



HOUSE OF COMMONS
CHAMBRE DES COMMUNES
CANADA

House of Commons Debates

VOLUME 148 • NUMBER 418 • 1st SESSION • 42nd PARLIAMENT

OFFICIAL REPORT
(HANSARD)

Thursday, May 16, 2019

—

Speaker: The Honourable Geoff Regan

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HOUSE OF COMMONS

Thursday, May 16, 2019

The House met at 10 a.m.

Prayer

ROUTINE PROCEEDINGS

• (1005)
[*English*]

PARLIAMENTARY BUDGET OFFICER

The Speaker: Pursuant to subsection 79.2(2) of the Parliament of Canada Act, it is my duty to present to the House a report from the Parliamentary Budget Officer entitled “Costs Associated with Replacing the Federal Pay System”.

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THE ENVIRONMENT

Hon. Catherine McKenna (Minister of Environment and Climate Change, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, pursuant to Standing Order 32 (2), I have the honour to table, in both official languages, Canada's climate change report for 2019.

[*Translation*]

This report is about how and why Canada's climate has changed and what changes are projected for the future.

* * *

[*English*]

GOVERNMENT RESPONSE TO PETITIONS

Mr. Kevin Lamoureux (Parliamentary Secretary to the Leader of the Government in the House of Commons, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, pursuant to Standing Order 36(8), I have the honour to table, in both official languages, the government's response to 21 petitions.

* * *

[*Translation*]

COMMITTEES OF THE HOUSE

PUBLIC SAFETY AND NATIONAL SECURITY

Mr. Pierre Paul-Hus (Charlesbourg—Haute-Saint-Charles, CPC): Mr. Speaker, I have the honour to present, in both official languages, the 33rd report of the Standing Committee on Public

Safety and National Security, entitled “Study on Crime in Rural Areas in Canada”.

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

[*English*]

Mr. Glen Motz (Medicine Hat—Cardston—Warner, CPC): Mr. Speaker, it is with profound sadness and disappointment that I find it necessary to rise on behalf of the official opposition and speak about our Conservative dissenting report to Motion No. 167 on rural crime.

It has been more than a year since a motion to study rural crime was presented in this House and passed unanimously, and 168 days since we finished hearing from witnesses. The study sought recommendations to help Canadians deal with the very serious and profound issue of rural crime.

In almost six months, the Liberal members on the public safety committee have only managed to put together a page and a half, two pages at best, with no real recommendations: two pages, after hearing from numerous witnesses with heartbreaking stories, to respond to a growing rural crime crisis in this country.

It is just shameful. It is another example of the Liberals neglecting their duty to protect Canadians. It is no surprise that the NDP and the Conservatives have tabled dissenting opinions to a very dismissive government report, opinions required to be as short as the government report, by parliamentary rules, unfortunately.

No Canadians should feel that their government is ignoring a crime wave crisis. For thousands of rural Canadians across this country, that is the clear message sent today by the Liberal government.

MOTION NO. 167—INSTRUCTION TO THE STANDING COMMITTEE ON PUBLIC SAFETY—SPEAKER'S STATEMENT

The Speaker: The report of the Standing Committee on Public Safety and National Security was presented a few moments ago. Given the point of order raised on May 9, 2019, by the hon. member for Lakeland regarding Motion No. 167, which was a motion of instruction to that committee, I would like to make a statement.

Routine Proceedings

As members will recall, in raising her point of order, the member for Lakeland explained that, on May 30, 2018, the House adopted Motion No. 167, which was an order to the Standing Committee on Public Safety and National Security to study the matter of rural crime and to report its findings to the House no later than six months following the adoption of the said motion. The committee did not respect this reporting obligation. More than five months after the deadline, which was November 30, 2018, the member brought to the attention of the Chair the failure of the committee to comply with that order.

[Translation]

In response, the chair of the committee, the member for Scarborough—Guildwood, provided explanations for the committee's delay.

Despite missing the fixed deadline to report to the House, as Speaker, I am satisfied that the committee did finally report on Motion No. 167.

[English]

While the Chair understands well the dynamics of committees and the different, sometimes conflicting, viewpoints that may arise in their deliberations, this does not excuse a committee from its obligation to respect orders of the House that pertain to its work, such as Motion No. 167. The fact that committees are masters of their proceedings does not allow them to ignore this obligation. Should difficulties arise in carrying out an order of the House, as may happen, it remains incumbent on the committee to ask for an extension to a deadline it cannot meet by means of a report to the House so that it may then decide whether or not to grant it.

[Translation]

With the report of the Standing Committee on Public Safety and National Security having now been presented to the House, I consider the matter closed.

I thank all hon. members for their attention.

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[English]

OLD AGE SECURITY ACT

Ms. Rachel Blaney (North Island—Powell River, NDP) moved for leave to introduce Bill C-449, An Act to amend the Old Age Security Act (monthly guaranteed income supplement).

She said: Mr. Speaker, I am incredibly proud to be standing here to introduce this practical piece of legislation. In July 2016, my office received the first of what turned out to be many individual calls. A woman in her eighties had not received her guaranteed income supplement. She did not receive it because she had been very sick earlier in the year and was a month late getting her taxes in.

The seniors in this country who receive GIS are some of those at highest risk for not maintaining the most basic of necessities. For this woman's life, it meant that she would not be able to afford her rent. We worked with her and we had her GIS reinstated. We worked with her landlord and ensured that she was not evicted. However, her experience, and those of tens of thousands of seniors across Canada, can be stopped. Too often, these seniors have their benefits paused

for up to four months because their taxes came in late, most often due to sickness, being in the hospital or dealing with a death.

This bill would give seniors who receive GIS a one-year grace period to get their taxes completed. This will stop tens of thousands of seniors from losing the money that pays for their medication, housing and food. Seventy-five per cent of GIS recipients see an increase in their benefits after being reassessed. These are not seniors trying to trick the system; these are seniors facing multiple challenges, and this bill would help. I hope all members in the House will support it.

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

* * *

● (1010)

CANADA HEALTH ACT

Hon. K. Kellie Leitch (Simcoe—Grey, CPC) moved for leave to introduce Bill C-450, An Act to amend the Canada Health Act.

She said: Mr. Speaker, I am pleased to present this bill.

[Translation]

I recently held nationwide consultations on the state of health care in Canada.

[English]

I met elderly people waiting for hip replacements and parents with kids waiting for mental health assessments. In Canada, there is an explicit agreement about health care. The state provides health care services and, in exchange, Canadians expect that their loved ones will be taken care of: except that the state is not keeping up its end of the bargain. Politicians get to say when and where people get their care, but they are not accountable to deliver health care in a timely manner. This is wrong. We need to take the politics out of health care.

[Translation]

My bill would amend the act to add a sixth principle, accountability. What I mean is the government's accountability to the patients it serves.

[English]

Accountability means that insured health services must be delivered in a timely manner. This is the health care guarantee that Liberal Senator Michael Kirby spoke of in his report. Accountability means that governments must be more responsive to patients' needs. Accountability was considered as a founding principle in the 1960s but was not included in the final five. It is time that it was.

Routine Proceedings

CANADA SUMMER JOBS INITIATIVE

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

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CHILDREN'S HEALTH COMMISSIONER OF CANADA ACT

Hon. K. Kellie Leitch (Simcoe—Grey, CPC) moved for leave to introduce Bill C-451, An Act to establish a Children's Health Commissioner of Canada.

She said: Mr. Speaker, I am pleased to introduce this private member's bill today. In 2007, I authored a report called "Reaching for the Top: A Report by the Advisor on Healthy Children and Youth".

[Translation]

In that report, I recommended that Canada create a national office of child and youth health.

[English]

This private member's bill is a long culmination of that report.

[Translation]

It is now more urgent than ever to establish a commissioner. Canada is ranked at the bottom of the list for most children's health indicators.

[English]

Indigenous children and children with disabilities fare far worse than other Canadian kids. Poor health in childhood is proven to lead to poor health in adults. We need to take the health of children in this country seriously.

Earlier this year, I introduced the children's fitness tax credit, which I proposed as a start. However, we need an advocate. We need someone whose exclusive mission is the promotion of children, someone who can work with government to ensure that legislation improves the health of kids, someone who would work with think tanks, the private sector and parents to raise awareness about improving the outcomes for children.

A children's health commissioner of Canada, the one recommended in this bill, is exactly that person. I ask all members in this House to join me in supporting the creation of this important position, which would help improve the health of Canadian children.

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

* * *

● (1015)

PETITIONS

PHYSICIAN-ASSISTED DYING

Mr. Dave Van Kesteren (Chatham-Kent—Leamington, CPC): Mr. Speaker, I have a number of petitions to present.

The first one is a petition asking that the Parliament of Canada enshrine in the Criminal Code the protection of conscience for physicians and health care institutions from coercion or intimidation to provide or refer for assisted suicide or euthanasia.

Mr. Dave Van Kesteren (Chatham-Kent—Leamington, CPC): Mr. Speaker, next, I have a number of petitions in which the petitioners call upon the Prime Minister to defend the freedoms of conscience, thought and belief and to withdraw the attestation requirement for applications to the summer jobs program.

PALLIATIVE CARE

Mr. Dave Van Kesteren (Chatham-Kent—Leamington, CPC): Mr. Speaker, finally, I have a number of petitions calling upon Parliament to establish a national strategy for palliative care.

EYE HEALTH

Hon. Judy A. Sgro (Humber River—Black Creek, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, I am pleased to present a petition on behalf of many Canadians with respect to a national framework for action to promote eye health and vision care.

Petitioners call upon the Government of Canada to commit to acknowledging eye health and vision care as a growing public health issue and respond to it, particularly with Canada's vulnerable population such as children, seniors, diabetics and indigenous peoples, through the development of a national framework for action to promote eye health and vision care, which will benefit all Canadians through the reduction of vision impairment resulting from preventable conditions and the modification of known risk factors.

TRANS MOUNTAIN PIPELINE

Mr. Peter Julian (New Westminster—Burnaby, NDP): Mr. Speaker, I am pleased to present a petition today signed by residents of New Westminster—Burnaby and Surrey, British Columbia. They add their names to thousands of Canadians, and particularly British Columbians, who have spoken out.

The petitioners are calling on the government to abandon the Trans Mountain pipeline expansion project. They say that the Trans Mountain pipeline project will cost billions of dollars, which could be better used to fund pharmacare, child care and housing projects. The petitioners are concerned about the environmental risks, the tremendous impact on greenhouse gas emissions and the fact that indigenous peoples have not given their consent.

Therefore, the petitioners call on the Government of Canada to reverse its decision to purchase the Trans Mountain pipeline; to respect the rights of first nations, Métis and Inuit communities to self-governance and free, prior and informed consent; and to abandon any and all plans to continue the expansion of the Trans Mountain pipeline.

[Translation]

PENSIONS

Ms. Marjolaine Boutin-Sweet (Hochelaga, NDP): Mr. Speaker, the people who signed this petition want to draw the government's attention to the fact that, before the 2015 election, the Liberals promised that the defined pension benefit plan that people had already contributed to would not be retroactively changed into a target benefit plan. However, that is exactly what the finance minister's Bill C-27 does.

Routine Proceedings

The petitioners are calling on the government to withdraw this unfair bill.

[*English*]

SEX SELECTION

Mrs. Kelly Block (Carlton Trail—Eagle Creek, CPC): Mr. Speaker, I am honoured to rise and table 57 petitions on behalf of thousands of Canadians who are concerned about the absence of legislation regarding the use of ultrasounds to determine the gender of an unborn child.

A CBC documentary has revealed that ultrasounds are being used in Canada to determine the sex of an unborn child so expectant parents can then choose to terminate the pregnancy if the unborn child is female.

The petitioners call on the government to support legislation that would make sex-selective abortion illegal.

I trust the government will deal expeditiously with the concerns of these citizens.

• (1020)

PALLIATIVE CARE

Mrs. Kelly Block (Carlton Trail—Eagle Creek, CPC): Mr. Speaker, I am also honoured to rise to table nine petitions on behalf of hundreds of residents of Saskatchewan and British Columbia. The residents believe that hospice palliative care improves the quality of life for patients and relieves their suffering, pain or illness, but that it is not accessible enough or available to all Canadians.

The petitioners call on the Government of Canada to identify hospice palliative care as a defined medical service covered under the Canada Health Act and to dedicate funds under the Canada health and transfer system to be used in providing available hospice palliative care to Canadians in all provinces and territories.

I trust the government will deal expeditiously with the concerns of these citizens as well.

KILLER WHALES

Ms. Elizabeth May (Saanich—Gulf Islands, GP): Mr. Speaker, it is an honour to rise today to present a petition from residents within Saanich—Gulf Islands, particularly from areas in north Saanich, in Victoria and in a number of the Gulf Islands. The concerns expressed by the residents are for the preservation of a population on the verge of extinction, the southern resident killer whales.

The petitioners call for more action, as has been undertaken in the state of Washington, to do more to protect this very vulnerable population from the impact of whale-watching vessels and other commercial vessels; to prohibit commercial recreational whale watching during crucial breeding and calving periods; to enhance the compulsory distance and speed restrictions for commercial and recreational whale-watching vessels; and a number of other specific and robust measures to preserve the southern resident killer whale population.

GOVERNMENT POLICIES

Hon. Candice Bergen (Portage—Lisgar, CPC): Mr. Speaker, I rise today to present a petition with thousands of signatures from

Canadians from every part of the country, calling on the Prime Minister to resign. The petitioners are not doing this lightly. This is unprecedented. It is because these Canadians believe the Prime Minister has lost the moral authority to govern.

Given the cover-up that he has been embroiled in with SNC-Lavalin and other ethical lapses, Canadians are seeing that the Prime Minister, who said he would be a leader with ethics, an open leader, somebody who was transparent, has indeed been the exact opposite. Because of that, literally tens of thousands of Canadians are joining with us and calling on the Prime Minister to resign.

I want the petitioners to know that we are in the last days of this Parliament and an election is coming up. However, I wanted to present this petition on their behalf and ask that the government look at this seriously and look at the reasons behind this petition.

PENSIONS

Ms. Rachel Blaney (North Island—Powell River, NDP): Mr. Speaker, today I have two petitions to table in the House.

The first is largely from the members of the Comox Valley, who call on the government to withdraw Bill C-27. The concern is that prior to the 2015 federal election, Canadians were clearly promised, in writing, that the defined benefits plans, which have already been paid for by employees and pensioners, should not be retroactively changed into target benefit plans.

The petitioners are very passionate about this and call on the government to do the right thing and withdraw Bill C-27.

TELECOMMUNICATIONS

Ms. Rachel Blaney (North Island—Powell River, NDP): Mr. Speaker, the second petition that am tabling in the House today is quite significant. With hundreds of signatures, this is the third petition I have tabled on this very important issue. People from communities like Sointula, Alert Bay, Port McNeill, Port Alice and Port Hardy have signed the petition to the Minister of Rural Economic Development. It points out that in the region of Highway 19, cellular phone service is not good.

This is an important public safety concern as it is sometimes necessary to travel more than 30 minutes to reach a cellphone service area or a landline to contact 911 in case of an accident or a need for roadside assistance. This is so important, and we saw that when a young man was trapped in his vehicle for seven days and luckily survived with the resources he had in his vehicle.

The petitioners ask the minister to intervene with the Canadian Radio-television and Telecommunications Commission and the local service provider to ensure there is continuous coverage on Highway 19 to satisfy the need for public safety.

Government Orders

TRANS MOUNTAIN PIPELINE

Mr. Fin Donnelly (Port Moody—Coquitlam, NDP): Mr. Speaker, I rise to present a petition to the House of Commons from petitioners mainly from New Westminster—Burnaby in Vancouver, who join thousands of Canadians, calling on the Government of Canada to abandon the Trans Mountain pipeline expansion project.

Their concern is that the Trans Mountain pipeline was purchased from Kinder Morgan, a Texas-based oil company, for \$4.5 billion, which puts all Canadians at risk to a plethora of environmental risks, including an increase in the daily amount of oil produced by the pipeline, which would drastically increase greenhouse gases in Canada. The real cost to taxpayers purchasing the pipeline and carrying out the related expansion could be as much as \$12 billion, which could be better used for pharmacare, child care and housing projects across Canada.

The petitioners therefore call on the Government of Canada to reverse its decision to purchase the Trans Mountain pipeline and respect the rights of first nations, indigenous and Métis communities to self-governance and free, prior and informed consent and to abandon any and all plans to continue the expansion of the Trans Mountain pipeline.

* * *

• (1025)

QUESTIONS ON THE ORDER PAPER

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

The Deputy Speaker: Is that agreed?

Some hon. members: Agreed.

GOVERNMENT ORDERS

[*English*]

THE ENVIRONMENT

Hon. Catherine McKenna (Minister of Environment and Climate Change, Lib.) moved:

That the House recognize that: (a) climate change is a real and urgent crisis, driven by human activity, that impacts the environment, biodiversity, Canadians' health, and the Canadian economy; (b) Canadians are feeling the impacts of climate change today, from flooding, wildfires, heat waves and other extreme weather events which are projected to intensify in the future; (c) climate change impacts communities across Canada, with coastal, northern and Indigenous communities particularly vulnerable to its effects; and (d) action to support clean growth and meaningfully reduce greenhouse gas emissions in all parts of the economy are necessary to ensure a safer, healthier, cleaner and more prosperous future for our children and grandchildren; and, therefore, that the House declare that Canada is in a national climate emergency which requires, as a response, that Canada commit to meeting its national emissions target under the Paris Agreement and to making deeper reductions in line with the Agreement's objective of holding global warming below two degrees Celsius and pursuing efforts to keep global warming below 1.5 degrees Celsius.

She said: Mr. Speaker, I am honoured to have the opportunity to address the House of Commons today with respect to our government's motion asking all parliamentarians, elected by Canadians from coast to coast to coast, to acknowledge and declare

that climate change is an emergency, that the science behind climate change is clear and that we all need to come together to meet our international obligations.

Why do we need to do this?

Let us listen to Greta, a 16-year-old girl from Sweden. What did she say? She said, "Our house is falling apart, and our leaders need to start acting accordingly." However, it is not just Greta who is standing up. Young people across Canada are demanding serious climate action from us, elected leaders, who have the ability to act.

[*Translation*]

Louis and Sara, from Quebec, organized the world's largest demonstration, and they are calling for government action on climate change.

[*English*]

Every Friday, Sophia from Sudbury is out on the streets for Fridaysforfuture. Amelia from my riding of Ottawa Centre is putting posters across Ottawa Centre talking about climate change.

Let me tell members about Carter.

Carter is a young Inuit boy from Cambridge Bay. I met him when I was on a ship in the High Arctic. He sat down beside me and said that he was worried about what he was seeing in his community. He thought that some of the impacts he was seeing were being caused by climate change.

I was lucky to be on a ship with my amazing Environment and Climate Change Canada scientists. I had one of them sit down with Carter. Carter started talking about what was happening in Cambridge Bay in his community. He talked about things that broke my heart. He talked about how when hunters went out to hunt, their feet would get stuck in thawing permafrost like quicksand. He talked about the caribou disappearing, the food on which his community relies. Then he said the saddest thing. He talked about how, after a millennia of hunting on snowmobiles, hunters were now falling through the ice because they could no longer tell its thickness.

We need to come together as a country. We need to join governments from around the world that recognize we are in a climate emergency and we need to act like it.

• (1030)

[*Translation*]

Today, I had the opportunity to present our scientists' report on climate change in Canada. This report shows that Canada is warming at twice the global rate and at three times that rate in the north.

[*English*]

That means our oceans are acidifying. That means we see more extreme weather events and we will continue to see more and feel the impacts.

Government Orders

[Translation]

The Arctic and North Atlantic oceans will lose their summer pack ice.

[English]

As sea levels rise, our coastal areas will flood even more.

I do not need to tell Canadians just about the science; let us talk about what is happening.

Right here, in the national capital region, we have seen the impacts of climate change. Three years ago there was a flood, a flood that was supposed to be a once-in-a-hundred-year flood, that devastated communities. Folks were out of their homes. People were sandbagging. People were worried they were losing their homes and livelihoods. They rebuilt. Then what happened?

Last year in the summer, tornados we had never seen before hit the same community. What happened this year? Now these folks are dealing with another flood. This is a flood that was only supposed to happen once in 100 years. Now we are seeing these events every few years.

[Translation]

We can also talk about what happened in Quebec last summer. Temperatures were so extreme that people died. They died because it was too hot.

[English]

Look at what happened out west. Forest fires are burning longer and brighter than ever before. These have real impacts on people. I talked to a mother who worried about whether her kids should go outside because the air quality index was 10 or higher, which meant it was dangerous.

We know the science behind climate change. We know the impacts. It is important that we now come together as a country and act. We may not always agree in the House about which solutions are best, but surely we can agree on the problem, that climate change is an emergency like none we have ever faced before and that we all need to do more to ensure a cleaner, more prosperous future for our kids and grandkids.

[Translation]

Everyone needs to do their part to combat climate change and build a cleaner future for our planet.

[English]

I am the second longest-serving environment minister, and it has been a huge honour. I often reflect on when I started this job. Two days into the job, we were off to the Paris climate negotiations. I was not alone. The Prime Minister was there. Members of the opposition were there. All parties were represented. Premiers, indigenous leaders, business leaders and young people were there. We fought for an ambitious Paris Agreement.

• (1035)

After a decade of inaction, after a decade of stalling on climate action, my colleagues told me they were happy Canada was back at the table to be serious about climate action.

That is what we did. We pushed and we made an ambitious agreement, with recognition of indigenous rights and recognition of the importance of the markets. Then we came back to Canada.

[Translation]

What did we do after that? We had our own work to do, because this is not just about signing an agreement with the world. We need to do our part. For a year, we negotiated with the provinces, territories and indigenous peoples. We heard from Canadians, businesses, environmentalists and youth.

[English]

We listened to Canadians. We negotiated for a whole year, and we came up with a made-in-Canada climate plan that was made by Canadians. That was a very proud moment, because we showed that we could be serious on climate change, that after a decade of inaction we could have a serious plan that brought folks together and took serious action to not only tackle climate change but to grow a clean economy. The reality is that we do not have to choose. The environment and the economy go together in the 21st century. However, that requires work. That requires finding solutions that are unique to Canada.

Let us talk about our climate plan.

Yes, it is no longer free to pollute. I was extremely proud when the Prime Minister announced that it was no longer free to pollute in the country, because if it is free to pollute, there will be more pollution. We are giving the money back to people, because we know life needs to be affordable. We can do both. We can put a price on pollution to reduce emissions and put more money in people's pockets so they can have choices and can be part of the solution when it comes to tackling climate change.

[Translation]

We invested historic amounts in public transportation. We were the only party to say that those investments needed to be made.

[English]

Now we have public transit projects across the country. Right here in Ottawa, light rail transit will mean the largest reduction in greenhouse gas emissions in Ottawa's history.

We have also been investing in our entrepreneurs and inventors. I am seeing clean solutions across the country from coast to coast to coast. It is incredible to see businesses stepping up with clean solutions that not only we but the world desperately needs, which means that we can export and create good jobs right here.

We are also phasing out coal, but we are ensuring a just transition for workers and communities, because everyone has to be part of this transition. We are making historic investments in renewables. We have more than 50 measures outlined in the climate change plan that we made with Canadians. We are moving forward on that plan, and it is making a real difference.

Government Orders

However, we are committed to doing more. That is why we have a sustainable finance task force, with some of the brightest minds trying to figure out how to unleash the trillions of dollars that we need to move to a cleaner future.

[*Translation*]

That is why we have two experts, Vancity's Tamara Vrooman and Steven Guilbeault, from Quebec, advising us on how to do more in the transportation sector and build buildings in ways that reduce greenhouse gas emissions.

[*English*]

We are committed to doing more. We are doubling the amount of nature that we are protecting in Canada. That is a good thing, because Canadians love nature, but we also have a biodiversity crisis that is made worse because of climate change. We just had a report that said the planet may be losing up to a million species, and climate change is one of the major contributing factors. We need to be doing more to take care of what we love—our land, our water, our air, our animals.

We are tackling plastic pollution. The creation of plastics creates emissions and so does getting rid of them, and we have too much plastic. We know that if we do not take action, we will have more plastic pollution in our oceans than we will have fish. That is a huge problem, and it is something that we can solve. We are wasting money by throwing out plastics that have value, billions of dollars. We will find ways to move forward, to ban unnecessary single-use plastics, to innovate and find other solutions and alternatives, and to work with countries around the world, because pollution knows no borders.

Unfortunately, we have an opposition of Conservative politicians from across the country who do not seem to understand that we are in a climate emergency, that we have to do more rather than less, that the science is absolutely clear, and that we have solutions that work.

Previously we had a Progressive Conservative prime minister, Brian Mulroney. He tackled the biggest challenge I faced when I was growing up, which was acid rain. I was worried that we were going to poison our lakes and rivers, and Brian Mulroney stepped up. He pushed the United States to take action with Canada. He listened to scientists. He talked to our business people to find solutions. What else did he do? He put a price on pollution, and we were able to tackle acid rain.

We can do this. We are a great country. We can figure this out. However, the only way we do that is by coming together. Polarization will end any action on climate change. We have seen that story. We have seen that story south of the border. We also see it in places like France.

• (1040)

[*Translation*]

That is where the yellow vests movement started. Of course people want life to be affordable. Fighting climate change has gotten harder. I saw that when I was in France for a G7 meeting last week.

[*English*]

We need to bring Canadians together. In the three and a half years I have been in this job, I realize that yes, we need laws; yes, we need regulations; yes, we need investments, but most of all we need to bring Canadians together.

Canadians, whether a farmer in a small town in Saskatchewan, an Inuk who lives in Cambridge Bay, a person who lives in Prince Edward Island or downtown Toronto or Ottawa centre or British Columbia, care about our environment. Canadians care about clean air and clean water. They want to tackle climate change, but they also want life to be affordable. They also want good jobs. We can do both. We can make sure that the environment and the economy go together.

[*Translation*]

We know how to solve these problems, but we need to stop fighting with each other. People need to stop telling the kind of falsehoods we keep hearing from Conservative politicians and premiers in this country. They say fighting climate change costs too much, so we cannot do it. They think putting a price on pollution is just a way to fill government coffers, but that is not true.

It is false. We have a plan. We put a price on pollution and we are giving that money back. A family of four in Ontario will get \$307.

[*English*]

We are taking action to put a price on pollution but giving the money back to families, such that a family of four in Ontario will get \$307. That is more than 80% of what families pay.

Why would Conservative premiers want to not tell the truth? The truth is that we can tackle climate change and do it in a way that is affordable. Why would there be a sticker campaign to mislead Canadians? Why would there be advertising using taxpayers' dollars to mislead Canadians?

We are bringing this motion today. It is not a partisan motion. Everyone should be able to support it.

What does the motion ask? The motion asks that we recognize that climate change is an emergency, that the science behind climate change is clear, that we need to meet our international obligations.

I know we can do this. I know we are a country that has come together, that has faced so many challenges. Think about the efforts that we put in during the two great wars. We stood up. We stood up as a country. We built this great country, and we are blessed because we have amazing natural resources in this country. We have a beautiful country. Our unspoiled wilderness is one of the largest in the world.

Government Orders

Most of all, we have our people. We were elected by Canadians from coast to coast to coast, who expect us to stand up, who expect us to make decisions based on science, who expect us to take action to tackle climate change, who expect us to come together on the biggest challenge that we face and expect us to answer our kids. Our kids are marching in the streets, demanding that we step up.

We know what the problem is: We have too much pollution. We know what the solutions are and we need to be coming together. It is so critically important that we recognize the science, that we recognize that we have an obligation to come together, as we said we would in Paris, to meet our international obligations, to be serious about tackling climate change, to not fight about whether we need to take action but come together and fight for more action and push each other to look at what more we can do, yet always remembering that people are at the heart of what we do. We need to make sure that we bring folks together.

I have learned in this job that I am the Minister of Environment and Climate Change for all Canadians, not only for environmentalists but also for people who work in the energy sector, for people who live in the north of the country and people who live in major cities. I recognize that. It means that every day I work hard with Canadians to find solutions.

When I look at what is happening, I see towns across the country taking serious action on climate change because they cannot ignore it. When there are floods, they have to be there. When Constance Bay is once again hit by another flood, the elected municipal leaders need to be there. They are there helping to fill sandbags, because they cannot ignore the science on climate change.

I see it with Canadian companies. There are so many incredible companies that are working so hard to tackle climate change. They are coming out with amazing, incredible solutions. Whether it is CarbonCure out of Dartmouth, Nova Scotia, or Carbon Engineering out of Burnaby, these companies are finding amazing solutions. They are showing us what we can do, showing us that we have the ingenuity, that we know what the problems are and can figure out the solutions.

That is why I am asking everyone in this House to come together, to put partisan politics aside and vote for a very simple motion. It is not a complicated motion and it is not a partisan motion. All it asks is that everyone in this House stand together and recognize that the science behind climate change is clear. It points to the fact that we are in a climate emergency and that we need to meet our international obligations.

● (1045)

[*Translation*]

Canadians will be proud.

[*English*]

Canadians will be proud that we can put political differences aside and say that climate change is a problem but that we can tackle it. We were elected by Canadians to stand up and deal with hard issues, to represent them, to show leadership and to be their voices right here in the House of Commons. I ask everyone to recognize that we need to act. We have a climate emergency.

Greta is asking, and children across Canada and around the world are asking, will we be serious? Will we recognize that there is a climate emergency? Will we stand up and take the action we need to and act?

It is their future. We are only borrowing this planet, and we will pass it on to our children and grandchildren. We owe it to them to pass on a sustainable planet. We owe it to them to ensure that they have good jobs and that life is affordable. We owe it them to come together.

[*Translation*]

We need to take action now for our children and grandchildren. They are asking us to. They are marching in the streets every Friday because they want us, their elected representatives, to show leadership. Are we going to stand up and say that there is a climate emergency and we need to come together to meet our international obligations? It is simple.

● (1050)

[*English*]

It is a simple request, and it is actually very reasonable. It is reasonable that they would want us to act. It is reasonable that they would ask us to put aside our partisan differences and actually come together to tackle the most challenging problem we face with the Canadian can-do spirit. We can figure this out. We can provide the solutions the world needs, and we can be creating jobs.

I am very proud that our government has a climate plan that we worked on and developed with Canadians. At the same time, we have created one million jobs. We can do both, which is something we all must recognize. Taking action on climate change is not a choice about the environment or the economy. We can do both. We can grow the economy and take serious action on climate change. That is what Canadians expect us to do, and that is what we are delivering on.

However, if we do not come together, we may lose all of this progress. It is a simple request: that we all stand up for the science behind climate change; that we stand up and recognize that we are in a climate emergency; and that we stand up and say that, yes, we are going to meet our international obligations and we are going to come together to do that.

[*Translation*]

I hope all parliamentarians will vote in favour of this motion and recognize climate change science, the climate emergency and the importance of meeting our international obligations.

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[English]

I know that we can do this. I have seen it across the country. I have seen that Canadians are committed to acting. Now we need to act like leaders. We need to be serious about tackling climate change. We need to come together, and we need to do it now.

The Deputy Speaker: There are a lot of interesting questions. I would ask hon. members to keep their interventions to no more than one minute.

Questions and comments, the hon. member for Abbotsford.

Hon. Ed Fast (Abbotsford, CPC): Mr. Speaker, the minister knows that the environment commissioner, the Auditor General, the United Nations itself, the Pembina Institute, Environmental Defence and the Climate Action Network all say that the minister is not going to meet the Paris targets she actually signed in Paris. I was there and saw her sign. We accepted in good faith that she was going to bring forward a plan that was going to meet those targets. It is very clear that she is not meeting those targets.

David Suzuki, when asked whether the Liberals would meet the Paris targets, said:

No, we're not going to make it. [The Prime Minister] was like, the sun came out and we praised him to the skies...

I emailed him after he signed and asked, "Are you serious about what you just signed?" And he emailed back and said, "I am very serious." We celebrated, we praised him, but the easiest thing to do is sign a document, especially when the end isn't for years and years. He knows bloody well that he's not going to be around in 2030.

Does the minister now admit that her government will not meet the Paris targets?

Hon. Catherine McKenna: Mr. Speaker, we are committed to meeting the targets. We have a plan that gets us three-quarters of the way there without even factoring in things like investments we are making in public transportation, the doubling of protected nature, the investments in innovation and action by provinces.

Do members know what will ensure that we do not get there? It is defeatist attitudes like that. When the Conservatives bring up points like that, it confuses me. Does it mean that they do not want us to meet our obligations?

We are working hard every day. We negotiated a plan with provinces and territories, and we are holding them to account. Provinces led by Conservative politicians have to do what they said they were going to do. After a year of negotiations, we all agreed that there was going to be a price on pollution. We are moving that forward and giving the money back to Canadians. We need to be serious about taking action. We are absolutely all in. I just hope the party opposite is too.

• (1055)

Mr. Nathan Cullen (Skeena—Bulkley Valley, NDP): Mr. Speaker, there are contradictions within this debate. The government talks about this being an emergency and a crisis, but it also went out and bought a \$4.5-billion pipeline, and it plans to expand it by tripling it. It is a bit of a contradiction. I think the minister, in a quiet moment, could admit to do doing harm, while saying that they are doing a benefit, and that the targets will not be met.

I want to speak to her about something very specific, which is larger than even the issue of climate change, and that is our role as parliamentarians. Last night, the Senate committee voted to kill C-48, a government-sponsored bill on the north coast tanker ban, which I had sponsored in a previous Parliament. The government campaigned on this, as did four out of five parties in this House.

This is a democratic question I ask. I think this is the first time in Canadian history that a government-sponsored bill is threatened with defeat at the Senate, which this government reformed, perhaps creating a bad problem and maybe making it worse.

What will the minister do to join with us not only to protect the north coast from the threat of oil spills and to make sure that this bill becomes law but to push back on the unelected and unaccountable Senate that is looking to overturn the democratic will of this House, as expressed by Canadians in the past election? This does not just have an effect now; it will affect future parliaments and the expressed will of Canadian voters in those elections.

Hon. Catherine McKenna: Mr. Speaker, sadly, I know the member opposite is leaving this House. I want to thank him for his efforts on so many files, including on the tanker ban.

I am concerned about what happened. We campaigned on this. We believe that this is critically important. I will do whatever I can to work with the member opposite and the party opposite to make sure that we move forward on this. The Senate has a very important role, but so does Parliament, and this is a very important piece of legislation.

In terms of flip-flops, it is hard taking action on climate change while making sure that we grow the economy and create good jobs. Unfortunately, the leader of the NDP said that he no longer supported LNG. That is 10,000 jobs. It is something I know the member opposite supported, because he knows it creates good jobs in his riding. He also knows that the B.C. NDP government is all in on climate change. My question to the member opposite is why.

Mr. Todd Doherty (Cariboo—Prince George, CPC): Mr. Speaker, throughout her speech, time and again, the minister said that we need to bring Canadians together, that this is about bringing Canadians together and that through their action, they have brought Canadians together. However, we have not seen a more divisive environment since the Prime Minister's father was in office. It is all because of the condescending remarks we hear from the minister, who speaks to Canadians as if they are uneducated. She speaks to parliamentarians as if they are uneducated. However, my question is not going to be about that.

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I want to know how the minister can stand in the House and talk about her climate action plan while still approving billions and billions of litres of raw sewage being emptied into our rivers, lakes and streams.

Hon. Catherine McKenna: Mr. Speaker, let us be clear. The reason municipalities are having challenges with sewage is that the previous government made no investments in waste water treatment facilities. We have made historic investments. I have seen it here in Ottawa, where we have made investments that are going to make a huge difference in making sure that we do not have untreated sewage. This is a top priority of mine, and we are working very hard as a government to make the investments that cities and municipalities need.

Mrs. Alaina Lockhart (Parliamentary Secretary to the Minister of Tourism, Official Languages and La Francophonie, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, Fundy Royal sits on the banks of the Saint John River basin and beside the Bay of Fundy. We have seen the direct impact of climate change. We have seen unprecedented flooding. We have seen coastal erosion. We have seen our local infrastructure overwhelmed.

What is amazing to me is that while the communities in my riding and the people in my riding are turning toward making sure that their homes are more resilient and that their communities are more resilient, we are sitting here having a debate about whether there is actually an emergency. Clearly, there is.

While the opposition seems to be screaming about what this is going to do to kill the economy, I am impressed that the businesses in my riding are coming to me with innovative ideas about a green future. Whether it is biodigesters or upgrades to asphalt operations, they are making changes.

If we could come together and actually agree that there is an emergency here and that we need to take action, how much further could we go to support these communities, these people and these businesses?

• (1100)

Hon. Catherine McKenna: Mr. Speaker, I would like to really thank my hon. colleague for raising what is happening in her riding. This is what is happening across the country. We have businesses that are innovating. We have cities and towns that are figuring this out.

Imagine what we could do if we did not spend time in question period having to answer questions about a price on pollution. We know that a price on pollution works, and we are giving the money back.

Imagine if we spent time asking these questions: What are the big ideas? What are the big innovations? Who are the entrepreneurs and inventors we should be supporting? What more can we do to make communities more resilient to the impacts of climate change they are facing?

Once again, I hope that the House comes together to show Canadians that we understand the science, that we understand that there is urgency and that we are committed to meeting our international obligations and to working together.

[*Translation*]

Ms. Anne Minh-Thu Quach (Salaberry—Suroît, NDP): Mr. Speaker, I note a lot of inconsistencies in the speech made by the minister, who says she is moved by young people who are sounding the alarm and by scientists.

She wants us to rely on reports from IPCC scientists, among others, but her own department recently produced a report that says that, under the current government, greenhouse gas emissions went up by 12 million tonnes over last year.

The cost of inaction is estimated at \$1.6 billion a year, and it could increase to \$43 billion a year because nothing meaningful is happening to reduce our greenhouse gas emissions.

The Liberals are incapable of eliminating fossil fuel subsidies. They are investing in the Trans Mountain pipeline, which triples oil sands production and adds seven times the number of oil tankers at sea, leading to even greater risk. This makes absolutely no sense.

Will they at least commit to eliminating fossil fuel subsidies?

Hon. Catherine McKenna: Mr. Speaker, I thank my colleague for her dedication to fighting climate change.

Our plan includes more than 50 measures, such as phasing out coal, ensuring a fair transition for communities and investing in renewable energies.

Yes, we said we would eliminate inefficient fossil fuel subsidies.

[*English*]

We now have a transparent process. We have eliminated eight out of nine fossil fuel subsidies in our tax system. We have a process.

We have to make sure that there are not unintended consequences. The NDP wants to immediately eliminate fossil fuel subsidies, but what would that mean to northern communities that actually have subsidies to make sure that energy is affordable for them?

We need to figure out the transition. We need to figure out a way that makes sense for people at the heart of it, that makes sure that life is affordable and that we are creating good jobs. Yes, we are absolutely serious about tackling climate change.

The Deputy Speaker: We are out of time.

I appreciate the interest, participation and co-operation of members in keeping their interventions succinct. We will make note of the other members who wish to put questions and comments and make sure that we can get them involved in the debate that follows.

Hon. Ed Fast (Abbotsford, CPC): Mr. Speaker, the minister has a difficult job, and I understand her frustration. She has to defend a climate plan that has failed miserably. She does not know where to turn, because the Prime Minister is jetting around the world, embarrassing Canada on the international stage.

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However, she started her speech by claiming this was a non-partisan issue, when of course the motion before us is fiercely partisan. Then she said, in all those warm and fuzzy statements, that she hoped this House would come together, I guess suggesting there would be a *Kumbaya* moment. Then she launched into a fiercely partisan speech.

In fact, she went so far as to suggest that the Conservative premiers in Canada, namely in Alberta, Saskatchewan, Manitoba, Ontario, New Brunswick and P.E.I., were liars. She said they were not telling truth, and we know that means. We are not allowed to call each other liars in the House, but she said in the House that those premiers were not telling the truth, as if she is the virtuous one telling the truth.

The rest of her speech was, of course, partisan, so how does she expect to bring this House together? How does she expect that Canadians are going to believe her, when her plan has failed so miserably?

Let me talk about the motion. I want to highlight a few parts of it. The motion states in part:

That the House recognize that: (a) climate change is a real and urgent crisis, driven by human activity, that impacts the environment, biodiversity, Canadians' health, and the Canadian economy; (b) Canadians are feeling the impacts of climate change today, from flooding, wildfires, heat waves and other extreme weather events which are projected to intensify in the future; (c) climate change impacts communities across Canada, with coastal, northern and Indigenous communities particularly vulnerable to its effects; and (d) action to support clean growth and meaningfully reduce greenhouse gas emissions in all parts of the economy are necessary to ensure a safer, healthier, cleaner and more prosperous future for our children and grandchildren—

So far, for the most part, we can come to a consensus on this. We might quibble about a few words, but there is general agreement that we have a very serious global climate challenge that needs to be addressed, and Canadians are prepared to do that.

The motion then goes on to say, “and, therefore, that the House declare that Canada is in a national climate emergency which requires, as a response, that Canada commit to meeting its national emissions target under the Paris Agreement”, and I would ask members to remember those words, “and to making deeper reductions in line with the Agreement's objective of holding global warming below two degrees Celsius and pursuing efforts to keep global warming below 1.5 degrees Celsius.”

That is the end of the motion, and the last part of it has some very serious problems for the government. It is the government's motion and the government's climate change plan, so how is that all working out?

Before I comment on that, I want to highlight that all of us in the House acknowledge that climate change is real, that we as humans contribute to climate change, and that we must do our part to address that challenge. I believe Canadians understand that problem. They understand that we face a global challenge that needs to be responded to globally, and that Canada can play a very helpful and constructive role in delivering a lot of the solutions required. I will get into that a little later.

●(1105)

This motion actually has nothing to do with taking meaningful action on climate change. This is effectively political posturing by the Liberals.

Let us think of the timing here. We are days before this Parliament comes to an end. We are on the eve of an election. For almost four years, the current government has done virtually nothing on the climate change file. The plan that the Liberals tabled with the premiers in Vancouver about six months after they were elected is an abject failure. They are scrambling because this is the last piece of their legacy that has any ability to survive, and they come up with a motion declaring a national emergency when actually the challenge is a global one.

It gets worse. The political posturing here is actually jaw-dropping when we place it in the context of the government's record of failure on the climate change file. It is the current government that adopted the Paris targets. By the way, those were the previous Conservative government's targets. Members may remember that the Liberals said they would take those targets but treat them as a floor. The Liberals said they were going to increase those targets. They accepted the Conservative targets and baked them into our Paris Agreement commitments. What happened? We were supposed to make progress. We were supposed to reduce our greenhouse gas emissions by a couple of hundred megatonnes by 2030.

Are we on track to do that? We all know we are not. In fact, the government's own documents show that in 2016 the Liberal government fell 44 megatonnes short of meeting its Paris targets. In 2017, the Liberals were 66 megatonnes short. In 2018, the latest report says they are 79 megatonnes short. We can see that this is going in the wrong direction. The report goes so far as to signal that by the time we hit 2030, the government could be up to 115 megatonnes short of its Paris targets.

This is the party that was doing all the virtue signalling in the last election. The Liberals were the “green party”. They were going to deliver for Canadians. They were going to go to Paris and sign on to really ambitious targets, which ended up being the Stephen Harper targets, and now they are not even meeting those targets. In fact, they are falling so far behind that they have become a bit of an international joke.

I know that because when the minister was at committee a couple of weeks ago, she was asked, point blank, if she was on track to meet her Paris targets. She said yes. Then she was asked if she could provide the committee with any proof that she is going to meet those targets. She responded by holding up this skimpy document with a couple of pages. She said it was right there, and she was pointing to a pie chart.

I have the pie chart here, and it has allocated very specific commitments. One of the commitments is that the Liberals are going to attribute 13 megatonnes of reductions to the role that forests play in Canada. The problem is they do not have any science to back it up.

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●(1110)

They are asking for credits under the Paris Agreement, when the rules to establish those credits are not in place. In fact, even at the last United Nations meeting that discusses these issues, COP24 in Poland, Brazil was holding up consensus on these rules; there is really no immediate prospect that those rules will be in place.

The government is claiming credit for something it does not have the right to claim credit for under the Paris Agreement. It also claims credit for something called additional measures. Nobody knows what additional measures are. We have been trying to figure out what those measures are. They include things like federal, provincial and territorial policies and measures, including those under the Liberals' own failed climate plan, that have been announced but are not yet fully implemented.

Here we are talking about policies that may or may not be implemented and may or may not be effective in reducing greenhouse gas emissions, and effectively what the Liberals are asking us to do is trust them. "Trust us; we know what we are doing," they say. Their plan is failing and they are not meeting targets, but they want us to trust them because they have a plan to make up the difference, the 79 megatonnes or the 115 megatonnes that would still leave us 50% short of our Paris targets. They have a plan.

There is another problem with the pie chart that the minister held up at committee. There is a chunk of proposed policies that would lead to about 79 megatonnes' worth of reductions if we take them at their word. However, right there, in print, it says, "These measures are unmodelled." That means fictitious or illusory. We can come up with a whole bunch of synonyms to describe what that means. "Unmodelled" means they have not actually done the work to figure out if these measures are even going to work to reduce greenhouse gas emissions, but they are putting them in the window so they can mislead Canadians into thinking they have a plan to make up the gap in their failed environment plan.

That is what is happening. It is a charade. By the way, the additional measures the Liberals talk about also include the carbon tax, which of course, right now, is \$20 per tonne of emissions.

Let us talk about the carbon tax. We know that carbon taxes will not do anything to help the environment. We cannot tax our way to a cleaner economy. Here is the problem. It does nothing for the environment, but it puts an unnecessary burden on Canadian families and small businesses, who are already overtaxed.

We know that the tax burden in Canada for the average Canadian family has gone up by about \$800 per year. We also know that 50% of Canadians are \$200 or less away from becoming insolvent. Do we really want to tax them more? Yes, that is what the Liberal plan is. It is a tax plan. It is not a climate plan. Members should remember, the carbon tax is a tax on absolutely everything. It will cost Canadians more to fill their cars with gas. They know that across the country, because gas prices are skyrocketing.

In my province of British Columbia, the price of gas at the pump is \$1.80. Somewhere around 65¢ of that is government taxes, and the Liberals are increasing that. Right now, that carbon tax is \$20 per tonne of emissions. We know that by 2022, it will go up to \$50 per

tonne. We also know, from government documents that I would be glad to show everyone, that the Liberals want to move to a carbon tax of \$200 to \$300 per tonne. That works out to another 66¢ per litre of gas.

●(1115)

I hope Canadians who are watching these proceedings understand what is at stake here. This is a government that loves to spend. Liberal governments are tax-and-spend governments. We know that. It is baked into their gene pool. The Liberals are talking about \$200 to \$300 more per tonne in carbon tax alone, but there is another kicker. Are members aware that the Liberals charge GST on their carbon tax?

It is a tax on a tax. Does any of the GST they collect on the carbon tax go back to Canadians? I am looking at my Liberal friends across the way, because they know the answer: It is no. It goes into government coffers and is spent on the government's own political priorities.

However, it gets worse. The government has said that by the end of June, it is going to announce what it calls its "clean fuel standard". We call it the "Liberal fuel standard". I have had stakeholder after stakeholder in my office, the ones who will be impacted by this clean fuel standard, and I have asked each one of them how much cost this will add. The carbon tax started at \$20. It will go to \$50 by 2022 and will probably go to \$200 to \$300 per tonne in the future. Now, on top of that, we have this fuel standard. How much is that expected to add on top of the carbon tax? The lowest estimate from those stakeholders was \$200 per tonne of emissions, and estimates went as high as \$400 per tonne.

Members can see where this is going. This is a huge, oppressive tax burden being placed on Canadians under a plan that is not working.

I have already shown that the Liberal climate change plan is not working. The Liberals are not meeting their targets. A host of people have confirmed that the Liberals are not meeting their greenhouse gas emissions targets. I will list just some of the many people who have told the minister she is wrong, that she is not meeting the Paris targets and should not con people into thinking she is.

The environment commissioner for Canada has said that. The Auditor General has said it. The United Nations itself has commented on the fact that Canada does not appear to be on track to meet its Paris emissions targets. The Pembina Institute, Environmental Defence, and the Climate Action Network Canada, which are all friends of the Prime Minister, have all said that the government is not going to meet its Paris targets. David Suzuki himself has said that Canada will not meet its targets.

When we look at the Liberals' performance, we see that they have not delivered on what they promised. It is another broken promise by the Prime Minister.

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Members may remember that he promised balanced budgets by 2019. Where is the balanced budget? We now know it will not be balanced until 2040. That is when we could see a balanced budget. When young Canadians understand that, they point out to me that my generation is going to be gone, but they are going to be left holding the bag. They wonder if they will have to pay back the money that has been borrowed. I have to say that yes, that is the case.

The budget is supposed to be balanced by 2040. That date represents another broken promise. Do members remember “small deficits”? A broken promise. Do members remember electoral reform? A broken promise. Then we have the environment plan, with the Liberals saying they are going to meet our Paris targets. It is a broken promise.

I now want to talk a bit more about the Liberal carbon tax.

Liberals are very sensitive. They have a very thin skin. Whenever they are criticized, they fire back and point to the B.C. carbon tax. To them, it is the paragon of virtue when it comes to carbon taxes.

Well, we know that all the promises made with respect to that tax have been broken as well.

• (1120)

It was brought in under the previous Liberal government in British Columbia under Premier Gordon Campbell. For full disclosure, he is a good friend of mine. I believe when he brought this measure forward, his motives were pure. The execution probably was not as good as it could have been, but I think he meant well.

He made three promises. The first promise on this B.C. carbon tax, which these folks are trying to emulate, was that the carbon tax would be capped at \$30 per tonne. How did that work out? Today, the tax in B.C. is \$40 per tonne, and it goes up every year by at least \$5. British Columbians have been had on that one. That is one broken promise.

The second promise was that this was going to reduce overall gas emissions in British Columbia. Today we know that is a broken promise, because emissions continue to go up. Yesterday my NDP colleague from New Westminster suggested they are going down, but all the statistics show that emissions are going up, not down. That is another broken promise.

The third promise was that this tax was going to be revenue neutral, meaning that every dollar that is pulled out of one pocket from a taxpayer goes back in the other pocket in other tax relief. Does that sound familiar? That is really the Liberals' plan.

How did that work out in British Columbia? A new NDP government came in, and the first act of that government was to eliminate the revenue neutrality on that tax. That was another broken promise. Three promises were broken with respect to the carbon tax.

Have members ever asked themselves why, out of the 50 different policies and programs that the minister mentioned in her speech, the only one that is mandatory and is being imposed on the provinces and territories with the heavy hand of the current Prime Minister is the carbon tax? It is the only tool in that 50-tool tool kit. Why is that? Why have the Liberals selected that one and why are they are so

intent on jamming it down the throats of the provinces and territories?

I know, and members know. It is because this is going to be a revenue-raising tool after the election. The Liberals are going to eliminate all these funny cheques they are sending out, and Canadians will be left holding the bag. That is the way it is under Liberal governments. If it happened in British Columbia, sure as shooting it is going to happen with the current Liberal government. The plan is failing. It is actually a tax plan.

Let us talk about who this tax hits the most.

We would assume that a benevolent Liberal government would look out for the most vulnerable, the working poor, the average Canadians who are struggling to make ends meet, and not make them bear the burden of the tax. Instead, the tax would be on the biggest polluters, but do members know what the Liberal climate change plan, the tax plan, will do? It will give the big polluters an exemption of up to 90% on this tax.

Think about that. The average consumer will pay 100% of the tax that is levied. Maybe these folks have great connections to the Prime Minister, because he said the big polluters would only have to pay 10% of the amount they should be paying and that they would get an exemption of 90%. When we add up all of the money that is collected under the carbon tax, what percentage of that do members think the big polluters will have to pay? Of that big pot of money that is going into government coffers from the carbon tax, what portion is being paid by the big polluters, the ones we would expect would pay the most? It is 8%. Canadians, consumers and small businesses are left paying the other 92% of that tax.

That is shameful. That should not be happening.

• (1125)

We should have a plan that treats our taxpayers with respect, that actually makes measurable improvements to the environment, measurable reductions in greenhouse gas emissions. We should not be misleading Canadians about our objectives and our achievements, yet that is what the government is doing. The Liberals are misleading Canadians about their plan, and it is a failed plan.

When we look at this failed plan and the carbon taxes, we see that gas prices in British Columbia are in the order of \$1.80 per litre. If we think of all the other taxes that are being levied and about how the Liberal government is already committed to raising this carbon tax as the years go by, we can see that high gas prices are going to be a reality in Canada if the Liberals are re-elected in October of this year.

However, there is very good news: A plan is coming. We have promised that we will release our environment plan before the end of June. It will be a plan that understands that climate change is a global issue, a global challenge requiring global solutions, and that Canada is perfectly positioned to deliver on many of those solutions. We are world leaders in so many areas; why would we not leverage that excellence to help the world reduce emissions?

Our plan is going to be workable, it is going to be realistic, and it will give Canada the best chance to meet its targets.

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I would like to close by moving this amendment.

I move:

That the motion be amended by deleting all the words after the word “that” and substituting the following:

the House recognize that:

a. climate change is a real and urgent global problem requiring real global solutions and that Canada can and must take a leadership role in developing those global solutions;

(b) human activity has an impact on climate change and its effects impact communities across the country and the world;

(c) Canada and the world must take urgent action to mitigate global climate change and combat its impacts on the environment;

(d) the government's own “Clean Canada” report shows the government is falling short of the Paris targets by 79 million tonnes;

and, therefore, as an alternative to its current proposal to tackle climate change involving a non-binding declaration, the House call upon the government to produce a real climate change plan that will enable Canada to reduce global greenhouse gas emissions according to the targets of the Paris agreement.

That is my amendment.

● (1130)

The Deputy Speaker: The amendment is in order.

Questions and comments, the hon. Parliamentary Secretary to the Minister of Justice.

Mr. Arif Virani (Parliamentary Secretary to the Minister of Justice and Attorney General of Canada and to the Minister of Democratic Institutions, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, I appreciate some of those contributions to today's debate, but I do not have a lot of confidence in the party opposite's plan, for which we have been waiting over a year.

I stand here on behalf of my constituents from Parkdale—High Park. They recognize that there is national climate emergency. I recognize that there is a national climate emergency. I think most parties in the House recognize that there is a national climate emergency. However, it is telling that the word “emergency” is not used in the proposed amendment to today's motion by the member opposite.

I would hope the Conservatives and the member appreciates that when we look at this issue, we have to look at it much more broadly, including addressing things like plastics. Canadians are concerned about plastics and plastic pollution. We see instances, such as Roncy Reduces in my riding, where residents are taking the initiative, along with businesses, to reduce these plastics and encourage the use of reusable plastic containers.

Is that the kind of initiative we need more of at the national, provincial and local levels, including in the member's riding?

● (1135)

Hon. Ed Fast: Mr. Speaker, this is the kind of issue on which we could probably make common cause. The member knows, I believe, that the government plans to release a plastics pollution strategy before the end of June. At the same time, at the environment committee, we have been undertaking a comprehensive study on plastics pollution.

Will I tell him what our plans for plastics are going forward? He will have to wait until we roll out our environment plan prior to the end of June. However, I can assure him that we are cognizant of the

fact that plastics pollution is a challenge in Canada, but it is an even greater elsewhere around the world when we think of places like southeast Asia, south Asia and China. On oceans plastic pollution, we have a significant challenge. As parliamentarians, we should be working together on that.

Mr. Fin Donnelly (Port Moody—Coquitlam, NDP): Mr. Speaker, I listened closely to my colleague, the member for Abbotsford. He has pointed out that the government is dramatically failing on meeting its Paris accord climate change targets, and we certainly agree. He mentioned environmental organizations, like the Pembina Institute, and he quoted Dr. David Suzuki.

Therefore, why are the hon. member and his Conservative senators blocking Bill C-48, the west coast tanker ban, from becoming law? Why are the Conservatives saying one thing but doing another? Could he explain that?

Hon. Ed Fast: Mr. Speaker, I am sorry the member is retiring. I know he is going to spend more time with his family, which is a good decision to make. However, we will miss him in this place. This is probably the last time I will have the chance to publicly say that to him. I have appreciated his friendship. We have been working on one file together.

However, Bill C-48, the tanker ban, intends to shut down resource development in Canada, more particularly, the development of our oil and gas resources. That is the purpose of this ban. Our party wants to find the appropriate balance between the environment and the economy, something the NDP has never understood. The Liberals are having trouble understanding that, because they have a climate change plan that is failing because it is a tax plan.

I would encourage the member to re-evaluate what Bill C-48 actually represents. It is a smack in the face to Alberta and Saskatchewan, which are trying to get those cleaner products out to international markets. Somehow those members think it is a good thing to shut down that effort.

Ms. Karen Ludwig (New Brunswick Southwest, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, as the member of Parliament for New Brunswick Southwest and also the chair of the New Brunswick caucus, I have reached out several times to the Higgs provincial government to meet over climate change.

I wonder if my hon. colleague in the opposition has had an opportunity to reach out to B.C. Premier John Horgan to ask if he has approached or needs help with the B.C. Utilities Commission to look at regulating gas prices in British Columbia?

Hon. Ed Fast: Mr. Speaker, I believe Premier Horgan is suggesting that if the government's heavy hand would suddenly interfere in the marketplace, that would be a very dangerous road to go down. Premier Horgan does not appreciate the value of the oil and gas sector and our resource sector. He has made it very clear that he does not want to get Canadian oil and gas products to foreign markets, which is produced in a more environmentally-sustainable way than any oil and gas in any other country. He is against getting that product to foreign markets and getting maximum value for the resources with which this country has been blessed.

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To answer the member's question, I do not believe that Mr. Horgan is, in any way, amenable to supporting a marketplace and finding better ways of reducing taxes than the heavy hand of regulation. The way to reduce gas prices is by reducing taxes, eliminating carbon taxes which, of course, he is not prepared to do, because it is such a significant source of revenue for his cash-and-spend government.

• (1140)

Ms. Marilyn Gladu (Sarnia—Lambton, CPC): Mr. Speaker, my hon. colleague talked about how the government was misleading Canadians on some of the parts of this climate action plan. I want to talk about one specifically.

The minister has been telling Canadians that the climate action rebate is an example of how they will get all the money they pay on the carbon tax back. This year when I filed my annual taxes, I got \$169 for the annual climate action rebate. However, the cost of gas has become \$10 more every time I fill up. If I fill up more than 50 times a year, which is about what I do, that is more than \$500. Already, I am not getting everything back, and that is before we talk about the cost of home heating and the fact that the Liberals are charging GST on top of it and everything else.

Would the member agree that this is another example of the Minister of Environment and Climate Change misleading Canadians?

Hon. Ed Fast: Mr. Speaker, I have to agree with my hon. colleague. She knows very well that when governments promise to give money back after it is taxed, that promise eventually will be broken. Canadians have a right to be skeptical about the promises the government has made, because it has broken so many of them, such as balanced budgets, small deficits and electoral reform, along with a failed environment plan. It goes on and on and on.

The Prime Minister has broken dozens upon dozens of promises. There is no reason for Canadians to trust that the cheques they will supposedly get back or the credits on their tax returns they will supposedly get will last. They will not. The moment this election is over, the Liberals will realize they have this gaping fiscal hole. They are running a huge national debt, a huge deficit and somehow they are going to have to fill that hole. How are they going to do that? They are going to reverse themselves.

This carbon tax is, in no way, going to be revenue-neutral. Canadians are going to be hurt. They are already being hurt because they have been misled by the Liberal government.

Ms. Elizabeth May (Saanich—Gulf Islands, GP): Mr. Speaker, I apologize to my hon. colleague from Abbotsford for being out of the chamber for parts of his remarks, so he may have addressed this.

What targets does the Conservative Party currently think are appropriate? If we look at the IPCC report on why we must hold global average temperature to more than 1.5°C, it is quite clear that we cannot continue to have an economy that depends on fossil fuels, but must transition out of it.

I would appreciate my hon. colleague's thoughts on what targets are appropriate for Canada to ensure we hit no more than 1.5°C.

Hon. Ed Fast: Mr. Speaker, of course the member knows that the targets that were set in Paris were the former Conservative government's targets. We have said that the plan we will roll out

prior to the end of June will give Canada the best chance to meet those targets.

For the rest of it, she will have to wait until she sees our plan. It is going to be a good plan. It is going to be a much better plan than we have received from the Liberals. It is going to be accountable to Canadians, with measurable results, measurable reductions in greenhouse gas emissions and a global approach to how we address our environmental challenges.

Mr. Randall Garrison (Esquimalt—Saanich—Sooke, NDP): Mr. Speaker, I will be splitting my time with the member for Salaberry—Suroît.

I am very pleased today to rise to debate a motion calling for a climate emergency declaration by Canada. It is very important to declare a climate emergency. That is a call for all of us to work together with urgency to meet the biggest challenge this country has faced since World War II and perhaps the biggest challenge in human history. I will be supporting the government motion and I will try not to engage in a polemic about who was first.

An NDP motion was followed quickly by the government motion. That is a good idea. Unfortunately, the new Green member has chosen to engage in a polemic before he has even come to the House, somehow taking credit for what is going on here. I welcome him to join us and I welcome a similar motion from the Green Party. We have to work together in the country to meet the challenges of climate change.

Since the Conservatives just moved an amendment, I want to address that amendment very quickly.

The member for Abbotsford says that we should wait for the Conservatives' plan, I am a little worried about their plan, given their amendment today. Let me point out three things their amendment would do.

First, it would eliminate climate emergency from the motion. It would take away the most important thing about the debate going on in the House now, which is the recognition that we have very few years left to act before climate change becomes irreversible and its impacts make this planet uninhabitable.

Second, it says that human action has an impact on climate. Here we are, back to the Conservatives denying the source of climate change. We know it is human activity. We know we are causing the rise in temperatures and the great variations in our climate. Therefore, because we are causing it, we can do something about it.

The third thing the proposed Conservative amendment does is blame everybody else. Its emphasis is on global action. Yes, of course, global action is required. Action by all of us is required to meet those challenges. However, the Conservative amendment places all of the emphasis on other people and what other people are doing.

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I hope the whole world will react as one in the attack on climate change. That does not excuse us from ensuring we meet our responsibilities in the House and through our government.

A lot of things have been thrown around about who was first, who has the longest record and who has the strongest record. I want to put on the record that I know there are members in at least two of the parties here, three if we count unofficial parties, who have long and strong records on the environment. There have been some false things said lately in my riding about my environment record, so I want to talk just for a minute about this.

As a student, on the first Earth Day in 1970, I joined with my fellow students to block traffic during rush hour, and I learned a very powerful lesson that day. We made a lot of people angry and we made no change. I learned at that time that it is much better to build the coalitions we need to bring about the required changes.

The second time I got involved in climate change was when I got a job working for an organization called Pacific Peoples' Partnership. It is an indigenous-led organization that builds links between indigenous people in Canada and the Pacific Islands. I became the executive director in 1989. Pacific Islanders brought two issues to our attention in 1989, 30 years ago. One was the great Pacific garbage patch, the plastic patch in the Pacific Ocean. At that time, it was, horrifyingly, as big as Vancouver Island, and I will come back to that in a minute.

The second issue it wanted us to raise in Canada was global warming, as it was called then, as a threat to the habitability of the Pacific Islands, not requiring them to get swimming lessons, as it is often trivialized, but threats to the coral reefs, which protect the ecosystems of those islands. We are now seeing a huge die-off of coral reefs around the world, and increased storm surges. All of the Pacific Islands depend on a lens of fresh water that sits underneath the islands. With the storm surges, they were fearing increasing invasion of those lenses by salt water, which would make the islands uninhabitable.

That was, as I said, 30 years ago when I started working on the issue of climate change. We organized a tour of high schools and I published a series of articles, warning about the impacts of what we were then calling global warming.

I was elected to Esquimalt council in 2010. When we had the first emergency measures meeting, I asked what we had for oil spills, because we have long and beautiful coast in Esquimalt, and the answer was "nothing". I was the first elected official in the country to move a motion against what was then the Kinder Morgan pipeline.

• (1145)

The second thing I was able to do on council was get Esquimalt to become one of the first municipalities in the entire country to adopt science-based greenhouse gas reduction targets. People asked at the time what that meant. It meant to me, and it still means in Esquimalt's policy, that we have to adjust those targets to what is necessary to keep the warming to 1.5°C or below. It was not simply saying that this is what we have to do; it was saying that we have to do this much and keep our eye on the ball and maybe do more as time goes on.

When I was doing a tour of high schools 30 years ago, I did not really imagine that, first, I would ever become an MP, but more important, that I would be standing here in this chamber when the great Pacific garbage patch was now not just bigger than Vancouver Island but bigger than B.C. and Alberta combined. I did not imagine that I would be standing here, when climate change is now clearly a threat to our very survival, and we would still be so far from any effective action to meet these challenges.

That is where I am disappointed with the government motion. As I said, I am happy to support it, because anything that brings us together to fight climate change is a good idea. However, I could not have imagined that this is what I would be standing here talking about, when reports show that we will soon have more plastic in the oceans than fish and when reports show that Canada will not meet its greenhouse gas reduction targets set in Paris, a reduction of 25% below 2005 levels by 2030, and that it will not meet those targets for 200 years with the current policies that are in place.

I am going to be supporting the government motion, despite what I would call omissions. One of the first of those, to me, is that there is no mention of reconciliation. On a side note, I have heard Liberals talking about our motion and saying that eliminating fossil fuel subsidies means cutting off power in remote indigenous communities. Nothing could be further from the truth. We have said that a climate change plan has to prioritize reconciliation, and that means dealing with those first nation communities that are the most affected by climate change: in the attack on traditional activities; in the flooding we have seen taking place; and in their dependence on diesel fuel, which makes life very unaffordable.

We have the example in my own riding of the T'Sou-ke Nation, which has become energy self-sufficient using solar power and now sells power back to the grid. That is what it means to prioritize reconciliation in a climate change plan to help first nations become self-sufficient on a renewable-energy basis that creates good jobs in their communities.

There is no mention of workers or jobs in the government's motion. I firmly believe that we cannot get the collective action we need on climate change if we have policies that leave certain parts of Canada, certain communities and certain kinds of workers behind. We know that the technology now exists for a transition to a net zero-carbon energy economy very quickly, and that will create good, family-supporting jobs in every community in this country.

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We in the NDP have put forward some of our planks. One of those is an energy retrofit program to retrofit the entire building and housing stock in this country. That would create good jobs in every community and jobs that would use some of those same skills that people who work in the oil-based energy industry already have. A good example is geothermal. Geothermal energy uses almost the same skills, in terms of engineering, welding and all those other kinds of things, that are already used in the oil patch.

I want to conclude by saying once again that I believe that it is important to declare a climate emergency, because we are simply running out of time to change. It is no longer a question of the distant future. We have seen the massive forest fires around the country. We have seen the massive flooding. We are already in the midst of what is called the second great extinction. We are about to lose one million species of plants and animals. That will destroy the web of life that our very existence depends upon.

Many Canadians have already taken individual action to reduce their carbon footprints, but personal action alone will not meet these challenges. We must come together in urgent and major collective action to address the threat of climate change. We need a declaration of a climate emergency and plans to attack that emergency very, very quickly.

• (1150)

Mr. Ken McDonald (Avalon, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, I want to thank the member for what seems to be a lifetime of commitment to environmental issues.

He mentioned what is happening on the B.C. coast. I live on the other side of Canada, on the Atlantic Ocean, and my entire riding borders a bay of some sort. The riding is completely surrounded by salt water. We see many changes, whether it is storm surges, the possibility of hurricanes or the icebergs coming from the north. It is a record year for icebergs. I read an article last week that said that there were 679 icebergs off the coast of Newfoundland last week. It is a phenomenal number. It brings in tourists like crazy to see them, but we take them for granted now, because we see them so often. However, we have never seen the like of that. It is phenomenal what is happening. Things are happening at a faster pace.

If we try to deal with this globally and get everyone onside before we do anything, the costs will be the burden of the provinces and municipalities because of the changes they are seeing in weather patterns and the infrastructure they need to repair constantly. We cannot wait. We have to start now. Could the member comment?

• (1155)

Mr. Randall Garrison: Mr. Speaker, I had the privilege of visiting the member for Avalon's riding in the past, and it is truly almost as beautiful as my own. We have the same kind of coastal environment, so we are seeing the same kinds of impacts in the communities in my riding. He points out that the cost of inaction is actually higher than the cost of acting, which is why we have to come together to get busy on climate change.

The second thing I want to thank him for is once again drawing attention to the attitude betrayed in the Conservative amendment, which is that somehow we will wait for everyone else before we get busy getting our own house in order. I share his concern. While others must act, we must act now.

Ms. Elizabeth May (Saanich—Gulf Islands, GP): Mr. Speaker, it is still permissible to say the name Paul Manly out loud. He is not yet allowed to speak in the House. The member referred to him earlier as the incoming member for Nanaimo—Ladysmith.

We are not trying, as Greens, to take credit for anything. However, it stretches credulity past the breaking point to imagine that Paul's election on May 6 had absolutely nothing to do with duelling motions on the climate emergency, on May 9 and May 10, from the Liberals and the NDP. That said, we are thrilled to see the climate emergency front and centre in the debate in this place, where it appears that only the Conservatives do not want to use the words "climate emergency".

My colleague from Esquimalt—Saanich—Sooke and I have worked together over the years, and we do have to work together, because this is an emergency that requires us to set aside partisanship.

The Paris Agreement is poorly understood, and I wanted to clarify a point in his speech. The Paris Agreement says that we must hold global average temperatures to 1.5°C, and then there are some weasel words about it being at least below 2°C. We now know that 1.5°C is the limit, and we cannot go above it.

Canada's commitment was not negotiated in Paris. Canada's commitment was the one left in place by former environment minister Leona Aglukkaq in May 2015, which was six months before Paris. Just to underscore it, the Paris Agreement is fine; what is wrong is Canada's target.

Mr. Randall Garrison: Mr. Speaker, in her statement, my neighbour just did exactly what I was saying the Green Party was doing, which was trying to say that the motions on climate emergency were connected to the by-election. It really makes no difference to me whether they were or they were not. I happen to know that we have been working on this for a long time, and I have certainly been an advocate of declaring a climate emergency for a very long time.

What is wrong with the Paris targets? Apart from not meeting them, they are not strong enough. They are not enough to keep us below the 1.5°C level. As the NDP motion proposes, we need some very tough targets, rules to make sure that we meet those targets and accountability for failing to meet those targets. That is what is missing from the government motion.

Government Orders

[*Translation*]

Ms. Anne Minh-Thu Quach (Salaberry—Suroît, NDP): Mr. Speaker, declaring a climate emergency sends an urgent warning that must be followed by concrete action, of which there is no mention in the government's motion. The time for half measures has long passed. If we want our government to take action to achieve the Paris Agreement targets, we must not stand idly by. We do not have 30 years to act, we have 11. It is our responsibility to take drastic action right now, as we are being asked to do by the scientists and young people who protest in the streets every Friday. We have to take our heads out of the sand and swallow our pride.

The members and political parties of this place must take stock of their actions. What have we done in the past 30 years? What have we done in the past four years?

Yesterday, the Minister of Environment and Climate Change was upset with the Conservatives. I believe she should instead be upset with her own government and her own record. Whenever she has to make a difficult choice between a polluting industry and the environment, she always chooses the polluting industry.

According to a recent report from Oil Change International, which examined energy investments from 2012 to 2017, Export Development Canada provided 12 times more support for the oil and gas sector, which received \$62 billion, than for clean technology, which received a meagre \$5 billion. Just last December, oil and gas companies received a new investment of \$1.6 billion. This is a concrete example of how the federal government is not putting its money where its mouth is.

All the Liberals have to show for after four years is the purchase of an old pipeline for \$4.5 billion. Scientists say that the project will cost three times more money. Let us also remember that the Minister of Environment and Climate Change was not even appointed chair or vice-chair of the cabinet committee on the environment and climate change. Moreover, greenhouse gas emissions are up across Canada, as confirmed by the Department of the Environment.

The Department of the Environment said it will take Canada 200 years to reach its targets for 2030, which is only 11 years away. According to the Environment Canada report, these targets will only be reached in 2230. This makes no sense.

The Conservatives, the NDP, the Green Party and the Bloc Québécois all need to incorporate climate change action into their policy agendas. We all need to have a plan for limiting the impact on Quebec and Canadian families.

We need to act now and revolutionize our ways of thinking, because the facts are stark and troubling. The temperature is expected to rise by 5°C to 6°C, one million animal species are facing extinction, and we are seeing more and more natural disasters each year. The flooding is still not fully under control. Forest fires recently broke out in Ontario. Last year, Quebec experienced one of the deadliest heat waves in its history. The list goes on. Everyone knows what we are going through.

Every Friday, thousands of kids and teens march through the streets to demand that the provincial and federal governments take concrete, measurable action and follow up to monitor our progress. Scientists say there is not enough follow-up. Normand Baillargeon

has been interviewed on this subject many times. Canada has no costed plan for meeting its targets, the same feeble targets that the Liberals criticized when they were first set by the Conservatives. Over the past year, our GHG emissions have risen by 12 million tonnes. Young people are reminding us that we are heading in completely the wrong direction.

● (1200)

If strikes do not get the message across, legal action might. On June 6, we will find out if ENvironnement JEUnesse gets the go-ahead to sue the government for infringing on the environmental rights of people age 35 and under. They are also demanding concrete measures and an action plan, and they want the Liberals and provincial and national governments to meet their obligations.

Everyone keeps saying that the environment is the number one issue for young people. It affects us all, of course, but young people will have to live with the consequences of what we choose to do and not do at this point in time for longer.

Now the government says we should declare a state of emergency. It is sounding the alarm, but there are no concrete measures in today's government motion.

Why is there no date? Nobody knows when the Paris Agreement targets will be met. Why are there no solutions to eliminate fossil fuel subsidies right away? The Liberals say they put it in their budget, but fossil fuel subsidies are not going away for years and years.

Why is the government not investing in renewable energy industries? Many environmental groups are saying that we should. I would like to quote Équiterre, since the Liberals like to brag about recruiting Équiterre's co-founder, Steven Guilbeault, as an adviser. According to Équiterre, investments in renewable energy create six to eight times more jobs than fossil fuel investments.

Our country agreed to dramatically cut fossil fuel subsidies. Before the purchase of the Trans Mountain pipeline, every Quebecker and every Canadian was giving \$100 to the oil industry. That is more than the United States' \$60 per capita average. The Liberals have committed to continuing the process over the next six years by buying the Trans Mountain pipeline and increasing that amount from \$100 to \$600 in tax dollars per Canadian. That money is going to end up in the pockets of multinationals that do not need it.

That money could be used to invest in more equitable markets and green energy, but the government continues to focus on fossil fuels. The Trans Mountain pipeline will triple oil sands production and increase oil tanker traffic sevenfold. That does not make any sense.

How will such decisions help us meet our Paris Agreement targets? The Liberals are unable to answer those questions.

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I am not making this up. On February 10, we invited the constituents of Salaberry—Suroît to draft motions that may eventually be presented to the Government of Canada. It seems like the Liberals are at an impasse. They no longer know how to come up with creative legislation.

I have some of the motions drafted by my constituents on February 10. They call for clear product labels that show their environmental impact and make them easier to recycle; targets to be set for the transition to a circular economy; binding greenhouse gas reduction targets in legislation requiring compliance with the Canadian government's commitments under the Paris Agreement on fighting climate change; legislation requiring disclosure by major banks and Canadian pension funds of their investments in fossil fuels; and a mandatory national system for assessing building energy efficiency, which would require amending the National Building Code of Canada.

I would now like to acknowledge in the House the citizens who drafted these motions. They worked with the following five resource people who volunteered their time: Lorraine Simard, Laurent Lenoir, Lorraine Caron, David Funk and Karel Ménard. I thank them very much for their time.

Furthermore, entrepreneurs in my riding would appreciate some help with some products they believe can support the energy transition. However, Canada is not doing much to promote these new technologies and innovations. The government prefers to give \$12 million to Loblaw's.

For the time being, there are no plans to update the National Building Code of Canada to reflect climate change. There is clearly a lack of political will to take drastic action.

• (1205)

To use a term Quebeckers relate to, we do not need a quiet revolution, but a meaningful, far-reaching green revolution.

The Assistant Deputy Speaker (Mrs. Carol Hughes): The hon. member is out of time, but she will certainly have the opportunity to speak further during questions and comments.

The hon. member for Sarnia—Lambton.

Ms. Marilyn Gladu (Sarnia—Lambton, CPC): Madam Speaker, I thank the member for her speech.

I would like her to clarify the NDP's position. Is it true that New Democrats are against fossil fuels, pipelines and plastics?

• (1210)

Ms. Anne Minh-Thu Quach: Madam Speaker, back in October, the scientific community gave us 12 years. Now, we have 11 left. We must take drastic action by reducing our greenhouse gas emissions by 45%. We will never get there if we keep subsidizing fossil fuels.

There is no shortage of people ready to work in the renewable energy industry, which represents six to eight times more jobs. Alberta has the highest potential in the country for developing solar energy. Why are we not doing it? Why are billions of dollars not being invested there?

As previously mentioned, in recent years, the federal government has invested \$62 billion in the oil sector, and only \$5 billion in

renewable energy. That is completely absurd given the fact that inaction costs us \$1.6 billion per year, not to mention the impact on human and ecological health.

[*English*]

Ms. Karen Ludwig (New Brunswick Southwest, Lib.): Madam Speaker, I represent New Brunswick Southwest. The whole province of New Brunswick recently experienced devastating flooding. We looked across the country at the same time this was happening, and we saw more troops deployed in Canada, fighting climate change, than abroad.

Does the hon. member have a comment on that, and does she agree that the greatest national security threat to Canada is climate change?

[*Translation*]

Ms. Anne Minh-Thu Quach: Mr. Speaker, obviously we agree that we are facing a climate emergency. We made that the topic of our opposition day yesterday and we triggered an emergency debate on the topic in October. It is not enough to say that there is a climate emergency. At some point, we have to put our money where our mouth is.

The Liberals claim to acknowledge the climate emergency and yet they are still using taxpayer money to buy \$4.5-billion pipelines. They continue to subsidize the fossil fuel industry and have no plan to measure the decrease in greenhouse gas emissions. There is no transparency or accountability on this. Our GHG emissions have increased by 12 million tonnes over the past year.

It does not add up. There is a disconnect between the Liberals' symbolic speech and their substantive action on the ground to truly reduce our environmental footprint. It makes no sense to say that there is a climate emergency when our environmental footprint is making matters worse, not better.

[*English*]

Mr. Wayne Stetski (Kootenay—Columbia, NDP): Madam Speaker, I would like to thank both of my colleagues for their great speeches.

In my riding of Kootenay—Columbia, there is a group called the Regional District of Central Kootenay, or RDCK, which is a collection of mayors and rural representatives who come together around important issues.

Recently, they put forward a motion recognizing that climate change is "an urgent reality requiring rapid decarbonisation of energy" and that "[p]reparing for increased resilience and adaptability is critical." They went on to say that the RDCK "recognizes that the world is in a global state of climate crisis" and requires an imperative for all orders of government to undertake "rapid and far-reaching" changes to building construction, energy systems, land use, and transportation."

I would like my colleague to comment on the role of municipalities, but also on how the NDP is already proposing to deal with things like construction.

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[Translation]

Ms. Anne Minh-Thu Quach: Madam Speaker, I thank my colleague. There are indeed initiatives at the municipal level that the government could draw on to reduce our environmental footprint.

In my riding, for example, the organization PRAQ is removing paved surfaces and planting trees to convert urban heat islands into green spaces, and CRIVERT wants to offset our travel-related emissions by planting trees. The NDP proposed that we renovate homes to improve their energy efficiency and create sustainable local jobs.

• (1215)

[English]

Ms. Julie Dabrusin (Toronto—Danforth, Lib.): Madam Speaker, I will be sharing my time with the member for Louis-Hébert.

I stand today in the House to call on the House to declare that Canada is in a national climate emergency. To address that, we must not only meet our national emissions targets under the Paris Agreement, but we must go further. As I say that, I pause, because this is a real and scary truth, and fear is a difficult emotion.

When I was thinking about this debate today, I thought about when I was a teenager and saw a film called *If You Love This Planet*. It was about the dangers of nuclear weapons. What I felt when I saw that film was fear. Fear can be immobilizing, and that is a danger when we are talking about something like a climate emergency. We cannot be immobilized. We need to take action, and we need to take action now.

Today, as we participate in this debate, we are facing that fear and putting a direction and a course of action as to how we will respond, because our country is on a path to transition to a low-carbon economy. We are on that path and we cannot falter; in fact, we need to speed up. For me, seeing how we are proceeding with the transition to a low-carbon economy is what gives me hope and strength to know how we are going to move forward.

Today, I will outline some of the things we are doing. I do not have enough time to speak about all of the actions that are being taken, but I will be talking about the price on pollution, building retrofits, investments in public transportation and a zero-emission vehicle strategy, and phasing out coal-fired electricity. Those are all steps that are being taken right now as we transition toward a low-carbon economy.

Before we go further, I would like to address one factor that has given me reason to question, and I know that I have had questions from others about what our government's climate plan is, and that factor is the Trans Mountain pipeline. I opposed the purchase of the Trans Mountain pipeline, but there is one thing I must emphasize. I disagree with people who say that this purchase negates all of the other work that is being done to transition to a low-carbon economy. It does not. There is much work that is being done right now, and there is much more that needs to be done. We need to keep pushing.

I give a shout-out to all the activists and environmentalists out there, because they are the ones who helped to clear the path and to push us down that path further toward a low-carbon economy. We need that strength. As we push forward, we also need to mark where

we have come from, where we are now and where we want to go, what the further steps are. It is a road map. Without a road map, it can be dispiriting because we cannot just push without looking forward, looking backward and seeing what we need to get to success.

What have we been doing over the past three and a half years to transition to a low-carbon economy? The single most important piece, and I cannot emphasize this enough, is putting a price on pollution. Here I want to thank some of the environmental activists out there. Citizens' Climate Lobby has been wonderful in coming out and taking the time to speak to MPs and educate communities about the importance of a price on pollution. Its work has been tremendous.

Last year, Paul Romer and William Nordhaus won the Nobel Prize for economics. Both studied a price on pollution, and what they found was that it works. It works because it signals to consumers and to producers which services and which goods have a higher carbon effect on us. It also encourages innovation, and that is exactly what we need: We need to innovate.

When William Nordhaus looked for a place to point out as a success story, he pointed to British Columbia, which has a system very similar to the plan that is being rolled out nationally. He pointed to the fact that not only does British Columbia have a strong economy, but it has lowered per capita gasoline use and improved vehicle fuel efficiency. The price on pollution has worked, and it has been there for over a decade.

Here I give a shout-out to the activists, because this is where we need to stand strong together.

• (1220)

The price on pollution is essential, but there is a lot of pressure right now to dismantle that system. There are court cases in Saskatchewan and in Ontario. I was very pleased that we won the court case in Saskatchewan in the Saskatchewan Court of Appeal, but there is a lot of pressure. Right now, in Ontario, the Ontario government is rolling out a \$30-million ad campaign to convince people that a price on pollution is not the way to go. Rather than using the money for planting trees and fighting climate change and doing what we need to do, the Ontario government has chosen to use that money to fight the climate plan, to fight this essential building block.

This is an active battle. The price on pollution must stay. We need it as an essential building block for a low-carbon economy. To everyone who believes we need to do this and believes there is a climate emergency, we need to come together and fight to make sure the price on pollution stays.

Government Orders

As I was studying the sources of our emissions and what we need to do, one thing I found surprising was that it is buildings that are the largest CO₂ emitters in cities. In fact, in the GTHA, 44% of our emissions come from buildings. A lot of work is being done right now to address that issue. Some of it relates to retrofits, model building codes, energy efficiency regulations and innovation. All of these are important steps in trying to reduce the emissions coming from our buildings.

The largest source of the greenhouse gases coming from our buildings is what we use to heat and cool them, and in Toronto there have been federal investments in the Enwave deep lake cooling system. That system cools all of downtown Toronto's hospitals in a low-carbon way. It does not produce all of those emissions, which is exactly what we are trying to move away from. It also cools many of Toronto's downtown buildings, including university buildings and office buildings. Through federal investments, we have allowed that system to expand, and that is exactly the innovation we want to see.

We have also put in place energy efficiency regulations to improve the energy performance of over 20 categories of appliances and equipment. This will decrease GHG emissions by about 700,000 tonnes by 2030.

Another thing I care about deeply is emissions from transportation, and I have been working on this issue. About 25% of Canada's emissions come from transportation. Our government has made historic investments in public transit, and we are also deploying electrical vehicle charging stations and implementing a zero emissions vehicle strategy. All of these things will come together as part of the transition to a low-carbon economy.

I am a TTC rider and I use public transit. I know that the system in Toronto faces many problems related to overcrowding and maintenance issues. In my own community, we feel deeply the need for a relief line.

Our government has made investments there. In fact, almost \$5 billion was allocated for public transit in the city of Toronto. However, there are some hiccups right now with the provincial government, and that is causing some complications. Despite this, I can say that all of my Toronto colleagues and I are championing and will champion the city's public transit system. We will stand by our city leaders to make sure Toronto gets what it needs to have a strong transit system.

So far, we have funded maintenance, which, as I said, was much needed, and we have addressed the need for buses. We have helped to purchase electric buses, and we have also invested in active transportation, such as in expanding bike sharing and bike parking. I would love to see a national active transportation strategy.

The last piece is about coal. I note that 11% of Canada's electricity supply is from coal-fired electricity, but it is responsible for 72% of Canada's greenhouse gas emissions in the electricity sector.

Ontario moved away from coal-fired plants many years ago, and we felt the difference. We used to have 50 smog days a year, and we are now down to zero. That is a tremendous difference, and it has an impact on our health. It is something we need to do.

We are moving on a just transition away from coal-fired plants. In talking to members today, I am building out that road map.

We have a long road to travel, but we are on it, and we need to work together to make sure that we continue in our transition to a low-carbon economy.

• (1225)

Ms. Marilyn Gladu (Sarnia—Lambton, CPC): Madam Speaker, the member opposite talked about how eliminating coal production can really help in solving this global climate change issue. I do not know if she is aware that there are 453 coal plants being built in the world. If we, as Canadians, can get our oil and gas products to either coast, we could prevent a lot of those from being built.

That said, why has the current government done nothing to advance the Trans Mountain pipeline?

Ms. Julie Dabrusin: Madam Speaker, I would like to remind the member opposite that what we are talking about today is what we need to do here in our country. We are doing what we need to do to make a just transition to move away from coal-fired plants by providing employment opportunities for workers in that field as well as by building the infrastructure we need.

We are also part of a worldwide alliance to help other countries to move away from coal-fired plants. We have done that with the U.K., and many other countries have joined us as signatories, so we are also part of an international effort to move away from coal-fired electricity.

Ms. Elizabeth May (Saanich—Gulf Islands, GP): Madam Speaker, I applaud the hon. member for Toronto—Danforth for being brave enough to say in this House that she opposes the Trans Mountain pipeline and the government's decision to buy it.

The difficulty is that the government's plan is to expand the Trans Mountain pipeline. It has not announced it yet, but everyone expects that on June 18 the government will say that it is going ahead and that further government funds will go into a project designed to expand production from the oil sands, which will drive up greenhouse gases.

While it is true that the government has taken steps and that the rhetoric is good, if it shuts down coal in Alberta, coal will be replaced by fracked natural gas and LNG in those same plants, resulting in the same carbon footprint as coal. As well, expanding the Trans Mountain pipeline will drive up greenhouse gases by expanding production in the oil sands.

If we are in a climate emergency, and the Liberals agree that we are, it means we have to hold to 1.5°C, which means not a single new project can be opened up—no new pipelines, no new oil wells, no fracking.

We need a plan to go off fossil fuels. Does the hon. member for Toronto—Danforth agree?

Government Orders

Ms. Julie Dabrusin: Madam Speaker, I agree that we need to be transitioning away from fossil fuels. That is a lot of what I was addressing specifically today when I spoke about what we are doing to transition to a low-carbon economy. That is what we are moving toward: zero-emission vehicles, more public transit, more active transportation.

In fact, in Toronto, Transform TO's aim is for 75% of commutes under five kilometres be done through active transportation. That is how we in cities can work toward reducing our footprint.

It is an absolutely essential piece. We are working on it, and there is more to do. That is what I admit and state clearly. That is why I am reaching out to people.

However, I have stood here and clearly said that the pipeline does not negate the work we have done. There is a lot of work being done. What we need to do is keep doing it and push further on that path.

Ms. Sonia Sidhu (Brampton South, Lib.): Madam Speaker, Canadians are feeling the impacts of climate change today from flooding, wildfires and heat waves. The WHO said that one million lives could be saved by 2050 through climate action.

Climate change is real. I want to ask my colleague this: Can you explain what steps you are taking to set up a low-carbon economy?

The Assistant Deputy Speaker (Mrs. Carol Hughes): I will not respond to that question. I would ask the member to address the question to the Chair and not the individual members.

The hon. member for Toronto—Danforth.

Ms. Julie Dabrusin: Madam Speaker, thank you for allowing me the opportunity to respond, because it is something I feel passionately about.

I have set out several parts to it. I mentioned that buildings are the largest CO₂ emitters in cities, so one of the things we have to think about is working on retrofits. We are doing that. In the city of Toronto, units across our city are getting the work they need, new windows and the like, to prevent those types of emissions.

There is also a zero-emissions strategy. We are putting more money into public transit, working to retrofit our buildings, working on better ways to cool our buildings, moving away from coal-fired plants, and so much more. I simply have not had the time to go through it all.

There is much being done and more to do.

• (1230)

[*Translation*]

Mr. Joël Lightbound (Parliamentary Secretary to the Minister of Finance, Lib.): Madam Speaker, I am very pleased to have the opportunity to speak to the motion before us today that declares a state of climate emergency in Canada.

It is clear, I think, to a large majority of Canadians, and certainly to a large majority of Quebeckers, that the situation with respect to climate change is in fact urgent and requires significant measures. While my Conservative colleagues refuse to face the urgent need to take action, I want to remind them that not having a plan for the environment at this point is completely irresponsible, especially considering the scientific evidence we are seeing on a weekly basis.

It is irresponsible to future generations not only from an environmental standpoint, but also from an economic standpoint, and I will expand on that during my speech.

Climate change is a global problem that threatens our environment and our society as a whole. Sudden increases in global temperatures are causing drought, flooding, landslides and powerful hurricanes. We do not have to look very far to see the devastating effect this is having on many Canadians who, at this very moment, are fighting to save their houses from the flooding that has occurred two out of the past three years. Many people assumed these were 100-year floods and so did not expect them to reoccur so soon.

In 2016, it was estimated that more frequent and more intense meteorological events in Canada would cost the federal disaster financial assistance arrangements program about \$902 million annually. In addition there are health costs associated with extreme weather conditions, costs expected to reach more than \$1.6 billion annually. Costs associated with property damage caused by climate change reached an average of \$405 million a year between 1983 and 2008. Since 2009, however, those costs have increased dramatically to \$1.8 billion, and they are estimated to reach as high as \$43 billion by 2050.

Our government is not the only one concerned about those figures. In a recent article, the Governor of the Bank of England, Mark Carney, and the Governor of the Banque de France, François Villeroy de Galhau, urged the financial sector and central banks in particular to play an increasingly active role in transitioning to a greener economy. This is how they put it:

Climate change is a global problem, which requires global solutions, in which the whole financial sector has a crucial role to play.

They added that fires, floods and other damage caused by climate change negatively affect health, decrease productivity and destroy our heritage. They noted that insured losses have risen five-fold in the past three decades.

Extreme weather conditions are costing countries dearly. They threaten Canadians' health and safety, our communities and our livelihoods. Even so, the official opposition still refuses to acknowledge the need to take urgent action on climate change. I can think of no good reason why the opposition would fight tooth and nail against our measures to curb climate change.

Canadians pay for climate change in many different ways, such as structural repairs, lower property values, higher insurance premiums, assuming they can get coverage in the first place, and higher costs for food, health care and emergency services. Unlike the official opposition, we know that pollution is not free. Just a few weeks ago, the Saskatchewan Court of Appeal ruled that the greenhouse gas pollution pricing act is constitutional and that climate change caused by greenhouse gas emissions is one of the great existential issues of our time.

We could not agree more. It is clear to the members on this side of the House that we need to act now to fight climate change. Climate change is the biggest challenge of our time, and accelerating clean growth is one of the commitments we made in the Paris Agreement. We take our Paris commitments extremely seriously, and I think all members of the House should do the same.

Canadians understand that a healthy environment and a strong economy go hand in hand. They understand that their quality of life today and their economic prosperity tomorrow depend on making a commitment to protect our natural heritage and preserve our environment for future generations. That is why the government has made major investments to protect the quality of Canada's air, water and natural areas for our children and grandchildren, for future generations, and to ensure that Canada has one of the cleanest, best performing economies in the world.

• (1235)

In order to fight climate change, the government has already allocated \$5.7 billion over 12 years to support the implementation of the pan-Canadian framework on clean growth and climate change. This is above and beyond the historic investments made by the government in green infrastructure and public transit.

This plan was developed with the provinces and territories and in consultation with indigenous peoples. It will allow us to create a healthy environment for generations to come and also support a clean and robust economy.

This framework supports Canada's target of reducing greenhouse gas emissions by 30% below 2005 levels by 2030, while also meeting the need to adapt and build resilience to climate change. The framework complements provincial and territorial measures to reduce greenhouse gas emissions and it provides ways for governments, businesses and civil society to seize the many economic opportunities offered by the global economy and clean growth.

In budget 2017, the government increased financial support for Canada's clean energy sector by allocating more funding to promising businesses in the form of equity financing, working capital and project financing.

Nearly \$1.4 billion in new funding has been provided to Canadian clean-tech companies through the Business Development Bank of Canada and Export Development Canada to help these firms grow and expand.

In the 2018 budget, we improved Canada's weather and water services by allocating an additional \$120 million over five years to protect people and communities from the devastating effects of the extreme weather we are now seeing.

Government Orders

In our most recent budget, our government proposed investments to make zero-emission vehicles an easier and more affordable choice for Canadians. Not only do these vehicles help people get around, they also improve air quality by reducing greenhouse gas emissions.

The costs of inaction are far greater than the costs of combatting climate change. We cannot ignore the problem, and we cannot pretend that pollution comes without a price. Climate change threatens our health, our communities and our economy.

We must tackle the problem head on to fix it, while at the same time generating economic benefits.

Week after week, Conservative politicians across the country bury their heads in the sand and go to great lengths to ignore one of the most important—if not the most important—issues of our generation and our planet.

I would ask all members who are participating in the debate today to join us, to join the government, in supporting today's motion. There is no time to lose.

I am prepared to answer any questions my colleagues may have.

[*English*]

Ms. Marilyn Gladu (Sarnia—Lambton, CPC): Madam Speaker, I would like to correct the record. The Conservatives have a great plan, which will be unveiled before the end of June.

The government has introduced this carbon tax, and the Parliamentary Budget Officer has said it has given a special exemption to all the big emitters. They will pay only 8% of the carbon tax, while 92% of the revenue is going to come from hard-working Canadians.

Could the member opposite just admit that this is nothing but a tax plan on Canadians?

[*Translation*]

Mr. Joël Lightbound: Madam Speaker, I am really not sure how the Conservative members can keep a straight face when they say that they are going to present their plan, since Canadians have been waiting for that plan for 382 days now.

Actions speak louder than words, and all we have seen so far is that Canada's Conservatives have been waging war on the carbon tax, a policy that has proven effective in reducing greenhouse gas emissions, a policy that has been working in Quebec and British Columbia for years, a policy that many areas of the world are implementing, a policy that, if I am not mistaken, is supported by Mr. Harper's former policy director and by many other economists and Nobel Prize winners around the world.

Government Orders

It is totally beyond me why the Conservative Party is working so hard to fight a policy that makes sense to most Canadians. This policy puts a price on something that we do not want, pollution, while ensuring that Canadians have more money in their pockets to make more energy efficient choices. The Conservative Party is anchored in the past and is continuing with Stephen Harper's disastrous policies. Canadians are not stupid. They understand how important it is to fight against climate change, and they will not vote for a party that does not have a plan to address it.

• (1240)

Mr. Matthew Dubé (Beloeil—Chambly, NDP): Madam Speaker, it is interesting to hear the hon. member talk about the Conservatives working hard to fight policy, when the Liberals are paying more attention to the Conservative plan than to their own record.

They talked about the devastating impact of Stephen Harper's plan. The previous Conservative government's targets are the same as the current ones. What is more, according to the commissioner of the environment and sustainable development, the Liberal government will not reach those targets. Can my colleague explain how the Liberals can say that they want to declare a climate emergency when they bought a pipeline and have the same targets as the Conservative Party, whom they relentlessly criticize?

Earlier I heard a member from Toronto say that the fact they bought a pipeline does not negate all the other measures they implemented. However, facts are facts, and the pipeline they bought will substantially increase our greenhouse gas emissions.

How does the hon. member reconcile his words with the actions of his government?

Mr. Joël Lightbound: Madam Speaker, with respect to TMX, that member was right. Équiterre has also said that the government's actions should not be judged on the Trans Mountain pipeline purchase alone, but rather on all actions taken by this government. No federal government in Canadian history has been more motivated and determined when it comes to the environment and fighting climate change. I am not the one saying so; several environmentalists are saying just that, including Sidney Ribaux and Steven Guilbeault.

I would therefore urge my colleague to look at government action overall. Our government put a price on pollution. It has made historic investments in public transit and green infrastructure. It will phase out coal by 2030. It will cut methane emissions from the oil and gas sector in half by 2025. It included incentives for the purchase of zero-emission vehicles in the last budget. The list of measures our government has taken goes on and on.

These investments include \$7.5 billion for Quebec to put towards public transit and green infrastructure, which will have a real impact on greenhouse gas reductions. What makes no sense to me is the NDP's plan for austerity and cuts, which it seems to have lifted from Stephen Harper's playbook. In 2015, despite its ambitious environmental goals, the NDP still campaigned on Harper-style austerity and balanced budgets.

We took a different approach. We knew that significant challenges lied ahead and that appropriate action was needed, including investments in infrastructure and public transit. Canada has

tremendous infrastructure needs from coast to coast to coast, especially in the area of green transportation and sustainable mobility. This is where I simply do not understand the position of the NDP, which campaigned on austerity despite having ambitious environmental plans.

[*English*]

Hon. Peter Kent (Thornhill, CPC): Madam Speaker, I will be splitting my time with the member for Chilliwack—Hope, our chief opposition whip.

After several hours now of overheated Liberal rhetoric and revisionist history, it is time to get back to some basic facts. Climate change is real; climate change is a global problem, and climate change demands a global solution.

Canada, which generates barely 1.6% of global GHG emissions, must still do its part. That is why the leader of the official opposition will lay out the most comprehensive climate policy ever proposed by an opposition party in Canadian history, just a few weeks from now.

The motion before us fails to acknowledge that Canada today falls far short of its emissions reduction targets, so let us just take a look at Canada's targets under the 2015 Paris Agreement.

When they came to office, the Liberals embraced the same targets set by the previous Conservative government, to reduce GHG emissions by 30% below 2005 levels by 2030. When those Conservative targets were set, it was not with a carbon tax imposed on commuters and soccer moms and small businesses. We focused on the major emissions sectors. Working with the scientists at Environment Canada and the scientific community beyond, we developed meaningful regulations that did not hamstring hard-working Canadian taxpayers or the Canadian economy.

Transportation was the largest emitting sector, with about a quarter of Canada's total annual emissions. With our American counterparts, we developed continental tailpipe regulations that are still reducing emissions today. These regulations, which came into force in 2012 and built on existing regulations, require that all cars and light trucks built between 2017 and 2025 be required to cut emissions by an average of 5% every year. These regulations will see tailpipe emissions reduced to 50% of what they were in 2008.

There is a cost. The new technology adds somewhat to the cost of each new model year, but there is a significant offsetting benefit. Fuel consumption will also be reduced by some 50% from 2008 levels by 2025.

When the Liberals, with gesticulation and hyperbole, hysterically defend their carbon tax, which is indiscriminately imposed on commuters, soccer moms and small business transport companies, they are actually imposing a cost on top of what these motorists are already paying for environmentally responsible technology and significantly reduced emissions and fuel consumption. The bottom line is that the Liberals are riding on reductions that are still being realized today as a result of the previous Conservative government's regulations on large emitters.

Government Orders

Similarly, the previous Conservative government achieved reductions by regulating the coal-fired electricity generating sector, which effectively banned the construction of any new coal-fired units that use old technology.

It is true that we did not hit our overall targets, but it is also true that we did not compromise the economic well-being of hard-working taxpayers or the competitiveness of our economy overall. We worked to protect the environment at the same time as we worked to protect the economy.

We made progress. Emissions were reduced, in sharp contrast to the world's major emitters, who blithely signed the Kyoto and Copenhagen accords and then did nothing. I am talking about China, which generates almost two-thirds of global GHG emissions, and whose emissions are still rising. I am talking about the United States, India, Brazil and so many other countries whose representatives, along with this Liberal government, partied the nights away in Paris and signed the Paris Agreement with toasts of champagne and foie gras tasties.

That brings me back to the motion before us and its preposterous objective of deepening targets, which would risk our economic well-being and achieve precious little in global terms while the major polluting countries keep pumping out ever-increasing amounts of GHGs.

• (1245)

Again, the motion fails to acknowledge that Canada continues to fall far short of its emissions reduction targets.

We have proposed an amendment to the motion that would recognize the reality we face, that Canada is failing to meet its targets under the Liberal plan. It would demand that the Liberals table a real environment plan, not a revenue plan and not a tax plan, to lower emissions and achieve Canada's targets.

We know that small-business owners and their employees care about the environment and have implemented a wide range of environmental initiatives. However, the Canadian Federation of Independent Business has just released a policy position paper that reveals that 87% of business owners in the four provinces where the federal carbon backstop tax is positioned say that they are opposed to the carbon tax and that the majority of these business owners will not be able to pass on their costs to consumers.

The CFIB numbers also show that small businesses will pay almost 50% of the carbon tax, with 50% paid by households. While the Liberals claim that households will get back 90% of their carbon taxes paid in rebate payments, small-business owners will get back rebates of barely 7% of their carbon taxes paid. With just about every aspect of the Prime Minister's climate change policy position, this motion has little to do with meaningful action and everything to do with desperate virtue-signalling politics.

The Prime Minister was elected, promising sunny ways, transparency, accountability, rainbows and unicorns, but he is running away from yet another scandal and trying to distract from it. He finished a dismal fourth in a British Columbia by-election. He is desperate and he is trying to find anything to change the channel.

The Liberals have had three and a half years to come up with a real plan for the environment. Meanwhile, Canada is falling further and further away from emission targets, even as the Liberals attempt to defend the carbon tax, which hits hard-working taxpayers and small businesses, while allowing at the same time massive exemption for the big polluters.

Again, climate change is real, climate change is a global problem, climate change is a global challenge and climate change demands global solutions. In contrast to the Liberals' failed plan, their high-carbon hypocrisy, in just a few short weeks, the Conservatives will lay out an environment plan that our Conservative leader promises will provide the best chance of reaching Canada's targets, the most comprehensive climate policy ever proposed by an opposition party in Canadian history.

• (1250)

Mr. Steven MacKinnon (Parliamentary Secretary to the Minister of Public Services and Procurement and Accessibility, Lib.): Madam Speaker, I listened with attention to the member's statement. Fundamentally, the pan-Canadian framework to combat the effects of climate change reposes on a simple idea and, at its heart, a Conservative idea. It is a market-based solution where we price behaviours that are undesirable, that is burning fossil fuels, and reward those by making it revenue-neutral and giving a rebate thereby saving the average family money.

I am more interested in the behaviour of the Ontario government, my colleague's home province. It would take millions of taxpayer dollars, dollars that could be going to libraries, to planting trees, to hiring nurses, to hiring teachers and to adding MRI machines in hospitals, and spend them to combat a plan and a government that has taken on the effects of climate change. We have this perverse situation where tax dollars in Ontario are going to discourage other governments from combatting climate change. Would the member please provide his opinion on that?

Mr. Bob Zimmer: Madam Speaker, I rise on a point of order. I thought this place was for talking about federal issues, not about the Province of Ontario, its particular plans and what it is going to do or not. I would like the question to be more focused on what is at hand here.

The Assistant Deputy Speaker (Mrs. Carol Hughes): That is not a point of order. I am sure the hon. member knows there is a lot of flexibility. Given the subject matter, I am sure the hon. member for Thornhill will be able to answer that question.

Hon. Peter Kent: Madam Speaker, perhaps the member opposite is contemplating the day after October 21, and may want to try his hand at provincial politics, perhaps in the province of Ontario or somewhere else.

With regard to his raising market-based solutions, I wonder how that fits in with the millions of dollars given to one of Canada's richest retail companies, with regard to the coolers and fridges for Loblaws, at the same time the Liberal shot gun carbon taxes, applied across the socio-economic scale, are causing increasing hardship? If the Liberal government were to be re-elected, it would ramp up the carbon taxes, which would have to be borne by those in Canadian society least able to carry those costs.

Government Orders

We believe in reducing emissions from the major emitters, not from burdening ordinary hard-working taxpayers with an unnecessary, unrealistic, unproductive carbon tax.

• (1255)

[*Translation*]

Ms. Marjolaine Boutin-Sweet (Hochelaga, NDP): Madam Speaker, a few years ago, the Harper government, which the member was a part of, gutted environmental protection for thousands of Canadian lakes and rivers by amending the Navigable Waters Protection Act. The Conservatives even tried to hide the cuts in an omnibus bill so people would not notice.

Do they really expect us to believe that their ideas about the environment are completely different now? I do not believe them, and I do not think Canadians will believe them either.

Hon. Peter Kent: Madam Speaker, I thank my colleague for her question.

[*English*]

We know the Liberal government rolled back many of the responsible environmental programs we had to support responsible resource development. Navigable waters was one of them. There has not yet been one example put forward by any member in the House of damage done by the improvements we made in conjunction with municipalities and provinces to eliminate some of the red tape in the previous act.

With regard to the fate of Bill C-48 in the Senate, that bill has fallen off the legislative platform, as it well should. Bill C-48 was a discriminatory law aimed directly at Canada's responsible oil and gas industry.

Mr. Mark Strahl (Chilliwack—Hope, CPC): Madam Speaker, it is a pleasure to address the House today on an issue that is important to all Canadians.

I want to read into the record the amendment we are debating at the moment, which was proposed by the member for Abbotsford at the end of his excellent presentation earlier today. It reads:

the House recognize that:

(a) climate change is a real and urgent global problem requiring real global solutions and that Canada can and must take a leadership role in developing those global solutions;

(b) human activity has an impact on climate change and its effects impact communities across the country and the world;

(c) Canada and the world must take urgent action to mitigate global climate change and combat its impacts on the environment;

(d) the government's own "Clean Canada" report shows the government is falling short of the Paris targets by 79 million tonnes,

and, therefore, as an alternative to its current proposal to tackle climate change involving a non-binding declaration, the House call upon the government to produce a real climate change plan that will enable Canada to reduce global greenhouse gas emissions according to the targets of the Paris agreement.

That is the difference between our amendment and the government motion. The government motion fails on a couple of significant levels. It does not talk about the global nature of the problem and, specifically, it does not address the fact that the government is falling further and further behind the targets it agreed to in Paris a couple of years ago.

We heard the member for Skeena—Bulkley Valley reminded the House earlier that those were the targets set under former prime minister Stephen Harper. Those are the targets we are talking about today. The targets set by the former Conservative government were such good targets that the Liberal government embraced them, but it is failing to meet them.

The comments from the Leader of the Opposition yesterday, declaring that the Prime Minister was a high carbon hypocrite, goes right to the member putting forward this motion in the House today. There are 22 sitting days left in this Parliament before we go back to our ridings for the summer and then the House dissolves due to the upcoming election. However, sanctimonious Liberals on the other side are asking how we cannot say that this is an emergency. They have had an opportunity for three and a half years to bring forward this motion. For three and a half years, they have had an opportunity to bring about a climate plan to reduce emissions to meet the targets they agreed to in Paris, and they have utterly failed.

What the Liberals have come up with instead is a carbon tax, a tax that punishes average working Canadians, while it lets the big emitters off the hook. It lets them continue to target the people we represent in our ridings for doing things Canadians have to do, things like heating their homes, driving to work, driving to school and taking their aged parents to a doctor's appointment. The government has decided to embrace a climate plan to punish those people for living in Canada.

I hear laughter on the other side. We hear laughter from the Liberals when they think about that. They do not care about those people. They care about people like the owners of Loblaws, the owners of a multi-billion company, who get \$12-million gift of free fridges that they would have bought on their own. That is called a climate plan to these Liberals. They are looking out for those people. Some emergency from the perspective of the Liberals.

The climate is such an emergency to Liberals that the Prime Minister got on his taxpayer-funded private jet and flew to Tofino for a couple of days of surfing. By the way, it was on Earth Day. He got on his private plane, burned the fuel and got to have his holiday in British Columbia.

A survey released this week by Toyota Canada shows that over half of British Columbians are rethinking their holiday plans because of the price of fuel. They cannot afford to fill the tank in their vehicles to go see their family or take the vacation they have been looking forward to all year. Rich British Columbians will have no problem reaching into their pockets, getting out a couple more \$20 bills or \$50 bills and paying for that extra price of fuel.

• (1300)

Similarly, the Prime Minister has no problem reaching into taxpayers' pockets and taking a private jet to Tofino. There is no way to get to Tofino on public transit. People have to drive there. It is a long, beautiful drive, one that I have made before, and it requires a vehicle with a full tank of gas. The Prime Minister has made it many times, but on a taxpayer-funded jet. He is a high-carbon hypocrite.

Government Orders

He did the same thing during the height of the SNC-Lavalin scandal when he used the taxpayer-funded private jet to take another vacation in Florida. He does not pay for the fuel and he does not care about the carbon tax. He went to Florida with the family when he needed some downtime, which is fine, but then he flew back to Ottawa for a private meeting and a photo op, and then back to Florida again, and then back to Ottawa one more time.

It is a climate change emergency, according to the Liberals, but it is an emergency for somebody else to pay for, because they should not have to change their ways and the Prime Minister should not have to change his ways; he just wants Canadians to change theirs. He wants them to drive less to get their kids to school, drive less to get their kids to their soccer practice, drive less to get their mom or grandmother to the hospital or to the doctor. That is what the government is doing. We have seen it time and again.

We have also seen that they actually do not believe in it. John Horgan, the premier of British Columbia, is a classic example. He also, like the Prime Minister, has virtue-signalling motions like this one, but he actually increased the carbon tax higher than what is mandated under the national carbon tax plan. He jacked it up on April 1. He jacked up the price of fuel even more than he was required to under the Prime Minister's law. Then, two weeks later, when the price hit \$1.80 a litre, he said it was a crisis and that we needed to do something because people were paying too much for fuel, but we all know that this is exactly what he wants and exactly what the Prime Minister wants. He said as much when he was in British Columbia a year ago. They want Canadians to pay a price for living in this country, and in a large portion of this country, people are living in remote areas where they have to drive to do the things that are necessary.

What happens when we do not treat this as a global issue? We have seen what happens when the Liberals do not treat this as a global issue. They think that Canada is an island unto itself and that if they impose additional costs on businesses and individuals, it has no impact.

What have we seen since the current government took office? We have seen the greatest flight of capital this country has ever seen. We have seen billions of dollars, nearly \$100 billion, fleeing the country, primarily out of the energy sector, and setting up shop in other places that are not putting a carbon tax on their businesses. In the case of Royal Dutch Shell, it was an \$18.4 billion flight of capital. For ConocoPhillips, it was \$17.7 billion; Devon Energy, \$7 billion; Kinder Morgan, \$4.5 billion; Marathon Oil, \$3.3 billion; Chevron Energy, \$1.5 billion; Murphy Oil, \$937 million; Apache Corporation, \$927 million; Statoil ASA, \$832 million; Total S.A., \$560 million, and the government celebrates it. The Liberals celebrate that flight of capital, because it is from the dirty industries that they do not like to talk about.

Those companies have not gone out of oil and gas; they are developing oil and gas in the United States. They are developing oil and gas in the offshore of Brazil. They are developing oil and gas in Kazakhstan and places that do not have the same high world-leading clean energy policies that this country has. We develop the cleanest, greenest energy in the world, and we should celebrate it, because that is something that all Canadians can be proud of.

The motion that the government has brought forward is an attempt to distract from its fourth-place finish in a recent by-election in British Columbia with 22 days left in the sitting of this Parliament. The Liberals are not taking emissions seriously, which is proven by their 79-million-tonne shortfall on their own targets. That is why we will support our amendment and not their motion.

● (1305)

Mr. Nathaniel Erskine-Smith (Beaches—East York, Lib.): Madam Speaker, I know the member is not particularly fond of our Prime Minister and that the conversation in this place often devolves into partisan attacks back and forth on all sides, but climate change is a real and urgent threat and it is an emergency. That is not my analysis but the analysis of thousands of scientists from well over 180 countries around the world.

Very simply, does the member agree that climate change is an emergency?

Mr. Mark Strahl: Madam Speaker, it is a problem that requires urgent action, but the member's own caucus does not believe it is an emergency. A leaked document showed that Ontario Liberal members of Parliament rank it about seventh on the list of priorities that they want to talk about in the next election. They do not think it is an emergency. The Liberal government has never acted as though it is an emergency. It is missing its own targets by nearly 80 million tonnes.

It is all well and good today, with 22 sitting days left, to declare a national climate emergency, but it is an empty gesture by the government. Its gestures are not backed up by its actions. It has great words, but it is terrible on action, which is exactly the condemnation that applies to everything that the Prime Minister does. He is simply not as advertised.

Mr. Mel Arnold (North Okanagan—Shuswap, CPC): Madam Speaker, I would ask the member for Chilliwack—Hope to explain a little more about the situation that exists in B.C. because of the extremely high gas prices, which the Prime Minister says are exactly what he wants.

In his experience, are people driving less or more? I have seen newspaper articles explaining how people in B.C. are driving further so they can get across the border to the U.S. to purchase fuel there, burning more fuel in total but doing it at less cost by purchasing it in the U.S.

Mr. Mark Strahl: Madam Speaker, the member is absolutely correct.

I live in Chilliwack, which is about a 30-minute drive from the Sumas border crossing and a little further from the Aldergrove border crossing. Canadians are lining up for kilometres, idling their cars while they wait to cross over the border, because right now they can save \$25 or \$30 per fill-up by going to the United States.

Government Orders

This is another real-world example of the carbon leakage that the government's ill-advised plan sets in motion. People are making other choices, and they are making dangerous choices too. The price of fuel is so dire for them that they are putting jerry cans in the trunks of their cars or in the back of their SUVs and endangering themselves. Because the price is so high in British Columbia, they are being forced to make that choice.

That is what happens with bad government policy. It does not actually impact the emissions globally or even locally; it just displaces emissions to the United States in this case.

The plan is not working. A Conservative government will come up with one that does.

• (1310)

[*Translation*]

Ms. Anne Minh-Thu Quach (Salaberry—Suroît, NDP): Madam Speaker, with their weak targets and their sector-by-sector regulatory approach, the Conservatives never met Canada's greenhouse gas reduction targets. They withdrew Canada from the Kyoto protocol, and they never regulated the oil and gas sector, Canada's dirtiest sector.

How can anyone suggest the Conservatives have any credibility on climate change and the climate crisis now?

[*English*]

Mr. Mark Strahl: Madam Speaker, we withdrew from the Kyoto protocol because it did not include the United States and it did not include China and it did not include India. It did not include any of the big emitters that need to be part of the global solution.

We will see, at the end of June, the most comprehensive plan that has ever been put forward by an opposition party in this country, a plan that will actually address global emissions and help Canada meet the targets that we have committed to.

Mr. Nathaniel Erskine-Smith (Beaches—East York, Lib.): Madam Speaker, climate change is an emergency for our planet and it is important that the House come together.

I have heard in the House already that we need action and not more words, but when we look outside of this place, we see that some Canadians and some of our constituents do not fully understand the need for immediate and stronger action. It is incredibly important as a sign of leadership for every single one of us in the House to stand and say that this is a climate emergency and that we need stronger action from this government.

I will be splitting my time with the member for Halifax, who I know is a strong supporter of climate action as well.

We have known that this has been an emergency for some time now. In the fall, I was one of a handful of MPs to call for an emergency debate in the House and note that climate change is an emergency.

Of course, it is not just political leaders in Canada or political leaders around the world who are noting this; scientists for too many years have been telling us that it is an emergency. In the Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change report, the authors

say that if we do not act now, in the next few years we will face very serious consequences for our planet.

The consensus of over 15,000 scientists from over 180 countries is this:

Since 1992, with the exception of stabilizing the stratospheric ozone layer, humanity has failed to make sufficient progress in generally solving these foreseen environmental challenges, and alarmingly, most of them are getting far worse. Especially troubling is the current trajectory of potentially catastrophic climate change due to rising GHGs from burning fossil fuels, deforestation, and agricultural production....

The document goes on to say:

To prevent widespread misery and catastrophic biodiversity loss, humanity must practice a more environmentally sustainable alternative to business as usual.

Without question, climate change presents us with a challenge, but it is our international, our intergenerational and fundamentally our moral responsibility to do our part.

What does doing our part mean? It is helpful to assess where we have been and where we need to go. We know the previous Conservative and Liberal governments have not done enough. The last Conservative government did the bare minimum. While we are not yet on pace to meet our international obligations as this Liberal government, without question we have made significant and meaningful progress.

Let me quote Mark Jaccard, professor of sustainable energy at Simon Fraser University:

In just four years, [new federal] policies have transformed Canada from a global pariah under the Harper government to a model for climate action under [this Prime Minister]....

In climate policy, experts agree that Canada is finally a global leader.

It is not a partisan writing that and it is not a Liberal writing that; it is a professor at Simon Fraser University, a professor in this very subject matter.

What are these new federal policies that have made Canada a leader in tackling climate change? Most of the attention has been on pricing pollution, and for good reason. We have a provincial Conservative government in Ontario spending \$30 million to spread misinformation about the plan, yet it remains the most efficient and effective solution to tackling climate change. Of course we know it is not the only solution; we clearly need additional actions when there is such political consternation over pricing pollution alone.

Government Orders

What has this government done in the last four years? I am going to go down a long list. Taxing is all we hear about from my colleagues in the opposition, so here is a long list for the members opposite: green procurement rules; accelerated phase-out of coal-fired electricity; strong methane regulations to reduce these emissions 40% to 45%; HFC regulations to implement the Montreal protocol; and the pricing backstop, about which, as a side note and contrary to that \$30-million misinformation campaign, the independent Parliamentary Budget Officer notes that 80% of individuals and families will actually get more money back, meaning that it is the top 20%, the wealthiest and most polluting Canadians, who are going to pay, and even those individuals will pay a very small sum to do their part on the most pressing challenge of our time.

We have also implemented the clean fuel standard; net-zero building codes; incentives for electric vehicles and EV charging stations across the country; public transit investments; infrastructure investments, such as in housing, that factor in the need to upgrade and have retrofits to tackle climate change by reducing building emissions; and clean-tech investments, including strategic innovation fund investments.

• (1315)

We have the accelerated capital cost allowance for clean tech. We have the low carbon economy challenge, part of the low carbon economy fund. That is \$2 billion to invest in businesses doing their part to reduce emissions. It also ensures that provinces that are actually doing their part have funds to invest in these renewable energies as well. Of course, there is the food guide and investments in plant-based foods in Saskatchewan.

Are we where we need to be? The answer is no, we are not. It is fair to point out that we are not where we need to be. However, have we made significant and meaningful progress in a very short period of time, when we look at how difficult this issue is and how intractable the opposition from the Conservatives is? Without question we have.

Based on the most recent analysis, we have a 200-million tonne reduction model, based on the measures we are implementing. There are 24 million tonnes to account for forestry. There are 79 million tonnes that are unmodelled.

The opposition members are saying that we are short. Not quite. That is short on modelled measures, but they are not modelling our public transit investments. They are not modelling our clean tech investments. Of the 79 million tonnes we are short on the current targets, yes, we need to do more, but we are not so very far short. We are certainly not short those 79 million tonnes, because we know that certain measures we put in place will make a significant impact. They just cannot be easily modelled.

What more do we need to do? I would say that we are well on the way to meeting the current target, but of course, we know that the 2030 target, and we can call it the Harper target, is itself insufficient. Did it make sense for us to spend a great amount of time in this place over the first three and a half years suggesting that we needed stronger targets, when we had 10 years of complete and total inaction and there was no way we could meet that stronger target? I would say no. The focus should have been on strong action.

We are now at a place where meeting that Harper target is feasible heading toward 2030. We know, though, that it is insufficient. What do we need to do next? The Paris Agreement itself contemplates a ratcheting up of these targets. At the next opportunity, 2020-2021, there will be an opportunity for Canada to attend an international conference and say, alongside other countries, that we are all ratcheting up our targets and holding ourselves more accountable so that we do more. We need to ratchet up our 2030 target at the next opportunity.

We also need to think further ahead, for the sake of our planet. The U.K. climate change committee, an independent advisory committee, recently, at the beginning of this month, called for net zero by 2050. I was recently in Brussels and met the European Commission's director-general for environment. They are also putting materials together calling for net zero by 2050.

We need more ambition here in Canada. We have come a long way. We have made significant and meaningful progress, but now is the time to call it a climate emergency. Now is the time for more ambition. We need stronger 2030 targets, and we need to aim for net zero by 2050. We need strong accountability measures and clear updates on that path to 2050.

Targets are not enough. Not only do we need to ratchet up our targets, we need to strengthen every single step we have taken to date and every single policy measure we have put in place. Therefore, the price on pollution should not stop in 2022. We should build on the investments we have made in retrofits. We should build on the investments we have made in electric vehicle infrastructure. The currently voluntary targets for EVs should in the future probably become mandatory targets.

We can finally say that Canada is a global climate leader and is on the right path. We simply need to double down on our current efforts to get where we need to be to do our part to tackle the most pressing issue of our time. This is an emergency. The Liberal government understands that and is acting as if it is an emergency. I wish every member in the House, regardless of party, would acknowledge that fact and vote to call this an emergency in the coming weeks.

• (1320)

Mr. Phil McColeman (Brantford—Brant, CPC): Madam Speaker, I somewhat admire the hon. member's independence in realizing that it is the government members' job, as it is his job, to hold their own government to account. I have heard the member say that publicly, and I appreciate that stance.

Government Orders

In that light, what is the member's true opinion of the leadership shown by his Prime Minister in using government resources, taxpayer dollars, to fly to Tofino for two days of surfing, then flying to Florida, and I do not begrudge him a vacation, then flying back to Ottawa on his own, in a jet, then flying back to Florida, and the amount of carbon that was created on those trips?

If the Prime Minister is going to lead by example, and if the government is going to lead by example, does the member agree that this was a good way to show leadership on this file?

Mr. Nathaniel Erskine-Smith: Madam Speaker, I truly believe that our individual actions should be consistent with our beliefs, and for that reason, I eat a plant-based diet. One ought to know in this place, as Canadians ought to, that the evidence is clear that if one eats 100 grams of meat a day, one contributes two and a half times more to climate change than if one is on a plant-based diet.

I do not think this is about pointing fingers at anyone. I do not think this is about saying, "Your choices are not as good as mine." It is simply about saying that flying less and eating less meat makes an incredible difference in reducing our individual emissions.

With respect to the Prime Minister specifically, frankly, I am more concerned about the policy measures the Prime Minister and this government are going to put in place to make sure that we are able to meet our international, intergenerational and moral obligations to tackle climate change, full stop.

Mr. Phil McColeman: Be honest.

The Assistant Deputy Speaker (Mrs. Carol Hughes): I just want to remind the hon. member for Brantford—Brant that he had an opportunity to ask a question without being interrupted, and I would ask him to listen to the answer without interrupting. If he has other things to add, he can stand during questions and comments.

Questions and comments, the hon. member for Skeena—Bulkley Valley.

Mr. Nathan Cullen (Skeena—Bulkley Valley, NDP): Madam Speaker, I think it is unhelpful and lacking in courage or ambition for the government to use the standard set by the previous government. Stephen Harper's targets and actions, or inactions, are not really much of a bar to set for a government that came in with a promise and such hopefulness regarding climate change. The member may argue whether it was proper for the government to continue with Stephen Harper's targets, but it is hurt by the fact that the government is not even going to meet those targets, according to the Auditor General.

The Harper government promised not to subsidize oil and gas. It made that promise to the OECD. The current government did the same thing, yet it continues the practice of subsidizing carbon.

Last night, the Senate, at the committee level, rejected Bill C-48, on the north coast tanker ban, which 67% of the members elected to the House voted to pass. This is a question of power between the Senate and the House. When democratically elected members of the House pass a bill like the one on the north coast tanker ban, what is the member willing to do, joining with us, to push back on the unelected house, the Senate, when its members describe a reality and preference that is different from the will expressed by the voters of this country?

● (1325)

Mr. Nathaniel Erskine-Smith: Madam Speaker, I will say two things. First, I do not think we should hold ourselves to the same standard as that of Mr. Harper. My point was to make a contrast. We are accused of doing nothing, yet, as Mark Jaccard, professor of sustainability, notes, the record shows that under Harper, we were a "pariah", and under the Prime Minister, we are considered a "global leader". It is important to acknowledge the clear difference in direction the country has taken between these two very different governments.

Second, on the question about power between this chamber and the other place, I would say that when a promise is put in a platform, and Canadians vote for a party to implement that promise, and the House passes legislation to implement that promise, it is well out of bounds, based on precedent and the historical interaction between the two chambers, for the Senate to strike such legislation down.

Mr. Andy Fillmore (Parliamentary Secretary to the Minister of Canadian Heritage and Multiculturalism, Lib.): Madam Speaker, as best we can tell, this tiny blue-green planet, Earth, is home to the only life forms in our far-reaching universe. As far as we know, this is it; life only exists here on this one rock orbiting the sun. What a remarkable privilege that is, and what a remarkable and overwhelming responsibility.

Let us consider for a moment, across history and across species, all that had to come together to create the extraordinary conditions for life on Earth: to be suspended just so, between the sun's gravity and the earth's own centrifugal force, with just enough eccentricity of orbit to give us the majesty of the seasons; a magnetic field to protect us from cosmic rays and solar flares; a moon to give us tides; and an atmosphere to retain water and oxygen, the foundational ingredients of life as we know it.

What began three and a half billion years ago as bacteria, no more than single-celled organisms, today walks the earth as you and me and all living things that surround us. It is only here, only on this planet.

Let us consider the astounding breadth of human experience over time, the accomplishments of ingenuity and discovery, the progress we have made, the people loved and lost and every act of bravery, courage and passion. Despite the vastness of the known universe and everything we have accomplished, it happened only here. For us, this could be the end of it.

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I am called from the very core of my being, as a life-long environmentalist, to use my voice in today's debate, because if passed, this motion introduced by the Minister of Environment and Climate Change will acknowledge and declare beyond any shadow of a doubt what so many Canadians already know, that there is a national climate emergency in Canada. Its approval would also set the Parliament of Canada on course to take the action necessary to meet Canada's emissions targets under the Paris Agreement. I believe this may be the most consequential vote I will ever cast in this place, and I implore my colleagues from all corners of this House to join me in voting yes.

I am a proud son of Halifax, Nova Scotia, Canada's ocean city. I am also a city planner who spent a career making my city and others more livable, prosperous and sustainable.

I am also a dad to Daisy Isabella Fillmore, a smart and beautiful 12-year-old girl who talks to me every day about our climate and our environment, and who, just last night, sent me a text message saying, "Daddy, can you please pass a bill to ban plastic straws?" Therefore, on her behalf, I am absolutely committed to the biggest fight of our time, and it is largely why I came to this place.

Halifax is perched like a jewel on the east coast of Canada, a city that has been shaped by the sea. While the Atlantic Ocean has always been a tremendous asset, increasingly it is going to become a threat. That is because Halifax has one of the fastest-rising sea levels in the country, and both the frequency and severity of extreme weather events are increasing rapidly. For these reasons, our city itself declared a climate emergency just this past January.

Last year, Globe and Mail reporter Matthew McClearn wrote extensively about this growing threat of sea-level rise, including its impact on Halifax. Here is what a local commercial real estate professional told McClearn when discussing flood risk on our beautiful downtown waterfront:

If you look at the five-metre contour [line], you can see that basically all of the buildings on our waterfront, from the casino right through to Bishop's Landing to the Port of Halifax, all of those buildings—the complete line of them—would be impacted. Perhaps catastrophically.

The outlook is just as troubling for other coastal communities in Canada as well, particularly in our north, which is warming at nearly three times the global rate.

Let us make no mistake, communities in central Canada are far from immune. In the last month alone, floods in Ontario, Quebec and New Brunswick have had a devastating impact. Here is what CBC's Isaac Olson reported from Montreal just a few weeks ago:

Annie Pépin's kids were playing outside with her father Saturday as she cleaned the kitchen after supper. Sirens, and the blaring of a police cruiser's loudspeakers, shattered the evening calm.

"Evacuation now! Evacuation now!" she recalled hearing. "I got outside and I looked at my kids and they were screaming and crying. And then everybody was running."

A 50-metre section of a natural dike holding back the Lake of Two Mountains had been breached in Sainte-Marthe-sur-le-Lac, an off-island suburb northwest of Montreal.

Water immediately began pouring into the town. Witnesses heard trees snapping under the rushing torrent.

Some residents would return days later by kayak and military escort, paddling into their living rooms in waste-deep water to

collect pets and belongings and to survey the devastation to their homes and their neighbourhood.

Climate change is real, it is happening and it is happening here.

As members of Parliament, together we represent every corner of this country and every single Canadian. While not every riding borders an ocean or sits downstream from a fragile dike, not a single one of us, not a single one of our constituencies and not a single one of our constituents will be spared the effects of unchecked climate change.

● (1330)

The effects of climate change will be omnipresent. It will create serious national security challenges. Let us consider that this month, as tanks rolled into Ottawa to support residents following the declaration of a state of emergency, there were more troops deployed within Canada than deployed around the world.

Climate change will also create serious public health care challenges. More people will die from malnutrition, malaria, diarrhea and heat stress. Already air pollution causes seven million deaths a year.

Climate change will also create serious international migration challenges. The UN projects that by 2050 there will be at least 200 million climate refugees. Some projections put that number significantly higher, up to a billion. Let us consider that in 2018, the number of refugees worldwide, including Syrian refugees, totalled just 25 million.

Climate change, left unchecked, will have devastating impacts on our economy. Research shows that within four decades the cost of climate change to the Canadian taxpayer will reach between \$21 billion and \$43 billion annually. Fighting climate change is not just the right thing to do; it is good economic policy, too. The World Bank has estimated that climate change will open up to \$23 trillion in clean investment opportunities around the world.

Historically in Canada, provinces with a price on pollution have been shown to be our country's strongest economic performers. In fact, last week we learned that, in the very same month that our government put a price on pollution in Ontario, we had the single-largest job gain on record. So much for that "job-killing carbon tax" the Conservatives warned us about.

On this side of the House, we have been saying it since day one: The environment and the economy go hand in hand. If one does not have a plan for the environment, one does not have a plan for the economy. It has been 382 days since the Conservative leader promised a climate plan, and still we have seen nothing. Last we heard, he promised to release his climate plan next month. I guess we will see. Perhaps he is waiting to get it back from the oil industry lobbyists with whom he recently met in secret. In any case, I will not be holding my breath.

Government Orders

To their credit, my colleagues in the NDP have begun to release parts of their climate plan. Of course, no one can say just how long it will stick. In recent weeks, the NDP leader has been flip-flopping on environmental issues and backtracking on previous positions, including LNG development in B.C. However, it does appear that on this particular issue, the NDP leader has finally arrived at the very firm position of “Well, who knows?” Wishy-washy is not much of a climate plan, either.

As for this team, we have a strong plan to fight climate change, and we are acting on it. It has more than 50 measures, including putting a price on pollution, protecting marine and terrestrial habitat, investing historic amounts in public transit, making electric vehicles and home energy retrofits more affordable, supporting clean technologies and phasing out coal power.

On a personal note, I am quite proud to say that our plan also includes a climate lens on all federally funded infrastructure projects under our investing in Canada plan. This is the result of my private member's motion, Motion No. 45, which I introduced in 2016 and which passed with support from all parties in this House, except the Conservative Party, unfortunately. That is what it will take to rise to the challenge of a national climate emergency: working collaboratively across party lines, regional divides and international borders to secure the political will and to undertake the necessary work to fight climate change tooth and nail.

We are running out of time. The effects of climate change have begun, and we have already lost too much. We learned recently that one million species are at risk of extinction, and climate change is one of the leading causes. It is an important reminder that this is not just about us. We share this place, after all, all of us together on this one planet, the only one in the vast universe known to sustain life. This cannot be how it ends.

I thank Daisy and all my constituents in Halifax for speaking to me so passionately about this.

It is now time to declare a national climate emergency in this country, and get to work.

•(1335)

Mrs. Cathay Wagantall (Yorkton—Melville, CPC): Madam Speaker, the Auditor General made it clear that 2020 emissions are expected to be nearly 20% above the target rate for the current government. I would like the member to respond to this. He indicated that it was only because this does not include current initiatives and the modelling of what the Liberals are going forward with doing now.

The current government provided five options to the provinces to consider when it met with them initially. Then, when they met again to express what each of the provinces was going to do, the government said that those options were no longer there and the provinces had to pick cap and trade or carbon tax.

Saskatchewan has a Prairie resilience program. It is all outlined. We have the best research on the environment because we need our environment in Saskatchewan. We are working toward what needs to be done. In 10 years, we will cover all of the greenhouse gas emissions of the oil sands in Saskatchewan.

Why did the government decide that working with the provinces did not matter? Is that why Saskatchewan, Manitoba, Ontario, New Brunswick, Alberta and the territories have said no to the carbon tax?

Mr. Andy Fillmore: Madam Speaker, I thank the member and her party for this road to Damascus moment. It is really a wonderful thing to see the Conservative Party finally acknowledging that climate change is real and even putting some ink on paper to acknowledge that we have to do something about it. However, the conversion is a little less than it seems to be.

The Conservatives' proposed amendment to the government's climate emergency motion removes the words “climate emergency”. They are simply not acknowledging the work that lies ahead. Our government has undertaken more than 50 measures toward getting our GHGs under control and reaching our international commitments. I welcome the day when the Conservative members will listen to their constituents and join us in this life-and-death fight.

[*Translation*]

Ms. Marjolaine Boutin-Sweet (Hochelaga, NDP): Madam Speaker, the government motion that we are debating today says that the government wants to keep global warming below 1.5 degrees Celsius. Speaking of wishy-washy, the Liberals did not give any deadline for achieving that goal. The NDP leader's motion that we debated yesterday was much more practical than this one. We set 2030 as the deadline for meeting that same goal.

Since this member is in favour of concrete action, will he vote in favour of the NDP's motion this afternoon, in just a few minutes?

[*English*]

Mr. Andy Fillmore: Madam Speaker, I am very pleased that the hon. member's party got a hurry-up motion together to try to keep up with the governing party on climate change emergency. However, in their haste, the New Democrats unfortunately included some fatal flaws in their motion.

Of course, our government is on track to reduce fossil fuel subsidies by 2025, but this must be done in an orderly way. The immediate withdrawal of fossil fuel subsidies that the NDP proposes would have left northern communities without subsidies for electricity, which would have had a terrible and catastrophic impact on those communities. It would also have immediately removed funding for research that will help us better track and reduce the emissions from fossil fuels.

This was a hasty, though well-intentioned, motion. Our best course of action is to stick with the very coherent and long-reaching motion proposed by the government.

Ms. Marilyn Gladu (Sarnia—Lambton, CPC): Madam Speaker, if it is really such an emergency, and if the Liberals really believe it is an emergency, why did they wait, with only 22 days left, and what are they going to add to their failed plan to make any difference?

Government Orders

Mr. Andy Fillmore: Madam Speaker, this motion, when passed, will send an important message: not just a message to all our constituents across the country that this crisis is real in Canada, but a message to people around the world that, after 10 years of being absent on the world stage in the battle against climate change, Canada is indeed back as a leader, as a climate leader. This is going to compel the entire Parliament of Canada, both Houses, to take the actions necessary to address this emerging and growing climate change disaster.

I am so proud to be standing in this House today, reflecting the voices of my constituents, bringing their voices right to this place, to bring action to this government and to the Parliament of Canada to address this calamitous emergency that we are facing together.

• (1340)

[*Translation*]

Mr. Joël Godin (Portneuf—Jacques-Cartier, CPC): Madam Speaker, this is a very important subject that I care a lot about.

First, I would like to remind the House that the Conservatives get up every morning to try to protect our planet, unlike what the Liberals would have people believe. Climate change is unacceptable, but it does exist. I am a Conservative, and I am stating loud and clear that climate change is real.

Today, the Liberals are waking up after three and a half years in office. They are waking up as the election season approaches, but given their environmental track record, they will be embarrassed to go talk to their voters.

Today, we are debating Motion No. 29, which states:

That the House recognize that: (a) climate change is a real and urgent crisis...

I will not read the entire motion. I simply want to say that this was urgent 50 years ago, 20 years ago and 10 years ago. It was urgent three and a half years ago, it was urgent yesterday, it is urgent today and it will be urgent tomorrow, too. We need to act and we need to come together to protect our planet.

The Liberals falsely label us. I would like to talk about the fable of the ant and the grasshopper. The ant is a hard worker. She prepares for the harsh winter ahead by storing food. We could liken her to the farmer, who cultivates his land and knows the seasons well. The grasshopper is the complete opposite. She is lazy and spends her time singing without worrying about the coming cold. We could liken her to the artist, who lives in a dream without worrying too much about reality and the seasons. In our context, the ant represents the Conservatives, and the grasshopper obviously represents the Liberals. They whiled away their three and a half years in office, and now they are waking up. The environment is now an important issue for them. It took three and a half years. The government's attitude is rather appalling.

Earlier, it was said that this is urgent. On April 22, 2016, Canada signed the Paris Agreement, which was ratified on October 5, 2016.

Ms. Alexandra Mendès: Was it actually 2016?

Mr. Joël Godin: I would like my colleague opposite to listen to what I am saying. She has a mouth and two ears, and she should use those two ears.

As I was saying, the Paris Agreement was signed in April 2016, so this is nothing new. It was being worked on before it was signed. It was worked on globally, in other words, with other countries around the world. We can now say that Canada will not achieve its Paris targets. We will say it. We will rely on the credibility of our public servants, our qualified people. The Auditor General has said so. The United Nations, which must be credible, also said so. The commissioner of the environment said so as well. Unfortunately, the Liberals are blind to this.

I was talking about the grasshopper earlier. The Liberals would probably be represented by the grasshopper. Summer is coming to an end for the grasshopper, with the election right around the corner. Let this serve as a warning to them. Let me do them this favour, so they can present their mediocre environmental record.

I am a member of the Standing Committee on Environment and Sustainable Development. I had an opportunity to meet with the minister, who appeared before the committee. She is one of the grasshoppers. I asked her a very clear question.

• (1345)

I will read the question so I am not accused of twisting words. Hon. members and people at home can consult the record themselves. It is available to all Canadians. This was my question:

Minister, with respect to your much-touted environmental plan, I would like to know—and the question is simple—whether or not you will be meeting the targets of the Paris Agreement, which seeks to reduce greenhouse gases.

The minister said yes. Everyone can see her response for themselves in the transcripts, which are public. Earlier today, the Minister of Environment bragged about being the longest-serving environment minister. How can she say with a straight face that Canada will meet the Paris Agreement targets? There is a word that we cannot use in the House, and I will not say it, but it is unacceptable to not tell the truth.

What credibility do the Liberals and the Minister of Environment have on the world stage? The minister will not meet the Paris Agreement targets. Again, it is the Auditor General, the United Nations and the environment commissioner who say so.

On another subject, during her testimony, the minister took a swipe at me by remarking that she had been waiting 365 days for us, the Conservatives, to release our plan for the environment. My answer was that whether we do or do not release a plan, it does not change anything right now. We need to take action to fight climate change, and the Liberals have been sitting on their hands for 1,300 days.

Why did they draw on the Conservatives' expertise in the environment? Because we have credibility. That is why they used our targets. The Liberals called us incompetent and claimed our scientists had not done a good job, yet when they got to Paris, they realized the previous Conservative government had done an amazing job. They proved it by adopting our targets.

Government Orders

It is absurd that the government is counting on us to get it out of trouble again by handing over our environmental plan. I would remind the Liberals that our leader has pledged to release our plan by the end of the session. That is even ahead of schedule, since it should normally be presented during the election campaign. We are presenting it ahead of schedule to give the Liberals another chance to take action. Time is short, obviously, but we are going to meet their demands and present it, even though we do not have to. We need to be conscientious and rigorous. We have an environmental plan that will enable us to meet the Paris targets. Yes, the Conservatives can do that.

In committee, I also told the minister that the previous Conservative government was successful in lowering greenhouse gas emissions. It was under a Conservative government that Canada saw the most significant drop in greenhouse gas emissions in its history. The minister claimed that was because we were in a recession. However, just yesterday, when I asked her a question during oral question period, the minister said that she would create thousands of jobs and that she had a plan. She needs to be consistent. If she is creating jobs, her plan will not work. We implemented a plan that worked, but she said it was due to the recession. That does not add up. She is making conflicting statements.

● (1350)

Yes, we can encourage economic development and reduce greenhouse gas emissions, but her speeches are fraught with inconsistencies. How can we accept the arrogance of this minister and this government, who, much like the grasshopper, woke up one morning and suddenly realized that we need to look after the environment?

The environment is an everyday problem. It is a local, provincial, national and international problem that needs to be addressed holistically.

For example, not all of the plastic that washes up on our shores comes from Canadian production. It comes from all over the world. Here in Canada, we are lucky to have a lot of shoreline, but there are problems that go along with that. Because of ocean currents, plastics from other countries around the world are washing up on our shores. Are members aware that only 5% of the plastic that is cleaned up along our shores from east to west comes from Canadian consumption? That means that 95% comes from other countries. We need to look at this problem from a global perspective. When working on a plan to reduce greenhouse gas emissions, we need to realize that we are, unfortunately, not working in a silo. There is no way to remain separate. We cannot deal with this all on our own. We need to work with all those involved.

We, the Conservatives, have taken concrete action, and we will continue on that same path.

In Portneuf—Jacques-Cartier, the riding I have the privilege of representing, I have taken some very solid, very targeted actions to improve our environmental footprint. I collaborated with local stakeholders to create a circular economy committee.

Yes, we, the Conservatives, are working for the environment. Yes, we, the Conservatives, are aware of climate change and taking concrete action.

In addition, a group of grade five students from a school in Stoneham in my riding presented me with a poem about the environment. They also prepared a petition that I will soon be presenting here. Together, we will succeed.

The strange thing about the Liberals across the aisle is that they are just now waking up and deciding this is urgent.

It is urgent every day. This is nothing new. We need to take charge and improve our environmental behaviour. Industries, citizens, governments and all stakeholders in a society need to row together to get results.

I want to come back to the fact that the Minister of the Environment does not tell the truth when she is asked the question.

I will be asking her this question again in a moment. I want to warn her that I will be asking the same question today about the Paris targets. I am giving her a hint, and I hope she will be able to tell us the truth.

I am not making this up. As I said earlier, the Auditor General, the United Nations, the environment commissioner, journalists and print media are all saying it. This is coming from specialists, journalists, the Conservatives. The Liberals are the only ones who do not see the truth.

I just want to read out a few headlines. One asks why Trudeau's climate plan is not working—

● (1355)

The Assistant Deputy Speaker (Mrs. Carol Hughes): Order. I must remind the hon. member that he is not to use the given or family name of other members. I hope that he will withdraw his remarks.

Mr. Joël Godin: Madam Speaker, it was part of the title. I apologize and withdraw my comment.

The article was about how the current Prime Minister's climate promise fizzled.

According to another publication, Canada's failure to fight climate change is disturbing. The Prime Minister owes us an explanation about the carbon tax. His carbon pricing plan is not working. Whether in Quebec or British Columbia, it is not working.

Another publication said that the Prime Minister owes us an explanation about the carbon tax and that Ontario's reaction will play a key role in the 2019 election.

According to new projections, Canada is farther from meeting the Paris Agreement targets than it was last year.

The UN says that the major greenhouse gas emitting countries, including Canada, will not meet the Paris Agreement targets.

Global News reports that it will be virtually impossible for Canada to cut emissions in half by 2030 to meet UN goals.

According to another publication, Canada is currently failing to meet targets on reducing greenhouse gas emissions, but businesses can still show leadership.

The title of another publication is “An Ironic Outcome: The United States—Even under Trump—Is Closer to Meeting Its Emission Targets Than Canada”. That says a lot. I think the title alone demonstrates the Liberal government's lack of action on climate change.

According to some publications, the Liberal climate change plans will not enable us to meet the targets, and the Prime Minister's Paris deal could cost Canada billions.

They say this will cost Canada money, but the fact is, it will cost Canadians money.

We can implement measures that will have a minimal financial impact while improving our environmental footprint. We can reduce greenhouse gases. We can work toward adapting to climate change. Emissions have dropped slightly, but Canada will not meet the 2030 targets.

Now I understand why they are asking us for our environmental plan. Once again, let me say that the plan our leader puts forward in the coming days or weeks, sometime before June 21, will clearly meet the Paris Agreement objectives. We will work with all stakeholders to have a positive impact and ensure that our children and grandchildren inherit a healthy planet and a healthy environment.

I would like to remind the House that my colleague from Abbotsford introduced an amendment to the motion this morning. It acknowledges the existence of climate change. I would like to read the amendment so that all members are aware of it. I encourage them to accept it and make it a priority. It asks that the motion be amended by deleting all the words after the word “That” and substituting the following: the House recognize that climate change is a real and urgent global problem requiring real global solutions and that Canada can and must take a leadership role in developing those global solutions; (b) human activity has an impact on climate change and its effects impact communities across the country and the world; (c) Canada and the world must take urgent action to mitigate global climate change and combat its impacts on the environment; (d) the government's own report entitled “Clean Canada: protecting the environment and growing our economy” shows the government is falling short of the Paris targets by 79 million tonnes.

That was an abridged version, obviously, because I am running out of time.

I encourage members to read the amendment. We encourage the Liberal government to introduce a concrete plan to meet its Paris targets.

•(1400)

The Assistant Deputy Speaker (Mrs. Carol Hughes): The member will have 10 minutes for questions after oral question period.

Statements by Members

STATEMENTS BY MEMBERS

[*Translation*]

INTERNATIONAL DAY AGAINST HOMOPHOBIA AND TRANSPHOBIA

Ms. Monique Pauzé (Repentigny, BQ): Madam Speaker, May 17 is the International Day Against Homophobia and Transphobia.

Members of the LGBTQ+ community still have battles to fight, and the Bloc Québécois is here to support them. Quebec society has made progress, but homophobia and transphobia are still very real obstacles to equality and people's right to dignity.

Anyone who spends any time on social media knows that cyberbullying has become a major social problem, and it is even worse for LGBTQ people. Nearly 90% of them report reading statements against sexual diversity.

That is why we applaud the work organizations such as GRIS, Fondation Émergence, Alliance Arc-en-ciel and many others are doing to end discrimination and prejudice. Let us work together to make Quebec a place where every individual feels free to express their identity and uniqueness without fear of discrimination.

* * *

[*English*]

BENOÎT SERRÉ

Mr. Marc Serré (Nickel Belt, Lib.): Madam Speaker, I rise today to honour the memory of my uncle Ben Serré. He lost his battle with cancer on May 11. He was surrounded by his two daughters, Ginette and Julie, sons-in-law Michel and Ken, and grandchildren, Stephanie, Melanie, Erik, Darren and Miguel.

My uncle served as Liberal MP for the riding of Timiskaming—French River and Timiskaming—Cochrane from 1993 to 2004, following in the footsteps of his older brother, my father, Gaetan Serré. I am truly humbled and proud to have followed their paths.

[*Translation*]

Uncle Benoît was dedicated to advancing his community's interests. He was proud of his indigenous, Algonquin and northern Ontario roots, and he was their voice in Ottawa. He was a passionate hunter and fisher and a proud francophone with a good sense of humour. Most importantly, he loved his family deeply.

May Uncle Benoît, a kid from Verner and Desaulniers, rest in peace.

Meegwetch.

* * *

[*English*]

BIRTHDAY CONGRATULATIONS

Mr. Robert Kitchen (Souris—Moose Mountain, CPC): Mr. Speaker, Sunday was Mother's Day, and I would like to highlight an outstanding new mother, Kathryn Gilliss.

Kathryn is a lawyer living in Estevan with her husband Dylan and their 11-week-old daughter Zella.

Statements by Members

Kathryn learned from Donna, her strong and vibrant mother, the value of knowledge and community. At age 18, she chaired the first-ever Estevan Relay for Life and did so again in 2015. She is a board member of the Estevan Art Gallery & Museum, a coordinator for the upcoming Rafferty Rumble and volunteers for the Estevan free legal clinic. She does fundraising for organizations like Special Olympics Saskatchewan.

Kathryn constantly promotes the community of Estevan and is passionate about sport and fitness throughout Saskatchewan. She teaches Learn to Skate and judges for Skate Canada, following her stint as a competitive figure skater. Most recently, she ran a five-kilometre fundraising race, coming second, 10 weeks after having Zella.

Kathryn is the definition of a strong woman and is sure to continue to grow in her role as a new mother.

It happens to be Kathryn's birthday today. I wish her a happy birthday.

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AFRO-CANADIANS

Mr. Ramesh Sangha (Brampton Centre, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, Brampton Centre is rich and vibrant in culture that we import from the rest of the world to make our city extraordinary.

Canada followed the United Nations in recognizing the International Decade for People of African Descent. I thank President Kabu Asante of the African Canadian Social Development Council for providing me the opportunity to be part of the celebrations held in Brampton.

It was wonderful to experience the celebration of culture, arts and the magnificent costumes from the cradle of humanity. Such events bring greater diversity to Canada, affording us more opportunities to facilitate stronger international relationships.

I commend Afro-Canadians for their great contributions to Canada.

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●(1405)

SENIORS

Mr. Scott Duvall (Hamilton Mountain, NDP): Mr. Speaker, the number of Canadian seniors living in poverty is clearly a crisis and it is clear the Liberal government has no plan to help.

As we get closer to an election, we will hear bigger and bigger claims from the government about what it has done for seniors. Do not believe any of it.

A recent study done for the Hamilton Community Foundation laid bare the dire situation for many of our seniors in Hamilton. The report cited an increase in poverty rates for Hamilton seniors, more seniors using food banks, an increase in the number of seniors needing to work to get by and an increase in seniors living alone.

The study projects director, Jeff Wingard, says that they found a rise in poverty rates for the first time in recent memory. He also says that the number of seniors who are working has doubled, many in

low-paying jobs. Many of those seniors are working because they have to, not because they want to.

The government needs to get its head out of the sand, recognize there is a real problem and offer up real solutions, not empty election promises.

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WINNIPEG GENERAL STRIKE

Hon. MaryAnn Mihychuk (Kildonan—St. Paul, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, 100 years ago, on May 15, 1919, Winnipeg unions declared a general strike.

Reacting to oppressive laws and dangerous working conditions, 30,000 workers rose up to demand basic human rights. Labourers, public servants and even the city police walked off the job. Manitoba's Conservative government declared the strike the work of Bolsheviks and "alien scum", new immigrants.

Then the federal government sent in the Northwest Mounted Police as strike breakers. On Bloody Saturday, their violent actions caused the death of two workers and ended the strike. Even today we hear the echos of this dangerous thinking, as immigrants are scapegoats and working-class people are marginalized.

Two years later, a Liberal government took power, enacting sweeping reforms to our labour laws.

I, for one, am proud to be part of a government that works to advance the rights of all Canadian citizens.

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DOORS OPEN ONTARIO

Ms. Leona Alleslev (Aurora—Oak Ridges—Richmond Hill, CPC): Mr. Speaker, both communities in my riding of Aurora—Oak Ridges—Richmond Hill know the importance of opening their doors and welcoming people throughout York Region, Ontario and Canada to the cultural, religious, historic and athletic excellence that our community has to offer.

Last weekend, organizations across Richmond Hill participated in Doors Open Ontario, including the Lake St. George Field Centre, Swan Lake Centre for Conservation and Innovation, Boynton House and many more. A special thanks to the Richmond Hill Hindu Temple and St. Mary and St. Joseph Coptic Orthodox Church for the fabulous personalized tour they gave me.

Members should mark their calendar for August 17 for Doors Open Aurora to visit the Aurora Farmers' Market, Church Street School, Hillary House, Koffler Museum of Medicine and Theatre Aurora just to name a few.

Many thanks to all who participated in Doors Open in Aurora and Richmond Hill for sharing who they are and what they do so we can celebrate the vibrancy of our communities and all that makes us who we are as Canadians.

*Statements by Members***INFRASTRUCTURE**

Mr. Robert Morrissey (Egmont, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, today my P. E.I. colleagues and I welcomed the newly-elected Premier Dennis King to Ottawa, and we appreciate the collaborative tone he brought with him.

With the mighty island leading the country in economic performance as he takes office, Premier King has large shoes to fill, and our government is ready and willing to support the many community groups and municipalities that are eager to get back to work improving their communities.

The Canada-Prince Edward Island integrated bilateral agreement provides \$366 million in federal funding over the next decade for cultural, rural and green infrastructure priorities as identified by provincial governments.

Me and my P.E.I. colleagues share a common goal of helping islanders. I look forward to building on our enviable economic position by investing in rural infrastructure and sustainable community projects in my riding of Egmont.

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CRIMEA

Mr. Borys Wrzesnewskij (Etobicoke Centre, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, 75 years ago, on May 18, 1944, the Crimean Tatars' sürgünlik was launched by Soviet dictator Stalin. All of Crimea's Tatars were forcibly transported 4,000 kilometres east into the inhospitable Central Asian Steppes. More than half died of suffocation, hunger and disease.

However, genocide was not enough. All traces of these people were to be erased. Crimean Tatar books were burned. Crimean Tatar towns and villages were renamed with Russian names. Muslim cemeteries and mosques were razed, all written references of these people was erased.

Today, we are honoured by the presence of the iconic Mustafa Dzemilev who spent 15 years in a Soviet gulag demanding his people's right of return, and today has again been banned from his ancestral homeland.

Let us draw on the wisdom of Raphael Lemkin and recognize May 18 as the Crimean Tatar genocide sürgünlik memorial day.

• (1410)

The Speaker: I would remind hon. colleagues of the general rule that members are to rise uncovered.

The hon. member for Oshawa.

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GOVERNMENT POLICIES

Mr. Colin Carrie (Oshawa, CPC): Mr. Speaker, the Prime Minister has failed to deliver for Oshawa.

He promised an open and transparent process for major decisions, yet he refuses to release the business plans for the Oshawa harbour as well as the Pickering Airport, a project which could create up to 50,000 much-needed jobs for our communities.

He promised a unique environmental plan and carbon taxes that would bring the jobs of the future to Canada. Instead of building the cars of the future in Oshawa, GM will now be building them in the United States where it is more internationally competitive.

The Prime Minister also broke his solemn promise to veterans to settle lawsuits out of court. He actually said that they were "asking more" than he could give.

Also, for one who has served his country bravely for nearly 40 years in the Royal Canadian Navy, the Prime Minister will drag the person's reputation through legal proceedings. However, become a convicted terrorist and he will gift a \$10.5 million out-of-court settlement.

The fact is that the Prime Minister is simply not as advertised.

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RIGHT TO PLAY

Hon. Robert Nault (Kenora, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, I want to welcome to the House youth leaders from Right to Play's promoting life skills in aboriginal youth program.

Right To Play works in partnership with over 90 first nations, Métis and Inuit communities and organizations across Canada to support community-driven youth programs that build life skills and improve health and education outcomes.

Today we are joined by Zoe Duhaime of Wahnapiitae First Nation, Tyler Evans of St. Theresa Point First Nation, Danny Charles of Beecher Bay First Nation, and Shayna Russell and Evangeline Martin of Gitanyow First Nation.

This evening, along with the member for Cariboo—Prince George and the member for Vancouver East, we will hear from these youth leaders at an event in room 410 of the Wellington Building.

I ask all members to join us tonight, and join me now in welcoming these inspiring youth leaders to the House of Commons.

* * *

THE ENVIRONMENT

Mr. Anthony Rota (Nipissing—Timiskaming, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, for her entire childhood, nine-year-old Chloe Cook has been an advocate for the environment. Chloe has always picked up litter whenever she walks down the street and encourages whomever is with her to do the same. She is involved with Earth Rangers, a youth conservation group that educates members about how to engage in environmental advocacy in their homes, schools and communities.

She is inspired by Greta Thunberg, the teenager from Sweden who started #FridaysForFuture to protest global inaction on climate change. Chloe is holding a similar protest in North Bay on May 24, because she believes climate change is a huge problem that is affecting our future.

I commend Chloe for being a leader of today. Chloe represents why tackling climate change needs to be a priority and why we need to take action for the future of our children and grandchildren. I thank Chloe.

*Statements by Members**[Translation]***INTERESTS OF QUEBEC**

Mr. Pierre Paul-Hus (Charlesbourg—Haute-Saint-Charles, CPC): Mr. Speaker, four years ago, the Prime Minister campaigned on a lot of promises. He was going to fix all of his predecessors' mistakes and get Quebec and Canada back on track. Like in a fairytale, it was all make-believe. It did not happen.

He promised that Quebec would be well served by his government. On the contrary, he betrayed us the first chance he got by trying to rob Davie of a major contract and the thousand jobs that went with it. Quebec deserves better.

He promised harmony with the provinces, but more than half of them, including Quebec, are fighting with him. Quebec deserves better.

He did not lift a finger to stop the influx of illegal migrants entering Quebec every day, rendering the Canada-Quebec accord on immigration meaningless.

Our relationships with our key international partners have deteriorated, not to mention the embarrassment that Quebeckers felt in the wake of the Prime Minister's trip to India.

Quebec deserves better.

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•(1415)

*[English]***INTERNATIONAL DAY AGAINST HOMOPHOBIA, TRANSPHOBIA AND BIPHOBIA**

Mr. Randy Boissonnault (Edmonton Centre, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, tomorrow we mark the International Day Against Homophobia, Transphobia and Biphobia. We pause to reflect on the violence, discrimination and injustice that persist for LGBTQ2 Canadians and people around the world.

[Translation]

It is thanks to the work of Fondation Émergence that we have been celebrating this day for 16 years now. Every year, the International Day Against Homophobia, Transphobia and Biphobia runs public anti-discrimination campaigns.

[English]

This year's campaign is "online violence has real-life consequences." Almost three-quarters of LGBTQ2 individuals report they have been personally attacked or harassed online. That includes me and many of my queer friends and colleagues. This is unacceptable.

Canada's co-chairmanship with Chile for the Equal Rights Coalition is a commitment to ending these injustices. We thank Uruguay and the Netherlands for their foundational work.

As we pass the torch to Argentina and the United Kingdom, we say that persecution, hate and ignorance have no place in this world. We will stamp it out.

*[Translation]***TROIS-PISTOLES FRENCH IMMERSION SCHOOL**

Mr. Guy Caron (Rimouski-Neigette—Témiscouata—Les Basques, NDP): Mr. Speaker, one of the proudest accomplishments of Trois-Pistoles and Les Basques is without a doubt the Trois-Pistoles French Immersion School. It is celebrating its 87th year of operation, making it the oldest immersion school in North America.

Every summer the principal, André Beaudin, and his team welcome approximately 600 young English speakers from across the country, who are housed by 100 or so host families, for an unforgettable experience.

When they arrive and they are spoken to in French, the kids often look like deer in the headlights, according to the Nicholas Moroz, president of the CAFEL, but they emerge from the experience with greater confidence in themselves and their abilities, not to mention a host of new memories.

Whenever I can, I have the pleasure of welcoming them when they arrive and seeing them off when they leave every year. This time, it will be bittersweet, because André is retiring this summer, after 10 years as principal of the school. His generosity of spirit and his sense of humour are equally legendary, and we are sorry to see him go.

His successor, Kathy Asari, will be taking over soon. She will have some seriously big shoes to fill.

Thank you, André, for all that you have done. Enjoy your well-deserved retirement.

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*[English]***GOVERNMENT POLICIES**

Hon. Diane Finley (Haldimand—Norfolk, CPC): Mr. Speaker, in an age of online shopping, most Canadians have had at least one bad experience buying something online, when what arrives is a cheap imitation of what one ordered.

Unfortunately, there are a lot of Canadians feeling that way about the Prime Minister right now. What was promised was brand new and clean. Instead, what we have is a rehashed version of the old 1996 to 2004 model of the Liberal Party, bending the rules for their big corporate buddies.

On the box it said, "now with ethics included", but apparently that was a limited time offer. Then there are the hidden fees and the promise of a balanced budget, when what arrived was four consecutive deficits.

Do members remember those lower taxes he went on about during the campaign? Instead he brought in a whole new tax, one that affects absolutely everything.

The Prime Minister is not as advertised.

[Translation]

GOVERNMENT POLICIES

Mr. Matt DeCoursey (Fredericton, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, we were elected on a plan to grow the economy and create jobs for Canadians. Thanks to investments our government is making in infrastructure, innovation, immigration, trade and clean growth, Canadians are working every day to build a Canada that works for everyone.

[English]

Under the Harper majority government, New Brunswick actually lost thousands of jobs, but under our government, New Brunswick has added thousands of jobs.

Our Atlantic coast strategy is breathing new life into our communities. In Fredericton, that means a booming cyber sector, hundreds of renewable jobs in smart grid, and new Canadian Armed Forces recruits at Base Gagetown. In fact, across the country since November 2015, Canadians have added more than one million jobs to our economy.

Because of our plan, New Brunswickers and Canadians are working. What is clear is that our plan is working better than advertised.

ORAL QUESTIONS

[English]

FOREIGN AFFAIRS

Hon. Candice Bergen (Portage—Lisgar, CPC): Mr. Speaker, China has now formally arrested Canadians Michael Kovrig and Michael Spavor. We do not know where these two men are being held, and they are at risk of being put to death by the Chinese because of these trumped-up allegations.

Clearly, the Prime Minister's approach to China is not working. When will he stop acting like a coward, pick up the phone and do something about this, because the very lives of Canadians—

Some hon. members: Oh, oh!

• (1420)

The Speaker: The hon. member would know that you cannot do indirectly what you cannot do directly, and so I ask her to withdraw the word and apologize.

Hon. Candice Bergen: Mr. Speaker, I withdraw calling the Prime Minister someone acting like a coward. I withdraw that.

Hon. Mélanie Joly (Minister of Tourism, Official Languages and La Francophonie, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, these are the lives of Canadians that we are talking about. We should not be playing politics about this.

We strongly condemn the arbitrary arrests of Michael Kovrig and Michael Spavor, and we continue to call for their immediate release. The minister is in close contact with their families. We have rallied an unprecedented number of partners around the world in support of Canada's position. Canada continues to express its appreciation to

Oral Questions

those who have spoken in support of these detained Canadians and the rule of law.

* * *

JUSTICE

Hon. Candice Bergen (Portage—Lisgar, CPC): Mr. Speaker, earlier this week the House apologized to Vice-Admiral Mark Norman, but as of yet the Prime Minister has not.

We all know very well that the House apologizing is vastly different from the Prime Minister apologizing. We know the Prime Minister has no problem apologizing, though. He has done so to Omar Khadr, a convicted terrorist.

Why in the world would he not apologize to Vice-Admiral Mark Norman, who has been wronged, maligned and almost bankrupted by the Liberal government? When can he—

The Speaker: The hon. Minister of National Revenue.

[Translation]

Hon. Diane Lebouthillier (Minister of National Revenue, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, Canadians can have full confidence in the independence of our institutions. We supported the motion this week to recognize Vice-Admiral Mark Norman for his service and apologize to him and his family. We are waiting to hear from the chief of defence staff and the Canadian Armed Forces to find out what the next steps are. We know that a process was followed, and, unlike the Conservatives, we on this side of the House have confidence in our institutions.

[English]

Hon. Candice Bergen (Portage—Lisgar, CPC): Mr. Speaker, we have learned that military regulations are preventing Vice-Admiral Norman from speaking freely about what the Liberals have been doing to him over the last three years.

Canadians deserve to know what the Prime Minister and his office did to Vice-Admiral Norman, but they will not know unless he is allowed to speak. Where have we heard that before?

Will the Prime Minister remove this gag order, or are we going to see another person with honour and integrity being told by the Prime Minister to just sit down, shut up and stay silent?

[Translation]

Hon. Diane Lebouthillier (Minister of National Revenue, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, the committees operate independently of the government, and we will wait for the results of their deliberations.

Regarding the legal process involving Vice-Admiral Norman, when it stayed the charge, the Public Prosecution Service of Canada noted that no other factors were considered in this decision, nor was there any contact or influence from outside the PPSC, including political influence, in either the initial decision to prosecute Mr. Norman or in the decision to stay the charge. Any accusation to the contrary is absurd and baseless.

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

Mr. Pierre Paul-Hus (Charlesbourg—Haute-Saint-Charles, CPC): Mr. Speaker, like his father, the Prime Minister has never acknowledged Quebec's importance to Canada. He speaks negatively of our province, and his actions clearly show that he does not support Quebec. By way of evidence, he involved his government in a coordinated operation to cancel Davie's contract to build the *Asterix*. Had he succeeded, Quebec would have lost 1,000 jobs.

Why? Was it to please Scott Brison's friends?

Hon. Diane Lebouthillier (Minister of National Revenue, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, our government is 100% committed to strengthening the Royal Canadian Navy and ensuring that it has the resources it needs to serve Canadians.

Davie is a major shipyard, and we recognize the expertise of its workers who delivered the *Asterix*. The *Asterix* is filling a temporary need for refuelling at sea, air support and medical capabilities for our navy.

Thanks to this transition to the future fleet, the Royal Canadian Navy continues to carry out its core missions of preparing, training, equipping and deploying naval assets for missions in Canada and abroad.

Mr. Pierre Paul-Hus (Charlesbourg—Haute-Saint-Charles, CPC): Mr. Speaker, at the November 2015 cabinet meeting, did the minister, who is from Quebec, support the idea of trying to cancel the contract for the *Asterix*, whose virtues she is extolling today?

That was the first cabinet meeting and the first decision cabinet made. Luckily, things did not go as planned.

Can the minister explain the coordinated operation against Admiral Norman to destroy him and prevent him from doing his job, which was to support the project, to the best of his ability?

• (1425)

Hon. Diane Lebouthillier (Minister of National Revenue, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, as a result of last week's decision, the charges against Vice-Admiral Norman were stayed.

As the Public Prosecution Service of Canada confirmed last week, all decisions were made completely independently.

No other factors were considered in this decision, nor was there any any contact or influence from outside the PPSC, including political influence in either the initial decision to prosecute Mr. Norman or the decision to stay the charge.

Allegations to the contrary are completely absurd.

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[English]

FINANCE

Mr. Peter Julian (New Westminster—Burnaby, NDP): Mr. Speaker, 47 billion dollars' worth of profits from criminal acts were laundered in Canada last year under the Liberal government. Canada is now the snow washing capital of the world. Epidemic money laundering increases housing costs, and Canadians pay the price.

Liberals choose to do nothing but fake posturing. They deny the resources and tools to fight money laundering. The B.C. NDP government has taken a courageous stand and launched a public inquiry.

Will the Prime Minister show some courage and initiate a joint public inquiry, co-operating with the Government of British Columbia?

Hon. Bill Blair (Minister of Border Security and Organized Crime Reduction, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, our government takes very seriously the integrity of our financial sector and the threat posed to Canada's national security by money laundering and organized crime.

That is why in budget 2019 we brought forward new measures to improve the transparency of beneficial ownership and add \$68.9 million to the RCMP and \$50 million to CRA's real estate audit teams.

There are many important measures we are acting on, and it is disappointing that the NDP voted against those measures.

[Translation]

Mr. Alexandre Boulerice (Rosemont—La Petite-Patrie, NDP): Mr. Speaker, we just learned that some \$50 billion were laundered in Canada. Let me explain that in a way the Liberals can understand: \$50 billion could buy about 10 pipelines.

The Liberals are asleep at the switch, but British Columbia's NDP government is showing leadership and moving forward with a public inquiry.

Who are the Liberals trying to protect this time?

Will they follow British Columbia's lead and take meaningful steps to end this scourge?

[English]

Hon. Bill Blair (Minister of Border Security and Organized Crime Reduction, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, let me first say how delighted I am to hear about the NDP's new-found interest in money laundering.

In budget 2019 we created the action, coordination and enforcement team and a money laundering centre of expertise to strengthen financial intelligence information sharing with law enforcement. This was directly in response to conversations we were having with the Government of British Columbia.

We have also provided resources, as I said, to the RCMP, FINTRAC and the CRA. We have added a new offence of recklessness in the legislation, as an offence in the Criminal Code, to facilitate prosecutions.

I look forward, with the new-found interest in money laundering—

The Speaker: The hon. member for Rosemont—La Petite-Patrie.

Oral Questions

[Translation]

THE ENVIRONMENT

Mr. Alexandre Boulerice (Rosemont—La Petite-Patrie, NDP): Mr. Speaker, after falling asleep at the switch, the Liberals are now waking up and making a big to-do about the climate emergency. They are scrambling about in a frenzy and putting on a big show.

We are talking about the same government that bought a pipeline with taxpayers' money and gives millions of dollars in handouts to oil companies.

This is Liberal hypocrisy, pure and simple. They are the champions of talk, when what we need is action. That is what Canadians are calling for, and that is what the NDP is proposing.

Will the Liberals have the courage to do the right thing? Will they stand up and vote in favour of our motion to increase our greenhouse gas reduction targets? That is what needs to be done.

Hon. Catherine McKenna (Minister of Environment and Climate Change, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, of course we are in a climate emergency. That is why we moved a motion in Parliament.

I want everyone to stand up and acknowledge that the science behind climate change is clear.

Of course there is a climate emergency, and we need to meet our international obligations. We have a plan to address climate change, and we are going to do so while growing our economy. We have created a million jobs, and we are making progress.

I hope that everyone will vote in favour of our motion to declare a climate emergency.

[English]

Mr. Peter Julian (New Westminster—Burnaby, NDP): Mr. Speaker, the truth is that the Liberals are trying to ram through Trans Mountain, which would mean Canada provoking even greater climate change.

Declaring a climate emergency does not mean responding with platitudes and pipelines. Tackling climate emergencies takes more than a fake price on carbon that excludes the big emitters. It takes leadership. Liberals spout platitudes and ram through pipelines.

Why do the Liberals not do the right thing? Why do they not end subsidies for big oil and gas, and abandon the massive emissions that will come from the Trans Mountain pipeline project?

● (1430)

Hon. Catherine McKenna (Minister of Environment and Climate Change, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, it is always very challenging in this House. On the one hand, we have a party whose members do not believe in taking climate action, who attack the price on pollution, pretending that we are not giving the money back and taking action to reduce emissions while putting more money in people's pockets. On the other hand, we have another party whose members are saying it is a fake price on pollution. I do not really get it.

We have a climate emergency. We need to come together and take serious action. We have to stop fighting and we need to move forward together. That is the only way we will be able to tackle

climate change. That is the only way we will be able to grow our economy. We have to come together as a country. We owe it to our kids.

The Speaker: Order. It seems that many members have lots to say, but I would ask them of course to wait until they have the floor.

Now the floor is going to the hon. member for Renfrew—Nipissing—Pembroke.

* * *

STANDING COMMITTEE ON NATIONAL DEFENCE

Mrs. Cheryl Gallant (Renfrew—Nipissing—Pembroke, CPC): Mr. Speaker, the Liberals are refusing to allow today's emergency meeting on the Vice-Admiral Mark Norman affair to be televised. Canadians deserve transparency, but the Liberals want to hide in the dark.

Vice-Admiral Norman says he has a story to tell that Canadians will want to hear. Canadians need to be assured that the Prime Minister is not orchestrating yet another cover-up.

Will the chair of the defence committee do the right thing and allow today's meeting to be televised?

Mr. James Bezan (Selkirk—Interlake—Eastman, CPC): Mr. Speaker, as vice-chair of the national defence committee, I am disappointed that the Liberal chair of the committee from Kelowna—Lake Country is stubbornly refusing to accommodate requests from media to televise today's meeting. There is intense national interest regarding the unjust prosecution of Vice-Admiral Mark Norman, but the Liberals want to keep it in the dark.

So much for Liberal transparency. It is starting to smell a lot like a cover-up.

* * *

JUSTICE

Mr. James Bezan (Selkirk—Interlake—Eastman, CPC): Mr. Speaker, last night I asked the Minister of National Defence if he would finally apologize on behalf of the Liberal government to Vice-Admiral Mark Norman for the miscarriage of justice he suffered at the government's hands. The answer was nothing.

The documents the Prime Minister fought to keep secret were the very documents that vindicated Vice-Admiral Norman. It could have happened months ago, yet the Liberals still refuse to turn them over to the court.

If the minister truly regrets what happened to Vice-Admiral Norman, will he let the sun shine in, release the documents and end this Liberal cover-up?

[Translation]

Mr. Serge Cormier (Parliamentary Secretary to the Minister of National Defence, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, Canadians can have confidence in the independence of our judicial institutions.

Oral Questions

This week, we supported the motion to recognize Vice-Admiral Mark Norman for his service and apologize to him and his family.

We are waiting to hear from the chief of defence staff and the Canadian Armed Forces about what the next steps will be. There is a process in place, and we know that it was followed. We need to respect the judicial process, unlike what the Conservatives are doing. They are not showing any respect for the judicial process.

* * *

PUBLIC SERVICES AND PROCUREMENT

Mr. Richard Martel (Chicoutimi—Le Fjord, CPC): Mr. Speaker, the Royal Canadian Navy needs two supply ships. On February 27, 2014, HMCS *Protecteur* was lost to a fire. On September 1, 2014, HMCS *Preserver* conducted its last exercise. The navy had an urgent need that only Davie could fill.

Why did the Liberal government try to cancel the *Asterix* contract that had been awarded to Davie?

Mr. Serge Cormier (Parliamentary Secretary to the Minister of National Defence, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, our national shipbuilding strategy is creating good jobs for the middle class in Quebec and across Canada.

The Conservatives shut Davie out entirely, awarding it no significant contracts through the national shipbuilding strategy. Meanwhile, our government has granted more than 16% of the contracts, worth \$1.5 million, to companies in Quebec.

We believe in the Davie shipyard, and we will also continue to ensure that the men and women of the Royal Canadian Navy have the equipment they need to do their jobs. That is exactly what we are doing by investing in our men and women in uniform.

* * *

JUSTICE

Mr. Richard Martel (Chicoutimi—Le Fjord, CPC): Mr. Speaker, by the way, we were the ones who awarded the contract, not them.

The *Asterix* is resounding success. It was delivered by Davie on time and on budget. Last night, the Minister of National Defence was unable to confirm when the Royal Canadian Navy could count on getting a second supply ship. He also confirmed that he endorsed the decision by the chief of the defence staff to suspend Vice-Admiral Norman.

Why did the Liberal government not support the man who was defending the Royal Canadian Navy?

Mr. Serge Cormier (Parliamentary Secretary to the Minister of National Defence, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, since the question also touched on the issue with Davie, it is important to respond by saying that the Conservatives completely abandoned Davie and did not award it a single contract.

Once again, we have granted more than \$1.5 billion in contracts to Quebec businesses. We will ensure that we provide equipment to the men and women of the Royal Canadian Navy.

To assess the navy's needs, our government relies on official advice from the Department of National Defence and the Canadian

Armed Forces, as well as that of the commander of the Royal Canadian Navy, who gave us his opinion on the supply ships.

• (1435)

[*English*]

Ms. Leona Alleslev (Aurora—Oak Ridges—Richmond Hill, CPC): Mr. Speaker, we know there was an orchestrated effort by the Prime Minister to politically interfere in the Mark Norman case. Documents were withheld and redacted, code names were used to suppress information, witnesses were tampered with and clandestine meetings were held at which no notes were taken. The Prime Minister's own lawyer talked about the need to engineer the issues at stake.

Will the Prime Minister apologize to Mark Norman and immediately return the admiral to his job?

[*Translation*]

Mr. Serge Cormier (Parliamentary Secretary to the Minister of National Defence, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, once again, we supported the motion this week to recognize Vice-Admiral Norman for his service and apologize to him and his family.

I would like to point out that the entire House supported this motion. We are waiting to hear from the chief of the defence staff and the Canadian Armed Forces about the next steps. As we know, the chief of the defence staff will be sitting down with Admiral Norman to discuss next steps.

We respect this process, unlike the Conservatives, who are trying to undermine a process that has been in place for many years and Canada's judicial process.

[*English*]

Ms. Leona Alleslev (Aurora—Oak Ridges—Richmond Hill, CPC): Mr. Speaker, the prosecution may have been completely independent, but the current government was anything but. Canadians know the Prime Minister was wrong to politically interfere in the Mark Norman case. Now Canadians expect the Prime Minister to say he is sorry.

It is clear the Prime Minister did everything he could to punish Admiral Norman. From tarnishing his reputation to destroying him financially, the Prime Minister was unrelenting.

When will the Prime Minister—on behalf of the government, not this House—apologize to Mark Norman and give him his job back?

[*Translation*]

Mr. Serge Cormier (Parliamentary Secretary to the Minister of National Defence, Lib.): Once again, the House unanimously adopted a motion to apologize. I would like to remind the opposition members that no factors were considered in this decision. There was no outside contact or influence, including political influence in either the initial decision to prosecute Mr. Norman or the decision to stay the charge.

Those are the words of the PPSC. Once again, any allegations from the opposition are absurd. We must respect this country's judicial process. Unlike the Conservatives, this side of the House always respects that process.

*Oral Questions**[English]***THE ENVIRONMENT**

Ms. Rachel Blaney (North Island—Powell River, NDP): Mr. Speaker, Kingcome, a community in my riding, has been going into debt every year because of the current government's lack of action to get it off diesel. This community has been grappling with dangerous floods because of climate change. Like many communities across this country, it wants action.

Our motion asked the government to stop subsidies to big oil, not to communities like Kingcome. The Liberals are misleading people by using their own failure to deliver for indigenous peoples to defend against their lacklustre record on climate change.

It is a simple question. Why are the Liberals refusing to support our motion to fight climate change?

Hon. Seamus O'Regan (Minister of Indigenous Services, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, that is not how it reads at all. In fact, we will remain on guard and work diligently with indigenous communities as they make the transition from a diesel economy to a new economy. In the meantime, we have to remain vigilant and make sure we protect at least 24 Ontario communities that presently rely right now on that subsidy in order to power their water rehabilitation facilities and schools.

We will continue to work with first nations as they, like the rest of us, make a transition to a new energy economy.

Ms. Rachel Blaney (North Island—Powell River, NDP): Mr. Speaker, this community is in British Columbia. It is deplorable that the Liberals are using access to housing and the cost of living on reserves to defend their subsidies to big oil. It is unacceptable to see the government mislead people to protect rich corporations.

New Democrats are talking about the more than \$6 billion given last year to oil giants. The Liberals are trying to claim they cannot cancel those subsidies because it would deny indigenous communities basic fairness.

Enough. When will they join us in fighting climate change and make sure that no indigenous community is left behind?

Hon. Seamus O'Regan (Minister of Indigenous Services, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, enough with legislation and policy being played on here in this House without consulting with indigenous communities first.

I would ask the NDP exactly how much consultation with indigenous groups they did before they decided they wanted to end the federal energy subsidies. How much consultation have they done? I know that on this side of the House we continue to consult, because the path to reconciliation requires all of us to do so.

* * *

● (1440)

*[Translation]***INTERGOVERNMENTAL RELATIONS**

Mr. Alain Rayes (Richmond—Arthabaska, CPC): Mr. Speaker, this Liberal government is incapable of working with the provinces on a number of issues.

The Minister of Environment and Climate Change is constantly attacking the Ontario and Alberta governments. The Minister of Tourism goes after the Premier of Ontario every chance she gets. The Minister of Families, Children and Social Development and the member for Louis-Hébert publicly attacked the Premier of Quebec.

My question is this. Does the Prime Minister support the disrespectful and condescending way his Liberal MPs and ministers attack the various provincial governments?

Hon. François-Philippe Champagne (Minister of Infrastructure and Communities, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, only a Conservative would oppose nationwide investments.

Just this morning, I spoke with my counterpart in Alberta. We are proud to have approved more than 4,800 projects across Canada. We are proud to have invested over \$2.4 billion in Atlantic Canada. We are proud to have invested over \$6.7 billion in Quebec. We are proud to have invested over \$12.2 billion in Ontario and we are proud to have invested over \$15.6 billion in western Canada. We will continue to make investments that improve the lives of Canadians across the country.

Mr. Alain Rayes (Richmond—Arthabaska, CPC): Mr. Speaker, too bad he was reading from a page that had nothing to do with my question.

This government is paternalistic and condescending toward our provincial premiers and partners. On Friday, the Prime Minister of Canada accused the Premier of Quebec of playing petty politics. That comment is disrespectful toward the person who was democratically elected by the people of Quebec in October.

Does the Minister of Infrastructure and Communities agree with the Prime Minister of Canada's disrespectful comments about the Premier—

The Speaker: The hon. Minister of Infrastructure and Communities.

Hon. François-Philippe Champagne (Minister of Infrastructure and Communities, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, I have a great deal of respect for my colleague.

Respecting Quebec means more than asking questions in the House of Commons. It means acting in the best interests of Quebecers. That is why we have approved 684 projects in Quebec since November 2015, for a total investment in excess of \$5.3 billion in Quebec.

Respecting Quebecers means investing in Quebec, which is what we will continue to do.

*Oral Questions***FINANCE**

Mr. Alupa Clarke (Beauport—Limoilou, CPC): Mr. Speaker, real federalism is what we did. We recognized Quebec as a nation in 2008, something the Liberals never would have done.

Not only that, but we have seen since 2015 that they are anything but transparent. They hide tax hikes and bury objectionable provisions in huge omnibus bills. Surprise, surprise, what do we see? The Liberals refused to properly fund the Office of the Auditor General this year.

Why are they withholding that funding, which the Auditor General needs in order to perform audits to hold this government accountable to Canadians?

Mr. Joël Lightbound (Parliamentary Secretary to the Minister of Finance, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, when it comes to respecting our officers of Parliament, we will take no lessons from the Conservatives, who, members will recall, appointed unilingual anglophone officers of Parliament, showing profound disrespect for Quebec.

We are committed to giving the Auditor General all the necessary tools. The member mentioned taxes, and I would like to remind him of one simple fact. Last summer, the OECD confirmed to Canadians that a typical Canadian family of four in 2019 has about \$2,000 more in its pockets than in 2015. The Liberal plan is working for the middle class.

[*English*]

Mr. Pat Kelly (Calgary Rocky Ridge, CPC): Mr. Speaker, this government will do anything to avoid accountability. We have seen them try to cover up interference in prosecution in the case of SNC-Lavalin and Mark Norman. Now the Auditor General says that his office cannot fulfill its mandate because it did not receive the funds it needs. As a result, the Office of the Auditor General has cancelled five important audits.

For 140 years, the Auditor General has helped hold governments accountable. Will the government commit today to end its culture of cover-ups and fully fund the Auditor General's office?

• (1445)

Hon. Joyce Murray (President of the Treasury Board and Minister of Digital Government, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, our government is committed to supporting the important and ongoing work of our Auditor General. When an officer of Parliament such as the Auditor General identifies the need for additional resources, we consider such requests very carefully to ensure that the office can continue its important work for Canadians efficiently and effectively.

* * *

NATURAL RESOURCES

Mr. Brian Masse (Windsor West, NDP): Mr. Speaker, with gas prices soaring, nothing protects Canadians from being gouged. A gas price monitoring agency was being established, until it was destroyed by the previous Conservative government. Meanwhile, Canadians keep getting ripped off.

Gas pumps routinely charge people the wrong amount of money, but when Canadians pump their gas, they want to know what they are getting and that they are paying the correct amount of money. To

make things worse, the pumps are rarely inspected. All the while, the industry racks up record profits and continues to get subsidies from the Liberals. Canadians are fed up.

Why did the government not finally protect consumers and restore the price monitoring agency?

[*Translation*]

Mr. Joël Lightbound (Parliamentary Secretary to the Minister of Finance, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, I would remind the House that we are very serious about protecting consumers across the country. We are very concerned about these issues. In so many areas, including financial matters and consumer affairs, we want to ensure that Canadian consumers are properly protected, and that is what we will continue to do.

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CANADIAN HERITAGE

Mr. Pierre-Luc Dusseault (Sherbrooke, NDP): Mr. Speaker, Facebook and Google generated total advertising revenues of more than \$5 billion last year, yet neither of those two multinationals paid a red cent in taxes to Canada.

The Minister of National Revenue says she wants to focus on the big fish. Hello! They are not called web giants for nothing. While her government sits on its hands, our artists, retailers, media and broadcasters are the ones paying the price for the government's willful blindness and rather subjective enforcement of the law.

When will she end the privileges given to the web giants?

[*English*]

Ms. Jennifer O'Connell (Parliamentary Secretary to the Minister of Finance (Youth Economic Opportunity), Lib.): Mr. Speaker, we have been working hard with international partners to deal with web giants to ensure that they pay their fair share. This is not a uniquely Canadian problem. That is why we are working with our international counterparts and with groups like the OECD to come up with a consensus-based approach. We want to ensure that the tax system is fair and that it works for everybody.

I want to point out the consistent inconsistencies when it comes to the NDP in closing tax loopholes—

An hon. member: Oh, oh!

[*Translation*]

The Speaker: Order. I would ask the hon. member for Longueuil—Saint-Hubert not to be yelling when someone else has the floor.

The hon. member for Mont-Royal. To

Oral Questions

[English]

HEALTH

Mr. Anthony Housefather (Mount Royal, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, 45,000 Canadians die of smoking-related issues each year. This amounts to one out of every five deaths in this country. Smoking-related illnesses cost the health care system approximately \$6.5 billion every year. As such, I would like to ask the Parliamentary Secretary to the Minister of Health what steps the government is taking to reduce the use of tobacco products here in Canada, particularly among our young people.

Ms. Pam Damoff (Parliamentary Secretary to the Minister of Health, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, I would like to thank my colleague, the member for Mount Royal, for his work on this important issue. Tobacco kills one Canadian every 12 minutes. That is why our government kept its promise to better protect Canadians, particularly youth, by introducing plain packaging and new regulations on vaping, with more to come.

The Canadian Cancer Society calls our new regulations the best in the world. We will continue to protect our youth and all Canadians.

* * *

[Translation]

JUSTICE

Mrs. Sylvie Boucher (Beauport—Côte-de-Beaupré—Île d'Orléans—Charlevoix, CPC): Mr. Speaker, when the Minister of Finance's chief of staff became directly involved in the SNC-Lavalin corruption scandal, the Liberals did not admonish him. They rewarded him and gave him a promotion.

Now we learn that he threatened the staff of the former attorney general and tried to subvert the rule of law.

Why does this Prime Minister reward those who do his dirty work and fire those who stand up to him?

Hon. Bardish Chagger (Leader of the Government in the House of Commons, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, as I have said many times, on this side of the House, we respect our institutions, and we know that they operate independently of government. We know that we must let them do their work, but that is not how the Conservatives do things. They continue to play petty politics, but we will continue to work for Canadians. That is why we are here, and that is exactly why we brought forward an agenda that is working very well for Canadians. As for the Conservatives, they do not have a plan.

• (1450)

[English]

Ms. Rachael Harder (Lethbridge, CPC): Mr. Speaker, the Prime Minister fired his attorney general when she had the audacity or the courage to stand up to him. However, Ben Chin, a key actor in the SNC-Lavalin scandal, has been promoted as senior adviser to the now Prime Minister.

Let me get this straight. Under the current Liberal government, if people stand up to the Prime Minister, they get fired; if people help the Prime Minister do his dirty work, no problem, they get a big promotion.

My question is very simple. Does no one over there see the injustice, or what is wrong?

Hon. Bardish Chagger (Leader of the Government in the House of Commons, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, in Canada, the country I am proud to have been born and raised in and to be representing, we have officers of Parliament and we have an independent court system. They are functioning.

We know that the rule of law is intact in Canada, and this has been said on numerous occasions. Canadians can have confidence in their institutions. We, on this side, have confidence in those institutions, which work independently of government.

The Conservatives have always been used to undermining our institutions, and used to making their patronage appointments. That is why they cannot tell that the institutions are working. If Conservatives want to mislead Canadians, that is, unfortunately—

The Speaker: The hon. member for Barrie—Innisfil.

Mr. John Brassard (Barrie—Innisfil, CPC): Mr. Speaker, at the height of the SNC-Lavalin scandal, Ben Chin threatened the former attorney general's chief of staff saying, “your boss spoke to [the finance minister] yesterday, and said that me and Elder were 'mucking around' on this file. Be careful when using my name, Jess.” I guess he wanted her to use code names. By “mucking around on this file”, what the former attorney general meant was that Ben Chin was working to undermine our rule of law.

Instead of firing Chin, as he did with the former attorney general, the Prime Minister promoted him. How is that right?

Hon. Bardish Chagger (Leader of the Government in the House of Commons, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, what is right is that we have a rule of law that is intact in Canada. What is right and appropriate is to have confidence in our institutions. What is right and appropriate is to have confidence in the officers of Parliament.

That is exactly what we do on this side. The Conservatives, under 10 years of Stephen Harper, always continue to undermine the work of officers of Parliament. They did question, and continue to question, the independence of our judicial system. That is very unfortunate. What is even more clear is that, here, we discuss government business, but the Conservatives continue to smear names because they know those individuals cannot be in here to defend themselves, and they are taking advantage of their privilege.

Mr. John Brassard (Barrie—Innisfil, CPC): Mr. Speaker, Chin was so aggressive to insert himself into the independence of our judicial process that the former attorney general went to the finance minister. She said, “I told him that engagements from his office to mine on SNC had to stop, that they were inappropriate.”

“They did not stop”, she said, adding that her chief of staff subsequently received calls from Ben Chin on SNC-Lavalin and the need for a deal.

Oral Questions

What message does it send when someone who actively worked to undermine our rule of law is promoted, and those who defend it, like the former attorney general, are fired and kicked out of caucus?

Hon. Bardish Chagger (Leader of the Government in the House of Commons, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, from the beginning, what we have always said is that Canadians deserve to know the truth, and that is exactly why the committee was able to work independently of this place. That is exactly why the Prime Minister waived solicitor-client privilege, as well as cabinet confidence.

This is the first time that this has happened. It is unprecedented. People should be able to speak for themselves. We live in a country where we have a rule of law that is intact. Unfortunately, that member cannot handle having people speak for themselves, because he feels that he needs to speak for them. I think the former attorney general is more than capable.

Some hon. members: Oh, oh!

The Speaker: Order. The hon. member for Carlton Trail—Eagle Creek and others will come to order.

The hon. member for Trois-Rivières.

* * *

• (1455)

[Translation]

THE ENVIRONMENT

Mr. Robert Aubin (Trois-Rivières, NDP): Mr. Speaker, Mr. Cusson, president of the Union des municipalités du Québec, had a message for federal leaders: “We will ask them to choose effective ways to fight climate change”.

The Liberals have responded with a motion devoid of commitments, whereas the NDP is proposing to stop the expansion of Trans Mountain, eliminate subsidies to oil companies and bring back Jack Layton's climate change accountability act, among other things.

Will the Liberals recognize the merits of our position and vote for the NDP motion?

Hon. Catherine McKenna (Minister of Environment and Climate Change, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, it is interesting that the NDP motion was only moved after our motion was announced. They are playing politics with their motion.

Our motion is clear and non-partisan. Together, we must recognize three things: first, that there is a climate emergency; second, that the science behind climate change is clear; and third, that we must meet our international obligations.

I urge everyone in the House to vote for action on climate change. It is an emergency.

An hon. member: Oh, oh!

[English]

The Speaker: I would invite the hon. member for New Westminster—Burnaby to speak when he has the floor and not when he does not have the floor.

The hon. member for Essex.

TAXATION

Ms. Tracey Ramsey (Essex, NDP): Mr. Speaker, thousands of Canadian winery jobs are in danger because the government refuses to act. We are running out of time for a WTO settlement with Australia. The finance minister knows that if he removes the escalator tax, he will save 9,000 direct grape and winery jobs, and another 37,000 tourism jobs linked to the industry. This is simple: remove the escalator tax and the WTO challenge disappears; leave it in place and jobs are threatened. We are running out of time.

Will the Prime Minister reverse the escalator tax to save Canadian wineries, yes or no?

Ms. Jennifer O'Connell (Parliamentary Secretary to the Minister of Finance (Youth Economic Opportunity), Lib.): Mr. Speaker, I appreciate the question because it gives us another chance to talk about how our government lowered taxes for businesses. We have been investing in Canadians and, as a result, we have actually created a million new jobs. It is hard to take New Democrats seriously when they are talking about the economy because it seems that every day they change their position on various industries.

We, on this side of the House, have had a plan: invest in Canadians and lower taxes for the middle class and small businesses. As a result, Canadians are \$2,000 better off. A typical Canadian—

The Speaker: The hon. member for Portneuf—Jacques-Cartier.

* * *

[Translation]

THE ENVIRONMENT

Mr. Joël Godin (Portneuf—Jacques-Cartier, CPC): Mr. Speaker, the Liberals are just now waking up to the urgent need to take action on the environment. Was that not obvious? After more than three and a half years at the helm, they are starting to realize that they have taken no meaningful steps toward meeting their Paris targets.

The National Observer is saying that Canada is going to miss its 2030 climate change targets by a country mile.

With the Liberals in power, Canada will not fulfill its commitment to the Paris Agreement.

Can this government finally tell Canadians the truth?

Hon. Catherine McKenna (Minister of Environment and Climate Change, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, what Canadians want to know is whether the Conservatives understand that we are in a climate emergency.

Does the Conservative Party understand that climate change is real and that it is accelerating?

Does the Conservative Party understand that we can price pollution and put money back into the pockets of Canadians?

Does the Conservative Party understand that the economy and the environment go hand in hand in the 21st century?

Will they vote for our motion? Everybody wants to know.

Mr. Joël Godin: Oh, oh!

*Oral Questions***TRANSPORT**

The Speaker: I would remind the hon. member for Portneuf—Jacques-Cartier that there is a time to ask questions and a time to listen.

[*English*]

The hon. member for Abbotsford.

Hon. Ed Fast (Abbotsford, CPC): Mr. Speaker, day after day the minister stands in this House and tells us that her so-called climate plan is working, and day after day she is reminded by friend and foe that her climate plan is failing and that the Liberal government is falling far short of its Paris targets. Why is that? It is because hers is not a climate change plan; it is a tax plan. While she is busy forcing carbon taxes—

Some hon. members: Oh, oh!

The Speaker: Order. Let us have one member speak at a time. That should apply to all sides.

The hon. member for Abbotsford.

• (1500)

Hon. Ed Fast: Mr. Speaker, while she is busy forcing carbon taxes on Canadians, her plan is missing the mark by a country mile. When will the minister finally come clean and admit that her plan is not as advertised?

Hon. Catherine McKenna (Minister of Environment and Climate Change, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, we put a price on pollution. We are giving money back, such that 80% of Canadians are better off, better than advertised. We have created a million jobs for Canadians, better than advertised. We are phasing out coal and ensuring a just transition for workers, better than advertised. Does everyone know what is exactly as advertised? It is the Conservatives, because they are just like the Harper Conservatives. They have no plan for the environment and no plan for the economy.

Hon. Ed Fast (Abbotsford, CPC): Mr. Speaker, earlier in question period, the minister admitted that she does not get it. Remember? She is right. The minister's own documents show that the Liberals are falling far short of the promises the Prime Minister made in the Paris Agreement. We have another promise made, another promise broken.

When will the minister drop the charade, stop trying to distract from Liberal failures and scandals and admit that her plan is a complete failure, not as advertised?

Hon. Catherine McKenna (Minister of Environment and Climate Change, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, I want to take us back to three and a half years ago. We went to Paris to negotiate an ambitious Paris Agreement after a decade of inaction. Who was with me? It was the member opposite. What did we talk about there? We talked about how we needed to take serious action on climate change, how that needed to include putting a price on pollution, that we needed to act for our kids and that we could grow the economy at the same time as tackling climate change.

He seems to have forgotten that. I am happy to go out and have a drink with him and remind him of exactly what happened and how we can grow the economy, how we can tackle climate change and that we can all do it together.

Ms. Gudie Hutchings (Long Range Mountains, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, in 1949, my province joined Confederation as Canada's 10th province. Since then, it has been our constitutional right as Newfoundlanders and Labradorians to be guaranteed a connection to Canada's mainland.

Eastern Canadian ferries are essential for tourism, for the movement of goods and services and for providing locals with an alternative source of transportation. Can the Parliamentary Secretary to the Minister of Transport please advise my constituents and all those who rely on the ferry services how our government's plans are improving our connection to the mainland?

Mr. Terry Beech (Parliamentary Secretary to the Minister of Transport, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, I would like to thank the member for Long Range Mountains for her advocacy on this file.

Our government is proud to be delivering the first new ferry on this route in 30 years. More than 70% of goods and 30% of people arrive via this service. It is crucial for Newfoundland. This \$80-million investment will ensure that both tourism and the economy continue to prosper in Newfoundland for the benefit of future generations.

* * *

INTERNATIONAL TRADE

Mr. Luc Berthold (Mégantic—L'Érable, CPC): Mr. Speaker, it is becoming pathetic how the Liberals are mishandling the canola crisis. The minister could not get a formal meeting with her Chinese counterpart. There is no delegation, no WTO complaint, no ambassador and no advance payment program. Yes, the Canadian Canola Growers Association said to farmers that it has not been implemented yet.

The Liberals are taking no action. When will farmers have access to the help they need to get through this Liberal failure?

Hon. Marie-Claude Bibeau (Minister of Agriculture and Agri-Food, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, we have stood with our farmers from the very beginning. I do not know where my colleague has been for the last two and a half months, because apparently, he missed a lot. I have travelled to the Prairies. We have talked with the industry, with farmers and with our provincial counterparts. We have created a working group. We have made a declaration at the WTO. I have travelled to Japan. I had a conversation with my Chinese counterpart. We are moving on this file, and we take it very seriously.

The Speaker: I remind members that we do not bring attention to questions about the absence or presence of members.

The hon. member for Windsor—Tecumseh.

Oral Questions

Ms. Cheryl Hardcastle (Windsor—Tecumseh, NDP): Mr. Speaker, 15 months ago, the government promised that Canada's ombudsperson for responsible enterprise, CORE, would be able to investigate human rights abuses committed by Canadian companies abroad, but these investigative powers are caught up in red tape, and it looks like it will not even open by the election. The government has a serious issue with corporate ethics and accountability, as the SNC-Lavalin scandal shows us, so this CORE office must be opened up and running by the summer. Will this minister follow up—

• (1505)

The Speaker: The hon. Parliamentary Secretary to the Minister of International Trade Diversification.

Mr. Omar Alghabra (Parliamentary Secretary to the Minister of International Trade Diversification, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, I am proud to be part of a government, for the first time in Canada's history, to create an office for social corporate responsibility. Our government has fulfilled our promise, and today we are consulting with stakeholders on the mechanisms that are needed. We recently announced the chair of the CORE office, and we are currently consulting. I look forward to the hon. member's support for that office.

* * *

LABOUR

Mr. Robert-Falcon Ouellette (Winnipeg Centre, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, yesterday was the 100th anniversary of the 1919 Winnipeg General Strike. A hundred years ago, more than 30,000 workers started the largest strike in Canadian history. It was a passionate fight, born on the streets of Winnipeg, for workers' rights and better working conditions.

"Bread and roses, bread and roses". Today we remember the progress we have made thanks to the labour movement. Can the Parliamentary Secretary to the Minister of Labour remind the people's House of our commitment to organized labour?

Mr. Rodger Cuzner (Parliamentary Secretary to the Minister of Employment, Workforce Development and Labour, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, I would like to thank the member for Winnipeg Centre for his obvious passion for working on behalf of Canadian workers. With the 100th anniversary of the 1919 Winnipeg Strike, I want to thank those pioneers for what they did.

Unions matter. Unions represent people, people who work hard, support their families and contribute to their communities and to the national economy. Unions fight for the middle class and have been a driving force behind historic progress made for workers.

Our Prime Minister and our government stand with workers today and every day.

* * *

THE ENVIRONMENT

Mrs. Kelly Block (Carlton Trail—Eagle Creek, CPC): Mr. Speaker, the Senate transport committee is recommending that Bill C-48 be scrapped. After listening to provinces, industry, and environmental and indigenous groups, it realized that this bill is not in Canada's interest. Like the carbon tax, this bill is not about the environment, it is about ideology.

Will the Prime Minister agree to allow this bill to die and not whip his Liberal senators into reviving this flawed legislation?

Mr. Terry Beech (Parliamentary Secretary to the Minister of Transport, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, our government is proud of the work we are doing to make sure that we not only protect B.C.'s pristine coastline but that we actively invest to restore it. Of course, we are disappointed by the vote. We hope that the Senate will vote to continue debate at third reading. We are open to any amendments the senators have. We will keep working with them as long as it is within the spirit of the bill.

* * *

[Translation]

INTERGOVERNMENTAL RELATIONS

Mrs. Marilène Gill (Manicouagan, BQ): Mr. Speaker, the Bloc Québécois submitted a brief on Bill 21 to the National Assembly.

Our message to Quebec's elected officials is simple: Ottawa can hardly wait to use the court challenges program to bankroll a challenge of the secularism bill.

Can the Minister of Justice guarantee that he does not intend to directly or indirectly challenge Quebec's secularism bill?

Hon. David Lametti (Minister of Justice and Attorney General of Canada, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, our government defended the fundamental rights of every Canadian and will continue to do so.

The Canadian Charter of Rights and Freedoms protects rights. We are the party of the charter. Our position is clear: we will defend rights. At this time, the debate will be held in Quebec by Quebecers.

Mrs. Marilène Gill (Manicouagan, BQ): Mr. Speaker, the answer was not clear.

The Bloc's position is clear. We support the religious neutrality of the Quebec state. We believe that people should give and receive services with their faces uncovered. We support the ban on public workers in positions of authority from wearing religious symbols.

In the meantime, the chair of the justice committee is waiting for Bill 21 to be passed before initiating legal challenges.

Will you respect the will of Quebec and not challenge Quebec's secularism bill, yes or no?

The Speaker: I would remind the hon. member for Manicouagan that she is to address her comments to the Chair.

The hon. Minister of Justice.

• (1510)

Hon. David Lametti (Minister of Justice and Attorney General of Canada, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, as I just said, we are the party of the charter, and we respect the fundamental rights of every Canadian.

The bill is making its way through the parliamentary process of the National Assembly of Quebec. We will respect that process.

* * *

[English]

INFRASTRUCTURE

Hon. Hunter Tootoo (Nunavut, Ind.): Mr. Speaker, my question is for the Minister of Infrastructure and Communities.

Yesterday in the House, the minister said that he would work with Quebec and the provinces to ensure that projects were approved in time for this construction season. Nunavut has a housing crisis that is contributing to high rates of poverty, suicide and tuberculosis. The territory does not have reliable access to the Internet. We need connectivity to educate our children and move our economy forward.

Will the minister extend the same courtesy to the Government of Nunavut and approve housing and connectivity projects in time for the summer construction season?

Hon. François-Philippe Champagne (Minister of Infrastructure and Communities, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, first of all, we were all pleased to see that Nunavut won the smart cities challenge in the \$10-million category. It proposed a project that will leverage digital access to promote mental health across the territory. We are extremely proud to see our colleagues from Nunavut win that.

Under the bilateral agreement, we will invest more than \$566 million in Nunavut. We have already approved 21 projects, which represent about \$333 million. We will continue to invest to improve the lives of people in the territory of Nunavut and to create jobs and economic opportunity.

* * *

PRESENCE IN GALLERY

The Speaker: I would like to draw to the attention of hon. members the presence in the gallery of the Hon. Dennis King, Premier of Prince Edward Island.

The member for Etobicoke Centre is rising on a point of order. I would ask the member to rise uncovered.

Mr. Borys Wrzesnewskyj: Mr. Speaker, I rise on a point of order. Having held consultations with all parties, I am rising to ask for the adoption of the following motion—

Some hon. members: No.

The Speaker: I am afraid it is already clear that there is no unanimous consent.

Some hon. members: Oh, oh!

The Speaker: Members often seek unanimous consent for motions on points of order, as members know, which I believe the member is doing. It is already clear that there is no consent for the motion.

Business of Supply

POINTS OF ORDER

ORAL QUESTIONS

Hon. Erin O'Toole (Durham, CPC): Mr. Speaker, I am rising on a point of order on a matter arising out of question period. Bosc and Gagnon, chapter 11—

Some hon. members: No.

Some hon. members: Oh, oh!

The Speaker: Order, please. The member is making it clear that this is not a request for unanimous consent. I was already aware that the member for Etobicoke Centre was making a request for unanimous consent. It was clear that there was no consent for that.

The hon. member for Durham has the floor.

Hon. Erin O'Toole: Mr. Speaker, arising out of question period, and relying on chapter 11 of Bosc and Gagnon in replies to oral questions, there were a number of questions today about Vice-Admiral Norman. It is the prerogative of the government to designate a minister to respond.

The government designated the Minister of National Revenue to respond. The government then designated the Parliamentary Secretary to the Minister of National Defence. A redirection of a supplementary question, according to Speaker Francis, has to be indicated in the first response. Therefore, there was no connection to the redirection from the response from the Minister of National Revenue.

I refer you, Mr. Speaker, to the ruling of Speaker Francis from May 17, 1984.

It is my position that the Minister of National Revenue should not have been responding to a question related to Vice-Admiral Norman. However, if it is redirected, it has to be directly linked.

• (1515)

The Speaker: I thank the hon. member for Durham. I will look into the matter, although it is my understanding, as the member knows, generally speaking, it is up to the government to decide who will answer a question. However, I thank him for raising his point and will look into it.

GOVERNMENT ORDERS

[Translation]

BUSINESS OF SUPPLY

OPPOSITION MOTION—THE ENVIRONMENT

The House resumed from May 15 consideration of the motion.

The Speaker: It being 3:15 p.m., pursuant to order made on Wednesday, May 15, 2009, the House will now proceed to the taking of the deferred recorded division on the motion of the member for Burnaby South relating to the business of supply.

Call in the members.

[English]

And the bells having rung:

Business of Supply

The Speaker: The question is as follows. Shall I dispense?

Some hon. members: Agreed.

Some hon. members: No.

[*Chair read text of motion to House*]

● (1520)

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

(*Division No. 1317*)

YEAS

Members

Aubin	Barsalou-Duval
Benson	Blaney (North Island—Powell River)
Boudrias	Boulerice
Boutin-Sweet	Brosseau
Cannings	Caron
Choquette	Christopherson
Cullen	Davies
Donnelly	Dubé
Duncan (Edmonton Strathcona)	Dusseau
Duvall	Fortin
Garrison	Gill
Hardcastle	Hughes
Julian	Kwan
Laverdière	MacGregor
Marcil	Masse (Windsor West)
Mathysen	May (Saanich—Gulf Islands)
Moore	Nantel
Paupé	Plamondon
Quach	Ramsey
Ste-Marie	Stetski
Thériault	Tootoo — 42

NAYS

Members

Aboultaif	Albas
Albrecht	Aldag
Alghabra	Alleslev
Allison	Amos
Anandasangaree	Anderson
Arnold	Ayoub
Badawey	Bagnell
Barrett	Baylis
Beech	Bendayan
Benzen	Bergen
Berthold	Bezan
Bibeau	Bittle
Blair	Blaney (Bellechasse—Les Etchemins—Lévis)
Block	Boissonnault
Bossio	Boucher
Brassard	Bratina
Breton	Carrie
Casey (Cumberland—Colchester)	Casey (Charlottetown)
Chagger	Champagne
Chen	Chong
Clarke	Cooper
Cormier	Cuzner
Dabrusin	Damoff
Davidson	DeCoursey
Dhaliwal	Dhillon
Diotte	Doherty
Dreeshen	Drouin
Dubourg	Duguid
Duncan (Etobicoke North)	Dzerowicz
Easter	Ehsassi
El-Khoury	Ellis
Erskine-Smith	Eyking
Eyolfson	Falk (Battlefords—Lloydminster)
Falk (Provencher)	Fast
Fergus	Fillmore
Finley	Finnigan
Fisher	Fonseca
Fortier	Fragiskatos

Fraser (West Nova)	Fraser (Central Nova)
Fuhr	Gallant
Généreux	Gladu
Godin	Goldsmith-Jones
Goodale	Gould
Gourde	Graham
Hardie	Hébert
Hehr	Hoback
Hogg	Holland
Housefather	Hussen
Hutchings	Iacono
Jeneroux	Joly
Jones	Jordan
Jowhari	Kelly
Kent	Khalid
Khera	Kitchen
Kmiec	Kusie
Lake	Lambropoulos
Lametti	Lamoureux
Lapointe	Lauzon (Stormont—Dundas—South Glengarry)
Lauzon (Argenteuil—La Petite-Nation)	Lefebvre
Leslie	Levitt
Lloyd	Lockhart
Long	Longfield
Ludwig	Lukiwski
MacAulay (Cardigan)	MacKenzie
MacKinnon (Gatineau)	Maloney
Martel	Massé (Avignon—La Mitis—Matane—Matapédia)
May (Cambridge)	McCauley (Edmonton West)
McColeman	McCrimmon
McDonald	McGuinity
McKay	McKenna
McKinnon (Coquitlam—Port Coquitlam)	McLeod (Kamloops—Thompson—Cariboo)
McLeod (Northwest Territories)	Mendès
Mihychuk	Miller (Bruce—Grey—Owen Sound)
Miller (Ville-Marie—Le Sud-Ouest—Île-des-Sœurs)	
Morrissey	
Motz	Murray
Nassif	Nater
Nault	Nicholson
O'Connell	Oliphant
Oliver	O'Regan
O'Toole	Ouellette
Paradis	Paul-Hus
Peterson	Petitpas Taylor
Picard	Poillievre
Poissant	Qualtrough
Reid	Rempel
Richards	Rioux
Robillard	Rodriguez
Rogers	Romanado
Rota	Rudd
Ruimy	Sahota
Saini	Samson
Sangha	Sarai
Scarpaleggia	Schiefke
Schmale	Schulte
Serré	Sgro
Shanahan	Sheehan
Shields	Shipley
Sidhu (Mission—Matsqui—Fraser Canyon)	Sidhu (Brampton South)
Sohi	Sorbara
Sorenson	Spengemann
Stanton	Strahl
Stubbs	Sweet
Tabbara	Tan
Tassi	Trost
Van Kesteren	Vandal
Vandenbeld	Vaughan
Vecchio	Viersen
Virani	Wagantall
Warkentin	Waugh
Webber	Weir
Wilkinson	Wrzesnewskyj
Yip	Young
Yurdiga	Zahid
Zimmer — 227	

PAIRED

Nil

The Speaker: I declare the motion defeated.

Private Members' Business

PRIVATE MEMBERS' BUSINESS

• (1525)

[*Translation*]

RESPECTING FAMILIES OF MURDERED AND BRUTALIZED PERSONS ACT

The House resumed from May 9 consideration of the motion that Bill C-266, An Act to amend the Criminal Code (increasing parole ineligibility), be read the second time and referred to a committee.

The Speaker: Pursuant to order made on Wednesday, May 15, the House will now proceed to the taking of the deferred recorded division on the motion at second reading stage of Bill C-266 under private members' business.

The question is on the motion. Shall I dispense?

Some hon. members: Agreed.

Some hon. members: No.

[*Chair read text of motion to House*]

• (1530)

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

(*Division No. 1318*)

YEAS

Members

Aboultair	Albas
Albrecht	Aldag
Alghabra	Alleslev
Allison	Amos
Anandasangaree	Anderson
Arnold	Ayoub
Badawey	Bagnell
Barrett	Beech
Bendayan	Benzen
Bergen	Berthold
Bezan	Bibeau
Bittle	Blair
Blaney (Bellechasse—Les Etchemins—Lévis)	Block
Boissonnault	Bossio
Boucher	Brassard
Breton	Carrie
Casey (Cumberland—Colchester)	Casey (Charlottetown)
Chagger	Champagne
Chen	Chong
Clarke	Cooper
Cormier	Cuzner
Dabrusin	Damoff
Davidson	DeCoursey
Dhaliwal	Dhillon
Diotte	Doherty
Dreeshen	Drouin
Dubourg	Duguid
Duncan (Etobicoke North)	Dzerowicz
Easter	Ehsassi
El-Khoury	Ellis
Erskine-Smith	Eyking
Eyolfson	Falk (Battlefords—Lloydminster)
Falk (Provencher)	Fast
Fergus	Fillmore
Finley	Finnigan
Fisher	Fonseca
Fortier	Fragiskatos
Fraser (West Nova)	Fraser (Central Nova)
Fuhr	Gallant
Généreux	Gerretsen
Gladu	Godin
Goldsmith-Jones	Goodale
Gould	Gourde

Graham	Hardie
Hébert	Hehr
Hoback	Hogg
Holland	Housefather
Hussen	Hutchings
Iacono	Jeneroux
Joly	Jones
Jordan	Jowhari
Kelly	Kent
Khalid	Khera
Kitchen	Kmiec
Kusie	Lake
Lambropoulos	Lamoureux
Lapointe	Lauson (Stormont—Dundas—South Glengarry)
Lauson (Argenteuil—La Petite-Nation)	Lefebvre
Leslie	Levitt
Lloyd	Lockhart
Long	Longfield
Ludwig	Lukiwski
MacAulay (Cardigan)	MacKenzie
MacKinnon (Gatineau)	Maloney
Martel	Massé (Avignon—La Mitis—Matane—Matapédia)
May (Cambridge)	McCauley (Edmonton West)
McColeman	McCrimmon
McDonald	McGuinty
McKay	McKenna
McKinnon (Coquitlam—Port Coquitlam)	McLeod (Kamloops—Thompson—Cariboo)
McLeod (Northwest Territories)	Mendès
Mihychuk	Miller (Bruce—Grey—Owen Sound)
Miller (Ville-Marie—Le Sud-Ouest—Île-des-Sœurs)	
Morrissey	
Motz	Murray
Nassif	Nater
Nault	Nicholson
O'Connell	Oliphant
Oliver	O'Regan
O'Toole	Ouellette
Paradis	Paul-Hus
Peterson	Petitpas Taylor
Picard	Poilievre
Poissant	Qualtrough
Reid	Rempel
Richards	Rioux
Robillard	Rodriguez
Rogers	Romanado
Rota	Rudd
Ruimy	Sahota
Saini	Samson
Sarai	Scarpaleggia
Schiefke	Schmale
Schulte	Serré
Sgro	Shanahan
Sheehan	Shields
ShIPLEY	Sidhu (Mission—Matsqui—Fraser Canyon)
Sidhu (Brampton South)	Sohi
Sorbara	Sorenson
Spengemann	Stanton
Strahl	Stubbs
Sweet	Tabbara
Tan	Tassi
Trost	Van Kesteren
Vandal	Vandenbeld
Vaughan	Vecchio
Viersen	Virani
Wagantall	Warkentin
Waugh	Webber
Weir	Wilkinson
Wrzesnewskyj	Yip
Young	Yurdiga
Zahid	Zimmer — 224

NAYS

Members

Aubin	Barsalou-Duval
Benson	Blaney (North Island—Powell River)
Boudrias	Boulerice
Boutin-Sweet	Brosseau
Caron	Choquette
Christopherson	Cullen
Davies	Donnelly
Dubé	Duncan (Edmonton Strathcona)
Dusseault	Duvall

Government Orders

Fortin	Garrison
Gill	Hardeastle
Hughes	Julian
Kwan	MacGregor
Marcel	Mathysen
May (Saanic—Gulf Islands)	Moore
Nantel	Paupé
Plamondon	Quach
Ramsey	Ste-Marie
Stetski	Thériault — 38

PAIRED

Nil

The Speaker: I declare the motion carried. Accordingly the bill stands referred to the Standing Committee on Justice and Human Rights.

(Bill read the second time and referred to a committee)

[*English*]

Mr. Kevin Lamoureux: Mr. Speaker, I rise on a point of order. The member for Etobicoke Centre had the floor on a point of order, as you will recall. When a member stands and asks for unanimous consent or indicates that there have been discussions among the parties, in every situation I have witnessed, it has always been the case that the member is at least afforded the opportunity to express what he or she wants to get unanimous consent for—

The Speaker: The hon. parliamentary secretary should know this is not the first time that a Speaker, when hearing noes during a request for unanimous consent, has not—

Hon. Bardish Chagger: It is. It is not in—

The Speaker: Order. The hon. government House leader will come to order.

The parliamentary secretary should check the record to see that in fact it is the case, as I have said, that Speakers in the past, when they heard noes and it was clear that there was not unanimous consent, did not hear the rest of the motion.

[*Translation*]

I wish to inform the House that because of the deferred recorded divisions, government orders will be extended by 16 minutes.

[*English*]

The hon. opposition House leader has the usual Thursday question. Of course, I thank members for their assistance.

* * *

BUSINESS OF THE HOUSE

Hon. Candice Bergen (Portage—Lisgar, CPC): Mr. Speaker, I want to begin by reaffirming and thanking you. I know there have been times when other members were stopped when they were trying to ask for unanimous consent, as you earlier indicated, so I concur and I thank you very much for that.

I would like to ask the government House leader if she could let us know what is going to be happening for the rest of this week in the House and after we return from the May long weekend constituency week.

Hon. Bardish Chagger (Leader of the Government in the House of Commons, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, this afternoon we will resume debate on government Motion No. 29, the national climate

emergency. Hopefully the Conservatives will find a way to support the environment.

Tomorrow we will begin debate at second reading of Bill C-98 concerning the Canada Border Services Agency.

● (1535)

[*Translation*]

Next week, we will be in our ridings working with our constituents.

When we come back, priority will be given to bills coming back from committee and those that have been returned to us by the Senate.

I wish all members a good week in their ridings. I know that we will continue to work for Canadians. We, on this side of the House, will continue to represent their interests.

GOVERNMENT ORDERS

[*Translation*]

THE ENVIRONMENT

The House resumed consideration of the motion, and of the amendment.

Mrs. Alexandra Mendès (Brossard—Saint-Lambert, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, I will be sharing my time with my colleague from Mississauga—Erin Mills.

[*English*]

Now more than ever, communities need support to adapt to the extreme weather events associated with climate change. The science is clear and troubling. A recent scientific study published by Environment and Climate Change Canada noted that our country's climate is warming twice as fast as the global average. This alarming development poses serious threats to the well-being of all Canadians.

[*Translation*]

Flooding, forest fires and storms are becoming more frequent and more intense. Across the country, we are seeing the devastating consequences of climate-related disasters for Canadians. Over the past few weeks, communities in Ontario, Quebec and New Brunswick have been hard hit by historic floods.

[*English*]

We have seen communities in British Columbia devastated by wildfires. We are no longer just talking about preventing climate change; we need to adapt to this stark reality urgently.

These disasters respect no borders. They threaten the health and safety of all Canadians. They traumatize families and damage entire communities when they lose their essential services and see their economies disrupted.

[*Translation*]

It costs a lot of money and takes time to repair damaged infrastructure. That is why our government is taking measures under the investing in Canada plan by earmarking \$180 billion for public infrastructure renewal across the country.

Government Orders

[English]

First, we are investing in resilient infrastructure that helps communities withstand damage from extreme weather events. The goal is to limit the costs of repairing damaged infrastructure and help communities recover faster. Through the \$2-billion disaster adaptation and mitigation fund, our government is supporting large-scale infrastructure projects that improve the resilience of communities in responding to natural disasters.

[Translation]

That funding is also used for wetland restoration, fire breaks, dikes and booms that can help communities affected by climate disasters recover more quickly.

[English]

To date, 26 projects have been announced under the fund. These projects include upgrades to 60 kilometres of dikes and flood water control structures along the western shores of Nova Scotia's Bay of Fundy. The investment will reduce flooding risk and the damage it can cause for tens of thousands of residents.

Another project is a stormwater management system in Yellowknife, Northwest Territories. This investment will protect the drinking water supply of the 20,000 residents living in two Dene communities.

Another project provides upgrades to the dikes and pumping stations in the coastal city of Richmond, B.C., to help protect its residents against the impacts of severe storms and rising sea levels.

Another is a new shoreline protection project in Hamilton, Ontario, to improve resilience and reduce the flooding risks along the shores of Lake Ontario.

Yet another is the construction of dry ponds in Edmonton. This investment will reduce stormwater overflows on city streets during rainfall, which means the number of Edmonton residents who go without essential services during floods will be reduced.

Our government has also introduced a new assessment, called the "climate lens". This assessment applies to select funding programs under the investing in Canada plan.

[Translation]

It encourages recipients to design infrastructure that will reduce carbon pollution and withstand extreme weather events related to climate change.

[English]

The climate lens is consistent with the objectives of the pan-Canadian framework for clean growth and climate change.

[Translation]

This framework seeks to meet our emissions reduction targets, transition to a low-carbon economy and build resilience to a changing climate.

[English]

Our government, in partnership with the Federation of Canadian Municipalities, supports cities and towns across the country as they develop the skills, capacity and solutions to respond to climate

change. For example, the \$75-million municipalities for climate innovation program provides training and resources to help Canadian municipalities adapt to the impacts of climate change and reduce greenhouse emissions.

In addition, the green municipal fund supports initiatives that advance innovative solutions to environmental challenges. These projects improve air, water and land quality; reduce greenhouse emissions; and generate economic and social benefits for local communities.

● (1540)

[Translation]

Under the investing in Canada plan, our government also invested \$27 billion in green infrastructure, which is contributing to making communities healthier and more resilient to climate change.

[English]

For example, investments in natural infrastructure, such as healthy watersheds, reduce the risk of flooding during heavy rains. The residents of Cornwall, Prince Edward Island, are benefiting from a cleaner, healthier community following federally funded upgrades to its wastewater system. These improvements mean that raw sewage is no longer discharged into local waterways. In addition, the construction of a new backup power supply for the lift station means wastewater will continue to be treated even during power outages.

To date, nearly 2,900 projects have been approved to support more natural infrastructure and improved water treatment systems in communities across the country. It is because of these investments that more than 80 long-term drinking water advisories have been lifted on public systems on first nations reserves.

[Translation]

That is how investing in green infrastructure improves the quality of life of Canadians and leads to healthier infrastructure that is more resilient to climate change.

While extreme weather events associated with climate change are on the rise, we have seen how Canadians come together in a crisis. Their courage, tenacity, and generosity have helped entire communities to carry on.

Government Orders

[English]

When it counts the most, Canadians pitch in and help each other in any way we can, with food, water, sandbags, shelter, and anything else our neighbours need to stay safe and rebuild their lives. However, we can no longer stand by and wait to react only when disaster is upon us. We need to do more to strengthen our communities against the rising threat of climate-related disasters. Our government is responding by investing in public infrastructure that protects Canadians before disaster strikes.

[Translation]

All Canadians deserve resilient infrastructure to help them adapt to the frequent and growing effects of climate change. That is why I find it troubling that the amendment proposed by the official opposition eliminates any mention of the climate emergency we are all facing. What is more, it makes no mention of the Paris Agreement, which leads me to believe that, just as it was when Mr. Harper was prime minister, their so-called plan is to withdraw Canada from the Paris Agreement.

[English]

If there is one thing our country cannot afford, it is another government that denies the urgency for action.

[Translation]

Mr. François Choquette (Drummond, NDP): Mr. Speaker, it is always an honour to rise in the House to talk about the environment. Today I am honoured to talk about the climate emergency.

Recently, students in my riding have participated in marches because they want the Liberal government to take meaningful action against climate change. One thing that is very hard to understand about the Liberal government's approach is the fact that it adopted Stephen Harper's unambitious climate change target of a 30% reduction by 2030. That will not enable us to meet the Paris targets.

What does my colleague have to say about that? Does she believe Canada will not achieve the greenhouse gas reduction targets set out in the Paris Agreement? The member voted against our motion, so I do not think she will meet the targets. The government's climate emergency declaration is therefore worthless and meaningless.

Mrs. Alexandra Mendès: Mr. Speaker, it is rather ironic to have to respond because, in the end, our intentions are the same. All of us in the NDP and the Liberal Party want to fight climate change.

With respect to emissions, there was a slight increase in 2016-17 when the oil industry in Fort McMurray resumed production after the wildfire. However, we have implemented a set of measures to reduce greenhouse gas emissions. It takes more than a year or two for the results of these measures to materialize.

We are constantly making investments in public transit and green infrastructure. We are helping several industries to change and transition to the green economy. Our budget includes tax credits for Canadians who invest in electric cars and many other investments and measures, as my colleague from Louis-Hébert mentioned earlier.

It is difficult to assess all the elements of our plan and determine if we will reach our targets. We certainly hope to reach our 2030

targets, but we have chosen to focus on action rather than discussing theoretical targets.

• (1545)

[English]

Mr. Kevin Lamoureux (Parliamentary Secretary to the Leader of the Government in the House of Commons, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, it is with an immense amount of pride that I stand today to address a really important motion.

The government has recognized over the last number of years that the environment really and truly does matter. One of the things that reinforces that is the commitment by the government to have a price on pollution. Even though at one point we had a patchwork, meaning some provinces had it and other provinces did not have it, we had a national government demonstrating leadership by saying that for those provinces that did not have it, we would have a price on pollution so that all regions of Canada would be treated equally and all regions would be contributing to a healthier planet.

I am wondering if my colleague could emphasize, from her perspective, how important it is that we demonstrate national leadership, using the price on pollution as a good example of that. I know many of my constituents see the environment as something we need to be giving more attention to, and something the government has responded to.

Mrs. Alexandra Mendès: Mr. Speaker, I totally agree with my colleague.

The price on pollution is perhaps the most obvious and visible measure we have put in place. As I said in my speech, pollution has no borders. The impacts of climate change have no borders. Climate change affects us all, throughout the world. Just yesterday, I met a delegation from Mozambique, which is just beginning to come out of the very painful side effects of the cyclone strike.

Absolutely, the price on pollution is the first and most important step to help us all fight against the effects of climate change, being fair to every Canadian and enabling all of us to contribute to this struggle.

Hon. Michelle Rempel: Mr. Speaker, on a point of order. I would like to direct your attention to page 568 of Bosc and Gagnon, which outlines the rule of anticipation, or the same-question rule. I would like to argue that the motion we are currently debating is out of order, pursuant to the vote that was just undertaken on the NDP supply motion.

I will direct your attention to the wording of the NDP supply motion, which we dispensed with. The Liberal government voted against the following wording, "to declare an environment and climate emergency", yet the motion we are debating right now asks "that the House declare that Canada is in a national climate emergency".

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Given that this is a government motion and the government has now voted against another motion to declare a climate change emergency, I would suggest, again, given the precedent outlined in Bosc and Gagnon with regard to the rule of anticipation, that the motion before us is out of order.

● (1550)

The Assistant Deputy Speaker (Mr. Anthony Rota): Although the titles of the motions sound similar, when we look at the text of both motions, there are a lot of dissimilar and very different areas, so the motion is in order.

Resuming debate, the hon. member for Mississauga—Erin Mills.

Ms. Iqra Khalid (Mississauga—Erin Mills, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, a few months ago I had the hon. Minister of Transport in my riding. During a guest lecture at the University of Toronto's Mississauga campus, with young people studying STEM, the minister described the first time that he went up into space and looked down. He saw a small, beautiful, lush planet that was surrounded in darkness. All differences from that perspective really melt into one beautiful ball of humanity. We have to realize with that view that all we have is each other and nothing else.

Today, I stand in the House to discuss something that is all too familiar. It is the future of our planet. We are facing a threat unlike any other, one that is negatively impacting every aspect of our lives. This threat is climate change, and we are the last generation with the power to do something about it. We cannot sit by and wait for someone else to act.

We talked about it in 2015, 2011, 2008, 2006 and 2004. Every time, it seems we are divided between those who will do something about it and those who will not, between those who will take it seriously and those who will debate its legitimacy. Climate change is not a debate. It has never been a debate. It is a reality and a crisis, and it is time to act.

Our duty is to the people who live and work in Canada, and we are seeing the effects on their everyday lives. We see wildfires rage across Canadian forests and floods destroy Canadian homes. We are feeling the impacts on our health every day as we breathe polluted air and endure more and more severe temperatures. This threat is not coming; it is here, and it has been here for years. We need courage, not cowardice, to lead the way. There must be action, and it must begin with us, united.

We were elected in 2015 with a mandate to use data-driven and scientifically proven strategies to improve the lives of Canadians. Our government developed and is implementing a plan to protect the environment and grow the economy, and it is working. Our emissions are going down and, in partnership with Canadian people, our government has created more than one million full-time jobs.

Canadians know there is a cost to pollution. We pay that cost with our economy as we repair the damage of severe weather conditions, and with health problems like asthma and chronic lung and heart disease. Our factories pay for it with bigger and stronger air conditioning units every year to prevent their machines from overheating. Our farmers pay for it when droughts force them to transport more and more water to grow their crops. The residents of

Mississauga paid for it when flooding caused major damage to their homes.

Climate change is a crisis that affects not just our environment, but also our economy and our industries. We have been taking measures to solve these problems. We are improving Canadians' health by reducing methane emissions by 40% to 45% by 2025. We are helping to build a clean economy and reduce polluting greenhouse gases by launching the emerging renewable power program, which will fund projects on renewable energy technologies.

Pollution cannot be free any longer, and under our government it is not. We ensured a fair price on pollution by using a proven strategy that has achieved success around the world and right here in Canada when it was implemented in British Columbia 10 years ago. We put 90% of that money right back into the pockets of families through our climate action incentive. The other 10% is invested back into the provinces to build stronger, cleaner infrastructure in our transit, our schools, our hospitals and more.

Leading the way means innovating. It means investing in clean, renewable energy and in sustainable technologies. It means embracing and supporting innovative technologies that are more energy efficient, and making those options more affordable for Canadians. By investing in these technologies we are on the road to making Canada a pioneer in green technology.

This month, we implemented a new credit designed to make zero-emission vehicles more affordable by saving Canadians up to \$5,000 on their purchase. We are expanding the availability of charging stations to ensure that these vehicles can be a real option across Canada, including in our rural communities.

● (1555)

We have set ambitious targets for sales of these vehicles, with a goal of having zero-emission vehicles comprise 100% of all sales by the year 2040. To help ensure that supply meets the increased demand for electric vehicles, we are working with automakers to secure voluntary production commitments. We are providing access to funding through the strategic innovation fund, to attract and support new high-quality, job-creating investments in zero-emission vehicle manufacturing in Canada. We are investing in Canadian innovation because our people have great ideas for reducing our emissions and developing clean technology. Our climate action fund is capitalizing on and supporting those great ideas. We are investing in new technologies that will revolutionize our industries.

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In Mississauga—Erin Mills, I have seen with my own eyes the incredible innovations Canadians are creating to fight climate change, such as membranes that greatly reduce emissions in the production of interior products. Our communities are coming together to fight waste and pollution, embracing new public transit routes and picking up garbage in parks across the riding. In Ontario, 64% of people are in favour of putting a price on pollution. I have heard stories of Canadians using their climate action incentive rebate to invest in smart thermostats, upgrade older appliances, and invest in heat pumps and other options to reduce emissions.

I have lost count of how many conversations I have had with my constituents in Mississauga—Erin Mills about the effects of climate change. We are enduring harsher winters and scorching summers. I hear it from our youth. I hear it from our seniors. I hear it from our businesses and community leaders.

My colleagues in Parliament hear those same concerns echoed in Mississauga, across Ontario and across Canada. From coast to coast to coast, the Canadian people are declaring that they want their government to do more to fight climate change. They want a real plan to protect our environment and build our economy, and that is what we are delivering. We owe Canadians a plan, a whole-of-government plan, with all sides of the House taking ownership of the greatest test of our lifetime.

Our quality of life and our present and future prosperity are deeply connected to the environment in which we live. The extraordinary beauty of Canada's parks and our natural and wild spaces are also central to the identity of Canadians. Fighting the effects of climate change also means developing real strategies to protect our environment and biodiversity.

There have been UN reports from the most exhaustive look yet at the decline in biodiversity. There is no dispute. At least a million species are now in serious decline or facing extinction. These species could disappear if things continue the way they are. Our government is investing over a billion dollars over five years to create a new nature fund to protect species at risk, expand wildlife areas and sanctuaries, manage protected areas, implement the Species at Risk Act and establish a coordinated network of conservation areas, but we must do more.

In addition to our investments in clean technology, we are phasing out traditional, coal-fired power by 2030, with an ambitious goal of attaining 90% of electricity generation from clean sources by 2030, but we must do more.

We are developing a national strategy to reduce plastic waste in our oceans, but we must do more.

We must set an example, and we must be a model for sustainability by greening government. We are on track to reduce the government's own greenhouse gas emissions by 40% by 2030 and by 80% by 2050.

One day, future generations will turn to us and ask what we did to preserve their future. On that day, we will either tell them that we stopped at nothing and did everything we could, and that we took responsible and effective action to fight the effects of climate change, or we will tell them that we did not take it seriously and we

could not stand united until it was too late to act. Today in this House, we decide which answer to give.

• (1600)

Mr. Alistair MacGregor (Cowichan—Malahat—Langford, NDP): Mr. Speaker, I do not doubt my colleague's sincerity in trying to address the problem. At the same time, she has to recognize that she belongs to a government that spent \$4.5 billion of our money on a pipeline. The government wants to expand that pipeline to triple its carrying capacity, which will lead to a seven-fold increase in tanker traffic in the coastal waters near my riding, where our precious, iconic wild salmon thrive and where our southern resident killer whales are endangered.

If we are going to invest that kind of money in expanding a pipeline, we probably want to see it run for the next 30 to 40 years. However, all the scientific evidence before us is telling us that we have just over a decade to act. Otherwise, there will be unmitigated, uncontrolled climate change by the end of the century.

The member obviously has an intention to do something about this, but how can she square that circle, with the government now owning a pipeline and wanting to expand it and all the greenhouse gas emissions that will come along with it? How can she square that circle with her government's actual course of action?

Ms. Iqra Khalid: Mr. Speaker, action against climate change to ensure the safety and protection of this planet is not an event; it is a process. It is a journey we all must take together, and it must be done in steps, in increments.

With respect to the Trans Mountain pipeline, there have been major consultations. It is a belief of mine and of our government that we must work in collaboration with all communities. We must follow our procedures of law and ensure that our environment and our economy go hand in hand as we continue to progress and hopefully implement a long-term plan for sustainable green technology.

Mr. Kevin Lamoureux (Parliamentary Secretary to the Leader of the Government in the House of Commons, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, when I was listening to the question from the NDP member, what came to my mind was the NDP government in British Columbia. That government has now moved forward on LNG, working with the national government. We believe that it is in the national interest to proceed with that.

On the other hand, the current leader of the New Democratic Party in the House has apparently flip-flopped on the issue. At one point, he favoured having LNG and thought it was a good thing. Now he believes that the NDP might have made a mistake at the national level and that it needs to reverse course.

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My understanding today is that the NDP, not at the provincial level but at the national level, thinks that LNG is a bad idea. Does my colleague believe that having consistency is important when talking about environmental issues and that the NDP should be clearer and more transparent with Canadians on exactly what its position is on LNG, given that it is worth billions of dollars of Canadians' money?

Ms. Iqra Khalid: Mr. Speaker, I completely agree. This kind of flip-flip is quite dangerous. In fact, the NDP leader's reversal goes against 10,000 good jobs for the residents of British Columbia.

We have to make sure that as we develop our whole-of-government approach and take climate action seriously and build that plan, we move forward together. It is really disappointing that the Conservatives have still not revealed their plan.

Ms. Jenny Kwan (Vancouver East, NDP): Mr. Speaker, the government, in fact the Prime Minister, made a unilateral decision to buy a pipeline after British Columbians were promised that there would be a new environmental assessment process for the Kinder Morgan expansion.

If the government were truly sincere about its action toward the climate emergency, why on earth did it buy a 65-year-old leaky pipeline?

• (1605)

Ms. Iqra Khalid: Mr. Speaker, now is the time for us to work in collaboration with all communities and to ensure that we are balancing the economy and the environment as we build capacity within our country to take on green technology and phase out our emissions to meet our emissions targets. I encourage the member opposite to work with us on this project.

Hon. Michelle Rempel (Calgary Nose Hill, CPC): Mr. Speaker, for those who are watching, today we are talking about how to ostensibly address the issue of climate change. At least that is what the Liberal government would have people watching believe. Unfortunately, the motion before the House of Commons that we are debating today does not talk about the economy and has absolutely no action in it whatsoever. More than anything, this gives the House an excellent opportunity to discuss the Liberal government's failures in the last three and a half years on both climate change and the economy. By quantitative metrics, the government has failed on both issues. That is what I want to lay out today. I also want to lay it out in the context of the amendment the Conservative Party has presented on this motion.

I want to start by reading an article from the National Post from August 9, 2016. The title is "Serious questions about GHG policy", and the subheading is, "Those championing a carbon tax are positioning it as a silver bullet. But the fact remains that there are legitimate questions to be raised about Canada's approach to reducing greenhouse gases." The article is from 2016, so the carbon tax was not fully implemented yet. It reads:

[The] Liberal government is developing a framework to implement a national price on carbon. Those championing this policy instrument are positioning it as a silver bullet. They offer a delicious premise: a carbon tax won't cause any pain, while immediately reducing GHG emissions in Canada. But the fact remains that there are legitimate questions to be raised about Canada's approach to reducing greenhouse gases.

First, Canadians have a right to know how much emissions the government wants to cut, on what timeline it plans to do it and why?

Why did it set those targets? What is it going to do on the issue of climate change?

The article continues:

What are the opportunity costs of us setting that target? It's difficult to measure if a policy is working...if we don't know what we hope for it to achieve. To date, the political exercise of setting emissions targets in Canada has mostly been about "my arbitrary target is bigger than yours," rather than discussing what is achievable under different scenarios.

And what about other countries? Canada has a relatively low overall GHG-emissions profile. Even if we impose one of the most restrictive GHG-reduction frameworks in the world, what can we do to make major emitters like Brazil, India, China and the United States reduce their GHG profiles? What happens if we implement a framework that makes our industries less competitive than those located in developing countries? What evidence do we have that a given policy proposal will work? Have the billions of dollars that Canada has spent on global mitigation and adaptation efforts made any impact? It will take more than just domestic policy to influence change.

In terms of putting a national price on carbon, we need to know whether that's the best policy option to reduce GHG emissions.... At what price does demand for gasoline, heating fuel and other carbon products actually decrease in Canada, by how much and over what time period? What impact will it have on Canadian workers and lower-income Canadians? Will one region of the country be affected more than others?

Where would all of your carbon tax dollars go? Will revenue from this tax go into general government coffers to offset large operational spending deficits, will it be used to offset the economic impact of the tax or will it fund the development of new technologies? How would this process be managed and how much will it cost to manage?

Recent reports show that regulations on specific high-emission sectors, such as vehicles and the coal-fired electricity sector, have caused GHG emissions to grow at a slower rate. More importantly, this happened while the Canadian economy was growing.

Of course, that reference is to a policy that happened under the former Conservative government.

The article goes on:

The decoupling of economic growth in Canada's natural resource intensive economy from GHG emissions growth is positive progress.

Any national GHG reduction policy framework should set achievable targets. It should be able to be transparently costed and measured. It should simultaneously reduce GHG emissions, protect the job security of Canadian workers and protect lower-income Canadians. If a proposed GHG policy fails to show that it can reduce GHG emissions, or if it will have a detrimental effect on the economy, we should reject it.

• (1610)

This likely means that presenting...[an idea that a carbon tax is]...a painless, stand-alone cure-all is a fallacy in the cold, natural resource-[driven]...economy that is Canada. Our GHG policy will likely need to consider phased-in, sector-[by-sector]... regulations (the current federal government isn't talking about repealing regulations put in place by the previous government), developing and adopting new, more efficient technologies and other approaches.

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The article talks about the carbon tax and asking Canadians to “make a financial sacrifice, and Canadians should have a say on whether or not they want to make it.” We are seeing that happen with the provinces right now.

The article continues:

The cost of GHG policy shouldn't be hidden in baffle-gab line items on their electricity bills, in order to avoid political scrutiny. Similarly, we should hold proponents of these policies to account for their GHG emission...targets, regardless of their political stripe....

this requires a non-dogmatic conversation about this issue. That, however, will take megatonnes of effort by all of us.

It is a pretty good article. Do members know who that was written by in 2016? It was written by me. This was in the National Post three years ago, and the government has done nothing on any of these questions.

Day after day, we sat in the House of Commons and asked the Liberals how much they were going to reduce greenhouse gas emissions by. How much tax would the residents of High River have to pay to not flood again? What are the price elasticity assumptions of their carbon tax? None of these things have been answered. Every day they complain about what the Conservatives are doing. We have been asking these questions for three years, after the Conservatives presented a track record of reducing the growth of greenhouse gas emissions while seeing the economy grow. What we have seen under the current Liberal government is the opposite. If anything, greenhouse gas emissions are rising, because the Liberals have not put forward a plan that will reduce greenhouse gas emissions. They have just put forward a tax plan.

What have we seen? My riding is out of work. That is because the current government is not using a carbon tax to reduce greenhouse gas emissions. It knows that it will not do anything. All it is doing is taking money out of the pockets of Canadians. That is wrong, because a carbon tax disproportionately affects low-income Canadians. It puts small businesses out of positions where they can hire more people. It is flawed public policy.

In the last three years, something very interesting has happened. Because there are people like me, and others, and yes, I have a degree in economics, economists have started backing off. The most militant pro-carbon-price economists have started backing off. When the Prime Minister first started talking about the carbon tax, he used reducing greenhouse gas emissions as the policy outcome.

Everyone around the world was saying that climate change is a problem. If climate change was not going to be a problem, what did we need to do? We needed to reduce greenhouse gas emissions.

I want to read this great quote. I love this quote. It was written on October 1, 2017, once the anger in this country starting mounting against the carbon tax. It is in Alberta Views magazine. It is an excellent article that is well researched. It is titled, “The Carbon Tax: Will it reduce pollution?” The author writes:

For many economists, the price increase is enough. “I don't think we should actually care too much about what the specific effect on emissions will be,” says Trevor Tombe, assistant professor of economics at the University of Calgary.

I thought the whole point was to reduce greenhouse gas emissions. Do members notice the shift in dogmatic language? It went from, “We are going to reduce gas emissions” to “We have to somehow

cover up and change the language, because we are stealing from people, and it is not going to reduce greenhouse gas emissions.”

Now, when the high priestess of the climate change cocktail circuit gets up here in the House and talks about a price on pollution, it is not a price on pollution. If the carbon tax is supposed to reduce greenhouse gas emissions, why are major emitters exempt from it?

● (1615)

She stood up in the House of Commons and said that all of these major oil and gas companies were standing behind Premier Rachel Notley and championing the carbon tax and saying that at \$40 a ton it was great, it was wonderful. Of course those companies were standing there; they had already priced that into their production models. They did not have to do anything to reduce their greenhouse gas emission profile.

All that did was price the junior oil and gas companies out of competitiveness. These were companies that had profit margins that would not allow them to operate when that price was coming on top of Bill C-69 and Bill C-42, which had punitive detrimental impacts on investment in those companies. All it did was price them out of the market. Bigger companies could come in and consolidate the assets, and that is the only way there has been any profit growth in the energy sector.

Then fast-forward to today, and where are all those big companies? They are saying, “Bye. See you later.” Why would they possibly invest in a country where the government fails, day after day, to provide any sort of stability in the regulatory sector? Bill C-69 does not have any positive impact on the environment, except in the opinion of far-left activists who do not think we should have an energy sector. Why? It is because the only environmental outcome they want is no development in the energy sector. Bill C-69 and Bill C-42 make the regulatory process so uncertain that we cannot attract investment in Canada.

It is even worse when we look at this problem from a climate change perspective. Let us say we lose that investment to other countries. What happens? Does global demand for carbon decrease? No, we have seen global demand for carbon increase, and somebody is going to be supplying that demand.

When the Minister of Environment and the Prime Minister price Canadian energy out of competitiveness and those contracts go to the United States, which has no carbon tax and less regulation, or to Saudi Arabia, the bastion of environmental standards and women's equality, and those jobs and those products go to those countries and that demand is met by those countries, we are actually perpetuating the problem of climate change, because that energy production is not happening in a country where we already have some of the strictest environmental standards in the world.

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There is no plan in this proposal. If the government were serious about addressing climate change, it could have read through every single one of the questions that I outlined in 2006. We do care about climate change, but if we are going to be serious about it, we cannot put forward policy that has no measurable outcome, outside of loss of jobs.

Let us talk about displacing the climate change burden.

It is such a bourgeois, champagne-Liberal philosophy to say, “I can afford a carbon tax, because I have my Bentley and my Grey Poupon and my trips to the Aga Khan island. It is great for me. I will just charge my grocery bill at the Whole Foods Market to the taxpayer here.” That is great for that person, the Prime Minister of Canada, but it is not great for somebody who is being punished.

Let us say it is a steelworker in Canada, someone who cares about climate change and cares about having a job. The government allows the Chinese to come in and dump steel, while our manufacturers are subject to a carbon tax that the Chinese are not subject to. Our steel is not competitive, so we lose jobs in that sector while we are benefiting an economy that has no rules on carbon emissions.

That is really the nub of the climate change issue. I have been to some of these meetings around the world, and nobody there actually cares about having the tough conversation. If someone reaches into their purse and pulls out a phone that was tariff-free from a country that has coal-fired electricity, has very bad labour laws and is able to produce that phone cheaply because of a lack of a carbon tax, that is where we are contributing to greenhouse gas emissions. However, nobody wants to have that conversation, because it is the tough conversation. This is why the Kyoto protocol did not work. It was because there were no binding requirements on emissions.

The Liberal government is going on the climate change cocktail circuit day after day, having pictures taken and sitting around tables covered in grass that cost \$50,000 and saying, “I am contributing to the environment with my paper straw.” That is not changing outcomes.

• (1620)

The government has had three and a half years to do the same hard work that we started. Kyoto did not work and the United States and China have to step up to the table, but those conversations do not happen under the Liberals. We know that. We know it because we see it with the rest of their trade policies.

Now, of course we have to take action here at home. Of course we do. However, Canada is a place where it is cold eight months out of the year. A lot of our country does not have the luxury of being able to access public transit. Those people having trouble accessing it have to drive to work in a lot of places. Even people who are watching from the greater Toronto area and are looking at the gas prices in Vancouver may wonder what they are going to do at \$1.80 a litre when they have to sit in traffic for an hour and a half. Because of its ineptitude, the government has not even been able to get the money out that the former Conservative government committed to years ago. What is that going to do for me?

The only behaviour that the \$1.80-a-litre gas price will change, as we have seen in province after province after province, is voting intention. Nobody is going to support a carbon tax, because the

emperor has no clothes. A carbon tax does not reduce greenhouse gas emissions; it kills jobs and it is bad public policy. It is bourgeois public policy. It is elitist public policy. It says that if someone is a low-income mom, it does not matter that she has to fill up her gas tank. It does not matter that someone who works in the energy sector is going to lose his or her job to Oklahoma or Texas or somewhere in the U.S. that has a more competitive regime.

To anybody in Canada who cares about climate change, the government is out to lunch with this motion. I do care about climate change, and that is why I am presenting a viewpoint that is opposite to the virtue-signalling nonsense that the government is putting forth. Pictures in a Climate Crusader costume do not reduce greenhouse gas emissions. Giving \$12 million to a privately funded rich corporation like Loblaws does not reduce greenhouse gas emissions. Hundreds of millions of dollars of corporate welfare handed out to whatever lobbyists can buy the environment minister the best steak dinner do not reduce greenhouse gas emissions. It is going to take tough policy, like the policy we put in place with the coal-fired electricity sector and passenger vehicles, to reduce that curve over time.

With regard to the oil and gas sector, we cannot put in place a policy that reduces greenhouse gas emissions in the oil and gas sector by killing the oil and gas sector. I wish there were people with the political courage to stand up and say that this is the policy objective. Let us have that debate. I will win that debate; they will not.

There is a reason we did not put regulations in place on the oil and gas sector with regard to greenhouse gas emissions. Why? It was because of the Americans. I was there when people thought Barack Obama was the climate change champion. Does anyone really think that Barack Obama was going to put a carbon tax in place when he knew that the major industry in the U.S. was just coming on stream with a supply that was going to change them from a net energy importer to an energy-independent nation? Of course not. Then why would we regulate our industry out of competitiveness when we know that we can produce cleaner energy than they can with our own clean technology?

It is all about smart public policy that sets a sweet spot so that industry is incented to adopt clean technology—which a carbon tax is not going to do—while ensuring that people in my community do not lose their jobs and that we continue to attract foreign direct investment and capital so that there are incentives for adopting that clean technology. That is the type of public policy discussion that we need on climate change.

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All that has been happening in the House of Commons this week was that the Liberals and the NDP were out-Liberalling and out-NDPping themselves on virtue-signalling, do-nothing motions in Captain Planet costumes. Anybody who cares about climate change in this country should vote against that and reject that. Anybody in this country who cares about jobs and the economy should ensure that the Leader of the Opposition becomes the prime minister of this country.

• (1625)

Mr. Lloyd Longfield (Guelph, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, I offer my thanks for the entertainment from across the way.

There were three amendments that were proposed during the Conservatives' presentation. One of them related to climate change not being related to human activity.

Could the hon. member maybe clarify the amendments she put on the floor, rather than the rhetoric, and in particular clarify whether climate change is related to human activity?

Hon. Michelle Rempel: Mr. Speaker, let us imagine if one of us had stood up and said, in a sarcastic tone, that his or her speech was entertainment. The Liberals might not agree with my public policy concerns. They might not agree with the fact that I have a background in energy economics and commercialized clean technology from the University of Manitoba, that I helped put together the business model for Carbon Management Canada and that I did that stuff and I know what I am talking about. My community is dependent on getting this policy right. If I had done something like that to the Liberals, it would have been, "climate change denier, everything is terrible". I reject that premise, first and foremost.

Second, I reject the virtue signalling. The member can read the amendment. It says, "human activity has an impact on climate change". I am saying that the current government has done nothing to mitigate the human impact on climate change in Canada or abroad. The only thing it has done is used its platform on the international stage, "Canada is back", to take picture, have cocktails and eat canapés. The Liberals have not had the hard conversations with China. They blew it with the Americans. They are penalizing our industries through reverse tariffs through policies like this.

If the environment minister wants to stand and quote Bill Nye, Science Guy, and quote his passion, then she had better look in the mirror. She has done nothing to reduce greenhouse gas emissions in the country.

Mr. Alistair MacGregor (Cowichan—Malahat—Langford, NDP): Mr. Speaker, I was just reading an article in iPolitics from a couple of years ago. It talked about Preston Manning distributing a Fraser Institute report among Conservative colleagues, urging them to adopt a carbon tax because it was a market-based mechanism. I am wondering how the Conservative opinion has shifted from Mr. Manning's.

That aside, I agree with the member for Calgary Nose Hill. A carbon tax is going to be ineffective if it is only selectively applied. If we are to put a price on pollution, it has to apply to everyone equally. I am worried that this debate is concentrating too much on the here and now, the costs of this and that and so on and so forth. I

want to look 20 to 40 years into the future and what the costs of climate change will put on our economy.

For example, in my province of British Columbia, the forest fire budget is putting a big dent in our coffers. We know what the costs will be mitigating floods and so on.

With the economic costs of climate change in mind, I wonder if we can find some common ground. Could the member for Calgary Nose Hill give her opinion and her thoughts on some of the opportunities that exist in the renewable energy economy of the future, how organizations like Iron&Earth, which are oil sands workers, want to take their skill set and transition to the renewable energy economy of the future so we are providing that just transition?

This change is going to be forced upon us one way or the other. We are either going to react to it or we are going to be proactive toward it.

Hon. Michelle Rempel: Mr. Speaker, first, I would like to put on the record that I vehemently and strongly disagree with Preston Manning's take on the carbon tax. He is wrong. It is not a policy instrument that works. I do not care if he is Conservative. There is no data to show that carbon is price elastic in Canada to the point where a \$40 tonne will change behaviour and allow the economy to grow.

The reality is that the price has probably got to be at least \$300. At that price, the only gains that we will see are sharp economic shocks. I do not want the single mom in my riding unable to drive to work. I do not want our country to go into the toilet economically. It is a false economy, and Preston is wrong.

Second, my colleague talked about the here and now versus the future. The future is determined by the here and now. If we are talking about policies and we are not measuring them based on greenhouse gas emissions reduction, then we are never going to see that reduction. That is just the reality. We cannot support a policy instrument that is bunk in the Canadian context. Maybe it works in Monaco, where it has a small principality that has public transit everywhere and it is loaded with billionaires. It is not going to work in the Canadian context. It just does not.

Anybody who has any background in economics knows that a carbon tax functions like a consumption tax. It does not change behaviour, outside of probably political behaviour and behaviour of things like going to work or creating jobs. It is a problem. There is no substitute good for carbon in Canada.

However, if we wanted to get to the point where we are talking about adoption of clean technologies and stuff, we need to have an industry and capital to receive that technology and adopt it. While we have been so busy chasing capital out of the country in the energy sector, we have been doing that at the detriment of our clean technology sector and all the workers about whom the member just talked. Those jobs are not going to happen here. They are going to happen in the U.S.

Government Orders

This is basic economics. The motions before us today are embarrassing. I am good to go on any one of these topics. I will debate price elasticity of carbon price. I will debate the best way to incent clean technology. We are not having that conversation. We are having a bunk, out left versus left virtue-signalling conversation for votes. That is the real problem with the climate change debate in Canada right now.

● (1630)

Mr. Terry Duguid (Parliamentary Secretary to the Minister for Women and Gender Equality, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, I know the hon. member has proud Manitoba roots and is now a proud Albertan. She will know that Manitoba experienced two one-in-300-year floods, costing our economy \$1 billion each. This, of course, is in addition to the \$6-billion Calgary flood. It is very good to hear her acknowledge the reality of climate change and that we do indeed have to act.

I want to pick up on something the hon. member from the NDP just picked up on, and that is this. Just about every Conservative economist who I have ever read on this topic supports a price on pollution, people who advised Prime Minister Harper, people who advised Preston Manning.

Of course, our own Brian Pallister, the Premier of Manitoba, was about to put a price of \$25 per tonne above our level. He seemed quite satisfied with that. He had a disagreement with the federal government on increasing that, but he did indicate to those far and wide that a price on pollution was one of a range of measures which would be effective in reducing greenhouse gases in Manitoba and contributing to our national reduction.

I wonder if the hon. member would comment on this. From the calculations I have seen by economists, by 2022, a price on pollution across Canada will cut emissions by 50 million to 60 million tonnes. We have seen the evidence from British Columbia, where there was a 7% reduction through its price on pollution.

Hon. Michelle Rempel: First, Mr. Speaker, I do not care what political stripe the economist is. A carbon tax does not work in Canada.

The member from my home province, the member for Winnipeg South, should understand that Winnipeg is not Vancouver. It is really cold in Winnipeg. I would love for him to walk down my mom's street, go to my mom's door and say that the government is going to make her pay another \$100. My mom would then ask him how much she would have to pay so Winnipeg would not flood next year. I do not think he would have an answer. That is the reality.

There is no price elasticity data that shows that \$40 a tonne is going to reduce greenhouse gas emissions. All it does is make me get angry phone calls from my constituents and his constituents, asking why the government is doing this. Of course, the Premier of Manitoba looked at that data and said this was bad public policy, which is exactly what the Liberal governments should be doing.

Let us talk about floods in Manitoba as well. I sandbagged along the Red River in 1997. I care about ensuring that does not happen. However, where has the member been on the fact that Manitoba has drained 60% of its wetlands over the last 60 years? Where is the Liberals' policy on that? Where is their support for the nature

conservancy? I am not saying that we have to have a holistic approach to environmental management in Canada. Yes, flood mitigation infrastructure and, yes, looking at all these projects, but that is the problem with the government. It has hung its hat on a consumption tax that is solely designed to offset the fact that it has spent billions of dollars on nothing and—

● (1635)

[*Translation*]

The Assistant Deputy Speaker (Mr. Anthony Rota): Order.

It is my duty pursuant to Standing Order 38 to inform the House that the questions to be raised tonight at the time of adjournment are as follows: the hon. member for Regina—Lewvan, Oral Questions; the hon. member for Calgary Rocky Ridge, Intergovernmental Affairs; the hon. member for Edmonton Riverbend, Carbon Pricing.

[*English*]

Mr. Mike Bossio (Hastings—Lennox and Addington, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, maple syrup, does it get any more Canadian than that? We can all imagine the crunch of snow under our boots, the steam coming off of the evaporator, treating our kids and maybe ourselves, too, if we are being honest, to some maple taffy when we pour warm syrup into a bucket of clean, fresh snow.

There are not too many things more closely tied to our rural communities and identity than producing maple syrup, yet even this time honoured Canadian tradition is at risk due to the impacts of climate change.

More and more research shows that warming temperatures and the loss of snowpack are having a negative and costly impact on the production of maple syrup and therefore on family farms that produce them. These family businesses keep our rural communities sustainable. This is not news. Sadly, we have known this for some time.

As far back as 2008, a study was published about the Hasler farm in Flinton, a community in my riding. From 1956 to 2007, tree tapping for maple syrup shifted a full two weeks earlier. The temperature range that is needed to produce maple syrup is becoming briefer and the season shorter. In fact, in 2012, our production of maple syrup in Ontario fell by 54% because of the unusually warm spring. Since Canada produces 70% of the world's maple syrup, this has an impact on our rural communities and our rural economy, including our family farms.

Ask any farmer in my riding and he or she will confirm the weather is getting wackier all the time. I heard from my constituent, Matt from the Hastings Stewardship Council. He told me that we really needed to prepare for the changes that were already happening and more that were going to happen.

Government Orders

Farmers want to pass their farms to the next generation. Through low-till and no-till practices, good stewardship, environmental farm plans and more, farmers are making great efforts to fight climate change. Unfortunately, they are also the first ones to suffer from its effects through severe weather events like drought and floods.

I would like to confirm, Mr. Speaker, that I will be splitting my time with the member for Guelph.

When farmers cannot grow food, it is an emergency and we are all in trouble.

Let me talk about five or six 100-year events in my rural community. I say 100-year events, but they actually all happened in the last six years.

In 2013, in the beautiful town of Bancroft, and there was a state of emergency. Flood waters had risen and roads were washed out. Three schools had to shut their doors. The children's centre was shuttered. Arnold Creighton, an 83-year-old, was quoted as saying he had lived there his whole life and had never seen anything like it.

In 2014, in Corbyville and Foxboro, villages in my riding that fall under the city of Belleville, there was another state of emergency. The mayor at the time, my good friend, the member for Bay of Quinte, was out there day after day sandbagging and helping to coordinate the relief.

Now it is 2016 and our farmers are hurting. Sixty days without solid rainfall was producing burnt and premature crops, costing our farm families. It was the worst drought in my area since record keeping began in the 1800s.

In 2017, we started the year with Quinte Conservation warning residents of the Napanee River watershed that they would have worse floods than even 2014. I get almost daily updates from Chief R. Donald Maracle of the Mohawks of the Bay of Quinte, telling me of the devastating effects that flooding is having on homes in the Tyendinaga Mohawk territory. Properties on Amherst Island and Hay Bay are under water, not just by inches but by feet.

Those who have not experienced flooding themselves are not always aware of all the subsequent impacts. Rural properties are usually on septic and well systems, both of which can be compromised by floods.

● (1640)

However, 2017 was just getting started. It seemed that Mother Nature was playing a cruel joke after all the flooding, but by summer and fall, the Moira River was experiencing the lowest water levels and droughts since record keeping began. It was even worse than 2016, when the drought had already exacted a terrible toll on our farming community.

This year, 2019, I recently visited properties in Bancroft, Hastings Highlands and Corbyville. They were under water yet again. There were roads washed out in Tweed and 21 roads washed out in North Hastings that they had to deal with. We do not have to look far to see the devastating toll right here in the Ottawa region.

Amid all this historic flooding and the hard work our conservation authorities have to do to help our communities, it is mind-boggling that the Ford government has cut flood prevention funding for our

local conservation authorities in half. These are the Conservatives' cuts, Conservatives who do not take climate change seriously.

Extreme weather events have a cost, a very human cost that we see on the faces of distraught homeowners who have lost everything. There is also a massive financial cost. Last year, extreme weather cost Canadians \$1.9 billion. From 1990 to 2009, the average was \$400 million a year. That number is only rising and is estimated to be as high as \$43 billion by 2050 if we do not act.

My constituents are awake to the impact of climate change in our rural communities. I heard from Louise, at Harvest Hastings, who reminded me of the increase in diseases affecting trees due to the warming temperatures: emerald ash borer, Dutch elm disease, beech bark disease, ash wilt, and the list goes on and on. All of this leaves our forests more susceptible to the devastating impact of wildfires.

The Ford government's cuts to planting 50 million trees is not helping this problem. To add insult to injury, these seedlings in eastern Ontario are going to be destroyed because of the Ford Conservatives' cuts.

Climate change is also causing rural communities like mine to have a higher incidence of ticks, which is a cause of Lyme disease. This has devastating health impacts. I have three friends whose health has been impacted for the last five to six years because of Lyme disease. It is happening more and more often. These are three personal friends who live in my own community who are trying to recover from this disease. Their immune systems had been compromised. Two of them were recently diagnosed with cancer because the impact was so dreadful.

There are a number of Conservatives who represent rural ridings. When we look at the devastating impact climate change is already having in our rural communities and on our farm families, it becomes clear that the Conservatives are doing a disservice to their constituents by fighting climate action instead of fighting climate change. The fact is, the fight against climate change is one of the most important fights of our generation, and future generations depend on us.

As a lifelong environmentalist, from my days growing up learning good stewardship practices while hunting and fishing in Madoc in the 1960s and 1970s, to starting the first recycling program in my apartment building during my young professional days in Toronto in the 1980s, to fighting as a community activist in Tyendinaga to protect our community's drinking water from the mega-dump expansion in Napanee from the 1990s to this very day, one thing is clear: I will never stop fighting to protect our environment, our community and future generations.

Government Orders

Extreme weather events across Canada and the world are increasing: forest fires in the west, tornadoes in Ottawa and historic droughts and floods in my own rural community. The science is clear and the impact on human lives is clear. We cannot leave it to our children to pay the vastly higher, even existential, costs of climate change.

We know how to solve this, and it is our duty as parents, citizens and legislators to act. This is a climate emergency.

• (1645)

[Translation]

Mrs. Sylvie Boucher (Beauport—Côte-de-Beaupré—Île d'Orléans—Charlevoix, CPC): Mr. Speaker, I came into the chamber because I heard the member opposite talking about rural areas, like where I am from, Beauport—Côte-de-Beaupré—Île d'Orléans—Charlevoix. I must say that the Liberals have not done anything in my riding, and they are certainly not trying to save the planet. We have seen nothing at all in four years.

The member said he recycles, among other things. This gives me the perfect opportunity to tell him that I am a Conservative and I make my own compost. I also recycle.

Can the member tell me why, with the election six months away, climate change is suddenly such an urgent issue for the Liberal government, when it had four years to take action and it did nothing?

[English]

Mr. Mike Bossio: Mr. Speaker, with all due respect to my colleague, I could not disagree more. The first thing we did as a government after the election was to bring all the provinces together to create the pan-Canadian framework, which was the basis of what experts call the first real plan in Canadian history to actually deal with climate change.

It is a vast plan of over 50 different measures that bring into effect investments in innovation, infrastructure and transit, and set methane emission standards. It is about clean energy, clean technology and a price on pollution. There is no silver bullet that is going to solve climate change. It is going to take a real plan to do it.

It is very easy for people to be skeptical of a real plan and criticize it when they do not have any plan of their own. The Conservatives have done nothing for 10 years, and they do nothing today but criticize what others call the first real plan.

Our plan is working. As a country, we have created over a million jobs. We have reduced unemployment to the lowest levels. We are reducing our emissions and we are going to meet our emissions targets and our Paris Agreement commitments, because we know that the economy and the environment can, and must, go hand in hand.

[Translation]

Ms. Marjolaine Boutin-Sweet (Hochelaga, NDP): Mr. Speaker, in her speech this morning, the Minister of Environment talked about a young Inuit boy she met who has been seriously affected by climate change.

When I visited Nunavik with my colleague from Abitibi—Baie-James—Nunavik—Eeyou, many Inuit people told us that the thawing permafrost is causing the ground to sink in several villages

and that many people would have to move out of their homes. This is having serious repercussions in the far north that are affecting indigenous peoples, yet there is absolutely nothing in the Liberal motion about indigenous peoples, unlike the NDP motion yesterday, which the Liberals voted against.

Why is there absolutely no mention of indigenous peoples in this motion?

• (1650)

[English]

Mr. Mike Bossio: Mr. Speaker, the member's question is a very important one, because addressing the concerns of indigenous people is in that nation-to-nation relationship, and reconciliation is the most important relationship our government has been working toward.

In recognizing the very difficult conditions that indigenous people are in, our government has made vast investments into infrastructure. There were a number of investments announced today, \$241 million in total, to help Inuit with infrastructure and the actions on permafrost.

We saw the road that was built to Tuktoyaktuk, and I give credit to the previous government for doing that. The great thing is that there are now sensors in that road measuring the impacts of climate change. As the member mentioned, those impacts are far greater in the far north than they are here in the south. It accentuates the importance of moving on this quickly and having a comprehensive plan to deal with climate change. That is exactly the plan that we have, and it is working.

Once again, the important thing is to ensure that the economy and the environment go hand in hand. If we blow up a section of the economy, then we will not have the revenues necessary to help indigenous communities build out.

Mr. Lloyd Longfield (Guelph, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, I thank my hon. colleague for sharing his time with me. We visited the Mohawks on the Bay of Quinte last year. We are both water champions, looking to reduce boil water advisories.

Item (c) in our motion expressly says that the vulnerable communities we are trying to serve include the indigenous communities. We recognize the effects of climate change on the land they were once stewards of, and good stewards of, that we are no longer good stewards of, and recognize the emergency we have brought on ourselves.

I rise today to support the motion. Climate change is like no other problem we have had to face as a government or as a people. With respect to fossil fuels, renewables and the transition we have to make into the new economy, there is a challenge in front of us, and it is an emergency.

Environment and Climate Change Canada identifies greenhouse gas contributions by sector to help define the challenge ahead of us. Industry contributes 40% of greenhouse gas emissions; transportation, 25%; electricity and energy, 11%; residences, 11%; agriculture, forestry and food-related emissions, 13%. The first thing we need to do when faced with a problem like this is to measure it, because what gets measured gets acted on.

Government Orders

Since 2007, Guelph has had a community energy initiative, and I am proud to say that I was involved in it from the beginning. It looks at the factors contributing to energy use in Guelph and how we can reduce per capita consumption by 50% as we increase our population by 50%. That has a direct impact on climate change. Guelph is also very involved in active transportation and in reducing our impact on the climate. We are now looking at how we can hitch our wagons together, having Canadian programs working with Guelph programs.

In 2017, the government invested \$175,000 for Guelph to update the community energy initiative, and last month the results were published in a phase 1 and phase 2 report, which was tabled at city council and will be discussed there later this month. It looks at all areas of climate change and how we can get our act together federally and with the municipality to address challenges together, aligning our efforts so we can combat climate change together.

My constituents are deeply concerned about the effects of climate change and how they will affect their future. I recently attended a student-run town hall, where students brought in the mayor, the member of provincial Parliament and me to sit on a panel for an accountability session. I would like to thank the young leaders of the community environmental leadership program and the Headwaters program for organizing the town hall.

The message is clear: Youth are demanding action from their leaders. They do not want leaders fighting each other; they want leaders fighting climate change. They do not want us to be distracted and in denial. They want us to meet climate change challenges head on, regardless of party and level of government.

Transitioning our economy from hydrocarbons to sustainable technology is the crucial task before us. While this at first appears to be disruptive to our economy, it is in fact a tremendous opportunity. There is a \$26-trillion global market for clean solutions, and Canada has a chance to get ahead in this emerging market.

To prevent further changes to our climate, and to position Canada for the looming sustainable economy to come, our government has a plan. The pan-Canadian framework on clean growth and climate change is investing \$5.7 billion over 12 years, including \$2 billion in the low-carbon economy fund. Other ministries, such as Innovation, Science and Economic Development, Transportation, Natural Resources, and Agriculture and Agri-Food Canada, have programs that contribute to our 50-point plan to address the climate emergency as we are facing it.

At the centre of this framework is a transition plan for our economy, including the sectors that emit the most, such as transportation and power generation, but also sectors that are already low on emissions, such as agriculture.

Emissions from transportation account for almost a quarter of all emissions in some provinces, such as Alberta, and in Quebec they account for half of all emissions.

• (1655)

To help change the level of emissions from transportation, our government has put forward an electric vehicle tax credit. Budget 2019 will invest \$300 million over three years to fund a credit of up to \$5,000 on any purchase of an electric battery or hydrogen fuel cell vehicle whose list price is less than \$45,000. Again, this measure is

focused on the middle class and on vehicles that are affordable for families. It helps them with the decision to get into those vehicles so that they can have a personal impact on climate change.

The clean fuel standards program aims at reducing emissions associated with the use of fuel and to promote cleaner technologies relating to fuel. The Canadian Trucking Alliance has actively worked to reduce emissions by adopting natural gas-powered engines and calling on governments to introduce complementary measures of investment in these technologies, as well as in hydrogen cell technology.

In Guelph, we are partnering with the federal government to find solutions. During a visit to Linamar, the Minister of Innovation, Science and Economic Development announced a \$50-million investment, which was matched by \$50 million from our previous provincial government. The funding will help create 1,500 new Canadian jobs and will support more than 8,000 jobs already within Linamar's corporate structure, including in advanced manufacturing processes using 3D printing and modelling, and resulting in cleaner automotive technologies.

Linamar will also open a new innovation centre in Guelph on Woodlawn Road. It will be dedicated entirely to research and development into the car of the future, including alternate fuels, electric vehicles, hydrogen cells and artificial intelligence technologies.

As a Guelphite and former president of the chamber of commerce, I know how important it is to have those jobs in Guelph. As co-chair of the automotive caucus of the Liberal Party, I know it is so important to see us getting into the car of the future in my home town.

The Government of Canada has financed the purchase of 26 new buses in Guelph, provided new bus stop funding and fare boxes, and funded a municipal study to look at how the municipality could use car sharing in the city's fleet to try to reduce the carbon footprint of the municipality itself.

With regard to energy and electricity, funds from the price on pollution can be used to invest in sustainable energy projects. My wife Barb and I have put solar panels on our house. We made use of a government program in order to do that. We are doing our part and getting income from our roof. What else can we do?

Geothermal is an example. In Saskatchewan, there is a \$50-million geothermal project in Estevan. Helped by the Government of Canada, Guelph's Canadian Solar is investing \$16 million in a solar project in Alberta, creating jobs in the new technologies of the future.

Government Orders

With regard to agriculture, we are looking at 13% of Canada's emissions. This week we were really excited to hear the announcement that Guelph and Wellington County were awarded \$10 million to develop their plan for a circular food economy. They developed three principal goals to transform our local food ecosystem and reduce our environmental footprint caused by food waste by 2025.

The three goals we are looking at are: looking at increasing accessibility of affordable, nutritious local foods by 50%; creating 50 new circular businesses and collaborations relating to food; and increasing circular economic revenue by 50% by recognizing the value of food waste. In fact, McDonald's Canada is now working with the University of Guelph studies to create plastics for the automotive industry by using all the coffee grounds from across Canada, which I know will be interesting to the member for Winnipeg, who I hear enjoys a lot of McDonald's coffee on the weekend.

Climate change is a serious matter for seniors concerned about their grandchildren's future, for entrepreneurs and for students. Even today, groups of music students from GCVI in Guelph are visiting for the MusicFest Nationals, and they are deeply concerned about climate change. We spoke about this just moments ago.

As members of Parliament, we have a responsibility to future generations to both acknowledge this threat and to develop an actionable climate plan. We have a realistic and progressive plan to reduce our emissions, reduce poverty and lay the foundations for a sustainable economy of the future.

• (1700)

I will close with the words of one of my constituents, who wrote, "I implore you to do your part ahead of this historic vote and to do more work in the future in your role as representative to take on the uncomfortable choices that the climate crisis has given us." I thank the people of Guelph, who inspired me to work on this challenge with them, and I look forward to working on this across Canada as well.

Mr. Harold Albrecht (Kitchener—Conestoga, CPC): Mr. Speaker, I want to thank my colleague from Guelph and his predecessor, the member for Hastings—Lennox and Addington, for their comments, especially as they related to rural areas. The member for Hastings—Lennox and Addington indicated that the maple syrup season in 2012 was a failure, but he failed to mention that this year was a record crop, not only in terms of quantity but also in terms of quality. I remember as a young person in the 1950s and 1960s that we would plant our spring grain in March, and this year it is barely planted in May. Therefore, yes, climate does change.

If these issues are such an emergency, why has it taken so long, with barely five weeks left in the session, for the Liberal Party to bring this to our attention? We found out today that in 2016, the government was behind its targets by 44 megatonnes; in 2017, it was behind by 66 megatonnes, and by 2018, it was behind by 79 megatonnes of carbon emissions. We can see that it is going in the wrong direction, yet the Liberals have the temerity to stand and say they are meeting their targets, when clearly they are not.

Why did the government wait so long into its mandate, with 23 or 24 days left, to address this emergency situation?

Mr. Lloyd Longfield: Mr. Speaker, my friend from Kitchener—Conestoga had maybe three questions there, but he is clever at getting a few questions in at one time.

One of his questions was about farms. Yes, there was a bumper crop last year, but there is uncertainty about what will happen this year in terms of floods. The University of Guelph is developing crops that have deeper roots, because one never knows when the next drought is going to hit.

In terms of our goals, according to COP21, we needed a pan-Canadian plan to be put in place by the end of 2019. We have done this. We will likely have to change it because of Alberta, but we do have a plan in place. Then, from 2020 to 2030, we have to meet our objectives on COP21, and they are not linear. It is not that we start at the average and stay at the average. We have to ramp up. As we implement changes, we will see them take hold across the country, and we know that we will get there with the help of Canadians.

We are on the right track, and I am really excited to see the economic and environmental opportunities as a result of our programs.

• (1705)

Ms. Jenny Kwan (Vancouver East, NDP): Mr. Speaker, the government thinks we have a climate emergency before us. We do, and I am glad the government has finally realized that. However, the Liberals have taken actions that are contrary to the action that is required. For example, the Liberal government has adopted Harper's emissions targets, and we are not even going to meet those targets. I do not know how the Liberals will address the issue at hand. In fact, there are those, such as the NDP and others, who want the government to take on more ambitious targets, but it is refusing to do so. From that perspective, to boot, the government has also bought a 65-year-old, leaky pipeline.

How does the member square all of this, when Liberals say there is a climate emergency and that they are acting on it?

Mr. Lloyd Longfield: Mr. Speaker, I can answer with just two words: Bill C-369. We have a way of evaluating environmentally sensitive projects such as a pipeline, but we are looking at having that pipeline provide a cleaner source of energy for old coal technologies used around the world. It will also give an economic benefit to enable us to pay for the transition into the new economy, which is something we have been very public about. The environment and the economy are connected. It is a matter of getting sustainable development of our environment using bills such as the one that is in the other place, Bill C-369, to have upstream and downstream emissions be part of the approval process. There are 156 conditions, and counting, that need to be met, including the indigenous conditions in that case.

We will work together with indigenous brothers and sisters and with the transition into the new economy.

Government Orders

[*Translation*]

Mr. Alexandre Boulerice (Rosemont—La Petite-Patrie, NDP): Mr. Speaker, I will be sharing my time with my fantastic and enthusiastic colleague from Cowichan—Malahat—Langford in British Columbia.

The matter before us today is very important. I am honoured to rise in the House to talk about the challenge facing our generation. I am speaking on behalf of my constituents and on behalf of Montrealers, Quebecers and Canadians.

Let me digress for a moment and talk about forced migration around the world.

In the past decade, growing numbers of people have had to flee their homes, never to return. Today, 66.5 million people, about 1% of the global population, have been forcibly displaced. Never in our history have so many people been displaced. Violence, armed conflict, persecution, massive development projects that destroy environments and ways of life, extreme poverty and environmental issues, including climate change, are forcing people to leave their homes and their communities.

Asylum seekers and internally displaced people leave their homes because they fear for their lives, their freedom or their safety. These people need peace and stability. That is why an organization like Development and Peace—Caritas Canada works with organizations around the world to meet the basic needs of those who have been affected by some of the worst migrant crises the world has ever seen.

In order to put an end to forced migration, it is imperative that we address the root causes. To do that, we must work together as citizens, organizations, civil society, humanitarian actors and multi-lateral organizations, but also as parliamentarians and as a government, to address this historically unprecedented challenge.

This situation will likely only get worse, because climate change and climate warming will also create what are known as climate refugees. These are people who have to leave home when natural disasters, such as rising sea levels, make their homes, cities or communities uninhabitable. Obviously, there is the tragedy affecting all of the nations and peoples who live on small islands in the Pacific. We know that those islands are at risk of becoming submerged by rising seas.

That is not all. Some shorelines and islands like the Magdalen Islands are eroding. Droughts, floods and forest fires are going to make some areas uninhabitable. Hundreds of thousands or even millions of people the world over will be displaced and will have no choice but to relocate because the temperature of the planet will have climbed 3°C, 4°C or 5°C. That would be catastrophic.

The debate we are having today is not just about the cost of investing in renewable energy, public transit or the electrification of our transportation, or the cost of constructing our buildings differently, using a circular economy approach and salvaged materials. The debate is also about the cost of doing nothing.

In Canada, the people who are most concerned about climate change are certainly young people, environmentalists and the NDP, but also insurance companies. They are scratching their heads

because payouts for people whose homes are destroyed by fires or floods keep going up every year.

I do not have to go too far back to illustrate that. Last summer, in British Columbia, forests were razed to the ground and people were displaced by forest fires the likes of which we had never seen. There is not only a human cost, but also a tremendous economic cost.

According to figures from recent media reports, 66 people died in last summer's heat wave in Montreal. They got so hot they died.

Climate change is going to accelerate and intensify. If we do nothing, this sort of situation will happen more frequently. Obviously, I cannot overlook the flooding we just experienced in the Outaouais region and in other parts of Quebec and Ontario.

● (1710)

Climate change and extreme temperatures are getting worse, and this is going to radically change our way of life. There is a reason people in Montreal, across Quebec and everywhere in Canada are taking action. People of all ages, both young and not so young, are calling on our governments to take action and make the right decisions, even if those decisions might be painful or politically costly in the short term. That is our duty and our responsibility.

Aurélien Barrau, a French astrophysicist I really admire, said something in a recent interview that really struck a chord. We have 12 years left to act. Without a major course correction right now, future generations will see us as criminals because we did not make the right decisions and did not change our habits. We continue to exploit natural resources like we always have, use yesterday's dirty energy sources, give society's biggest polluters a free pass and subsidize oil and gas companies. That is what we are doing. We are not doing enough. That is why our constituents say we must take action. We need to change course now. Unfortunately, the Liberal government is not getting the job done.

Some will say that I am saying this because I am an opposition MP and the election is coming. I will repeat what I told a journalist not that long ago. I will rely on numbers and facts. I will even rely on reports from Environment and Climate Change Canada, from the current government. In 2017, Environment Canada told us we were going to miss the Conservatives' targets for 2030 by 66 megatonnes. Last year, that same department told us we were going to miss the targets by 79 megatonnes.

Then the Liberal government told us that we are heading in the right direction. How did it come to that conclusion? Where does that information come from? I understand that this is politics, and the Liberals are trying to convince people to re-elect them because they are such nice people. However, the reality is that they are going to miss targets that were already insufficient.

Government Orders

The Liberals promised to stop subsidizing oil and gas companies, but they are still doing that. They give them roughly \$3 billion a year, and that does not include the \$10 billion from Export Development Canada. That is huge.

Then they sprinkle a few dollars here and there for public transit, not to mention their totally inadequate plan for vehicle electrification. The Liberals say that they are offering a \$5,000 subsidy to people who purchase a zero-emission vehicle, but they are not telling the whole story. It is a bit like buying a car. We must be sure to read to the very end of the contract to find out what is in the fine print. The Liberals fail to mention that this subsidy applies to a maximum of 20,000 vehicles a year, which represents 1% of all new cars sold in a year. The Liberals' target is to have zero-emission vehicles account for 100% of vehicles sold by 2040, but today, zero-emission vehicles only account for about 1% of vehicles sold, and the Liberals' plan is to increase that number by just 1% per year. I do not know how they expect to go from 1% to 100% with that plan. The numbers just do not add up.

The government talks a good game, but it is not taking action. On the contrary, it is making decisions that go against our responsibility to future generations. That is why I am disappointed that the Liberals voted against the NPD's motion on the climate emergency. It set out real measures and real decisions to help us make the necessary first steps. Unfortunately, all of the Liberal members of the House voted against our motion. Today, they moved their motion on the climate emergency after we moved ours, but their motion is weak and vague, and it does not make any real commitments. That is extremely disappointing.

Once again, the Liberals are making a big show of saying how important science is. Of course we agree that science is important, but the IPCC report says that we have 12 years to take action. If we spend the next 12 years doing the same thing we have been doing for the past four years, then we will not meet the target. We have a responsibility to act for our children and our grandchildren.

• (1715)

[*English*]

Ms. Kim Rudd (Northumberland—Peterborough South, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, I want to respond to a comment my colleague from Kitchener—Conestoga made that apparently there had been no discussion about climate change in three and a half years and that it appeared we had to use the word emergency in order for anyone to pay attention. I am very pleased he now recognizes that climate change is indeed a problem. I thank him very much for saying that.

My hon. colleague from Rosemont—La Petite-Patrie talked about insurance. I come from a rural riding, as my former colleague did. All the municipalities within it have declared climate change an emergency in their work. One of the reasons they have done this is because of the insurance costs. We live in Lake Ontario and all the water up here is coming down.

The Governor of the Bank of Canada just put out his report today. He said that the insured damage to property and infrastructure averaged about \$1.7 billion per year between 2008 and 2017, which is eight and a half times higher than the annual average of \$200 million from 1983 to 1992.

Where does the hon. member think that \$1.7 billion will come from? As the insurance companies are paying out that money, I assume they are going to want to recover those costs.

[*Translation*]

Mr. Alexandre Boulerice: Mr. Speaker, I thank my colleague for her comments and question.

We have the same concerns because insurance companies are not going to give their customers a handout. They will generally pass the cost on to them. That means it is Canadians who are going to pay for these natural disasters, for climate change and all the ensuing consequences, whether it is droughts or floods that cause mould problems. Our infrastructure will be severely tested. We must make investments to adapt to climate change and also take concrete action to reduce greenhouse gas emissions.

In Quebec City, there is a problem with a streetcar project. Streetcars are a good thing because they reduce the number of cars on the road and reduce pollution and greenhouse gas emissions. Unfortunately, the federal government is not honouring its commitment to this project. Its share of the funding is supposed to be \$1.2 billion, but it has only contributed \$400 million to date.

The only solution it has come up with is to take money away from Montreal and give it to Quebec City. I believe that there should be enough money to go around. Unfortunately, the formula used to calculate ridership does not meet the needs of Quebec City. I hope that this decision will be changed.

• (1720)

Ms. Marjolaine Boutin-Sweet (Hochelaga, NDP): Mr. Speaker, my colleague spoke at length about the environmental consequences if we do not wake up right now. The green, sustainable economy is the fastest-growing economy in the world. Given that the Liberal federal government is not doing much to go green, it seems to me that we are wasting a great opportunity, not just for the environment, but for the economy as well.

Does the member agree with me?

Mr. Alexandre Boulerice: Mr. Speaker, we are in a climate emergency. We have to take action to save the planet, our ecosystems and biodiversity and mitigate climate destabilization as much as possible. At the same time, we have an opportunity to create new technologies, new companies, new processes, new software, and better modes of transportation.

My colleague from Hochelaga is absolutely right. If we fail to act, other countries will. We are already lagging behind because we are living in the past. Denmark, the Netherlands, Spain, and the United Kingdom are far more advanced than we are. These are good jobs that have yet to be created today and will be much harder to create in the future when they are filled by our foreign competitors.

[*English*]

Mr. Alistair MacGregor (Cowichan—Malahat—Langford, NDP): Mr. Speaker, it is an honour to rise today and add my voice to this debate on the government's motion, which seeks to, among other things, finally declare that we are in a climate emergency.

Government Orders

It is very interesting that the government motion quickly followed our motion, which was debated yesterday and today was voted down by the Liberals, because they wanted to author their own, weaker-worded motion. Nonetheless, I am glad that we are paying attention to this very urgent issue.

There is no debate that climate change is happening. It is human-caused and we have to face up to that fact. Yes, our climate has changed many times over earth's history, but it has never changed as quickly and at the rate it is now because of the very fact that we are pumping greenhouse gases into our atmosphere and they are reaching such concentrations that it is having dire consequences for how our planet's natural processes operate. If we continue down this path, we are on course to reach 4°C to 6°C of warming by the year 2100. It sounds like a small number, but it can have cataclysmic consequences.

I remember hosting a town hall on a national clean energy strategy and looking at scenarios of the planet warming 1°C, 2°C, 3°C or 4°C. When we get up to 3°C or 4°C, we are essentially looking at the disappearance of island nations. We can say goodbye to the country of Bangladesh. Many areas along the eastern seaboard of the United States will be inundated. The state of Florida will be gone, as will the state of Louisiana. If we think the current refugee crisis is bad, we should just wait until we have 800 million to one billion people who have to move.

In my province of British Columbia, we are seeing real economic costs as the forest fire budget every year is eating into provincial coffers. We have heard mention of what the insurance costs will be. Some of the most prized real estate in the country is in Vancouver. Vancouver International Airport is right beside the ocean, with the Fraser River flowing right by it. What are the costs going to be to save that piece of land when a flooding Fraser River is matched by rising sea levels? This has real economic costs.

In my own riding, in March, the Cowichan River, which is one of four designated heritage rivers in British Columbia, was at 30% of where it should have been. I counted on one hand the number of days of rain we got on Vancouver Island in the month of March, a month when, under normal circumstances, it would be raining pretty much every day. This puts our wild salmon at risk, because of course they depend on that river to spawn and continue the next line.

Therefore, we do have real costs, which is the frustrating thing. I feel that in today's debate there is a lot of discussion about the costs to people now, such as the cost of a carbon tax and the cost of upgrading things to make sure that we are on a path to a low-carbon future. However, the economic costs of doing nothing are going to absolutely dwarf anything we are talking about now. I have seen some estimates that climate change could cost anywhere up to 10% of the world's GDP. At that rate, we are not talking about billions of dollars; we are in fact talking about trillions of dollars.

Today's motion, which the Liberals have brought forward, roughly follows the same path of what we debated yesterday, with some key differences. Number one, there is no mention in today's motion of the Liberal government's continued subsidy of the oil and gas sector, to the tune of billions of dollars every year. Just imagine, Mr. Speaker, if we actually ended those subsidies and reinvested them in the renewable energy economy of the future. The Trans Mountain

pipeline purchase was \$4.5 billion of our money, and if the Liberals want to expand it, it could go up to \$11 billion. Imagine if we had taken that money and put it in the renewable energy economy of the future, which, by the way, is now employing more and more Canadians, Canadians like those who work in the oil sands.

● (1725)

There is an amazing organization of oil sands workers, called Iron and Earth, who argue quite passionately that they have the skill sets as welders, pipefitters and electricians to transfer to the renewable energy economy, because they know that this is where our future lies.

This change is going to be forced on us one way or another. Therefore, our big choice here is whether we are reactive to that change, and change because it is being forced on us, or whether we seize the opportunity before us right now and make those important investments for the renewable energy economy of the future.

It is possible. We just need the political will. We have the technology. Every day in my riding, I see more electric cars. I see more solar panels on roofs. We have technology that allows for tidal power generation, coupled with wind turbines, solar power and geothermal. All of these, coupled with our existing hydroelectric facilities, can produce the electricity we need. Battery storage life is getting better by the year. The technology is there. We just need to have the political will to seize it and make sure that it is all working together, because ultimately, what we need to do is generate more electricity. It is possible to do it in a clean and renewable way.

It is going to take an absolutely herculean effort. I am talking about an effort on par with what this country did in World War II. We put women to work who had never really had positions in factories before. We basically retooled our entire economy to the war effort so that by the end of the Second World War, this country had the third-largest navy in the world. We had many people in uniform and tons of equipment, because we were united in a cause. This kind of fight is going to take the exact same type of effort through a combination of government working with the private sector, all working together toward a singular goal. We have to make that kind of investment.

People like to speak in this debate about how Canada's emissions are such a small part of the global average. I agree with that. However, our contribution in World War II was quite a small percentage. That did not stop us from joining in the fight with our allies, all working together. Canada did not stop sending soldiers because we thought our contribution was going to be insignificant. No. We were there from the get-go, and we saw it all the way to the end in 1945. That is the type of effort we are going to need, all working together and acknowledging that the problem is happening.

Government Orders

There are examples. In the state of Washington, just south of where I live, Governor Jay Inslee just announced an evergreen economy plan. He has set up a green bank that will have \$90 billion in it. It is one of the most ambitious plans ever launched in the United States. There will be a wholesale effort, including renovating homes to make them more energy efficient, making sure that Washington state's electricity grid is all on renewables, and having a huge number of incentives to get people driving electric cars. We can call it the evergreen economy plan, a green new deal or whatever. I think we are all referring to the same thing. That is exactly what I, as a New Democrat member of Parliament, want to see us do, because we do not have a lot of time left. The clock is running out. We have to get to a point where Canada's emissions are measurably being reduced year after year, and we are currently not at that stage.

For me, it is personal, as it is with a lot of members of Parliament. I have three children. I have six-year-old twins and a 19-month-old. I have great concerns about the world they are going to inherit.

This is a moment where we have to put aside our differences and acknowledge that we have a way of doing this. This is not just virtue signalling, as I have heard some of my Conservative friends say. If we are going to actually take those first important steps of addressing this problem, the big thing we have to do is first acknowledge that there is a problem, that there is an emergency. However, so that this is not just about platitudes, we also have to back up that kind of emotion with strong, concrete actions. It can be done. We have the people. We have the skill sets. We have the technology. We just need to see the leadership in this place, this House of Commons, and show people that we are actually treating this issue with the seriousness it deserves.

• (1730)

There is a whole generation of kids out there in high school who are looking to us. They are striking every Friday. Let us rise to the challenge, meet their expectations, come together to do this and give it the justice it deserves.

Mr. Terry Duguid (Parliamentary Secretary to the Minister for Women and Gender Equality, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, we have heard a lot in this House about the recently announced LNG initiative on the British Columbia coast, the largest private sector investment in Canadian history, which the NDP government in British Columbia and the federal government in Ottawa approve, and which will create 10,000 jobs. We have heard the leader of the NDP express his lack of support for that particular project, which will displace coal in China and create jobs.

This initiative is good for the environment in that it is displacing coal, and it is good for the economy. Why does the party opposite oppose it?

Mr. Alistair MacGregor: Mr. Speaker, I support a future in which we remove subsidies for oil and gas and put our resources into a renewable energy economy.

With respect to the Government of B.C., let me just tell the member that the premier of B.C. lives in my riding, and I could not be more proud of John Horgan's B.C. NDP government. We lived in a province under 16 years of Liberal rule, an unholy alliance of federal Conservatives and provincial Liberals. They have come together with the CleanBC program, supported by the B.C. Green

Party, and are investing in retrofits and putting new electric cars on the road.

Yes, I have my personal views as a federal New Democrat. I believe our future lies in the renewable energy economy of the future, but the B.C. NDP government has done some amazing things with its CleanBC program, something I very much support.

Mr. Dane Lloyd (Sturgeon River—Parkland, CPC): Mr. Speaker, it is evident that my colleague is very passionate about this issue. I share some of his concerns, but nowhere in his speech did I hear mention of carbon capture and sequestration. A report by the International Panel on Climate Change last year said that in order to avoid further damage from climate change, countries need to embrace carbon capture and sequestration. I wonder if the member could speak on that matter and on whether he supports carbon capture and sequestration.

Mr. Alistair MacGregor: Mr. Speaker, I am aware of that technology, but the scale at which it would have to be employed would be far beyond our resources.

In terms of sequestering carbon, all we need to do is plant more trees. We need to support our farmers, who are using amazing ecological methods to put more carbon in the soil through proper crop management techniques. I sit as the vice-chair of the Standing Committee on Agriculture and Agri-Food. I have listened to our farmers, who are on the front lines of climate change. They are doing some amazing things that need to be properly recognized. Through their careful agricultural management and crop rotation techniques, they are putting a lot of carbon back into the soil. I absolutely support that kind of work, recognizing the amazing work farmers across this country are doing every single day.

• (1735)

Mr. Kevin Lamoureux (Parliamentary Secretary to the Leader of the Government in the House of Commons, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, I would like to see a little more transparency from the federal NDP. The last answer was interesting. The LNG project was supported wholeheartedly by the NDP government in British Columbia, and the Trans Mountain pipeline was supported wholeheartedly by the NDP government of Alberta, yet the national NDP outright opposed on both accounts.

I wonder if the member could explain very clearly to those who might be following the debate on the environment why the federal New Democrats are completely, 180°, at odds with the provincial NDP governments in both Alberta and B.C.

Government Orders

Mr. Alistair MacGregor: Mr. Speaker, I do not think the parliamentary secretary was listening carefully when I addressed the very same question from his colleague on this topic. I answered very clearly that as a federal New Democrat, looking at the evidence before us, I put my support into a future that sees us getting rid of oil and gas subsidies and putting our workers to work in a just transition to the renewable energy economy of the future. My whole speech was about the available renewable energy technology that exists to make sure we get off fossil fuels. All we need is the political will to make it happen. That is what I support; that is what I will be fighting for; that is what I have always fought for and what I will be proud to continue to fight for in this Parliament.

Mr. Terry Duguid (Parliamentary Secretary to the Minister for Women and Gender Equality, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, before I begin, I would like to inform you that I will be splitting my time with the member for Repentigny.

Climate change is real. It is an urgent problem driven by human activity. Scientific data presented in the recent “Canada’s Changing Climate Report” makes it clear that our country is warming at twice the global rate. In Canada’s north, change is happening even faster.

We are seeing the devastating impacts of climate change across the country. Rivers are rising higher during floods. Droughts are parching crops. Forest fires are burning longer, hotter and more often.

Manitoba has already been hit hard by climate change. The 2011 and 2014 floods cost us some \$1 billion each and forced the evacuation of thousands of people. This spring, parts of Ontario, Quebec and New Brunswick were devastated by floods. What used to be the flood of the century seems to be happening every few years now. Canadians are growing more and more concerned about the damaging and costly impacts of our destabilizing weather on our infrastructure, on our communities and on our environment.

Canadians expect their leaders to take action on the very real threats from climate change. The federal Liberal government’s climate plan will achieve historic reductions in emissions through over 50 practical and affordable measures, including putting a price on pollution.

Our federal plan is fair and affordable. In the provinces where the federal price on pollution will apply, we are returning all the money collected back to Canadians. Let me be clear: The federal government is not keeping a cent. Ninety per cent is going right back to citizens through the climate action incentive tax rebate. The remaining 10% will help businesses, schools, hospitals, universities, municipalities and indigenous communities shift to a cleaner economy. An average family of four in my province of Manitoba will get \$339 through its 2018 tax return under our federal plan. Most Canadian families will save more in taxes than they will pay in the carbon price increase. Citizens will also have a greater incentive to make greener choices.

We know that a price on pollution is the most affordable and effective measure we can take to bring down harmful emissions. In 2018, William Nordhaus and Paul Romer won a Nobel Prize for their work on the economics of climate change. Nordhaus argues that the most sensible response to climate change is to price carbon pollution. Romer asserts that the problem is not knowing what to do; the

problem is getting a consensus to act, which we do not seem to have in this chamber.

Another key part of the federal government’s plan to tackle climate change is setting ambitious greenhouse gas emissions reduction targets that will see Canada’s emissions reduced by 30% from our 2005 levels. By 2030, we aim to reduce our output from 815 megatonnes of emissions to 523 megatonnes.

We intend to phase out our coal power by 2030 as well. Coal power that causes pollution today results in close to 10% of Canada’s total greenhouse gas emissions. In addition, smog from coal power plants can lead to asthma and respiratory illness, especially for children and seniors, and it adds to the burden on our health care system. Accelerating the phasing out of coal-fired electricity in Canada by 2030 will help reduce carbon pollution by more than five megatonnes in 2030, the equivalent of moving 1.3 million cars off the roads. It will also mean cleaner air and healthier lives for Canadians.

Through our budget 2019, we are making zero-emission vehicles accessible for more Canadians and are creating a new home retrofit program to help people lower their electricity and energy bills.

Our federal government is collaborating with scientists and economists on practical actions that work. We know this makes good ecological and economic sense. The whole world is looking for clean solutions, and the market for those solutions is estimated to be worth \$26 trillion. That is bigger than the Canadian, U.S. and U.K. economies combined. A price on pollution gives Canadian businesses an added incentive to innovate, compete and lead in the dawning low-carbon economy. It is a once-in-a-generation opportunity, and we cannot let Conservative politicians hold Canada back.

● (1740)

The time for debate over what to do about climate change has come and gone. The science is clear and the window of opportunity to safeguard our planet as a healthy home for future generations is closing. Now is the time to come together, as our Minister of Environment and Climate Change said today. Why, then, are Conservative politicians across this country ignoring evidence, putting roadblocks in front of positive climate action and using this issue to divide Canadians? It reminds me of the Stephen Harper decade of environmental backsliding and muzzling of scientists.

While a cabal of provincial Conservative leaders like Doug Ford, Jason Kenney and Scott Moe wish to spend time and money fighting carbon pricing in the courts instead of fighting climate change, the federal Conservatives are still choosing to ignore science.

I am very disappointed in my own premier, Brian Pallister, who has joined the cabal by flip-flopping on his original position to put a price on pollution. Not only are the Conservatives ignoring the reality of climate change, but they are also misleading Canadians. Recently, Conservative MPs mailed a tax guide to households that does not tell people how to claim their climate action incentive rebate. That could cost a family hundreds of dollars if it is tricked into not claiming what it is entitled to. The Conservatives say they are on the side of the middle class, but how could they deny money to middle-class citizens who are entitled to those funds?

The fact is that, in 2019, if a government does not have a plan for the environment, a government does not have a plan for the economy. Conservative politicians will spread myths and misinformation about fighting climate change, but by investing in the clean economy now, we are actually creating the jobs of tomorrow and helping to lower the huge future costs to society resulting from climate-related disasters.

The Government of Canada proposes a motion that recognizes that climate change is a real, urgent crisis caused by human activity that impacts our environment, biodiversity, economy and health.

Fighting climate change is the greatest collective challenge we face. It is a tough battle and we cannot let ourselves be distracted by partisan posturing. The world is changing, and one day soon we will pass it on to our kids and our grandkids. We owe them our very best, most well-informed, most united effort. Supporting our federal government's motion to declare a national climate emergency and commit to meeting the Paris targets is the first united step we can take to fight climate change together and protect the environment that we as Canadians love.

I hope all parties will join us in supporting the motion.

• (1745)

Mr. Dane Lloyd (Sturgeon River—Parkland, CPC): Mr. Speaker, I wanted to address something from the previous speaker. There are actually at least four major carbon capture and sequestration projects in Canada. We have Carbon Engineering Ltd., out of Squamish, B.C., which is literally sucking carbon out of the atmosphere and turning it into diesel fuels.

We also have the North West Refining upgrade in my riding of Sturgeon River—Parkland. It will take 1.2 million tonnes of carbon out of the atmosphere with its carbon capture project.

Then we have the Boundary Dam project in Estevan, Saskatchewan, taking one million tonnes of carbon out of the atmosphere. Then we have the Capital Power Shepard project, which I had the pleasure of giving an award to this week. It is about groundbreaking technology that is turning carbon into carbon nanotubes, which can be used as an ingredient in cement and many other projects.

Canada is a world leader in carbon capture. Why is the Liberal government not doing anything to facilitate carbon capture

technology? Is it just because it is opposed to the oil and gas industry?

Mr. Terry Duguid: Mr. Speaker, we should be using every technology known to humankind to address our carbon footprint and bringing it to this fight of our lives. My understanding is that there has been federal support in the past for a number of the projects the member mentioned, and I welcome his comments.

The Deputy Speaker: The hon. parliamentary secretary will have three minutes remaining for questions and comments when the House next gets back to debate on the motion.

It being 5:46 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*]

FAIRNESS FOR ALL CANADIAN TAXPAYERS ACT

The House resumed from April 3 consideration of the motion that Bill S-243, An Act to amend the Canada Revenue Agency Act (reporting on unpaid income tax), be read the second time and referred to a committee.

Mr. Guy Caron (Rimouski-Neigette—Témiscouata—Les Basques, NDP): Mr. Speaker, I am pleased to rise in the House to speak to Bill S-243. Although the bill was introduced here, in the House, it is actually a Senate initiative sponsored by Senator Percy Downe, for whom I have a great deal of respect. Back when I was the NDP finance critic, I had the pleasure of working with him on tax evasion issues. I know this issue is really important to him.

In the previous Parliament, the Standing Committee on Finance studied the tax gap, which is the difference between what the government does collect and what it should collect. That is money the government misses out on because of tax evasion, aggressive tax avoidance, the use of tax havens and so on.

I remember when the committee was debating it, we had witnesses from all over the world, including the United States, Great Britain and various European OECD countries, as well as Canadian experts. We heard from experts on taxation, banking and various organizations.

It became apparent that we needed to measure the tax gap. However, at the time, the Conservative government and the Conservative members of the committee had no interest in moving forward. They told us that it was impossible, that it would require too much work, and that any data we might gain from the whole exercise would not justify the resources required to see it through. I do not think that was true, and the Liberals who were on the committee at the time agreed.

Private Members' Business

However, as soon as they took office, the Liberals became reluctant to get the Canada Revenue Agency to be transparent and to start measuring the tax gap. Yes, they ended up doing it. Yes, the CRA is now doing some hasty calculations to try to tell us how much tax revenue is likely being lost.

However, most stakeholders do not believe the amount is accurate. As part of a review of all tax measures, the CRA claimed that the government is currently losing about \$7 billion or \$8 billion in tax revenue. Most tax fairness organizations do not believe that. The Conference Board of Canada even conducted a study on measuring the tax gap, which found that it may actually be closer to \$45 billion or \$47 billion, if we rely mainly on how much tax revenue is currently being lost by the United States, which I would remind members has a lot more resources to deal with this issue than the CRA does.

The Parliamentary Budget Officer now has the authorization, power and desire to measure the tax gap. For two years, the Parliamentary Budget Officer and his office were asking for authorization to proceed with an accurate measurement of the tax gap. For two years, the Liberal government refused to give them the information they needed. For two years, the Parliamentary Budget Officer did not have the information needed to proceed with this important study, a matter on which the CRA has no credibility, and yet, the government claimed the whole time to support the office.

Here is why I believe the CRA has no credibility. During the entire time that I had to deal with the agency, all I saw was a lack of transparency. Not only did I find that they were unwilling to provide information, but I also observed that they were withholding it.

Not that long ago, at the beginning of this Parliament, I sat on the Standing Committee on Finance. Among other things, we studied the whole scheme involving KPMG and the Isle of Man. After a handful of committee meetings, we were no longer allowed to examine the processes that KPMG had been involved in.

When CRA representatives testified before the committee, they gave every possible excuse for not providing the information. They told us that it would breach confidentiality, that privacy could be at risk and that it could not give us information that KPMG deemed to be privileged. There was every reason to deny us the information, but none of them were valid.

We could have done what the U.S. usually does, which, in the case of KPMG, was to use the committee's authority to issue subpoenas requesting that KPMG officials testify and compelling them to do so.

• (1750)

Both the Canada Revenue Agency and its minister had a hand in that.

The minister does not have much credibility. Throughout this Parliament, she repeatedly told us that the government and the Canada Revenue Agency had taken steps, but that turns out not to be the case.

For example, the minister repeatedly said that the government invested \$1 billion to fight tax evasion and had recovered \$25 billion, but that turned out not to be true. The government did not recover \$25 billion; it hoped to recover \$25 billion. As it turns

out, "hope to recover" is exactly right because the government is far from hitting that target at the moment. Then the minister said the government really had taken the necessary measures and that CRA had hired 1,300 new auditors. Well, we did the math, and so did the media, and we figured out that CRA hired 192 new auditors, not 1,300.

The Canada Revenue Agency told us that it answers 90% of all calls within two minutes. The Auditor General begged to differ. The truth is that 34% of all callers actually get someone on the line, and a third of all callers are given incorrect information.

It is very hard to believe everything coming out of the Canada Revenue Agency. It is very hard to lend them credibility. That is why we need an independent study. I do not believe the numbers that the Canada Revenue Agency came up with in the course of its study of the so-called tax gap. I would have more confidence in the numbers from the Parliamentary Budget Officer, if he has access to the data that should be made accessible to him through this bill.

Percy Downe, the senator who introduced the bill, has a great deal of credibility in the area. He made this his pet issue and did not make a big spectacle out of it. He just wants to get to the bottom of this. He realizes that here in Canada, the Canada Revenue Agency is a problem.

The CRA's approach to collecting tax revenue across the country is problematic. The senator recognizes, as we do, that the CRA is acting arbitrarily. It changes its approach to collecting personal income tax depending on the individual's level of wealth. I am not making that up. It was in the Auditor General's 2018 report, which notes a lack of consistency in the CRA's collection processes.

Two different taxpayers will be treated in two different ways. That is not professional. It is unfair and perpetuates the perception that the CRA and the Government of Canada treat taxpayers differently based on their wealth or status.

This is a major problem because it indicates that this is a two-tiered system. In this system, the government will try to reach an out-of-court settlement with people who have the means to defend themselves. That is actually what we have seen. The government tries to resolve the situation by closing the file, because it will be too expensive to recover money from people who have the means to defend themselves. However, in the case of those who cannot defend themselves, the government takes quick action to recover the money.

We must standardize the way the agency does things and, above all, take away the Canada Revenue Agency's authority to assess the gap, because it will likely not do a very credible job. We must routinely ask the government to do its job, to exercise due diligence and to provide on a regular and ongoing basis the information requested by the Parliamentary Budget Officer to evaluate the tax gap.

Private Members' Business

That is why I am proud to support this bill.

• (1755)

[English]

Mr. Matt Jeneroux (Edmonton Riverbend, CPC): Mr. Speaker, I am thankful to be able to stand and speak on behalf the hon. member for Calgary Rocky Ridge. He is a dear friend, and I believe that this is a very important piece of legislation that he is bringing forward here in the House. It is an honour to speak on it.

I would also like to thank Senator Percy Downe for introducing this bill in the Senate. It is a shame that the government plans to oppose it, but I hope government members will listen to all of the reasons that this bill makes sense for the government and for Canadians.

It is timely to be speaking about Bill S-243 now, as the majority of Canadians just finished filing their taxes with the Canada Revenue Agency. We also just found out that the Canada Revenue Agency wrote off \$133 million owed by a single taxpayer.

CRA employees discussed the large writeoff in an internal memo in September of 2018, and the media reported on this memo in April. However, we do not know who the taxpayer is or whether it is a person or a corporation. We also do not know whether this writeoff is related to government subsidies, which is something Canadians should know.

The aim of this bill is to keep the CRA accountable for tax collection efforts. It would also require the CRA to report on the tax gap, which is the difference between taxes owing and taxes actually collected. The bill would also require the CRA to publish information on convictions for domestic and offshore tax evasion. Data shows that the offshore tax gap for the 2014 tax year was between \$0.8 billion and \$3 billion.

The CRA has published information about the tax gap related to the goods and services tax. In 2014, here the offshore tax gap was estimated to be about \$4.9 billion. The CRA has also shared the domestic personal income tax gap for that same year, 2014, at \$8.7 billion. In that one year, the money owed for the tax gap, which could have been as high as \$16 billion, could have funded many programs or eased the tax burden for many Canadians.

Conservatives believe in making life more affordable for Canadians and in keeping taxes as low as possible to stimulate the economy. When the government loses a significant amount of money because of a tax gap, it means that taxes could be raised for the rest of us. This penalizes law-abiding Canadians.

I support Senator Downe's bill, which is sponsored by the member for Calgary Rocky Ridge here in the House, because it makes sense and makes the CRA and those Canadians not living up to their responsibility to pay taxes more accountable.

Some Canadians are concerned that reporting on the tax gap could threaten their privacy, but this bill balances the privacy of individuals with transparency and accountability for the CRA. The information would be reported to the Parliamentary Budget Officer, so its intent is not to name and shame average Canadians.

The United States, the United Kingdom, Sweden and Australia all report on their tax gaps. These governments all indicate that they

report this information because it helps their revenue departments understand how and why non-compliance occurs. This information is helpful to policy-makers, who can then make better-informed decisions about tax policy and also help the government better manage its resource allocation.

Canada should have this system. Mandating measurement of the tax gap ensures that future governments and parliaments have all of the information necessary to take action on the tax gap.

Many of us are aware that offshore tax evasion is a problem in Canada. Almost 1,000 Canadian taxpayers, including individuals, corporations and trusts, were named in the Panama papers three years ago.

The CRA told media last month that it had identified 894 taxpayers and had finished reviewing 525 of these cases, resulting in \$14.9 million in federal taxes and penalties. This number will rise as audits continue.

Although the CRA told the media the amount of taxes assessed, it did not say how much of that money has actually been collected. Senator Downe's bill, if passed, would require the CRA to report that type of information to Canadians. As I mentioned before, this type of information would be incredibly helpful to our policy-makers. Many other countries use this information, and Canadians would be better served if our policy-makers also had this kind of information.

Most Canadians work hard all year and diligently file their taxes. These are honest people who would never attempt to cheat the government. However, we see wealthy Canadian individuals and corporations attempt to cheat the tax system all the time.

Tax money is used to fund services we enjoy, such as health care, transit and roads. The CRA should be able to say how much money it has collected as a result of the Panama papers. This is in the Canadian public interest.

Similarly, it should be allowed and able to tell us why \$133 million was written off for a single taxpayer. That money could provide significant funding for public services, and Canadians deserve to know why this taxpayer or corporation received special treatment while the rest of us diligently work to pay our fair share.

Private Members' Business

●(1800)

I have had many constituents complain about dealings with the CRA, including poor levels of service or the agency repeatedly requesting documentation that has already been provided to a different branch. The Office of the Taxpayers' Ombudsman, which operates at arm's length from the CRA, has experienced an increase in complaints over the last few years. In 2017, the taxpayers' ombudsman said the biggest complaints were: first, the struggle to even get through to the CRA call centre, which can be a huge headache, especially around tax time. Other complaints included receiving inconsistent and incorrect information from the call centre agent and the lack of information sharing between different branches of the CRA. Many Canadians have been asked to produce the same information or documents more than once, because the person's file was not properly shared between departments.

The taxpayers' ombudsman called these problems "systemic" and said there are other deeply rooted problems. The CRA acknowledges that it needs to do more to better serve Canadians, and representatives from the agency will be travelling across Canada over the next month to conduct in-person consultations on how the CRA can improve its services. I have no doubt they will receive plenty of feedback. I am hopeful that the CRA will take this feedback and then implement it to create a better-run system, which Canadians deserve.

I know it is not just the CRA that has these problems. A recent Auditor General report found that other government departments, including immigration, employment insurance and the Canada pension plan, did not answer their phones for the millions of Canadians who called them in 2017 and 2018. It is obvious the government needs to make huge improvements to give Canadians the accessible service they require and deserve.

I hope these consultations by the CRA are fruitful and we will see a service improvement in the near future. I know how seriously Canadians take the CRA, except for wealthy Canadians who keep their money in offshore accounts without thinking of the consequences. For many Canadians, getting a letter from the CRA is anxiety-inducing, and dealing with audits and investigations can cause high levels of stress.

When Canadians owe the CRA money, most work to pay that money back, whether it is through installments or a lump sum payment. Most people would not dream of running out on the bill, so to speak, so they should not be unfairly penalized when corporations and wealthy Canadians run out on their tax obligations.

If this bill passes, it means increased accountability for the CRA, which is in the best interests of taxpayers. The changes proposed in this bill require the CRA to report on all convictions for tax evasion in addition to reporting the tax gap, as I mentioned earlier. This data would be reported to the Minister of National Revenue in the CRA's annual report, which is tabled in Parliament. The Minister of National Revenue is also required to provide the Parliamentary Budget Officer with data to calculate the tax gap.

These amendments, which would be inexpensive to implement, would increase transparency, which the government allegedly values. Publicly available reports on the gap between income taxes

owed and taxes collected will provide a metric for judging the efficacy of measures to combat income tax evasion. This is important information for Canadians to have access to. Many other western nations publicly post this information. Canada is already behind standard practice in this regard. Conservatives support any measures to enhance the effectiveness and accountability of the public service.

Bill S-243 is a common-sense amendment to the Canada Revenue Agency Act, and I support the amendments.

I thank Senator Downe for his work on this bill, and the member for Calgary Rocky Ridge for helping to get the bill through the House of Commons. I appreciate the opportunity to speak to this bill today.

●(1805)

Mrs. Deborah Schulte (Parliamentary Secretary to the Minister of National Revenue, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, I would like to start by thanking the member from the other place, who initiated this bill, for his efforts to bring attention to Canada's tax gap through Bill S-243, and the member for Calgary Rocky Ridge, who sponsored this bill so that we can have a healthy debate on it in this House.

Our government agrees that when the tax gap information is publicly available, it demonstrates a commitment to transparency and helps to identify opportunities to make a fairer tax system for all Canadians. Bill S-243 has put a spotlight on the importance of understanding Canada's tax gap. We thank the senator for that.

The Minister of National Revenue has been very clear about her commitment to fighting tax evasion and to measuring the tax gap, helping to shine a spotlight on the cost of tax evasion.

I find it a bit rich to hear the Conservative opposition members speak in support of the bill. They seem to have completely erased from their memory the Harper government's attacks on the PBO and the utter refusal to consider studying the tax gap. As a matter of fact, I would like to draw the attention of members to what the former vice-chair of the public accounts committee and Conservative MP for Don Valley West, John Carmichael, said in 2014, when talking about the tax gap. He decided to explain to the opposition the mechanics of measuring the tax gap in order "to explain why deriving such an estimate would be overly complex, inefficient, and a total waste of time." He followed this statement by saying that studying the tax gap was "nonsensical".

Let us talk about something that is nonsensical: the Conservatives pretending to care about measuring the tax gap and wanting more transparency for Canadians. We have 10 years of Harper's track record on tax evasion to know that studying the tax gap is no priority for that side of the House. Unlike my colleagues on the other side, I am very proud of my government's track record on this issue.

Private Members' Business

While we agree with the spirit of this bill, due to the requirements and importance of protecting the confidentiality of taxpayers' information, and our concerns related to the proposed legislative vehicle in this bill, our government cannot support it.

This bill asks to change the Parliamentary Budget Officer's model of access to information by compelling the Minister of National Revenue to provide data to the PBO through amendments to the Canada Revenue Agency Act. This act is not the right legislative vehicle to change the PBO's model of access to information. It would pose concerns for the confidentiality of taxpayer information. The current report to the PBO is issued in a format that protects taxpayers' information. This bill would also create an unnecessary administrative burden for the CRA, as the tax gap is already being reported on.

Allow me to elaborate. To start, Bill S-243 would require the Minister of National Revenue to collect, compile, analyze and abstract statistics on the tax gap every three years and to publish them in the annual report to Parliament of the Canada Revenue Agency. The CRA already publishes research and estimates on various components of the tax gap and has a strong public commitment to continue to do so. Therefore, adding a legislative requirement to collect, compile, analyze and abstract statistics on the tax gap in the CRA's annual departmental results report is unnecessary.

The CRA already has a dedicated team in place to study the tax gap. Through the work of this team, the CRA has published four reports pertaining to the tax gap. Unlike the allegations of the member for Rimouski-Neigette—Témiscouata—Les Basques in his speech, the government took immediate action. In June 2016, the CRA published a conceptual study on tax gap estimation. At the same time, it published the tax gap estimates for the goods and services harmonized sales tax. In June 2017, the CRA published tax gap estimates on domestic reporting and payment non-compliance by individuals. In June 2018, it published a report on tax gap estimates on offshore non-compliance by individuals on the international scale. In June 2019, the CRA will release its fifth report on the tax gap, which will provide information about corporate income tax non-compliance.

These reports are published on the Canada.ca website. They describe the methodology the CRA used to estimate the tax gap. They also provide information on the CRA's compliance efforts to reduce these gaps. Collectively, these reports provide the basis for a more comprehensive tax gap estimate.

• (1810)

Therefore, yes, we agree that the tax gap is important to measure. That is why it is already being done.

I would now like to bring to members' attention the requirement in the bill for the CRA to provide the PBO with the data collected and compiled on the tax gap as well as any additional data the PBO considers relevant to conducting a further analysis of the tax gap.

Members may know that the CRA already provides the PBO with information on this tax gap, and it is in a format that does not compromise taxpayer confidentiality. This bill simply does not amend the appropriate act. In fact, these proposed changes run the

risk of creating confusion about the PBO's existing legislated access to information. Indeed, amending a departmental statute such as the Canada Revenue Agency Act would not broaden access to taxpayer data or information. This bill should require significant and consequential amendments to legislation directly related to providing taxpayer data, such as section 241 of the Income Tax Act or section 295 of the Excise Tax Act to make such a change, but it does not.

What this would not change, however, is the CRA's commitment to continue to work closely with the PBO, the Privacy Commissioner and Statistics Canada to determine how best to share the relevant information necessary for the work of the PBO while also protecting the confidentiality of taxpayers' information.

Last, I would like to touch on the stipulation in Bill S-243 that would require the CRA to provide in its departmental results report a detailed list of all convictions for tax evasion, including a separate list for overseas tax evasion. Similar to the commitment to reporting the tax gap, the CRA has already been providing this information at Canada.ca since 2017. The available information identifies individuals, corporations and trusts convicted in the courts for tax evasion or for failing to file income tax returns. It includes convictions that have links to money and assets located offshore.

The CRA's departmental performance report already includes information about convictions. The CRA also offers a service that notifies subscribers about enforcement activities. Given these efforts, it is clear that the CRA already provides significant information about its enforcement activities, just like what is being requested in Bill S-243.

Once again, I thank the member from the other place who initiated this bill for his commitment to ensuring that Canadians have greater access to information about non-compliance. Our government will continue to report on the tax gap to ensure that taxpayer information is and stays confidential and will continue to remain transparent in our fight against tax evasion. That is what we have been doing for the past three and a half years and that is what we will continue to do.

Hon. Michelle Rempel (Calgary Nose Hill, CPC): Mr. Speaker, for the people watching today, what Bill S-243 would do, in technical jargon, is amend the Canada Revenue Agency Act to require that the CRA report on all convictions for tax evasion, including international tax evasion, and that the tax gap or the difference between estimated taxes owing and actual taxes collected be included in the annual report it submits to the Minister of National Revenue for tabling in Parliament. It would require the minister to provide data for calculating the tax gap to the Parliamentary Budget Officer.

Private Members' Business

The Conference Board of Canada estimates the tax gap at between \$9 billion and \$50 billion. That is a lot of money. What could that be used for? It could be used to reduce the deficit, spend money on things that we need and maybe not tell veterans in Canada that they are asking for more than we can give.

I find the parliamentary secretary's speech ridiculously hilarious and I do not even know how to summarize her defence of voting against this bill. I am going to give this lecture to the CRA bureaucrats in the lobby who wrote that audacious speech that she did not even bother to edit before coming in here and reading it.

To the CRA bureaucrats watching, first, none of us on this side of the House would be the man and then take the man's talking points into the House of Commons to argue why CRA bureaucrats would not provide this data for not doing their job, number one. That is just ridiculous. It is actually laughable.

Second, some poor political staffer put the one attack line in her speech. My colleague from Calgary Rocky Ridge made a wonderful comment, which was summarized as follows: "Conservatives should be ashamed of themselves for not doing 10 years ago the thing that we are not going to do today."

Come on. We know that this is important, which is why my colleague has spoken against it, but the delicious part of the argument to not support it was the argument of privacy for financial records.

I am going to give credit in a nod of bipartisanship to this point. The lobby coordinator of the New Democratic Party, Anthony Salloum, said it is really rich for the Liberals to be making an issue about the privacy of personal banking records when it was they who wanted Statistics Canada to dive deep into people's individual banking records and then stood day after day in the House of Commons saying it was all good. They said there was no problem with the government being able to see if people went to the 7-Eleven at 10 o'clock at night and bought a delicious blue Slurpee, because that is the role of government.

They did that for a month. Day after day, they said it is the role of government, that the man should be able to see everything people buy, that there is no issue with privacy and everything is A-okay. Now, today, they are saying that Canada Revenue Agency bureaucrats are all of a sudden concerned with privacy.

As a member of Parliament, I have to hire someone in my office just to do casework, and I have had cases in which people had their files locked in some CRA bureaucrat's desk or left by the water cooler. The incompetence of this bureaucracy is staggering at best and irresponsible at worst. Anytime somebody stands in the House of Commons to talk about privacy, that person should at least read the speech that the bureaucrats provided and think about whether it makes the individual sound like a super-villain. I think the parliamentary secretary forgot to do that today.

In all seriousness, we need to ensure that we are addressing the issue of the tax gap, because it is a source of revenue that we are not tapping into and it disadvantages Canadians who are paying taxes fairly if we are not collecting taxes in an appropriate manner. In fact, it creates a disproportionate burden of taxpaying on one aspect of Canadian society as opposed to another.

Since I have a moment to talk about the Liberal government's ability to prosecute tax evaders, I am going to point to a CBC story in 2018 that talked about governments around the world being able to recover \$500 million in taxes thanks to the Panama papers.

● (1815)

However, the article said that this is in stark contrast to the CRA's effectiveness at catching offshore tax cheats and comes in the wake of a CBC investigation that found that few, if any, of the criminal convictions the agency cites in defence of its record have anything to do with offshore tax evasion.

In fact, of the court cases the government had cited in Parliament to defend its record on cracking down on offshore tax evasion, a 2017 CBC article said that few, if any, had anything to do with millionaires hiding money in overseas tax havens.

As a further point of proof, the parliamentary secretary's boss, the Minister of National Revenue, or the minister of bluster, since she has a tendency to stand in the House and repeat nonsensical talking points that have nothing to do with the question asked, said in 2016 that her agency had already started to identify 45 targets for audits. However, three years later there are no tangible outcomes.

The nice thing about this bill is that it would force the bureaucrats who wrote that very staid and weird speech to determine what our tax gap is on an annual basis and help ensure that Canada is retrieving those taxes, so that complying Canadians do not shoulder this burden of taxes on their own.

I want to point out the government's hypocrisy. When it saw that it was potentially losing billions of dollars to tax evasion, its action was to increase taxes on law-abiding Canadians. In terms of the results of its tax increases, my colleague, the shadow minister for finance, made a wonderful intervention in the House that is worth repeating.

He stated that the CRA data that had recently been released demonstrated that "in the first year after the tax increase took effect, the government actually collected \$4.6 billion less from the wealthiest 1%."

He went on to say:

Finance Canada released documents almost exactly a year ago today in its annual financial report, on September 19, 2017, in which it revealed almost exactly the same phenomenon. Revenues went down from the wealthiest 1%.

As my colleague pointed out, the government said that this was all "due to one-time factors", but we know there were some wealthy individuals who moved money around to avoid paying their fair share.

It is worth pointing out that one of those individuals was the Minister of Finance himself; the minister of the french fry yacht. He announced a tax increase to take effect on January 1, 2016. He sold shares in his own company, Morneau Shepell, just 30 days before that, in order to ensure his capital gain would be taxed at the earlier, lower rate and he would not have to pay the same higher taxes he imposed on everyone else.

We see the Liberals' record and the absolute ridiculousness of making the argument on privacy after they were going to allow Statistics Canada to look at Canadians' personal banking records. We see the track record of the Minister of Finance on this. We understand that bureaucrats are not motivated to have transparency in terms of their efficacy. The role of the executive branch is to go to bureaucrats and thank them for their public service and let them know that it has a fiduciary responsibility to taxpayers and is going to make these changes. This is what we need to do in this place.

By voting against this bill, we understand what real change means to the Liberal government. It means absolutely nothing.

• (1820)

The Deputy Speaker: The hon. member for Calgary Rocky Ridge has up to five minutes for his right of reply.

Mr. Pat Kelly (Calgary Rocky Ridge, CPC): Mr. Speaker, it is a tremendous honour and privilege to sponsor a bill in this place.

First, I want to acknowledge and thank Senator Percy Downe for his passion on this issue and for obtaining unanimous support in the other place for the bill and giving me the opportunity to sponsor it in the House.

I want to thank my dear friends, the member for Edmonton Riverbend and the member for Calgary Nose Hill, for their speeches tonight. I also want to thank my friend, the member for Calgary Shepard, who spoke in the first hour of debate on the bill, and indeed the other members who spoke in support of the bill, in particular the member for Rimouski-Neigette—Témiscouata—Les Basques, who spoke tonight, and the member for Sherbrooke, who spoke in the first hour. I would also like to thank the members for Châteauguay—Lacolle and Winnipeg North as well as the Parliamentary Secretary to the Minister of National Revenue, who also participated in the debate.

The bill would allow the Parliamentary Budget Officer to measure a problem that all parties acknowledge exists. As the member for Rimouski-Neigette—Témiscouata—Les Basques noted, the Auditor General has repeatedly called out the Canada Revenue Agency for not treating Canadians the same way it treats those who file taxes offshore.

When he said that, I was reminded that the CRA, in its self-audit, believed that its call centre was operating just fine. It took a report from the Auditor General to reveal that it was a complete disaster. Without giving the Parliamentary Budget Officer the tools it has asked for, we are asking it, with the misleading information the CRA hands over, to be the final word on the scope and scale of this problem. That is not acceptable. It is not good enough. It is not good enough for Canadians, and it is really just more of the same.

I take exception to the parliamentary secretary castigating my motives as a Conservative in bringing forward, under Private

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Members' Business, the bill. As was pointed out by the member for Calgary Nose Hill, she essentially said, "Shame on the Conservatives". Because we did not do this for the 10 years we were in government, she said we should be ashamed for saying that this is important, even as the Liberals plan to vote against the bill. Only a Liberal could say this and not understand the hypocrisy and ridiculousness of that position.

I was not part of the former Parliament. However, despite the previous government's incredible track record and that Canadians are now yearning for a return to a Conservative government, I am comfortable admitting that not every single problem under the sun was solved during the 10 years of the Conservative government. Tens years was not long enough to undo everything done by the previous Liberal government. It was not long enough to solve every problem in the world.

All speakers on the Liberal side claimed to support the motivation behind the bill and claimed to care about the problem it would solve, yet they came up with excuse after excuse, which is all we heard in the parliamentary secretary's speech, for why we should not pass it and should not bother. Shame on the Liberals if, as has been indicated to me by the minister, they reject the bill tonight.

Again, I want to thank Percy Downe for his advocacy on this and thank all members who participated in the debate on the bill.

• (1825)

[*Translation*]

The Deputy Speaker: The question is on the motion. Is it the pleasure of the House to adopt the motion?

Some hon. members: Agreed.

Some hon. members: No.

The Deputy Speaker: All those in favour of the motion will please say yea.

Some hon. members: Yea.

The Deputy Speaker: All those opposed will please say nay.

Some hon. members: Nay.

The Deputy Speaker: In my opinion the nays have it.

And five or more members having risen:

The Deputy Speaker: Pursuant to Standing Order 93, a recorded division stands deferred until Wednesday, May 29, immediately before the time provided for private members' business.

ADJOURNMENT PROCEEDINGS

A motion to adjourn the House under Standing Order 38 deemed to have been moved.

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● (1830)

[English]

ORAL QUESTIONS

Mr. Erin Weir (Regina—Lewvan, CCF): Mr. Speaker, the day after the member for Nanaimo—Ladysmith was elected in that riding's by-election, I rose in this House to ask about the possibility of adding more independent questions to accommodate the growing number of independent MPs. The Green Party is not a recognized party in this House, so its MPs are adding to the number of independents, which is now 21, the largest ever in Canadian history.

It seems only logical that as the number of independent MPs increases, the number of opportunities for us to participate in question period should increase correspondingly. However, the government House leader rejected this suggestion, stating, "There is a formula to determine the number of questions for each party and for independents." It would be nice to know what that formula is. Perhaps the government will be able to provide a more detailed answer this evening.

I can certainly say that the soon-to-be-21 independent MPs are now sharing only 14 spots in question period every week. We compare that to the officially recognized opposition parties. An NDP caucus of 41 MPs gets 54 question period spots every week, and a Conservative caucus of 97 MPs gets 120 questions per week. I think we all accept the idea that officially recognized parties would receive some extra questions. They get a bit of a bonus.

However, it seems that the current formula, such as it is, is completely out of whack. To provide a direct comparison, the NDP caucus has about twice as many MPs as the independent group, yet receives nearly four times as many spots in question period every week. It does not strike me that this represents a reasonable allocation of question period opportunities or that it provides a fair chance for independent MPs to speak up for our constituents.

Of course, there is a bit of history to this question. Earlier in this Parliament, the Bloc Québécois, which is also part of the independent group, raised a point of privilege, requesting more spots in question period. The Chair ruled that this was not a matter of privilege. Fair enough, but I want to emphasize that this ruling does not mean that the current allocation is proper or that it makes sense. There may not be a right to more questions as a matter of privilege, but surely common sense would suggest that the allocation of questions should reflect, roughly speaking, the allocation of MPs.

Therefore, when the government House leader says that there is a formula, at the start of this Parliament what that formula meant was that there were as many questions for independents as there were independent MPs. When I became an independent MP, the Speaker added another question to the Tuesday question period to maintain that balance, but since then we have had seven more independent MPs and no additional independent questions. I think that is where the allocation breaks down, and I hope the government would support reallocating some opportunities to independent MPs to restore a proper equilibrium.

Mr. Kevin Lamoureux (Parliamentary Secretary to the Leader of the Government in the House of Commons, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, as the member knows well, the Speaker actually did

address the issue late last year in October. Let me be very specific by reading the Speaker's ruling:

I would be remiss if I looked at this matter only through the lens of just one group of members and their right to speak. Instead, I must manage all proceedings, including question period, effectively for the benefit of all members. It is the view of the Chair that the current allotment of 14 questions per week for independent members maintains an appropriate balance with respect to the management of time, the rights of independent members, and the longstanding practices of this House.

The Chair notes that recently, some of the time slots made available to independent members have not been used. I would therefore encourage independent members to consult table officers, who remain available to assist in any way necessary, with a view to ensuring that these opportunities are optimized for the benefit of all.

This is what the Speaker of the House has indicated. I would highly suggest that whether it is representatives of the independents to make the necessary arrangements with the Speaker's office to sit down and have that discussion. It might be somewhat fruitful for the member opposite to do something of that nature.

I do not know if the member would be able to indicate that there are no extra questions. Are all the questions that have been allocated to the independents used every day? That would be helpful information to bring to the Speaker's attention.

We as the government are not necessarily taking a side per se, other than to reinforce that the Speaker has made a ruling on the matter after no doubt having done a considerable amount of research. From our perspective, we have taken some initiatives to modernize the House of Commons in order to improve our democracy.

For example, we changed question period to make government and the Prime Minister more accountable. There is a new Prime Minister's question period in which the PM answers every question on that day. The Prime Minister had done more than 40 Prime Minister's question periods, answering over 1,600 questions. It is absolutely unprecedented.

We have ensured that Liberal MPs have a strong voice in the House by permitting free votes, except on matters of confidence, election promises or protections guaranteed by the Charter of Rights and Freedoms.

We have introduced legislation to ensure that the all-party Board of Internal Economy, which for years operated in secrecy, is now public. We have made Parliament more family friendly and helped encourage the next generation of women to run for office by arranging for votes at better times of the day and allowing parental leave for parliamentarians.

Over the last number of years, I have seen many different ideas from people about ways we can improve the conditions of parliamentarians, and we want to explore different options. On a couple of occasions in the last couple of years, there was the opportunity to have that sort of dialogue at the committee on procedure and House affairs, and that sort of dialogue is very healthy.

I would encourage the member to make an appointment with the Speaker's office and report back and see if some other accommodations could be taken into consideration.

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●(1835)

Mr. Erin Weir: Mr. Speaker, the parliamentary secretary began by quoting a Speaker's ruling that 14 question period slots were appropriate for independent MPs. The Speaker made that ruling at a time when there were only 15 independent MPs. I think it was reasonable at that point in time. Of course, there are now going to be 21 independent MPs, and what I am suggesting is that the number of questions should be related to the number of MPs.

The parliamentary secretary also raised the question about whether the slots allocated to independents are being used. I am pleased to assure him that they are, every week. We now have 21 MPs sharing 14 slots, so certainly if someone is not available, other MPs step in very quickly to fill those spots. The utilization of those spots is a matter of public record. It is not at all in doubt.

The fundamental point here is that it is quite strange to imagine that there is a formula for question period that is totally disconnected from the actual numbers of MPs.

●(1840)

Mr. Kevin Lamoureux: Mr. Speaker, the number of independents at any given time can actually fluctuate quite significantly, even immediately following elections.

Political parties are often short by one or two or three in terms of not having party status. There is consideration the Speakers give to independents. There is a sense of trust and faith that the Speaker will respond in a way that is most fitting, given the makeup of the chamber. We have confidence in the Speaker being able to do that.

I would suggest to my colleague across the way that we have 21 more days, 21 sitting days between now and the next election. It is never too late. I would encourage the member to make that appointment and meet with the Speaker.

INTERGOVERNMENTAL AFFAIRS

Mr. Pat Kelly (Calgary Rocky Ridge, CPC): Mr. Speaker, I rise tonight at adjournment proceedings to talk about the answer I received to a question in question period quite some time ago. It was in the first week back after the Christmas break.

I asked the Minister of National Revenue why the government would not allow Quebecers to file only a single tax return, as has been committed to under a future Conservative government that I look forward to in a few months.

In response to that question, the minister, and many members will probably remember this, accused the previous government of “chop, chop, chop[ping]” at the Canada Revenue Agency during its time. It was interesting that day, because the member for Edmonton West pointed out that the departmental plan for the Canada Revenue Agency actually shows that it was the Liberals who reduced the full-time equivalents at the Canada Revenue Agency in their first year in office. Furthermore, according to their departmental plan, the Liberals are going to chop, chop, chop another 800 full-time equivalents over the coming year, this year to next year.

This is a digression, certainly from the main point of the question. I do not think any Canadian really cares how many tax collectors work at the CRA. What Canadians care about is that they get the

service they need to get and that they are treated fairly by the agency, regardless of how many people are employed at the agency.

Under the Liberal government, the service at the agency has been a consistent problem in every way we have looked at, whether it was the treatment of disabled Canadians, the treatment of parents with respect to the Canada child benefit or the treatment of Canadians compared to Canadians who have offshore transactions, and the Auditor General's report took a look at that.

These are important considerations. Having to file two tax returns is just another way in which, collectively, the government makes life more difficult for citizens in Quebec. In the debate on this issue, I have heard a lot of things. First, the government members accused the Conservatives of pandering to Quebec and dared me to say the same thing in English that we were saying in French. Of course, I have said it many times, including in that question and by choosing to participate in tonight's late show. Others also said that I should say that in my riding.

People in Calgary Rocky Ridge want to have a smaller government. They do not like red tape. They do not think any Canadian should have to file two tax returns. They do not think that any Canadian should have to have onerous compliance responsibilities, regardless of where they live in Canada.

I am very happy and proud that I am part of a political party that is committed to making life simpler for Canadians, in Quebec and indeed all across Canada.

●(1845)

Mrs. Deborah Schulte (Parliamentary Secretary to the Minister of National Revenue, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, for the second night in a row, I am here to speak to the Conservatives' empty promise to implement a single tax return for the Province of Quebec that would be administered by Revenu Québec.

Last night, I shared the facts that identify why this proposal does not make sense. Also, let us not forget the potential impact it would have for Canadian taxpayers across the country. As explained many times, we strongly disagree with the Conservatives' proposal to have the Province of Quebec administer the federal tax system for Quebecers.

Currently, the federal government, nine provinces and three territories have harmonized their definition of income and have a single tax return administrated by the federal government. This is the simplification and the savings Quebec is looking for. However, Quebec has different definitions, different rules and different exemptions. Therefore, to have a single tax return in Quebec, a choice has to be made: either Quebec adopts Canada's tax framework, or Canada and nine provinces and three territories have to change and adopt Quebec's way of doing things. We have yet to hear which of these two options the Conservatives prefer.

As in 2015, in leading up to October the Conservatives will have one set of promises for Quebec and another for the rest of Canada. We all know that this promise of a single tax return is empty. The Conservatives know they have no intention of keeping it, and Quebecers will see right through it.

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On this side of the House, we have been absolutely clear that we support a single tax return for Quebecers, but only if it is administered by the Canada Revenue Agency, just like it is across the country. Knowing that the Government of Quebec has a different point of view, we chose to be honest with Quebecers. Instead of making empty promises, we chose to work with the Province of Quebec to make the filing of tax returns as simple as possible.

The Canada Revenue Agency and Revenu Québec have a long history of close collaboration, of sharing best practices in tax and benefit administration on an ongoing basis. That is why our government has met with representatives from the Government of Quebec to discuss ways to make tax filing easier for Quebec residents. That is also why we have collaborated on initiatives such as the volunteer program.

This income tax assistance volunteer program provides assistance to people who are unable to complete their income tax returns themselves and who cannot afford the services of a professional. This great program is jointly administered by the Canada Revenue Agency and Revenu Québec, with the collaboration of hundreds of community organizations and thousands of volunteers. Each year the program's volunteers provide tens of thousands of people with assistance to ensure that Quebecers receive the credits and benefits to which they are entitled.

The CRA is also committed to administering a tax system that is fair for all taxpayers from coast to coast. Tax evasion and aggressive tax avoidance is a complex, global issue, and it requires global solutions to track down people and businesses who engage in elaborate tax schemes.

Let us not forget the importance of the Canada's international partnerships and the international agreements and tax treaties that fall under federal jurisdiction. Collaborating with international partners is essential to tracking down people and businesses that are avoiding and evading paying taxes.

Work with the Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development, for example, has led to the common reporting standard initiative. The common reporting standard allows the automated exchange of information with other countries. With these agreements, Canada and almost 100 other countries exchange financial account information. A province would have no jurisdiction to navigate these partnerships, to take advantage of these international agreements, or to have access to the information they provide.

We see that the CRA and Revenu Québec have similar goals: to ensure a fair tax system and to ensure that Canadians receive the credits and benefits to which they are entitled. We will continue working together to do just that.

Mr. Pat Kelly: Mr. Speaker, I thank the parliamentary secretary for her remarks, but I am disappointed with the answer to the issues.

It is quite similar to, and perhaps typical of, the broader Liberal policy on the CRA: We support a single tax return for Quebecers, but we just will not let them have one; we support the idea of measuring the income tax gap, but we are just not going to do it; we believe that we should make it easier for Canadians to receive the credits and benefits to which they are entitled, but we are just going

to crack down and claw back from disabled Canadians and recipients of the Canada child benefit.

Canadians, after three and a half years, are tired of the empty promise and the action that does not support the stated objectives. I am disappointed by those answers tonight.

• (1850)

Mrs. Deborah Schulte: Mr. Speaker, I will need to be clear again, because I think it was missed. We absolutely support a single tax return for Quebecers, but only if it is administered by the Canada Revenue Agency. We have been incredibly clear on that point.

Last week, a symposium organized by academics from the Université de Sherbrooke took place, and after a whole day of discussion, invited experts came to a strong conclusion: The issue is far more complex than has been proposed by the Conservatives. Actually, they concluded that if Quebec's aim in this proposal was to save money, the advantage for Quebecers would be to have one single tax return administered by the CRA, like all other provinces in Canada.

While we disagree on which organization would be best to administer the federal tax in Quebec, we remain committed to working with the Government of Quebec to simplify the tax-filing process for residents of Quebec. Relations between the CRA and Revenu Québec are strong, and we have a long history of collaboration that allows us to share good practices for the benefit of taxpayers in Quebec and the rest of the country.

CARBON PRICING

Mr. Matt Jeneroux (Edmonton Riverbend, CPC): Mr. Speaker, it is an honour to stand and ask this question.

The original question I asked was on carbon and the reasons we on this side of the House oppose the carbon tax. However, the answer I got back was a lot more of the same empty rhetoric saying that we do not have a plan. We are highly anticipating announcing our plan. I do not know who is more excited, those of us who have been able to be part of feeding into the plan in our caucus or the hon. member who answered my question. I am sure he will be glued to his TV when that plan comes forward.

The carbon tax will raise the cost of living for all Canadians, from gas prices to our groceries. The Liberals say that they will give some Canadians back more than they spend on a carbon tax through a tax rebate, but a one-time payout will not make up for higher bills, groceries or other expenses.

At the same time as Canadians tell the government they cannot afford this tax, the government is considering a plastic tax. That demonstrates how out of touch the Liberals are. Plastic is found in almost everything. Introducing a plastic tax would, like the carbon tax, increase the cost of everything we buy. This comes at a time when more and more Canadians are finding it harder to get by and bankruptcies are increasing.

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Instituting this tax is not going to make a dent in the world's emissions, either. Even with a carbon tax, Canada will not achieve its emissions targets under the Paris accord.

It unfairly targets average families and lets big emitters off the hook. The Parliamentary Budget Office found, in its analysis of the carbon tax, that big polluters will pay only 8% of the total revenue collected by the Liberals' carbon tax, leaving the remaining 92% to be paid by families and small businesses. They will also pay these costs through higher gas prices, groceries and home heating costs.

Gas prices have already gone up since April 1. In most provinces, it now costs more than \$1.30 a litre to fill up with gas, and this is only going up. The Liberals say these prices are what they want, because it will encourage people to change their behaviour. They want people to think more seriously about the environment before filling up their gas tanks. However, most Canadians do not have other options.

Rural Canadians do not have any public transit. If they go from point A to point B, they have to drive. With different work schedules, most families cannot go down to one car. That does not mean that these people just do not care about the environment. These people are realistic about what they can and cannot do.

Commuters from our suburbs may have more options, but in most cases, public transit is not efficient enough to meet their needs, and they have no choice but to drive into cities for work. Driving to work or school allows them more time with their families. If the Liberals want commuters to use public transit rather than passenger vehicles, they need to develop more efficient and user-friendly services in our cities.

At the same time, this plan will not achieve Canada's emissions reductions under the Paris accord. That is probably why the Liberals plan to hike the carbon tax to \$300 per tonne of greenhouse gas emissions, up from the current price of \$20 a tonne. The Liberals are trying to convince Canadians that they will get back more than they pay in carbon tax.

Can the Liberals tell us how they plan to help Canadians who are struggling to make ends meet under their government's carbon tax scheme?

•(1855)

Mr. Sean Fraser (Parliamentary Secretary to the Minister of Environment and Climate Change, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, it is an honour to rise in this House to address the many aspects of the small speech the hon. member just gave.

The starting point in this analysis for me is that climate change is real. We know that it is driven by human activities and that we have an obligation and an opportunity to do something about it if we simply pull together and muster the political will to implement the solutions that we know exist.

We know, from leading experts in the field, including the winner of the Nobel Prize in economics last year, that implementing a pricing mechanism to reduce GHG emissions is the single most effective thing we can do to help reduce our emissions and prevent the worst consequences of climate change. We are not a one-trick

pony. In fact, our plan has over 50 measures. Perhaps another day I would be happy to take the time to walk the hon. member through it.

With respect to the submissions he made in this chamber a moment ago, there are a number of pieces of misinformation that I want to correct. He cited a \$300-a-tonne piece. That is not an initiative this government is undertaking. To suggest otherwise would be to mislead the House.

The hon. member has dramatically mischaracterized the contents of the Parliamentary Budget Officer's report, which in fact pointed out that 80% of households that are subject to the federal system will be better off and that the only people who will pay more are the wealthiest 20% of residents in the four provinces where the plan applies. I note in particular that the most anyone would be out of pocket, after the climate action incentive is factored in, would be the wealthiest 20% of people in Saskatchewan, who will be out of pocket for a grand total of about \$50 a year. It is a dollar a week for the richest Canadians. Meanwhile, the average household of four would receive a rebate of \$609.

The hon. member has also suggested that somehow big emitters are exempt under our plan. This is an absolute falsehood. Let me state unequivocally that big emitters do pay. The reason families get more as a result of this plan being in place is that big emitters are paying into the same system and the revenues are divided 90% to residents in the province in which the revenue is collected and 10% to small businesses, municipalities, universities, schools and hospitals.

With respect to the question of rural communities, I think this is very important. I represent rural communities, and I agree that not every rural community has access to public transit. We are making the largest investment in the history of public transit in Canada, which is going to pull more cars off the road. Importantly, there are things that rural residents can do as well.

I am happy to highlight the investments we are making in energy efficiency. In my home province of Nova Scotia, we are putting \$56 million into a program in partnership with the Province of Nova Scotia that is helping to make the cost of everyday efficiencies more affordable, whether it is home heating or electricity. I made an announcement with some of my colleagues in Dartmouth, Nova Scotia to highlight the rebates that were put on some household products, whether it was smart thermostats or energy-efficient light bulbs, different products that would actually make things more efficient but bring the cost of living down by lowering people's power bill.

To conclude, if the member is concerned about affordability, I would question why his entire caucus opposed the Canada child benefit, which put more money in the pockets of nine out of 10 Canadian families; why it opposed the middle-class tax cut for nine million Canadian families while we raised taxes on the 1%; and why it opposed a bump-up to the guaranteed income supplement for low-income single seniors.

Adjournment Proceedings

The hon. member knows that the Parliamentary Budget Officer has indicated that the average household will be \$2,000 better off as a result of the measures we put in place. We know that the Canadians who are struggling to get by will put this money to good use. We know that we can make our homes and our country more efficient while at the same time seeing economic growth and life being made more affordable for Canadian families.

Mr. Matt Jeneroux: Mr. Speaker, of course we support the child care benefit, because we created the child care benefit on this side of the House. We remember the Liberals' day care plan that never came to fruition. Now they are adopting our plan, at the end of the day.

I thank the member opposite for his answer, but it does not get to the crux of the issue. Under the current government, more and more people are finding it harder to make ends meet. They cannot afford another tax. This does not mean they do not care about the environment, far from it. We know that even with the carbon tax Canada will not achieve its emissions reductions targets under the Paris accord.

This is a tax plan, not an environmental plan. Can the Liberals tell us why they are continuing with this scheme that unfairly targets suburban and rural Canadians?

Mr. Sean Fraser: Mr. Speaker, again I would like to correct a number of falsehoods the member has stated.

The Conservatives put forward the universal child care benefit, and we have altered that to make sure that millionaires no longer

receive child care cheques and nine out of 10 Canadian households receive more money at the end of the day. That important social policy innovation was opposed by members of the Conservative Party. With respect to day care, we are making investments that are taking a hold across the entire country right now.

I outlined why life has been made more affordable. I will not repeat my previous remarks.

With respect to the allegation that we will not reach the Paris Agreement targets, again that is false. We are going to get there. To the extent that there is any gap in the data analysis, it is because it has not factored in things like the uptake in electric vehicles; our investments in things like carbon sequestration, which will be taken up with innovation over the next number of years; and the largest single investment in public transit in the history of our country, which is going to help reduce congestion, make cities more efficient and, yes, bring emissions down. We are going to meet our Paris Agreement targets because, quite frankly, there is no choice.

● (1900)

[*Translation*]

The Deputy Speaker: The motion to adjourn the House is now deemed to have been adopted. Accordingly the House stands adjourned until tomorrow at 10 a.m., pursuant to Standing Order 24(1).

(The House adjourned at 7 p.m.)

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