryden with a spectacular save.” Every kid scoring goals on the streets of Quebec, they were all Guy Lafleurs. Every kid making saves in every neighbourhood, all the goalies, they were Ken Drydens. From Chibougamau to Venise-en-Québec, from Shawinigan to Drummondville, “Save by Ken Dryden!” He was the best goalie in the world. We were too when we stopped a frozen tennis ball while playing smack in the middle of the road on a January night.

He was the one who earned some of our Stanley Cups, who made the Canadiens unbeatable. Is there any more beautiful tribute to someone than to say that he was the one with whom thousands and thousands of children identify? Everyone wants to be Montreal Canadiens number 29. For anyone who loved hockey, Guy Lafleur and Ken Dryden were the ones who thrilled Quebec the most. For at least two generations of Quebecers, Ken Dryden was the embodiment of our youth. He, like others before him and others after him, explains our passion for hockey and the importance of the Montreal Canadiens to our identity.

We offer our deepest condolences to his family, and on behalf of all fans of our national sport, we express our gratitude for the achievements he earned for us.

I would be remiss if I did not mention his public service. Elected in 2004, when the Bloc Québécois had 52 members elected, Mr. Dryden served briefly as a minister under Paul Martin before ending up on the opposition benches until 2011. He was an affable, intelligent man. He was liked by everyone, which is no small feat in today's political climate. His fight to protect young athletes from the scourge of concussions is admirable, and we have a collective responsibility to carry on his legacy.

For his work in the House, for his commitment to protecting our young athletes, for the Stanley Cups he delivered to Canadiens fans and on behalf of all young people standing in goal on a winter's night in the 1970s, allow me, on behalf of the Bloc Québécois, to simply say thank you, Mr. Dryden.

[English]

**Leah Gazan (Winnipeg Centre, NDP):** Mr. Speaker, I would say to my hon. colleagues, friends and everyone across Canada that I know, when we hear the name Ken Dryden, as we have heard today, the first image for many is of a towering figure in the net, calm, steady, unshakable, leading the Montreal Canadiens to six Stanley Cups and earning his place in the Hockey Hall of Fame. However, Ken Dryden's greatest legacy is not measured in wins or banners, but in his tireless work to ensure that every child in this country has a chance to dream, learn and succeed.

Ken Dryden understood something fundamental, which is that greatness in sport comes and goes, but greatness in service to others is a lasting legacy. Even while he was guarding the net for the Canadiens, he was also finishing his law degree at McGill University. It is a sign of his determination, balance and foresight, which would define his life after hockey. He could have chosen an easy path of fame and comfort. Instead, he chose learning, leadership and ultimately public service. He retired, in fact, at the height of his career.

Dryden then became a writer, a teacher, eventually a member of Parliament and then the minister of social development. In that role, he championed what he has always believed, which is that the future of Canada rests in the opportunities we give to our children. Ken Dryden had a deep respect for children, who are often overlooked in places of power.

At a time when we find so many people and groups disconnected from our very own humanity, Ken Dryden reminded us always that every child matters, that every child had a right to dignity, safety and security and to be nurtured as a flower, to grow and to flourish. What inspires me time and again is that he reminded us that early childhood education was not, in fact, a luxury, but a necessity, and that child care was not a private burden, but a public responsibility. As somebody who started their career in early childhood education, that meant so very much to me and early childhood educators throughout the country.

He also understood that, if we want to build a stronger country, we must start by giving every child, no matter where they came from, a fair chance to grow, thrive and succeed. He deeply cared about the human rights of children, something that is often up for debate in political spaces.

What inspires me the most in Dryden's persistence is that he never settled for short-term fixes or political convenience. He called on governments of every stripe to think beyond election cycles and to think about generations. His questions were always about what kind of country we wanted to leave our children. We need to learn from his example. We need to work across party lines to ensure that we never lose sight of ensuring that children in Canada are given everything they need to thrive and are provided with everything they need to live in dignity and flourish as the delicate flowers Ken Dryden was able to see in all children.

● (1530)

Reflecting on this, I know that, through listening to Ken Dryden and seeing what he did, he pushed all of us to see education as not simply reading and arithmetic, but as the very foundation of citizenship. A strong education system does not produce workers. He reminded us that it produces good leaders, dreamers and citizens with compassion and courage. As somebody who comes from the field of education, we often lose sight of how to build a good country. It goes beyond the pocketbook. It is about ensuring the well-being of all people.

Today, as we reflect on Ken Dryden's legacy, we are reminded that true leadership is not about the applause we receive in the arena, but about the lives we lift up in our communities. His commitment to children and education has touched countless families. His vision continues to challenge us to be better, to do more and to dream bigger to ensure that the next generations are better off than the ones before.

Let us honour Ken Dryden not only with our words but also with our actions. Let us carry forward his fight for universal child care, for stronger schools, for policies that put children at the very heart of every decision we make, whether in Canada or across the world. In the end, the most fitting tribute we can offer Ken Dryden is through our very own actions.

On behalf of the NDP, I offer condolences to his wife Lynda, his children Sarah and Michael, the rest of his family members and all those whose lives he touched.

● (1535)

**Elizabeth May (Saanich—Gulf Islands, GP):** Mr. Speaker, it is a great honour to have a chance to add my words to those of my colleagues on the passing of a remarkable Canadian whom I was very, very lucky to know. Obviously I did not get to know him because I play hockey. I did not get to know him in courtrooms, although I was a practising lawyer. I got to know him before I was involved in partisan politics, while I was working with other women leaders and other people in civil society working for child care when Ken Dryden was minister of social development.

I will not take all my time, because so many good words have been said of the way in which he inspired youth, the way in which he championed important causes, and the remarkable achievement of being a successful NHL player while also, as my friend from Winnipeg Centre said so eloquently, making sure his education was completed. Although many people will debate whether choosing the practice of law was a good choice, I endorse it myself. Because Ken Dryden had such a keen mind and a heart for public service, he did so much for this country and for women.

Let me share what I remember. I remember Ken Dryden's working ceaselessly to get signed agreements with each of the 10 provinces in this country to guarantee that we would have affordable early education and child care for every Canadian child. I remember working with Martha Friendly, who founded the University of Toronto's Childcare Resource and Research Unit, and her tireless work with then minister Dryden.

It is Martha I want to quote now. I never heard Ken Dryden say these words, but Martha said she will never forget Ken Dryden saying, as he started on this mission, "We need to get the system so in place that we're painted into a corner and it can't ever be removed." Unfortunately that did not occur. He created a universal child care program, and it obviously set a benchmark. It set the stage, and we still have work to do, because every child in Canada deserves the best start in life and deserves high quality early education and child care, and every parent needs to know that when they drop their child off at child care, it is affordable and they are not choosing between their rent and child care.

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Let me close with Ken Dryden's own words. When he achieved this for Canadians, the selfless, hard work in a very partisan and difficult place, Ken Dryden described himself as "the luckiest guy in government" because he was given a tough job to achieve something meaningful. I would ask all of us to reflect on that. When will we feel we have accomplished something that makes us feel we are the luckiest person in Parliament because we were given an impossible task and we accomplished it?

His family, Lynda, Sarah, Michael and his grandchildren, has our deepest sympathy and gratitude for sharing a remarkable human being, a truly decent human being of remarkable talent and skill, who gave his life, his dedication and service to inspiring Canadians, not just when he served in this place but also with the legacy he left for us to achieve and deliver on the promises he started so brilliantly to deliver.

● (1540)

[*Translation*]

**The Speaker:** Hon. colleagues, thank you very much for your words in tribute to our friend and colleague, the Hon. Ken Dryden. As you said, we owe a great deal to our former colleague for the great moments he gave us on the ice, in his writings and right here in the House of Commons.

[*English*]

He was a man for all seasons, who contributed to this country and its identity in so many profound ways. As a hockey hero, lawyer, author of books exploring Canada's soul, politician, thinker, professor and, as so many of us here today know, as a gentleman. We are grateful for all the great moments he gave us, moments etched in our individual memories and collective consciousness.

[*Translation*]

He was a true Canadian hero, one of the greats, a model of integrity and humility, and a man who pursued excellence in a variety of areas. I will always remember when he arrived on the scene in the middle of the playoffs in March 1971, when Montreal and its team had run out of hope in the quarter-finals against the champions, the Bruins. It was a true baptism of fire for a young man with no NHL experience, whom we had never heard of, but who took us to the cup.

[*English*]

His career as a hockey player had so many dramatic moments, and yet as a person, he eschewed drama for civility. I recall reading that one time the fiery Johnny McKenzie, of what were then called the Big Bad Bruins, crowded in front of the net and ran into Ken's stick. McKenzie was ready to answer with a well-placed punch, only to hear Ken calmly say, "Excuse me." McKenzie later said, "How could I get mad at a nice [guy who says sorry]?" It is as much a story about Ken Dryden as it is about the power of civility. Hockey and saying sorry, it does not get much more Canadian than that.

### *Tributes*

As a colleague, I saw him stay at an event well beyond what was expected because he would grant every last person time to share their Ken Dryden story, a moment that meant something to them during a game they saw in person or on TV.

[Translation]

Like with most heroes, there are many stories about Ken Dryden that help us better understand his impact and his contribution to his country. His arrival in my hometown of Montreal in the 1970s was momentous, even magical.

[English]

The fortunes of the Canadiens changes when the lanky Cornell-educated player from Toronto arrived in net.

[Translation]

I think Ken's time in Montreal also helped him, given his boundless curiosity, to more fully explore this country's passion for hockey and to discover some sense of Canada's soul and a love for the French language.

Here, in the House, Ken Dryden was always well spoken, always calm under pressure, just as he was on the ice, always listening and always wanting to do more for his country.

He was an inspiration to us and to all Canadians, some of whom immortalized him in works of art and even in a play.

[English]

After his death, a letter writer to a national newspaper said that if ever we are unsure of what to do, we should ask ourselves, "What would Ken Dryden do?"

These are wise words in tribute to a very wise man.

[Translation]

We offer our condolences to his family and hope that his extraordinary legacy will be a source of comfort and pride.

Thank you.

\* \* \*

• (1545)

[English]

### HON. JOHN MCCALLUM

**The Speaker:** Pursuant to order made on Tuesday, September 16, 2025, I invite all hon. members to stand to observe a moment of silence in honour of our former colleague, the Hon. John McCallum.

[A moment of silence observed]

[Translation]

**Hon. Dominic LeBlanc (President of the King's Privy Council for Canada and Minister responsible for Canada-U.S. Trade, Intergovernmental Affairs, Internal Trade, and One Canadian Economy, Lib.):** Mr. Speaker, I have the honour to rise today on behalf of the government and my Liberal caucus colleagues to pay tribute to the life of one of our former colleagues, someone you also knew well, Mr. Speaker, and one of my best friends, the late

Hon. John McCallum, whose kindness, generosity and incredible sense of humour touched everyone who had the pleasure of knowing him.

I will provide a brief overview of his long and distinguished career.

Before entering politics, John was known as one of Canada's top economists. He started his academic career in western Canada, at the University of Manitoba, before becoming dean of the faculty of arts at McGill University, where he was at the forefront of the national unity debates that were on Canadians' minds at the time.

In 1994, he left university life for the private sector where he held the position of senior vice-president and chief economist at the Royal Bank of Canada. That is where he forged a reputation as a very well-respected economist who could explain major economic trends in simple terms for the average person, a quality that helped me a great deal throughout our friendship.

[English]

After more than half a decade at RBC, John decided in 2000 to enter public life, and he was elected in the riding of Markham—Thornhill. That was when I met John for the first time. As luck would have it, we were sitting next to each other on that very first day in the House of Commons almost 25 years ago. From there on, we quickly became friends, finding common interests, not just in political matters but in family holidays together, on fishing trips in New Brunswick and family holidays abroad as well.

I will forever cherish those memories, and seeing John's wife, Nancy, and their children on Parliament Hill today reminded me of those happy moments.

John became minister in January 2002, and later I had the opportunity to serve as his parliamentary secretary at National Defence, the highlight of what was then my first term in the House of Commons. In those early years, in addition to his ministerial responsibilities, John made a name for himself as a courageous and outspoken advocate on pivotal issues that helped shape Canada into a more open, tolerant and welcoming society.

In June 2001, as a backbencher, he introduced a motion in the House of Commons to nominate Nelson Mandela as an honorary citizen of Canada, making Canada the first country to extend such an honour to this iconic champion of equality and human rights.

Fast-forward to 2015, when, building on his ability to leverage Canada's global reputation as a compassionate and progressive nation, John, as the newly appointed minister of immigration, refugees and citizenship, spearheaded Canada's efforts to resettle more than 40,000 Syrian refugees in record time.

The scale of the task cannot be overstated. It required mobilizing considerable government, local, private sector and community resources, and John poured his heart and soul into this noble effort. His success was our nation's success, and all of us can be proud of the way Canadians opened their homes and their hearts, as they have time and time again over the course of history, to those people fleeing war and persecution. John McCallum led that effort brilliantly. John embodied those values and led those debates.

• (1550)

[Translation]

Throughout his career, he served Canadians with intelligence, dedication and kindness.

[English]

I would like to offer our sincerest condolences to his beloved wife, Nancy, and to their three boys, Andrew, Jamie and Duncan. May they find comfort in knowing the profound impact their husband and their father had on our country and his numerous friends and colleagues, myself included. His legacy will live on here in the House of Commons, in his community and in the lives of the thousands of people whom he helped to find hope and solace.

Rest in peace, my friend. Thank you for your friendship and remarkable service to our country.

**Hon. Michelle Rempel Garner (Calgary Nose Hill, CPC):** Mr. Speaker, I rise to pay tribute to John McCallum, a long-serving member of Parliament and cabinet minister.

My Liberal colleague just outlined John's long and accomplished career in economics and finance, and he certainly brought that knowledge and skill set to his role in this place.

I first met John when I was elected in 2011. I was young and somewhat naive, if members can believe that, but John was always kind to me, and that is something that one remembers in this place.

There is a line in the Fleetwood Mac song *Landslide* that of late, given my advancing age, has recently started to punch me in the gut:

Time makes you bolder  
Even children get older  
And I'm gettin' older, too

It is hard to believe that nearly nine years have passed since I last rose in this place to pay tribute to John, who at that point had announced his retirement as a member of Parliament after a long and successful career. At the time, I noted that I was not delivering a eulogy, so finding myself doing so today is a reminder of one of the things John used to say when we routinely chatted: "Time passes quickly here, so make each day count." That is wisdom from John that we should all take in our roles.

At the time, John was the immigration minister and I was the immigration critic. I guess some things never change, John. After John retired, I realized that he had two particularly admirable qualities I think everybody in this place would do well to emulate. The first was his remarkable sense of humour. I have to say, John, if you are listening, that I deeply enjoyed sparring with you. John's wit

### Tributes

and cleverness were eclipsed only by his gregariousness and his very good sense of humour.

For example, John and I once had a rather famous sparring match in the House, wherein he implied that I should smile more. I raised the issue in a point of order, and he apologized. After the interaction, he came up to me and genuinely apologized, albeit with that signature twinkle in his eye. If anyone knew him, they knew this: There was always this little twinkle in John's eye. Feeling bold, I accepted his apology with a flourish, saying, "Thank you, Emperor Palpatine." John paused for a moment; he roared with laughter, and he encouraged me to embrace the dark side. In that instant, all was well.

That sense of humour is something that served John so well in this place, where the three-sword-length distance between the government and opposition benches can feel rather short on some days. He was always known across the aisle for his good humour, and that is something he will be remembered for. I find myself sometimes chuckling about things he would say to me, especially coming back into this role.

The other admirable quality that I will remember about John was that as a minister, he respected the role of the opposition. In my experience with John, I found that he understood that in this place, and in order for democracy to work, he could not ignore his opposition critic. When we disagreed, I found that he still respected the work I had put into the file. When we sparred, he would usually take the time to tell me that he had thought about what he had brought up and would try to explain to me his position and why he felt it was more important. Oftentimes, he did try to consider where I was going, and on more than one occasion we actually managed to find common ground.

He would be honest with me. He was very upfront about what he thought he could get through his caucus or where he thought I needed to bend in order to find compromise. Sometimes we found compromise and sometimes we did not, but at the end of the day, I trusted John because I knew he was coming at his work from a sense of trying to respect our democratic institutions and from a place of love and support for the people in his community. I have to say that I have sorely missed that dynamic since John left. I was spoiled as an opposition critic. I will always respect him for that.

A few years ago, John and I found ourselves accidentally seated beside each other on a plane. It was funny; people were walking down the aisle and saw us seated together, and they were like, "Uh-oh", but it was one of the best plane rides I have ever had. Many of the members share what we shared, as we are on a plane quite often. He was extremely wistful and imparted some sage words of advice. I remember this: He said, "Our lives are short. Make each day count. Spend less time on a plane and more time with your family, Michelle." It is advice that is hard to internalize in this place. Certainly, I still struggle with it every day, but it underscores that life in public service cannot be walked alone.

*Tributes*

● (1555)

My deepest condolences go to Nancy, Andrew, Jamie and Duncan, and to their families, for a loss that I think a lot of people across the country felt.

I also extend my gratitude to John's family for their support to John throughout his time in public office.

John, may you rest in peace.

[Translation]

**Claude DeBellefeuille (Beauharnois—Salaberry—Soulanges—Huntingdon, BQ):** Mr. Speaker, on June 21, at the beginning of the summer break, the House lost a seasoned parliamentarian, an influential minister, an economist, a renowned academic and a diplomat, when John McCallum passed away at the age of 75.

Mr. McCallum was a pillar of the Liberal Party who served under three prime ministers: Jean Chrétien, Paul Martin and Justin Trudeau. He left an indelible mark on the recent history of federal politics.

He first made his mark in his hometown of Montreal as a professor at UQAM and then as the dean of the faculty of arts at McGill University. Following an academic career of nearly 20 years, during which he made a name for himself in the field of commerce, Mr. McCallum put his expertise to the test as the chief economist for the Royal Bank of Canada in 1994.

Then, politics called. With the support of Jean Chrétien, John McCallum was elected to the House of Commons in 2000 as the member for Markham, a northern suburb of Toronto. Two years later, Jean Chrétien appointed him as defence minister. A new prime minister, Paul Martin, appointed him to serve as veterans affairs minister in 2003 and revenue minister in 2004, a position he held until the Liberals were defeated in 2006.

This was followed by an extended period in the opposition, during which Mr. McCallum did his duty as one of the key critics for his political party.

Nearly a decade later, he returned to Cabinet as the Minister of Immigration, Refugees and Citizenship, this time under Justin Trudeau. It must have been the ultimate irony to return to Cabinet at the request of a new boss who was just a student at McGill when Mr. McCallum was a dean there.

John McCallum retired from politics in 2017 to become Canada's ambassador to China, a position he held until 2019, when he became a strategic adviser in the private sector.

As the Bloc Québécois representative, I admit it would be an understatement to say we had major political differences with Mr. McCallum. He was strongly opposed to Quebec's sovereignty, his contribution to the public debate on the economics of Quebec's separation raised many eyebrows. Although we often found ourselves on opposing sides during the biggest political battle in the history of Quebec and Canada, we remember Mr. McCallum today as a smiling, affable intellectual, who spoke frankly, had a great sense of humour and also a sense of statesmanship.

On behalf of the Bloc Québécois, I want to offer my condolences to his wife, Nancy, his three sons, his six grandchildren, his loved ones and the Liberal political family.

Thank you for your public service, Mr. McCallum.

● (1600)

[English]

**Jenny Kwan (Vancouver East, NDP):** Mr. Speaker, on behalf of the NDP, I too rise to pay tribute to the late Hon. John McCallum.

It has already been said in this place that he had many accomplishments. He was a recognized and respected economist; he was a recognized academic; he was a recognized parliamentarian; and of course he was a recognized diplomat. In the face of all that work and all that effort, though, before all of it, he was a son, a brother, a husband, a father, and a friend and colleague, and that is how I knew John: as a colleague in this place, as many, like me, have cited as their experience with John.

Like them, in 2015, when I was first elected, John was also in this House. He was the Minister of Immigration, Refugees and Citizenship. I was the critic for the NDP, and as a newly elected member of Parliament, I was so often lost in this place. Shortly after the election, a constituent phoned me to ask for help on an immigration matter. It was actually a family who needed to come and see their dying father before they departed. In my eagerness to support them, I did not know what to do. I picked up the phone, I searched the directory and I called John's office. I left a message and I was not sure if anybody was even going to pick it up, because it was early days after the election.

Lo and behold, John McCallum called me back, and he put his office and his staff onto it, even though he did not have very much staff, as he said to me. However, he put people onto it and ensured that they would do their best to support the family, and that he did. I will never forget that moment in time when a minister picked up a call and responded to a call from an opposition MP in helping their constituent. That kindness was something that I will never forget about John McCallum, that level of responsiveness that he took to the job and that respect he has shown not only to me as a colleague but more importantly to his role as the minister of immigration in respecting the needs of Canadians.

That was the John McCallum I was reminded of when I heard about his passing.

I then thought about his work. As he cited at the time, being the minister of immigration was a significant job, because the government was working through the Syrian refugee initiative. It was an ambitious initiative and it was a tough one to accomplish, and that he did. There were some missteps here and there and everywhere, as in all things that we try to do. John McCallum, though, took to the job with a sense of humility, I would say. He was not bragging about that work and he was also open to what he could learn and what I, as the opposition critic, could offer to help him do that job better. I offered many different suggestions, and in the Syrian refugee initiative, there were many lessons learned.

One important lesson was for us to take in and utilize the knowledge of the communities of people who are new arrivals and have established themselves and have the language and cultural experience to welcome newcomers but do not really have a place in the established structure of resettlement services. I went to John and said, “Look, we should be leveraging the strength of all Canadians in this effort.” He said to me, “What do you think we should do?” I offered some suggestions, including helping these younger, newer organizations to build capacity, and for us to utilize their strength and harness their strength in the resettlement effort. That is exactly what he did.

• (1605)

I appreciate a parliamentarian, a minister, who brings that kind of view to this place. After all, that is why we run for office. I am absolutely sure that was the reason John ran for office as well. It was to help Canadians so that we can support each other.

The responsiveness of John as minister is something to be noted, but I also want to acknowledge something else. I remember when he left this place back on January 31, 2017, and he gave his final speech in Parliament. He looked back on what he felt was good, the things he accomplished, and he singled out two things in particular: “the nomination of Nelson Mandela to be an honorary citizen back in 2001 and, in particular, the Syrian refugees.” We should always remember that. Why it stood out is that it showed Canada's compassion and kindness, and it showed that Canada is different. In nominating Nelson Mandela, who is an icon of social justice, that is also what it stood for.

Let me close with a quote. John McCallum said the following:

what makes me really proud is not that we got the job done, although that is good, but that at a time when so many countries around the world are closing their doors to refugees, ordinary Canadians across this land have come out and have welcomed our newcomers with open hearts. That is what makes me very proud to be a Canadian.

Those were the words of John McCallum in this place on his way out as a parliamentarian. For that, I honour you. I honour your work.

I thank his family for his service to our community and for sharing him. Last but not least, I say let those words be a reminder of what we need to continue to do, especially during these very difficult times in the global community.

[*Translation*]

**Elizabeth May (Saanich—Gulf Islands, GP):** Mr. Speaker, I too am honoured to rise this afternoon to pay tribute to our colleague and dear friend, John McCallum. He was an extraordinary man, a genius. He was a lawyer, I believe, and a professor. He was an academic and a scholar.

[*English*]

He was not just someone who had a few degrees here and there; he was the dean of arts at a university. He was a chief economist at the Royal Bank. He did all of this and had a political career. His articles remain noted for their scholarly importance in the fields in which he practised in economics.

We knew each other through a strange circumstance, I suppose. I got to know him quite well. We became friends. I can share, as the

### *Tributes*

member for Vancouver East and the member for Calgary Nose Hill have said, how kind he was to people in other parties, sharing ideas and his humour. I will not digress into the circumstances of how I got to know him too deeply, but I was on a hunger strike in front of Parliament Hill in 2003 to try to get a toxic waste site cleaned up in Cape Breton. That is when I really got to know John McCallum.

When I think back on it, I remember how often I tried to get him to stop smoking. Of course, he passed away from lung cancer. The reason I got to know him so well is that I was sitting in front of Parliament Hill for 17 days on a hunger strike, so the members of Parliament I got to know best were the ones who went out for smoke breaks the most often. When he left to become the ambassador to China, I told him it was good because my chances of getting him to stop smoking had gone downhill and that he could smoke anywhere in China as I did not think there were any rules against smoking.

He was a man of enormous kindness. There were some people who would rush by me as I sat in front of Centre Block. By the way, it was not illegal. I got a permit from the Parliament Hill people to be able to sit right in front of the members' doors to stay on this hunger strike. John, like our colleague whom I should mention, Ralph Goodale, was really worried about my health. Not that I need to mention him, but I can say his name now because he is not here. So were quite a few members of Parliament and even members of cabinet. While I was worried about John and his smoking, he was worried about me being on a hunger strike, so he kept checking on me. It meant a great deal that he would stop, talk and check on me through this period, and we became really good friends.

I appreciated his sense of humour. He would stop and we would talk about anything, because I was sitting in a good spot for stopping and having a conversation. He also tried to help to resolve the situation we were in at that point, trying to get a toxic waste site cleaned up. In the end, and that is a longer story, we did.

What I want to share is with respect to his incredible thoughtfulness and kindness when at last I was here as a member of Parliament. The friendship we forged through those unusual circumstances on his smoke breaks lasted. Just as our colleague from Vancouver East said, I would go to him as the then minister of immigration, and he would unfailingly make time to listen to specific cases. I would plead with him that he not deport the person and ask if he could see his way clear to talking to his officials, because there were things there that just did not add up in the way the department had decided to handle the matter. He was patient and kind. He was willing to listen. He would try to apply his immense brain to the very specific local concerns I brought to him.

### *Tributes*

• (1610)

I want Canadians to know that if they go to a Wikipedia page, everything that was ever controversial pops up. Let us forget all of that. Canada and every Canadian owe people in public life a debt of gratitude, and there are not many who serve as long as John McCallum. John McCallum served in the cabinets of the following former prime ministers: the Right Hon. Jean Chrétien, the Right Hon. Paul Martin and the Right Hon. Justin Trudeau. He did so with a generosity of spirit toward those of us in opposition that has rarely been matched. Yes, there is no doubt that there could be sparring, as I would say to my friend from Calgary Nose Hill. Those were good moments. However, that was with a good heart and nothing that could be considered mean-spirited. He was a kind and generous man of enormous intellect. He had a great, deep and abiding love for this country, which he lived out every day.

I would say to his wife, Nancy; his children; and his six grandchildren that he has gone too soon. From the bottom of my heart, I ask the Lord to receive him into his kingdom. He was a wonderful man. We will miss him. Thank you for sharing him with us.

• (1615)

[*Translation*]

**The Speaker:** Hon. colleagues, it is now my turn to pay tribute to our colleague, the Hon. John McCallum, a professor, an economist, a banker, a parliamentarian and a friend.

Beginning in 2000, after a career as a banker and then as dean of the faculty of arts at McGill University, he devoted himself to public service. As others have mentioned, he served as a minister in three governments, taking on a number of challenging files: national defence; veterans; revenue; and immigration, refugees and citizenship.

[*English*]

It was in this role that we saw his many talents put to the test for the benefit of the tens of thousands of Syrian refugees who were fleeing dire circumstances in the hope of a new beginning. As many have noted, he was the mastermind behind the very complicated logistical and humanitarian challenge of bringing Syrian refugees to Canada, where they were able to start new lives.

That was one of the brighter moments of our recent history, and we have our late friend to thank for helping Canada open its doors and hearts to those in need. In a world that seems always full of thorny economic challenges, John McCallum was there to provide cogent explanations.

[*Translation*]

As a professor, he developed the patience to explain complex issues. As a member of Parliament, he again practised patience in answering tough questions, always with kindness, humour and his trademark smile. He brought his intelligence and knowledge to politics while always remaining approachable, and I have no doubt that was the key to his success here and in all aspects of his life.

[*English*]

We know that John was a family man and that he will be much missed. We take this time to express our deepest condolences to all

who loved him. He will always be remembered for his service to Canada.

[*Translation*]

May he rest in peace.

\* \* \*

[*English*]

### **HON. GAIL SHEA**

**The Speaker:** Pursuant to order made Tuesday, September 16, I invite all hon. members to stand to observe a moment of silence in honour of our former colleague, the Hon. Gail Shea.

[*A moment of silence observed*]

**The Speaker:** The House will now proceed to tributes in memory of our former colleague, the Hon. Gail Shea.

**Hon. Pierre Poilievre (Leader of the Opposition, CPC):** Mr. Speaker, on August 21, many of us were saddened to learn of the passing of our former colleague and long-time friend Gail Shea. At four foot five, she was a little lady who packed a big punch, and she put her fight to work on behalf of farmers, fish harvesters, workers and veterans. She was proud of her roots and her commitment to the island that gave her her upbringing, her career and of course her beloved family.

In addition to being a great fighter for her people, she was a woman of incredible warmth and generosity. In fact, those who knew Gail always found out that if she learned of their presence on beloved Prince Edward Island, they would be making the obligatory and extremely enjoyable visit to her residence to enjoy seafood casserole and many other island delights.

She had a generous heart, and I often turned to her for encouragement. In times of confusion and stress, I would call her to get her counsel. In the many years after she left Parliament, she continued as a mentor and friend to me.

She always lifted the spirits of the people she knew. I think of my friends from Atlantic Canada. She visited my friend from Newfoundland and his community. My friends from New Brunswick would see her pop up in their community to bring her smile, her humour and often her razor-sharp intellect.

There are so many stories of the kindness she showed to people in the community, all the personal details that she would remember about people's lives. I remember when I first started running for leader of the Conservative Party, she anticipated my long travels away from my family and gifted me two beautiful little teddy bears that I brought home to my kids. My daughter, who has a tendency to develop a great attachment to different kinds of objects and toys, held on to that teddy bear for days and days after I left on my subsequent trip. My wife told me that little Valentina held that teddy bear close to her heart.



*Tributes*

Gail was very proud of her Irish roots, reminding us all that there are only two types of people: those who are Irish and those who wish they were. If I walked down the hallways of the parliamentary precinct while she was preparing for question period, I could hear the beautiful sound of Gaelic music and an Irish harp echoing off the walls as she quietly prepared. Her love of music was reflected in her efforts to get the Stompin' Tom Centre inaugurated in honour of the great Canadian legend.

She was also the first female cabinet minister at the federal level from Prince Edward Island, and she was very proud of that commitment. She then went on to serve as minister of fisheries and minister of national revenue. Most importantly of all, she was the MP for Egmont. She was also a provincial member of Parliament and was elected there after defeating a Liberal in a riding that had not switched blue for 40 years prior to her election.

This often meant she was challenging the way things were. She was taking strong and principled stances. This meant there would occasionally be controversy. One day, when she was at a press conference, a lady walked up pretending she was about to fix a technical problem on her microphone and threw a pie in her face. Most people would have thought the press conference would end and the politician behind the mic would quickly run away and do so in shame. She simply took her hand, wiped off her face and said, "back to the business at hand". It turned out the protester was angry because of Gail's principled support of the all-important seal hunt, but if that protester with her bad behaviour thought she was going to change Gail's mind, she said it only increased her "resolve to support the seal hunt and our northern and coastal communities that depend on the hunt for part of their annual income."

She was an iron lady, never backing down and unflappable, and was determined and resolved to stand for what she knew was right. She would serve provincially and federally, and most importantly, she would continue to do the most important job she had. There were three jobs she had, actually, that she bragged about most often: mom, grandmother and great-grandmother. Gail carried in her heart her strong faith in God and her love of the people who surrounded her. She will rightly be remembered as a great Islander and a great Canadian.

● (1620)

I was honoured to attend the mass and funeral that Islanders put on for Gail a few weeks back. It was a celebration of life that then carried over, as all Irish funerals do, to the local Legion, where it went on into the very late hours of the night. They say of the Irish that they are the only people who cry at every wedding and laugh at every funeral, and so it was once again.

On behalf of all Conservative MPs, ministers, volunteers and others who served with Gail and experienced the wonderful warmth of her personality and her faith, I wish my condolences, thoughts and prayers to the entire Shea family and to all Islanders who cherish the memory she left behind.

On behalf of my family and our Conservative caucus, may she rest in peace, in the peace of God, and may her Irish eyes be smiling at us all from above.

● (1625)

**Robert Morrissey (Egmont, Lib.):** Mr. Speaker, I rise in the House today to pay tribute, on behalf of the government caucus, to a former member of Parliament who sadly left us a few weeks ago, the Hon. Gail Shea.

Politics can be challenging and it can be tough at times, but Gail was prepared to step up and put herself forward as a candidate in numerous elections. Gail, as pointed out, was a member of Parliament for the riding of Egmont, the riding I now represent. She served as a cabinet minister in the government of former prime minister Stephen Harper, and she also served in the government of the former premier of Prince Edward Island, the Hon. Pat Binns.

On a personal note, I knew Gail for most of my life. We grew up in neighbouring communities, coastal fishing communities, a few kilometres from one another at a time when the fishery was not as valuable as it is today. We both attended the same high school, and our lives often revolved around the same community we called home, the town of Tignish, where, as the Leader of the Opposition referenced, her funeral service was held a few weeks ago. It is the furthestmost community in the western part of our home province of Prince Edward Island.

Gail was very proud of her family, and there is no question that her family was very proud of Gail. She was also deeply attached to her home community of Skinners Pond. On a lighter note, when Gail became a minister of the Government of Canada, she said in conversation that there were now two famous people from Skinners Pond, a very little community. The other person was Canadian icon musician Stompin' Tom Connors, who a lot of people would remember. Gail made it a priority of hers to get Tom Connors to choose that community to be the location of a centre that would commemorate his legacy, a very deep legacy in traditional Canadian music, and house all the artifacts attached to his distinguished career as a Canadian. Make no mistake: Stompin' Tom Connors put Canada first.

Although she was not elected at the time that this particular centre came to realization, it was her vision. Since it was heavily federally funded and I had the option, I personally asked her to attend the official opening in 2017 and join me on stage to cut the ribbon to officially open the centre. She was extremely touched and appreciated the opportunity to be there.

Gail's legacy will live on, both through her various accomplishments as a public representative and through her commitment to volunteerism, because after leaving politics, she immersed herself in the community on a volunteer basis. She was very involved in the local Royal Canadian Legion. These organizations will certainly miss her presence over the years.

### *Tributes*

Her family, especially her five children, who I know well, Sally, Sandy, Kelly, Holly and Shawn, can be very proud of their mother and the contribution she made to our part of this wonderful country, the small part that I referenced in western Prince Edward Island. Family took precedence over every other aspect of her accomplished life, and I know her family members, children and grandchildren will miss her.

The most important tribute we can give to a former parliamentarian or legislator, which I say unequivocally, is this: Her community is a better place today because of her years of service. I want to express my appreciation for the opportunity to say a few words here today on behalf of the government caucus about the life of Gail Shea, and pay tribute to a life well lived and filled with value and contributions that will have a long-lasting legacy.

I will leave with this. Let us not take our health for granted. Life passes by quickly. I want to thank Gail for her contribution to Prince Edward Island and to Canada, this country we all so love.

• (1630)

[Translation]

**Alexis Deschênes (Gaspésie—Les Îles-de-la-Madeleine—Lis-tuguj, BQ):** Mr. Speaker, today we honour the life and contributions of Gail Shea, a former Conservative minister and, more importantly, a dedicated citizen of Prince Edward Island, who passed away on August 21 at the age of 66.

Ms. Shea came from a fishing family in western P.E.I. She had a knack for bringing people together across political lines, first by being elected to the Legislative Assembly of Prince Edward Island in 2000 as a Conservative in a Liberal stronghold. Up until her departure in 2007, she made her mark there, notably by shouldering the heavy responsibilities of the role of minister of transportation and public works.

Then, in 2008, she was lured away from home by a new challenge: federal politics. Once again, Gail Shea won voters' trust as a blue candidate in the red stronghold of Egmont. What is more, she was given a role in Stephen Harper's cabinet straightaway as minister of fisheries and oceans, a position that is crucial for her region and mine. She was the first woman from Prince Edward Island to become a minister. She remained in the Conservative cabinet until she left politics in 2015.

Ms. Shea was known in her part of the country for standing up for the Maritimes, specifically by resisting stubborn misconceptions about the seal hunting industry.

Everyone who knew her, including her political opponents, remember her most as a woman who never forgot where she came from or the people she represented, including fishers.

On behalf of the Bloc Québécois and as my party's critic for fisheries and oceans, I offer my sincere condolences to Gail Shea's family and loved ones.

May new members like me and seasoned members alike also never forget where we come from or the people we serve.

[English]

**Lori Idlout (Nunavut, NDP):** *Uqaqtittiji*, I am privileged to represent Nunavut in honouring the work of the Hon. Gail Shea. I did not know Gail personally. I send my condolences to her family, her friends and, I am sure, her wide-ranging community.

One of the privileges that we gain as parliamentarians is how much we learn about Canada, Canadians and the hopes and strengths we see for our future. I have learned that Gail Shea, who died on August 21, was a trailblazer in Canadian politics and that she was a devoted public servant and a proud Islander. Gail Shea's legacy will long be remembered across Prince Edward Island, Canada and abroad.

I am told that Gail Shea's journey began in Skinners Pond, a small fishing community that shaped her values and her unwavering commitment to service, which included her serving as a member of the Legislative Assembly of Prince Edward Island from 2000 to 2007 and being the member of Parliament from 2008 to 2015 for the riding of Egmont. She brought those values to the legislative assembly, where she served with distinction and shattered glass ceilings as the province's first female minister of transportation and public works. Her leadership continued on the federal stage, where she made history as the first woman from Prince Edward Island appointed to the federal cabinet. As minister of fisheries and oceans, and later as minister of national revenue, she championed rural communities, stood firm for Canadian industries and always put her constituents first.

Gail Shea was known for her strength, her warmth and her fierce dedication. She was a mother to five children, Sally, Kelly, Sandy, Holly and Shawn, a grandmother of 17, and a mentor to many more. Her colleagues across party lines remember her as someone who could "move a mountain" and who "never...forgot where she came from".

I have learned that Gail Shea and I have a common sense of pride for the strengths of our constituents, especially in the sealing industry. During a time when the sealing industry experienced such controversy because of lobby groups, she showed great leadership. Was I ever pleased to hear what she had to say about the sealing industry: "I can tell you that this incident actually strengthens my resolve to support the seal hunt. If this is what it takes to stand up for Canadian sealing families and this industry I'm certainly very proud to do it."

I have learned that she has remarked that this was one of the lower points in her political career, and to hear that later shows that she had great strength. This quote captures her spirit. She was unapologetically principled, deeply rooted in her community and proud to stand for what she believed in.

Gail Shea's legacy is seen in our continued work, in the policies she helped shape and in the lives she impacted. She showed us that politics can be both fierce and compassionate. She showed us that leadership means listening, serving and never forgetting where we come from.

May her children, who I mentioned earlier, continue to provide warm and welcoming gatherings with lots of great seafood and continue to welcome visitors to their beautiful island. I am aware that in her memorial, in lieu of flowers, they had requested, and I do suggest this as well, that donations be made to Children's Wish Foundation and Community Hospital O'Leary's palliative care wing.

• (1635)

On behalf of the NDP, we hope she rests in peace.

**Elizabeth May (Saanich—Gulf Islands, GP):** Mr. Speaker, I thank all the previous speakers.

I knew Gail Shea. Of the people we have paid tribute to today, though I knew them all, it was only with Gail Shea that I served at the same time in an overlapping period. She was always a great person to visit with, to have fun with and to chat with. She was certainly formidable. It has already been noted that she was a trailblazer.

I want to mention, of course, one aspect of her political success. Coming from the Maritimes myself, I know this was the case, or I am pretty sure it was, but Prince Edward Islanders can correct me if I have this wrong. As far as I can tell, in the years that I have known Prince Edward Islanders of different parties in politics, there had never been a time when a Prince Edward Island MP got elected to Parliament, joined a federal cabinet and then survived the next election. There tended to be a bit of a tradition of defeating anybody who ended up in cabinet. I am looking over at some of my friends here, and I cannot say their names out loud, to see if I got that wrong, but I think she was the very first.

We know she was the first federal minister woman to enter any cabinet from Prince Edward Island in this country. She served at the provincial level, and she served in the cabinet of Stephen Harper. She survived to run again and get re-elected.

She was, as we know, someone of great energy, good humour and a very big heart to welcome all. I think of what it must have been like for her that, in 2021, she lost her dear husband Russell. The two of them had 45 years of marriage. I still think she died very young at 66. They had 45 years of marriage and five children. That is a rich life before we count the number of successes she experienced in politics, the number of times she was elected, and the numbers of times and the different ways in which she served.

One of my favourite memories, and I cannot remember why it was, but of course this is Canada, so we were sitting with each other on an airplane. She was Irish and both of us were Christian. I said that reminded me that I had known a friend, an Irish small child, when I was a small child. This friend had misunderstood, "Surely goodness and mercy shall follow me all the days of my life". I told Gail that this friend had thought all through her childhood that it was actually, "Surely, good Mrs. Murphy shall follow me all the days of my life". Being that the child was Irish, it seemed to fit, and Gail loved that. There was something about Gail that one could imagine her as good Mrs. Murphy following us all the days of our lives.

### *Tributes*

She was kind-hearted, hard-working and dedicated, and someone who was an inspiration to know. She showed that life after politics as a grandmother can be a whole lot better than life in politics.

The leader of the official opposition mentioned that he was at the funeral. How many people have 29 honorary pallbearers, including a former prime minister and former colleagues? She will be missed.

It is appropriate that today we take the time to honour her memory, thank her for her service, and thank her family and Skinners Pond for sharing her with Canada.

• (1640)

[*Translation*]

**The Speaker:** Hon. colleagues, I would also like to take a moment to say a few words about our friend, the Hon. Gail Shea.

[*English*]

Gail Shea entered federal politics the way many politicians do, at the provincial level, serving in the Legislative Assembly of Prince Edward Island from 2000 to 2007, where she served as minister of community and cultural affairs and the minister of status of women, as well as minister of transportation and public works. Indeed, she was the first woman minister of transportation of her province. Here in this place, she represented the riding of Egmont, as we know, between 2008 and 2015.

[*Translation*]

She also served as minister of fisheries and oceans, minister of national revenue and minister of the Atlantic Canada Opportunities Agency.

Once again, she broke a glass ceiling by becoming the first woman from Prince Edward Island to be appointed to the federal cabinet.

[*English*]

I remember her during question period answering questions. Yes, she gave answers in her own down-to-earth and sincere manner.

[*Translation*]

She always prioritized the concerns of her constituents, especially those in rural communities who had issues related to farming and fishing. Her love for her family, her community and her country was reflected in the kindness and open-mindedness that defined her, qualities that the whole world associates with her province and her region.

*Routine Proceedings**[English]*

Her heart and home were always open to her large family and circle of friends, which was very large indeed, as she connected with everyone she met. She was a friend and fan of the legendary folk hero Stompin' Tom Connors, who also hailed, as we know, from Skinners Pond. Both Islanders shared a love of country and an appreciation of the towns and people who make Canada unique.

*[Translation]*

Our thoughts are with the Hon. Gail Shea's family and her many friends. May she rest in peace, knowing that Canadians are grateful for her dedication to her community, her province and her country.

• (1645)

*[English]*

**The Deputy Speaker:** Pursuant to order made on Tuesday, September 16, I wish to inform the House that because of the tributes, the time provided for Government Orders will be extended by 92 minutes.

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## ROUTINE PROCEEDINGS

*[English]***CHIEF ELECTORAL OFFICER OF CANADA**

**The Deputy Speaker:** It is my duty to lay before the House, pursuant to section 536 of the Canada Elections Act, the report of the Chief Electoral Officer of Canada on the 2024 by-elections.

Pursuant to Standing Order 108(3)(a), this report is deemed permanently referred to the Standing Committee on Procedure and House Affairs.

\* \* \*

*[Translation]***COMMITTEES OF THE HOUSE****PUBLIC SAFETY AND NATIONAL SECURITY**

**Hon. Jean-Yves Duclos (Québec Centre, Lib.):** Mr. Speaker, I have the honour to table, in both official languages, the first report of the Standing Committee on Public Safety and National Security, entitled “Fighting the Phenomenon of Vehicle Thefts in Canada”.

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

*[English]***PROCEDURE AND HOUSE AFFAIRS**

**Chris Bittle (St. Catharines, Lib.):** Mr. Speaker, pursuant to Standing Orders 104 and 114, I am honoured to present, in both official languages, the second report of the Standing Committee on Procedure and House Affairs, regarding the membership of the committees of the House.

If the House gives its consent, I intend to move concurrence in the second report later this day.

**CRIMINAL CODE**

**Hon. Michelle Rempel Garner (Calgary Nose Hill, CPC)** moved for leave to introduce Bill C-220, An Act to amend the Criminal Code (immigration status in sentencing).

She said: Mr. Speaker, I rise today to introduce this urgently needed bill, which seeks to remove the consideration of immigration status in sentencing and would end the two-tier practice of judges issuing more lenient sentences to non-citizens convicted of serious crime. Becoming a citizen or staying in Canada is a privilege, not a right, for non-citizens, and this bill seeks to uphold the will of Parliament and the initial spirit of the Immigration and Refugee Protection Act.

I would like to thank Sean Phelan, Andrew Evans and my whole team, as well as my colleague who is seconding this bill. I hope that all colleagues in the House will support it.

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

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**CORRECTIONS AND CONDITIONAL RELEASE ACT**

**Mel Arnold (Kamloops—Shuswap—Central Rockies, CPC)** moved for leave to introduce Bill C-221, An Act to amend the Corrections and Conditional Release Act (disclosure of information to victims).

He said: Mr. Speaker, I want to start by thanking my colleague from Oshawa for seconding this bill, an act to amend the Corrections and Conditional Release Act. The hon. member worked on it in the last Parliament when she worked with her predecessor, the former member for Oshawa, Dr. Colin Carrie, who retired after 21 years of distinguished service that included moving an identical bill to a very advanced stage with unanimous support before the last Parliament was dissolved.

This bill is relatively short, but it is meaningful in that it would make a much-needed difference in the lives and experiences of victims of crime. The proposals of this bill were inspired by Ms. Lisa Freeman, whose father was brutally murdered in 1991. Ms. Freeman's experience has compelled her to be an incredible advocate for victims' rights, and I thank her for her incredible perseverance and bravery in dealing with government systems and processes that can be unfriendly to victims of crime and must be reformed.

This bill seeks to provide victims of crime with timely and accurate information upon sentencing and prior to the potential release of an offender, to avoid ambiguity and false comfort of parole eligibility dates that can be misleading. This bill also proposes that victims of crime be provided an explanation of how dates related to parole are determined. The bill's proposals would also ensure that victims and their families are provided timely and accurate information concerning the movements of an individual within the prison system and would prevent the arbitrary denial of victims' participation at parole hearings.

As I mentioned, this bill was on track to achieving royal assent when the last Parliament was dissolved, and it deserves to be passed in this Parliament. I look forward to working with all parliamentarians to move this bill to completion.

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

\* \* \*

• (1650)

## COMMITTEES OF THE HOUSE

### PROCEDURE AND HOUSE AFFAIRS

**Chris Bittle (St. Catharines, Lib.):** Mr. Speaker, if the House gives its consent, I move that the second report of the Standing Committee on Procedure and House Affairs, presented to the House earlier this day, be concurred in.

[Translation]

**The Deputy Speaker:** All those opposed to the hon. member's moving the motion will please say nay.

Hearing none, 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]

## PETITIONS

### PUBLIC SAFETY

**Dan Mazier (Riding Mountain, CPC):** Mr. Speaker, it is a privilege to rise on behalf of the people of Swan River to present a petition on the alarming increase in violent crime, which has threatened the safety and well-being of families all across our region. The petitioners are experiencing the devastating impacts of soft-on-crime Liberal policies like Bill C-5 and Bill C-75. Bill C-5 repealed mandatory jail time for serious crimes and Bill C-75 forces judges to release repeat violent offenders right back on our streets.

The petitioners are concerned that since 2015, extortion in Canada has increased by 330% and homicides are up 29%. The petitioners in the Swan Valley want to see an end to the Liberals' catch-and-release policies so they can feel safe in their own communities. That is why the people of Swan River are demanding jail, not bail, for violent repeat offenders. I support the good people of Swan River.

## Routine Proceedings

### WORLD HEALTH ORGANIZATION

**Cheryl Gallant (Algonquin—Renfrew—Pembroke, CPC):** Mr. Speaker, I am pleased to rise to present a petition from the freedom-loving, maple-leaf-waving patriotic Canadians in my riding of Algonquin—Renfrew—Pembroke.

My constituents are concerned over the Liberal government's decision to arbitrarily sign on to the WHO's Pandemic Agreement and the amendments made to the international health regulations, or IHRs. These changes were never brought to a single debate nor vote in this House, leaving Canadians without a say while the Liberals negotiate away our country's sovereignty to corrupt, unelected and unaccountable UN bureaucrats, who are all under the influence of the Chinese Communist Party. The Liberals screamed "elbows up" and promised to defend Canada's independence throughout the last election, but they spared no time selling out Canada to their globalist friends right after Canadians voted.

The petitioners are calling on the Liberal government to immediately withdraw from the WHO's Pandemic Agreement, signed in May, and to unilaterally withdraw Canada from the IHR amendments.

• (1655)

### CHARITABLE ORGANIZATIONS

**Cathay Wagantall (Yorkton—Melville, CPC):** Mr. Speaker, I am rising today on behalf of the 38,942 Canadians who signed petition 6586. They are united against the finance committee's 2025 pre-budget report that called for the removal of advancement of religion as a recognized charitable purpose under the Income Tax Act.

Canadians from all walks of life, different faiths and different beliefs have signed this petition. They value the irreplaceable role that these faith-based charities have in serving the hungry, homeless, hurting, discouraged, depressed and lonely; those in difficult leadership positions; first responders; those in our Canadian Armed Forces; those with injuries, illnesses or disabilities; children; parents; families; young people; seniors; and newcomers. Anyone and everyone who seeks out their services are cared for.

This good work is rooted in faith-based Christian Canadian tradition. Our Canadian fabric is strong and richer because of the vital work of these faith-focused charities.

### *Government Orders*

On behalf of these petitioners and in response to the fundamental rights we have and cherish as Canadians, this petition calls for recommendations 429 and 430 of the pre-budget report to be rejected and denied any part in further legislation. I am honoured to table this petition on behalf of the 38,942 Canadians who look forward to the government's timely, transparent and supportive response to their request.

#### WILD PACIFIC SALMON

**Elizabeth May (Saanich—Gulf Islands, GP):** Mr. Speaker, within my community of Saanich—Gulf Islands, concerns run deep for the fate of wild Pacific salmon.

The petitioners are calling for the Government of Canada to remove the conflict of interest within the Department of Fisheries and Oceans Act, which makes it a requirement for the department to both promote aquaculture and regulate aquaculture. The petitioners are also calling for the government to fully implement the recommendations of the long-standing report commissioned under the previous government of Stephen Harper, the excellent report of the Hon. Bruce Cohen that was released in 2012. The petitioners note that we have yet to see the 75 recommendations implemented.

**The Deputy Speaker:** The hon. member has a point of order.

**Elizabeth May:** Mr. Speaker, it is in the context of the petition from the hon. member for Algonquin—Renfrew—Pembroke. I would love some guidance from you. I do not think our parliamentary petition process allows a petition itself to accuse UN officials of all being corrupt. I think when presenting a petition, as I understand the rules, we are merely to summarize. I found that distressing, but perhaps it was within the rules, so I raise it to you for guidance.

**The Deputy Speaker:** I would like to thank the member for Saanich—Gulf Islands and all other members who suggested what the Speaker should do. It was very helpful.

How a member describes the content of a petition is entirely up to the member presenting it to the House, as long as it is kept short and to the point and is directly about the text in the petition. I trust all members did so when they presented theirs to the House, and that is where I am going to leave it.

The member for Saanich—Gulf Islands is rising on the same point of order.

**Elizabeth May:** Mr. Speaker, I never intended to direct you in what to do. I merely thought that unparliamentary language was raised in the context of a petition and was seeking guidance on that.

**The Deputy Speaker:** International organizations and their behaviour are matters of debate for members of the House to undertake in the future if they so choose. The ruling has been made.

\* \* \*

### 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 would ask that all questions be allowed to stand at the stage.

• (1700)

**The Deputy 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 would ask that all notices of motions for the production of papers also be allowed to stand.

**The Deputy Speaker:** Is that agreed?

**Some hon. members:** Agreed.

[Translation]

**The Deputy Speaker:** Order. Pursuant to Standing Order 38, it is my duty to inform the House that the questions to be raised tonight at the time of adjournment are as follows: the hon. member for Swift Current—Grasslands—Kindersley, Agriculture and Agri-Food; the hon. member for Calgary Centre, Finance; the hon. member for Riding Mountain, Health.

## GOVERNMENT ORDERS

[Translation]

### STRONG BORDERS ACT

The House resumed from September 16 consideration of the motion that Bill C-2, An Act respecting certain measures relating to the security of the border between Canada and the United States and respecting other related security measures, be read the second time and referred to committee.

**Angelo Iacono (Alfred-Pellan, Lib.):** Mr. Speaker, I am honoured to rise today to speak to Bill C-2, a major legislative initiative to both strengthen our asylum system and secure our borders. These two objectives go hand in hand, because we need an effective and humane immigration system that protects vulnerable people, while ensuring the safety of all Canadians.

Every year, thousands of people choose Canada to build a better life, to find refuge and to contribute to our society. However, global migration realities are changing quickly. In 2022, we processed more than 92,000 claims for asylum. That number climbed to more than 171,000 in 2024, which means it nearly doubled in two years. The rapid increase in asylum claims is straining our system. Processing times are getting longer, claimants are living in uncertainty, and our public services are grappling with a heavier workload.

Bill C-2 proposes concrete, well-thought-out solutions to improve this situation while keeping our system fair and compassionate. One of the measures we are proposing is a single online form for all applications, whether they are submitted at an airport, at a land border or outside the country. This will simplify the process, reduce administrative errors and allow for better coordination between Immigration, Refugees and Citizenship Canada, the Canada Border Services Agency and the Immigration and Refugee Board of Canada. Furthermore, cases will be pre-screened and scheduling powers will be transferred directly to the board to allow hearings to be held faster and to facilitate planning. This will reduce unnecessary delays and ensure timely decisions. Lastly, we are proposing a simplified process for withdrawing incomplete applications while preserving the applicant's right to explain their situation and present arguments. Together, these measures will speed up decision-making and ensure that asylum continues to be accessible to those who truly need it.

Bill C-2 also introduces clear rules to protect the integrity of the system. For example, a claim for asylum must be filed within one year of the person's arrival in Canada. This time limit will deter people from using the asylum system to circumvent the regular immigration channels or to unduly prolong their temporary stay. The number of irregular border crossings has already diminished since the expansion of the safe third country agreement, but, under this bill, a person who crosses the border illegally and files a claim more than 14 days after their entry into Canada will no longer have their claim referred to the board. These provisions do not close the door on protection, however. Anyone facing persecution will still have the right to a pre-removal risk assessment, so our humanitarian commitment remains intact. In short, we are striking a balance between efficiency, security and compassion, which is essential to the credibility and legitimacy of our asylum system.

The COVID-19 pandemic showed us that we need to be able to respond quickly and effectively in exceptional circumstances. The current laws do not allow a large volume of immigration documents to be suspended, varied or cancelled in response to a widespread crisis. That limits the government's ability to protect Canadians in times of crisis. Bill C-2 addresses that gap by enabling the government to temporarily suspend certain visas or travel authorizations in the event of a major crisis, whether it be a pandemic, an international conflict or a natural disaster. These temporary powers will enable the government to react quickly to protect the health, safety and well-being of Canadians while ensuring the continuity of essential services.

• (1705)

The second major mission of Bill C-2 is to strengthen border security and combat transnational organized crime. The bill builds on the historic \$1.3-billion investment and is structured around three pillars. The first pillar is to secure the border by modernizing the Customs Act, by improving the efficiency of export inspections, including inspections of rail and marine shipping containers, and by adding security-related activities to the Canadian Coast Guard's mandate. The second pillar is to combat fentanyl and organized crime by facilitating the seizure of mail for criminal investigations, by creating an accelerated scheduling pathway for precursor chemicals, and by providing legal access to electronic data in order to dis-

rupt trafficking networks. The third pillar is to crack down on money laundering by introducing stiffer penalties, a ban on certain cash deposits over \$10,000, and better information sharing between banks, the Financial Transactions and Reports Analysis Centre of Canada, or FINTRAC, and law enforcement.

All of these measures come with robust, transparent oversight mechanisms to ensure compliance with the Canadian Charter of Rights and Freedoms and protect Canadians' privacy. This gives law enforcement the tools it needs while safeguarding the public trust.

Those are not abstract issues. They are having a direct impact on Laval and the riding of Alfred-Pellan. Laval is a strategic economic and logistical hub, being close to the port of Montreal, the international airport, Highway 15 and major railway routes. Those attributes foster innovation and prosperity, but they also attract the attention of criminal networks. In 2024, Laval recorded more than 3,300 crimes and offences, including more than 800 auto thefts. More and more luxury cars are being stolen for export, threatening the safety of local residents and businesses. Thanks to the new export inspection powers, we will be able to intercept those vehicles before they leave the country, enabling us to protect property and strengthen public trust.

The fight against fentanyl is also crucial for our community. Our police services and community organizations are grappling with an overdose crisis that is affecting too many families in Laval. Bill C-2 provides meaningful federal support to combat this scourge by coordinating the efforts of local, provincial, and national agencies. By protecting the integrity of cross-border trade, we are also protecting innovative Laval businesses in the logistics, pharmaceutical and international trade sectors, as well as the thousands of jobs they generate. This bill helps create a safe and prosperous environment for families, workers and entrepreneurs in my riding.

Like all Canadians, the people of Alfred-Pellan want safe communities, a fair and efficient immigration system, and an economy protected from the threat of crime. Bill C-2 equips our border, police and justice services with tools for the 21st century. It protects our youth from the scourge of fentanyl, our businesses from financial crime, and our families from auto theft and fraud. It strengthens trust in our asylum system and enables us to respond effectively to global crises. We are reinforcing the system to reflect today's realities, protect Canadians and prepare for tomorrow's challenges. We are also sending a clear message—

• (1710)

**The Deputy Speaker:** The member's time is up.

The member for Lac-Saint-Jean.

**Alexis Brunelle-Duceppe (Lac-Saint-Jean, BQ):** Mr. Speaker, I listened carefully to my colleague's speech.

*Government Orders*

Not everyone takes long vacations, and all summer long, I met with groups that will be affected by Bill C-2. For these meetings, I was joined by my colleagues from Beauharnois—Salaberry—Soulanges—Huntingdon and Rivière-du-Nord, because we will all be sharing the task of studying Bill C-2 if it goes to committee, as we hope it will.

My question is quite simple. All of the groups we met with raised serious doubts about the validity of certain clauses that would not even stand up in court. Some provisions do raise legal questions. For example, it will not be possible to compel the minister and his staff to appear before the Refugee Protection Division. There is no explanation as to why or how that will be done in court.

Is my colleague aware of the problems with certain clauses in this bill?

**Angelo Iacono:** Mr. Speaker, I simply want to tell my colleague that a safe Canada is a strong Canada. We are taking steps to keep Canadians across the country safe. We are taking steps to prevent the crime that is threatening our communities and to give police the tools they need to fight it and to hold criminals accountable for their actions.

[English]

**Rhonda Kirkland (Oshawa, CPC):** Mr. Speaker, I wonder if the member could indicate something to this side of the House. We spoke to many police associations over the summer, and they indicated that the number one issue they are facing in terms of crime and safety with the current reformed bail we have is that it needs to be reformed so that repeat offenders are kept behind bars.

Can the member indicate why none of this was added to this particular bill?

[Translation]

**Angelo Iacono:** Mr. Speaker, the Conservative Party claims that Bill C-2 threatens national security and access to asylum. However Bill C-2 strengthens border security and makes cargo inspections more efficient. It makes it possible to intercept drugs, weapons and stolen vehicles. It also expedites the processing of asylum claims and ensures humane access to risk assessment. It respects the Canadian Charter of Rights and Freedoms and protects Canadians' privacy.

[English]

**Sima Acan (Oakville West, Lib.):** Mr. Speaker, like all colleagues, we were busy this summer, visiting our local law enforcement. I had multiple meetings with the police chief, deputy chief and officers, and one common thing that I heard from them was that they were in favour of the bill. I would like to ask my hon. colleague this: Could he please explain the importance of the bill to all Canadians?

• (1715)

[Translation]

**Angelo Iacono:** Mr. Speaker, it is very clear: Bill C-2 will strengthen our borders by allowing officers to conduct more effective inspections of goods, drugs, weapons and stolen vehicles. The Canadian Coast Guard has a clear mandate to protect our waters. In

Laval, these measures will help recover stolen vehicles and make our neighbourhoods safer.

We listened to Canadians, as my colleague has done, to find out what they need and what they want us to do to better protect our borders. This is exactly what we are doing. We are taking action.

[English]

**Greg McLean (Calgary Centre, CPC):** Mr. Speaker, I appreciate what is in the bill and how it would actually move things forward as far as safety goes, particularly on the border. I hear from my colleagues on the other side that they listened to police officers over the summer.

My question is this: What took you so long? All of these things make so much sense. Were you not listening for the past 10 years, or four years in particular? What took you so long to get to what are the most commonsensical security changes we need to make in Canada?

[Translation]

**The Deputy Speaker:** Before giving the floor to the hon. member for Alfred-Pellan, I would like to remind members that they must address other members through the Chair.

The hon. member for Alfred-Pellan.

**Angelo Iacono:** Mr. Speaker, it is funny to hear this question from my opposition colleague. He should perhaps reflect on what his party has done during its 10 years in government.

This problem is not something that popped up this morning or yesterday. It has been going on for a long time. The Conservatives failed to act on this matter when they were in government 10 years ago. They did not do very much. This is why we have to deal with this problem today.

[English]

**Doug Shipley (Barrie—Springwater—Oro-Medonte, CPC):** Mr. Speaker, on behalf of the great people of Barrie—Springwater—Oro-Medonte, I am pleased to rise today to speak to this important piece of legislation.

Since this is my first full speech in the 45th Parliament, I would be a little remiss if I did not take a moment to thank a few people who helped send me back here. First of all, I would like to mention my EDA president and sign guru, Shawn Scott. A few of my key campaign team members were Erin, also referred to as “Peaches”, the other Errin, Lauren, Harry, Sharbell, Hale and, of course, Kelly, who held the fort. Many other volunteers and supporters also helped with this. It takes an army, as everybody on all sides knows, to get a successful campaign done.



I would also like to thank my family: my wife, Lisa, for always supporting me; my son, Wyatt, and his girlfriend, Grayson; my other son, Luke; and, just to get some brownie points from my wife, I would also like to mention my dog, Ollie, for always posing for pictures on all the brochures and winning everyone's hearts. I am sure my wife will be very happy to hear that part; I think the dog is a little higher on the pecking order at home than I am.

Conservatives have been calling on the Liberal government to introduce many of these measures for years. Under the Liberal government, Canada has turned a blind eye to enforcement on illegal migration, gun trafficking, money laundering and the cross-border trafficking of fentanyl. Unfortunately, the Liberals felt inclined to make real progress on these issues only when they were called out and threatened with tariffs by the United States. They scrambled, and we must ask ourselves why it took so long to act.

Conservatives believe in protecting Canadians from transnational crime, illegal trafficking and abuse of our immigration system, but Bill C-2 contains many troubling provisions related to privacy and civil liberties of Canadians that will be difficult to support without significant amendments. Bill C-2 is a sweeping omnibus bill into which the Liberal government decided to throw a laundry list of measures that are completely unrelated to border security and immigration reform.

I will discuss three main issues touched upon in Bill C-2 that the Liberal government has allowed to spiral out of control: fentanyl, our immigration system and border security.

Let us begin with the fentanyl crisis. Canada faces an opioid crisis that has claimed the lives of more than 50,000 Canadians since 2016. This is a national crisis that has wreaked havoc on our communities in our cities, in our towns and in rural Canada from coast to coast.

Many members must wonder how the Liberal government has responded to this crisis. The Liberal government introduced Bill C-5. This disastrous bill eliminated mandatory prison time for drug traffickers, drug producers and drug importers. Many of the people responsible for killing over 50,000 people and causing unbelievable mayhem and destruction in our communities no longer have mandatory prison times. It has been repeated over and over again, even by Liberals themselves, that Bill C-5's specific goal was for fewer people to go to prison.

As a result of legislation like this, we see that people involved in this deadly fentanyl trade are getting back out on the streets more quickly than ever. It is extremely disappointing to see that there are no new sentencing provisions included in this massive omnibus bill. Individuals who threaten our communities will continue to walk free because of Bill C-5, even if the current bill is passed.

I will remind the members of the House that, in December, Conservatives put forward an opposition day motion calling for many measures related to fentanyl trafficking. Our motion called on the Liberal government to reverse Bill C-5, reinstate longer sentences for drug kingpins, ban the importation of fentanyl precursors, buy high-powered scanners, put more boots on the ground at the ports and stop buying unsafe supply of opioids. Shockingly, the Liberal government, the Bloc and the NDP all voted against this motion.

### *Government Orders*

Now I will turn to our immigration system and border security, issues that the Liberal government has quickly allowed to spiral out of control during its past decade in power. The Prime Minister promised to fix our broken immigration system and broken borders, but recently released numbers show that he has blown past his immigration targets, with some on track to be the highest on record. He supports the same out-of-control Liberal immigration policies that delivered a triple-header crisis in housing, health care and youth unemployment. Conservatives believe we must reduce the numbers so that health care, housing and job creation can catch up.

The Canadian public deserves a trustworthy immigration system that operates in the national interest. We used to have the best immigration system in the world, and we were the envy of all other nations.

● (1720)

Our immigration system must put Canada first. That means inviting the right people in the right numbers to absorb them into housing, health care and jobs. It means having a system that allows newcomers to succeed as part of the Canadian family. It also means restoring the value of citizenship so that everyone who calls our country home, regardless of where they came from, is Canadian above all else. We must also end the abuse of the temporary foreign worker program and the international student program and end fraudulent refugee claims.

With respect to border security, Conservatives will support any measure that invests in our border and provides greater resources to CBSA personnel to prevent the flow of illegal guns, drugs and other listed goods over our border and into Canada. Conservatives are committed to strengthening Canada's border security through practical effective measures. We support deploying thousands of additional border agents, expanding the operational reach of the Canada Border Services Agency across the entire border and installing advanced surveillance towers to monitor high-risk areas. We also advocate for the use of high-powered scanners at land crossings and shipping ports to detect illicit drugs, firearms and stolen vehicles. These tools are essential in disrupting organized crime and protecting Canadian communities.

Above all, we stand firmly behind the dedicated men and women serving on the front lines of our border. These professionals are often under-resourced, but they work tirelessly to safeguard our country. Their efforts in intercepting dangerous substances and weapons are critical to national security, and they deserve our full support and sincere gratitude.

### *Government Orders*

Now I would like to touch briefly upon how the Liberal government's soft-on-crime agenda is having an impact on my own community. After 10 years under the Liberal government, I walk around the downtown core of my riding and do not recognize it. Ten years ago, my community did not have tent encampments, and it did not have widespread homelessness; it did not have individuals smoking and shooting up illegal drugs on sidewalks and in children's playgrounds. Lawlessness has become the norm in my community and in cities across Canada. The sad part is that our young people think this is normal. They think this is the way Canada has always been. To young people across Canada, I say that it was not like this before the Liberal government came into power; it will not be like this once it is gone.

In the city of Barrie, Mayor Alex Nuttall was recently forced to declare a state of emergency to address the growing number and size of encampments, which pose significant risks to the community, our first responders and the individuals living in these encampments. Our first responders and community organizations are stretched thin by the scale of disorder caused by the encampments. Children are exposed to open drug use and must navigate dangerous areas on their way to school. Small businesses and local retailers face ongoing challenges related to vandalism, theft, loitering and public intoxication. It is clear that this is a symptom of the Liberal government's reckless experiment of flooding our streets with taxpayer-funded hard drugs. Our once-safe neighbourhoods are now plagued by crime, chaos, death and disorder.

The justice minister recently tweeted, "This isn't the Wild West." I would like him to say that to residents in downtown Barrie. A resident recently wrote a letter to my office to express his concern, stating, "This situation is unacceptable. My children should be able to walk safely down the street without encountering garbage, needles, makeshift encampments or open drug use. Allowing this to continue is a failure of leadership and a betrayal of the residents who work hard to maintain their homes, pay their taxes and raise their families here. A clear line must be drawn. People cannot simply set up tents wherever they choose, and open drug use cannot be ignored. This is not only a public health and safety crisis but also a direct threat to law and order. By tolerating it, we send the message that community standards and laws no longer matter."

At the federal level, the Liberal government must face reality and take immediate action to protect Canadians. The Conservatives are calling on the Liberal government to amend the Criminal Code to include a much-needed stand-on-guard principle, fix Canada's broken bail system, reverse the reckless drug policy and repeal soft-on-crime legislation so that dangerous criminals receive jail time, not bail.

To conclude, I would like to reiterate that Conservatives are supportive of some measures in Bill C-2. However, we are deeply concerned about others. I am extremely concerned that there are no new sentencing provisions, there are no mandatory jail sentencing provisions, there are no mandatory jail terms for fentanyl traffickers who terrorize our communities and there are no new mandatory jail terms for criminals who terrorize our communities with guns. This is the reality of Canada. Criminals, including those charged with trafficking fentanyl, smuggling firearms or committing violent assaults, are being routinely released on bail, often

within hours. The bill would not address that reality in any way, shape or form. Conservatives believe that Canadians deserve to feel safe in their homes, in their streets and in their communities.

As of today, Bill C-2 is a bad bill. In its current form, it will be difficult for Conservatives to support the bill. What is the solution? We recommend that Liberals copy our ideas. Our leader has said time and time again, "Please use our ideas."

● (1725)

Conservatives have brought forward serious proposals in the form of private members' bills and otherwise to fix our broken—

**The Deputy Speaker:** The member's time has elapsed.

Questions and comments, the hon. member for Hamilton West—Ancaster—Dundas.

**John-Paul Danko (Hamilton West—Ancaster—Dundas, Lib.):** Mr. Speaker, congratulations to the member opposite on his first speech in the House of Commons.

It is good to hear that the Conservatives and the Liberal Party largely agree on the need to be tougher on crime to secure our border, in particular by securing the border against illegal drugs and guns. However, it is also fascinating that the Conservatives want to position themselves to be tough on crime at the same time that their freedom convoy friends are inventing all kinds of conspiracy theories about this bill.

Will the Conservatives listen to the needs of Canada and Canadian residents or to Pierre Poilievre's freedom convoy friends—

**The Deputy Speaker:** I have to interrupt the member. You cannot use the name of the leader of the official opposition. There has been a change. There was a by-election, and that name can no longer be used in the House.

The member was coming to his conclusion. I think the substance of the question has been asked.

The hon. member for Barrie—Springwater—Oro-Medonte.

**Doug Shipley:** Mr. Speaker, that was an interesting question from across the aisle. I did have many quotes in mind of what I have been hearing back in my community. It is chaos back home.

He wants to talk about conspiracy theories. These are not conspiracy theories; these are facts. Total violent crime is up 49.84%; total homicides are up 27.75%; total sexual assaults are up 74.83%; total violent firearms offences are up 116.4%; extortion is up 357%; auto theft is up 45%; total sexual violations against children are up 118%; forcible confinement and kidnapping is up 10%, indecent harassing communications are up 86%; and trafficking in persons is up 83%.

This is from 2015 to 2023. I can keep going on with this list. Maybe they will ask me another question and I can continue with my list.

[Translation]

**Simon-Pierre Savard-Tremblay (Saint-Hyacinthe—Bagot—Acton, BQ):** Mr. Speaker, I too want to congratulate our colleague on his first speech and his very first election. I welcome him to the House.

We have come to expect magic formulas from the Liberal government, even if the magic amounts to nothing more than window dressing and smokescreens instead of real results. I am curious, I truly wonder how the border can be strengthened and how new means and capacities can be provided in a context where there is a shortfall of 3,000 officers and no sign of hiring any time soon.

What are we actually talking about here?

● (1730)

[English]

**Doug Shipley:** Mr. Speaker, when I was at the public safety committee the last time, we discussed this issue in great detail. I would like to go over some of the issues or some of the concerns that Conservatives had. We have been consistent in trying to make our borders stronger. We have been calling for this for years. It was only when the President of the United States called on us to take action that we actually did. When Conservatives called for action, there was no action.

Conservatives have called for the addition of thousands of border agents; the extension of CBSA powers along the entire border, not just crossings; the installation of border surveillance towers as well as truck-mounted drone systems to spot border incursions; the installation of high-powered scanners at all major land crossings and shipping ports; the tracking of departures so that government officials will know which deportees are in Canada illegally; the toughening of penalties for repeat violent offenders; the ending of catch-and-release bail and of house arrest for violent criminals; and the elimination of multiple murder discounting in sentencing.

Those were just a few. I will wait for my next question.

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

I have a question for my colleague, but I would be remiss if I did not respond to a previous question by a Liberal member about conspiracy theories.

When Conservatives actually put forward a bill that tried to respond to many of the issues that this bill responds to, we were

### *Government Orders*

mocked by the Liberals. Back then, it was okay for us to try to do this and for the Liberals to say it was not okay. They have gone, in my view, much further, and are they now saying that we are putting forward conspiracy theories? It just does not equate. We cannot make this stuff up. This is the type of thing that makes me think the Liberals are tripping over their own agenda.

My colleague talked about an emergency order by the mayor of his city. How does it feel to live in a city that is under such an order?

**Doug Shipley:** Mr. Speaker, what I saw happening last summer in Barrie was remarkable. The downtown area was becoming unlivable. Businesses were closing up. The good mayor there took the drastic step of declaring a state of emergency and doing something about it. We are actually starting to clean up our downtown area and starting to move the tents and get people the help they need.

It is a big issue, but at least the mayor there is dealing with it.

**Hon. Judy A. Sgro (Humber River—Black Creek, Lib.):** Mr. Speaker, I am pleased to be able to join the debate today.

I listened with great sympathy to every word said by my new colleague across the way. I understand the issue very well and sympathize with the challenge that is facing him, and many of us, which is exactly why Bill C-2 is so important in enabling us to make the kinds of changes necessary to give the tools that are required and necessary for the various policing organizations and other organizations that deal with the many issues that Bill C-2 covers. I am happy to be able to speak to it, as well as to welcome my hon. colleague here.

I want to focus my remarks on the provisions of the bill that deal with lawful access, which is an issue that many of us have heard about and talked about.

When the police want to investigate something, they often have many roadblocks in being able to do that. How law enforcement obtains evidence in investigations is a real challenge. These provisions, though, have sparked much public comment, and I would like to try to dispel some of the myths about them.

*Government Orders*

Before I do that, I want to provide some of the context that informs the bill that we are debating today. A key challenge facing the criminal justice system right now is that digital evidence is required in almost all criminal and national security investigations. The Internet has fundamentally transformed how many serious offences, such as extortion, fraud and money laundering, are committed. The online world also allows criminals to operate across borders much more easily. As a result, many types of crimes are easier to commit and harder to detect, investigate and prosecute.

The transnational nature of many types of crime and the storage of data in the cloud, beyond the reach of local law enforcement, makes international co-operation a necessity in many of these investigations. The evolving case law in this context also highlights the challenges that law enforcement faces in accessing key information required to investigate many of these serious crimes. I am referring especially to two decisions by the Supreme Court of Canada, in *Spencer* and in *Bykovets*, which address child sexual exploitation and abuse material and online fraud.

In 2014, the Supreme Court of Canada, in *Spencer*, held that Internet users have a reasonable expectation of privacy in their identity when linked to anonymous online activity. Accordingly, the court held that the police need some type of lawful authority to obtain subscriber information in this context. The *Spencer* decision has had a significant impact on law enforcement investigations across the country. Since that decision, service providers, in the context of routine investigations, do not provide the police with any information relating to their subscribers without a court order.

In the absence of a specific tool to seek lawful authority to obtain subscriber information, law enforcement has been using what is called a general production order. However, this tool was designed for other purposes, and police are often unable to meet its threshold requirements, namely, to demonstrate that they reasonably believe that an offence has been or will be committed and that the subscriber information sought will provide evidence of the offence. If they do not meet those conditions, they cannot obtain a general production order.

That is just one example of the difficulties that our law enforcement officers and other authorities have when it comes to securing evidence that is required. These conditions are particularly challenging at the very early stages of investigations.

Bill C-2 proposes to address that challenge, post-*Spencer*, by establishing a new production order. It is designed specifically to allow the police to seek judicial authorization to compel the production of subscriber information. This would be done on a standard that is calibrated to balance the expectation of privacy with the needs of the state to pursue criminal investigations when there are reasonable grounds to suspect that the information will assist in the investigation of an offence, making it something that should be much easier to obtain.

• (1735)

One of the key safeguards embedded in these amendments is requiring judicial authorization prior to the release of any subscriber information. Previous attempts by Parliament to address this issue proposed allowing the police to access subscriber information without prior judicial authorization, but in 2024, in *R v. Bykovets*, the

Supreme Court of Canada confirmed that individuals have a reasonable expectation of privacy in relation to an IP address that has been assigned to them. An IP address, of course, as we all know, is a unique set of numbers that identifies a device connected to the Internet or a private network.

The decision has created uncertainty as to how police can act when an IP address has been provided to them voluntarily. For example, when the victim of an online crime such as fraud identifies an IP address when filing a police report or when law enforcement receives tips regarding child sexual exploitation and abuse from the National Center for Missing & Exploited Children, the bill clarifies that law enforcement can receive and act on information, including an IP address, that is provided to them unsolicited and information that is publicly available. This clarification would enable more timely investigations and reduce pressures on the criminal justice system, including police and judicial resources.

Bill C-2 would also modernize existing tools like the main search and seizure power in the Criminal Code. It has been in place for decades and was originally designed for the search of physical places and the seizure of tangible things. The proposed amendments address the examination of data stored on an accessible device by adding terms and conditions relating to the examination of the data. The proposed amendments seek to codify the Supreme Court of Canada's direction on computer searches set out in the 2013 decision *R v. Vu*. Related to this amendment is clarification that the Criminal Code's existing regime governing the detention of seized property does not apply to data obtained during an investigation.

As I previously mentioned, digital evidence is now required in almost all serious criminal and national security investigations. Often this digital evidence may be held outside of Canada; for instance, it may be held by social media companies. Existing mutual legal assistance mechanisms are often too slow for investigations that require digital evidence, especially in light of the volatile nature of data and the ease with which it can be moved or destroyed. Bill C-2 would establish a new mechanism, called an "international production request", that would allow law enforcement to seek authority from a court in Canada to request subscriber information or transmission data.

Bill C-2 is important and is necessary for us to move forward in this new time in our world.

• (1740)

[Translation]

**Alexis Brunelle-Duceppe (Lac-Saint-Jean, BQ):** Mr. Speaker, I am going to repeat a question I asked a Liberal colleague on the same subject and for which I do not believe I received a suitable response.

It is a simple question. Many groups that we met for Bill C-2 shared their apprehensions over some clauses in the bill that, according to them, might be unconstitutional. I doubt that we the only ones they shared that with. They must have shared that with colleagues in the party currently in power.

Do members of the Liberal Party, within the government, the executive, realize that there are constitutionality issues with certain clauses as the bill is currently written?

[English]

**Hon. Judy A. Sgro:** Mr. Speaker, that is a very important question. The bill has been reviewed and will continue to be reviewed. We all know that if it does not meet the calls in the Constitution, then those changes would have to be made. However, the folks who wrote up Bill C-2 clearly believe that it is within the framework that needs to be there to protect all Canadians and to respect our Constitution.

**Iqra Khalid (Mississauga—Erin Mills, Lib.):** Mr. Speaker, what are the important things that this bill covers, why is Bill C-2 necessary in terms of our border security, and how are we going to work with our partners as we go through the bill's stages?

Right now, it is at second reading and it will go into committee. How do we manage our relationships and collaborate to make sure that this bill is the perfect bill that would help Canadians in ensuring border safety and security?

**Hon. Judy A. Sgro:** Mr. Speaker, I know how concerned my colleague is, as all of us are.

Bill C-2 is necessary today to deal with 2025 and the future years. The current legislation that our police officers and other officials have to deal with is outdated and needed corrections much earlier, had I had my way about it.

I look forward to Bill C-2's protecting my constituents and all Canadians as we move forward, and hopefully we will be able to work together to do that. I believe that, at the end of the day, we all want to make sure that Canada is safe and that we have the proper safeguards that are required.

**Chris Lewis (Essex, CPC):** Mr. Speaker, Essex is basically right next door to the busiest international border crossing in North America, and soon we are going to have a brand new bridge, called the Gordie Howe International Bridge.

My question is this: How much collaboration was done with the CBSA officers? I have heard a lot about police departments, but the CBSA officers are ultimately the front line. The second part to that question is this: I believe that the hon. member referred to the people who wrote the bill, and I am wondering about the follow-ups to make sure that the bill would actually do what it is intended to do.

### *Government Orders*

**Hon. Judy A. Sgro:** Mr. Speaker, it is great to see my hon. colleague, whom I have worked with for several years, on the floor of the House.

Of course, CBSA is a big part of all of this. Securing the border, we all know, no matter where we live, is something that is extremely important. I continue to be very concerned about the number of guns that flow across the borders, by way of our lakes, our rivers and so on. I would like to see additional resources put into that effort, which is exactly what Bill C-2 would do.

It is not only about personnel being there and manning the border; it is also about making sure they have the legislation and the laws in place to be able to carry out what is required to protect all of us, whether it is from the guns crossing the border or from fentanyl, or by tightening up our immigration system. All of these are areas, with my colleague's support, that would strengthen the laws of Canada.

• (1745)

**Eric Duncan (Stormont—Dundas—Glengarry, CPC):** Mr. Speaker, it is an honour to be back in the House of Commons. Just like with our back to school week, we call it “getting back into routine”.

I want to take this opportunity, this being my first chance to be on my feet here on the floor, to speak on more of a sad note, which is to report and acknowledge in the House the passing of my predecessor, who served as the member of Parliament for Stormont—Dundas—South Glengarry for 15 years, Mr. Guy Lauzon.

Guy passed away on June 22, at the age of 81. I was very lucky to not only have had Guy as my member of Parliament before I came into the role, but also to have had the honour of working for him for a number of years here on Parliament Hill and in our Cornwall constituency office.

Guy was hard-working. He was full of integrity. His loyalty was second to none. He really cared about SD and G, Cornwall, and the entire country, frankly. We could not have found a more proud Canadian than Guy.

In the House, he served as the national Conservative caucus chair. At one point he was the parliamentary secretary to the then minister of agriculture and agri-food. He loved being in here, and he loved the honour of commuting back and forth and representing our part of eastern Ontario.

Guy was not just a boss to me; he was also a friend and a mentor. I am going to miss the regular calls I had with him, where he gave me advice. It is very unique serving in this job as a member of Parliament. Not too many people are fortunate to be in this job. I am going to miss him dearly for many reasons. He attended events with me even after he retired, and he was out and about in the community. His legacy and reputation for hard work and delivering for the people of Stormont—Dundas—Glengarry is something I want to acknowledge.

*Government Orders*

My thoughts are with Jeff, Lonna-Lea and the entire Lauzon family as they continue to mourn a wonderful man and a wonderful Canadian.

I rise tonight to speak to the government's Bill C-2, the strong borders act. It is a very important piece of legislation for our part of eastern Ontario. Stormont—Dundas—Glengarry, the united counties, the city of Cornwall and our community of Akwesasne in the riding of SD and G all share a border with the United States. We also have a port of entry that crosses from Cornwall onto Cornwall Island and over to Messina, New York. It is an important throughway for commercial and regular traffic to go through.

To be honest and frank as well, our community, sadly for too many years, has been a haven for drug, gun, human and sex trafficking. It has been a very disturbing trend we have seen over the course of the last couple of years, frankly decades. It is a reputation, one we are not proud to have. However, we are very proud of the men and women on the front lines who are working to combat the problem each and every day. Therefore when we see a piece of legislation entitled "strong borders", I certainly have some contributions to add to the debate.

I will again give my gratitude to the frontline law enforcement officers who are doing the best they can with the resources and legislation they are given. The RCMP, the Canada Border Services Agency, the OPP, the Cornwall Police Service and the Akwesasne Mohawk Police Service work through the border integrity unit to address it. I just want to give members an idea of where we have not had strong borders and why we need some improvements, something for which I have been advocating for years.

The border integrity unit team, which specializes in combatting trafficking and criminal activities, up until recently was not even funded for a 24-7 service. Usually, every night at midnight is when the shifts would end for the people in the border integrity unit. Very often they would not be back until the next morning. I was astounded when I learned this in some of the briefings and ride-along tours I had with local law enforcement. There was frustration or exasperation that this was even a fact. When do we think most of the notorious activity happens? It is not at two o'clock in the afternoon along the St. Lawrence River, but at dark, throughout the night, in an attempt to achieve as quiet a circumstance as possible, and the unit is not being funded 24-7.

The government made an announcement recently, after years and years of knowing this, and I am following it anxiously to make sure the commitment actually turns into a reality, that in our part of the St. Lawrence River and eastern Ontario we will truly, finally, get a 24-7 stronger border by having the necessary resources and officials on the front line, not only the people but also the tools and equipment that are needed as well.

There are some good parts to the bill, as there would be in most pieces of legislation, that members will not find us having too much of an issue with. When I go through it and see the details of the legislation, there are some things that have been changed with respect to the sex offender registry and modernizing that. Members will find agreement from Conservatives on this side of the House. I think, frankly, all members of the House would support moderniz-

ing it, tightening it up and making those conditions more strict, as there are several loopholes that have been identified.

• (1750)

There are some modernizations as well that would allow CBSA to better have locations and facilities and to co-locate them when it comes to the import and export of products and goods in this country. On modernization, the government is not going to get an argument from us on this side of the House.

However, there are many concerning parts. The government has put an omnibus piece of legislation forward with many different parts. I believe there are 16 different parts to the legislation, several of which are concerning when it comes to civil liberties and the protection of Canadians' privacy.

I want to raise part 4, which deals with mail and some of the challenges that go along with that. What do we mean by that? Part 4 would give Canada Post unilateral power not just to open parcels but also to open letters without a warrant. The Liberals have tried to refute that, but when we go through the legislation, we see that it does not specify that a warrant would be needed. We have combed through the legislation.

Also, part 4 specifically deals with changes to the Canada Post Corporation Act, and because "warrant" does not appear there once, it leads to many questions about why the government is choosing to do this. Canada Post, to my knowledge, did not ask for this power specifically.

At the end of the day, I think Canadians would be very concerned to know that if they had mail going through an international crossing, leaving Canada or coming in, that their letter mail could be opened without a warrant. I believe, and the Conservatives believe, that is a complete invasion of privacy.

There is a process that law enforcement can follow if there is suspicion of parcels or, frankly, even of letters. We are left asking why the constraint on power is being changed, and we are wondering what is going on. Why would Canada Post want the authority to open mail? This creates a lot more questions than answers. We are going to continue to ask for those answers, because opening an envelope and looking for fentanyl also means opening a piece of mail and being allowed to read it. Who is going to have access to correspondence? What is the process going to be? There are certainly many questions when it comes to part 4.

The second part I want to raise in the debate here tonight is part 11 of the bill, which would ban cash transactions over \$10,000. It would not put in a reporting requirement at all. It would not restrict it. It would not add bureaucracy or red tape, which the government is very good at doing, but would actually be a clear ban. When reading directly from the bill, we see that it would do all that.

I represent a rural community. In our part of Eastern Ontario, there are a lot of people who still deal in cash. It would not be anything to buy a small piece of farm equipment for \$10,000 or \$15,000, or to buy a used farm truck or a used vehicle. This would be jeopardized by what is being proposed:

Every person or entity that is engaged in a business, a profession or the solicitation of charitable financial donations from the public would commit an offence if the person or entity accepts a cash payment, donation or deposit of \$10,000 or more in a single transaction or in a prescribed series of related transactions that total \$10,000 or more.

There are a lot of those interactions that happen across the border between Eastern Ontario and northern New York. It continues to be a problem.

An additional challenge is what is not in the legislation. The Liberals are not addressing the desperate and urgent need for bail reform now. Our criminal justice system is a revolving door of catch and release. We need to address that. The Liberals have failed to do so.

When it comes to sentencing fentanyl kingpins, we need to clamp down and get more serious. Violent crime is up 50%, homicide is up 28%, sexual assaults are up 75%, extortion is up 357% and auto theft is up 46%. The list goes on and on. The bill does not go far enough to tackle the urgent need we have for public safety in this country.

I look forward to the questions and comments from my colleagues and how we will work to strengthen parts of it to actually get Canadians some relief from criminals ravaging our streets.

• (1755)

**Hon. Kevin Lamoureux (Parliamentary Secretary to the Leader of the Government in the House of Commons, Lib.):** Mr. Speaker, it is important to clearly indicate to the member that the Prime Minister has been very clear that we are going to be bringing forward significant bail legislation. At the end of the day, with Bill C-2, there is an opportunity for the Conservatives to actually do some positive work at the committee stage if they are concerned about some amendments.

They bring up the issue of mail. We are talking about a typical letter, being used today to send fentanyl throughout different regions of our country. This is a very serious issue. The change would enable law enforcement agents to ultimately look inside an envelope if they have a warrant. I do not understand why the Conservatives would not support at least what I am saying in principle. If they do not read it within the legislation, why—

**The Deputy Speaker:** I have to interrupt the parliamentary secretary to give a chance to the member for Stormont—Dundas—Glengarry to respond.

**Eric Duncan:** Mr. Speaker, when we go through the whole of part 4, which I was alluding to, under no clause does it make reference to a warrant. That is part of the issue we have with this piece of legislation.

This is where we are going again. There have been so many times in my nearly six years here in the House when the Liberals have said, “Just trust us.” This is what we mean. I do not trust them and Canadians do not either. It is simple that it should be put in

there. The fact that it is not leaves more questions than it does answers.

[Translation]

**Alexis Brunelle-Duceppe (Lac-Saint-Jean, BQ):** Mr. Speaker, I listened carefully to my colleague's speech. One part of his speech really caught my attention, and that was when he referred to part 11 of the bill. If the bill were applied as it is currently written, it would prohibit cash transactions of more than \$10,000. The hon. member referred to his riding, which is rural. I have also heard indigenous community leaders express their concerns about this part, specifically because cash transactions are more common in a number of indigenous communities, for example.

Is my colleague also aware of this reality? In his opinion, should there not be an amendment to that part of the bill?

[English]

**Eric Duncan:** Mr. Speaker, I appreciate my colleague from the Bloc raising that because our part of eastern Ontario has the Cornwall port of entry. We have one of the most complex borders and complex logistics to go with that. We have the community of Akwesasne in Ontario and Quebec, and in both Canada and the United States. The member is absolutely correct to highlight the challenge and the frustration with part 11 and that ban on transactions over \$10,000.

There will be many people who reside and do business in Akwesasne, either in Ontario or Quebec, or on the Canada or U.S. side, who would be jeopardized. This issue and the complexities of it have been raised locally as well. There are not only farmers in my riding, and the member is correct to say that many people in the first nation community of Akwesasne would be severely impacted by this. It would impact them very negatively when it comes to their businesses and the transactions they choose to do.

**Kelly McCauley (Edmonton West, CPC):** Mr. Speaker, I would like to thank my colleague for his excellent speech tonight. Being a border MP, he knows what he is speaking about. He brought up the Canada Post Corporation Act. We actually had the head of Canada Post at the government operations committee, the mighty OGGO. He went on the record and said that the government has not even consulted Canada Post about the changes it is proposing in Bill C-2.

Can my colleague comment on the fact that the government is trying to make changes without even consulting Canada Post?

### *Government Orders*

**Eric Duncan:** Mr. Speaker, I would not be surprised by the lack of coordination the government would have in consulting Canada Post about this. I asked in my comments if Canada Post is even asking for this. This confirms that it did not. Again, there is a simple opportunity or resolution: If fentanyl is found in an envelope, or if there is suspicion of it, it can be set aside. They can then get a warrant to open it.

Whenever the Liberals say to give them a piece of legislation unamended, as is, they come back and say, “Just trust us, and we will deal with it later.” Trust continues to be a fundamental issue. That is why Conservatives are standing up for privacy rights and for charter rights in protecting people's right to send mail back and forth. There is a simple way of resolving this. Again, instead of the Liberals' “do not worry about it” approach, I think it needs a lot more scrutiny. I am glad my colleague is on OGGO in addition to the other committee work he does and the interventions he gives in the House.

● (1800)

**Jessica Fancy (South Shore—St. Margarets, Lib.):** Mr. Speaker, it is with great pride and humility that I rise in the House as the member of Parliament for South Shore—St. Margarets. To stand here representing the voices, the stories and the concerns of my community is both an honour and a responsibility that I do not take lightly. My riding is a place where the ocean is not simply scenery. It is livelihood, heritage and the foundation of our communities.

For generations, families in South Shore—St. Margarets have built their lives around the water. Our fishers head out before dawn. Our families depend on the marine industries for their income, and our coastal towns thrive because of the opportunities and the challenges that the sea provides.

The Canadian Coast Guard, too, is woven into our community's fabric. For many in my riding, the Coast Guard is not just a federal institution. It is a neighbour, a rescuer and a partner. We see the red and white vessels in our harbours. We know the crews that are on call at all hours, and when there is a storm, a vessel in distress or an oil spill threatening our shorelines, it is often the Canadian Coast Guard that answers first.

That is why it feels fitting that my first speech here as we sit again should be about Bill C-2, and in particular, part 5 of this legislation, which would amend the Oceans Act. This is not just about legal language or technical updates. It is also about the safety, the well-being and the resilience of our coastal communities, those like mine and like so many across Canada.

South Shore—St. Margarets is defined not only by its relationship with the ocean but also by the strength of its communities and the compassion of its people. This past summer, I had the privilege of meeting with a remarkable local non-profit group called Thriving Together. This organization works tirelessly with families and individuals who are struggling with addiction. What they shared with me was very sobering.

They described parents living in constant fear that their children might be exposed to drugs at school or throughout their community. They spoke of individuals desperate for treatment but unable to find a bed, a program or timely support. They told me about families

who have been torn apart by addiction and the invisible weight that so many of us carry each day.

Those were not statistics or headlines. Those were the stories of real people. They are the mothers, fathers, sons, daughters and neighbours, the people in my community who I have met at local events, at the grocery stores, at the church halls or at community fundraisers. Their struggles are real, and they remind us that the issues debated in the House are not abstract. They are about human lives, dignity and hope.

Their concerns are also echoed through another message I received this summer, which was an open letter from a municipal warden in my riding. The letter urged the federal government to act swiftly and decisively to address the flow of drugs into our communities. It spoke of the strain on local resources, of the heartbreak felt by too many families and of the urgent need for federal leadership.

When a community leader, a frontline organization and everyday families all converge on the same message, we must listen. Their voices remind us that government action must be grounded in the realities that the people face on the ground. It is against this backdrop that we must view part 5 of Bill C-2.

● (1805)

This legislation proposes an amendment to the Fisheries Act to explicitly state that Canadian Coast Guard services include activities related to security. It would authorize the responsible minister to collect, analyze and disclose information and intelligence. It also clarifies that these new authorities would strengthen Canada's capacity to work with our international partners, including our closest ally, the United States, to address pressing challenges such as cross-border drug trafficking.

Let me be clear that the Canadian Coast Guard is and will remain non-military, a civilian organization. Its core mandate will not change, and the vital services it provides, such as search and rescue, environmental response, marine navigation and support for our fishers and mariners will continue uninterrupted and undiminished. However, what this amendment would also do is provide the Coast Guard with these additional tools. It would ensure that in the face of modern security challenges, the Coast Guard can contribute effectively to the efforts to keep our communities safe. For communities like mine in South Shore—St. Margarets, this matters.



We know that the same waters that sustain us and our livelihoods can also be exploited by those who seek to move illicit substances across our borders. We know that trafficking networks are sophisticated. They adapt very quickly, and no single agency can respond alone. The Coast Guard's unique presence, its vessels, its infrastructure and its crews, stationed from coast to coast to coast, make it a critical partner for this work. By strengthening its ability to collect and share intelligence and to work seamlessly with law enforcement and international allies, we make it harder for traffickers to exploit our waters. We also make meaningful steps toward protecting families and communities from the ripple effects of drug trafficking.

Supporting this legislation is about more than policy. It is about people. It is about responding to the voices that I have heard in my riding, the voices that all members have heard in their ridings, the families supported by Thriving Together in my community, the municipal leaders sounding alarms and the neighbours who quietly share their fears about what drugs are doing to our youth and communities. It is also about acknowledging that addiction and trafficking are not challenges that one level of government, one organization or one community can solve alone. It requires a coordinated response. They require tools at every level: prevention, treatment, enforcement and community supports. Bill C-2 would not solve every aspect of this crisis, but it would strengthen one piece of the puzzle.

I have seen first-hand the resilience of my community. I have seen how people come together in times of crisis, whether it is after a storm, during a fire or in response to tragedy, but I have also seen the strain. I have seen how families can only carry so much on their own, how municipalities struggle with limited resources and how community organizations such as Thriving Together do this historic work, but cannot fill the gaps left by a lack of coordinated support. This legislation gives us a chance to ease some of that burden in our communities.

By enhancing the Coast Guard's capacity to play a role in security, we would disrupt trafficking networks before their products reach our shores, strengthen the hand of law enforcement and reduce the pressure on families and communities already stretched thin. I also believe this amendment reflects a broader principle here, one that I continue to carry with me in the House. That principle is that national policy must always be connected to the local realities we see every day in our ridings. When we debate legislation here in Ottawa, it must be with an eye to the impact that it will have on places like Liverpool, Bridgewater, Tantallon, Mahone Bay, Shelburne, Caledonia and the many other towns and villages along South Shore—St. Margarets—

• (1810)

**The Assistant Deputy Speaker (John Nater):** I have to interrupt the hon. member. Her time has expired.

Questions and comments, the hon. member for Algonquin—Renfrew—Pembroke.

**Cheryl Gallant (Algonquin—Renfrew—Pembroke, CPC):** Mr. Speaker, I would like to congratulate our colleague on her maiden speech.

She mentioned the Coast Guard, and I want to ask what measures the government must take to maintain all the services she outlined

### *Government Orders*

in her speech but be sufficiently protected when it comes into contact with a fully armed adversary? The People's Liberation Army Navy is not going to respect our civilian versus military designations.

**Jessica Fancy:** Mr. Speaker, I think one of the most important pieces here is to realize that the Coast Guard is now going to be part of the Department of National Defence. Being part of the Department of National Defence comes with those extra measures, that extra authority and those extra bodies. It is why we are putting so much money into our Department of National Defence. Those different services and resources are all part of the package our Minister of National Defence has outlined throughout the summer.

Yes, the resources the Coast Guard needs to do the enforcement on the water are all part of the package.

[Translation]

**Simon-Pierre Savard-Tremblay (Saint-Hyacinthe—Bagot—Acton, BQ):** Mr. Speaker, we are talking about a bill that seeks to expand the powers of the authorities in place, including border services. However, there are not enough officers. There are not enough officers. There are not enough officers. According to the customs union, they are not short 200 officers, but 3,000.

What do we do about that?

[English]

**Jessica Fancy:** Mr. Speaker, when you are talking about the Canada Border Services Agency, a lot of this piece we have discussed already in the House. We are going to be adding 1,000 more border patrol officers and 1,000 more RCMP officers, so there is infrastructure that we are putting in place to help support the needs in even your local communities.

In terms of my local community being coastal, having the Coast Guard present and having ramped up enforcement is going to be huge when we start to look at tackling different drug trafficking operations that are off the coast of Nova Scotia.

**The Assistant Deputy Speaker (John Nater):** Before we move on, I will remind the hon. member to address her comments through the Chair.

Questions and comments, the hon. member for Moncton—Dieppe.

**Hon. Ginette Petitpas Taylor (Moncton—Dieppe, Lib.):** Mr. Speaker, I wanted to thank my colleague for sharing what she has been hearing in her community over the summer. I think as members of Parliament we all want to make sure that we are doing active listening in our community, and we want to ensure that the legislation we bring forward really reflects what we are hearing from our constituents.

*Government Orders*

I think one thing we can all agree on in the House is that we want to ensure that the Canadian Coast Guard has the authorities and tools it needs to do its job. During the member's speech today, she indicated that part 5 of Bill C-2 will ensure that the Canadian Coast Guard has the tools it needs. I am wondering if my colleague could elaborate a bit on that.

**Jessica Fancy:** Mr. Speaker, in terms of some of those resources, for example, I live in a coastal community where the fisheries are one of our primary industries, and sometimes we have enforcement issues. I know this summer, for the first time in decades, we had to deploy the Coast Guard to take care of some of those local fisheries issues. Having the Coast Guard there and putting some members of authority, in this case the DFO, on that boat really helps ramp up enforcement practices. Presence is key, so the more people we have helping with those enforcement strategies, the more we are going to be able to curb some of the problems going on in my community, such as, in this case, drug trafficking.

• (1815)

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

My colleague gave a local example about how things are going. I am wondering, though, about firearms. Firearms are killing our people. There is nothing in here about them.

What does she say to that?

**Jessica Fancy:** Mr. Speaker, that is a wonderful question from my colleague across the aisle. In terms of firearms, we have to remember that I grew up in a very rural area. I grew up on a farm, so when we are looking at local firearms, in my case, I have been saying this all throughout, since I was named as a member of Parliament: We have to look at the purpose of having the gun. In my case, I say the wooden handle, not the metal handle. There is a purpose for guns in rural communities: to protect our animals, to protect our—

[Translation]

**The Assistant Deputy Speaker (John Nater):** The hon. member's time has expired. We have to resume debate.

The hon. member for Saint-Hyacinthe—Bagot—Acton.

**Simon-Pierre Savard-Tremblay (Saint-Hyacinthe—Bagot—Acton, BQ):** Mr. Speaker, finally! Finally, that is the word.

Ottawa has finally understood the need to look at border security. In recent years, Ottawa has consistently turned a deaf ear to calls from all sides, including our own. Now, Ottawa seems to be starting to wake up. How unfortunate that it took a barrage of hostile comments and tariff threats from the newly appointed President Donald Trump for Ottawa to realize that it had to appear like it was taking the border security issue seriously. I was in Washington last week with the leader of the Bloc Québécois and the member for Lac-Saint-Jean. The Americans are still very concerned about border security.

However, we have long called for stronger measures to combat the export of stolen vehicles, reduce the number of asylum seekers, and tackle the flow of fentanyl and the issue of money laundering.

We need to address all of these issues. We have been talking about them for a long time. It cannot be said that they were never discussed by anyone in government, and that the problem was unknown. Unfortunately, it took a radical shake-up in Canada-U.S. relations before we saw anyone start to wake up.

However, it is unfortunate that this belated awakening has resulted in an extremely lengthy and highly technical bill with potentially serious consequences. The bill is 130 pages. It amends no fewer than 12 laws and cannot be examined hastily or treated lightly. Unfortunately, this same bill is potentially rife with infringements on privacy and rights and freedoms.

While the Bloc Québécois does support Bill C-2 at this particular stage so it can be studied in committee, where members can hear from experts, groups and affected individuals, we need to be clear that we will not accept any expedited procedures, gag orders, short studies or any other such strategies intended to force it down our throats. The bill is 130 pages long, and it is complicated and technical. It contains many more questions than answers. We have to get this right.

Let me start with the immigration aspect of the bill. Bill C-2 gives the minister more control over asylum claims, allowing him to further consider all asylum claims, even if they have been deemed admissible by officers. The minister must authorize all claims before they are sent to the Immigration and Refugee Board of Canada. The minister also has the power to determine if an asylum claim has been withdrawn. It is therefore up to the minister to set the requirements through regulations.

Additionally, the minister and the minister's staff will no longer be required to appear before the Refugee Protection Division. That is a major change.

Bill C-2 also stipulates that claimants will have to be in Canada to have their case heard. While we understand why the bill gives the minister the power to suspend or refuse to consider permanent and temporary resident visas, work permits and study permits, and while we welcome the intention behind these expansions of power, it is imperative that an in-depth study be conducted to determine whether there will be any consequences on permanent residents selected by Quebec. Given Canada's tendency toward increasing centralization, we have every reason to be skeptical.

Furthermore, we are pleased that Ottawa has finally listened to reason on the infamous 14-day loophole. What is the 14-day loophole? It is the idea that people who have entered through a route other than an official border crossing can file a claim if they are not caught during the first 14 days after crossing the border. This exception obviously encourages people to cross the border illegally. It is being removed, ensuring that such individuals would instead be deported.

The section on enhancing border services powers is full of good intentions, but chances are that the understaffing will undermine Ottawa's efforts. Let us talk about intentions. Transporters and warehouse operators are required to provide access to their facilities to allow Canada Border Services Agency officers to inspect goods destined for export. That is a good idea.

● (1820)

The bill would also add security-related activities to the Coast Guard's mandate, allowing it to conduct patrols and share information. That is not such a bad idea either. They also want better sharing of information by the RCMP concerning sex offenders and to change the legal threshold for disclosing information gathered in the national sex offender registry. The problem is knowing how to apply all that. The bill is full of good ideas, but the mandates it seeks to expand are those of institutions that are having a hard time recruiting and also retaining their employees.

In its election platform, the Liberal Party promised to hire 1,000 more RCMP officers, as well as 1,000 more CBSA officers, no less. How is it going to do that? We do not know. According to the Customs and Immigration Union, the same union that is rarely consulted when Ottawa is preparing yet another costly fiasco at the border, in order to fulfill its mandate, the Canada Border Services Agency would require nearly 3,000 additional officers. Without these hires, any real strengthening of border security will remain wishful thinking. Ottawa also needs to allow CBSA officers to patrol between ports of entry, which does not require a legislative amendment, only a regulatory change. That alone could help, and it is also very easy to do.

The biggest problem has to do with privacy, rights and freedoms. We do not yet know if they will be respected. Ineffectiveness is one thing, but this could lead to people being unjustly deprived of their freedoms. For any society, the balance between security and freedom can sometimes be precarious. Fighting crime obviously means giving law enforcement the tools it needs to do its job. We have no issue with that principle.

However, we have reason to fear that the bill could lead to security overreach. Nowadays, surveillance of everything we do is steadily increasing. Simplifying procedures is one thing; implementing an extremely intrusive provision is another. Would this give law enforcement the right to open people's mail, as some have suggested? We know the bill would require electronic service providers to support the investigations of law enforcement agencies and the Canadian Security Intelligence Service, or CSIS, by responding to their requests and intercepting information and communications. It also allows a bank, credit union or insurance company to collect and use an individual's personal information without their knowledge or consent under certain circumstances. These are just a few examples.

Are these provisions justified in some cases? Are groups and civil law experts right to be concerned? We have been hearing a lot of concerns and a lot of perspectives. I want to emphasize that. Is the balance between increased security and the protection of freedoms being upset in favour of the former and to the detriment of the latter? There is no way to be sure at this point, but there are, as they say, red flags. There is reason enough to worry, even though we

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agree with the principle of the bill, which addresses a need that should have been addressed a long time ago.

This massive bill raises more questions than it answers. One thing is certain: it warrants serious, in-depth study before we can determine whether the bill can and should be improved and, of course, whether it should be passed in the end. This circumstantial support should not be seen as a blank cheque. We will be keeping a close eye on things.

● (1825)

[English]

**Hon. Kevin Lamoureux (Parliamentary Secretary to the Leader of the Government in the House of Commons, Lib.):** Mr. Speaker, I appreciate what the member is saying in regard to the passage of the legislation. At the end of the day, we need to look at what the government committed to in the last election. The legislation we see before us today encompasses many of the things the Prime Minister campaigned on in the last election.

I can appreciate, in a minority situation, that we have to work with opposition. There is a very strong willingness to do so, but we also need to recognize that if the government does not try to encourage the legislation to go through, there is a very good chance that it will never get through. We need to encourage the legislation to go through. Much of the debate and questioning could be taking place at the committee stage.

Can the member provide his thoughts in terms of Canadians wanting us to co-operate?

[Translation]

**Simon-Pierre Savard-Tremblay:** Mr. Speaker, yes, it was a government commitment. That said, I do not believe that the 130 pages of this bill, right down to the smallest detail, were actually specific Liberal commitments during the election campaign. The devil is often in the details.

We are quite willing to co-operate, but things need to unfold differently than they did last June, when there was a super closure motion, fast-track procedures and rushed studies. This bill is complicated. The Bloc Québécois has said that it will vote in favour of the bill so that it can be sent to committee, because we want to study it. If my colleague wants our co-operation, there will have to be a thorough study, increased scrutiny and a rigorous process involving experts, groups and individuals who are affected.

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**Rhonda Kirkland (Oshawa, CPC):** Mr. Speaker, I wonder if the member could elaborate a little more on his comments regarding simply removing the irritants the United States has asked us to remove. It does not feel like leadership. The public safety minister pretty much admitted that this was the purpose of the bill.

What took the Liberals so long? Why did they wait for the U.S. to chime in? I think our government is stronger than that, or it should be, and I would like to hear a couple of more comments on that.

*[Translation]*

**Simon-Pierre Savard-Tremblay:** Mr. Speaker, unfortunately, I need to point out that it took a wake-up call, like so many other situations. The same thing happened with the previous American administration with regard to Roxham Road. It took the White House saying that the situation was no longer working and that enough was enough. All of a sudden, the government, which has rediscovered the concept of Canadian sovereignty—so despised in previous decades and supposedly a major concern now—is saying that border security is important. Perhaps stolen vehicles being shipped overseas is important. Perhaps fentanyl matters. Perhaps criminal gangs are important. Perhaps the weapons that enter our country have an impact here. It took an American administration to say those things to get the ball rolling after nine years with this government in power.

**Alexis Brunelle-Duceppe (Lac-Saint-Jean, BQ):** Mr. Speaker, I want to say more about this topic, because it is quite surprising. The Parliamentary Secretary to the Leader of the Government in the House of Commons says this is a new government, but I do not believe this is the first time I have seen him. He has been rising in the House for some time, and, all of a sudden, he is saying that we need to tighten our borders and toughen up the asylum seeker program.

In June 2024, when he was in office, the former immigration minister announced to great fanfare that a committee would be set up to distribute asylum seekers across Canada. He said that some provinces were doing much more than their share based on their demographic weight, that is, their population. Where is this committee on the distribution of asylum seekers now?

That is my question for my colleague.

• (1830)

**Simon-Pierre Savard-Tremblay:** Mr. Speaker, my colleague is using a figure of speech known as a “rhetorical question”.

If such a committee existed, my colleague, who is the immigration critic, would probably know more about it than I do and know where it is now. I therefore take it that the answer was implied in the question.

Nonetheless, I will take this opportunity to say that it took a long time and a lot of turning in circles to finally get somewhere. We still do not know if it will measure up or whether it will have to be enhanced or improved, but if Ottawa is finally starting to wake up, so much the better.

Why did it take a reminder from the U.S. for Canada's representatives to realize that they have to monitor their borders? Why did

King Charles not tell them that when they went to meet with him to talk about sovereignty?

*[English]*

**Iqra Khalid (Mississauga—Erin Mills, Lib.):** Mr. Speaker, I am on my feet today to talk about Bill C-2 because I strongly feel there is a balance to be struck between public safety and the safety of our collective community in Canada and of our country, and the safety of individual rights.

I think everybody in this House wants to go after child sex offenders transnationally. We want to make sure that law enforcement is modernized and has the tools it needs to go after bad guys. All of us want to crack down on money laundering, stop the cash flow of organized crime and deprive organized criminals of their illegal profits. We want to stop auto theft and ensure that our vehicles remain within our country and are not exported abroad and sold. We want to make sure that drug production comes to a halt. We want to make sure that fentanyl is not going between borders and, most importantly, is not ending up in the hands of the vulnerable communities all across Canada that suffer for it. At the same time, though, we want to make sure the majority of Canadians do not suffer for our collective safety.

That balance is what this debate is all about, and that balance is what I am hoping the discussion at committee will be about. I am willing to support this bill to ensure that collective Canadian safety is paramount to where we are going with it, but at the same time, providing safeguards to individual Canadians is just as important. We want to make sure that we are not only collectively safe, but individually safe.

A number of concerns have been raised about this bill, but I want to talk about some of the positive things that have been brought about. For example, the Canadian Association of Chiefs of Police has said:

Canada lags behind its international law enforcement partners in the ability to lawfully access electronic evidence associated to criminal activity. Transnational organized crime groups are exploiting this gap to victimize our communities across the country through serious crimes such as human, drug and firearm trafficking, auto theft, and violent profit-driven crime.

These are serious things, and we need to equip our law enforcement, as they are dealing with and protecting our borders and our communities.

The association goes on to say:

The proposed Bill demonstrates a commitment to modernizing legislation and equipping law enforcement with necessary tools to combat transnational organized crime in an increasingly complex threat environment. In particular, the Bill sets out several important law amendments which will address systemic vulnerabilities within the justice system, providing critical tools for law enforcement, border services and intelligence agencies.

I think those are very important pieces to this legislation.

A number of issues have also been raised by civil society. However, I will first address some of the items this bill would and would not do that have been sensationalized and perhaps used to misinform the public.

There have been talks about a ban on cash transactions over \$10,000. However, if we read the bill, specifically part 11, line 136, and the exemptions for section 5 of the Proceeds of Crime (Money Laundering) and Terrorist Financing Act, we see that there are exemptions for financial institutions, credit unions, etc., that would allow legitimate activity to happen. The intention of this bill is to go after the clandestine or nefarious nature of a money transfer.

There is another claim, which I have heard members talk about in the House today, about our mail being opened. Under our current law, that is already allowed. However, the bill would remove the section on exempting our letters so that it not just about our parcels.

● (1835)

When we talk about reasonable suspicion as a ground to open mail, I have some concerns about that, but ultimately, when we are talking about giving discretion to our law enforcement officers, the people we trust to hold office, that discretion needs to be honoured and valued. It also needs to ensure there is no systemic bias within that process. Somebody from a specific country should not be targeted, nor should they raise the reasonable suspicion of a mail officer or border officer. There are many other ways to do that.

One major concern that has been raised is with respect to privacy, an issue of our time. It is not just about the privacy that we have regarding our phones and data tracking at the border. It goes across all ways. It goes across how we use our social media, how our Internet use is sold to third parties, how it is used to advertise and how it is used to basically figure out a pattern of who we are as people.

There needs to be a deeper dive not just at the border, but all across the digital world we live in here in Canada. Where is our information stored? Who is it shared with? Where Bill C-2 addresses a part of that, I think we need to go a little further and expand it, perhaps in different legislation, to look at how we are protecting Canadians' data and their privacy, regardless of where they are within the country. That is a very important aspect of providing safety to Canadians.

One part that does trouble me a bit is about sharing the data of Canadians with international partners. I think that, yes, we absolutely have obligations to our allies and partners, whether it is the Five Eyes, NATO or other partners, but first and foremost, we need to decide how we are going to protect Canadians and what our international obligations are with respect to privacy and human rights, and make sure that Bill C-2 conforms to that as well. We have a very robust judicial system that will eke out exactly how we need to ensure this is regulated.

I realize that I only have two minutes left. I have a lot more to say, but I want to reinforce that this whole debate is not about the technicalities of the bill per se. I think it is a broader conversation about how we balance our need for public safety and security against our individual rights as Canadians.

The majority of Canadians are strong, law-abiding, friendly, amazing people, and they should not have their rights stepped on because of a few nefarious actors. Having said that, we need to explore a little further what the balance could be between the very le-

gitimate and well-founded concerns that civil society organizations have raised and the needs of our country and law enforcement with regard to safety and security.

I find it to be an amazing step forward for our Prime Minister to say that we will have over 1,000 new CBSA officers providing resources on the ground for border safety and security, trying to combat drug trafficking, sex trafficking and money laundering, and trying to clamp down on organized crime. However, I also want to make sure that our laws are fit for purpose and that individual Canadians are well respected per their rights in our charter and Constitution.

● (1840)

**David McKenzie (Calgary Signal Hill, CPC):** Mr. Speaker, I appreciated receiving some further information from the members opposite with respect to this bill this afternoon.

With great respect to the government party, this bill feels rushed. There are aspects of it that would intrude upon the rights of individuals. I have yet to hear a justification for the intrusion on privacy rights without the benefit of a third party review. It is our judicial process currently that law enforcement agencies, whatever they may be, when they have a suspicion of crime, go before the courts to obtain a warrant prior to accessing the property of individuals. I have yet to hear a justification for why we should set that aside.

**Iqra Khalid:** Mr. Speaker, I think the member is talking about the ISPs and wiretaps on our phones. There are a number of different acts and laws that really combat this issue. From my understanding, there is no specific provision that says that, without a warrant, we can go and take somebody's data.

Again, as we go through the bill process, I am looking forward to seeing how all of this information and the details and the technicalities come out within the committee stage, as well as to hearing from experts, to see how we can improve this bill to make sure that everybody's rights are protected.

[Translation]

**Patrick Bonin (Repentigny, BQ):** Mr. Speaker, it is always a pleasure to be back in the House, especially after a very busy summer as a new member. I think it is important to go back to basics and acknowledge my constituents in Repentigny, because I am here to work for them.

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My question is this. We have seen Chinese drones being used in the past to patrol the border, among other things, which was problematic. The big issue with border surveillance is the number of officers on the ground. We have asked about this over and over, but we have not received a response. The Customs and Immigration Union has been very clear about the fact that nearly 3,000 more officers are needed.

How will these additional officers be paid, and when will they be hired? Can we get an answer to those questions?

[English]

**Iqra Khalid:** Mr. Speaker, as we all know, the Prime Minister and the Minister of Public Safety have announced that there will be 1,000 more CBSA officers to help patrol. As the work starts and continues, we have to be nimble. We have to make sure that our border patrol has the resources it needs in order to be successful. As I said in my speech, it is a changing landscape where we have the digital aspect of it and we have the physical aspect of it. Organized criminals are oftentimes 10 steps ahead of where we are, and we need to make sure that we are catching up with that pace. I look forward to working with the member to make sure we have that support—

**The Assistant Deputy Speaker (John Nater):** Questions and comments, the hon. member for London West.

**Hon. Arielle Kayabaga (London West, Lib.):** Mr. Speaker, I would like to welcome my colleague back into the House of Commons. I know that she had a lot more to say, and maybe she will get the opportunity to do so right now. I just wanted to comment on the fact that she said that this is not the final bill, and we want to take it to committee to discuss many of the issues that many people in the House have commented on.

Could the member maybe speak to how she can continue to convince the opposition to support sending this to committee, so that opposition members' suggestions can actually be discussed and further moved into the bill?

**Iqra Khalid:** Mr. Speaker, as I say often and as I say loudly, there is no government without a healthy and strong opposition. That is where good legislation comes from. In order for us to really think about the issues that we are discussing here today, in order for us to really work and collaborate together for the betterment of Canadians, the bill has to go to committee, so that not only do we hear about members' concerns, but most importantly, we hear from experts on specific aspects of the bill and propose amendments to make the bill stronger, so that both of our concerns are addressed. Those concerns are public safety and individual security.

• (1845)

**Rachael Thomas (Lethbridge, CPC):** Mr. Speaker, Conservatives have always stood for the principle of security and the principle of freedom, and we have managed to do so simultaneously. These are the two pillars of a safe and prosperous society. Sadly, though, after a decade of Liberal governance, Canadians are living with less of both: less freedom and less security. The Liberals would like to move past their disastrous record on these topics, but Canadians are still paying the price and therefore very much paying attention and have some significant concerns.

Today, with Bill C-2, the government is claiming yet again to secure Canada. The Liberals have said that this is the intent of the bill. I would like to explore that a bit, because there are two problems that I see with the bill. I would say that it would neither make our communities safer nor protect our freedoms, and it would actually deepen the failures of the current government from the past decade.

There are two things. The bill claims to enhance security, but it would actually leave glaring holes in our justice system untouched, therefore leaving a person feeling less secure than ever. I will expand on that. The second thing I would like to discuss is the fact that it would infringe on the fundamental freedoms of Canadians in ways that should alarm each and every one of us in this place.

With regard to security of person and the justice system, let us be clear: Bill C-2 is the Liberals' half-hearted attempt to patch over the chaos that many of their policies have actually created. Sadly, Canadians have been truly, not figuratively, paying for those mistakes with their lives. We are told the border is secure, yet the CBSA has lost track of nearly 30,000 people with deportation orders. That is not security; that is negligence. In Falkland, B.C., authorities uncovered the largest, most sophisticated drug superlab in Canadian history in just the last couple of years. In the same province, the RCMP arrested individuals tied to a transnational organized crime group connected to Mexican drug cartels. This is the state of our country.

These are not isolated incidents. They are the product of years of border mismanagement and reckless drug policy experiments that have been done, especially in the province of British Columbia, which the government not only stamped with approval but also funded. That same failed experiment actually resulted in the death of more people due to drug overdose than died during World War II. Let that sink in for a moment: More people died because of the government's failed drug experiment than the number of people who died in World War II. That is a big deal.

Meanwhile, we also have to look at catch-and-release policies and what they have done, because they have sown great chaos across the country. My own riding of Lethbridge has one of the highest property and violent crime rates in Canada, and we are certainly not alone. It is something being experienced in communities from coast to coast.

In Welland, Ontario, just a few weeks ago, a three-year-old girl was violently sexually assaulted in her own bed. A little girl should be able to go to sleep at night with confidence that she is going to be kept safe, that she is going to wake up in the morning without her sleep being disrupted in any way. Unfortunately, because of our weak policies in this country, that three-year-old woke up having been forever changed, and she now has to work through the scarring that has taken place, not only to her physical body but to that little three-year-old heart. That is because of the failed policies of this place.

Folks, more can and should be done in order to make sure that a person is secure. Yes, sure, put more border patrol in place, but at the end of the day, there is so much more. In Kelowna, B.C., Bailey McCourt, a 32-year-old mother of two, was beaten by her ex with a hammer after he got released on \$500 bail. That did not have to happen. Folks, if our justice system were stronger, if it stood for victims and did not side with criminals, these things would be prevented.

These tragedies expose a massive weakness in our justice system, and it is one that desperately needs to be addressed. The government has not only the opportunity but, I would dare say, the responsibility.

● (1850)

There are solutions, and I want to outline two of them. We have dozens that we can offer, but these are two of them. One would be bail reform. There are cases like that of Bailey, who was the mother murdered by her ex. He should not have been allowed out on bail. It highlights a massive problem with our bail system, the fact that a criminal can be put in jail and then let out before the ink on the police report even dries. That is what happened here. This man, a very dangerous offender who was known to police, went out and took the life of his ex-wife, leaving two young children without a mom, and a family grieving.

We have put forward a bill called the jail not bail act, and it calls for the repeal of Bill C-75, which forces judges to release offenders at the earliest opportunity and under the lightest conditions. That should not be the case in this country. The bill we are proposing would instead require judges to consider an accused's full criminal history, deny bail to repeat major offenders and toughen risk assessments, which would do a lot of good for victims and innocent Canadians. It would certainly do a lot of good to put criminals where they belong.

The other reform that we could bring forward is sentence reform. We have to confront the fact that our sentencing laws in this country are very broken. In Canada today, the maximum penalty for a third robbery offence is higher than the penalty for a sexual offence. I am going to say that again. Right now in this country, the maximum penalty for a third robbery offence is actually more than for a sexual assault offence.

I want us to think about that for a moment. Physical property in this country is actually given more weight, more value, than a person's dignity. Most often, it is women who are sexually assaulted. It is women who are put in that vulnerable place, that place of having to pull themselves together and heal from what was robbed: their very dignity and their very being.

It is also worth noting that our system allows for violent offenders to actually receive house arrest rather than be put in prison where they belong. How does that protect society? How does that protect those who are just trying to go to work, take their kids to sports or a music lesson, and live life in a safe, law-abiding manner? Why are we not standing up for those folks?

Colleagues, we need tougher, more consistent sentencing that reflects the gravity of the crime committed. Canadians deserve this. When we talk about the security of a person, these are the things

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that must come to the table. Under Bill C-2, none of this is considered. In fact, in the six or seven months that the government has now been in place under the new Prime Minister, the topics I am bringing up today have not even been addressed. They have not even been acknowledged.

This summer, it felt like every other hour I was opening up my phone and reading an article with regard to a crime committed against another human being. There was another life lost or another person assaulted. It should not be that way. Those in this House have the power, we have the power, to make a difference. We have the power to change the laws of this country and to instruct our law enforcement agents and the courts to act differently. We have the ability to contend for victims, to protect those who are innocent, and to truly provide security of person. When we talk about Bill C-2, there is a whole lot missed there.

I said originally that I was going to talk about security of person, and I was going to talk about the violation of human liberty that is also exposed in this bill. Out of passion, I have run out of time, but I think I have hit my mark. Ultimately, it is the people who matter most. They are the ones who sent me here. They are the ones I am contending for, and I would ask that my colleagues do the same.

● (1855)

**Will Greaves (Victoria, Lib.):** Mr. Speaker, my thanks go to the hon. member opposite for bringing attention, and her passion, to this very important and indeed deeply touching issue.

I wish to bring to the member's attention, in case she is not yet aware, a petition that has been moved by the loved ones of Bailey McCourt from Kelowna, whom the member referenced. This tragic story, which occurred this summer in British Columbia, my home province, touched many of us and has rippled out widely across our communities.

In that context, it is my great privilege to be the parliamentary sponsor for a petition that Bailey's loved ones have brought forward. It calls for a number of revisions to the Criminal Code to address some of the shortcomings and gaps that may have contributed to the tragic loss of her life at the hands of her former partner. Some of those proposed changes include requiring the disclosure of a criminal record to one's partner upon receiving a marriage licence, as well as a variety of other measures that I trust the Minister of Justice and Attorney General of Canada will take up in this session.

**Rachael Thomas:** I thank the hon. member for taking those steps. I think advocating for, in this case, his constituent's family, the loved ones who have been left behind, is really admirable. It is the right thing to do. Well done.

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That said, I also believe that the member stands on the side of government and therefore has the ability to urge change. I hope he is doing that. I hope he is urging cabinet with all his might, and especially the Prime Minister, to look at this very seriously and to create changes around both bail and the way we do sentencing in this country. Those two things are very much needed in order to protect the innocent and make sure that future situations like what happened to Bailey do not happen again.

[Translation]

**Alexis Brunelle-Duceppe (Lac-Saint-Jean, BQ):** Mr. Speaker, I thank my colleague from Lethbridge for her passionate speech. I think this is a very emotional topic for her. I understand her and I congratulate her on this speech.

This bill will likely end up in committee. Does my colleague think we need to make a lot of changes to it? Will the parties have to work as a team to ensure that this bill can be passed in the House? If the Liberals do not accept the amendments and the bill is presented to the House as it currently stands, will it be acceptable to vote for this bill?

[English]

**Rachael Thomas:** Mr. Speaker, I am curious about the hon. member's purpose for the question.

Nevertheless, when it comes to this bill, there are significant flaws. I have taken the time to outline some of those flaws here today, but ultimately, it comes down to this: The bill fails to secure people in the way it promises to. It fails to contend for Canadians who deserve protection.

Furthermore, it is a direct infringement on people's freedoms. For example, it will grant permission to Canada Post employees to open mail without a warrant. That is crazy.

Furthermore, a peace officer will be able to access a person's data, again without a warrant. That is crazy. We have warrants in place in order to make sure that people are protected from an overreach of government and authority.

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

I really thank my hon. colleague for talking about sentences for robbery versus those for sexual offences. It is something I brought up on Bill C-299 the last time. In fact, the member for Winnipeg North was in the chamber when I brought that bill forward, and I was heckled while bringing that bill forward.

My hon. colleague is so passionate about this. I do not have a question. I want to commend and thank her for standing up for the most vulnerable.

• (1900)

**Hon. Arielle Kayabaga:** Mr. Speaker, I rise on a point of order. I believe we cannot refer to a member's absence from or presence in the House, so I would caution the member to not say that again.

**The Assistant Deputy Speaker (John Nater):** I appreciate the member's intervention. We cannot refer to a member's absence from or presence in the House. We do not need to go any further.

The hon. member for Lethbridge has 20 seconds to respond.

**Rachael Thomas:** Mr. Speaker, I appreciate the good work the member has done in order to advocate for victims and the protection of Canadians. He certainly has done a lot of good work in that regard. It is my great pleasure to join with him in continuing the good fight to contend for Canadians, their peace of mind and the security of persons.

**Glen Motz (Medicine Hat—Cardston—Warner, CPC):** Mr. Speaker, it is always an honour to rise and to represent the great people of Medicine Hat—Cardston—Warner.

This summer, like many members of the House, I had the privilege of meeting with constituents from all across my riding, hearing directly from them on issues that matter most to them. I want to thank everyone who took the time to connect with me, because their voice matters.

Today I would like to discuss Bill C-2, known as the strong borders act. Despite its simple name, Bill C-2 is an omnibus piece of legislation that includes 16 separate parts and would make amendments to 19 different acts of Parliament.

The broad nature of the bill and the substantial changes proposed require vigorous study and debate at committee, with numerous expert witnesses from all perspectives to get the important legislation right, because as tabled by the government, I believe it is flawed and requires amendments to fix and strengthen it.

As the official opposition, Conservatives remain committed to implementing tougher and smarter measures that are needed to keep Canadians safe. We are ready to support provisions in the bill that are in our national interest and secure our borders while proposing—

**The Assistant Deputy Speaker (John Nater):** There is a point of order from the hon. member for Algonquin—Renfrew—Pembroke.

**Cheryl Gallant:** Mr. Speaker, in the camera shot that the public sees, there is someone in the background directly behind the member who is speaking. I would ask the Speaker to request that people be aware of when they are within the camera shot. It is very distracting for people who are trying to pay attention to the speech.

**The Assistant Deputy Speaker (John Nater):** I thank the member for her intervention. I think the point has been well understood by those in the camera shot. I think the issue has resolved itself.

We will return to the member for Medicine Hat—Cardston—Warner.

**Glen Motz:** Mr. Speaker, Conservatives are ready to support provisions in the bill that are in our national interest and secure our borders while proposing amendments by which the bill can be improved and opposing measures that go against the best interest of Canadians.



Before I get into the specifics of the bill, it is very important to note that much of the urgency surrounding the legislation is the direct result of 10 years of Liberal inaction on border and immigration enforcement. Let us not forget it was the new Trump administration that actually forced this issue, causing the Liberals to finally take these concerns seriously. It was about time.

Through the introduction of the bill, the Liberals are trying to address problems they not only created but also allowed to reach a crisis level. Conservatives have been calling for a stronger response to public safety, border security and immigration for years. I am pleased to see that some aspects of Bill C-2 take meaningful steps in helping to streamline investigations, fight money laundering and ensure sex offenders are dealt with properly under the Sex Offender Information Registry Act.

Having the appropriate tools is critical in keeping our borders secure, disrupting illegal financing and fighting transnational organized crime and fentanyl.

Part 2 attempts to begin to address the fentanyl crisis by proposing to amend the Controlled Drugs and Substances Act to fill a loophole in the act. It proposes to do this by banning precursor chemicals for fentanyl, which is critically important.

However, Bill C-2 fails to address the serious matter of appropriate sentencing for fentanyl dealers, for example, given the Liberals' failure to repeal their soft-on-crime bill, Bill C-5, and their catch-and-release legislation in Bill C-75.

Part 4 of Bill C-2 would expand the powers of Canada Post, allowing it to open anything during post. While I agree that the Canada Post Act requires some amendments, the searching and opening of mail should be limited to law enforcement agencies with judicial authorization.

I remain concerned that some of the sweeping changes embedded in this omnibus bill could undermine privacy protections across Canada.

Having a secure border means having a strong, robust immigration system that serves the needs of Canadians and aligns with our national interests. Parts 6 to 9 of Bill C-2 attempt to address some of the challenges our immigration system faces after 10 years of Liberal mismanagement.

I strongly believe that the role of government is to protect our national security. We must ensure that our national security apparatus and law enforcement agencies have the legislative tools necessary to do their jobs and do them well.

Part 6 of the bill introduces amendments to the Department of Citizenship and Immigration Act and the Immigration and Refugee Protection Act to allow information sharing between various government departments and agencies, but only if a written agreement exists.

I applaud the opening of communication between federal agencies, but the bill would permit these activities through regulation rather than simply legislating that requirement. The absence of legislating it and having enforcement mechanisms casts doubt on whether meaningful action would follow or whether this would be yet another empty promise.

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Parts 7, 8 and 9 of Bill C-2 include proposed substantial changes to the in-Canada asylum claim eligibility. It would expand the minister's authority to suspend or cancel immigration documents for reasons determined to be in the national interest and proposes changes to the safe third country agreement so that anyone who crosses the border between official ports of entry would be ineligible to apply for asylum immediately after arrival and could be returned to the United States during that period if they do not qualify for an exception.

All of these proposed changes are significant and have potential, but they require in-depth study to ensure they address the problems appropriately.

Beyond immigration, Bill C-2, in part 10 and part 11, contains provisions to crack down on money laundering, terrorist financing and organized crime. Part 10 proposes to increase penalties and replace optional FINTRAC compliance agreements with a mandatory regime. It would expand FINTRAC's registration to include more entities and would authorize FINTRAC to share information with Elections Canada.

● (1905)

These are all sound proposals. However, in part 11 of the bill, the Liberals are proposing to ban certain entities from accepting third party cash deposits, any cash payments, donations or deposits of \$10,000 or more. While I appreciate that the government says its intent here is to prevent money laundering by criminals, who predominantly use cash, without further legislative clarity, this has raised concerns from charities, community groups, rural communities and many individuals who rely on cash for their daily business activities.

The provision would risk limiting Canadians' freedom to use legal tender, including cash, as they may choose. Conservatives oppose any move to ban cash or require mandatory digital transactions, and believe that these changes must undergo rigorous scrutiny at committee.

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Parts 14 and 15 of Bill C-2 have introduced measures which would curtail individual freedoms and have raised concerns that innocent individuals, not just criminals, may be caught by the provisions of the bill. The bill would introduce provisions to provide greater authority for police, CSIS and authorized persons to access online subscriber information from electronic service providers without the need for a warrant. I understand that this is important in some circumstances, but I believe that digital privacy is a fundamental right of Canadians, and we must ensure that the legislation would not lead to law-abiding citizens' being treated like criminals.

While action on our borders and the need for increased national security enforcement is desperately needed, I want to be clear that I do not support granting excessive, unchecked powers to government or law enforcement, in most circumstances, without due process, proper oversight and respect for Canadians' rights. Conservatives are concerned about Bill C-2's potential impact on Canadians' privacy and freedoms, and we will ensure that they are respected. As I have mentioned, Bill C-2 is sweeping in its scope, and I do not believe that Canadians should have to choose between having a secure border and having their civil liberties protected.

Given the scope and complexity, Conservatives are proposing that Bill C-2 be split into two separate pieces of legislation: one confined to border security and immigration, and the other to everything else. My hope is that the Liberals will receive that as intended. Like most Canadians, we all want secure communities and borders, and immigration that works, and the safety and security of Canadians is not negotiable.

Bill C-2 is a step in the right direction, like cracking down on terrorist financing, but we have concerns, and we oppose other provisions in the bill. The bill needs to be scrutinized. My hope is that the Liberals are open to non-partisan co-operation in ensuring that the bill achieves the stated goal of meaningful improvement to Canada's public safety and national security while safeguarding Canadians' rights and freedoms so that law-abiding Canadians are not treated like criminals.

• (1910)

**Hon. Kevin Lamoureux (Parliamentary Secretary to the Leader of the Government in the House of Commons, Lib.):** Mr. Speaker, the Prime Minister has been very clear: We want to have more co-operation here on the floor of the House of Commons.

Let me use a specific example. If someone sends something via Purolator, in order for the law enforcement agency to check the envelope, it needs to get a warrant. The proposed legislation would put Canada Post under the same system as Purolator, so if someone anywhere in Canada were to mail a size 10 envelope and put fentanyl or any other thing inside that envelope, if a law enforcement officer, not a Canada Post worker, were to get a warrant, they would be able to open the letter. What is wrong with that?

**Glen Motz:** Mr. Speaker, if that is exactly what the bill said, then there is nothing wrong with it, but it does not say that. This is why it is so important that the work of the committee is done in a non-partisan fashion to clear up any ambiguity and provide clarity so that, exactly as my friend across the way suggested, things are done in a lawful, rights-protected manner by law enforcement, not

Canada Post opening letters, and that they do it under the authority of a warrant.

[Translation]

**Simon-Pierre Savard-Tremblay (Saint-Hyacinthe—Bagot—Acton, BQ):** Mr. Speaker, I am happy to hear that our colleague is as keen as we are to ensure the government takes a serious and thorough approach to the committee process. We do not want it to pull a fast one, as they say. We have to be able to examine every line of these 130 pages, down to the last comma, with experts and affected groups.

Now, could my colleague elaborate on his concerns about rights and freedoms and privacy? He spoke about it a bit, but I would like him to elaborate on that.

[English]

**Glen Motz:** Mr. Speaker, this is an important piece of legislation. It would have a far-reaching impact, both positive and negative, if we get it wrong. We need to ensure that the committee is given as much time as it needs. This is not something that should be brushed over because of the urgency being pushed from the United States. Canadian rights and freedoms need to be protected, but we also need to have tools that do not hinder the ability of law enforcement to do its job in a lawful manner and to keep our national security and community safety at the forefront.

• (1915)

**Jeremy Patzer (Swift Current—Grasslands—Kindersley, CPC):** Mr. Speaker, I know my colleague obviously has a background in law enforcement.

If the bill goes through as the Liberals intend it to, with a Canada Post worker opening mail and discovering drugs, what kind of a weird position would that put a Canada Post worker in, as opposed to a law enforcement officer in that situation?

**Glen Motz:** Mr. Speaker, I had the same fright when I saw the government's initial proposal to have Canada Post deal with the confiscation of firearms. It is not appropriate. Canada Post has an obligation. I appreciate the fact that we need to adjust the Canada Post act to even allow for law enforcement to be able to obtain a warrant to gather and seize evidence, but it needs to be law enforcement, not Canada Post individuals.

**Leah Gazan (Winnipeg Centre, NDP):** Mr. Speaker, does my hon. colleague believe the bill violates the Canadian Constitution and violates sections of the Charter of Rights and Freedoms, yes or no?

**Glen Motz:** Mr. Speaker, that is a very loaded question that is going to require a lot of time to answer.

In its present form, I believe that unless the proper clarity and checks and balances are put in place, the bill would have the potential to reach beyond its initial intent, to reach beyond the ability to keep our nation safe and Canadians safe. It has potential. That is why we need to study it at committee. That is why we need to have vigorous debate. That is why we need to have all parties, the government included, open to constructive amendments that would make the bill strong and actually achieve the measures that we intend it to.

**Ned Kuruc (Hamilton East—Stoney Creek, CPC):** Mr. Speaker, I would like to talk about a few things that the bill fails to address, which are fentanyl sentencing, gun crimes and bail reform.

I would like to start by sharing some alarming facts. According to Health Canada's latest figures, there was a total of 49,105 apparent opioid toxicity deaths reported between January 2016 and June 2024. Of all accidental apparent opioid toxicity deaths from January to June 2024, 79% involved fentanyl. The percentage has increased by 39% since 2016 when national surveillance began. Fentanyl and its analogs were involved in 33% of opioid-related poisoning emergency department visits from January to June 2024. The percentage of all opioid-related poisoning emergency department visits that involved fentanyl and its analogs has increased by 106% since 2018 when national surveillance began.

The Washington Post reported in December 2023 that fentanyl super labs in Canada are producing mass amounts of the drug. The super labs that police are finding in Canada differ because they are synthesizing the drug, not simply pressing pills, using precursor chemicals sourced primarily from China.

In August 2023, the Hamilton Police Service, the OPP, York Regional Police and the Toronto Police Service shut down a number of fentanyl labs in various areas between the GTA and Hamilton. This included two different labs and 25.6 kilograms of fentanyl. When the Liberals passed Bill C-5, they eliminated mandatory jail time for trafficking, producing, importing and exporting drugs like fentanyl. The current penalties in the Controlled Drugs and Substances Act are so weak that organized crime groups are not deterred at all. They simply view them as a cost of doing business.

Conservatives want tougher sentencing measures to ensure that those who mass-produce and traffic fentanyl in mass quantities serve a mandatory life sentence, as murderers do right now. The DEA found that just two milligrams of fentanyl can cause an overdose that leads to death. Producing fentanyl in mass quantities should be treated the same. In June, in my city of Hamilton, police executed a warrant and not only found an illegal handgun, surprise, surprise, but also seized 35 grams of fentanyl. If it had been in its pure, uncut form, that amount could have taken the lives of 17,000 people. Hamiltonians deserve to be protected from those who wish to wreak havoc and take the lives of others. We have had enough.

The second issue Bill C-2 does not address is violent firearms offences. In Hamilton alone, there have been 86 shootings in the last 20 months. On April 17, an international student studying at Mohawk College was shot and killed by a stray bullet while simply waiting for the bus. On July 17, in broad daylight and at the intersection of one of the busiest business districts during a popular

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street festival in Hamilton, an innocent 26-year-old refugee from Ghana was murdered by a 17-year-old drive-by shooter.

On July 29, in my hometown of Stoney Creek, two separate shootings took place just minutes apart, one of which occurred mere steps from one of our local councillors. On August 30, three people were injured after a gunfight broke out in downtown Hamilton. People ran for their lives as 80 shots were fired. Clearly, if the Liberal government opened its eyes, it would see that Canada is in desperate need of reform for violent firearms offences. How many more innocent bystanders need to be murdered in cold blood for the government to wake up and reverse course? Firearms crime is up 130%.

● (1920)

The statistics speak for themselves, and even though this number has increased for nine consecutive years, the Liberals repealed mandatory prison time for the following: using a firearm or imitation firearm in the commission of an offence, possession of a firearm or weapon knowing its possession is unauthorized, possession of a prohibited or restricted firearm with ammunition, extortion with a firearm and robbery with a firearm. As I said, the Liberals repealed the mandatory minimum sentences for these crimes.

The third issue that Bill C-2 does not address is bail reform. In 2019, the Liberals introduced Bill C-75, which requires judges to prioritize releasing an accused person at the earliest opportunity and on the least onerous conditions. Why are we not prioritizing the victim or the safety of law-abiding citizens?

A Hamilton individual was released on bail after a string of armed robberies this spring. He has now fled his residence, and the police have completely lost his whereabouts. Conservatives are calling for jail, not bail. The Liberals' soft-on-crime policies have put Canadians in danger. For example, total violent crime is up 50%, total homicides are up 28%, auto theft is up 45%, human trafficking is up 83% and total sexual assaults are up almost 75%.

The Hamilton Police Service had to release a statement of warning to the public after a 22-year-old repeat violent sexual offender was released on bail. This individual forcibly entered the home of a 72-year-old Hamilton woman and sexually assaulted her for one hour. Through DNA findings, he was later connected to a 2022 and 2023 sexual assault claim. Why was he let out on bail?

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Bailey McCourt, a young mother we heard about earlier today, was murdered by her ex-husband just hours after he was released on bail for assault. My constituents and I lose sleep at night thinking about how insanely off path this country has gone in terms of protecting its citizens. The statistics are right in front of the government's face. Crime is on the rise, but despite the facts and figures, the Liberal government has repealed and softened its sentencing and bail measures. It is appalling and completely unacceptable and it must change.

The most disturbing statistic to me is that total sexual violations against children are up 120%. A 25-year-old man from Welland, not far from my riding and in my colleague's riding, got an early release from jail in March after serving time for sexually assaulting a 12-year-old boy. Five months later, he forcibly entered a home and sexually assaulted a three-year-old girl. As a father of young children, I am haunted by these stories and these statistics. I can only hope that the Liberals understand that we must protect the innocence of children at all costs.

• (1925)

**John-Paul Danko (Hamilton West—Ancaster—Dundas, Lib.):** Mr. Speaker, Bill C-2 is a border security act, and we have heard repeatedly that bail reform and federal sentencing reform are pending.

To go back to Bill C-2 and border security, I have had meetings with Hamilton police in my role as an MP and in my former role as a city councillor. The Minister of Public Safety, Minister Anandasangaree, was in Hamilton this summer to discuss Bill—

**The Assistant Deputy Speaker (John Nater):** The member for Winnipeg Centre is rising on a point of order. I believe I know what it is, but go ahead.

**Leah Gazan:** Mr. Speaker, it is about that, but also, I cannot hear because there are members in the House chit-chatting. I am wondering if they could take it to the lobby so we can hear the debate.

**The Assistant Deputy Speaker (John Nater):** I thank the member for that. We will try to keep the noise down, and I remind the member not to use the proper names of ministers.

The hon. member.

**John-Paul Danko:** Mr. Speaker, the minister was in Hamilton. The police are very supportive of this act and the tools involved in it. I am wondering if the member could comment on some of his discussions with the police.

**Ned Kuruc:** Mr. Speaker, I know my colleague's heart is in the right place concerning the words I just spoke. I have also talked to the chief of police and other police officers, and they are calling for bail reform.

Specifically to Bill C-2, I am here to touch on things that I believe should be included. Through my discussions with Hamilton police, I know they believe that the bail system is broken. In the spirit of collaboration, we do agree on part 1, part 2 and part 3, and hopefully as this moves along, we can collaborate on other parts. I hope that the Liberals can see my concerns and consider them in the spirit of good faith.

[Translation]

**Alexis Brunelle-Duceppe (Lac-Saint-Jean, BQ):** Mr. Speaker, we can all agree that this is a rather lengthy bill. It is no less than 130 pages long and affects around 15 acts and a number of departments. We are going to have to do an extremely thorough job.

There is one thing I have not heard my Conservative friends talk about as much. My colleague could surely enlighten me on their concerns, their understanding or their position when it comes to parts 6 to 9 of Bill C-2, the parts regarding immigration laws. I would like to know the Conservative Party's position on the immigration aspect of Bill C-2.

[English]

**Ned Kuruc:** Mr. Speaker, yes, it is a thick bill, and it will be moved along. As I have said, we do agree with some parts of the bill.

Specifically, we have some issues with part 6 and part 9 that will hopefully be hashed out in committee, but again, I want to revert back to fentanyl, bail reform and gun crime. These are specific to me and my riding of Hamilton, and I would love to see these incorporated into Bill C-2 in some way as we move along. As some colleagues on the other side said, we need to work together, so hopefully they will take my words in good faith and co-operation and input them as this bill moves along.

**Rhonda Kirkland (Oshawa, CPC):** Mr. Speaker, the member touches on something that is very close to my heart as well, and that is bail reform. We keep hearing members opposite saying that it is coming and it is pending. It has been six and a half years since they presented bail reform in Bill C-75, and my colleague mentioned it rewrote the rules so that judges are instructed to let offenders out at the earliest opportunity and under the least onerous conditions.

This was a deliberate Liberal policy. It was not an accident. They deliberately wrote that in the bill, and for six and a half years, people have died and women have been raped and abused. This has happened over and over again in six and a half years. The Liberals are accountable for it.

What does the member have to say about that?

• (1930)

**Ned Kuruc:** Mr. Speaker, I would like to repeat part of my speech: Bill C-75 requires judges to prioritize releasing an accused person at the earliest opportunity and on the least onerous conditions.

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Clearly, after 10 years, the Liberals must realize that bail reform is needed. They must be listening to their constituents. That is why I bring this up, so it can be added to Bill C-2, because we have been talking about it for years. It needs to be repealed for the safety of everyone and all Canadians. Again, in good faith and working together on what is best for Canada, I hope that the Liberals—

**The Assistant Deputy Speaker (John Nater):** I do have to interrupt the member. The time for questions and comments has expired.

Resuming debate, the hon. member for Winnipeg Centre.

**Leah Gazan (Winnipeg Centre, NDP):** Mr. Speaker, I have to say, it is highly disturbing that I am again obliged to call out the government's glaring violations of Canada's Constitution, including international covenants to which Canada is a signatory, in Bill C-2, the so-called strong borders act.

This is the second occasion where the Liberals have presented a piece of legislation that would provide government with sweeping executive powers. In fact just before summer adjournment, the NDP had to hold the Liberals accountable for how Bill C-5 undermines the Constitution.

Now we are here today debating Bill C-2, a bill that would disregard constitutionally enshrined rights, undermine civil liberties, criminalize migrants and asylum seekers, and bypass Parliament and public debate. Who are the Liberals targeting? They are targeting marginalized communities.

Just like Bill C-5, Bill C-2 is an omnibus bill. It is vague and dangerous. The NDP is once again calling out an undemocratic power grab.

It is clear that the measures are meant to appease Trump, which is the opposite of what the current Prime Minister campaigned on. Do not just take it from me; the Minister of Public Safety said the Liberals carefully crafted Bill C-2 to address Trump's "irritants", lifting up disinformation that Canada is causing America's fentanyl crisis, appointing a fentanyl czar and enacting draconian border policies that terrorize migrants and refugees and result in the detaining of citizens. That is the American administration the current Prime Minister is lifting up.

According to the Migrant Rights Network:

[the Prime Minister] campaigned on being different from Donald Trump, yet his very first bill is a shameful capitulation to racism and xenophobia, which abandons Canada's legal and moral obligations to refugees and migrants. We're witnessing the deliberate expansion of a mass deportation machine designed to tear apart families and communities.

It is shameful.

I have to question the Prime Minister and the Liberal government. Are they going to keep undermining rights to appease a president who has demonstrated that he is erratic, or are they committed to upholding human rights? Are they, along with the Conservatives, going to keep entertaining the lie that immigrants are driving the housing crisis, when the real blame lies with landlords and profit corporations? As we have seen from extremist anti-immigrant and anti-migrant riots in Toronto, entertaining this violent rhetoric is no way to build a unified country.

This week, the Prime Minister called Trump a "modern man", indicating he texts him regularly. Are we going to pretend that this "modern man" is a reasonable partner in protecting democracy, when he is using his ICE police force, the National Guard and the army to terrorize people, his very own citizens, as well as visitors, including Canadian citizens?

The bill goes beyond what the Liberals have tried to convince people across Canada it is, a bill to protect our borders. In fact, it would result in violating civil liberties and violating rights to privacy. In fact, through the legislation, the Liberals would be ushering in sweeping surveillance powers for police, intelligence and even vaguely defined "public officers" to enforce upon anyone in Canada.

● (1935)

In fact, if the bill is passed, these actors can, without a warrant, demand people's personal information from doctors, banks and landlords; track their locations, associations and service usage; open their Canada Post mail; and share their data with foreign governments such as the United States government. This is a violation of the right to privacy, a charter right that has been affirmed and upheld by the Supreme Court as an essential part of the Charter of Rights and Freedoms.

According to a letter sent to the government by 39 civil liberties and human rights groups, and 122 lawyers, Bill C-2 "is a multi-pronged assault on the basic human rights and freedoms Canada holds dear. It is likely unconstitutional, and deeply out of step with the values Canadians expect our government to embody and respect."

This violation of privacy will be felt the most by those who are already the most impacted by oppressive systems: women, gender-diverse folks and the 2SLGBTQQIA+ community. Several organizations representing women and gender-diverse people, including Action Canada, have condemned the bill for allowing a range of powers for law enforcement to access private medical records on abortion history without a warrant, violating the charter-protected right to privacy that people throughout Canada possess with regard to health care services.

Even worse, Bill C-2 includes provisions for intelligence sharing with other countries, including the United States, which would allow authorities from jurisdictions where abortion or gender-affirming care is banned to find out whether a person has obtained these services in Canada. What happens when somebody comes from the United States, where some practices have been made illegal? Does Canada want to be involved in jailing people for exercising their human rights?

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This legislation lacks a gender-based analysis. That has been made clear, full stop. It even fails to acknowledge the reality of survivors of gender-based violence. According to Action Canada, “Survivors fleeing gender-based violence abroad are learning about legal processes while living with profound trauma, often under the control of abusive partners who restrict their access to information and support. Imposing strict time limits on these most marginalized refugees”, for example, “ignores Canada's commitments to gender equality and safety.” That also applies to people fleeing intimate partner violence in Canada.

Under Bill C-2, a survivor of violence can be endangered if their abuser or abusive partner, for example, is a member of law enforcement who, without a warrant, is capable of accessing information on their whereabouts and the services they use. However, we should not be surprised if the Prime Minister seems oblivious to the issue of gender-based violence; he plans to cut funding for women and gender equality by 81%, even though several municipalities have declared gender-based violence an epidemic.

I would be remiss if I did not add that Bill C-2 further advances the Liberals' attacks on those who oppose the government agenda, such as land defenders and workers. In fact, just last month, the Liberal government abused its power and its use of section 107 of the Canada Labour Code to violate the right to strike. As the Canadian Union of Public Employees has stated in regard to Bill C-2, “Trade unionists and activists know how surveillance can be used in attempts to limit labour and social movement fights for justice.”

The NDP will not stand for these infringements on our privacy and human rights. The NDP is calling for the bill to be withdrawn in its entirety. Let us not fall into the trap of undermining our Constitution, our human rights and the rule of law.

I am urging the Liberal government to withdraw this harmful bill and to put forward something that upholds human rights and truly ensures that people can live in security and safety.

● (1940)

**John-Paul Danko (Hamilton West—Ancaster—Dundas, Lib.):** Mr. Speaker, I do appreciate the member opposite bringing forward some of the troubling authoritarian tendencies in the U.S. It is an important issue, but I am trying to figure out where the NDP actually stands on law enforcement and public safety. In Hamilton, NDP activists not only want to defund the police, they want to abolish the police altogether. They are in favour of illegal encampments in city parks, and they want to actually legalize all drugs, including fentanyl, cocaine and methamphetamines.

Why is the NDP consistently opposed to law enforcement and public safety as their benchmark reflex?

**Leah Gazan:** Mr. Speaker, I think the hon. member should join the Conservative Party. That is a lot of sound bites. The reality is that what the NDP opposes is the violation of constitutional rights, the violation of the Charter of Rights and Freedoms and the putting forward of a bill that impacts particularly women fleeing violence without a gender-based lens. This has been highly criticized by over 122 lawyers, as well as civil liberties organizations. This is not pie-in-the-sky stuff. This is another example of the Liberal government trying to give itself sweeping powers to violate constitutionally enshrined rights.

**Grant Jackson (Brandon—Souris, CPC):** Mr. Speaker, to my fellow colleague from Manitoba, her riding of Winnipeg Centre is certainly facing the brunt of the fentanyl crisis. I used to drive through her constituency to get to work at the Legislative Assembly of Manitoba. I think we know, or it is universally accepted, that a lot of these drugs are coming into Canada across the border. That is under discussion here.

If the member from the NDP thinks that the bill should be completely withdrawn, does she have any solutions as to how to deal with the crisis of drugs coming across our border, or is she content to just let that continue?

**Leah Gazan:** Mr. Speaker, we know, even from what has happened in the States, that tough-on-crime approaches to drugs do not work. We have seen that. What our community organizations are calling for on the front lines of this issue is to deal with the toxic drug supply. We have a record number of overdoses in our community. I am not into political responses that have resulted in people dying in the streets that I represent. I am into public health responses. I am going to listen to the experts, not to politicians with a bunch of really good sound bites.

● (1945)

[Translation]

**Simon-Pierre Savard-Tremblay (Saint-Hyacinthe—Bagot—Acton, BQ):** Mr. Speaker, I am going to pick up where my colleague's response left off, when she mentioned the need to listen to the experts. I liked her speech. As I understand it, however, the New Democrats are going to vote against the bill. We are going to vote for it, but with the aim of dissecting it in committee. We will listen to the experts and the affected groups. Then, if necessary, we will vote against the bill or try to amend it. That may be where our positions on this matter diverge.

That said, is my colleague not concerned that the Liberals are trying to introduce an overly fast-tracked procedure that would stop us from doing our job and scrutinizing this bill?

[English]

**Leah Gazan:** Mr. Speaker, absolutely, we saw that with Bill C-5, certainly. With Bill C-2, they are not really getting members up to speak. This is a far-reaching bill. This is an omnibus bill that is over 132 pages. Where are the Liberals? The same people are here talking about the bill. We are talking about a bill that violates civil liberties, constitutional rights and international law. Yes, migrants and asylum seekers have human rights that are protected under international law. We have an obligation, as members of Parliament, to uphold the rule of law. The bill does not cut it. We are voting against it.

**Kelly McCauley (Edmonton West, CPC):** Mr. Speaker, I am very pleased to rise on Bill C-2. I have been here almost 10 years, long enough to remember the Liberals in 2015 and their campaign promise of no more omnibus bills. Obviously, that promise, along with so many others, has been broken.

This is another example of an omnibus bill, with the government trying to squish everything into one large bill and jam it through Parliament despite very valid concerns expressed by quite a few people in the House today. They have tried to paint Conservative, Bloc and NDP members as not co-operative if we disagree with one part of this massive omnibus bill.

Bill C-2 reminds me, like many other government bills, of *Seinfeld*. This one specifically reminds me of a *Seinfeld* episode where they did a play on the “Son of Sam”, David Berkowitz, except it was Newman, the post office man, playing the criminal. I think it was about killing his neighbour's dog. When Jerry and Elaine catch him, he asks what took them so long. That is the question I have for the Liberals. What took them so long?

We have had crime issues, border issues and immigration issues for 10 years, not just since the new government. It is not a new government. It is the same old, tired, corrupt, incompetent Liberal government that has been running things for the last nine and a half years. It is the same people who have been in charge for all these years and have done nothing.

Bill C-2 talks about finally bringing in controls over precursors coming in from mainland China, which are being used for fentanyl. It is not legislation yet; only now are the Liberals talking about it in a bill after almost 10 years. They are talking about strengthening the border, again after 10 years. They are talking about crime. We on this side have been bludgeoning the government over crime.

We heard earlier today my colleague from Lethbridge, in tears, going over a horrific crime inflicted on a Canadian, and the government says, “Just wait a bit longer. Didn't you hear? We're going going to bring in bail reform.” It brought in bail reform I think a year or two ago with Bill C-48, which did nothing. However, now it is promising this again because it is a new government, not the old government. The new government will fix things, maybe.

As for money laundering, if we read Sam Cooper's book, it is about \$128 billion a year in this country. I cannot talk about this year's budget because we will not see it, but in last year's budget, I think it was about \$450 billion. If we think about that, money laundering is almost 30% of the value of our tax haul, and the government has done nothing for 10 years. I do recall that Sam Cooper's

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book identified several Liberals with their fingers in the till earning money off of money laundering, including one of their former MPs, who was linked to money laundering. Again, as Newman says to Seinfeld, what took so long?

When we ask this of the Liberals, they stand up and say Harper cut from CBSA.

**Frank Caputo:** Lamoureux never says that.

**Kelly McCauley:** I know; we would think that, but I actually brought receipts.

Mr. Speaker, this is just in the last couple of years. The Prime Minister, eight different ministers and six different parliamentary secretaries have stood here in this House and said this is about the Harper cuts. Members can see how many pages I have. Most of it is said by the member for Winnipeg North. I am just going to read from them; they are not a prop. According to him, Harper cut a thousand jobs. Jennifer O'Connell, who is no longer with us thankfully, repeatedly said Harper cut 1,000 jobs and cut \$400 million.

Let us just put that to rest once and for all. I am going to quote numbers from the government's own Treasury Board site. I brought this up before, and the member for Winnipeg North said they were just statistics and they do not count, that what counts is what they say on that side. This is from the government's own websites: GC InfoBase, the Library of Parliament and the Treasury Board.

● (1950)

On full-time equivalents to CBSA, when the Liberals took over from big, bad Harper, there were 14,113 full-time equivalents with the CBSA. Two years later, under the Liberals, there were 13,707 full-time equivalents, so where was the cut? The cut was not under Harper. The cut was under the Trudeau Liberals.

### *Government Orders*

On spending for CBSA, we saw, as I said, eight different ministers, including the former minister in charge of CBSA, who is now doing the free trade attempt with the U.S., stating that \$400 million was cut by Harper. Well, in 2012-13, spending was \$1.7 billion. The next year it went up, under Harper, to 8.3%. The year after that, it went up 8.16%. Then the Liberals took over and what happened? The spending dropped 11% on the CBSA. Again, these are the government's own numbers. I know the Liberals are saying, "There are lies, damn lies, statistics and Treasury Board numbers," but this is from the public accounts, from the Treasury Board. In 2016 and 2017, another full year into their mandate, it had dropped 18% from the Harper era.

Let us look forward. I quoted earlier Trudeau's election promise to end the omnibus bills. Let us look at the government promise from the last election. It reads:

Canadians deserve to feel safe where they live, play, work.... My government will hire thousands of new RCMP and CBSA officers to crack down on illegal drugs and guns coming from the United States, increase funding to prosecute violent criminal gangs [and let them out later], make bail laws stricter for home invasions....

Apparently, that is for those who fight back against home invaders.

Later, it reads, "Recruit 1,000 more RCMP personnel to tackle drug and human trafficking".

What do the Liberal numbers show?

This is from the departmental plans, for those who follow the estimates process, which I think is one of us. Departmental plans forecast spending requirements as approved by the government three years forward, but also lays out the goals and priorities that justify spending to be approved by Parliament, should there ever be a budget.

Now, our current full-time equivalents is 31,743 for the RCMP, so a thousand more would be 32,743, but under Liberal math, planned full-time equivalents drops over the next couple years to 33,000. Next year it is going to be 33,076, and if we add 1,000, it goes to 33,632. Where is the rest of the thousand they promised?

For CBSA, it says, "Train 1,000 new CBSA officers". Next year, the Liberals plan 17,289 dropping to 16,615 CBSA officers. Again, do not take my word for it. The Minister of Public Safety and the new member of Parliament for Edmonton Centre, who replaced the scandalous other Randy, signed off on it. This is their departmental plans. These are their numbers.

Spending for CBSA is due to drop from \$3.1 billion this year, dropping \$200 million, so when we add in all the Liberal inflation, it is still dropping \$200 million.

I asked earlier what took the Liberals so long, but I have to ask why they are pushing forward this fantasy world to Canadians. Why are they continuing with this bait and switch where they promise they are going to do this and then deliver that? It is another example of them believing, "Hey we announced it, and therefore, it is done." Well, they announced more for the RCMP, but their own numbers show they are going to drop. They announced more for CBSA, but their own numbers show a drop. They have announced

repeatedly that they are going to do something about crime, and the reality shows the other way.

We on this side do not believe anything the government is putting forward, and its own facts prove that.

● (1955)

**Hon. Kevin Lamoureux (Parliamentary Secretary to the Leader of the Government in the House of Commons, Lib.):** Mr. Speaker, I give the member opposite credit. He has consistently argued that point, but at the end of the day, the reality is different from the images the member tries to portray. We know Stephen Harper did cut, and it is within his own Harper budget. Yes, the current leader of the Conservative Party was part of that cut to Canada border control.

The member might be able to convince members of his own Conservative caucus, but the reality is those individuals who are in the workforce in CBSA, as well as others outside the Conservative caucus, recognize that Stephen Harper was not a friend when it came to beefing up border controls.

This Prime Minister, who made a commitment in the last election, made it very clear that we are going to beef it up, not only budget-wise, but legislatively, and that is why we have Bill C-2.

**Kelly McCauley:** Mr. Speaker, the emperor has no clothes, clearly.

These are the government's own numbers. These are not my numbers. These are not Conservative numbers. These are the numbers of the current Liberal government. The Treasury Board posts these numbers.

I would encourage the member opposite to, instead of spending all his time in this House spewing misinformation, maybe take a few minutes outside the House and look at the facts. The government cut CBSA dollars. It cut CBSA full-time equivalents. Its own documents, signed by the Minister of Public Safety, say that for the next three years it is going to continue to do—

**The Assistant Deputy Speaker (John Nater):** Questions and comments, the hon. member for Repentigny.

[*Translation*]

**Patrick Bonin (Repentigny, BQ):** Mr. Speaker, could my hon. colleague share with us his understanding of why, after more than 10 years in power, the Liberals are only now presenting us with Bill C-2, a bill will require a great deal of work in committee, because it clearly has major shortcomings?



*Adjournment Proceedings**[English]*

**Kelly McCauley:** Mr. Speaker, it is odd that it has taken the government 10 years to bring it forward. I just do not believe it is serious about the challenges facing Canadians. I am going to refer again to the minister's own departmental plan, Public Safety Canada's departmental plan, which mentions opioids and fentanyl just once.

When we look at the priorities, it reads, "we will continue to ensure the legitimate movement of goods and persons across the world's longest shared border". It goes on, but it only mentions opioids once. The previous year, it was twice. In fact, in the last five years combined, it was mentioned fewer than 10 times.

However, it mentions the United Nations' desire to enforce its climate control issues on Canada. The government does not care about the issues facing Canadians, it cares about its own ideology first.

• (2000)

**Frank Caputo (Kamloops—Thompson—Nicola, CPC):** Mr. Speaker, it is always a pleasure to rise on behalf of the people of Kamloops—Thompson—Nicola. It is so great to be here in the House of Commons every day, but when we have the member from Edmonton closing it up Tom Henke style tonight, I just cannot help but commend him for not only his impassioned speech, but the truth that reigns supreme.

It was like a deluge of truth that fell on this House of Commons. If only the Liberals would listen to my hon. colleague when he provides them with numbers. In fact, I know we are getting to the end of the night, but his speech was so good that I would seek unanimous consent for him to continue until 8:02 p.m.

**The Assistant Deputy Speaker (John Nater):** I will assume that the member is saying that in jest, because his time will take us to 8:02 p.m.

**Kelly McCauley:** Mr. Speaker, my colleague has done fantastic work on Bill C-2.

As I mentioned, and as I have said on this side, there are a lot of issues that we can support in this bill. Unfortunately, Liberals pushed it all into an omnibus bill. What they like to do is push it all together, throw in a couple of poison pills, and if someone does not like it, then obviously they are working against Canada.

I do want to bring up a very important issue. We hear about crime a lot and the need to reform our bail system. We are coming up to just over the two-year anniversary of a horrible murder in Edmonton. Carolann Robillard and her daughter, Jayden Miller, were murdered by a man who was released on bail 18 days earlier, for assaulting a young person at a bus stop. He had previously been out on bail for stabbing someone.

The government needs to get serious on crime, and Bill C-2 is not it.

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## ADJOURNMENT PROCEEDINGS

A motion to adjourn the House under Standing Order 38 deemed to have been moved.

*[English]*

## AGRICULTURE AND AGRI-FOOD

**Jeremy Patzer (Swift Current—Grasslands—Kindersley, CPC):** Mr. Speaker, it is an honour to be able to rise in the chamber for the first time since we returned from the summer break. We had a great summer in southwest Saskatchewan and in the western part of the province.

Farmers have been working really hard. I want to give a quick shout-out to all the farmers and producers who are bringing the harvest in. It has been another interesting growing season. Some areas have had an extension of the many years of drought; some are up to 10 consecutive years of drought now. There have also been substantive amounts of rain in other parts of the province and the riding, where farmers who maybe seeded a little later this year are seeing a tremendous yield in their crops. They are really grateful for the way the growing season has been. We would like to maybe see a little more consistent rain, but over the duration of the summer, I think everyone is quite content with where things are at.

That leads me to the reason I am here today: the response to a question I asked the government about what it was doing with the tariffs that have been imposed on Canadian canola oil, canola meal and canola seed, as well as on our yellow peas, by the Communist regime in Beijing. Over the summer, we were waiting for the Prime Minister to perhaps go to China and work on that relationship. He has bragged openly in the past about how he is going to do things differently, how he has great connections there and how he is going to be a great advocate for Canada with China.

I know that over the summer, the farmers and producers in my riding were waiting to see that happen. It did not happen. We were waiting to see whether anybody would do something. Nobody did, until the Premier of Saskatchewan took the initiative to arrange meetings and go to China about a week and a half ago. A member of the Liberal caucus did go with him, but it was not the Prime Minister and not even the agriculture minister.

When it comes to trying to get a deal done with China to try to remove the tariffs, it is going to be only the Prime Minister who has the ability and authority to do that. It will not be whoever the government decides to send. It is going to be only the Prime Minister who is able to get the deal done. We still have not seen the Prime Minister take that very important step of going to get the issue resolved.

Agriculture accounts for about one in eight or one in nine jobs in the Canadian economy. It is also about 7.5% of the Canadian GDP. When we look at what that means for the Canadian economy and what happens when there is a 100% tariff on canola meal, canola oil and yellow peas, and another 76% tariff applied on canola seed, by one of the largest export markets that we have for our product, everyone can understand why that is a big problem.

*Adjournment Proceedings*

We continue to hear from the government that it is a new government, yet we continue to see nothing but the same. We see that it has a hands-off approach to trade. We would think one of the first priorities of a national government that is trying to differentiate itself from the previous government would be to take this seriously, be proactive in its approach and go and get this done. As the harvest is coming in, farmers are looking for some certainty. They want to know where the market is going to be. Right now they are seeing no respect from the government.

I am wondering why the government continues to turn its back on farmers, especially when they are responsible for 7.5% of Canada's GDP.

• (2005)

**Sophie Chatel (Parliamentary Secretary to the Minister of Agriculture and Agri-Food, Lib.):** Mr. Speaker, we do not talk enough in the House about the agriculture and agri-food sector, and I am so thankful the member raised this important issue.

Our farmers and I echo what the member said. It is very important. They are at the end of the season. Some have experienced drought, extreme weather events, smoke and fires. It is a difficult time for farmers. They are resilient and great, and I think we should talk more about the success we have as a country in our food security thanks to the hard work they do.

[Translation]

As I was saying, we should talk about the agriculture industry a lot more because it is essential. It feeds not only Canadians, but the world at large with its exports. The agriculture and agri-food industry is Canada's largest manufacturing industry. It is one of the most important industries in terms of GDP and employment. That is what makes it essential.

Earlier, we were talking about the climate challenges our farmers are facing. We are fortunate to have the sustainable Canadian agricultural partnership with the provinces and territories, which invests \$3.5 billion in key programs to help our farmers manage risk. They have access to risk management programs that provide protection against loss of income. My colleague mentioned drought, which is exactly the kind of thing these programs are designed for. These are key programs to which the federal government contributes 60%. These programs do not just address climate change. They also address trade turmoil, like the turbulence we are experiencing right now, which is not easy to navigate. China's tariffs are completely unwarranted.

[English]

I had the great honour in my career to be a tax treaty negotiator, but when we negotiated with China, it was under Stephen Harper's government. It is not easy, and we have to set the path. Our Prime Minister is very engaged with officials, with diplomats and with the premiers, with his parliamentary secretary and with the minister, and the channel is always open for discussion when the conditions are right. For sure, the China-Canada relationship is so important that, of course, the Prime Minister has a lot of occasions to meet in these international negotiations.

To support producers navigating significant risks, we have doubled the advance payment to help our farmers to manage those

risks. I want to talk about the canola sector in particular. The advance payment has been doubled from \$250 to \$500 for this year so that it really helps the farmers weather this storm. I also want to talk about the AgriStability program. AgriStability is a very important program to help farmers diversify their portfolio as well as their exports.

• (2010)

**Jeremy Patzer:** Mr. Speaker, as the member was finishing her remarks, she talked about AgriStability. One of the largest complaints that I get in my office from producers, besides the government's inactivity on trade, is the AgriStability program and how it just does not ever trigger when they need it to trigger. Particularly out in the Prairies, with how much larger our farms are getting, and particularly compared to farms out here in Ontario, Quebec and Atlantic Canada, the margins just do not work. We do not see people triggering.

There are a lot more people who are leaving the program than choosing to be in the program, because they are just seeing it as a financial loss. We are also seeing with crop insurance that, because there have been so many bad years consecutively, farmers are unable to get the coverage out of their insurance, because the five-year average has now dropped so low because of the consecutive years of bad crops.

The government needs to do a better job of engaging with producers in Saskatchewan in the breadbasket of Canada to get a better handle on understanding what is really going on in agriculture.

**Sophie Chatel:** Mr. Speaker, I think that is an important aspect. Those risk management programs are so important and so vital. These are programs that are shared federally and provincially. There will be another round of discussions with the premiers and with the territories. The second round of the partnership, the strategic partnership, will be discussed. There is improvement that needs to be done on both those programs, but they are fundamental because these programs ensure that, despite climate change and extreme weather events, and despite the turbulence of the market, our farmers have income, have stability and can manage the risk. They are fundamental, and they have to fit the need.

I did not have a chance to talk about the AgriMarketing program, but that is also a very good and important one.

## FINANCE

**Greg McLean (Calgary Centre, CPC):** Mr. Speaker, it is a great honour to be here tonight and to ask the questions that I did not feel were adequately answered back in June. I was talking about the increase in the amount Canadians were spending on food out of their weekly budgets. It was about \$800 a year more being spent on food at that point in time. However, we can take a look at what has happened with the cost of food since then. The latest information on food inflation is that it is up over 3.4% year over year.

I acknowledge I am cherry-picking some statistics here, but people will know what I am talking about when I tell them that ground beef is up 15.3% year over year, bacon is up 13%, canned salmon is up 11.6%, oranges are up 11.6%, fruit juices are up 11.5%, nuts and seeds are up 14.2% and coffee, that ever-sustaining fluid, is up 27.9%. This is significant inflation built into our basket of goods that, I hope my colleagues on the other side will recognize, are part of daily life for so many Canadians.

I try to bring this together with respect to what is happening in the economy. Things are costing more for Canadians, and this is a result of economic policies brought about by the current government, particularly overspending. The government plans to spend, in its initial estimates from last year, 8% more this year than last year. The government is going to have to print more money. More money is not coming in. More money is going out the door. Since then, of course, we have delayed and delayed the budget, so now we are actually going to see how much more the government is going to spend, but it is going to be a lot more than an 8% increase over last year. Let us put it at a deficit of over \$100 billion coming out of this year, which is more than double what the deficit was expected to be and what the deficit was last year. This means more in payments, which, of course, means more inflation. All of these things roll through the economy, and they are felt by Canadians.

The inflation is felt in basics such as food and shelter, so Canadians are bearing the brunt of bad economic policies that the government continues to go down the road on. There is a price to pay for overspending, and that price, of course, comes out of the pockets of Canadians themselves. The hidden costs of these deficits are \$50 billion-plus last year. When the interest rates actually go up at some point in time in the near future, that cost to Canadians is going to be significant.

Let us look at the money leaving Canada. The money leaving Canada is an indication of how badly the economy is actually doing. Here is just a quick number. Back in 2014, the net difference between the money invested in Canada by foreigners and the money invested by Canadians elsewhere was about \$100 billion in deficit. That is \$100 billion more in Canadian investments going outside the country versus what is being invested in Canada. Now that number has ballooned to \$971 billion as of the end of 2024. That is \$971 billion more invested outside Canada than being invested in Canada. Canadian money is leaving this economy for a good reason. It is that we have bad economic policies compared to almost anywhere else in the world where it can be invested. Our Canadian dollar is going down. Here is another touchpoint: Since the government came in, \$86 billion more has left the country, on a net basis, this year alone. We do not have the right policies. We have to change direction here.

*Adjournment Proceedings*

I would love to hear the government say it is actually going to address the problem, but right now all I see is a Prime Minister and a government who want to continue to spend money and continue to visit economic pain upon Canadians. Will they please indicate how they are going to turn this around?

● (2015)

**Karim Bardeesy (Parliamentary Secretary to the Minister of Industry, Lib.):** Mr. Speaker, I thank the hon. member for Calgary Centre for the intervention and for his concern with respect to some of these matters. I am happy to respond with some of the actions our government is taking to stabilize food prices and help Canadians with the cost of living.

We recognize that food affordability continues to be a critical issue that all Canadians are faced with. The hon. member across cited some statistics and some trends. We know that food inflation was a global phenomenon during and after the pandemic, but happily, price increases have slowed considerably. Food inflation for groceries has fallen from a peak of 11.4% in January 2023 to under 3.5%, as the hon. member cited, in August 2025.

The hon. member talked about good economic policies and spending. Actually, we agree that the government does have an important role in creating good economic policies to help address some of these challenges. That has to do with promoting competition, primarily in the portfolio that I assist the Minister of Industry with, and some related policies to help those who are most in need.

First is targeted spending that actually reaches the people who need it so they can get the food they need. I cannot help but mention the national school food program, which will put \$1 billion over five years into programs and projects that will provide meals for up to 400,000 more kids per year. Unfortunately, the party opposite voted against that measure, but we think it is an important measure that is helping many people in our communities.

More generally, increased consumer choice with increased competition in the grocery sector is a key, and I would even say the key, to improving food affordability. That is why in recent years, we have modernized the Competition Act in Parliament.

*Adjournment Proceedings*

A number of members from all parties have just come back from an industry committee meeting where we heard from competition commissioner Matthew Boswell. When we asked him how the changes to the act are helping him promote competition, he essentially asked in return how much time we had. He has a long list of measures that he is already implementing with the supports and resources given by the government to help the bureau do its job, in part to help tame food prices. For instance, changes to the act have required vendors to be more truthful in their advertising, recognizing that showing prices without all mandatory fees is a form of dishonesty. This practice of drip pricing makes it harder for consumers to do price comparisons to find the best value. It also penalizes the vendors that are most up front with how much things cost. We know that in this era of limited attention, those kinds of sleight-of-hand pieces divert people from finding the best options. We have also made amendments that affect how the Competition Bureau can investigate anti-competitive conduct and deceptive marketing.

A strong Competition Bureau and good competition policy help consumers. It is as simple as that. However, we have work to do with the players in our grocery sector. Our engagement with industry has been focused on ensuring the continuous improvement of food affordability. After many years of collaboration with provincial and territorial ministers of agriculture and a lot of industry engagement, lots of which we talked about in this House in the previous parliament, we were pleased that in July 2024, all of the large grocery retailers committed to the grocery sector code of conduct. The code is a positive step toward uniting supply chain partners to operate under a set of ground rules and bring more fairness, transparency and predictability to Canada's grocery supply chain and to consumers.

We are working hand in hand with industry and partners to continue to ensure food price stability, including with the measures that my colleague, the Parliamentary Secretary to the Minister of Agriculture and Agri-Food, mentioned. We will continue to take concrete actions to ensure Canadians pay fair prices for groceries.

• (2020)

**Greg McLean:** Mr. Speaker, the point that I think is still being missed by the government side of the aisle is that we cannot spend our way out of a deficit and a mounting debt problem. More and more money is flowing off the table. The member refers to the idea that we are giving more to programs so it should not be as bad, but the fact is, food prices continue to inflate. This is a basic human need. We have to make sure that we get this under control more than anything else, because Canadians need to eat and need to eat well. The whole thing about what we eat is a contribution to our lifestyle, both the quality of it and how long we live.

This is something the Liberals have to get in front of. It is a fundamental indication of how we are doing as a society. We need to get better food to Canadians, make sure they can afford that food and make sure it is delivered without cost. Cutting the deficit is part of averting food inflation. Will you please get ahead of this inflation you are causing?

**The Assistant Deputy Speaker (John Nater):** Obviously, the member must go through the Chair.

The hon. parliamentary secretary.

**Karim Bardeesy:** Mr. Speaker, again, I continue to share the concern of the member for Calgary Centre and appreciate some of his points.

I will just observe that in our provinces and our country, we have some really great assets to be proud of. A number of my colleagues in the Ontario caucus and I went recently to visit Canada's warehouse capital, so to speak, in southwestern Ontario, in the Windsor-Leamington area. There we could see fresh food being delivered and grown at scale in such a way that it can reach lots of Canadians.

We also realize there are a broader set of policy issues. I will refer, of course, to our income tax cut that reached 22 million Canadians, which took effect on July 1. That is another measure that we think can help with affordability, including food affordability.

## HEALTH

**Dan Mazier (Riding Mountain, CPC):** Mr. Speaker, it is good to be back in adjournment proceedings.

Last year, the Liberals approved 800 permanent resident applications for international doctors through the federal skilled workers category. How many of those doctors have actually been licensed to practise medicine in Canada? I just want a number.

**Maggie Chi (Parliamentary Secretary to the Minister of Health, Lib.):** Mr. Speaker, it is a pleasure to return to the House after a summer in Don Valley North and meeting with neighbours to talk about how we can keep making our community a better place for everyone. I look forward to working with all MPs to do good by Canadians.

I know my colleague put on notice a question regarding workforce planning and health care in the health care sector, so I will be responding to that.

I am pleased to rise in the House today to speak on a subject that I know is of concern to many of us: the urgent need to strengthen Canada's health care workforce by integrating internationally educated health professionals into the health care system. Canada's health workforce is currently facing some critical challenges, including long-term shortages, low retention and workplace conditions that put additional pressures on workers. Recent estimates project that there could be shortages of over 23,000 family physicians and 28,000 registered nurses. These shortages are projected to deepen over the next 10 years if there are more pressures added to the health care system, such as increased incidence of chronic illnesses and a growing population.

Internationally trained, educated health professionals are key to addressing these challenges; however, current processes to validate foreign credentials are long, costly and complex. They are creating barriers for the successful recruitment and retention of these professionals in our health care system. There are an estimated 198,000 internationally educated health professionals employed in Canada, but only 58% work in the field they are trained in.

As we know, health care is a shared responsibility between the federal government and our provincial and territorial partners. While the federal government provides financial support for health care services, responsibility for matters related to administration and delivery of the services, including health profession regulation, licensure and foreign credential recognition, falls within provincial and territorial jurisdiction. However, our government understands we have a role to play and we are actively working with our provincial and territorial partners to address current challenges for Canada's health workforce. This includes ensuring immigration policy support, recruiting internationally educated health professionals, working to help streamline foreign credential recognition and supporting retention efforts to have long-term success and integration within the health system.

This is why, beginning this year, our government is funding a number of projects to better integrate internationally educated health professionals into Canada's provincial and territorial health care systems. This funding will create new family medicine training positions for international medical graduates, increase assessment capacity to support accelerated licensure processes for internationally educated health professions and provide support to help newcomers navigate the credential recognition system. The foreign credential recognition program also continues to fund various initiatives to support the labour market integration of skilled newcomers.

Provinces and territories are also making individual action a part of the working together to improve health care for Canadians plan. As a result, differentiated, innovative pathways for internationally educated health professionals to enter the health system are rapidly emerging at the provincial and territorial level. For example, Nova Scotia created the Physician Assessment Centre of Excellence, which allows internationally trained physicians to provide supervised primary care in a collaborative-care setting while being assessed for licensure.

### *Adjournment Proceedings*

Finally, our government understands that Canada must not only attract health care workers from around the world, but also make sure they are properly integrated into the health care workforce. Further, with health care workers facing burnout, we need to ensure they have the support they need to stay on in their jobs.

Earlier this year, our government published the “Ethical framework for the recruitment and retention of internationally educated health professionals in Canada”—

● (2025)

**The Assistant Deputy Speaker (John Nater):** Order.

The hon. member for Riding Mountain.

**Dan Mazier:** Mr. Speaker, the Liberals' parliamentary secretary for health did not answer my question.

Of the 800 international doctors they granted permanent residency to through the federal skilled workers category last year, how many are now licensed and treating Canadian patients?

**Maggie Chi:** Mr. Speaker, it is true that we are experiencing workforce issues in the health care space. Our government is doing a lot of work in this space to make sure that we play a leadership role in supporting solutions to challenges facing health systems across the country, including those related to our workforce.

We do have investment. As I stated in my first statement, we are creating new family physician residency training positions for international medical graduates. We are increasing assessment capacity to support accelerated processes. We are helping folks navigate a very complex system. We do recognize the important role that internationally educated health professionals play in our health care system. I look forward to working with all members to address this issue.

[Translation]

**The Assistant Deputy Speaker (John Nater):** The motion that the House do now adjourn is deemed to have been adopted. Accordingly, the House stands adjourned until tomorrow at 10 a.m. pursuant to Standing Order 24(1).

(The House adjourned at 8:28 p.m.)



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