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Friday, February 3, 2012

—

Speaker: The Honourable Andrew Scheer

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HOUSE OF COMMONS

Friday, February 3, 2012

The House met at 10 a.m.

Prayers

• (1000)

[English]

HOUSE OF COMMONS

The Deputy Speaker: I invite the House to take note of today's use of the wooden mace that you see on the table. The wooden mace is traditionally used when the House sits on February 3 to mark the anniversary of the fire that destroyed the original Parliament buildings on this day in 1916.

GOVERNMENT ORDERS

[English]

FINANCIAL SYSTEM REVIEW ACT

Hon. Vic Toews (for the Minister of Finance) moved that Bill S-5, An Act to amend the law governing financial institutions and to provide for related and consequential matters, be read the second time and referred to a committee.

Mrs. Shelly Glover (Parliamentary Secretary to the Minister of Finance, CPC): Madam Speaker, I welcome the opportunity to open debate at second reading of Bill S-5, the financial system review act.

This proposed legislation matters to Canadians because it concerns one of the most fundamental drivers of our economy, the financial services sector.

Before I go any further I would like to note that the proposed legislation is in fact mandatory. Every five years, the government is bound to review the statutes that govern federally regulated financial institutions to maintain the safety and the soundness of the sector, while ensuring that Canada remains a global leader in financial services.

The Canadian Bankers Association has remarked that its members “believe strongly in the importance of ensuring that the legislative and regulatory framework is reviewed regularly”. As the last review was conducted in 2007, the Bank Act requires that this be completed this year.

For the information of members and Canadians watching at home, the current five year review was launched on September 20, 2010 when the Minister of Finance initiated an open public consultation process on how to improve our financial system.

[Translation]

Here in Canada, the financial sector plays a key role in fostering financial stability, safeguarding Canadians' savings and fuelling economic growth and productivity. Aside from the fact that these institutions offer essential services worldwide, the industry employs over 750,000 Canadians. It represents about 7% of Canada's GDP and is known for its use of information technology.

Not only are our banks the foundation of our economy, but their strength and stability are a model for the entire world. Unlike the United States, the United Kingdom and other European countries, we did not have to nationalize, bail out or buy stock in our banks. In fact, for the fourth year in a row, the World Economic Forum has stated that Canada has the soundest banks in the world. The Financial System Review Act will help to ensure that our banks remain strong and effective and that they adapt to the new realities of an evolving global marketplace.

[English]

As the Canadian Life and Health Insurance Association has noted, the act represents a welcome fine tuning of the various financial institution statutes.

To effectively describe the benefits of this proposed legislation to the House it is worth revisiting our government's response to recent financial volatility.

Beginning in 2007 and through 2008, turmoil in global markets revealed serious weakness in the international financial system. Around the world many major financial institutions failed and needed to be bailed out by governments at the expense of taxpayers, but not here in Canada. Thanks to sound regulation by our Conservative government, not one single bank failed and not a single bailout was necessary, making Canada a model for the world.

Listen for example to the words of U.K. Prime Minister David Cameron who praised our banking system on a recent visit to Canada:

In the last few years, Canada has got every major decision right. Look at the facts. Not a single Canadian bank fell or faltered during the global banking crisis... Your economic leadership has helped the Canadian economy to weather the global storms far better than many of your international competitors.

Government Orders

The Irish Times also declared that Canada's "strict banking supervision was a reason why it was one of the world's strongest performers during the recession".

The International Monetary Fund also said it "commended Canada's strong financial regulation and supervision. This has resulted in a stable and resilient banking sector, which has resisted the international financial crisis well and remains well prepared to deal with most adverse scenarios".

A U.S. Congressional Research Service report added that "Canada's financial system in particular is garnering attention, because it seemed to be more resistant to the failures and bailouts that have marked banks in the United States and Europe".

Even so, we have responded to the crisis with quick action to ensure the long-term stability of our financial system.

•(1005)

[*Translation*]

First, in budget 2008, the government ensured that the Bank of Canada had modern, appropriate tools to enhance the stability of the financial system when necessary. In fact, the Bank of Canada used these improved tools to protect our financial system, particularly by redistributing liquid assets to financial institutions, which was key to preserving the flow of credit to Canadians and businesses during the so-called credit crunch.

In budget 2009, the Conservative government also strengthened the authority of the Canada Deposit Insurance Corporation, or CDIC. This enhancement gave CDIC a broader range of tools to provide financial assistance to troubled financial institutions, thus promoting stability and protecting Canadian's deposits.

[*English*]

We also took steps to protect our mortgage market. The American sub-prime mortgage crisis, and the recession which followed, illustrate the importance of a stable and well functioning housing market.

In Canada, our system of mortgage insurance ensures that real estate remains stable. In order to protect it from the dangerous excesses experienced by other countries, our government has acted three times to adjust the mortgage guarantee framework. These adjustments included reducing the maximum amortization period to 30 years from 35 years for government-backed insured mortgages with loan-to-value ratios of more than 80%. We also reduced borrowing limits for refinancing and withdrew government insurance from home equity lines of credit.

In budget 2011, our government announced that we would give the current rules on the mortgage insurance framework a basis in legislation. This would further promote financial stability. We are actively developing this framework.

[*Translation*]

As you can see, the government has not been idle since the last financial institutions legislative review in 2006. We have renewed many key elements of our financial system and bolstered it by adding new tools to ensure its stability. It is perhaps because of these changes that, during the consultations conducted during the 2011

review, we found that only a few minor adjustments are now necessary.

Numerous detailed and thoughtful submissions were received from various stakeholders, including industry associations, financial institutions, consumer groups and individual Canadians. I am pleased to announce that the participants were satisfied with the process.

•(1010)

[*English*]

The Canadian Life and Health Insurance Association stated at the Senate committee on banking, trade and commerce, which completed its study of this bill late last year, that:

The consultation process was very positive and reflected the technical nature of this review.

From these consultations, we received a number of excellent proposals for fine-tuning, clarifying, harmonizing and modernizing the existing framework. Our government has listened and is committed to doing just that with the proposals contained in the bill before the House today.

The current framework works well. Canada's financial system continues to be recognized as one of the soundest in the world. With that in mind, I will outline the key measures contained in Bill S-5 for members and Canadians watching at home. I remind them that this is very technical in nature. I hope that they will be able to understand the measures I will outline.

The proposed legislative package includes measures that will: respond to changes in the sector; ensure access to banking services for all Canadians; level the playing field by promoting co-operation among our financial institutions; improve the efficiency of our system; and, finally, clarify the intent of existing legislation.

Among the examples, to better respond to changes in the sector, our government is improving the ability of regulators to share information efficiently with their international counterparts.

Also, to keep pace with the growing global financial sector we are increasing the widely held ownership threshold for large banks from \$8 billion to \$12 billion.

To ensure universal access to banking services, the legislation clarifies that all Canadians, including bank customers, are able to cash government cheques under \$1,500 free of charge at any bank in Canada.

To better protect consumers, we will enhance the supervisory powers of the Financial Consumer Agency of Canada by increasing the maximum penalty for a violation of a consumer provision, consistent with penalties for other violations under financial institutions statutes. To improve efficiency, the Superintendent of Financial Institutions will have the authority to issue a certificate to assist financial institutions in documenting incorporation information.

I am especially pleased with the responsiveness of S-5's measures to promote co-operation among our financial institutions. I would like to highlight them now.

For instance, federal credit unions will vote with the co-operatives class in the governance of the Canadian Payments Association. Competition and innovation will be promoted by enabling co-operative credit associations to provide technology services to a broader market. We have heard time and time again from stakeholders about the importance of these changes to the Canadian Payments Act.

The Credit Union Central of Canada stated:

Placing the federal credit union in the cooperatives class will preserve and strengthen the credit union system representation at the CPA. It will ensure that a federal credit union will be represented by a director, who speaks for the interests of cooperative financial institutions in CPA matters. A strong advocate at the CPA is important for the credit union system's ability to advocate on behalf of credit unions and to continue to operate payments facility efficiently and cost effectively, which has a direct impact on overall credit union system competitiveness.

Furthermore, the legislation reduces red tape and lessens the administrative burden for federally regulated insurance companies offering adjustable policies in foreign jurisdictions by removing duplicative disclosure requirements.

[*Translation*]

Here are some of the other technical changes included in Bill S-5 to improve the efficiency of the financial sector. Mutual funds controlled by insurance companies through investments made from segregated funds will be permitted to hold market-indexed shares in managing life insurance companies. Greater flexibility will be provided in adjusting to new terminology under the international financial reporting standards in order to continue to promote prudential objectives.

Future adjustments on the limits on transfers to shareholders from participating policy accounts will be facilitated by adding regulatory flexibility. The Canada Deposit Insurance Corporation Act will be fine-tuned to enhance the corporation's ability to protect insured depositors and manage the resolution of a member institution. Limited testimonial immunity will be provided to the Superintendent of Financial Institutions and the Commissioner of the Financial Consumer Agency of Canada, as well as their employees and agents, to enhance operational efficiencies and protect the confidentiality of information.

Finally, the bill before us includes a number of technical changes to clarify intent. For example, the bill clarifies the order of priorities where multiple security interests, including those taken under the Bank Act and under provincial legislation, are taken on the same collateral. It clarifies that derivatives can be cleared by a clearing and settlement system. It also confirms that banks can have an asset manager who also acts as a trustee of a mutual fund trust.

• (1015)

[*English*]

Many of the financial sector solutions now being promoted and adopted around the globe are based on the Canadian system that has served us so very well. For the fourth year in a row, the World Economic Forum rated Canada's banking system as the soundest in the world and as noted, *Toronto Sun* columnist, Peter Worthington, observed, "Canada's banking system is now widely recognized as arguably the world's best. No Canadians fear for their deposits as many Americans do".

Government Orders

The measures proposed in the financial system review act will further strengthen our system by reinforcing stability in the financial sector, fine tuning the consumer protection framework and adjusting the regulatory framework to better adapt to new developments.

As I have mentioned, the statutes which govern federally regulated financial institutions are subject to a five-year review cycle to ensure that Canada remains a global leader in financial services. It is imperative that this legislation be renewed by April 20 to allow financial institutions to stay in business.

Today's act would provide for a framework that would benefit Canadians by ensuring that we would have a safe and secure financial system that we could rely on by maintaining the long-standing practice of ensuring reviews of the regulatory framework for financial institutions, a unique practice that sets Canada apart from almost every other country in the world.

Our Conservative government recognizes that it must constantly evaluate what regulatory changes are needed to foster competitiveness and ensure the safety and soundness of our financial system for the benefit of all Canadians, and we have done exactly that with the measures contained in the legislation.

As the Canadian Life and Health Insurance Association noted during the Senate committee stage consideration, "prompt passage of the bill will ensure the legislative stability and continuity that are so important to the financial services sector".

I therefore urge all members in the House to give the financial system review act careful consideration. I hope that opposition members will allow us to ensure that this moves quickly and prepares Canadians for more good things to come.

Mr. Robert Chisholm (Dartmouth—Cole Harbour, NDP): Madam Speaker, I appreciate the intervention by the parliamentary secretary. She has indicated that this is an extremely important matter that will affect hundreds of thousands of Canadians and that we need to take a thorough review of exactly what the act intends to do.

Could she explain to the House why she and her government decided to introduce this through the Senate first and can we expect that the government will invoke time limits on this bill, like it has on every other important bill that we have tried to debate in the House on behalf of Canadians?

Mrs. Shelly Glover: Madam Speaker, I congratulate my colleague across the way on being newly appointed to our finance committee. I look forward to many future studies and discussions with him on the financial status of our country.

Government Orders

With regard to the bill, I acknowledge, as my colleague mentioned, that this will affect hundreds of thousands of Canadians. In fact, it will affect all Canadians. Financial systems affect not only the people who are working, but those who are benefiting from other forms of income. For example, it benefits our children. Therefore, it is very important that we continue to evaluate and ensure we get this right for all Canadians.

With regard to the Senate, we have some wonderful senators who work very hard to help move these kinds of very important legislation forward. The legislation has to go through both Houses before a decision can finally be implemented. We have a number of agenda items that affect the financial system and Canadians, including the pooled registered pension plan that we introduced recently and a number of other bills that are coming forward.

Since we have such a charged agenda, it is important that we also move Bill S-5 because of the sunset date. In our opinion, it is prudent to ensure we get this through as quickly as possible and use the expertise and the senators in a way that would help us do that.

I assure the member that the senators took great care in looking at the bill, as we will in the House. We have had a number of reviews already and I look forward to that member voting in favour to pass the bill in a timely manner.

• (1020)

Mr. Ted Hsu (Kingston and the Islands, Lib.): Madam Speaker, while I listened to the hon. parliamentary secretary, I could not help but be struck by what I would consider taking undue credit for the strength of the Canadian financial system. I am glad the legislation has some renewals on sunset clauses and technical amendments because, in the past, Conservatives urged deregulation of Canada's financial system. I believe the strength of Canada's financial system really is due to the resistance by previous Liberal governments to deregulate.

After the 2006 election, we had proof of the Conservative's desire to deregulate when the finance minister brought in 40-year mortgages with no down payment. Over the years, they realized that was a mistake because it encouraged consumers to take on too much risk. We know that the allowance of these mortgages was amended over the years. A couple of years later it was changed so that only 35 years was allowed for the period of a mortgage, requiring a down payment of 5%. Just last year they said that was maybe a little too risky. They had to back off some more and changed it to 30 years, with a 5% down payment.

The bill is worth supporting because the renewal of the sunset clauses is needed as well as some of the technical amendments, which could be tweaked. However, I want to counter what the parliamentary secretary has said in taking credit for the strength of Canada's financial system, which is recognized by the rest of the world. Having heard—

The Deputy Speaker: I would like to give the hon. parliamentary secretary an opportunity to respond.

Mrs. Shelly Glover: Madam Speaker, unfortunately, I did not hear a question from my colleague as he ran out of time.

I will talk about some of the things that Canadians might be wondering about regarding what the hon. member and his party have said.

Our record has been very clear. Our government has taken measures time and time again to strengthen the financial system and our ability to stay in a fiscally advantaged position. The IMF and OECD have both said that Canada is a place to do business because it has such a strong and sound banking system. It is because it has a tremendous regulatory system that it allows for this kind of thing to go on.

I disagree wholeheartedly with the member's assertions about the Liberal record. In fact, I remind the member that it was the Liberals who stole \$57 billion out of the EI account when it was in a surplus and put it toward their pet projects. In fact, it was our government that took a \$38 billion sum and put it onto our debt so that it would save Canadians money and strengthen our system so we could weather things like the economic crisis much better than other countries. It is this government that has a record of doing good things for our fiscal system and not the government of Liberals and that colleague.

• (1025)

Mr. Scott Armstrong (Cumberland—Colchester—Musquodoboit Valley, CPC): Madam Speaker, it is great to speak today and ask the member questions about Bill S-5, which I think is a tremendous bill for our country.

As the member travelled across the country during the break, conducting many consultations with people from the business and financial communities and discussing the aspects that are contained in the bill, what were the results of those consultations, what did she hear about the bill and what did Canadians have to say about the financial institutions and the way the government operates them in Canada?

Mrs. Shelly Glover: Madam Speaker, I thank my colleague for caring so much about what his constituents and Canadians are saying about prebudget consultations and about consultations on things like this bill because we do things to protect the interests of Canadians.

Canadians clearly told us during consultations that they liked the fact that this government looked ahead, that it was visionary and looked at the long-term status of our country to ensure that we were protected against threats like financial crises. That is why they really appreciated this government making changes to the mortgage in the housing industry three times to ensure we were protected, that we did not suffer the same consequences we saw in other countries.

Canadians also said that they appreciated the low tax agenda by the government and that they increasingly appreciated our push for trade. Unfortunately, they did comment that they were not happy with the \$10 billion hike suggested by the NDP and its anti-trade position or the votes against their well-being that were voted upon by the Liberals.

Government Orders

Ms. Elizabeth May (Saanich—Gulf Islands, GP): Madam Speaker, I hate to trespass into partisan debates between the Conservatives and the Liberals, but on the banking sector, in fairness, we are very fortunate that Paul Martin turned down the banks when they wanted to go global. It is just a historical reality.

This legislation is encouraging. It is good to see a government that is willing, although it tends to be very anti-regulation, to say that more regulations are needed, particularly over the Canadian banking sector going into more foreign territories.

Could the hon. parliamentary secretary expand on whether there could be more robust consumer protections still added to the legislation when it goes to committee?

Mrs. Shelly Glover: Madam Speaker, I welcome my colleague back to the House following the Christmas break.

Consumer protection is part of the platform within the bill and we look continually to ensure that consumers are protected. As we move forward with the bill through the House and through committee, we will be open to listening to all suggestions. We will take those suggestions into consideration and will essentially come forward with a bill that will protect the interests of consumers.

This is a good start, but, again, we will continue to evaluate as we move forward. There will continually be a review every five years. This government is committed to ensuring that we look at these things in the future to prevent anything that might be coming up the pipes that could negatively affect Canadians.

If the member has any particular suggestions, I would be happy to listen to those and pass them on.

Mr. Robert Chisholm (Dartmouth—Cole Harbour, NDP): Madam Speaker, I am pleased to have the opportunity to participate in the debate on Bill S-5. I thank the parliamentary secretary for her kind words with respect to my addition to the finance committee. I look forward to working with her and other members of that committee in the weeks and months ahead.

I want to make it clear that the official opposition will support Bill S-5 at second reading in principle. As she herself has said, it is a very technical bill. It has not received a lot of public discussion. As is the case with a bill of this nature, the devil is sometimes in the details. It will be incumbent upon us in the chamber and certainly members of the finance committee to bring witnesses forward and discuss those details to make sure there is not something untoward that causes concern. Assuming we do not find anything, we will support the bill at third reading, but we will see.

There is no question the financial services industry is a major financial force in this country. It employs hundreds of thousands of Canadian women and men and deals with trillions of dollars in assets. We also know that the banking industry is not an ordinary sector of the economy. Banks have the power to shape and influence the livelihoods of Canadians. They have the power to create currency through credit. Therefore, it is extremely important that we pay attention to the practices and procedures of these financial institutions. We only have to look at what has been happening around the world over the past couple of years to see how important that is.

While I want to go through the bill to some degree, I want to say at the outset that it makes me chuckle how the Conservatives like to take credit for the Canadian banking system that has relied on a strong regulatory and supervisory tradition and framework. Unlike our American neighbours, the Canadian government, but more importantly Canadians, have recognized how important it is that we not allow our financial institutions to run amok and do what it is they do. We therefore have been slower in deregulating our financial system.

I suggest that had there not been a minority government from 2005 onward and given what we have seen over the past number of months since the Conservatives have been in a majority situation, they may have moved before 2008 to remove some of the important regulations that saved our system in 2008. Luckily we got through that time. Even they recognize the value of maintaining regulations and supervisory control over the industry and we are continuing in that direction.

We saw with the financial meltdown that we in this country are not immune to what happens in foreign countries. It was the single largest default by a foreign financial institution which created a domino effect. It affected us and financial markets around the world.

It is important to recognize, which I know the government has failed to do on a number of occasions, that the Bank of Canada back in 2008 had to advance \$75 billion through the Canada Mortgage and Housing Corporation to buy back \$75 billion in mortgages from Canadian chartered banks to stem a liquidity crisis.

• (1030)

While the Conservatives want to try to take credit, it is important to recognize it is an established tradition that Canadians have followed. I am glad that we are going to continue along those lines for the foreseeable future.

We have a few concerns with respect to the process by which Bill S-5 reached the House. The government made a commitment in the last budget that it was going to initiate a review at that time. There is a statutory sunset clause that comes into effect on April 20 this year. The government recognized that we have to conduct this review. Unfortunately, what it did was post a request for submissions on the website. It was very quietly done, and it did not seek permission from the groups and individuals who were submitting that those presentations would be allowed to be public. Only 3 of the 30 submissions that were made have been made public and that was by those organizations themselves that posted the information on the government's website.

This idea gets to what the parliamentary secretary said in her debate. She said to Canadians who were watching that this is a very technical bill and that she would talk about very technical issues which they might not understand. That is an issue which goes to the heart of the whole question of consultation around such important matters. We need to demystify these issues. We need to present them in common language so that Canadians do understand.

Government Orders

One problem we are facing, which has been cited by the Governor of the Bank of Canada, Mark Carney, is that Canadians are overly indebted. Household debt has reached very problematic levels. Part of the reason we run into these situations is that we do not have a sufficiently clear and honest discussion about matters such as those contained in the bill. The questions that have been dealt with by the bill deal with consumer protection. Those are matters in which Canadians should be involved. Canadians are continuing to be gouged, in that hundreds of millions of dollars in fees and taxes are being imposed by the banks on every type of financial activity. Canadians need to play a role in discussions on the regulations that the government permits and the legislation that goes through.

It is a concern to us that the government decided to introduce this legislation in the unelected chamber. It did not start such an important bill before the members of this House who are duly elected by Canadians. The government took another route. Some would say the bill came in through the back door. It came in through the Senate. Even some august senators said that there was not sufficient time given to them to have a proper review of it. They raised concerns about it. I also asked that question of the minister.

Members of this caucus hope that the government will not bring in closure number 14 on this bill to limit debate by elected members of the House. This is far too important. It is important that Canadians understand what is going on. We need to take every opportunity to explain what it is that is being proposed by Bill S-5, to ask questions of government, to listen to the answers, and to have a general debate about what it is contained in the bill and how it will affect Canadians. That is what we are going to do.

• (1035)

It has been suggested that there are a multitude of housekeeping changes. However, there are a few things within the bill that I would like to speak to directly.

We welcome the broadening of the supervisory and enforcement powers of the Financial Consumer Agency of Canada and the broadening of the jurisdictional scope of the Superintendent of Financial Institutions.

We heard this morning that the Office of the Superintendent of Financial Institutions is watching closely the practices of banks, which appear to be loosening up credit, in some instances. That it is paying attention is a good thing. It is a good thing that the banks and financial institutions are not going to go down the road of predatory lending practices, which would have an impact. We have seen they have had an impact in other countries. We would not want to see that happen here. We welcome the broadening of the jurisdictional scope of the superintendent that is contained in the bill. However, we would say there was an opportunity in the bill for the government to go further to protect Canadian citizens from the predatory monopolistic practices of the banks.

I said that we have concerns that Canadians continue to be gouged by the banks in the form of service charges, user fees, and abusive credit card rates. That is one of the reasons we need to have a fulsome debate with Canadians about issues regarding our financial institutions and borrowing and lending practices.

It is also a fact that we need to provide in the bill and in regulation further protection for consumers because they are continuing to be gouged. The former leader of the opposition, Mr. Layton, was an outspoken advocate for a reduction in the credit card interest rates and the predatory practices of the banks and financial institutions as they dealt with credit cards. That is something we believe needs to happen. It is particularly galling at a time when these extra charges on Canadians are allowing banks to recognize record profits, which last year amounted to \$25.5 billion, at a time when Canadian wages are declining. It is just wrong and we need to deal with that.

The responsibility for consumer protection unfortunately is not dealt with in this legislation. It is dispersed among multiple jurisdictions, departments and agencies. Again, it raises doubts as to whether the government is truly committed to the robust protection of consumers.

The modest changes that are brought about for consumer protection in the bill have yet to be tested by consumer advocates and users. We certainly hope we have the opportunity at the finance committee to bring representatives forward to deal with these issues.

We are concerned by increasingly risky lending practices in terms of mortgages and home equity credit lines by banks and other lending institutions. That concern is well-founded. It is something we heard about today and is shared by the Office of the Superintendent of Financial Institutions. Members of this House and members of the finance committee need to pay attention to that when we are discussing this bill.

Again let me say that it was through greater regulation that Canada avoided the mortgage-induced crisis, such as the one that occurred in the United States in 2007-08. We have a strong tradition in this country of supervisory and regulatory protections over our banking system, and we need to ensure that we are vigilant going forward.

• (1040)

This bill is missing an important step in creating a stronger economy, the regulation of financial speculation and derivatives. Billions of dollars continue to be gambled on a regular basis, destabilizing the economy and providing no benefit to everyday citizens. The government should use this opportunity to work in concert with other governments to halt the destructive speculation in Canada and abroad. We are also concerned that under this bill, large foreign acquisitions by financial institutions would be subject to ministerial approval rather than simply the approval of the Superintendent of Financial Institutions. We think this will unnecessarily politicize important decisions. These decisions should not be made in a partisan manner because there is the potential for political influence being exerted.

Government Orders

While I talk about the fact that the banking system in Canada has a tradition of regulation and supervision that has helped us avoid the kind of problems we have seen in other jurisdictions, there is a darker side to our stronger banking system. Canadian chartered banks have dominated the domestic market for decades. Their dominance and the fact that both Liberal and Conservative governments have only paid lip service to this issue have allowed them to continue to extract abusive fees, taxing Canadian consumers. These fees have created \$25 billion in profits for the banking system. They provide the banks with enough net revenue to offset eventual speculative losses on the international capital markets and from overseas ventures, and allow them to pay out generous seven-figure bonuses to their CEOs and dividends to shareholders.

In addition, Canadian banks have been benefiting for years from tax-arbitered schemes such as the dividend gross-up mechanism that has allowed them to reduce their effective tax rates by acquiring Canadian dividend-paying stocks while hedging away the economic risk of those stocks by the use of derivatives. Banks sometimes share those tax savings with non-taxable entities, such as pension funds. This amounts to an effective tax subsidy that costs Canadian taxpayers sums that could well be in the billions of dollars. In addition to the tax effects, dividend gross-up mechanisms tie up bank capital for years and trump bank lending to small businesses and entrepreneurs. This is a complex issue that deserves much more scrutiny.

The changes being brought forward by Bill S-5 are modest. They could be greater as they relate to consumer protection. There is much work to be done and we cannot be complacent. We have seen turmoil and the damage that can be done by over-speculation and risky lending by financial institutions around the world, and we need to be constantly vigilant. However, I again say to the members opposite that we need to have this conversation about lending, borrowing and spending openly with Canadians. We need to deal with the problems created by the lack of financial literacy in this country.

• (1045)

We recognize that the increasing indebtedness of ordinary Canadians is a serious problem. The economy continues to be flat and has not been growing to expectations. Recently, we heard announcements indicating that the job creation figures continue to be weak.

The government is moving in directions that are having a detrimental impact on Canadians. We need to have important and respectful conversations about matters as important as to how we are managing our financial system in this country.

As I said earlier, we will be supporting the bill as it moves forward from second reading to committee. I look forward as a member of that committee to engaging with witnesses and starting to deal with some of the details so we can find out exactly what is in this legislation and make sure that it is as strong as possible for Canadians.

• (1050)

Mr. Kevin Lamoureux (Winnipeg North, Lib.): Madam Speaker, I take exception to the government taking credit, when it introduced this legislation, for the banking industry being able to survive over the last number of years in Canada.

I want the government to recognize the fact that as the world economy was going into a downward spiral, Canada stood out on top. Other economies in the world recognized how strong and healthy Canada's financial markets were. They did that because of inspirational leaders like Paul Martin and Jean Chrétien and Liberal administrations that believed in having a regulated industry. Those individuals did more than anything the Conservative government has ever done to protect the integrity of the financial institutions we have in Canada today. The government needs to be aware of that fact.

When the Conservatives talk about financial responsibilities, they need to be aware of the fact that when they took office there was a \$60 billion surplus handed to them. The Conservatives need to recognize that they are the ones who are messing up priorities, and we need only look at what they are doing to seniors in this wealthy country of Canada.

I would ask my colleague about the potential role of credit unions in this regard. Over the last five to ten years our credit unions have been expanding in places where banks have been withdrawing. They have been making it more affordable for the average consumer to do more banking, whether online or offline or going to the counter for services. I believe there is a good role for credit unions in the Canadian financial market in the future.

I wonder if the member would comment on how important our credit unions are in Canada today.

Mr. Robert Chisholm: Madam Speaker, credit unions began 100 years ago in places like New Waterford, Nova Scotia. They help support working people in their communities and families. They are the backbone of this country. Credit unions continue to thrive and provide important financial services for many families in small and large communities throughout this country. They should be commended for the work they do.

I will also respond in part to the member's quibble with the Conservative government for trying to take credit for the banking system. That member wants the Liberals to have the credit for the banking system. The traditions of our banking system are well established. They were established by members of the House, by Canadians from one end of this country to the other, who worked hard to make sure that we have a viable, respected and trusted banking system in this country. We should be thanking Canadians for responsible financial management rather than trying to break our arms by patting ourselves on the back.

[Translation]

Mr. Matthew Dubé (Chambly—Borduas, NDP): Madam Speaker, I have a very important question for my colleague.

I know that he is going to join the Standing Committee on Finance; perhaps he already has. I would like him to comment on the importance of studying this bill carefully. We all, particularly the members on this side of the House, know how important it is to have strict laws for our banking system. We also know that these are very complicated issues.

I would like my colleague to comment further on the importance of studying this bill carefully to ensure that we understand all of its complexities and are able to develop appropriate regulations.

Statements by Members

•(1055)

[English]

Mr. Robert Chisholm: Madam Speaker, the member said that it was a relevant question. I agree with him and just hope that I can provide a reasonably relevant answer.

The role of the finance committee is very important and always has been. I have not sat on that particular committee before, but I have certainly been involved at other levels of government on a committee such as the Standing Committee on Finance. I am very excited about participating on it, particularly as it relates to Bill S-5, because that committee needs to bring forward experts to talk to us about the consumer protections advertised in the bill. I say so because I do not think the way the government has gone about its consultations to date has given consumer protection advocates the opportunity to have input into this process.

At our committee, as we go through the bill item by item, we will have an opportunity to invite those experts who are out there in the field, from credit unions and consumer advocacy groups, to come in and share with us information that will help us make the bill the best piece of legislation it can be in order to get the support of members of the House.

Mr. John Carmichael (Don Valley West, CPC): Madam Speaker, as we hear from the parties opposite, everyone wants to take credit for our current success with our banking system and financial institutions. Certainly, the Canadian system is sound and strong and has survived the last several years of difficult economic times in a way that organizations around the world have recognized.

I commend the member for his appointment to the finance committee, and I wonder if he could speak to some of concerns about regulation, which he recognized were technical in nature and needed to be simplified, but specifically in terms of consumer protection. I wonder if he could go a little deeper and address some specific issues that are of concern to him.

Mr. Robert Chisholm: Madam Speaker, in my remarks I tried to address where we needed to focus some attention, and that was in regard to consumer protection.

I underlined how financial institutions are continuing to gouge their clients with increases in user fees and banking charges. We pay a charge for putting money in, we pay a charge for pulling it out, and we pay a charge for thinking about doing either of the two. I think I pay a charge every time I take my credit card out of my wallet, without even using it. It is that kind of foolishness we have to get a handle on.

We have talked about the need to address fees and interest rates that are being charged on credit cards. There is an opportunity to do that in this bill, an opportunity that the government has so far avoided. We will work at committee to try to deal with that so we can finally bring in some protection of credit card holders to stop the abuse they are receiving from financial institutions.

STATEMENTS BY MEMBERS*[Translation]***QUEBEC ICE WINE**

Mr. André Bellavance (Richmond—Arthabaska, BQ): Madam Speaker, once again, the federal government is creating obstacles for agricultural producers from Quebec, with standards that penalize them and favour their counterparts from other provinces. Without bothering to notify stakeholders or the Quebec Ministry of Agriculture, Fisheries and Agri-Food, the Canadian Food Inspection Agency declared that the Quebec method of producing ice wine prohibits Quebec wineries from using the “ice wine” appellation. Yet, this method, which is used because of the climate, is recognized by the Government of Quebec and the International Organization of Vine and Wine.

Representatives of the Quebec Ministry of Agriculture, Fisheries and Agri-Food confirmed in *La Presse* that this method in no way affects the quality of the product, as demonstrated by the international awards Quebec ice wines have won recently. The 70 or so vineyards in Quebec are not second-class vineyards. The Canadian government must recognize their method and let consumers judge the quality of the best ice wine in Canada: Quebec ice wine.

* * *

•(1100)

*[English]***LIEUTENANT GOVERNOR'S WINTER FESTIVAL**

Mr. Merv Tweed (Brandon—Souris, CPC): Madam Speaker, this weekend Brandon will celebrate the ninth annual Lieutenant Governor's Winter Festival. This festival is a multicultural celebration of all that the great constituency of Brandon—Souris has to offer. The cultures represented at the festival this year include Brazil, Colombia, El Salvador, English, first nations, French Canadian, German, Irish, Métis, Scottish and Ukrainian and for the first time the festival will feature pavilions for Mauritius and the U.S.A.

Last year, 60,000 visitors attended Winterfest and the organizing committee is expecting even more this year.

I want to congratulate the committee and the many volunteers who make it such an outstanding event. I wish to recognize the executive of this year's festival: Esther Bryan, Hope Roberts, Nick Vandale, Charlotte Tosch, Dorothy McHarg, Walter Gibbons and Elaine Arvisais. Without these dedicated individuals and many other volunteers, this event would not be possible.

Brandon—Souris is well-known for its hospitality and amazing community spirit. Our government is proud to support the Winterfest. I invite all Canadians to hop on a plane, train or automobile to come to Brandon for Winterfest.

*Statements by Members***NATURAL RESOURCES**

Mr. Kennedy Stewart (Burnaby—Douglas, NDP): Madam Speaker, last year the NDP brought forward a motion to study refineries and oil pipelines to which the Conservatives agreed. So far the testimony has been deeply disturbing.

According to government statistics, since 1980 the number of refineries operating in Canada has declined by over 60%, from 39 refineries to 15 refineries. If this trend of losing one refinery per year continues, there may not be a single refinery operating in Canada by 2030. This puts Canada in an absurd position. We will be shipping our crude oil out to China and the U.S. and then buying it back as gasoline. This is softwood lumber on steroids.

I am proud to say that New Democrats are developing a comprehensive energy strategy that will put Canadian value-added jobs first. I call on the Conservatives to work with us on this.

* * *

FIREARMS REGISTRY

Mr. Bob Zimmer (Prince George—Peace River, CPC): Madam Speaker, during our winter break I had the opportunity to meet with the North Peace Rod and Gun Club to reiterate our government's commitment to ending the long gun registry. For far too long law-abiding farmers and hunters in my riding have been made to feel like criminals for simply owning a rifle or a shotgun.

Next week will begin the final stages of ending the wasteful and ineffective long gun registry once and for all, fulfilling a long-standing commitment our government has made to law-abiding Canadians like the members of the North Peace Rod and Gun Club. By eliminating the long gun registry, we can focus our efforts on more effective ways to tackle crime and protect families and communities. Since it was created, the long gun registry has cost literally billions of dollars. This money should be used to crack down on the real criminals, not law-abiding Canadians.

* * *

CANADA'S WORST DRIVER

Mr. Rodger Cuzner (Cape Breton—Canso, Lib.): Madam Speaker, I have risen in the House many times to pay tribute to constituents from my riding of Cape Breton—Canso. I have congratulated Grammy Award winners, Giller Prize winners, star athletes, political figures and humanitarians, but today I must recognize a resident who has achieved some truly unique distinction.

Last month, Shirley Sampson, from Port Caledonia, was named Canada's worst driver. Shirley was chosen from almost 1,000 Canadians who auditioned for the show and when the competition was over, it was clear that Shirley Sampson is Canada's worst driver. Shirley's daughter Janis had nominated her mother, noting that her biggest issues were backing up, using mirrors and also had problems with rotaries and intersections.

The show offers professional coaching to the contestants. Although the host often tells the winners they should never drive again, Shirley got the green light to stay on the road.

I offer my congratulations to Shirley on this dubious distinction. For the residents of Cape Breton—Canso, I offer this warning: "Heads up if you see Shirley coming".

* * *

DIGITAL ECONOMY

Mr. Gary Schellenberger (Perth—Wellington, CPC): Madam Speaker, Canadians gave our government a strong mandate to stay focused on what matters: creating jobs and economic growth. Part of this plan involves creating jobs in Canada's digital economy.

I am very proud today to announce that soon the University of Waterloo Stratford Campus will expand its master of digital experience innovation program to allow a part-time option for those students who must continue working, while they strive to upgrade their education. Not only is this program strengthening Canada's digital economy, it has helped Stratford to receive the recent honourable distinction as one of the top seven intelligent communities in the world.

I am very proud of all who have helped make this campus a reality. The expansion of this masters program at the University of Waterloo Stratford Campus is good news for Canada's digital economy at home and Stratford's recognition around the world.

* * *

●(1105)

[Translation]

HIGH-SPEED INTERNET

Ms. Ruth Ellen Brosseau (Berthier—Maskinongé, NDP): Madam Speaker, from coast to coast to coast, many regions still do not have access to competitive high-speed Internet service. In Quebec, the people of Berthier—Maskinongé are no exception. Following a meeting between elected officials and the people of my riding, I decided it was time to take action. Although we know that the Internet is an essential tool for communication in 2012, the infrastructure to provide such service in rural areas remains inadequate.

Marjolaine Cloutier, from Saint-Justin, pays \$140 a month for high-speed service, but gets mediocre-speed service instead, despite the broadband Canada program. For well-established telecommunications companies, connecting the remote regions is not always profitable. The status quo keeps their basic service profitable. It is time for high-speed Internet to be accessible and affordable to all Canadian families.

* * *

[English]

MULTICULTURALISM

Mr. Deepak Obhrai (Calgary East, CPC): Madam Speaker, first, I wish the residents of Calgary East a happy new year.

Statements by Members

My riding, as others across the country, represents the Canadian multicultural mosaic. It is home to people of the first nations, English, French, Germans, Italians, Ukrainians, Fijians, South Asians, Middle Easterners, Vietnamese, Filipinos and most recently from the continent of Africa. All these people from different cultural and religious backgrounds live and work side by side in all neighbourhoods. Their priorities are the same: stable jobs, safe streets and good schools, so they can live peacefully and raise their children. Seniors want to retire peacefully.

My riding sends a strong message to the world that those who endorse a doctrine of hatred toward others will not succeed. I am proud to represent the good folks of Calgary East.

* * *

CHILD PORNOGRAPHY

Mrs. Joy Smith (Kildonan—St. Paul, CPC): Madam Speaker, yesterday law enforcement in Ontario announced the outcome of a province-wide child pornography investigation that resulted in 213 charges being laid against 60 individuals, including sexual assault, child luring, possession, distribution and creation of child pornography. Most important, 22 child victims were rescued and are now receiving care.

Our government has taken leadership in combatting online child exploitation by increasing penalties for child pornography and creating new offences that hold predators accountable.

I want to commend the Ontario Provincial Police Child Sexual Exploitation Section and the 23 law enforcement agencies involved in this investigation for their dedication and commitment to tracking down these predators. These investigations are long and complex and exert significant emotional and physical tolls on the officers involved.

As a nation, it is incumbent on each of us to support efforts that protect children, hold predators accountable and restore rescued victims.

* * *

[Translation]

QUEBEC WINTER CARNIVAL

Ms. Annick Papillon (Québec, NDP): Madam Speaker, the Quebec Winter Carnival is showing off its colours until February 12. This is the 58th edition of the largest winter carnival in the world. This festival provides an ideal opportunity to discover or rediscover the charms of Quebec City whose heritage is unique in North America. Every year, Bonhomme Carnaval warmly welcomes more than a million visitors who participate in hundreds of activities. Whether you attend the legendary night parade or the canoe race on the St. Lawrence River or visit Place de la famille on the Plains of Abraham, you will be entertained.

The carnival was established by the business community and today is a symbol of success that brings \$30 million into Quebec City's economy. I invite everyone, young and old, to the heart of my riding, Québec, to celebrate with me in the coming days. I once worked for the Quebec Winter Carnival and I would like to personally salute and thank all the organizers of this major festival as well as the many volunteers.

Thank you everyone. Come and enjoy the carnival.

* * *

•(1110)

[English]

RUSK FAMILY AND DONALD MCNAMEE

Mr. Ryan Leef (Yukon, CPC): Madam Speaker, I rise today on a sad occasion. A Yukon family, Brad and Valerie Rusk, their children, Gabriel and Rebekah, as well as their friend, Donald McNamee were all found dead in their home last Sunday. Officials say that carbon monoxide is likely to blame. When firefighters arrived at their home, carbon monoxide levels were 10 times the amount that would be picked up by a standard home alarm. Therefore, I encourage all Canadians to ensure they have a carbon monoxide detector in their home.

This is a tragic accident that is tough for any size of community and especially hard for a town as small and as close-knit as Whitehorse. This sad event reaches across territorial boundaries as the family and close friends who live in other provinces head north to say goodbye to their beloved family.

For the family and close friends, especially the schoolmates of Gabriel and Rebekah, our thoughts are with them. For the emergency services workers whose duty in times like this is both harrowing and emotional, we thank them for their courage and professionalism under the most heartbreaking of circumstances.

* * *

[Translation]

EMPLOYMENT

Mrs. Anne-Marie Day (Charlesbourg—Haute-Saint-Charles, NDP): Madam Speaker, the employment situation continues to deteriorate in the Quebec City region. The unemployment rate rose again in January, following a constant trend over the past few months. The closure last month of White Birch Paper, where 600 workers were thrown out in the street, is but one example. The workers were simply asserting to their American boss their right to access their pensions, which they had paid into their entire lives. The Quebec government is rolling up its sleeves and trying to bring in private investors to reopen the plant.

The Conservative government, on the other hand, is doing nothing once again. It is simply shameful to ignore the dire circumstances facing the forest products industry in Quebec and across Canada. The government must take action to strengthen the Investment Canada Act in order to prevent foreign companies from jeopardizing jobs in our communities. Canadian families are fed up with mere rhetoric; they want action.

[English]

INNOVATION COMMERCIALIZATION PROGRAM

Mr. David Wilks (Kootenay—Columbia, CPC): Madam Speaker, I am pleased to speak to the success of our government's Canadian innovation commercialization program.

The goal of this kick-start initiative is to bolster the innovations that drive economic growth by helping Canadian businesses to commercialize their innovative products and services. This government recognizes that innovation fuels business competitiveness, quality and productivity and, ultimately, jobs for hard-working Canadians.

One businessperson has said that this program is “about the government recognizing that the gap between innovators' ideas and the marketplace is simply someone willing to bet on them, willing to take a chance on their product and then willing to give them feedback”.

Today our government has announced that we are doing just that with 35 more Canadian businesses promoting 36 innovations. We know this is an important step to help them create jobs and economic growth in Canada.

* * *

MARGUERITE LEWIS

Mr. Francis Scarpaleggia (Lac-Saint-Louis, Lib.): Madam Speaker, I would like to draw the attention of the House to the passing of a passionate Canadian.

Marguerite Lewis was a woman who lived to help others, a woman of principle, determination, heart and compassion, a loyal friend and a stalwart Liberal proud of her Acadian roots.

[Translation]

The headline in *Cités Nouvelles* described her as an iron lady. It is true because she held to her convictions and because she worked tirelessly for the good of others, particularly for seniors who cannot always afford the quality of life they deserve.

[English]

Marguerite was a tireless advocate for seniors, including the veterans at her local legion. She founded Aid for Seniors, a program that connects young helpers to seniors in need, and she organized annual lunches where golden agers could come together for a meal and companionship.

For her community action, Marguerite was rightly honoured with the Governor General's Caring Canadian Award and the Lions Club Award for Outstanding Community Service.

We offer our deepest condolences to her daughter Diane and husband Ted, granddaughters Caroline and Robin, brother René and sisters Eliza and Léa.

* * *

EMPLOYMENT INSURANCE

Mr. Richard Harris (Cariboo—Prince George, CPC): Madam Speaker, on Tuesday at the Standing Committee on Human Resources and Skills Development, the NDP and Liberals reaffirmed

Statements by Members

their belief that convicted criminals were more entitled to employment insurance benefits than law-abiding citizens.

On Tuesday, I moved forward on my private member's bill, which would remove the preferential access convicted felons have to EI over law-abiding citizens. Not surprising, instead of standing with victims of crime and advocating fairness, the NDP and the Liberals were more interested in promoting the preferred EI benefits of convicted felons.

When will the opposition members get their heads out of the sand and realize that convicted criminals should have the same rules as law-abiding citizens when it comes to EI benefits?

This is yet another example of how the opposition would prefer to put the rights of convicted criminals ahead of law-abiding, hard-working Canadians.

* * *

● (1115)

ASBESTOS

Mr. Dan Harris (Scarborough Southwest, NDP): Madam Speaker, the Conservatives continue to spread cancer and death in developing countries.

Yesterday we learned that the study on the safety and use of asbestos, funded by the industry itself and the government, is fraudulent. The study by a group of researchers from McGill University is incorrect, lacks transparency and contains manipulated data, according to an epidemiologist. It is a study that gives a green light for discharging carcinogenic asbestos in developing countries where workers have no protection.

The study was funded by taxpayer dollars. The government and those preceding it invested \$20 million in the last 30 years. Instead of listening to doctors in the international community who affirm that asbestos is deadly, the Conservatives prefer to side with their friends and asbestos lobbyists.

[Translation]

This government is the only one denying that asbestos is dangerous. It is the only one that has blocked the listing of asbestos as a hazardous substance under the Rotterdam Convention—

The Deputy Speaker: Order, please. The hon. member for Cumberland—Colchester—Musquodoboit Valley.

* * *

[English]

MEMBER FOR WINNIPEG CENTRE

Mr. Scott Armstrong (Cumberland—Colchester—Musquodoboit Valley, CPC): Madam Speaker, the NDP member for Winnipeg Centre is at it again with a vicious personal and abusive attack on the senator from La Salle. It is unacceptable when a member of a party which is so soft on crime attacks someone who has been such a tragic victim of crime.

Oral Questions

The members of the NDP have opposed every tough on crime measure our government has brought forward in this House. They even opposed the repeal of the faint hope clause, a clause which would have given convicted first degree murderers like Clifford Olson the opportunity for early parole. That is unacceptable.

The member for Winnipeg Centre should apologize in this House for his vicious, personal and abusive attack upon the senator. The senator's family has suffered enough. It is time for the member to stand up and do the honourable thing.

voted against that tax credit. We are delivering on our plan for jobs and growth.

• (1120)

Mr. Joe Comartin (Windsor—Tecumseh, NDP): Madam Speaker, the 600,000 figure the Conservatives keep using is not net new jobs. Net new jobs are in a negative position.

ORAL QUESTIONS

[*Translation*]

EMPLOYMENT

Mr. Joe Comartin (Windsor—Tecumseh, NDP): Madam Speaker, Canadians are paying the price for the government's inaction when it comes to the economy. The unemployment rate went up again in January, and behind the statistics are thousands of families who are suffering.

Are the Conservatives ever going to wake up? Probably not. Their economic inaction plan is not working. When will we have a real job creation plan?

Hon. Peter Van Loan (Leader of the Government in the House of Commons, CPC): Madam Speaker, the priorities of our government are the priorities of Canadians: economic growth and job creation. Fortunately, among the G7 developed countries, Canada has the strongest employment growth, with the creation of more than 600,000 net new jobs since July 2009. We are focusing on job creation and we intend to continue to focus on that priority.

[*English*]

Mr. Joe Comartin (Windsor—Tecumseh, NDP): Madam Speaker, the Conservatives keep repeating those statistics that are clearly not in keeping with what is the net job loss in the country. For example, there are 45,000 fewer workers in the professional, scientific and technical service industries. Manufacturing is down 44,000 jobs just in the last 12 months. More and more Canadians are looking for jobs that simply do not exist.

As employment is going down, what are the Conservatives planning to do? They are planning to cut the OAS and force people to wait until they are 67 to get the help they need. With no job creation and a cut in pension benefits, what are people supposed to do?

Hon. Peter Van Loan (Leader of the Government in the House of Commons, CPC): Madam Speaker, we are very fortunate that Canada has been doing well relative to other major developed economies during what has been the most dramatic global economic downturn in my lifetime. That is in large part due to the fact that our government has pursued an economic action plan, a low tax plan for jobs and growth, that has delivered over 600,000 net new jobs for Canadians.

While that is good news, we know we have much more to do. That is why, for example, in the fall we brought forward legislation to establish a tax credit for small businesses to hire new employees. What did the opposition member and all the opposition do? They

We voted against the budget, and we will continue to vote against budgets that simply give tax breaks to the Conservatives' billionaire and millionaire friends.

The unemployment rate in this country is up. The Conservatives' strategy is not working. After taking millions in corporate tax giveaways directly from the Prime Minister, Caterpillar just closed down in London. Five hundred well-paying manufacturing jobs have gone south to the United States.

The NDP has been saying this for months, but the government refuses to listen. Does the government realize what is happening in the economy in Canada?

Hon. Peter Van Loan (Leader of the Government in the House of Commons, CPC): Madam Speaker, it is fascinating that the hon. member opposite just described tens of thousands of Canadians who run small businesses and create jobs for millions across the country as millionaires and billionaires, who they want to vote against. We will not tolerate that. We are on the side of those who are out there struggling to get ahead. When we established the tax credit for hiring for small businesses, it was to help people who are entrepreneurs, who are taking risks, who are creating jobs for their neighbours, for the people in their communities, so that everybody in Canada can get ahead.

That is what we are focused on, jobs and economic growth for Canadians across the country.

[*Translation*]

Mr. Hoang Mai (Brossard—La Prairie, NDP): Madam Speaker, what is upsetting is to have the Conservatives make all kinds of excuses rather than face reality.

In Montreal, jobs continue to disappear; the unemployment rate is 9%. We are talking about Quebec's economic hub. A change in direction is needed. Where is that change in direction?

Oral Questions

Mrs. Shelly Glover (Parliamentary Secretary to the Minister of Finance, CPC): Madam Speaker, as we have often stated in the House, our government is working on creating jobs and maintaining economic growth. In terms of economic growth, Canada is well positioned in comparison with all other countries. As we have seen, the IMF and the OECD have said that, in the coming years, Canada will be the place to establish companies and do business. That is what we will continue to do. We really need the NDP's help. They have to stop trying to add their \$10 billion in taxes—

The Deputy Speaker: Order, please. The hon. member for Brossard—La Prairie

Mr. Hoang Mai (Brossard—La Prairie, NDP): Madam Speaker, the reality is that the Quebec economy has lost 45,000 jobs in the past year. The unemployment rate is increasing in Montreal and Quebec City. The small number of jobs created are mostly part-time and low paying. There is not enough work for the growing labour force.

Why refuse to face facts? Why stubbornly persist with an inaction plan that does not work?

Mrs. Shelly Glover (Parliamentary Secretary to the Minister of Finance, CPC): Madam Speaker, as we have said, more than 610,000 jobs have been created since the downturn. Our government will definitely continue to provide businesses with an environment that is conducive to job creation. The private sector created 90% of these jobs and 80% of them were full-time jobs. What are we hearing from the stakeholders? Canadian Manufacturers and Exporters confirmed in a report that reducing the tax burden leads to job creation. Therefore—

The Deputy Speaker: Order. The hon. member for Wascana.

* * *

[*English*]

PENSIONS

Hon. Ralph Goodale (Wascana, Lib.): Madam Speaker, at a time when Canadian unemployment is worse, and again worse in the last hour with the closure of the Electro-Motive plant in London, when economic growth has stalled and even turned, when household debt is at a record high with the heaviest burden falling on older people heading for retirement, namely the baby boomers, why is the government now doing what it promised explicitly and repeatedly never to do? The government is threatening the old age pensions of those future retirees. Why is the government doing this, when the OAS is already fundamentally sound?

• (1125)

Hon. Diane Finley (Minister of Human Resources and Skills Development, CPC): Madam Speaker, the hon. member has it totally wrong. What we committed to Canadians was that we would protect their pensions, and that is exactly what we are doing.

However, we know that going forward the old age security system is not sustainable. With three times the expense of what we have right now and only half as many people to pay for it, it only makes sense that we have to take action right now not just to protect the pensions of our retirees of today, but those of future generations as well. That is exactly what we are going to do.

Hon. Ralph Goodale (Wascana, Lib.): Madam Speaker, Canadians are not buying the government's doublespeak. Future seniors are deeply concerned because the Conservatives are promising to slap them in the face. Over the next 10 years, 4.5 million Canadians will retire; 92% of them will need the old age pension and 75% will have incomes below \$40,000. The scheme the Prime Minister announced in Switzerland does not make those human needs go away for those modest income seniors. It just dumps them onto provincial welfare. How is that any better?

Hon. Diane Finley (Minister of Human Resources and Skills Development, CPC): Madam Speaker, if we were to take the advice of the hon. member and do nothing, those poor seniors of the future would not have any OAS left for them. Is that what he really wants? That is what it sounds like.

That is not what we want to do. We want to ensure that all Canadians have a secure retirement in the future and that is what we are working toward. That is why we introduced the TFSA. That is why we increased the GIS for the most vulnerable seniors. Unfortunately, the hon. member across the way voted against those initiatives.

[*Translation*]

Ms. Lise St-Denis (Saint-Maurice—Champlain, Lib.): Madam Speaker, the Conservative government is not letting up in its attack on old age security, but it is swimming against the tide. Eighty-one per cent of Canadian women are against the government's proposed changes.

Considering the impact the proposed changes would have on Quebec's social assistance program, as explained yesterday by Premier Charest, will the Prime Minister tell us whether he plans to consult the provinces about this and what he thinks such measures will end up costing the provinces?

Hon. Diane Finley (Minister of Human Resources and Skills Development, CPC): Madam Speaker, as I have said repeatedly, we are working to maintain the old age security system for today's seniors and for future generations.

[*English*]

The old age security system is just not viable for the future. That is why we have to take action right now. It is the responsible thing to do. We will do it in a fair way. However, we will do it in a prudent way, so that we can support Canadians.

* * *

EMPLOYMENT INSURANCE

Ms. Jean Crowder (Nanaimo—Cowichan, NDP): Madam Speaker, yesterday, the Minister of Human Resources and Skills Development told Canadians that the real reason Service Canada cannot keep up with EI requests is that there are too many unemployed people applying for benefits.

Oral Questions

Now, it seems to me there is a solution here. Instead of letting the jobless rate rise, lower it with a job creation plan. Instead of cutting back on EI services, give Canadians the support they need.

Is the government just going to give us more excuses, or will it finally decide to act?

Hon. Diane Finley (Minister of Human Resources and Skills Development, CPC): Madam Speaker, we have done exactly that already. When we noticed there was an increase in demand during December and January, the spike season, and when the increase in demand was greater than what we had anticipated, we immediately put extra resources to help process EI claims.

We are seeing positive results from that. We are seeing the backlog come down. We are seeing Canadians get the benefits they need and deserve in a more timely manner. Our goal is to get those benefits to them when they need and deserve them.

Ms. Jean Crowder (Nanaimo—Cowichan, NDP): Madam Speaker, when will the government stop blaming unemployed people? They played by all the rules. The lack of empathy for thousands of unemployed Canadian families is stunning. This is not just about statistics, although the numbers will back me up here. This is about out-of-work Canadians being told it does not matter if they have to wait six or seven weeks just to get their EI cheques.

These are tough economic times. Why is the government making Canadian families wait?

• (1130)

Hon. Diane Finley (Minister of Human Resources and Skills Development, CPC): Madam Speaker, we are trying to get those cheques to them just as quickly as possible. We understand how difficult it is when people lose their jobs due to circumstances beyond their control. We are trying to get the EI system to go faster. We are putting more people on the job to deal with the current problem. Over the long term, we are automating the system. We encourage employers to automate their filings, because it will go faster.

The real scheme is to create jobs. That is what we are doing. We have more jobs created in the last month. In fact, thanks in part to our action plan, there are over 610,000 more net new jobs in this country than there were at the pit of the recession.

Ms. Jean Crowder (Nanaimo—Cowichan, NDP): Madam Speaker, let us just take a look at the government's track record right now. The jobless rate just climbed another notch today, after months of bad news. The government's corporate tax giveaways cannot guarantee one single job. Across this country, Conservative-approved foreign takeovers are shipping Canadian jobs overseas or south.

Canadians are finding out they cannot even rely on EI, a service they spent their whole working lives paying into.

When is the government going to reverse its losing streak?

Mrs. Shelly Glover (Parliamentary Secretary to the Minister of Finance, CPC): Madam Speaker, I am proud to be part of a government that is considered by many Canadians and by many other countries as a winner. We will continue to be in that position for years to come because of decisions by the NDP to oppose every

measure that we take to move forward on job creation and on protecting Canadians who are at risk.

In fact, I would ask the member, why did the NDP members vote over 100 times against measures that would protect Canadians, for example, against the TFSA, against the increase in GIS, and more and more and more? Let us have the NDP answer that.

* * *

JUSTICE

Mr. Robert Chisholm (Dartmouth—Cole Harbour, NDP): Madam Speaker, today, another provincial justice minister added his voice to a growing long list of people who do not want the Conservatives' prison agenda. Nunavut's justice minister says Bill C-10 would undermine the Supreme Court ruling on aboriginal justice. It would drag down the corrections system and it would rob judges of the chance to use their own discretion.

The verdict is in. The Conservatives' prison agenda will not work. When will the government admit its mistake and go back to the drawing board?

Ms. Kerry-Lynne D. Findlay (Parliamentary Secretary to the Minister of Justice, CPC): Madam Speaker, while we recognize that the administration of justice, including the courts, is a provincial and territorial responsibility, we continue to work in collaboration with our provincial and territorial partners. This is very important, to ensure a strong justice system.

We are committed to supporting successful justice programs, such as the aboriginal justice strategy that achieves real results in reducing and preventing crime in aboriginal communities. In 2008, we enhanced this program by investing \$40 million more, for a total commitment of \$85 million toward aboriginal community justice programs.

We are continuing to do what we have committed to do.

Mr. Robert Chisholm (Dartmouth—Cole Harbour, NDP): Madam Speaker, the reality is that this agenda is going to burden Canadian taxpayers. It is going to weigh down an already strained justice system. That is clear. The list of those who are complaining continues to grow: provincial leaders, lawyers' groups, justice groups and police chiefs. Canadian taxpayers are speaking out about this problem.

When is the government going to fix the bill and get the burden off Canadians?

Ms. Kerry-Lynne D. Findlay (Parliamentary Secretary to the Minister of Justice, CPC): Madam Speaker, contrary to the soft on crime approach of the NDP, we continue to stand up for victims in Canada as we always have done.

It is not correct that provinces continue to complain or to criticize what we are doing. Many of the initiatives we have taken were requested by the provinces. Justice ministers across this country, including in B.C., Manitoba and New Brunswick, have praised us for our initiatives. They are thanking us for doing exactly what they asked us to do.

We are committed to this program because it is what Canadians need and want.

* * *

[Translation]

THE ENVIRONMENT

Ms. Laurin Liu (Rivière-des-Mille-Îles, NDP): Madam Speaker, after dragging his feet for over 18 months, the minister is finally going to announce a water management strategy for the oil sands. Canadians have a very hard time trusting the Conservatives when it comes to this file. We know that water contamination has been a problem for years now, but no measures have been taken so far.

Can the government tell us if the water monitoring system will be completely independent and transparent?

• (1135)

[English]

Ms. Michelle Rempel (Parliamentary Secretary to the Minister of the Environment, CPC): Madam Speaker, as my colleague opposite continues to lobby against 500,000 jobs in Canada's energy sector, we are taking real action to protect the sustainable development of Canada's natural resources.

I would like to remind my colleague opposite of the Commissioner of the Environment and Sustainable Development's testimony on this very subject in committee. He said, "What I would say is there is now an ambitious plan, a significantly important plan for the federal government to put in place a monitoring system".

Instead of her empty rhetoric and talking points, the member should get on board.

[Translation]

Ms. Laurin Liu (Rivière-des-Mille-Îles, NDP): Madam Speaker, my hon. colleague has not done her homework. Pollution from the oil sands is expected to triple by 2035. Instead of a voluntary approach that favours friends of the government, lobbyists and large corporations, we should be imposing strict limits on the pollution caused by the oil sands in order to protect the environment and the health of Canadians.

Will the government protect the communities of millions of Canadians, or is it too busy chasing "foreign radicals"?

[English]

Ms. Michelle Rempel (Parliamentary Secretary to the Minister of the Environment, CPC): Madam Speaker, when we talk about homework my colleague opposite should stop lobbying against the Canadian energy sector.

What we are about to announce today, and I do not want to steal the minister's thunder, is a credible monitoring system where we will be working in lockstep with the provinces and with industry to come up with a world-class monitoring system. The Commissioner of the

Oral Questions

Environment and Sustainable Development said this "holds the promise of establishing a credible, robust and publicly accessible monitoring system for measuring environmental conditions and changes in environmental quality levels, as well as determining the source of changes".

We have a real plan with a real focus. The member should get on board.

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OIL AND GAS INDUSTRY

Mr. Kennedy Stewart (Burnaby—Douglas, NDP): Madam Speaker, in spite of the risks, the government blindly backs the northern gateway. It dismisses Canadians who raise real concerns about the effect on our fisheries, on our first nations and on our way of life.

Yesterday, we learned that the pipeline would also raise oil prices for Canadians, hurting the bottom line of families and businesses throughout the economy.

Why is the minister putting oil companies ahead of Canadians?

Mr. David Anderson (Parliamentary Secretary to the Minister of Natural Resources and for the Canadian Wheat Board, CPC): Madam Speaker, if members had been at committee yesterday they would have heard great testimony about the strength of the Canadian energy industry and the great future that we have ahead of us.

The Minister of the Environment has referred the northern gateway pipeline to a joint review panel. That panel will hear everyone who has an interest in speaking to it. It will make a decision in the end.

We are going to protect the environment and develop the energy industry across this country. We then expect to export our products around the world.

Mr. Kennedy Stewart (Burnaby—Douglas, NDP): Madam Speaker, the government's only energy strategy is to boost the profits of oil companies at the expense of the rest of us.

The government has sold out Canadian jobs and our environment to back the Enbridge northern gateway pipeline.

The government is so cozy with big oil that it would not surprise me if it were to take it along to China.

When the Prime Minister flies to China, is he bringing Canadians' interests or the CEO of Enbridge?

Mr. David Anderson (Parliamentary Secretary to the Minister of Natural Resources and for the Canadian Wheat Board, CPC): Madam Speaker, we need to diversify our markets to move forward in Canada's economic future. Why can the NDP members not realize that?

Mark Carney agrees. He said, "The Chinese market is a tremendous opportunity for Canada". Why can the NDP members not realize that?

Oral Questions

Jack Mintz said that getting our oil to market would result in \$131 billion for the Canadian economy. Why can the NDP members not stand behind that? Why will they not stand with us to protect Canadian jobs, protect the environment, protect the economy and let us move ahead?

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EMPLOYMENT

Mr. Rodger Cuzner (Cape Breton—Canso, Lib.): Madam Speaker, the national unemployment rate in January rose to 7.6%. Over 2,200 jobs were lost in Atlantic Canada alone. In my home province of Nova Scotia, the unemployment rate has gone up to 8.5%. Hashtag: Tories suck at job creation.

What will get worse is the massive cuts to government positions. We have seen already that the minister responsible for Service Canada has crippled her department. She is sleepwalking through a crisis. Canadians are hurting and need their money—

Some hon. members: Oh, oh!

The Deputy Speaker: Order, please. The hon. Parliamentary Secretary to the Minister of Finance.

• (1140)

Mrs. Shelly Glover (Parliamentary Secretary to the Minister of Finance, CPC): Madam Speaker, although I sympathize with all Canadians who have lost their jobs, the fact of the matter is, there was an increase of a couple of thousand jobs in this last month's report.

We do have more to do. Unfortunately, as we move forward trying to increase those job numbers and trying to create an environment so that business can create those jobs, the Liberals keep proposing things like the doubling of the CPP, increasing corporate taxes and a carbon tax. All of these things would damage our environment to allow job creation.

We will not do that. We will continue on this plan that is working for Canadians.

Mr. Rodger Cuzner (Cape Breton—Canso, Lib.): Madam Speaker, I am looking at a picture of the Prime Minister in a locomotive in London, Ontario, and he is waving. He must be waving to the 450 employees who were just let go when the plant was shut down there.

It is like Groundhog Day. The minister over there saw her shadow yesterday, so for the next six weeks we will get the same spin, the same talking points, the same drivel.

We cannot feed our families on that. Would the minister please give us something other than baloney? People are hurting and those on that bench over there do not care.

Mrs. Shelly Glover (Parliamentary Secretary to the Minister of Finance, CPC): Madam Speaker, the people of Canada elected this strong, stable, Conservative government to bring them out of that misery that unfortunately was perpetuated by a Liberal government that failed to take steps to allow us to weather a recession better than any country across the world.

Our government will continue to put forward measures, like the hiring credit for small business, that will allow us to sustain those jobs.

We do sympathize with those who have lost their jobs, but we are creating jobs. We need the Liberals to get on board to help us do that.

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GOVERNMENT COMMUNICATIONS

Hon. Geoff Regan (Halifax West, Lib.): Madam Speaker, the latest victim of the Conservatives' obsession with secrecy and their intolerance of dissent is the chief economic analyst at Statistics Canada.

He is the second senior official to quit because of the government's attempts to muzzle them.

[*Translation*]

Why are they so obsessed, to the point of hiring 1,500 spin doctors to control the message coming from the Prime Minister's Office? Why are they so determined to muzzle any dissenters and scare away government officials who play a vital role?

[*English*]

Hon. Christian Paradis (Minister of Industry and Minister of State (Agriculture), CPC): Madam Speaker, as I said yesterday regarding Statistics Canada, I understand the individual wants to seize an opportunity to work in the private sector, since the data is free.

I want to reiterate that we thank him for his years of service in the public sector.

That being said, we have been improving the system with things like the national household survey. With regard to this, the national collection response rate is now at 69.3%, well above the target of 50%.

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[*Translation*]

JUSTICE

Ms. Rosane Doré Lefebvre (Alfred-Pellan, NDP): Madam Speaker, the debate on the death penalty ended decades ago and Canadians have no interest in reopening it. What is more, before coming to power, the Prime Minister said: "The Senate is a relic of the 19th century."

Senator Boisvenu's comments prove the Prime Minister right. The most troubling thing is that Mr. Boisvenu is authorized to sign bills on behalf of Canadians. For the last time, does the government intend to reopen the debate on the death penalty or not?

[*English*]

Ms. Kerry-Lynne D. Findlay (Parliamentary Secretary to the Minister of Justice, CPC): Madam Speaker, we have said over and over again we are not reopening this debate. Senator Boisvenu is staying in place. He will continue to be a strong advocate for victims of crime.

A soft-on-crime party like the NDP should not be attacking victims of crime. The member belongs to a party that opposes tougher sentences for violent criminals. It opposed our repeal of the faint hope clause, a clause that gave first degree murderers the chance of getting early parole.

It is about time that the member for Winnipeg Centre stood in this place and apologize for his attack on a victim of violent crime—

[Translation]

Ms. Rosane Doré Lefebvre (Alfred-Pellan, NDP): Madam Speaker, does this attack indicate that this is indeed the Conservatives' intention? Honestly. Not only were the senator's comments completely inappropriate, but they constituted the abetting of suicide, which goes completely against current rehabilitation efforts.

Making inappropriate comments, seeing whether that shocks Canadians, then admitting having gone too far, but not apologizing: is that what it means to the Conservatives to be tough on crime?

• (1145)

[English]

Ms. Kerry-Lynne D. Findlay (Parliamentary Secretary to the Minister of Justice, CPC): Madam Speaker, I can think of nothing more inappropriate than personally attacking a victim of violent crime who lost his daughter to the actions of a repeat offender, who abducted, sexually assaulted and murdered a young, 27-year-old woman. There is no sympathy shown by the opposition for the context of those remarks, which the senator withdrew within hours of making them.

What is shocking is that the member for Winnipeg Centre has refused to stand in this place and apologize.

* * *

[Translation]

GOVERNMENT APPOINTMENTS

Mr. Denis Blanchette (Louis-Hébert, NDP): Madam Speaker, the Conservatives continue to make partisan appointments and have even gone so far as to break the law to do so. The Minister of Transport, Infrastructure and Communities is preparing to replace a member of the board of directors of the Quebec port authority without consulting users first, as required under the Canada Marine Act.

The port's electoral college submitted names for consideration, which the minister did not even bother to look at, choosing instead to impose his preferred candidate. Why is the minister ignoring the recommendations that were made?

Mr. Pierre Poilievre (Parliamentary Secretary to the Minister of Transport, Infrastructure and Communities and for the Federal Economic Development Agency for Southern Ontario, CPC): Madam Speaker, the normal process is now under way and an announcement will be made as soon as a decision is made.

Mr. Jamie Nicholls (Vaudreuil—Soulanges, NDP): Madam Speaker, members will remember another incident involving the Conservatives and the Port of Quebec. Three years ago, the Department of Transport modified a press release to cover up the fact that the new CEO of the Port of Quebec did not have a

university degree as the position required. We can see just how far the Conservatives are willing to go to take care of their friends.

Where is the transparency that this government has been promising since taking office six years ago?

Mr. Pierre Poilievre (Parliamentary Secretary to the Minister of Transport, Infrastructure and Communities and for the Federal Economic Development Agency for Southern Ontario, CPC): Madam Speaker, as I just said, the process must run its course. We will make an announcement as soon as there is something to announce.

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[English]

PUBLIC SAFETY

Mr. Blake Richards (Wild Rose, CPC): Madam Speaker, Canadians gave our government a strong mandate to keep our streets and communities safe. That is why we have introduced the safe streets and communities act and numerous other tough on crime reforms since 2006. However, the NDP member for Burnaby—New Westminster says that these reforms to increase the sentences of sex offenders and ensure that murderers are not eligible for early parole will cost \$19 billion and are not worth it.

Could the Minister of Public Safety please tell the House what he thinks of this shocking statement?

Hon. Vic Toews (Minister of Public Safety, CPC): Madam Speaker, the member for Burnaby—New Westminster cites a report by a left wing think tank that has been widely discredited. The number is false. Our entire tough on crime agenda is estimated to cost \$2.7 billion over five years. In fact, our costs are based on estimates of a prison population that has failed to materialize. That will mean even more savings.

The NDP's willingness to distort the facts and attempt to mislead Canadians shows how reckless the NDP is and the danger it presents to Canada's interests and Canada's victims of crime.

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[Translation]

PENSIONS

Mr. Alain Giguère (Marc-Aurèle-Fortin, NDP): Madam Speaker, the Conservatives' attack on old age security shows just how out of touch with reality the government is. After six years of mismanagement, they now want to penalize Canadians who have worked and saved their whole lives. Yesterday, the NDP moved a motion to protect old age security so that all Canadians can retire in dignity.

Will the government clarify its intentions here in the House, not in Davos? Or will the government force people to wait until they turn 67 before they can collect their retirement benefits?

Hon. Diane Finley (Minister of Human Resources and Skills Development, CPC): Madam Speaker, the NDP is the party on the attack, and they are attacking Canadians. They say that there will be cuts, which is not true. We will not stand for that.

Oral Questions

What we are trying to do—what we will do—is protect the old age security program for the current generation, of course, as well as for future generations. The program must be made viable; currently it is not. We will protect the old age security program.

* * *

• (1150)
[English]

GOVERNMENT APPOINTMENTS

Mr. Dan Harris (Scarborough Southwest, NDP): Madam Speaker, the Public Appointments Commission was supposed to be part of the Federal Accountability Act. The secretariat was created 2,114 days ago, and since then millions has been spent, but the commission never materialized.

Under the Conservatives, patronage has gone from bad to worse. Candidates with Conservative connections land plum federal appointments. Just when integrity is needed, Conservatives choose more patronage and waste millions on phantom commissions.

When will the Conservative hypocrisy stop?

Mr. Andrew Saxton (Parliamentary Secretary to the President of the Treasury Board and for Western Economic Diversification, CPC): Madam Speaker, the member opposite should know that we tried to appoint an appointments commissioner, and it was that party in the opposition that shot it down.

All appointments are done based on merit.

* * *

[Translation]

TRANSPORT

Ms. Isabelle Morin (Notre-Dame-de-Grâce—Lachine, NDP): Madam Speaker, many residents of Longueuil, and Montreal in general, take public transit across the Champlain Bridge. Yet this government still refuses to confirm its plans for that sector.

Will there be designated bus lanes? Will there be light rail? Too many questions remain unanswered. On this side of the House, we know that the future hinges on improving public transit. When will the Conservatives commit to providing the people with the services they need on the Champlain Bridge? When?

Mr. Pierre Poilievre (Parliamentary Secretary to the Minister of Transport, Infrastructure and Communities and for the Federal Economic Development Agency for Southern Ontario, CPC): Madam Speaker, the minister has already announced plans to replace the Champlain Bridge. So we are making progress. We are examining the impact on the local environment.

As for the broader question of public transit, our government had made investments and achieved results. For instance, the average age of infrastructure in Canada is coming down for the first time in 30 years. This proves that we are investing in our infrastructure and in public transit.

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ABORIGINAL AFFAIRS

Mr. Mathieu Ravnat (Pontiac, NDP): Madam Speaker, the situation in aboriginal communities under third party management

by this government is not improving. Take for example the Barriere Lake reserve, which has been under third party management for far too long. The record is shameful: no new housing since the 1980s, no secondary school on the reserve and no investment in the primary school.

When will the government end third party management, which is not working, and when will this government allow the Algonquins of Barriere Lake to take care of themselves?

[English]

Hon. John Duncan (Minister of Aboriginal Affairs and Northern Development, CPC): Madam Speaker, the situation at Barriere Lake, Lac-Barriere, is a very difficult one. I agree. It has been going on for years. We have invoked a rarely used section of the act in order to try to effect governance in that community. We will continue to do what we can in a very difficult set of circumstances and do the right thing for the people of that community.

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SEARCH AND RESCUE

Mr. Scott Andrews (Avalon, Lib.): Madam Speaker, the employees at the marine communications and traffic services centre know their jobs and the government should listen to them. However, our regional minister recently insulted them as he rubbed cake in their faces and then ran out the back door.

The Coast Guard continues to be gutted. First it was about closing the marine sub-centre. Now we find out that the government has given the order to cut key positions in marine communications and traffic services. The employees have confirmed these cuts and are very concerned that they will drastically affect their ability to keep mariners safe.

Let us be clear: these employees listen for the mayday calls. Why would the government compromise this important service?

Hon. Keith Ashfield (Minister of Fisheries and Oceans and Minister for the Atlantic Gateway, CPC): Madam Speaker, as usual the member opposite is entirely wrong. The efficiencies being gained at the sub-centre are strictly a working of the overtime situation, allowing better usage of overtime, with principles that have been used in both Victoria and Quebec for some 10 years now. We are simply nationalizing that as a policy to save money and still protect mariners.

* * *

• (1155)

SEALING INDUSTRY

Mr. Scott Simms (Bonavista—Gander—Grand Falls—Windsor, Lib.): Madam Speaker, yesterday there was this event about seals as part of Seal Day. The member for Labrador said yesterday that he was disappointed that no opposition MPs were there at the event. However, yesterday morning my office called to find out where this event was going to be and we received an email from the Minister of Fisheries and Oceans' office saying:

There is not events scheduled for today, as a sign of support we are encouraging all Members of Parliament to show their support by wearing a seal fur lapen pin....

Countries around the world are acting to ban seal products. When is the government going to get its act together?

Hon. Keith Ashfield (Minister of Fisheries and Oceans and Minister for the Atlantic Gateway, CPC): Madam Speaker, of course this government is in support of sealers, their families and the way of life of many eastern Canadians and people in the Arctic. Not only is it a way of life but it is also a food source for many people in the Arctic. It is a very important food source, high in protein and omega 3 oils. We are very happy on this side of the House to support our sealers.

* * *

VETERANS AFFAIRS

Mr. Peter Stoffer (Sackville—Eastern Shore, NDP): Madam Speaker, I remind the House that it was not military and RCMP veterans and their families who put the country into deficit. Yet the government plans to cut 1,800 jobs from the Department of Veterans Affairs, thus cutting actual services for our brave heroes in this country.

So will the government put a prophylactic barrier around the Treasury Board to stop doing to DVA what it is about to do to our pensioners and our seniors in this country?

Ms. Eve Adams (Parliamentary Secretary to the Minister of Veterans Affairs, CPC): Madam Speaker, our government has been very clear: under no circumstances are we making cuts to veterans. We are maintaining all benefits to veterans. We will ensure that veterans receive services when they need them, and we are going to look for ways to improve delivery of services to our veterans by cutting red tape.

We recognize the great work done by our officials at Veterans Affairs and we know that Charlottetown is a key component of their work. It is expected that many of the changes the member is noting will be achieved mostly as a result of employees retiring over the next five years.

[Translation]

Ms. Annick Papillon (Québec, NDP): Madam Speaker, the Conservatives plan to cut 500 jobs at Veterans Affairs, and with the transfer of Ste. Anne's Hospital to the Government of Quebec, 1,800 jobs will be lost. Great Britain and the United States have chosen not to reduce their deficits on the backs of their heroes, but that is what this government is planning on doing. Veterans are not the ones who have been mismanaging the budget for the past six years.

This government is going to cut 40% of the staff at this department and it is promising to improve services for veterans. That is totally illogical. Can someone explain to me how this is going to work?

[English]

Ms. Eve Adams (Parliamentary Secretary to the Minister of Veterans Affairs, CPC): Madam Speaker, our government will ensure that the veterans at Ste. Anne's Hospital continue to receive priority access to exceptional care and services. Under no circumstances whatsoever will our veterans' services be compromised. We will also protect the interests of the employees at Ste.

Oral Questions

Anne's Hospital, who have devoted their lives to providing exceptional care to our veterans. The transfer of Ste. Anne's Hospital aims to maintain their employment.

Unlike the NDP, Conservatives believe Quebec can run a hospital.

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THE ECONOMY

Mr. Bernard Trottier (Etobicoke—Lakeshore, CPC): Madam Speaker, with the economic recovery still fragile, Canadians know that our government remains focused on creating jobs and economic growth. Today, the Minister of Public Works and Government Services announced that another 36 companies, promoting 37 innovations, with help from the government are ready to take that next step and contribute to our future prosperity.

Can the minister tell us how this government is helping kick-start Canadian entrepreneurship?

Hon. Rona Ambrose (Minister of Public Works and Government Services and Minister for Status of Women, CPC): Madam Speaker, I am very pleased to speak to the success of our government's Canadian innovation commercialization program. Our government recognizes that innovation fuels competitiveness and productivity and, ultimately, jobs for hard-working Canadians. This program was supported by the R and D panel led by Tom Jenkins, because it is about supporting Canadian inventions, innovations and products, and getting them to the marketplace so they can succeed. This is just one more example of our government's commitment to creating jobs and economic growth.

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●(1200)

FOREIGN AFFAIRS

Hon. Mark Eyking (Sydney—Victoria, Lib.): Madam Speaker, the Conservatives are way behind in spending for peace building and democracy projects. Last year the Minister of Foreign Affairs approved 85 projects. This year the minister has approved only 23 projects and the rest are sitting on his or the Prime Minister's desk.

When the Conservatives use their partisan and ideological tactics it puts the NGOs and their staff in jeopardy. Most of all, it fails Canada's commitment to help the poor and devastated regions of the world.

The minister should stop playing with people's lives and approve these projects.

Oral Questions

Mr. Deepak Obhrai (Parliamentary Secretary to the Minister of Foreign Affairs, CPC): Madam Speaker, I would like to tell my hon. colleague that the core principle of this government is promotion of human rights and democracy, and one of them is building peacekeeping. In whatever we do this government will stand behind promotion of democracy, ensuring peace around the world.

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[Translation]

RESEARCH AND DEVELOPMENT

Mr. Guy Caron (Rimouski-Neigette—Témiscouata—Les Basques, NDP): Madam Speaker, Montreal lost more quality jobs this week with the closing of the AstraZeneca research and development centre.

We are talking about the loss of 132 jobs in a cutting-edge industry in addition to 1,000 other jobs that have disappeared in the pharmaceutical sector in Montreal alone since 2010. This is further proof that this government is unable to stimulate Canada's research and development sector.

Will the government finally acknowledge that its policies in this area are a failure and decide to take action?

Hon. Christian Paradis (Minister of Industry and Minister of State (Agriculture), CPC): Madam Speaker, obviously I empathize with the Montreal employees affected by this bad news. However, as we know, AstraZeneca's cuts to research and development activities worldwide, including in Canada unfortunately, is a business decision based on the global situation.

Nevertheless, AstraZeneca will continue its research and development activities in Canada in conjunction with our universities and other stakeholders. I would remind members that we have invested more in research and development than any other government in Canada's history, and the party opposite has always voted against these additional investments. We will continue along this path.

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[English]

PUBLIC SAFETY

Mr. Leon Benoit (Vegreville—Wainwright, CPC): Madam Speaker, Canadians are concerned about crime. That is why they gave our government a strong mandate to keep our streets and communities safe.

One of the most disturbing trends is the recent surge in child pornography. Yesterday the Ontario Provincial Police announced the arrest of over 60 individuals on various child pornography charges. Disturbingly, the police also identified over 9,000 Internet protocol addresses that were involved in the downloading and distribution of child pornography.

Could the Minister of Public Safety please comment on this situation?

Hon. Vic Toews (Minister of Public Safety, CPC): Madam Speaker, I would like to congratulate the Ontario Provincial Police for taking these dangerous individuals off our streets. Sexually exploiting our children is absolutely despicable.

As technology evolves, many criminal activities, such as the distribution of child pornography, become much easier. That is why our government will be reintroducing lawful access legislation. Rather than making things easier for child pornographers, I call on the NDP to listen to the police, listen to the provinces, and support these balanced measures that protect law-abiding Canadians and their children.

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[Translation]

SEALING INDUSTRY

Mr. Philip Toone (Gaspésie—Îles-de-la-Madeleine, NDP): Madam Speaker, this week Canadians learned on a website that Russia has now banned our seal products. This new embargo, in addition to that of the European Union, is a threat to the sealing industry. However, instead of negotiating an agreement for our fishers, the Conservatives are playing political games.

Will the Minister of Fisheries and Oceans stop playing games and open a dialogue in which stakeholders in the Canadian fishery can participate? Will he finally help them to address the major challenges they face?

[English]

Mr. Gerald Keddy (Parliamentary Secretary to the Minister of International Trade, for the Atlantic Canada Opportunities Agency and for the Atlantic Gateway, CPC): Madam Speaker, the hon. member should be paying attention to what the Minister of Fisheries and Oceans and the Minister of International Trade have been doing.

We have been working on behalf of Canadian sealers since we formed government and we will continue to do exactly that.

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OIL AND GAS INDUSTRY

Ms. Elizabeth May (Saanich—Gulf Islands, GP): Madam Speaker, in a recent *National Post* article, B.C. journalist Terry Glavin raised concerns about the extent of Chinese ownership in the oil sands. He pointed out that Sinopec, which is owned by the Communist Party of China and is the seventh largest corporation in the world, plus PetroChina and a number of others now have a \$20 billion stake in direct ownership of the oil sands. He raised this question: "Just how Sinopec became co-author of" the Prime Minister's "new foreign policy and energy strategy isn't a question any of us are supposed to be asking".

Well, I am asking. How did this happen without public debate?

● (1205)

Mr. David Anderson (Parliamentary Secretary to the Minister of Natural Resources and for the Canadian Wheat Board, CPC): Madam Speaker, the premise of the member's question is just rubbish. Our government is concentrating on what is important to Canadians, which is the environment and economic growth.

The fact is the oil sands are responsible for over 100,000 direct jobs across Canada. That number will grow to 700,000 jobs. That is how many jobs the opposition, the NDP member opposite and the Liberals say no to every time they oppose the development of the Canadian economy.

ROUTINE PROCEEDINGS

[Translation]

CERTIFICATES OF NOMINATION

Hon. Peter Van Loan (Leader of the Government in the House of Commons, CPC): Madam Speaker, pursuant to Standing Order 111.1, I have the honour to table, in both official languages, a certificate of nomination, with biographical notes, for the proposed appointment of Anne-Marie Robinson as President of the Public Service Commission. I request that the nomination be referred to the Standing Committee on Government Operations and Estimates.

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[English]

FOREIGN AFFAIRS

Mr. Deepak Obhrai (Parliamentary Secretary to the Minister of Foreign Affairs, CPC): Madam Speaker, pursuant to Standing Order 32(2), I have the honour to table, in both official languages, the regulations amending the special economic measures, Syria, regulations, as announced on January 25, 2012, as well as the regulations amending the special economic measures, Iran, regulations, as announced on January 31, 2012.

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ABORIGINAL AFFAIRS

Hon. John Duncan (Minister of Aboriginal Affairs and Northern Development, CPC): Madam Speaker, under the provisions of Standing Order 32(2), I have the honour to table, in both official languages, copies of the West Bank First Nations Self-Government Agreement annual report on implementation for the years 2008 to 2010.

Madam Speaker, under the provisions of Standing Order 32(2), I have the honour to table, in both official languages, copies of the 2009-10 annual report on the state of Inuit culture and society in the Nunavut settlement area.

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PETITIONS

THE ENVIRONMENT

Mr. Mike Allen (Tobique—Mactaquac, CPC): Madam Speaker, I appreciate the opportunity to present, on behalf of 30-some people in my riding in western New Brunswick, a petition on behalf of the Canadian interfaith league calling for collaboration, leadership and action on climate change and the importance it represents to us as a world.

• (1210)

Mr. Francis Scarpaleggia (Lac-Saint-Louis, Lib.): Madam Speaker, I have four petitions to present. The first petition calls on

Routine Proceedings

the government to create a royal commission on health and the environment. The objective would be to take stock of the studies over the years linking problems with human health to pollutants in the environment.

I have three petitions that call upon the government to take stronger action against climate change, namely to sign a binding international agreement replacing the Kyoto protocol, one that commits nations to reduce carbon emissions and set fair and clear targets to ensure that global average temperatures stay below a 2°C increase from pre-industrial levels.

The petitioners also want the government to develop a national renewable energy policy and implement climate justice by playing a constructive role in the design of the green climate fund under United Nations governance.

ASSISTED SUICIDE

Mr. Scott Reid (Lanark—Frontenac—Lennox and Addington, CPC): Madam Speaker, I have a number of petitions to present to the House today.

The first petition deals with the issue of assisted suicide. The petitioners urge Parliament not to lessen the criminal sanctions for that.

FIREARMS REGISTRY

Mr. Scott Reid (Lanark—Frontenac—Lennox and Addington, CPC): Madam Speaker, the second petition deals with the firearms registry. The page I have provided is only one of a large number.

The petitioners urge Parliament to act as expeditiously as possible in getting rid of the long gun registry.

MARRIAGE

Mr. Scott Reid (Lanark—Frontenac—Lennox and Addington, CPC): Madam Speaker, the third petition deals with the right of marriage commissioners to perform their functions and to decide which marriages they will be involved in officiating.

MISSISSIPPI LAKE MARINA

Mr. Scott Reid (Lanark—Frontenac—Lennox and Addington, CPC): Madam Speaker, the last petition is a smaller one, but it is on a local issue. It deals with a marina on Mississippi Lake and the concerns the petitioners have with regard to the way in which the marina is operating.

JUSTICE

Ms. Elizabeth May (Saanich—Gulf Islands, GP): Madam Speaker, I present two petitions today. They both deal with issues of justice and human rights.

The first petition is signed by over 165 people from British Columbia, Ontario and other parts of Canada. It deals with the troubling use of secret trial security certificates.

Government Orders

The petitioners ask the House to examine security certificates, recognizing that they imprison indefinitely on secret evidence people for whom no charges have yet been brought. They really deny them full right of appeal and deny them their charter rights. This really is offensive to all principles of the rule of law and Canadian tradition.

They call upon the House to ensure that those who are currently detained be released unless they can have charges clearly brought and that they not be deported.

The second petition also deals with justice issues. It is signed by people from British Columbia, Nova Scotia and Manitoba. It deals with the mandatory minimum sentences that are included in Bill C-10.

The petitioners urge that the government not pursue the failed policies of other jurisdictions in using mandatory minimums, knowing that every criminologist, every academic study has found that they simply do not work. They are not tough on crime; they are just stupid on crime.

THE ENVIRONMENT

Mr. Harold Albrecht (Kitchener—Conestoga, CPC): Madam Speaker, I have the honour to present a petition signed by 35 petitioners from the riding of Kitchener—Conestoga and area.

The petitioners call upon Parliament to collaborate in providing leadership and action on climate change.

CANADIAN BROADCASTING CORPORATION

Mr. Scott Simms (Bonavista—Gander—Grand Falls—Windsor, Lib.): Madam Speaker, the vast majority of signatures on this petition are from citizens in Calgary, Alberta regarding the Canadian Broadcasting Corporation, CBC/ Radio-Canada.

The petitioners draw the attention of the House to the fact that CBC is a national public broadcaster and that Radio-Canada plays an important role in reflecting Canada and its regions. There are several points in the petition, but one of the points is about the role it plays in the regions across the country from coast to coast to coast.

The petitioners call upon the Government of Canada to maintain stable, predictable, long-term core funding to the public broadcaster, CBC/Radio-Canada, in support of its unique and crucial role.

●(1215)

POVERTY

Mr. Blake Richards (Wild Rose, CPC): Madam Speaker, I would like to present a petition signed by 28 residents of Canmore in my riding of Wild Rose.

The petitioners call upon Parliament to ensure the swift passage of Bill C-233, an act to eliminate poverty in Canada.

* * *

QUESTIONS PASSED AS ORDERS FOR RETURNS

Mr. Tom Lukiwski (Parliamentary Secretary to the Leader of the Government in the House of Commons, CPC): Madam Speaker, if revised responses to Questions Nos. 342 and 387, originally tabled on January 30, could be made orders for returns, these returns would be tabled immediately.

The Deputy Speaker: Is that agreed?

Some hon. members: Agreed.

[Text]

Question No. 342—**Hon. Gerry Byrne:**

Since January 1, 2010, for each Minister, Minister of State and Parliamentary Secretary, how many times did he or she travel by government-owned or leased aircraft inside or outside of Canada, and for each trip: (a) what was the departure point and date; (b) what was the arrival point and date; (c) what type of aircraft was used; (d) who owned each aircraft; (e) who accompanied the Minister; (f) what was the purpose of the trip; (g) what is the source of funds and budget that was used to pay for each trip; (h) what was the total cost; and (i) what was the menu for in-flight meals made available to the Minister or other travelers?

(Return tabled)

Question No. 387—**Hon. Wayne Easter:**

With regard to the Department of National Defence, since August 14, 2007: (a) how many times has the Minister of National Defence used military equipment for travel; (b) what type of equipment was used; (c) what is the detailed list of each trip; (d) what was the destination of each trip; and (e) what was the cost of each trip?

(Return tabled)

[English]

Mr. Tom Lukiwski: Madam Speaker, I ask that the remaining questions be allowed to stand.

The Deputy Speaker: Is that agreed?

Some hon. members: Agreed.

GOVERNMENT ORDERS

[Translation]

FINANCIAL SYSTEM REVIEW ACT

The House resumed consideration of the motion that Bill S-5, An Act to amend the law governing financial institutions and to provide for related and consequential matters, be read the second time and referred to a committee.

Mr. Massimo Pacetti (Saint-Léonard—Saint-Michel, Lib.): Madam Speaker, before beginning, I seek unanimous consent to split my time with the member for Wascana.

I have the honour to rise in the House to debate Bill S-5, An Act to amend the law governing financial institutions and to provide for related and consequential matters. On the surface, this bill does not seem particularly controversial to me. However, as usual, the Conservative government's way of doing things, its approach and its attitude leave much to be desired. Once again, the government has introduced a bill that it says must be passed immediately. In other words, this government sees no need to consult Canadians or experts. The government would probably tell people that, since it is in power, it can make any decision it likes. It does not matter what anyone else thinks; this bill must be passed right away.

Government Orders

We have known since April 2007 that this act would have to be reviewed. Despite having five years to work on it, the government appears to have been taken completely by surprise. Now it is in a big hurry to get this bill passed in just two months. This bill has to be passed by April 20 because the Bank Act has to be reviewed every five years. Today is February 3.

This government does not even have enough respect for Parliament, the Standing Committee on Finance or the institutions that will be directly and indirectly affected by this review to have introduced this bill with sufficient time to—

The Deputy Speaker: Order. I apologize for interrupting the hon. member, but I just realized that he sought unanimous consent to share his time. I would like to put that to the House.

[*English*]

The hon. member has asked for unanimous consent to share his time. Does the House give its consent?

Some hon. members: Agreed.

[*Translation*]

The Deputy Speaker: The hon. member for Saint-Léonard—Saint-Michel.

Mr. Massimo Pacetti: Madam Speaker, I was trying to save time. I thought I had received unanimous consent.

On the surface, this bill does not seem to have any major points of contention, as I have already said, but we cannot assume that everyone sees it that way. Financial institutions are a pillar of our economy and have to be treated with more respect. Allowing the Minister of Finance to have veto power over the acquisition of foreign entities by Canadian banks is something that should be analyzed further. The government tells us that this is to allow us to prevent crises like the one in 2008, but is this really necessary? No Canadian bank had problems similar to the ones experienced by the American or European banks and there is nothing to suggest that this could happen in the near future.

Why are the Conservatives imposing this condition in the bill? Do they have a hidden agenda? We do not know. Do they have any studies to support the fact that this necessary? Why do they not leave this responsibility to the real professionals? Representatives from the Office of the Superintendent of Financial Institutions, who have always done excellent work, would be better qualified for this responsibility. Perhaps we are giving this veto power to the minister simply because the Prime Minister, as we all know, always likes to be in control of everything.

All these questions make us realize one thing: the Conservatives do not like studies. They believe they have the answers to all the problems and they pass legislation without any consultation or debate. In 1995, former finance minister Paul Martin introduced the Bank Act and saw it passed. That legislation was not sloppy or passed at the last minute. We spent a year preparing it before passing it. The Liberal government at the time held many consultations and put a committee in charge of the matter. Public consultations were held, and the Liberals listened to expert advice in order to ensure that the legislation was drafted properly.

The Liberal government of the day had a majority, as the Conservatives do today. Yet it did not impose legislation at the last minute or limit debate; instead, it listened to what parliamentarians and all Canadians had to say. This Liberal legislation saved our banks from the financial collapse of 2008. Now, we have barely two months to pass this bill. The problem is that parliamentarians are not necessarily experts in banking. We use banking services, but we are not experts. Consultations with people in the industry are needed, for instance, with people who receive and provide services, managers and others. And that takes time.

As I said earlier, is it really necessary to give the finance minister more power? Would another person or institution have been in a better position to make these decisions? Is there really a problem?

Since we are taking the time to tackle the question of banks, are there other aspects that we should also focus on, as we heard this morning? Is this the best solution for the problem? These are some of the basic questions that could have been answered with an in-depth study. The last time we reviewed the legislation on financial institutions, in 2006 and 2007, I was chair of the Standing Committee on Finance and we examined Bill C-37. Thanks to the hard work of the Liberal members on the committee, we led consultations that lasted over three months. That diligent work allowed us to find several flaws in the Conservative bill. It is hard to do the same work today.

As I said earlier, the main problem with this bill is not so much its content as the uncertainty surrounding its review, given that the government does not intend to consult the players involved. This problem could have easily been avoided had the government introduced this bill in October rather than in February since, I repeat, the bill must be passed before April 20. The House of Commons simply does not have the time to seriously consider this bill. Even in the Senate, Senator Hervieux-Payette stated that they simply did not have time to thoroughly examine the issue.

• (1220)

What were the Conservatives thinking when they introduced this bill in the Senate on November 23, 2011? The bill was read for the second time on December 6, 2011, just before the long Christmas break. Today, it is February 3 and the government is only now presenting the bill for second reading. Rather than wasting their time abolishing the firearms registry and rushing to pass regressive legislation to imprison our youth, why did the Conservatives not begin seriously reviewing the Bank Act? This is an urgent situation that needs to be resolved because, as I mentioned, the act must be revised before April 20. This should have been a priority but the Conservatives would rather invent threats than take care of real problems.

Another problematic aspect of this bill is the fact that the changes to this legislation would allow a foreign government to own shares in a Canadian bank and thus have voting rights. How does this help Canadian banks? We do not know. Taxpayers who have pension plans with banks do not even have the right to vote, so why should a foreign government? What will the effects of this be? I doubt that we will have an answer before this reformed legislation is passed because we do not have enough time to consider the consequences.

Government Orders

In summary, I am not against this bill but there are still some unresolved issues because this government took its time and did not adequately plan for this review of the Bank Act. A competent government, like the one that existed when the Liberals were in power, would have conducted many studies and allowed parliamentarians to carefully consider this bill. Now, there is not enough time and we will not know all the effects this bill will have until after it is passed.

• (1225)

Mr. Alain Giguère (Marc-Aurèle-Fortin, NDP): Madam Speaker, after listening to the speech by the Liberal Party member and my friend, I believe that we do not live on the same planet. The problems in the financial sector did not start with the Conservative Party, far from it.

Could you explain why, when you were in power, you did not regulate the quality of services provided to consumers by the financial sector with respect to credit cards, interest rates and holds preventing people from cashing their cheques right away? You were very critical of the Conservatives but, when you were in power, you did not take action and you did nothing to protect consumers and people who had mortgages with exorbitant interest rates.

The Deputy Speaker: I would remind all members that they must direct their comments to the Speaker.

The hon. member for Saint-Léonard-Saint-Michel.

Mr. Massimo Pacetti: Madam Speaker, I thank the member for his question and I welcome him to this country.

As in other areas, matters that affect consumers are usually a provincial responsibility. But I will not use that excuse.

The banking sector is evolving. We had the courage to make changes and introduce regulations. In addition, we introduced into the bill a provision requiring the legislation to be reviewed every five years. Every time a change is made to tighten up the financial sector, new products become available. The financial sector is evolving and that is quite acceptable. Yes, there are always problems. That is why we are prepared to undertake consultations. We have amended the legislation every time the opportunity has presented itself.

I would like to correct the hon. member. He said that we did nothing for consumers. We established the Financial Consumer Agency of Canada, which accepts complaints. The sector is always evolving and I hope that we can solve the credit card problem.

[*English*]

Hon. Ralph Goodale (Wascana, Lib.): Madam Speaker, the strength of the banking and financial system in Canada is that its legal framework is perpetually sunsetted every five years. It has to be re-enacted or it expires. Some might think this is a source of uncertainty or weakness, but the opposite is really true. By requiring Parliament to re-examine Canada's banking laws every five years, we are forced to pay attention and to keep them strong and up to date.

Bill S-5 is a product of this five-year review process. It certainly has the questions that have just been referred to by my colleague, but hopefully Parliament will be able to address those questions in a satisfactory manner in the time that remains before the bill needs to

be passed. It has to be enacted before April 20, 2012, to keep our whole system intact.

In that sense, this proposed legislation is rather routine. It renews and extends Canada's basic financial laws for another five years. That is important, but beyond that, Bill S-5, quite frankly, is not very ambitious.

It does not, for example, address the chronic problem that small businesses have in getting fairness from the big banks on their debit and credit card arrangements. It does not address the problem that will soon arise from another piece of legislation that was before the House this week, and that is the bill creating the new pooled registered pension plans.

Experience in other countries has demonstrated that a key issue will be the management fees and the other charges enacted by big financial institutions to operate these new pension plans.

A report from Australia shows that its PRPP system generated handsome profits for banks and insurance companies, but the average pensioner would actually have been better off simply buying a government bond.

There is nothing in legislation from the government to ensure a level of return on PRPPs equivalent to the extraordinary performance of the Canada pension plan, or to prevent fee gouging by the banks, insurance companies and other companies that run these new plans. Bill S-5 is probably most noteworthy for what it does not do.

The last significant work on the overall framework governing our financial sector was undertaken some 15 years ago by the Task Force on the Future of the Canadian Financial Services Sector. It was chaired for Canada by an eminent Saskatchewanian, Mr. Harold MacKay. His report was a powerful piece of work. He laid out those principles and values that have given this country the strongest financial services sector in the world.

The current Prime Minister likes to travel the world bragging about the success of Canadian banks and financial institutions. He did so in his recent alpine speech to the rich and famous in Davos, Switzerland. Before he launched his attack on low and middle income future seniors, he spent some time taking credit for the strength of Canadian banks as well as for the Canada pension plan.

There is more than a little irony here; some would say hypocrisy. In the mid-1990s, when Mr. MacKay was doing his work, there was huge pressure on the Liberal government of the day to go in the opposite direction. The big banks and the political right in Canada, including the predecessors of the Conservative government, were pushing hard for what they called a more American-like system. They wanted weaker prudential standards. They wanted less regulatory oversight. They wanted big banks to merge, so the biggest five or six could become the big two or three, and they could better take on the American competition, like Lehman Brothers, for example. That was their Conservative line back then.

All that right-wing advice turned out to be really bad advice. Lehman Brothers and other U.S. banks have gone the way of the dodo bird, and Canadian banks have turned out to be the most successful and the most respected.

• (1230)

In opposition back in the 1990s, the current Prime Minister and his Reform-Alliance colleagues also gave very bad advice about pensions. They went on the attack against the CPP, the Canada pension plan. They called it a huge boondoggle. They called it a big, European-style socialist welfare scheme. They said it should be scrapped altogether, that Canadians should just fend for themselves with private savings. The rich, of course, would do very well under a scheme like that, and as for all the rest, well, who cares. That was the right-wing line back in the 1990s.

We can hear echoes of that sort of thing today in the current debate about old age security and the old age pension. Never mind that 75% of those who receive the old age pension have incomes below \$40,000. Never mind that many are elderly widows living alone. Never mind that without the old age pension, poverty among seniors would rise by as much as one-third. "Never mind all that", the right-wingers say, "just cut them back and let provincial welfare programs pick up the slack".

There is only one taxpayer, federal or provincial. Cutting down the OAS would not make the human needs go away. It would just download the burden onto the provinces, like health care downloading and prison cost downloading. It is false economy. That is true today, just as it was 10 or 15 years ago, when the current Prime Minister and his colleagues attacked the CPP.

He went to Davos and bragged about how the CPP is so actuarially sound, which it is, but no thanks to him. It was refurbished for the future despite the Conservatives, not because of them. The CPP has a superlative investment and return record and the plan is assured for at least another 75 years.

Once in government, the incompetence of the party across the way has continued. The Conservatives increased federal spending by three times the rate of inflation. They eliminated contingency reserves and prudence factors from federal budget making and they put Canada back into deficit again, all before there was any recession, not because of the recession, but before it. Then during the recession they dug their deficit hole deeper and deeper, \$50 billion or more per year, with no coherent rules or objectives. Millions of dollars were siphoned into useless pork-barrel projects like the G8 and G20 fiasco, with all its fake lakes, ornamental gazebos, and sidewalks to nowhere. The Auditor General called it unprecedented and very wrong.

Now, while earmarking billions to be squandered on bigger jails and wildly expensive fighter jets, the Prime Minister says his government can no longer afford pillars of Canadian life like universal health care and old age pensions for middle- and low-income seniors.

The fiscal pressure on the Conservatives is entirely self-concocted and they are rather happy about that. I can hear them chuckling across the way right now. They want an excuse to pull away from medicare and pensions, and they really could care less who suffers.

Government Orders

It is important to keep Bill S-5 in context. It will be passed before April 20 to maintain Canada's banking success. However, for so many Canadians beyond the big banks the story is not very rosy. Economic growth stalled in October; it turned negative in November. Household debt is at an all-time record high, at 153% of disposable income. Unemployment went up again last month and it worsened again just today, with another 450 jobs lost at the Electro-Motive plant in London.

Strong banks are a must, but they are certainly not all by themselves sufficient to achieve a strong, successful country overall with growing and shared prosperity for all Canadians. It is that last element that the government seems to care very little about. It does not care if growth is sustainable. It certainly does not care if it is shared.

We will continue to battle the Conservatives on that fundamental principle: prosperity. We have proven we know the formula for making the economy grow. We did that through 12 very successful years of economic prosperity in this country. We also must work together on the sharing and the sustainability of that prosperity.

• (1235)

Mr. Paul Calandra (Parliamentary Secretary to the Minister of Canadian Heritage, CPC): Madam Speaker, I listened to the hon. member's speech. I noticed that he did not seem to gather much support from his Liberal colleagues for his words. However, it is true that when the Liberals were in government, they did download quite a bit onto the provinces. That is how they balanced their budget.

He talked about health care. He might have been the then finance minister who cut \$25 billion from the health and social transfers to the provinces unilaterally, as well as from students and seniors. The Liberals took the money that was destined for people who were unemployed and put it into general revenue. Those people had contributed to the employment insurance program. That member, who was probably the then minister of finance, stole that money from the workers and used it for other means.

As well, there was the sponsorship scandal. The Liberals actually stole money from Canadian taxpayers to help them win elections. Yet they get up in the House and pretend to care about Canadians, when the history of that party and that individual as finance minister is just the opposite. It is one of deceit and not caring about Canadians, seniors or people who are unemployed.

• (1240)

Hon. Ralph Goodale: Madam Speaker, the hon. gentleman's comments are in fact laughable. The Conservative Party has a very selective memory about history.

The approach that our government took with respect to EI—

Mr. Royal Galipeau: Where is the \$40 million?

Government Orders

The Deputy Speaker: Order, please. I would like the hon. members to respect the time that the hon. member has to speak. When there is time for more questions other members can raise them. However, for now the hon. member for Wascana has the floor.

Hon. Ralph Goodale: Madam Speaker, it is obvious that the truth aggravates the government across the way, but we will keep working on it nonetheless.

With respect to the financing of EI, during the period of time that the hon. gentleman referred to in his question, the structure was examined by the Auditor General of Canada. She recommended a certain approach to the management of those funds. We implemented that approach as recommended by the Auditor General of Canada. I will take her advice over the government's advice any day of the week.

As far as reinvestment in health care is concerned, the fact is I had the pleasure of negotiating the 10-year health care accord with the prime minister of the day, the Right Hon. Paul Martin, with the 10 provinces and the territories. It was agreed to unanimously. We invested \$41 billion over 10 years, to which the government has not added one penny.

Mr. Kennedy Stewart (Burnaby—Douglas, NDP): Madam Speaker, on a number of occasions I have taken the opportunity to ask the government about a statistic that is frequently reported by the U.S. federal reserve. It regards the natural rate of unemployment.

Former prime minister Paul Martin used to quote a number of around 7% as a natural rate of unemployment. I wonder if perhaps I could get an answer from the member about what he believes the natural rate of unemployment would be. It does seem directly related to the bill we are debating.

Hon. Ralph Goodale: Madam Speaker, the definition of that term depends on a number of the factors used to consider what is natural or unnatural. In the United States I believe that number is guesstimated to be in the neighbourhood of 4%. In Canada it would be somewhat higher.

Since the time that Mr. Martin was the minister of finance, 10 or 15 years ago, I suspect that the number has come down a bit below the 7% figure. The most profound influence on that calculation today is the aging of the baby boomer generation. It may well be, before the 7% moderates very much, that we will have to get past the retirement rate of the baby boomers, which is a very significant economic factor.

Mr. John Carmichael (Don Valley West, CPC): Madam Speaker, I am thankful for the opportunity to speak to Bill S-5, Financial System Review Act. Bill S-5 is important legislation because it provides a framework to regulate financial products and services, helping to ensure the continued safety and security of our financial system that Canadians and their families depend on every day.

Before continuing, by way of background, I would note for the benefit of the House that today's legislation is the result of a mandated review. In Canada financial sector legislation is subject to a full review on a five-year cycle to ensure the stability of the sector, with the latest review completed in 2007.

The current review began with a public and open consultation process in September 2010, when all Canadians were invited to share their views on how to improve and strengthen our financial system. This practice sets Canada apart from almost every other country in the world and ensures that laws and regulations by which our financial systems are governed remain the safest and most secure anywhere.

As a recent *Ottawa Citizen* editorial proclaimed:

—our banking and financial system is the envy of the world. While the great money edifices of countries such as the U.S., Britain and Switzerland cracked at the beginning of the recession, Canadian banks stood firm.

Listen to what *Forbes* magazine stated:

—Canada has avoided many of the problems that currently bedevil the U.S.—mountains of public debt, a banking system in crisis...With no bailouts, it is the soundest [financial] system in the world, marked by a steady and responsible continuation of lending and profits.

Indeed, for the fourth year in a row, the World Economic Forum recently rated Canada's banking system the best in the world. Only days ago, an independent global organization, known as the Financial Stability Board, praised Canada's financial system, calling it a model for all countries. The Financial Stability Board stated:

The strength of the economy and of the financial system at the onset of the crisis meant that no Canadian financial institution failed or required government support in the form of a capital injection or debt guarantees.

As the past few years have shown, international praise for our system is well-founded. While the global financial crisis resulted in nearly \$2 trillion in losses for banks and insurance companies, Canada's banks stood solid, bolstered by sound risk management and supported by an effective regulatory and supervisory framework. In fact, Canada was the only country in the G7 that did not have to bail out its major banks with taxpayer money in the aftermath of the 2008 financial crisis.

I neglected to announce that I am splitting my time today with the member for Etobicoke—Lakeshore.

This Canadian resilience matters. A strong financial sector plays a fundamental role in supporting a strong economy, and not just in times of crisis. Families, workers, retirees and pensioners count on it for the security and growth of their deposits and investments and to maintain the standard of living that they worked hard to build. Consumers rely on it for competitive financial products to keep their mortgages and other household financing affordable. Businesses, large and small, also depend on it for access to competitive financing to allow them to invest and grow.

The financial crisis highlighted the importance of evaluating the overall size of financial institutions, their global linkages and the impact of these factors on the best interests of Canada's financial system.

Government Orders

●(1245)

The crisis also resulted in extensive changes in the regulatory framework, which continues to ensure that Canada is home to one of the safest and soundest financial sectors anywhere in the world. The financial system review act would build on these reforms and fine-tune the efficiency and effectiveness of this framework. It would improve the ability of regulators to share information efficiently with their international counterparts. This would help to fulfill our G20 commitments at a time when financial institutions increasingly operate on a global scale and would ensure effective supervision and regulation across borders.

The bill also recognizes the implications of global reform on Canadian banks. Since 2001, Canadian banks and their holdings have grown significantly. The new Basel III capital standards in 2013 will further increase capital levels. Based on projections until 2017, the threshold defining a large bank will be raised to maintain the current policy. Today's bill would increase the large bank ownership threshold from \$8 billion to \$12 billion.

Bill S-5 would also strengthen consumer protection for the financial sector, most notably by enhancing the supervisory powers of the Financial Consumer Agency of Canada also known as the FCAC. The agency is mandated to ensure that federally regulated financial institutions adhere to the consumer provisions of the legislation governing financial institutions and their public commitments. FCAC is also the government's lead agency on financial education and literacy and has moved forward with an array of excellent initiatives in recent years.

The agency has developed innovative tools to help Canadians plan their financial future, like a mortgage calculator that quickly determines payments as well as the potential savings which can be realized by paying early. It also publishes valuable information online to help consumers choose credit card and banking packages best suited to their own needs.

Bill S-5 also proposes to increase the maximum fine that can be levied by the agency for consumer protection violations to better protect Canadians.

Finally, the financial system review act would build on this government's ongoing actions to cut red tape by proposing to reduce the administrative burden on financial institutions and increase regulatory flexibility. This includes eliminating duplicative disclosure requirements and allowing limited testimonial immunity for federal officials to enhance operational efficiencies. These measures would contribute to a well-functioning financial system that meets the needs of Canadians and supports our future economic prosperity.

Today's legislation is important because it concerns one of the key foundations of the global economy. Canada's financial sector plays a pivotal role in fostering financial stability in safeguarding the savings of Canadians and in fuelling the economic growth that is essential to our standard of living.

We also recognize that Canada's financial sector is a critical component of the Canadian economy, employing over three-quarters of a million Canadians in well-paying jobs. What is more, the sector represents about 7% of Canada's GDP.

As the Canadian Life and Health Insurance Association declared during the Senate's consideration of this important legislation, “prompt passage of the bill will ensure the legislative stability and continuity that are so important to the financial services sector”. Updates to the financial legislative framework will continue to ensure that Canada's financial institutions operate in a competitive, efficient and stable environment and will help Canada maintain its well-earned reputation as a global leader in financial services.

●(1250)

[*Translation*]

Mrs. Anne-Marie Day (Charlesbourg—Haute-Saint-Charles, NDP): Mr. Speaker, we know that our financial system weathered the last crisis, at least people here did not lose their homes, as was the case south of the border. We also know that our savings are secure and even protected. It is great that families can count on a banking system that protects small investors. For example, we know that if a bank is in trouble, the CDIC protects our investments up to \$50,000. That is great.

We on this side of the House—and I am directing the question to the hon. member—are wondering why not take this further. In our election platform, the NDP calls for a limit on credit cards. Why not include that sort of thing in order to help families even more?

[*English*]

Mr. John Carmichael: Mr. Speaker, at the root of today's discussion and debate is the foundational principle that Canada's banking system and financial institutions are the strongest in the world, as recognized by those I identified in my presentation.

Earlier today in debate the parliamentary secretary was asked whether there would be an opportunity when the bill got committee for members to bring recommendations on consumer protection and to deal with issues such as credit cards and the like. She responded at that time that that was the case and she encouraged open debate and discussion on ways we might strengthen what is already a very good system.

●(1255)

Ms. Michelle Rempel (Parliamentary Secretary to the Minister of the Environment, CPC): Mr. Speaker, I am pleased to hear my colleague talk about the bill because it recognizes the fact that Canada does have one of the soundest banking systems in the world. This has been recognized by the World Economic Forum for four years in a row.

Government Orders

What we often hear from our colleagues opposite is that they want to raise taxes on job-creating companies. Our government has implemented a low tax plan to create jobs and economic growth, but also to ensure that we have a sound financial system. I am hoping my colleague opposite could tell us a bit more about how the bill enhances the work our government has done to ensure a sound financial system.

Mr. John Carmichael: Mr. Speaker, foundational to everything we do as a government is job creation and economic growth. At the root of that is certainly our financial system, one of the strongest in the world, as we heard today, and it will continue to be.

With this debate we expect to take the bill forward for fine tuning and take what is already a very strong financial system, with good governance and good regulations, and make it even stronger.

Mr. Bernard Trotter (Etobicoke—Lakeshore, CPC): Mr. Speaker, thank you for the opportunity to contribute at second reading of Bill S-5, the Financial System Review Act.

[*Translation*]

This bill is important because it seeks to regulate one of the most important sectors in the country: financial services.

[*English*]

Today's act is significant because it regulates one of the most important sectors of the Canadian economy, financial services. In fact, this sector is a key foundation our economy depends on. It is also a cornerstone of the economy of the city I represent in Parliament, Toronto.

The act would also help ensure that Canada's financial system remains strong and secure, a system that has been made a model for countries all over the world in a period of global economic turmoil. In fact, for four consecutive years Canadian banks have been ranked the soundest in the world by the independent World Economic Forum. This has been further acknowledged by other independent observers, both in Canada and internationally.

Here is what a few are saying. Noted *Toronto Sun* columnist Peter Worthington has said:

Canada's banking system is now widely recognized as arguably the world's best. No Canadians fear for their deposits as many Americans do.

The influential *Economist* magazine has proclaimed:

CANADA has had an easier time than most during the recent global recession, in part because of a conservative and well-regulated banking system.

Finally, U.K. Prime Minister, David Cameron, has praised our system in this very House:

In the last few years, Canada has got every major decision right. Look at the facts. Not a single Canadian bank fell or faltered during the global banking crisis. Canada got to grips with its deficit and was running surpluses and paying down the debt before the recession, fixing the roof while the sun was still shining. Your economic leadership has helped the Canadian economy to weather the global storms far better than many of your international competitors.

On a broader scale, the financial services sector plays a significant part in the daily lives of Canadians, from a child making his or her first deposit in a bank account to a young family taking on a mortgage to buy their first house. Businesses in my riding of Etobicoke—Lakeshore rely on the liquidity of Canada's banking

system to finance their day to day operations and their expansion plans.

Beyond relying on the financial services industry for everyday products and services, its businesses are an important economic driver. As my colleague mentioned earlier, it employs over 750,000 Canadians in well-paying jobs. Moreover, the sector represents about 7% of Canada's overall GDP.

Finally, Canada's banks are playing an increasingly large role on the world stage via their expansion in the United States, Central and South America, and in other emerging markets.

● (1300)

[*Translation*]

Accordingly, there is no doubt about the importance of ensuring that the legislative governance of this critical sector is effective and current.

[*English*]

Accordingly, today's act supports the ongoing stability of Canada's financial sector, fine-tunes consumer protection provisions and adjusts the regulatory framework to better reflect new economic developments.

Specifically, today's act includes measures to update legislation to promote financial stability and ensure that Canada's financial institutions continue to operate in a competitive, efficient and stable environment; adjust the consumer protection framework, including enhancing the supervisory powers of the Financial Consumer Agency of Canada; and improve efficiency by reducing the administrative burden on financial institutions and by adding regulatory flexibility.

Furthermore, the act will improve the ability of regulators to share information efficiently with their international counterparts; change the priority status of segregated fund policies in insolvency situations to facilitate timely transfer; clarify that Canadians, including bank customers, are able to cash government cheques under \$1,500 free of charge at any bank in Canada; promote competition and innovation by enabling co-operative credit associations to provide technology services to a broader market; and reduce the administrative burden for federally regulated insurance companies offering adjustable policies in foreign jurisdictions by removing duplicative disclosure requirements.

I will quickly expand on a few of these points.

[*Translation*]

Effective and competitive financial institutions are essential for creating an environment favouring savings and investments in Canada and for improving our standard of living.

Government Orders

[English]

The regular review of the financial sector statutes allows the government to amend the framework as necessary so that financial sector legislation and regulations continue to be effective and efficient. Indeed, today's act is mandatory legislation. The government has a long established practice of reviewing the statutes governing federally regulated financial institutions every five years to maintain the safety and soundness of the sector for Canadians.

For the information of the House, the latest legislative review and subsequent legislation were completed in the 39th Parliament through Bill C-37. The present five-year review began in September 2010 when the finance minister launched an open consultation process with Canadians on how to improve our financial system. The financial system review act addresses a number of key areas that were identified in the review and consultation process to achieve increased legislative and regulatory efficiency.

Currently, financial institution statutes have a built-in sunset clause that causes them to lapse five years after they come into force. The proposed common sense amendments in Bill S-5 modify the statutes to lengthen the automatic extension period of the sunset date, triggered by the dissolution of Parliament, from three months to six months. This will allow greater flexibility and more security for consumers and Canadian institutions.

We all know that consumers have the ability to manage their finances. In properly managing financial affairs, we know that knowledge is critical. That is why the government is moving forward to implement the recommendations of the task force on financial literacy aimed at improving financial literacy for all Canadians.

At the same time, the government is responding to concerns about the terms and conditions associated with network branded pre-paid cards by developing measures to enhance the consumer protection framework.

Changes in today's legislation fine-tune the consumer protection framework and enhances the supervisory power of the Financial Consumer Agency of Canada by confirming that all Canadians are able to cash government cheques in amounts of less than \$1,500 free of charge at any bank in Canada; and increasing the maximum penalty for violation of a consumer provision, consistent with penalties for other violations under financial institution statutes. These are all important measures that will protect consumers when dealing with financial institutions.

As members know, the rate of change in the financial services sector has only increased in recent years. Another objective of today's act is to allow financial institutions to respond to change by allowing them to better adapt to new developments in the industry. In other words, financial institutions must be able to effectively respond to developing trends such as globalization, convergence, consolidation and technological innovation.

To summarize, the measures proposed in the financial system review act would reinforce stability in the financial sector, fine-tune the consumer protection framework and adjust the regulatory framework to new developments.

Renewing Canadian financial institution legislation on a regular basis has resulted in a robust and effective financial system that is aligned with and more responsive to developments in the financial markets and the broader economy. Today's act provides framework that would benefit all participants in the financial services sector, financial institutions as well as all Canadians. It maintains the longstanding practice of ensuring regular reviews of the regulatory framework for financial institutions, a unique practice that sets Canada apart from almost every other country in the world.

Therefore, I urge all members to support the proposed financial system review act.

• (1305)

[Translation]

Mr. Hoang Mai (Brossard—La Prairie, NDP): Madam Speaker, I want to thank the member opposite for his presentation.

As he said, this bill affects many Canadians and an entire industry. I would like to know why, in his opinion, such an important bill was introduced in the upper chamber instead of here, in the House of Commons. That would have shown the type of respect such an important bill deserves.

Mr. Bernard Trottier: Madam Speaker, I thank my colleague opposite for the question.

As the member knows, in our Parliament, bills can be introduced in either chamber. The Senate committee responsible for examining the financial system and its regulations studied this bill thoroughly. One of the Senate's mandates is to propose and analyze such bills. It began the process in 2010 and we are very pleased with the excellent job it did. That is why we are proposing that the bill be enacted.

[English]

Hon. Lynne Yelich (Minister of State (Western Economic Diversification), CPC): Madam Speaker, the member referred to the financial literacy bill that was brought forward by the member for Edmonton—Leduc. For the benefit of those listening to the debate, I would like the member to expand on the bill to emphasize how important it is and what its mandate is.

Mr. Bernard Trottier: Madam Speaker, financial literacy is one of those key foundational elements to having a successful life in this country, along with health and civics. We really believe that all Canadians should have strong financial literacy so that they can be successful in their lives, not just taking care of their own financial future but also those of their families, and sharing that financial knowledge with their friends and becoming literate to function effectively in today's society.

Therefore, we proposed legislation to increase financial literacy. We are working with educational practitioners as well as financial institutions to make sure that this kind of program is expanded throughout the country.

[Translation]

Mr. Hoang Mai: Madam Speaker, I would like to continue along the same lines.

Government Orders

When it comes to studying such an important bill—the upper chamber studied it for three weeks—they missed an important opportunity to examine the fundamentals of the banking system and financial institutions. Several aspects were studied, particularly technical aspects, but much more could have been done to protect consumers, as my colleague mentioned. Why were further steps not taken to protect consumers?

Mr. Bernard Trottier: Madam Speaker, I thank my colleague for the question.

This bill has a rather specific mandate: to examine measures related to financial products. However, some financial products are not regulated by this bill. Therefore, they are not part of this bill's core mandate.

[*English*]

Ms. Kellie Leitch (Parliamentary Secretary to the Minister of Human Resources and Skills Development and to the Minister of Labour, CPC): Madam Speaker, as we know, the financial institutions in our country have been the rock bed ensuring that Canada has a sound, stable economy, especially through these tough economic times.

Could my colleague from Etobicoke—Lakeshore expand on his previous comments on the need for this bill to be brought forward at this point in time, both its mandatory component and its timing implications?

• (1310)

Mr. Bernard Trottier: Madam Speaker, it is really important right now that we have a very stable financial system to ensure there is liquidity. Many companies are in precarious situations when it comes to growing their businesses and plans. Also, consumers need to have financial institutions they can rely on when it comes to their mortgages.

We have not had the problem that the United States and other places have had, and we can thank the leadership of this government for making sure of that.

[*Translation*]

Mr. Alain Giguère (Marc-Aurèle-Fortin, NDP): Madam Speaker, I would like to inform you that I will be sharing my speaking time with the member for Brossard—La Prairie.

Mr. Hollande, who is the Socialist Party candidate in the next French election, said that his enemy was faceless; that enemy would never be a candidate, was not a member of a political party and had no political platform, but nevertheless was in control. He was talking about the financial sector.

At present, this bill certainly reflects his words. Here we have a bill that is remarkable not for what it says, but for what it does not say and what it does not do. It should be protecting the Canadian economy; it should be protecting Canadians; it should be protecting the economic aspirations of the Canadian public; but it does not do that. It is utterly and completely silent on that.

There is probably good reason why this bill was introduced in the Senate. The bill was introduced to do nothing. It was introduced in haste. It contains only technical points and items that are hardly essential to the growth of the Canadian economy.

It does not talk about supporting industrial capital and investment in job creation, which our financial sector could be ordered to do. No, that is not what it talks about; it speaks only about purely technical items. We will see, later, that these technical items are essentially going to allow the financial sector to do more of the same: more money and more bonuses, but certainly no more services for the Canadian economy.

We have been talking about service charges and use of the banking sector for a long time, and this relates directly to the Bank Act. Those charges are excessive. They mean that consumers are not just the people who supply the banks with the money so they can lend it out again, but also the customers who have to pay truly excessive charges to use their own money. They have enabled the banking system to increase its profits to the \$25 billion point, an impressive number indeed.

At the same time, the financial sector's budget for bonuses has climbed to \$9 billion. That was the fastest-growing item in the financial sector. As in the United States, France and England, the financial sector is motivated by bonuses, and in that sector the board members have little to gain by defending the interests of the shareholders, their customers and the economy of their country. They are motivated solely by bonuses. In this regard, just like all the other laws in the other countries, the government of Canada is modelling its approach directly on the worst elements of the banking laws of the other countries. We could talk about excessive credit card interest rates. That is something that is directly connected with too many bankruptcies experienced by Canadians. They are not talking about that. They do not want to talk about it. There are a lot more things missing as well.

Let us talk about the waiting time that allows banking institutions to hold a cheque for a certain number of days. People deposit their cheques and cannot withdraw their money immediately. That means that an entire parallel service is created: a new financial sector, the cheque-depositing sector, where the cheque is paid out immediately in return for a charge that may range from 5% to 20%. But that is not a problem. We will not talk about that.

Nor is a compensation fund for victims of fraud being created by players in the financial industry, something that is considerably more serious. People are told to go ahead: the financial sector is safe and is there for them, but if it does not work out, no one will be there to support them anymore.

• (1315)

There will be no one to reimburse them and protect them, but in exchange, they will be allowed easier access to financial literacy. That was very useful to Nortel's shareholders and the people who invested in Norbourg, when those two companies were praised to the skies by the financial world. There were countless articles in the economic press praising the management of those two companies and encouraging Canadians to participate actively in financing them. And yet once again they decide it is not necessary to protect consumers and investors.

Government Orders

Even investors now have to take on the task of managing their own RRSPs. They alone will be responsible for losses in their RRSPs. That is impressive. Obviously, we are going to use the time for examining this bill in the Standing Committee on Finance to give it a few more teeth. In spite of the short time the government is giving us, we will be fighting hard to make this bill better suited to defending the interests of modern Canada.

The bill talks about foreign acquisitions, an important point, particularly in Canada; we have been visited by the Union de banques suisses, the UBS. We could call them “itinerant bankers” or carpetbaggers. These people represent a foreign financial institution — the UBS—and they send people to meet with the wealthiest Canadians and ask them to invest in their discreet, secret, numbered bank accounts and they will not have to pay Canadian income taxes. That is marvellous. And that is what they have done. The problem is that it is not really legal. It is called tax evasion. It is flat out illegal. And yet no lasting changes are being made to Canada’s Bank Act to prevent activities like that.

There should be a power of life or death over a Canadian institution owned by foreign entities, to prohibit it from ever doing anything inside Canada. They could be much more stringent, and yet they are not. They are raising the ceiling on shareholder equity. They already raised it in 2007. At the time, it was \$5 billion. Now we are told it has to be \$12 billion. This is an opening for what is called leverage. It is going to be much easier to make speculative investments. That is the most obvious opening for speculation in the financial sector.

In other words, this bill is not an instrument to strengthen the regulatory framework that protects Canada, as it did in the last recession. The entire financial sector was unscathed. What we are really looking at is deregulation of all the intervening new economic factors. They are regulating only the old financial sector. The new one can do as it wishes.

On that last point, there is an important item to note: pooled registered pension plans, this government’s most recent invention. These plans will allow financial institutions to take money. All the Canadian workers who contribute to the plans will know exactly how much they will pay every week—\$25 or \$50 or \$60—but they will never know exactly how much they will get when they retire. This is what is called a defined contribution plan. However, people will not know what their benefit rate will be when they reach the age of 65—or 67—depending on the whim of the people opposite. That will be largely determined by the management fees. That is why it is important to talk about this and to regulate this sector.

• (1320)

[English]

Ms. Michelle Rempel (Parliamentary Secretary to the Minister of the Environment, CPC): Madam Speaker, my colleague opposite started his speech by quoting a socialist, which I thought was very telling. The policy of the party opposite would see us contract our economic growth. Those members want to raise taxes on job-creating companies and raise taxes for families. They want to kill jobs in our energy sector. Moreover, they refuse to support any budgetary measures which would promote jobs and economic growth.

Why is my colleague opposite an advocate for socialist, growth stifling policy when our government is working hard to strengthen our country’s world-class banking system through this bill in a time of economic fragility?

[Translation]

Mr. Alain Giguère: Madam Speaker, with all due respect for the member from Calgary Centre-North, she is obviously contradicting herself. She says openly that the last recession was caused by the financial sector, that it was catastrophic in the United States and resulted in major spending to support a financial sector that had not been prudent and honest enough. Now, when we say the global financial sector is an enemy, that it is solely responsible for the last economic recession, we are told we should not talk about it that way. We are not blind; we have memories. What we remember and what we see are the reasons we say that the financial sector has to be regulated and not left to go its own way, as the government seems to prefer.

Mr. Mathieu Ravignat (Pontiac, NDP): Madam Speaker, I would like to congratulate my esteemed colleague on his very interesting speech. Like him, I condemn the fact that we have forgotten who was really responsible for this situation, that they have not been punished severely enough, and that workers and taxpayers ended up paying the price. What does my esteemed colleague think we can do to minimize that burden?

Mr. Alain Giguère: Madam Speaker, the first thing we have to do is make sure that the financial sector answers to Canada, not the other way around. That is critical. Once we have established that, we will be able to tell the financial sector to stop taking advantage of Canadians with usurious credit card interest rates and freezing people’s funds for no reason to apply new administrative charges. Most importantly, we have to ensure that the emerging economic sector is as well regulated as the old one so that people who invest in pooled registered pension plans can count on better protection than Canadians had during the latest economic recession.

Mr. Hoang Mai (Brossard—La Prairie, NDP): Madam Speaker, I would like to congratulate my colleague on his speech and on his work as a member of the Standing Committee on Finance. He was a tax lawyer before becoming an MP, and I know that he has extensive knowledge and experience. This bill does nothing to prevent speculation. It does not deal with that problem. What does my colleague think should be done about that?

• (1325)

Mr. Alain Giguère: Madam Speaker, Canada’s industrial sector has lost 400,000 jobs. When that sector is in need of investments, there are none to be found. Yet right now in Canada, there is \$500 billion tied up in the financial sector that is used only for takeovers, speculation and other purely financial purposes, not investment.

Private Members' Business

Mr. Hoang Mai (Brossard—La Prairie, NDP): Madam Speaker, I am pleased to rise to speak to Bill S-5, the Financial System Review Act. However, before I begin, I would like to express my displeasure at the fact that this bill was examined by the other place before being studied here. I think it shows a complete lack of respect for this House, especially since the other place studied it for only three weeks. I will come back to all the procedures involved in that.

On the other hand, we do support this bill, the Financial System Review Act. We know that the financial services industry employs many Canadians. This sector is very important to the NDP. However, it is not necessarily straightforward. It is rather complex; it is not an ordinary sector for the economy. Banks and financial institutions have several ways of influencing politicians—this is more obvious if one looks at the other side of the House—and the economy. This very important sector forms part of the foundation of our country and our economy.

We know that the legislation must be reviewed every five years. The last review was in 2007. We find it deplorable that, when the opportunity arises to review such legislation, the review is done so quickly, without giving members the opportunity to closely examine the bill and without consulting the public.

With regard to procedures, we know that the bill was examined by the unelected members of the Senate for three weeks. Moreover, after hearing Senator Boisvenu's comments, we are of the opinion that the Senate's judgment may sometimes leave something to be desired. Why not examine a bill as important as this one here in the House of Commons? Why not discuss it and find real solutions?

On this side of the House, we would like to abolish the Senate. Thus, we do not necessarily agree that this bill should have been examined there. This is an important bill since financial institutions really have an impact. We also find it deplorable that there were only 30 Internet submissions, 27 of which were anonymous. That was the basis for the study. Only three people dared to say where they were from and what their suggestions were. We do not feel as though the study was very thorough. We would definitely like to examine this bill more closely when it is sent to the Standing Committee on Finance. We must take the time to examine it.

No public consultations were held. We do not know what the procedures were and who was able to discuss them. The government did not really look at what consumers and the public had to say. That is why we think that the members opposite are lacking courage when it comes to this bill. They should have looked at how to protect the public and consumers. The banks are making record profits. And what is the government doing? It is giving them tax breaks. The public has to pay increasingly high bank fees. Banks are increasing customer fees. People have to pay more to withdraw their own money. It is completely unacceptable. We think that the members opposite lack courage because they did not consider all the options and did not look at how to protect consumers. It was—

• (1330)

The Deputy Speaker: I regret to interrupt the hon. member, but it is 1:30 p.m. He will have about five minutes when the bill returns on the order paper.

It being 1:30 p.m., the House will now proceed to the consideration of private members' business as listed on today's order paper.

PRIVATE MEMBERS' BUSINESS

[*Translation*]

PURPLE DAY ACT

The House resumed from November 14 consideration of the motion that Bill C-278, An Act respecting a day to increase public awareness about epilepsy, be read the second time and referred to a committee.

Mr. Ted Hsu (Kingston and the Islands, Lib.): Madam Speaker, I rise today in support of the member for Halifax West, who introduced Bill C-278.

[*English*]

The bill is designed to make March 26 Purple Day all across Canada every year. The purpose is to raise awareness of epilepsy and to help epilepsy sufferers, their families, friends and communities recognize that there are many among us who suffer from epilepsy, but they are a part of us. Awareness will help all of us recognize how to help epilepsy sufferers during seizures and reduce the stigma attached to epilepsy.

[*Translation*]

I will start by mentioning the presence here of Susan Harrison, executive director of the Epilepsy and Seizure Disorder Resource Centre in my riding of Kingston and the Islands.

[*English*]

I am not standing on debate today because I am an expert on epilepsy. I am relatively ignorant of epilepsy. I am standing today because of a young woman who is a friend, a constituent and a resident of Kingston. She told me during the last election campaign that I really had to go to an event called Purple Day. At first I did not know what it was, but I attended it. I sat and listened and really realized that I did not understand epilepsy at all.

I want to start off by thanking this young woman, Kim McFarlane, who is the secretary of the Epilepsy and Seizure Disorder Resource Centres of Southeastern Ontario, for inviting me to the event and also for sharing a lot of her own personal experiences, which I will relate in my speech today.

I did not know that, for example, one in a hundred people suffer from epilepsy. That means about 300,000 Canadians. Probably a couple of members of the House of Commons are epilepsy sufferers.

What is very important is I did not realize how many different types of epilepsy there were and that there were stereotypes, mostly in our visual entertainment, of what it meant to have an epilepsy seizure. That means we do not often recognize it in our daily lives. We may confuse it and think that something else is happening, when really we have to recognize that epilepsy is a possibility and deal with it accordingly.

Private Members' Business

I would like to quote from my friend Kim, who talks about her own type of epilepsy. She says:

I apparently look spaced out with a glazed look over my face for 15 seconds to a minute. However, when I come around, I don't remember anything and usually I'm pretty tired. I could walk from point A to point B, but I won't remember how I got there. I could even have a conversation with someone, yet I won't remember a word of it. One moment, I'm working away, the next thing I know that there's a lapse of time I can't account for and I'm trying to piece together what happened. Of course, I'll never remember that brief period. All seizures are different and not everyone will have the exact same every single time. Sometimes I "space out", sometimes I'll mumble, and other times well, even carry on what I was doing. This is just a snapshot of two of the many different types of seizures that exist.

If somebody told me about those symptoms a year ago, I would not have associated them with epilepsy at all.

In recognition of a day like Purple Day, giving it official recognition across the country will help with that awareness, and every bit of awareness of fellow members of our community will help bring us closer and allow us to help each other better.

Another aspect of awareness of different kinds of seizures is to help people who are suffering from seizures with safety during the seizure and also help support them when they come out of a seizure. Often when people come out of seizures, they are confused. They might be scared because they do not remember what happened and they have to figure out where they are now that the seizure is over.

I would like to again quote from my friend, Kim, about the stigma that is connected with seizures. This is the second thing about awareness, not only when somebody is having a seizure or right afterward and learning what to do, but learning how to live with other members of the community who have epilepsy and recognizing that they are just like everybody else. There is a couple of things they cannot do. They need special care for a few minutes sometimes, or longer, but we really have to avoid the stigma.

To understand what that stigma can mean, I would like to quote from Kim McFarlane again. She suffered from epilepsy as a young child, just like the person who is responsible for this bill, Cassidy Megan, a resident of the constituency of Halifax West.

• (1335)

My friend, Kim, also was diagnosed with epilepsy when she was a child. She said:

I remember the first time I ever directly felt the stigma attached to epilepsy. I was in grade 6 rehearsing for our spring play, when at the moment that it was my turn to say my lines; I had an absence seizure in front of everyone. Since I wasn't saying my lines, my teacher thought I must have been defiant. She threatened to send me to the office if I didn't answer her...[T]hat day still sticks with me. There have been many other instances, too, where I've heard comments over the years, including more recently, which one could describe as ignorant. Imagine if you will hearing someone refer to the second hand of a clock as something that looks like it's having a seizure; or standing in Dundas Square in Toronto watching hip hop/breakdancers and hearing 2 guys behind you say they "look like they are having seizures"; or watching one of your favourite reality shows, and a judge refers to a contestant's dance piece as though he's having a seizure because the body movements were a little crazy and all over the place. This is only a smidgen of things I've heard, and I'm only one person. Other times people just automatically assume that because I said the word "epilepsy" or the word "seizure"—they start panicking and think I must have tonic-clonic seizures and that I will convulse on the ground because this is the only type of seizure that is typically portrayed on primetime shows. However, the reality is I'd rather someone stop and ask me questions, than just make assumptions. It's better to become educated than to remain ignorant. The point of Purple Day is about raising awareness, about education, and about eliminating the stigma that is attached to epilepsy. As long as that stigma remains, many with the disorder will not disclose or talk about it for fear of backlash and prejudice.

That is one of the purposes of designating March 26 as Purple Day, to deal with the stigma and to educate people. It is also an opportunity to tell people about some famous people who have also suffered from epilepsy. I draw today from a speech which my hon. colleague from Halifax West gave. He mentioned a number of famous people who suffered from epilepsy: Dostoevsky and Neil Young, artists; FloJo, Florence Griffith Joyner, the athlete; Margaux Hemingway and Danny Glover, actors; and Pope Pius IX.

Purple Day is a chance to tell children especially that there are many very accomplished people in history and in the world who are co-sufferers of epilepsy. Maybe even "suffering" is the wrong word to use in some cases; it is just part of who they are. They are not somebody different; they are not outside the mainstream of society. That is another opportunity we would have, if we were to make Purple Day a national day of recognition and awareness.

I would like to conclude with a statement from my friend Kim who has been working to support and help people become more aware of epilepsy for a long time. She said:

Everyone is all unique and has their own special talents. Everyone deserves to be treated equally and fairly and not threatened by backlash or prejudged in any way. If 1 in 100 Canadians have epilepsy, statistically speaking, how many Members of Parliament, Senators, staff members, and all of their family and friends, have this neurological disorder? Help bring epilepsy out of the shadows by not only supporting Bill C-278 and asking questions instead of making assumptions, but by encouraging discussion, dialogue, and awareness not only here on Parliament Hill, but also in your own constituencies.

• (1340)

Mr. Colin Carrie (Parliamentary Secretary to the Minister of Health, CPC): Madam Speaker, I thank my colleague for his eloquent speech. I am grateful to speak in support of Bill C-278, introduced by the hon. member for Halifax West, which promotes epilepsy awareness.

The bill calls on the Government of Canada to establish each March 26 as Purple Day in Canada. Every year on March 26, people would be encouraged to wear the colour purple to indicate their support for those living with epilepsy and to raise awareness of this serious condition. Any opportunity we have to raise awareness of this important health issue and its causes is worthy of consideration. There are many reasons for this.

Almost 190,000 Canadians are living with epilepsy, a number growing by almost 15,000 every year, many of whom are in my home riding of Oshawa.

I was diagnosed and grew up with petit mal epilepsy. I know what it is like to deal with this condition. People living with epilepsy experience brief recurring seizures that can pose serious harm. Epilepsy can begin at any age, but new cases are most common among children and older adults. While many strides have been made in addressing epilepsy, much remains to be done.

Private Members' Business

Socially, people with epilepsy can suffer from the stigma associated with it because there is little understanding about the nature of the disease. At times, people with epilepsy can also face difficulty finding employment or even obtaining private health insurance.

To underscore the challenges of living with epilepsy, we need only listen to the stories of our fellow Canadians, like Norm Beam from Niagara Falls, Ontario. Mr. Beam said:

Suffering from so many seizures due to having epilepsy was a really rough time in my life as well as my wife, Janet....

Many nights my wife and I would lay in bed in tears, feeling so helpless. We had no one to turn to. No one really understood what my epilepsy was doing to me. Friends and family weren't there for they just didn't understand. I lost a few friends after they witnessed me having a seizure.

As well, there is the case of Adam Cunningham from Burlington, Ontario. Mr. Cunningham started having seizures at eight years of age. He would have as many as 10 a day. Mr. Cunningham said these seizures felt like "somebody was bashing my head in with a baseball bat".

As a result of his epilepsy, Mr. Cunningham lost out on hockey and lacrosse scholarships. As a result of his condition, he was not able to live alone or to drive. He even underwent brain surgery in the hopes of reducing the seizures. When referring to his epilepsy, he said:

It has been a terrible impact on my life and I don't want this to happen to anyone else.

Mr. Beam's and Mr. Cunningham's stories are but two examples of the countless challenges that Canadians with epilepsy face every day. As such, we must do more to raise awareness about epilepsy. In doing so, we can decrease the stigma faced by epileptics.

Epileptic seizures are classified as a neurological condition caused by sudden, brief electrical discharges in a group of brain cells. This condition can be separated into two types, idiopathic epilepsy and symptomatic epilepsy. Idiopathic epilepsy accounts for 60% of cases. It cannot be prevented. Its cause is unknown. Symptomatic epilepsy, also known as secondary epilepsy, the kind I was diagnosed with, can be caused by brain damage during birth, strokes, brain infections, brain tumours and severe brain injuries caused by accidents. All of these factors can contribute to epileptic seizures.

Research shows greater occurrences of epilepsy in children and seniors. For example, nearly a quarter of new seizure cases occur after the age of 60. One contributing factor in this case is a greater risk of injuries stemming from falls.

Studies show that children and seniors have a greater chance of incurring head injuries, which as I mentioned can cause secondary epilepsy. As such, activities that address supportive environments and injury prevention must be embraced. The Government of Canada is doing just that. For example, the government supports initiatives that enable both young and old to live safely and actively. It promotes active and safe routes to school, age-friendly communities and a broad range of injury prevention efforts.

The government has also provided \$5 million to address sports and recreational injuries among children and youth through the active and safe injury prevention initiative.

●(1345)

This initiative draws attention to the importance of safety and precaution in recreational activities while encouraging children and youth to be active. While these positive initiatives are making a difference from a prevention perspective, there remains a lack of information about epilepsy that must be addressed.

That is why, in collaboration with Canada's major neurological charities, the government has implemented a four year \$15 million population study. This study will determine the rates of neurological conditions in Canada and the effects of these conditions on individuals, families and caregivers.

The study involves the assistance of 25 neurological health charities, including Neurological Health Charities Canada and the Canadian Epilepsy Alliance. Data from the study will be used to better understand and meet the needs of Canadians affected by these conditions.

In addition, the government has invested more than \$44 million in epilepsy-specific research since 2006, through the Canadian Institutes of Health Research, CIHR. Funding for this research comes through the Institute of Neurosciences, Mental Health and Addiction, as well as the Institute of Human Development, Child and Youth Health.

This research is crucial. It helps create new understanding about how we can build understanding and awareness of the impact of genetics on epilepsy, how epilepsy affects brain development, and what types of interventions can improve the quality of care and well-being for those living with epilepsy.

This knowledge is filling the gaps related to epilepsy that can be used to inform policies and programs and to help improve the health of Canadians. While research is key, continued action from all sectors is also critical. Right now, communities across Canada are taking action to raise awareness about epilepsy and injury prevention.

Our international partners are also taking a higher profile stance on this issue. The World Health Organization is leading a global campaign to raise awareness and provide better information about epilepsy. Together, global partners, including Canada, are building a stronger evidence base. We are strengthening and sharing our knowledge. Collectively, we are making great strides in advancing these efforts. But we can do even more.

The Canadian Epilepsy Alliance, CEA, a national support and information network, has been leading efforts to gain Canadian and international support for Purple Day. Last March, the Minister of Health recognized March as National Epilepsy Month. By drawing further attention to this issue and by declaring March 26 as Purple Day, the government will take a leadership role in these awareness raising efforts.

Private Members' Business

Before I close, I want to take a moment to offer some considerations.

The best possible path for all Canadians is to take precautions in prevention and treatment. First, proper health care and treatment is essential. Individuals with epilepsy need to ensure they seek medical advice and take their medications as directed. Even missing a dose can cause a seizure.

Additionally, those with other medical complications compounding their epilepsy must take care to ensure their medications and dosages are well managed. For people living with epilepsy, it is important to ensure their family, friends and colleagues know how to respond appropriately in the event of a seizure.

Taking precautions to prevent injuries is a shared role. We can all help to provide a safe environment. Whether we are driving, swimming, or at home, we should always be mindful of potential dangers such as falls. We would do well to remember that it is possible to prevent some forms of epilepsy by taking precautions. For example, wearing helmets helps prevent head injuries, which in turn can prevent secondary epilepsy.

For those with epilepsy, managing it well can help ensure a full life and the ability to participate in many activities. There is hope for a cure and there is hope for those living with this condition. I am evidence of that.

Bill C-278 represents a progressive step forward in raising awareness of epilepsy. It also lets epileptics know that they are not alone. By supporting this bill, we would officially enshrine in law every March 26 as Purple Day. This would increase Canadians' awareness of epilepsy and its causes. It would enable us to better support people living with epilepsy and to better understand the link between epilepsy and injury prevention.

I encourage all members to support the bill. I am confident it would make great strides toward improving the quality of life for those living with epilepsy and their families. I know this bill is extremely important to many families in Oshawa who have loved ones who suffer from epilepsy.

Again, I thank the hon. member for bringing this important issue forward for our consideration so that we can all ensure that this happens.

• (1350)

[*Translation*]

Mr. Matthew Dubé (Chambly—Borduas, NDP): Madam Speaker, it is an honour for me to speak to bill C-278, which was introduced by the member for Halifax West, for the same reasons mentioned by the member for Kingston and the Islands.

I was not very familiar with this issue. In preparing to address the House, I realized that I did not know very much about epilepsy. Other members may also lack awareness, as I did. This proves that this bill and a day to raise awareness are important.

March 26, the day proposed to this House for raising public awareness, would be called Purple Day. We often hear criticism of awareness campaigns. Some supporters say that raising awareness does not solve the problem and is merely a symbolic gesture that

could seem meaningless. I would argue otherwise and stress the importance of raising awareness. That is why we support this bill.

I said at the outset that there is a lack of understanding of illnesses such as epilepsy. This proves that it is important to raise awareness. This illness is not well understood and is also unpredictable. It is the unpredictability of the seizures that makes it so difficult for people to understand this illness. The unpredictable nature of epilepsy also makes it hard for caregivers, for example. I will come back to this point a little later.

I would like to start with a very simple suggestion. The NDP members will make this suggestion in committee. I am talking about very minor changes that are backed by the organization Épilepsie Montréal métropolitain. These are changes to the French version that will improve the French. We would like to substitute “Journée lavande” for “Journée pourpre”. Thus, “couleur pourpre” would become “couleur lavande”. In addition, the term “condition” would be used instead of “maladie” in describing epilepsy in order to better represent the situation of people who suffer from epilepsy. As I mentioned, these changes are supported by Épilepsie Montréal métropolitain, more specifically Aurore Therrien, the executive director of this organization.

It seems obvious to me that the epilepsy community and the various agencies that work in this field support this bill. I am thinking about the director of the epilepsy clinic and epilepsy research group at the Sainte-Justine Hospital, Lionel Carmant. He fully supports Purple Day and he does not see anything else wrong with the bill. He thinks there are many other opportunities. He adds that the bill should receive media coverage and that we should address the discrimination that people with epilepsy suffer at work and in many other areas of society.

I think this shows once again the importance of awareness and the impact it can have in society. Even though this is a symbolic gesture, it launches very important work that can result in major progress and breakthroughs.

I think all parties in the House support bills on work toward possible medical breakthroughs. I think we all consider matters of health to be important. These are non-partisan issues. Here we are looking not only at raising awareness, but also at medical initiatives that could result in treatments. I am no expert, but based on what I have learned in the past few days, this illness is not properly understood according to current data. For example, there are surgeries available, but very few people with this illness undergo surgery, even though in many cases it would improve matters.

• (1355)

The same is true of the various medications available. That is a more general and very important issue that MPs have tried to grapple with recently.

Let us talk about medication shortages and availability. Epilepsy medications are less readily available because companies make relatively little money on them. That makes them harder to come by. This situation has made people more aware of this problem, and they want solutions.

Private Members' Business

There is no doubt that the House would be willing to consider the problem of medication availability. If society were aware of this problem, that would help us deal with the issue. Members of the House, including parliamentary secretaries, ministers and committee members, could keep working on this issue. That is another important reason to support this bill.

With respect to raising awareness, consider family caregivers. I had a very touching, very interesting conversation that was very difficult for me. My colleagues will understand why. While I was at a grocery store in my riding over the holidays, I ran into a family friend who lives in my riding. His wife, a family friend, passed away in September. She had a malignant brain tumour. During the final months of her life, the family had a very hard time dealing with the situation. Their experience is relevant to this discussion because we are talking about the problems that people with neurological diseases face. Of course, the severity of the disease varies from one person to the next—cancer is not the same thing as epilepsy, but it does affect neurological functions, which can be very difficult for loved ones. People with cancer and those with epilepsy have somewhat similar experiences.

Out of respect for this man, who is one of my constituents and also a friend and a friend of my family, I will not name him. During our conversation, he spoke at length about the importance of family caregivers. He talked about how much a bill like this could have helped not only his wife, but also him and his family, who made sacrifices in terms of their jobs and the time they spent trying to create a positive environment for their loved one. In this case, they were trying to make the most of her final days. In my opinion, it is just as relevant in non-terminal cases, as with epilepsy for instance, to create an environment in which the person can function normally and feel less stigmatized, which is one of the consequences of living with an illness that not everyone understands. In such cases, awareness is very important and can be a first step towards financing and understanding family caregivers, who are a very important part of health care.

Family caregivers and the resources available to them are at the crux of the matter. People often lack resources and are misunderstood. Medication can help people live day to day, support them at work and enhance their emotional or social well-being, but it starts with public awareness. I cannot emphasize this enough. It is an important gesture that may seem symbolic from the outside, but it is a first step in the right direction for our society and all Canadians, in order to improve the living conditions of people who are living with a very difficult illness. I commend them and congratulate them because, from what I have read over the past few days, life is not easy for them. They are working very hard to get legislation like this passed.

• (1400)

[*English*]

Mr. Leon Benoit (Vegreville—Wainwright, CPC): Madam Speaker, I am pleased to rise today to support Bill C-278, which promotes awareness about epilepsy.

I would like to commend and thank the member for Halifax West who brought this bill forward. He probably had a dozen other choices that he could have debated in a private member's bill or

motion, but he chose this issue because he felt it was important. I commend him for that.

Bill C-278 seeks to establish March 26 each year in Canada as Purple Day. As part of Purple Day, Canadians would be encouraged to wear something purple to indicate their support for people living with epilepsy. By supporting Bill C-278, we can show our dedication to raising awareness of epilepsy, which would lead to a greater acceptance and understanding of this condition. This increase in information and awareness could lead, and often does lead, to greater action taken by governments, by individuals, by society in general to help make life just a bit better for those with a certain condition, in this case, epilepsy.

I tabled a motion, and the second hour of debate on it is coming up, which deals with making more information available for those who are in the advanced stages of MS, multiple sclerosis, and are considering whether to go somewhere to have the so-called liberation therapy treatment. Because it is not available in Canada, my motion seeks to provide information about other places people could go to have this treatment and to provide information about what the process involves.

One of the benefits of my motion, perhaps its greatest benefit, would be to raise awareness, as the member's private member's bill raises awareness, and to garner support and in the end, help make people's lives a bit easier. I commend the member for that.

Credit for Purple Day and this bill is owed to a special young Canadian. Her noble efforts should be applauded. Cassidy Megan, a young girl from Nova Scotia, was seven years old when she had her first epileptic attack. Her own questions and struggles with this condition led her to suggest that countries worldwide should take steps to recognize the many challenges of living with epilepsy.

As a way of doing this, Cassidy came up with the idea of Purple Day. The choice of the colour purple has a broad significance. The lavender flower, representing purple on the colour spectrum, is internationally recognized as the symbol of epilepsy. It represents the feelings of isolation that many people affected with epilepsy and seizure disorders often feel.

I can say very honestly that I know very little about epilepsy. That is part of the reason I commend the member for bringing this bill forward, in that I have learned a little. However, I know about having a child who has lived with a lot of isolation because of a condition that the child is living with.

Our youngest daughter was born with a moderate hearing impairment. All through her life in many situations she simply did not know what was going on around her. Even in a crowd she was isolated because she just did not know. Our daughter never complained about that. She never let it hold her back. She became an engineer. She has a great job. She got married last summer. She is doing very well in spite of this condition. However, as a parent, seeing the isolation and the pain that this caused her certainly has led me to understand the importance of trying to help those who have conditions that really do make them feel isolated.

Private Members' Business

● (1405)

I believe that the greater understanding brought about because of this bill will, through understanding and acceptance, lead to a little less isolation on the part of people suffering from epilepsy.

Back to Cassidy and epilepsy. Cassidy's motivation for starting Purple Day is inspiring and her own personal story is making an impact. For instance, the Canadian Epilepsy Association is now working to have Purple Day endorsed by the World Health Organization and the United Nations.

Purple Day is a way to get people to talk about epilepsy. We must do all we can to recognize this condition and raise awareness of its associated challenges. By doing so, we are letting people living with epilepsy know that they are really not alone.

For anyone unfamiliar with epilepsy, let me take a few moments to explain what it is and why it needs our attention.

Epilepsy is one of the most common chronic neurological conditions in Canada. Epilepsy affects more than 50 million Canadians worldwide. In Canada, nearly 190,000 people live with epilepsy. This number grows by more than 50,000 every year. The World Health Organization has declared that epilepsy is the most common serious brain disorder globally.

One of the hallmarks of this disease is the brief recurring seizures experienced by epileptics. These mild to severe seizures often occur when nerve cells or neurons in the brain send out the wrong signals. When having a seizure, an epileptic may have violent muscle spasms or lose consciousness. Due to the perceived stigma associated with epilepsy, many with the disorder are reluctant to report having it or to seek treatment, so the number of those affected may be even higher than the reported numbers.

The most common known causes of epilepsy result from injuries resulting from a brain tumour, head trauma, substance abuse or serious infection. However, in more than half of all epileptic cases, the cause simply remains unknown. That said, many Canadians living with epilepsy enjoy productive lives, but living with this condition still presents challenges for patients, their families and for society.

Some of these challenges include physical hazards related to unpredictable seizures, social exclusion and other forms of stigma. It can also affect participation in key aspects of life, including communities, schools, employment and leisure. Raising awareness about epilepsy is part of confronting the condition and its challenges.

By supporting this bill and enshrining Purple Day into law, we build on initiatives already in place to enhance the understanding of epilepsy in Canada. For example, March is recognized as National Epilepsy Month. In March Canadians are encouraged to learn more about epilepsy and to help foster a national focus on a discussion of the condition.

In addition, the Government of Canada works in tandem with its key partners to help us better prepare to meet the needs of those living with neurological conditions, including epilepsy. Furthermore, I am pleased to say that the Government of Canada has invested \$15 million over four years in a national population study of neurological

conditions, working with major neurological health charities in Canada.

Raising awareness about epilepsy is exactly what Bill C-278 is all about and I have talked about why that is important.

On a final note, I would like to close with some words from Cassidy Megan. As Cassidy said in a recent public message:

I started Purple Day because when I first found out that I had epilepsy I was afraid and embarrassed of what other people would think. I also thought I was the only kid in the world with epilepsy. I wanted to have one day where everyone in the world could show support for people with epilepsy and teach people about epilepsy.

Educating people about epilepsy is so important because people need to know what to do if they see someone having a seizure and they need to know that there are different types of seizures...

I would like to commend Cassidy Megan and the member for Halifax West for what they have done to help with awareness and to make things just a little better for people with epilepsy.

● (1410)

[*Translation*]

Mr. Mathieu Ravnignat (Pontiac, NDP): Madam Speaker, first, I would like to commend the hon. member for Halifax West for introducing this very important bill and, particularly the founder of Purple Day, Cassidy Megan, and her family for their excellent work. This is a great example of involvement and commitment that can bring about change.

I am pleased to participate in a debate on an issue as important as a condition that has such a major impact on Canadians and their families. Unfortunately, I must apologize to those who suffer from epilepsy because our government and we politicians have not done enough.

Let us look at the situation. Today, in 2012, 30% of patients do not respond to the treatments that are currently available. This figure shows how necessary it is to produce new anti-epileptic drugs, improve access to global epilepsy assessment and treatment programs and increase funding for research in this area.

One in four people has seizures that cannot be controlled with anti-epileptic drugs. Surgery is an option for nearly half of these people. Dr. Valiente noted that, in Ontario, 10,000 people with epilepsy could benefit from brain surgery but only 2% have the operation.

According to a briefing note about anti-epileptic drug shortages by the Canadian Epilepsy Alliance, drug manufacturers are not in any rush to address the current shortages, which largely affect lower-cost generic drugs with small profit margins. That is shameful. The shortage of drugs used to treat epilepsy can have serious consequences that can reduce the quality of life of those with the condition and even put their lives at risk.

Private Members' Business

I sympathize with the people who have this illness because this situation is unacceptable and even deplorable. We must take action and that is why I support this bill. Even though this bill does not necessarily focus on access to medication, I support it because it will make Canadians more aware of epilepsy. However, my party is still calling upon the government to deliver concrete results for Canadians in matters of health. Canadians deserve more than empty words. The government can and must do more to help Canadians with epilepsy and their loved ones. The NDP is advocating and asking for this.

Indeed, members opposite and all members of this Parliament are speaking eloquently about the challenges people with epilepsy face, but previous governments had no plan to help these people. I wonder if all members are going to pressure this government to implement measures such as help for caregivers and employment assistance measures for people in difficult situations. We know that a number of people with epilepsy are also under-employed.

Is this government going to take the drug shortage seriously? This shortage has devastating effects on people with epilepsy. Previous Liberal governments were no better. The Liberals were in power for 13 years and had a majority government for 11 of those years. They did not increase public awareness about epilepsy and did not help those with epilepsy fight discrimination, which is still far too common. Purple Day was created in 2008, when the Liberals no longer formed the government.

• (1415)

We know that this condition affects many Canadians and has serious repercussions on their lives and their families' lives. Epilepsy is one of the most common neurological diseases in the world and affects almost 300,000 people in Canada and 50 million people worldwide. Epilepsy can also have profound physical, psychological and social repercussions and its impact on quality of life is sometimes worse than other chronic diseases. It is believed that certain factors can contribute to this situation, including the unpredictability of the episodes and the social stigma associated with epilepsy.

People with epilepsy are more likely to have low self-esteem, to be depressed and even to commit suicide. This illness can also have repercussions on a person's education, job opportunities, independence, and the ability to drive or get a driver's licence. These very difficult conditions have to be taken into account by this government and future governments.

More than 30% of patients do not respond to current treatments and suffer unpredictable seizures. This highlights the need to manufacture new anti-epileptic drugs, improve access to comprehensive programs to fight this condition and increase funding for research. We cannot eradicate this illness without research. That is what we on this side of the House and the experts who agree with us are asking for.

Together with the experts, I fully support Purple Day to raise public awareness of epilepsy. The Canadian Epilepsy Alliance and its 25 member organizations are strong supporters of Bill C-278. Dr. Lionel Carmant, director of the epilepsy clinic and the epilepsy research group at Sainte-Justine Hospital and a professor in the pediatrics department at Université de Montréal, fully supports

Purple Day. He does not see any other errors in the bill. He also believes that there are other opportunities: obtain media coverage for the bill and tackle discrimination against people with epilepsy in the workplace and in other areas of society.

I completely agree with that. The Epilepsy Support Centre in London, Ontario, said that it is critical to build public awareness of epilepsy because people with the illness can face social stigmatization. Information is still the best way to raise public awareness.

Épilepsie Montréal Métropolitain also supports the bill wholeheartedly.

Lastly, I would like to remind Canadians of the NDP's position. We support this bill because it would raise awareness among Canadians. We are asking the government to take responsibility for delivering real results for people with epilepsy. The government can and should do more to ensure that medications are available. Let us end the stigmatization of Canadians suffering from this illness.

• (1420)

The Deputy Speaker: Before I recognize the hon. member for Notre-Dame-de-Grâce—Lachine, I would like to inform her that she will have only three minutes to make a few remarks.

[*English*]

Ms. Isabelle Morin (Notre-Dame-de-Grâce—Lachine, NDP): Madam Speaker, I thank my hon. colleague for bringing up this important legislation. More awareness is needed for people dealing with epilepsy. If we choose to look the other way on this important issue, we will be turning our backs on 300,000 Canadians who live with epilepsy every day.

A young girl from Nova Scotia took it upon herself to create purple day in 2008. She was only nine years-old, but she was motivated by her own struggles with epilepsy. In 2009, the day was created internationally, and now 35 countries recognize the importance of raising awareness of this condition.

Epilepsy is not a small issue: it affects about 1 in every 100 people in Canada. That makes this condition the second most common neurological disorder after migraines. It is more common than muscular dystrophy, multiple sclerosis, cerebral palsy and Parkinson's disease combined. Epilepsy may begin at any age, but the most common occurrence is in young children and the elderly over 65. They are our most vulnerable citizens and should not be forgotten.

Purple day helps remove the stigma of a very common condition. In the developing countries of our planet, 60% to 90% of people living with epilepsy receive no treatment due to social stigma. Our country must set an example with people wearing purple on March 26 in order to remove the stigma of this common condition.

People with epilepsy have been shown to have an increased risk of poor self-esteem, leading to depression, which can lead to higher rates of suicide. The House has been debating suicide prevention for some time now, and it is time to take concrete actions to undo the stigma and provide further health care for those who need it.

Epilepsy also adversely affects an individual's education and employment opportunities. As a government, we need to create possibilities for job growth in our country. Under this government, employment opportunities have been getting worse for average Canadians, so the disadvantaged are less likely to be employed and are more likely to sink into depression. Measures should be taken to fight discrimination against any Canadian.

Raising awareness to overcome stigmas is extremely important, but raising awareness also means speaking about the shortages in health care. An important point is that about 70% of people with epilepsy respond to current treatments. That is a good thing, but it also means that 30% do not respond to the currently available treatments. These people continue to experience uncontrollable seizures.

This is clearly the time to highlight the need for anti-epileptic drugs and improve the access to comprehensive epilepsy programs for evaluation and treatment. We need to—

• (1425)

The Deputy Speaker: Order, please.

I regret to interrupt the hon. member, but I must go to the sponsor of the bill, the hon. member for Halifax West, for his right of reply.

Hon. Geoff Regan (Halifax West, Lib.): Madam Speaker, I regret the fact the mover of the bill gets the last five minutes and ends up taking time from the last speaker. I certainly appreciate the member for Notre-Dame-de-Grâce—Lachine's comments, and I will say a little more about them later.

I want to talk about some of the other comments we heard today. I am really grateful for the support of all members, as I am sure Cassidy Megan is as well, the young lady from my riding of Halifax West, who was spoken of so often today.

I enjoyed all of the speeches today. My colleague from Kingston and the Islands spoke of a young woman from his riding who came to him to talk about this issue. For her it was an issue of overcoming the stigma of having seizures and people's reactions to, and lack of understanding of, them. He, like all of us, I think, has learned more about epilepsy from hearing about it and speaking on this topic.

My colleague from Oshawa, the parliamentary secretary for health, spoke very touchingly about his personal experience with epilepsy, because he has petit mal epilepsy. He also spoke of a person he talked to who had lost friends because of their seizures when he was a kid and who talked of the impact of that. Imagine

Private Members' Business

what that would be like, how awful that would be for a young person.

[*Translation*]

I also appreciated the comments made by the hon. member for Chambly—Borduas, who spoke about the importance of making people aware of epilepsy and how it works.

[*English*]

I also thought that my colleague from Vegreville—Wainwright spoke very touchingly and powerfully. He said that greater awareness, we hope, will lead to greater action, greater government action, greater action from all of us. That is very much the idea of this bill. He also talked about the personal experience of his own child and the isolation that she has sometimes felt because of a hearing impairment. I appreciate that, as looking forward to his motion on MS, which I congratulate him for moving.

[*Translation*]

The member for Pontiac spoke about the difficult situation that people with epilepsy are in and of the lack of resources and support. He also spoke about the discrimination and stigmatization that they face.

[*English*]

The member for Notre-Dame-de-Grâce—Lachine said let us not turn our backs on the 300,000 Canadians living with epilepsy. It is valuable for us to be reminded of how many Canadians actually are affected by this and what it can mean for all of them.

I want to close, though, with my thoughts and my appreciation of all members, but particularly to Cassidy Megan, the young girl who started all this, of whom I am so proud. This means a great deal to all of us and I look forward to this bill succeeding and I appreciate the support of members.

The Deputy Speaker: It being 2:30, the time provided for debate has expired.

[*Translation*]

Is it the pleasure of the House to adopt the motion?

Some hon. members: Agreed.

The Deputy Speaker: I declare the motion carried. Accordingly, the bill stands referred to the Standing Committee on Health.

(Motion agreed to, bill read the second time and referred to a committee)

The Deputy Speaker: It being 2:30 p.m., this House stands adjourned until next Monday at 11 a.m. pursuant to Standing Order 24(1).

(The House adjourned at 2:30 p.m.)

APPENDIX

**ALPHABETICAL LIST OF MEMBERS WITH THEIR
CONSTITUENCIES, PROVINCE OF CONSTITUENCY
AND POLITICAL AFFILIATIONS;
COMMITTEES OF THE HOUSE,
THE MINISTRY AND PARLIAMENTARY SECRETARY**

CHAIR OCCUPANTS

The Speaker

HON. ANDREW SCHEER

The Deputy Speaker and Chair of Committees of the Whole

MS. DENISE SAVOIE

The Deputy Chair of Committees of the Whole

MR. BARRY DEVOLIN

The Assistant Deputy Chair of Committees of the Whole

MR. BRUCE STANTON

BOARD OF INTERNAL ECONOMY

HON. ANDREW SCHEER

MS. CHRIS CHARLTON

MR. JOE COMARTIN

MS. JUDY FOOTE

HON. ROB MERRIFIELD

HON. GORDON O'CONNOR

HON. PETER VAN LOAN

ALPHABETICAL LIST OF MEMBERS OF THE HOUSE OF COMMONS

First Session—Forty-first Parliament

Name of Member	Constituency	Province of Constituency	Political Affiliation
Ablonczy, Hon. Diane, Minister of State of Foreign Affairs (Americas and Consular Affairs)	Calgary—Nose Hill	Alberta	CPC
Adams, Eve, Parliamentary Secretary to the Minister of Veterans Affairs	Mississauga—Brampton South	Ontario	CPC
Adler, Mark	York Centre	Ontario	CPC
Aglukkaq, Hon. Leona, Minister of Health and Minister of the Canadian Northern Economic Development Agency	Nunavut	Nunavut	CPC
Albas, Dan	Okanagan—Coquihalla	British Columbia	CPC
Albrecht, Harold	Kitchener—Conestoga	Ontario	CPC
Alexander, Chris, Parliamentary Secretary to the Minister of National Defence	Ajax—Pickering	Ontario	CPC
Allen, Malcolm	Welland	Ontario	NDP
Allen, Mike	Tobique—Mactaquac	New Brunswick	CPC
Allison, Dean	Niagara West—Glanbrook	Ontario	CPC
Ambler, Stella	Mississauga South	Ontario	CPC
Ambrose, Hon. Rona, Minister of Public Works and Government Services and Minister for Status of Women	Edmonton—Spruce Grove	Alberta	CPC
Anders, Rob	Calgary West	Alberta	CPC
Anderson, David, Parliamentary Secretary to the Minister of Natural Resources and for the Canadian Wheat Board	Cypress Hills—Grasslands	Saskatchewan	CPC
Andrews, Scott	Avalon	Newfoundland and Labrador	Lib.
Angus, Charlie	Timmins—James Bay	Ontario	NDP
Armstrong, Scott	Cumberland—Colchester— Musquodoboit Valley	Nova Scotia	CPC
Ashfield, Hon. Keith, Minister of Fisheries and Oceans and Minister for the Atlantic Gateway	Fredericton	New Brunswick	CPC
Ashton, Niki	Churchill	Manitoba	NDP
Aspin, Jay	Nipissing—Timiskaming	Ontario	CPC
Atamanenko, Alex	British Columbia Southern Interior	British Columbia	NDP
Aubin, Robert	Trois-Rivières	Québec	NDP
Ayala, Paulina	Honoré-Mercier	Québec	NDP
Baird, Hon. John, Minister of Foreign Affairs	Ottawa West—Nepean	Ontario	CPC
Bateman, Joyce	Winnipeg South Centre	Manitoba	CPC
Bélanger, Hon. Mauril	Ottawa—Vanier	Ontario	Lib.
Bellavance, André	Richmond—Arthabaska	Québec	BQ
Bennett, Hon. Carolyn	St. Paul's	Ontario	Lib.
Benoit, Leon	Vegreville—Wainwright	Alberta	CPC
Benskin, Tyrone	Jeanne-Le Ber	Québec	NDP
Bernier, Hon. Maxime, Minister of State (Small Business and Tourism)	Beauce	Québec	CPC
Bevington, Dennis	Western Arctic	Northwest Territories	NDP
Bezan, James	Selkirk—Interlake	Manitoba	CPC
Blanchette, Denis	Louis-Hébert	Québec	NDP
Blanchette-Lamothe, Lysane	Pierrefonds—Dollard	Québec	NDP
Blaney, Hon. Steven, Minister of Veterans Affairs	Lévis—Bellechasse	Québec	CPC
Block, Kelly	Saskatoon—Rosetown—Biggar	Saskatchewan	CPC

Name of Member	Constituency	Province of Constituency	Political Affiliation
Boivin, Françoise	Gatineau	Québec	NDP
Borg, Charmaine	Terrebonne—Blainville	Québec	NDP
Boughen, Ray	Palliser	Saskatchewan	CPC
Boulerice, Alexandre	Rosemont—La Petite-Patrie	Québec	NDP
Boutin-Sweet, Marjolaine	Hochelaga	Québec	NDP
Brahmi, Tarik	Saint-Jean	Québec	NDP
Braid, Peter	Kitchener—Waterloo	Ontario	CPC
Breitkreuz, Garry	Yorkton—Melville	Saskatchewan	CPC
Brison, Hon. Scott	Kings—Hants	Nova Scotia	Lib.
Brosseau, Ruth Ellen	Berthier—Maskinongé	Québec	NDP
Brown, Gordon	Leeds—Grenville	Ontario	CPC
Brown, Lois, Parliamentary Secretary to the Minister of International Cooperation	Newmarket—Aurora	Ontario	CPC
Brown, Patrick	Barrie	Ontario	CPC
Bruinooge, Rod	Winnipeg South	Manitoba	CPC
Butt, Brad	Mississauga—Streetsville	Ontario	CPC
Byrne, Hon. Gerry	Humber—St. Barbe—Baie Verte	Newfoundland and Labrador	Lib.
Calandra, Paul, Parliamentary Secretary to the Minister of Canadian Heritage	Oak Ridges—Markham	Ontario	CPC
Calkins, Blaine	Wetaskiwin	Alberta	CPC
Cannan, Ron	Kelowna—Lake Country	British Columbia	CPC
Carmichael, John	Don Valley West	Ontario	CPC
Caron, Guy	Rimouski-Neigette—Témiscouata—Les Basques	Québec	NDP
Carrie, Colin, Parliamentary Secretary to the Minister of Health	Oshawa	Ontario	CPC
Casey, Sean	Charlottetown	Prince Edward Island	Lib.
Cash, Andrew	Davenport	Ontario	NDP
Charlton, Chris	Hamilton Mountain	Ontario	NDP
Chicoine, Sylvain	Châteauguay—Saint-Constant	Québec	NDP
Chisholm, Robert	Dartmouth—Cole Harbour	Nova Scotia	NDP
Chisu, Corneliu	Pickering—Scarborough East	Ontario	CPC
Chong, Hon. Michael	Wellington—Halton Hills	Ontario	CPC
Choquette, François	Drummond	Québec	NDP
Chow, Olivia	Trinity—Spadina	Ontario	NDP
Christopherson, David	Hamilton Centre	Ontario	NDP
Clarke, Rob	Desnethé—Missinippi—Churchill River	Saskatchewan	CPC
Cleary, Ryan	St. John's South—Mount Pearl	Newfoundland and Labrador	NDP
Clement, Hon. Tony, President of the Treasury Board and Minister for the Federal Economic Development Initiative for Northern Ontario	Parry Sound—Muskoka	Ontario	CPC
Coderre, Hon. Denis	Bourassa	Québec	Lib.
Comartin, Joe	Windsor—Tecumseh	Ontario	NDP
Côté, Raymond	Beauport—Limoilou	Québec	NDP
Cotler, Hon. Irwin	Mount Royal	Québec	Lib.
Crowder, Jean	Nanaimo—Cowichan	British Columbia	NDP
Cullen, Nathan	Skeena—Bulkley Valley	British Columbia	NDP
Cuzner, Rodger	Cape Breton—Canso	Nova Scotia	Lib.
Daniel, Joe	Don Valley East	Ontario	CPC

Name of Member	Constituency	Province of Constituency	Political Affiliation
Davidson, Patricia	Sarnia—Lambton	Ontario	CPC
Davies, Don	Vancouver Kingsway	British Columbia	NDP
Davies, Libby	Vancouver East	British Columbia	NDP
Day, Anne-Marie	Charlesbourg—Haute-Saint-Charles	Québec	NDP
Dechert, Bob, Parliamentary Secretary to the Minister of Foreign Affairs	Mississauga—Erindale	Ontario	CPC
Del Mastro, Dean, Parliamentary Secretary to the Prime Minister and to the Minister of Intergovernmental Affairs	Peterborough	Ontario	CPC
Devolin, Barry, The Acting Speaker	Haliburton—Kawartha Lakes—Brock	Ontario	CPC
Dewar, Paul	Ottawa Centre	Ontario	NDP
Dion, Hon. Stéphane, Saint-Laurent—Cartierville	Saint-Laurent—Cartierville	Québec	Lib.
Dionne Labelle, Pierre	Rivière-du-Nord	Québec	NDP
Donnelly, Fin	New Westminster—Coquitlam	British Columbia	NDP
Doré Lefebvre, Rosane	Alfred-Pellan	Québec	NDP
Dreeshen, Earl	Red Deer	Alberta	CPC
Dubé, Matthew	Chambly—Borduas	Québec	NDP
Duncan, Hon. John, Minister of Aboriginal Affairs and Northern Development	Vancouver Island North	British Columbia	CPC
Duncan, Kirsty	Etobicoke North	Ontario	Lib.
Duncan, Linda	Edmonton—Strathcona	Alberta	NDP
Dusseault, Pierre-Luc	Sherbrooke	Québec	NDP
Dykstra, Rick, Parliamentary Secretary to the Minister of Citizenship and Immigration	St. Catharines	Ontario	CPC
Easter, Hon. Wayne	Malpeque	Prince Edward Island	Lib.
Eyking, Hon. Mark	Sydney—Victoria	Nova Scotia	Lib.
Fantino, Hon. Julian, Associate Minister of National Defence	Vaughan	Ontario	CPC
Fast, Hon. Ed, Minister of International Trade and Minister for the Asia-Pacific Gateway	Abbotsford	British Columbia	CPC
Findlay, Kerry-Lynne D., Parliamentary Secretary to the Minister of Justice	Delta—Richmond East	British Columbia	CPC
Finley, Hon. Diane, Minister of Human Resources and Skills Development	Haldimand—Norfolk	Ontario	CPC
Flaherty, Hon. Jim, Minister of Finance	Whitby—Oshawa	Ontario	CPC
Fletcher, Hon. Steven, Minister of State (Transport)	Charleswood—St. James—Assiniboia	Manitoba	CPC
Foote, Judy	Random—Burin—St. George's	Newfoundland and Labrador	Lib.
Fortin, Jean-François	Haute-Gaspésie—La Mitis—Matane—Matapédia	Québec	BQ
Freeman, Mylène	Argenteuil—Papineau—Mirabel	Québec	NDP
Fry, Hon. Hedy	Vancouver Centre	British Columbia	Lib.
Galipeau, Royal	Ottawa—Orléans	Ontario	CPC
Gallant, Cheryl	Renfrew—Nipissing—Pembroke	Ontario	CPC
Garneau, Marc	Westmount—Ville-Marie	Québec	Lib.
Garrison, Randall	Esquimalt—Juan de Fuca	British Columbia	NDP
Genest, Réjean	Shefford	Québec	NDP
Genest-Jourdain, Jonathan	Manicouagan	Québec	NDP
Giguère, Alain	Marc-Aurèle-Fortin	Québec	NDP

Name of Member	Constituency	Province of Constituency	Political Affiliation
Gill, Parm	Brampton—Springdale	Ontario	CPC
Glover, Shelly, Parliamentary Secretary to the Minister of Finance	Saint Boniface	Manitoba	CPC
Godin, Yvon	Acadie—Bathurst	New Brunswick	NDP
Goguen, Robert, Parliamentary Secretary to the Minister of Justice	Moncton—Riverview—Dieppe	New Brunswick	CPC
Goldring, Peter	Edmonton East	Alberta	Ind. Cons.
Goodale, Hon. Ralph	Wascana	Saskatchewan	Lib.
Goodyear, Hon. Gary, Minister of State (Science and Technology) (Federal Economic Development Agency for Southern Ontario)	Cambridge	Ontario	CPC
Gosal, Hon. Bal, Minister of State (Sport)	Bramalea—Gore—Malton	Ontario	CPC
Gourde, Jacques, Parliamentary Secretary to the Minister of Public Works and Government Services, for Official Languages and for the Economic Development Agency for the Regions of Quebec	Lotbinière—Chutes-de-la-Chaudière	Québec	CPC
Gravelle, Claude	Nickel Belt	Ontario	NDP
Grewal, Nina	Fleetwood—Port Kells	British Columbia	CPC
Groguhé, Sadia	Saint-Lambert	Québec	NDP
Harper, Right Hon. Stephen, Prime Minister	Calgary Southwest	Alberta	CPC
Harris, Dan	Scarborough Southwest	Ontario	NDP
Harris, Jack	St. John's East	Newfoundland and Labrador	NDP
Harris, Richard	Cariboo—Prince George	British Columbia	CPC
Hassainia, Sana	Verchères—Les Patriotes	Québec	NDP
Hawn, Hon. Laurie	Edmonton Centre	Alberta	CPC
Hayes, Bryan	Sault Ste. Marie	Ontario	CPC
Hiebert, Russ	South Surrey—White Rock—Cloverdale	British Columbia	CPC
Hillyer, Jim	Lethbridge	Alberta	CPC
Hoback, Randy	Prince Albert	Saskatchewan	CPC
Hoepfner, Candice, Parliamentary Secretary to the Minister of Public Safety	Portage—Lisgar	Manitoba	CPC
Holder, Ed	London West	Ontario	CPC
Hsu, Ted	Kingston and the Islands	Ontario	Lib.
Hughes, Carol	Algoma—Manitoulin—Kapuskasung	Ontario	NDP
Hyer, Bruce	Thunder Bay—Superior North	Ontario	NDP
Jacob, Pierre	Brome—Missisquoi	Québec	NDP
James, Roxanne	Scarborough Centre	Ontario	CPC
Jean, Brian	Fort McMurray—Athabasca	Alberta	CPC
Julian, Peter	Burnaby—New Westminster	British Columbia	NDP
Kamp, Randy, Parliamentary Secretary to the Minister of Fisheries and Oceans and for the Asia-Pacific Gateway	Pitt Meadows—Maple Ridge—Mission	British Columbia	CPC
Karygiannis, Hon. Jim	Scarborough—Agincourt	Ontario	Lib.
Keddy, Gerald, Parliamentary Secretary to the Minister of International Trade, for the Atlantic Canada Opportunities Agency and for the Atlantic Gateway	South Shore—St. Margaret's	Nova Scotia	CPC
Kellway, Matthew	Beaches—East York	Ontario	NDP
Kenney, Hon. Jason, Minister of Citizenship, Immigration and Multiculturalism	Calgary Southeast	Alberta	CPC
Kent, Hon. Peter, Minister of the Environment	Thornhill	Ontario	CPC
Kerr, Greg	West Nova	Nova Scotia	CPC
Komarnicki, Ed	Souris—Moose Mountain	Saskatchewan	CPC
Kramp, Daryl	Prince Edward—Hastings	Ontario	CPC

Name of Member	Constituency	Province of Constituency	Political Affiliation
Lake, Mike, Parliamentary Secretary to the Minister of Industry ...	Edmonton—Mill Woods— Beaumont.....	Alberta	CPC
Lamoureux, Kevin	Winnipeg North	Manitoba	Lib.
Lapointe, François	Montmagny—L'Islet— Kamouraska—Rivière-du-Loup	Québec	NDP
Larose, Jean-François	Repentigny	Québec	NDP
Latendresse, Alexandrine	Louis-Saint-Laurent.....	Québec	NDP
Lauzon, Guy.....	Stormont—Dundas—South Glengary	Ontario	CPC
Laverdière, Hélène	Laurier—Sainte-Marie	Québec	NDP
Lebel, Hon. Denis, Minister of Transport, Infrastructure and Communities and Minister of the Economic Development Agency of Canada for the Regions of Quebec	Roberval—Lac-Saint-Jean.....	Québec	CPC
LeBlanc, Hon. Dominic	Beauséjour.....	New Brunswick.....	Lib.
LeBlanc, Hélène.....	LaSalle—Émard.....	Québec	NDP
Leef, Ryan	Yukon.....	Yukon	CPC
Leitch, Kellie, Parliamentary Secretary to the Minister of Human Resources and Skills Development and to the Minister of Labour	Simcoe—Grey	Ontario	CPC
Lemieux, Pierre, Parliamentary Secretary to the Minister of Agriculture.....	Glengarry—Prescott—Russell .	Ontario	CPC
Leslie, Megan	Halifax	Nova Scotia	NDP
Leung, Chungsen, Parliamentary Secretary for Multiculturalism ...	Willowdale	Ontario	CPC
Liu, Laurin.....	Rivière-des-Mille-Îles.....	Québec	NDP
Lizon, Wladyslaw	Mississauga East—Cooksville .	Ontario	CPC
Lobb, Ben	Huron—Bruce.....	Ontario	CPC
Lukiwski, Tom, Parliamentary Secretary to the Leader of the Government in the House of Commons	Regina—Lumsden—Lake Centre.....	Saskatchewan	CPC
Lunney, James.....	Nanaimo—Alberni	British Columbia	CPC
MacAulay, Hon. Lawrence	Cardigan	Prince Edward Island....	Lib.
MacKay, Hon. Peter, Minister of National Defence	Central Nova	Nova Scotia	CPC
MacKenzie, Dave	Oxford	Ontario	CPC
Mai, Hoang	Brossard—La Prairie	Québec	NDP
Marston, Wayne	Hamilton East—Stoney Creek .	Ontario	NDP
Martin, Pat.....	Winnipeg Centre	Manitoba	NDP
Masse, Brian.....	Windsor West	Ontario	NDP
Mathysen, Irene	London—Fanshawe.....	Ontario	NDP
May, Elizabeth	Saanich—Gulf Islands.....	British Columbia	GP
Mayes, Colin	Okanagan—Shuswap	British Columbia	CPC
McCallum, Hon. John	Markham—Unionville.....	Ontario	Lib.
McColeman, Phil.....	Brant	Ontario	CPC
McGuinty, David.....	Ottawa South.....	Ontario	Lib.
McKay, Hon. John	Scarborough—Guildwood.....	Ontario	Lib.
McLeod, Cathy, Parliamentary Secretary to the Minister of National Revenue.....	Kamloops—Thompson— Cariboo	British Columbia	CPC
Menegakis, Costas	Richmond Hill	Ontario	CPC
Menzies, Hon. Ted, Minister of State (Finance)	Macleod	Alberta	CPC
Merrifield, Hon. Rob	Yellowhead	Alberta	CPC
Michaud, Éline	Portneuf—Jacques-Cartier.....	Québec	NDP
Miller, Larry	Bruce—Grey—Owen Sound...	Ontario	CPC
Moore, Christine	Abitibi—Témiscamingue	Québec	NDP

Name of Member	Constituency	Province of Constituency	Political Affiliation
Moore, Hon. James, Minister of Canadian Heritage and Official Languages.....	Port Moody—Westwood—Port Coquitlam	British Columbia	CPC
Moore, Hon. Rob	Fundy Royal	New Brunswick.....	CPC
Morin, Dany	Chicoutimi—Le Fjord	Québec	NDP
Morin, Isabelle	Notre-Dame-de-Grâce—Lachine	Québec	NDP
Morin, Marc-André	Laurentides—Labelle	Québec	NDP
Morin, Marie-Claude.....	Saint-Hyacinthe—Bagot	Québec	NDP
Mourani, Maria.....	Ahuntsic	Québec	BQ
Mulcair, Thomas	Outremont	Québec	NDP
Murray, Joyce	Vancouver Quadra	British Columbia	Lib.
Nantel, Pierre	Longueuil—Pierre-Boucher	Québec	NDP
Nash, Peggy	Parkdale—High Park	Ontario	NDP
Nicholls, Jamie	Vaudreuil-Soulanges	Québec	NDP
Nicholson, Hon. Rob, Minister of Justice and Attorney General of Canada	Niagara Falls	Ontario	CPC
Norlock, Rick	Northumberland—Quinte West	Ontario	CPC
Nunez-Melo, José	Laval.....	Québec	NDP
O'Connor, Hon. Gordon, Minister of State and Chief Government Whip	Carleton—Mississippi Mills....	Ontario	CPC
O'Neill Gordon, Tilly	Miramichi	New Brunswick.....	CPC
Obhrai, Deepak, Parliamentary Secretary to the Minister of Foreign Affairs.....	Calgary East.....	Alberta	CPC
Oda, Hon. Bev, Minister of International Cooperation	Durham	Ontario	CPC
Oliver, Hon. Joe, Minister of Natural Resources	Eglinton—Lawrence	Ontario	CPC
Opitz, Ted	Etobicoke Centre.....	Ontario	CPC
Pacetti, Massimo	Saint-Léonard—Saint-Michel ..	Québec	Lib.
Papillon, Annick	Québec.....	Québec	NDP
Paradis, Hon. Christian, Minister of Industry and Minister of State (Agriculture)	Mégantic—L'Érable.....	Québec	CPC
Patry, Claude	Jonquière—Alma	Québec	NDP
Payne, LaVar	Medicine Hat.....	Alberta	CPC
Péclet, Ève.....	La Pointe-de-l'Île.....	Québec	NDP
Penashue, Hon. Peter, Minister of Intergovernmental Affairs and President of the Queen's Privy Council for Canada	Labrador	Newfoundland and Labrador.....	CPC
Perreault, Manon	Montcalm.....	Québec	NDP
Pilon, François	Laval—Les Îles	Québec	NDP
Plamondon, Louis	Bas-Richelieu—Nicolet—Bécancour	Québec	BQ
Poilievre, Pierre, Parliamentary Secretary to the Minister of Transport, Infrastructure and Communities and for the Federal Economic Development Agency for Southern Ontario	Nepean—Carleton	Ontario	CPC
Preston, Joe	Elgin—Middlesex—London ...	Ontario	CPC
Quach, Anne Minh-Thu	Beauharnois—Salaberry	Québec	NDP
Rae, Hon. Bob	Toronto Centre	Ontario	Lib.
Rafferty, John.....	Thunder Bay—Rainy River	Ontario	NDP
Raitt, Hon. Lisa, Minister of Labour	Halton	Ontario	CPC
Rajotte, James	Edmonton—Leduc	Alberta	CPC
Rathgeber, Brent	Edmonton—St. Albert.....	Alberta	CPC
Ravnat, Mathieu.....	Pontiac.....	Québec	NDP
Raynault, Francine	Joliette	Québec	NDP

Name of Member	Constituency	Province of Constituency	Political Affiliation
Regan, Hon. Geoff	Halifax West	Nova Scotia	Lib.
Reid, Scott	Lanark—Frontenac—Lennox and Addington	Ontario	CPC
Rempel, Michelle, Parliamentary Secretary to the Minister of the Environment	Calgary Centre-North	Alberta	CPC
Richards, Blake	Wild Rose	Alberta	CPC
Richardson, Lee	Calgary Centre	Alberta	CPC
Rickford, Greg, Parliamentary Secretary to the Minister of Aboriginal Affairs and Northern Development, for the Canadian Northern Economic Development Agency and for the Federal Economic Development Initiative for Northern Ontario	Kenora	Ontario	CPC
Ritz, Hon. Gerry, Minister of Agriculture and Agri-Food and Minister for the Canadian Wheat Board	Battlefords—Lloydminster	Saskatchewan	CPC
Rousseau, Jean	Compton—Stanstead	Québec	NDP
Saganash, Romeo	Abitibi—Baie-James—Nunavik —Eeyou	Québec	NDP
Sandhu, Jasbir	Surrey North	British Columbia	NDP
Savoie, Denise, The Deputy Speaker	Victoria	British Columbia	NDP
Saxton, Andrew, Parliamentary Secretary to the President of the Treasury Board and for Western Economic Diversification	North Vancouver	British Columbia	CPC
Scarpaleggia, Francis	Lac-Saint-Louis	Québec	Lib.
Scheer, Hon. Andrew, Speaker of the House of Commons	Regina—Qu'Appelle	Saskatchewan	CPC
Schellenberger, Gary	Perth—Wellington	Ontario	CPC
Seeback, Kyle	Brampton West	Ontario	CPC
Sellah, Djaouida	Saint-Bruno—Saint-Hubert	Québec	NDP
Sgro, Hon. Judy	York West	Ontario	Lib.
Shea, Hon. Gail, Minister of National Revenue	Egmont	Prince Edward Island	CPC
Shiple, Bev	Lambton—Kent—Middlesex	Ontario	CPC
Shory, Devinder	Calgary Northeast	Alberta	CPC
Simms, Scott	Bonavista—Gander—Grand Falls—Windsor	Newfoundland and Labrador	Lib.
Sims, Jinny Jogindera	Newton—North Delta	British Columbia	NDP
Sitsabaiesan, Rathika	Scarborough—Rouge River	Ontario	NDP
Smith, Joy	Kildonan—St. Paul	Manitoba	CPC
Sopuck, Robert	Dauphin—Swan River— Marquette	Manitoba	CPC
Sorenson, Kevin	Crowfoot	Alberta	CPC
St-Denis, Lise	Saint-Maurice—Champlain	Québec	Lib.
Stanton, Bruce, The Acting Speaker	Simcoe North	Ontario	CPC
Stewart, Kennedy	Burnaby—Douglas	British Columbia	NDP
Stoffer, Peter	Sackville—Eastern Shore	Nova Scotia	NDP
Storseth, Brian	Westlock—St. Paul	Alberta	CPC
Strahl, Mark	Chilliwack—Fraser Canyon	British Columbia	CPC
Sullivan, Mike	York South—Weston	Ontario	NDP
Sweet, David	Ancaster—Dundas— Flamborough—Westdale	Ontario	CPC
Thibeault, Glenn	Sudbury	Ontario	NDP
Tilson, David	Dufferin—Caledon	Ontario	CPC
Toet, Lawrence	Elmwood—Transcona	Manitoba	CPC
Toews, Hon. Vic, Minister of Public Safety	Provencher	Manitoba	CPC
Toone, Philip	Gaspésie—Îles-de-la-Madeleine	Québec	NDP

Name of Member	Constituency	Province of Constituency	Political Affiliation
Tremblay, Jonathan	Montmorency—Charlevoix— Haute-Côte-Nord	Québec	NDP
Trost, Brad	Saskatoon—Humboldt	Saskatchewan	CPC
Trottier, Bernard	Etobicoke—Lakeshore	Ontario	CPC
Trudeau, Justin	Papineau	Québec	Lib.
Truppe, Susan, Parliamentary Secretary for Status of Women	London North Centre	Ontario	CPC
Turmel, Nycole, Leader of the Opposition	Hull—Aylmer	Québec	NDP
Tweed, Merv	Brandon—Souris	Manitoba	CPC
Uppal, Hon. Tim, Minister of State (Democratic Reform)	Edmonton—Sherwood Park	Alberta	CPC
Valcourt, Hon. Bernard, Minister of State (Atlantic Canada Opportunities Agency) (La Francophonie)	Madawaska—Restigouche	New Brunswick	CPC
Valeriote, Frank	Guelph	Ontario	Lib.
Van Kesteren, Dave	Chatham-Kent—Essex	Ontario	CPC
Van Loan, Hon. Peter, Leader of the Government in the House of Commons	York—Simcoe	Ontario	CPC
Vellacott, Maurice	Saskatoon—Wanuskewin	Saskatchewan	CPC
Wallace, Mike	Burlington	Ontario	CPC
Warawa, Mark	Langley	British Columbia	CPC
Warkentin, Chris	Peace River	Alberta	CPC
Watson, Jeff	Essex	Ontario	CPC
Weston, John	West Vancouver—Sunshine Coast—Sea to Sky Country	British Columbia	CPC
Weston, Rodney	Saint John	New Brunswick	CPC
Wilks, David	Kootenay—Columbia	British Columbia	CPC
Williamson, John	New Brunswick Southwest	New Brunswick	CPC
Wong, Hon. Alice, Minister of State (Seniors)	Richmond	British Columbia	CPC
Woodworth, Stephen	Kitchener Centre	Ontario	CPC
Yelich, Hon. Lynne, Minister of State (Western Economic Diversi- fication)	Blackstrap	Saskatchewan	CPC
Young, Terence	Oakville	Ontario	CPC
Young, Wai	Vancouver South	British Columbia	CPC
Zimmer, Bob	Prince George—Peace River	British Columbia	CPC
VACANCY	Toronto—Danforth	Ontario	

ALPHABETICAL LIST OF MEMBERS OF THE HOUSE OF COMMONS BY PROVINCE

First Session—Forty-first Parliament

Name of Member	Constituency	Political Affiliation
ALBERTA (28)		
Ablonczy, Hon. Diane, Minister of State of Foreign Affairs (Americas and Consular Affairs)	Calgary—Nose Hill	CPC
Ambrose, Hon. Rona, Minister of Public Works and Government Services and Minister for Status of Women	Edmonton—Spruce Grove	CPC
Anders, Rob	Calgary West	CPC
Benoit, Leon	Vegreville—Wainwright	CPC
Calkins, Blaine	Wetaskiwin	CPC
Dreeshen, Earl	Red Deer	CPC
Duncan, Linda	Edmonton—Strathcona	NDP
Goldring, Peter	Edmonton East	Ind. Cons.
Harper, Right Hon. Stephen, Prime Minister	Calgary Southwest	CPC
Hawn, Hon. Laurie	Edmonton Centre	CPC
Hillyer, Jim	Lethbridge	CPC
Jean, Brian	Fort McMurray—Athabasca	CPC
Kenney, Hon. Jason, Minister of Citizenship, Immigration and Multiculturalism	Calgary Southeast	CPC
Lake, Mike, Parliamentary Secretary to the Minister of Industry	Edmonton—Mill Woods—Beaumont	CPC
Menzies, Hon. Ted, Minister of State (Finance)	Macleod	CPC
Merrifield, Hon. Rob	Yellowhead	CPC
Obhrai, Deepak, Parliamentary Secretary to the Minister of Foreign Affairs	Calgary East	CPC
Payne, LaVar	Medicine Hat	CPC
Rajotte, James	Edmonton—Leduc	CPC
Rathgeber, Brent	Edmonton—St. Albert	CPC
Rempel, Michelle, Parliamentary Secretary to the Minister of the Environment	Calgary Centre-North	CPC
Richards, Blake	Wild Rose	CPC
Richardson, Lee	Calgary Centre	CPC
Shory, Devinder	Calgary Northeast	CPC
Sorenson, Kevin	Crowfoot	CPC
Storseth, Brian	Westlock—St. Paul	CPC
Uppal, Hon. Tim, Minister of State (Democratic Reform)	Edmonton—Sherwood Park	CPC
Warkentin, Chris	Peace River	CPC
BRITISH COLUMBIA (36)		
Albas, Dan	Okanagan—Coquihalla	CPC
Atamanenko, Alex	British Columbia Southern Interior	NDP
Cannan, Ron	Kelowna—Lake Country	CPC
Crowder, Jean	Nanaimo—Cowichan	NDP
Cullen, Nathan	Skeena—Bulkley Valley	NDP
Davies, Don	Vancouver Kingsway	NDP
Davies, Libby	Vancouver East	NDP
Donnelly, Fin	New Westminster—Coquitlam	NDP
Duncan, Hon. John, Minister of Aboriginal Affairs and Northern Development	Vancouver Island North	CPC
Fast, Hon. Ed, Minister of International Trade and Minister for the Asia-Pacific Gateway	Abbotsford	CPC
Findlay, Kerry-Lynne D., Parliamentary Secretary to the Minister of Justice	Delta—Richmond East	CPC

Name of Member	Constituency	Political Affiliation
Fry, Hon. Hedy	Vancouver Centre	Lib.
Garrison, Randall	Esquimalt—Juan de Fuca	NDP
Grewal, Nina	Fleetwood—Port Kells	CPC
Harris, Richard	Cariboo—Prince George	CPC
Hiebert, Russ	South Surrey—White Rock—Cloverdale	CPC
Julian, Peter	Burnaby—New Westminster	NDP
Kamp, Randy, Parliamentary Secretary to the Minister of Fisheries and Oceans and for the Asia-Pacific Gateway	Pitt Meadows—Maple Ridge—Mission	CPC
Lunney, James	Nanaimo—Alberni	CPC
May, Elizabeth	Saanich—Gulf Islands	GP
Mayes, Colin	Okanagan—Shuswap	CPC
McLeod, Cathy, Parliamentary Secretary to the Minister of National Revenue	Kamloops—Thompson—Cariboo	CPC
Moore, Hon. James, Minister of Canadian Heritage and Official Languages	Port Moody—Westwood—Port Coquitlam	CPC
Murray, Joyce	Vancouver Quadra	Lib.
Sandhu, Jasbir	Surrey North	NDP
Savoie, Denise, The Deputy Speaker	Victoria	NDP
Saxton, Andrew, Parliamentary Secretary to the President of the Treasury Board and for Western Economic Diversification	North Vancouver	CPC
Sims, Jinny Jogindera	Newton—North Delta	NDP
Stewart, Kennedy	Burnaby—Douglas	NDP
Strahl, Mark	Chilliwack—Fraser Canyon	CPC
Warawa, Mark	Langley	CPC
Weston, John	West Vancouver—Sunshine Coast—Sea to Sky Country	CPC
Wilks, David	Kootenay—Columbia	CPC
Wong, Hon. Alice, Minister of State (Seniors)	Richmond	CPC
Young, Wai	Vancouver South	CPC
Zimmer, Bob	Prince George—Peace River	CPC
MANITOBA (14)		
Ashton, Niki	Churchill	NDP
Bateman, Joyce	Winnipeg South Centre	CPC
Bezan, James	Selkirk—Interlake	CPC
Bruinooge, Rod	Winnipeg South	CPC
Fletcher, Hon. Steven, Minister of State (Transport)	Charleswood—St. James—Assiniboia	CPC
Glover, Shelly, Parliamentary Secretary to the Minister of Finance	Saint Boniface	CPC
Hoepfner, Candice, Parliamentary Secretary to the Minister of Public Safety	Portage—Lisgar	CPC
Lamoureux, Kevin	Winnipeg North	Lib.
Martin, Pat	Winnipeg Centre	NDP
Smith, Joy	Kildonan—St. Paul	CPC
Sopuck, Robert	Dauphin—Swan River—Marquette	CPC
Toet, Lawrence	Elmwood—Transcona	CPC
Toews, Hon. Vic, Minister of Public Safety	Provencher	CPC
Tweed, Merv	Brandon—Souris	CPC
NEW BRUNSWICK (10)		
Allen, Mike	Tobique—Mactaquac	CPC
Ashfield, Hon. Keith, Minister of Fisheries and Oceans and Minister for the Atlantic Gateway	Fredericton	CPC

Name of Member	Constituency	Political Affiliation
Godin, Yvon	Acadie—Bathurst	NDP
Goguen, Robert, Parliamentary Secretary to the Minister of Justice	Moncton—Riverview—Dieppe	CPC
LeBlanc, Hon. Dominic	Beauséjour	Lib.
Moore, Hon. Rob	Fundy Royal	CPC
O'Neill Gordon, Tilly	Miramichi	CPC
Valcourt, Hon. Bernard, Minister of State (Atlantic Canada Opportunities Agency) (La Francophonie)	Madawaska—Restigouche	CPC
Weston, Rodney	Saint John	CPC
Williamson, John	New Brunswick Southwest	CPC
NEWFOUNDLAND AND LABRADOR (7)		
Andrews, Scott	Avalon	Lib.
Byrne, Hon. Gerry	Humber—St. Barbe—Baie Verte	Lib.
Cleary, Ryan	St. John's South—Mount Pearl	NDP
Foote, Judy	Random—Burin—St. George's	Lib.
Harris, Jack	St. John's East	NDP
Penashue, Hon. Peter, Minister of Intergovernmental Affairs and President of the Queen's Privy Council for Canada	Labrador	CPC
Simms, Scott	Bonavista—Gander—Grand Falls—Windsor	Lib.
NORTHWEST TERRITORIES (1)		
Bevington, Dennis	Western Arctic	NDP
NOVA SCOTIA (11)		
Armstrong, Scott	Cumberland—Colchester—Musquodoboit Valley	CPC
Brison, Hon. Scott	Kings—Hants	Lib.
Chisholm, Robert	Dartmouth—Cole Harbour	NDP
Cuzner, Rodger	Cape Breton—Canso	Lib.
Eyking, Hon. Mark	Sydney—Victoria	Lib.
Keddy, Gerald, Parliamentary Secretary to the Minister of International Trade, for the Atlantic Canada Opportunities Agency and for the Atlantic Gateway	South Shore—St. Margaret's	CPC
Kerr, Greg	West Nova	CPC
Leslie, Megan	Halifax	NDP
MacKay, Hon. Peter, Minister of National Defence	Central Nova	CPC
Regan, Hon. Geoff	Halifax West	Lib.
Stoffer, Peter	Sackville—Eastern Shore	NDP
NUNAVUT (1)		
Aglukkaq, Hon. Leona, Minister of Health and Minister of the Canadian Northern Economic Development Agency	Nunavut	CPC
ONTARIO (105)		
Adams, Eve, Parliamentary Secretary to the Minister of Veterans Affairs	Mississauga—Brampton South	CPC
Adler, Mark	York Centre	CPC
Albrecht, Harold	Kitchener—Conestoga	CPC
Alexander, Chris, Parliamentary Secretary to the Minister of National Defence	Ajax—Pickering	CPC
Allen, Malcolm	Welland	NDP

Name of Member	Constituency	Political Affiliation
Allison, Dean	Niagara West—Glanbrook	CPC
Ambler, Stella	Mississauga South	CPC
Angus, Charlie	Timmins—James Bay	NDP
Aspin, Jay	Nipissing—Timiskaming	CPC
Baird, Hon. John, Minister of Foreign Affairs	Ottawa West—Nepean	CPC
Bélanger, Hon. Mauril	Ottawa—Vanier	Lib.
Bennett, Hon. Carolyn	St. Paul's	Lib.
Braid, Peter	Kitchener—Waterloo	CPC
Brown, Gordon	Leeds—Grenville	CPC
Brown, Lois, Parliamentary Secretary to the Minister of International Cooperation	Newmarket—Aurora	CPC
Brown, Patrick	Barrie	CPC
Butt, Brad	Mississauga—Streetsville	CPC
Calandra, Paul, Parliamentary Secretary to the Minister of Canadian Heritage	Oak Ridges—Markham	CPC
Carmichael, John	Don Valley West	CPC
Carrie, Colin, Parliamentary Secretary to the Minister of Health	Oshawa	CPC
Cash, Andrew	Davenport	NDP
Charlton, Chris	Hamilton Mountain	NDP
Chisu, Corneliu	Pickering—Scarborough East	CPC
Chong, Hon. Michael	Wellington—Halton Hills	CPC
Chow, Olivia	Trinity—Spadina	NDP
Christopherson, David	Hamilton Centre	NDP
Clement, Hon. Tony, President of the Treasury Board and Minister for the Federal Economic Development Initiative for Northern Ontario	Parry Sound—Muskoka	CPC
Comartin, Joe	Windsor—Tecumseh	NDP
Daniel, Joe	Don Valley East	CPC
Davidson, Patricia	Sarnia—Lambton	CPC
Dechert, Bob, Parliamentary Secretary to the Minister of Foreign Affairs	Mississauga—Erindale	CPC
Del Mastro, Dean, Parliamentary Secretary to the Prime Minister and to the Minister of Intergovernmental Affairs	Peterborough	CPC
Devolin, Barry, The Acting Speaker	Haliburton—Kawartha Lakes—Brock	CPC
Dewar, Paul	Ottawa Centre	NDP
Duncan, Kirsty	Etobicoke North	Lib.
Dykstra, Rick, Parliamentary Secretary to the Minister of Citizenship and Immigration	St. Catharines	CPC
Fantino, Hon. Julian, Associate Minister of National Defence	Vaughan	CPC
Finley, Hon. Diane, Minister of Human Resources and Skills Development	Haldimand—Norfolk	CPC
Flaherty, Hon. Jim, Minister of Finance	Whitby—Oshawa	CPC
Galipeau, Royal	Ottawa—Orléans	CPC
Gallant, Cheryl	Renfrew—Nipissing—Pembroke	CPC
Gill, Parm	Brampton—Springdale	CPC
Goodyear, Hon. Gary, Minister of State (Science and Technology) (Federal Economic Development Agency for Southern Ontario)	Cambridge	CPC
Gosal, Hon. Bal, Minister of State (Sport)	Bramalea—Gore—Malton	CPC
Gravelle, Claude	Nickel Belt	NDP
Harris, Dan	Scarborough Southwest	NDP
Hayes, Bryan	Sault Ste. Marie	CPC
Holder, Ed	London West	CPC
Hsu, Ted	Kingston and the Islands	Lib.
Hughes, Carol	Algoma—Manitoulin—Kapusking	NDP
Hyer, Bruce	Thunder Bay—Superior North	NDP

Name of Member	Constituency	Political Affiliation
James, Roxanne	Scarborough Centre	CPC
Karygiannis, Hon. Jim	Scarborough—Agincourt	Lib.
Kellway, Matthew	Beaches—East York	NDP
Kent, Hon. Peter, Minister of the Environment	Thornhill	CPC
Kramp, Daryl	Prince Edward—Hastings	CPC
Lauzon, Guy	Stormont—Dundas—South Glengarry	CPC
Leitch, Kellie, Parliamentary Secretary to the Minister of Human Resources and Skills Development and to the Minister of Labour	Simcoe—Grey	CPC
Lemieux, Pierre, Parliamentary Secretary to the Minister of Agriculture	Glengarry—Prescott—Russell	CPC
Leung, Chungsen, Parliamentary Secretary for Multiculturalism	Willowdale	CPC
Lizon, Wladyslaw	Mississauga East—Cooksville	CPC
Lobb, Ben	Huron—Bruce	CPC
MacKenzie, Dave	Oxford	CPC
Marston, Wayne	Hamilton East—Stoney Creek	NDP
Masse, Brian	Windsor West	NDP
Mathysen, Irene	London—Fanshawe	NDP
McCallum, Hon. John	Markham—Unionville	Lib.
McColeman, Phil	Brant	CPC
McGuinty, David	Ottawa South	Lib.
McKay, Hon. John	Scarborough—Guildwood	Lib.
Menegakis, Costas	Richmond Hill	CPC
Miller, Larry	Bruce—Grey—Owen Sound	CPC
Nash, Peggy	Parkdale—High Park	NDP
Nicholson, Hon. Rob, Minister of Justice and Attorney General of Canada	Niagara Falls	CPC
Norlock, Rick	Northumberland—Quinte West	CPC
O'Connor, Hon. Gordon, Minister of State and Chief Government Whip	Carleton—Mississippi Mills	CPC
Oda, Hon. Bev, Minister of International Cooperation	Durham	CPC
Oliver, Hon. Joe, Minister of Natural Resources	Eglinton—Lawrence	CPC
Opitz, Ted	Etobicoke Centre	CPC
Poillievre, Pierre, Parliamentary Secretary to the Minister of Transport, Infrastructure and Communities and for the Federal Economic Development Agency for Southern Ontario	Nepean—Carleton	CPC
Preston, Joe	Elgin—Middlesex—London	CPC
Rae, Hon. Bob	Toronto Centre	Lib.
Rafferty, John	Thunder Bay—Rainy River	NDP
Raitt, Hon. Lisa, Minister of Labour	Halton	CPC
Reid, Scott	Lanark—Frontenac—Lennox and Addington	CPC
Rickford, Greg, Parliamentary Secretary to the Minister of Aboriginal Affairs and Northern Development, for the Canadian Northern Economic Development Agency and for the Federal Economic Development Initiative for Northern Ontario	Kenora	CPC
Schellenberger, Gary	Perth—Wellington	CPC
Seeback, Kyle	Brampton West	CPC
Sgro, Hon. Judy	York West	Lib.
Shiple, Bev	Lambton—Kent—Middlesex	CPC
Sitsabaiesan, Rathika	Scarborough—Rouge River	NDP
Stanton, Bruce, The Acting Speaker	Simcoe North	CPC
Sullivan, Mike	York South—Weston	NDP
Sweet, David	Ancaster—Dundas—Flamborough—Westdale	CPC
Thibeault, Glenn	Sudbury	NDP

Name of Member	Constituency	Political Affiliation
Tilson, David	Dufferin—Caledon	CPC
Trottier, Bernard	Etobicoke—Lakeshore	CPC
Truppe, Susan, Parliamentary Secretary for Status of Women	London North Centre	CPC
Valeriote, Frank	Guelph	Lib.
Van Kesteren, Dave	Chatham-Kent—Essex	CPC
Van Loan, Hon. Peter, Leader of the Government in the House of Commons	York—Simcoe	CPC
Wallace, Mike	Burlington	CPC
Watson, Jeff	Essex	CPC
Woodworth, Stephen	Kitchener Centre	CPC
Young, Terence	Oakville	CPC
VACANCY	Toronto—Danforth	

PRINCE EDWARD ISLAND (4)

Casey, Sean	Charlottetown	Lib.
Easter, Hon. Wayne	Malpeque	Lib.
MacAulay, Hon. Lawrence	Cardigan	Lib.
Shea, Hon. Gail, Minister of National Revenue	Egmont	CPC

QUÉBEC (75)

Aubin, Robert	Trois-Rivières	NDP
Ayala, Paulina	Honoré-Mercier	NDP
Bellavance, André	Richmond—Arthabaska	BQ
Benskin, Tyrone	Jeanne-Le Ber	NDP
Bernier, Hon. Maxime, Minister of State (Small Business and Tourism)	Beauce	CPC
Blanchette, Denis	Louis-Hébert	NDP
Blanchette-Lamothe, Lysane	Pierrefonds—Dollard	NDP
Blaney, Hon. Steven, Minister of Veterans Affairs	Lévis—Bellechasse	CPC
Boivin, Françoise	Gatineau	NDP
Borg, Charmaine	Terbonne—Blainville	NDP
Boulerice, Alexandre	Rosemont—La Petite-Patrie	NDP
Boutin-Sweet, Marjolaine	Hochelaga	NDP
Brahmi, Tarik	Saint-Jean	NDP
Brosseau, Ruth Ellen	Berthier—Maskinongé	NDP
Caron, Guy	Rimouski-Neigette—Témiscouata—Les Basques	NDP
Chicoine, Sylvain	Châteauguay—Saint-Constant	NDP
Choquette, François	Drummond	NDP
Coderre, Hon. Denis	Bourassa	Lib.
Côté, Raymond	Beauport—Limoilou	NDP
Cotler, Hon. Irwin	Mount Royal	Lib.
Day, Anne-Marie	Charlesbourg—Haute-Saint-Charles	NDP
Dion, Hon. Stéphane, Saint-Laurent—Cartierville	Saint-Laurent—Cartierville	Lib.
Dionne Labelle, Pierre	Rivière-du-Nord	NDP
Doré Lefebvre, Rosane	Alfred-Pellan	NDP
Dubé, Matthew	Chambly—Borduas	NDP
Dusseault, Pierre-Luc	Sherbrooke	NDP
Fortin, Jean-François	Haute-Gaspésie—La Mitis—Matane—Matapédia	BQ
Freeman, Mylène	Argenteuil—Papineau—Mirabel	NDP

Name of Member	Constituency	Political Affiliation
Garneau, Marc	Westmount—Ville-Marie	Lib.
Genest, Réjean	Shefford	NDP
Genest-Jourdain, Jonathan	Manicouagan	NDP
Giguère, Alain	Marc-Aurèle-Fortin	NDP
Gourde, Jacques, Parliamentary Secretary to the Minister of Public Works and Government Services, for Official Languages and for the Economic Development Agency for the Regions of Quebec	Lotbinière—Chutes-de-la-Chaudière	CPC
Groghé, Sadia	Saint-Lambert	NDP
Hassainia, Sana	Verchères—Les Patriotes	NDP
Jacob, Pierre	Brome—Missisquoi	NDP
Lapointe, François	Montmagny—L'Islet—Kamouraska—Rivière-du-Loup	NDP
Larose, Jean-François	Repentigny	NDP
Latendresse, Alexandrine	Louis-Saint-Laurent	NDP
Laverdière, Hélène	Laurier—Sainte-Marie	NDP
Lebel, Hon. Denis, Minister of Transport, Infrastructure and Communities and Minister of the Economic Development Agency of Canada for the Regions of Quebec	Roberval—Lac-Saint-Jean	CPC
LeBlanc, Hélène	LaSalle—Émard	NDP
Liu, Laurin	Rivière-des-Mille-Îles	NDP
Mai, Hoang	Brossard—La Prairie	NDP
Michaud, Éline	Portneuf—Jacques-Cartier	NDP
Moore, Christine	Abitibi—Témiscamingue	NDP
Morin, Dany	Chicoutimi—Le Fjord	NDP
Morin, Isabelle	Notre-Dame-de-Grâce—Lachine	NDP
Morin, Marc-André	Laurentides—Labelle	NDP
Morin, Marie-Claude	Saint-Hyacinthe—Bagot	NDP
Mourani, Maria	Ahuntsic	BQ
Mulcair, Thomas	Outremont	NDP
Nantel, Pierre	Longueuil—Pierre-Boucher	NDP
Nicholls, Jamie	Vaudreuil-Soulanges	NDP
Nunez-Melo, José	Laval	NDP
Pacetti, Massimo	Saint-Léonard—Saint-Michel	Lib.
Papillon, Annick	Québec	NDP
Paradis, Hon. Christian, Minister of Industry and Minister of State (Agriculture)	Mégantic—L'Érable	CPC
Patry, Claude	Jonquière—Alma	NDP
Péclet, Ève	La Pointe-de-l'Île	NDP
Perreault, Manon	Montcalm	NDP
Pilon, François	Laval—Les Îles	NDP
Plamondon, Louis	Bas-Richelieu—Nicolet—Bécancour	BQ
Quach, Anne Minh-Thu	Beauharnois—Salaberry	NDP
Ravignat, Mathieu	Pontiac	NDP
Raynault, Francine	Joliette	NDP
Rousseau, Jean	Compton—Stanstead	NDP
Saganash, Romeo	Abitibi—Baie-James—Nunavik—Eeyou	NDP
Scarpaleggia, Francis	Lac-Saint-Louis	Lib.
Sellah, Djaouida	Saint-Bruno—Saint-Hubert	NDP
St-Denis, Lise	Saint-Maurice—Champlain	Lib.
Toone, Philip	Gaspésie—Îles-de-la-Madeleine	NDP
Tremblay, Jonathan	Montmorency—Charlevoix—Haute-Côte-Nord	NDP

Name of Member	Constituency	Political Affiliation
Trudeau, Justin	Papineau	Lib.
Turmel, Nycole, Leader of the Opposition	Hull—Aylmer	NDP
SASKATCHEWAN (14)		
Anderson, David, Parliamentary Secretary to the Minister of Natural Resources and for the Canadian Wheat Board	Cypress Hills—Grasslands	CPC
Block, Kelly	Saskatoon—Rosetown—Biggar	CPC
Boughen, Ray	Palliser	CPC
Breitkreuz, Garry	Yorkton—Melville	CPC
Clarke, Rob	Desnethé—Mississippi—Churchill River	CPC
Goodale, Hon. Ralph	Wascana	Lib.
Hoback, Randy	Prince Albert	CPC
Komarnicki, Ed	Souris—Moose Mountain	CPC
Lukiwski, Tom, Parliamentary Secretary to the Leader of the Government in the House of Commons	Regina—Lumsden—Lake Centre	CPC
Ritz, Hon. Gerry, Minister of Agriculture and Agri-Food and Minister for the Canadian Wheat Board	Battlefords—Lloydminster	CPC
Scheer, Hon. Andrew, Speaker of the House of Commons	Regina—Qu'Appelle	CPC
Trost, Brad	Saskatoon—Humboldt	CPC
Vellacott, Maurice	Saskatoon—Wanuskewin	CPC
Yelich, Hon. Lynne, Minister of State (Western Economic Diversification)	Blackstrap	CPC
YUKON (1)		
Leef, Ryan	Yukon	CPC

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Earl DreeshenPierre-Luc Dusseault
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AGRICULTURE AND AGRI-FOOD

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CANADIAN HERITAGE

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MS. JOYCE MURRAY

MR. BRENT RATHGEBER

MR. GARY SCHELLENBERGER

MR. GLENN THIBEAULT

THE MINISTRY

According to precedence

Right Hon. Stephen Harper	Prime Minister
Hon. Rob Nicholson	Minister of Justice and Attorney General of Canada
Hon. Marjory LeBreton	Leader of the Government in the Senate
Hon. Peter MacKay	Minister of National Defence
Hon. Vic Toews	Minister of Public Safety
Hon. Rona Ambrose	Minister of Public Works and Government Services and Minister for Status of Women
Hon. Diane Finley	Minister of Human Resources and Skills Development
Hon. Bev Oda	Minister of International Cooperation
Hon. John Baird	Minister of Foreign Affairs
Hon. Tony Clement	President of the Treasury Board and Minister for the Federal Economic Development Initiative for Northern Ontario
Hon. Jim Flaherty	Minister of Finance
Hon. Peter Van Loan	Leader of the Government in the House of Commons
Hon. Jason Kenney	Minister of Citizenship, Immigration and Multiculturalism
Hon. Gerry Ritz	Minister of Agriculture and Agri-Food and Minister for the Canadian Wheat Board
Hon. Christian Paradis	Minister of Industry and Minister of State (Agriculture)
Hon. James Moore	Minister of Canadian Heritage and Official Languages
Hon. Denis Lebel	Minister of Transport, Infrastructure and Communities and Minister of the Economic Development Agency of Canada for the Regions of Quebec
Hon. Leona Aglukkaq	Minister of Health and Minister of the Canadian Northern Economic Development Agency
Hon. Keith Ashfield	Minister of Fisheries and Oceans and Minister for the Atlantic Gateway
Hon. Peter Kent	Minister of the Environment
Hon. Lisa Raitt	Minister of Labour
Hon. Gail Shea	Minister of National Revenue
Hon. John Duncan	Minister of Aboriginal Affairs and Northern Development
Hon. Steven Blaney	Minister of Veterans Affairs
Hon. Ed Fast	Minister of International Trade and Minister for the Asia-Pacific Gateway
Hon. Joe Oliver	Minister of Natural Resources
Hon. Peter Penashue	Minister of Intergovernmental Affairs and President of the Queen's Privy Council for Canada
Hon. Julian Fantino	Associate Minister of National Defence
Hon. Bernard Valcourt	Minister of State (Atlantic Canada Opportunities Agency) (La Francophonie)
Hon. Gordon O'Connor	Minister of State and Chief Government Whip
Hon. Maxime Bernier	Minister of State (Small Business and Tourism)
Hon. Diane Ablonczy	Minister of State of Foreign Affairs (Americas and Consular Affairs)
Hon. Lynne Yelich	Minister of State (Western Economic Diversification)
Hon. Steven Fletcher	Minister of State (Transport)
Hon. Gary Goodyear	Minister of State (Science and Technology) (Federal Economic Development Agency for Southern Ontario)
Hon. Ted Menzies	Minister of State (Finance)
Hon. Tim Uppal	Minister of State (Democratic Reform)
Hon. Alice Wong	Minister of State (Seniors)
Hon. Bal Gosal	Minister of State (Sport)

PARLIAMENTARY SECRETARIES

Mr. Dean Del Mastro	to the Prime Minister and to the Minister of Intergovernmental Affairs
Ms. Kerry-Lynne D. Findlay	to the Minister of Justice
Mr. Robert Goguen	to the Minister of Justice
Mr. Chris Alexander	to the Minister of National Defence
Ms. Candice Hooppner	to the Minister of Public Safety
Mr. Jacques Gourde	to the Minister of Public Works and Government Services, for Official Languages and for the Economic Development Agency for the Regions of Quebec
Mrs. Susan Truppe	for Status of Women
Ms. Kellie Leitch	to the Minister of Human Resources and Skills Development and to the Minister of Labour
Ms. Lois Brown	to the Minister of International Cooperation
Mr. Deepak Obhrai	to the Minister of Foreign Affairs
Mr. Bob Dechert	to the Minister of Foreign Affairs
Mr. Andrew Saxton	to the President of the Treasury Board and for Western Economic Diversification
Mrs. Shelly Glover	to the Minister of Finance
Mr. Tom Lukiwski	to the Leader of the Government in the House of Commons
Mr. Rick Dykstra	to the Minister of Citizenship and Immigration
Mr. Chungsen Leung	for Multiculturalism
Mr. Pierre Lemieux	to the Minister of Agriculture
Mr. Mike Lake	to the Minister of Industry
Mr. Paul Calandra	to the Minister of Canadian Heritage
Mr. Pierre Poilievre	to the Minister of Transport, Infrastructure and Communities and for the Federal Economic Development Agency for Southern Ontario
Mr. Colin Carrie	to the Minister of Health
Mr. Randy Kamp	to the Minister of Fisheries and Oceans and for the Asia-Pacific Gateway
Ms. Michelle Rempel	to the Minister of the Environment
Mrs. Cathy McLeod	to the Minister of National Revenue
Mr. Greg Rickford	to the Minister of Aboriginal Affairs and Northern Development, for the Canadian Northern Economic Development Agency and for the Federal Economic Development Initiative for Northern Ontario
Ms. Eve Adams	to the Minister of Veterans Affairs
Mr. Gerald Keddy	to the Minister of International Trade, for the Atlantic Canada Opportunities Agency and for the Atlantic Gateway
Mr. David Anderson	to the Minister of Natural Resources and for the Canadian Wheat Board

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