



HOUSE OF COMMONS  
CHAMBRE DES COMMUNES  
CANADA

43rd PARLIAMENT, 2nd SESSION

---

# House of Commons Debates

Official Report  
(Hansard)

Volume 150 No. 019  
Monday, October 26, 2020

---

Speaker: The Honourable Anthony Rota



## **CONTENTS**

(Table of Contents appears at back of this issue.)

# HOUSE OF COMMONS

Monday, October 26, 2020

The House met at 11 a.m.

---

*Prayer*

---

## PRIVATE MEMBERS' BUSINESS

• (1105)

[*English*]

### CANADA REVENUE AGENCY ACT

**Mr. Len Webber (Calgary Confederation, CPC)** moved that Bill C-210, An Act to amend the Canada Revenue Agency Act (organ and tissue donors), be read the second time and referred to a committee.

He said: Mr. Speaker, it is an absolute honour to finally rise again in the House and speak on my private member's bill, Bill C-210.

I first introduced this bill four years ago almost to the day back in October 2016. Back then, it was Bill C-316, which passed unanimously at every stage of the process. Unfortunately, in spite of the widespread support for the bill, it died in the Senate when the 2019 election was called. It was incredibly disappointing, of course. A lot of people worked on this bill with me; stakeholders and friends back home. It was incredibly disappointing, but what can one do? It is just the way it is, the way the cookie crumbles, as my daughters would say, and one just has to move forward.

Fast-forward to December of last year to the private members' business, PMB, lottery date. I clearly remember watching the draw. The Deputy Speaker, the hon. member for Simcoe North, walked into the room with his robes on, and it was really quite formal. He sat in the chair, and there was a big cookie jar with all of our names inside. The Deputy Speaker stood up, picked out a name and, sure enough, it was mine. I was just elated. It was fantastic. Coming from Calgary, I yelled out a "yahoo" Calgary Stampede-style. It was a good feeling, and clearly a divine intervention. I knew then that I had to reintroduce this bill, and so Bill C-316 has now been resurrected as Bill C-210. Here we are today in second reading, and we have this rare opportunity to re-pass this legislation to hopefully and certainly save some lives.

For those who may not already know, I have been a long-time advocate of organ and tissue donation in Canada. In fact, several years ago, I passed a bill in the Alberta legislature as an MLA,

which resulted in the creation of the Alberta organ and tissue donation registry. The bill also put in place some strong and robust education and awareness programs that have included adding donor hearts to our Alberta driver's licences.

The reality is that 4,600 Canadians are still awaiting a life-saving transplant, and we need to do more to find those critical matches to save lives. This is an issue that transcends political lines and offers us, as parliamentarians, the opportunity to make a difference in every corner of this country.

It is disappointing that while over 90% of Canadians say that they support organ donation, only 20% have actually registered on their provincial or territorial registries. Every year, this country sees hundreds of people dying waiting for a donor. Sadly, Canada has one of the lowest donation rates in the world. A single donor can save the lives of up to eight people, and a single tissue donor can help up to about 75 individuals.

My Bill C-210 proposes a very simple and effective method to increase the size of the organ donor base here in Canada. It would also help update existing databases but, most importantly, it would save lives. I am proposing that we use the annual income tax form to ask Canadians whether they would like to register as organ donors, and whether they consent to have this information passed to their provincial government for addition to its existing organ donor registries, and that is it. This is a very simple bill that would add the very simple question to our income tax forms. The federal government would simply collect the data and pass it on to the provinces.

• (1110)

We would not be encroaching on provincial jurisdiction because we would not be setting up a federal registry. That was already tried once in this House, back in 2015, by the hon. member for Edmonton Manning in his PMB. He wanted to create a national organ and tissue donation registry. It failed in this House, due to the fact that the government cited jurisdictional encroachment.

This bill would provide the information to the provinces. The provinces would use that information as they see fit. The provinces would still maintain their own lists. We would just be supplying them with that data.

*Private Members' Business*

The tax form, by law, is restricted to collecting data for the purposes of taxation only. That is why it is required to amend legislation to allow for this common-sense approach to a national problem. I modelled my bill on the successful inclusion on the income tax form of the question that asks Canadians if they want Elections Canada to be kept informed of their current information. That question is on the first page of the form. My bill has been crafted in keeping with that successful precedent.

This proposal is so simple and could be implemented so quickly. The federal government, via the Canada Revenue Agency, already successfully shares data every day with all the provinces and territories via encrypted networks with strong and reliable privacy safeguards. In addition, the existing infrastructure at the CRA would support this change at virtually no cost. The CRA already shares dozens of data fields of information on every taxpayer with the provinces and territories and this would simply be one more data exchange. The income tax form is a way to update this information annually, via a legally binding document. Thus, it would allow for provincial lists to remain current and relevant year after year after year.

Before I go any further, I would like to thank the 20 members of Parliament from all parties in this House who have come forward to officially second my bill. That is a rare occurrence indeed; it has happened twice. It happened in my last bill as well, which was not successful.

This extraordinary non-partisan approach demonstrates how a sensible idea can bring us together as a House to improve the lives of Canadians. This collaborative approach also extended to the health committee. I served on that committee in the last Parliament, along with nine of my colleagues, one of whom is looking over here right now and giving me a big smile. They have been extremely supportive of improving the organ and tissue donation situation here in Canada.

The health committee conducted a study and tabled a report on organ donation with several recommendations. The committee specifically wanted to know what role the federal government could play in strengthening Canada's organ donation and transplantation procurement system. One of the key recommendations in that report deals directly with a debate that we are having here right now. If this bill is passed, it will fulfill that key recommendation.

I also want to thank the government for taking the rare and possibly unprecedented step of allocating funding for this initiative before it has even passed in this House. That is a fact. We have the will, we have the funding, and now all we need is our reapproval here in this House.

This is not a political issue. It is a human issue. Any one of us could be in need of donor organs or tissues at any time. Just asking the simple question could increase the number of donors. Donor registration jumped 15% in British Columbia when drivers were asked directly at licencing locations across their province if they wanted to be donors. They are also doing it in Alberta, as a result of a bill that was passed when I was an MLA there. Imagine what we could do on a national scale with the income tax form.

• (1115)

As I mentioned, the Canada Revenue Agency has already been allocated the funding for this purpose, but needs the law changed so it can proceed. While some methods used by provinces and territories, such as drivers' licences and health care cards, help register donors, none has as far a reach as the income tax form. The existing voluntary online method of registering is neither proactive nor fully effective. For example, those who move from one province to another rarely update their information. The income tax form approach overcomes these common problems.

Stakeholders have been universally supportive of the bill and the thousands of affected families with loved ones on waiting lists will welcome this additional help. One stakeholder, the Ontario Trillium Gift of Life Network, is the largest registry in Canada and its CEO, Ms. Ronnie Gavsie, said:

...we would support creating an opportunity for Canadians, when filing their income tax returns, to register their consent for organ and tissue donation.... The online income tax return becomes a gateway and an annual reminder to drive Canadians to organ and tissue donor registration.

We share with you the goal of substantially improving awareness of organ and tissue donation and improving health of Canadians by increasing the number of life-saving transplants.

I thank Ms. Gavsie for sending that.

Also, the federal agency responsible for organ donation is Canadian Blood Services and its vice-president, Dr. Isra Levy, said, "Just like our colleagues, we support a transactional touchpoint that will raise awareness, especially if it leads to the conversation.... But for sure this is to be welcomed."

Elizabeth Myles of the Kidney Foundation of Canada wrote to the Prime Minister expressing the foundation's support for this change. Dr. Amit Garg of the Canadian Society of Nephrology, a society of physicians and scientists specializing in the care of kidney disease, and Dr. Lori West of the Canadian Donation and Transplantation Research Program in Edmonton have also expressed their strong support for the bill. The list goes on. Support for this legislation reaches far and wide across the country and into every community.

In conclusion, we have the opportunity to leverage the resources of the federal government to help our provincial and territorial partners improve their registries. I hope we seize the opportunity and run with it. I and, most importantly, the 4,600 Canadians awaiting life-saving transplants hope we can count on all MPs for their support. We have shown leadership in the past by passing this bill unanimously at all stages, so I call on the members of this House to do the same. This bill got a rare second chance and I hope we can pass it so that people in dire need of the gift of life can get a second chance as well.

*Private Members' Business*

**Mr. Kevin Lamoureux (Parliamentary Secretary to the President of the Queen's Privy Council for Canada and to the Leader of the Government in the House of Commons, Lib.):** Madam Speaker, I applaud the member on his initiative. It is an issue that I too have followed over the years, from the Manitoba legislature to here in Ottawa. I was disappointed in the Senate since we had gotten it to a certain point and for some reason the other house did not do what the House of Commons wanted done.

Having said that, the support the bill received in the last Parliament demonstrates that members of Parliament on all sides of the House are encouraged by the legislation and look forward to it going to committee, as I suspect it will in due time after debate.

• (1120)

**Mr. Len Webber:** Absolutely, Madam Speaker, it is disappointing that we have to go through this stage again, a second hour of debate here, sending it to committee and then coming back to the House to be voted on. It is laborious and time-consuming. The second hour of debate at second reading is not until the end of January, for example. It is frustrating because there are people waiting for organs and we need to get this on the income tax form as soon as possible. There is a deadline to get this bill passed so it can be put on the next income tax form.

**Mr. Brian Masse (Windsor West, NDP):** Madam Speaker, Liberal member Lou Sekora introduced this bill in 1999 and the year 2000, followed by Judy Wasylcia-Leis from the NDP in 2002, 2003 and 2008, and the NDP's Malcolm Allen in 2009 and 2013. The most recent efforts have been very much appreciated and well received in the House.

We have had majority governments during that time and a lot of opportunities. Does the member feel confident that we have learned lessons in this chamber, going back to the original mover Mr. Sekora in 1999, and that it is time to act and throw away the irresponsible delays that have taken place?

**Mr. Len Webber:** Madam Speaker, yes, there have been many attempts to get a national organ donor registry put in place in this country. On the member's number of individuals who have come through the House to try to pass this bill, I need clarity on whether the hon. member is referring to actually getting the question put on the income tax form. I am not aware of that. I am certainly feeling confident that, this time around, this bill will pass on the kindness of the House because it is required to save lives.

**Mr. Earl Dreeshen (Red Deer—Mountain View, CPC):** Madam Speaker, as a fellow Albertan, I know the member for Calgary Confederation's passion in this particular area. I also understand his frustration. I had a private member's bill that ended up being lost, but which then had the opportunity to come back in the next Parliament. It was regarding the personation of a police officer in the commission of an offence. After all the work done by our staff and the people who have worked with us in the past, I look forward to having this discussion.

One of the things the member mentioned in his speech is there would be an annual reminder on the income tax form. Would the fact that one has done it once mean that it would continue to be on there, or is there a possibility it would be something one would have to do continually?

**Mr. Len Webber:** Madam Speaker, from my meetings with the CRA in the past on implementing this on the tax form, the question would be there every year for the individual to either mark yes, they were willing, or to just leave blank. If a person left it blank, it would stay that way on next year's form. If a person changes their mind in the future, they would need to change it on their income tax form.

• (1125)

**Ms. Pam Damoff (Parliamentary Secretary to the Minister of Indigenous Services, Lib.):** Madam Speaker, I want to start by congratulating and applauding the member for Calgary Confederation for his tireless efforts to improve organ donations across Canada: first in Alberta and now here in the House of Commons. He has reached across party lines. This bill has support not only across party lines, but across the country. His way of working in the House of Commons is one we can all take lessons from. He is one of the finest MPs we have in the House.

I gave a speech to support this bill in the previous Parliament, but sadly it did not pass in the Senate. This speech is much the same as the one I gave then because, unfortunately, organ donation rates across the country remain, quite frankly, pathetic. Here in Ontario, more than 85% of residents are in favour of organ donation, but only one in three Ontario residents has registered his or her consent to donate. This trend is similar across the country.

There is clearly a disconnect between people's wishes and their actions. Sadly, without advance registration, an individual's family is often faced with this decision at a time of crisis, dealing with the loss of a loved one when so many emotions are at play. Too often, we have not discussed our wishes with our loved ones. We know that health care delivery is a provincial responsibility, and I applaud the member for finding an elegant way to engage the federal government on this important issue while still respecting our constitutional jurisdictions.

This bill would make it easier to gather information. With a simple check mark on one's income tax return, voila: The information is passed on to the person's province of residence. A province can choose not to participate in the program if it so wishes. This is so important because, while our provincial counterparts have made tremendous strides to raise awareness in registration rates, we are still not seeing organ donation registration rates rising as they should.

In 2012, when I was an Oakville town councillor, I was part of a group of Oakville residents who formed Oakville Be a Donor. It grew out of a call from then Oakville resident Jennifer Malabar, who challenged the mayor and council to register as organ donors.

*Private Members' Business*

Jennifer developed a kidney disease while pregnant with her first child, Arya. Facing an eight-year wait for a kidney transplant or the prospect of dialysis, Jenn was the recipient of a kidney from her husband, Hitesh Patel, on their wedding anniversary no less. Hitesh later joined me for the Courage Polar Bear Dip wearing a Be a Donor T-shirt to raise awareness for organ donation. They later welcomed their second child, Sage, and the family continues to thrive.

Through the Oakville Be a Donor group, I met the most amazing people: Bev Cathro, who donated her kidney to her young daughter, and Ron Newman, affectionately known as the “dialysis dude”, who received a kidney transplant and lived dialysis-free for many years. However, as of late 2016, he was back on dialysis as he waited for another donor.

Julie Pehar, whose experience was a different one, came to our group having lost a loved one and having made the decision to donate his organs.

Sarah Taylor and Keith Childerhose have a love story that played out as Keith struggled to breathe. In need of a lung transplant, Sarah took to social media to publicize Keith's challenges. They appeared in the news as Keith waited for a double lung transplant.

Keith was failing quickly and was on life support. He had been living with diffuse panbronchiolitis from the age of 25 and had been fighting the disease for 15 years. This severe and rare disease caused fluid to continually build up in his lungs, similar to cystic fibrosis. On life support, the news came as Keith was heading into a 10-hour surgery that a donor had been found. In one of the most touching pictures I have seen, Keith was hooked up to an IV and tubes, looking into Sarah's eyes. Keith touched Sarah's nose as she touched his hand.

The good news is that the surgery was a success and brought much-needed attention to the need for organ donation. In a lovely twist to the story, the two were engaged, then won a wedding package and were married in 2013. As wonderful as Keith and Sarah's story is, sadly, across the country, too many stories like Keith's do not have a happy ending.

Our Oakville Be a Donor group gathered together at the Inter-faith Council of Halton with community leaders and politicians to raise awareness across town. Despite our efforts to raise awareness, registration rates across Canada are dismal.

I want to share some statistics from the Ontario Be a Donor website. In Ontario, there are still over 1,500 people waiting for a life-saving organ transplant. That number has not changed since I gave my speech in the last Parliament. This is their only treatment option, and every three days, someone will die because they did not get a transplant in time.

• (1130)

As the member for Calgary Confederation mentioned, one donor can save up to eight lives through organ donation, and can enhance the lives of up to 75 people through the gift of tissue.

Age alone does not disqualify someone from being a donor. The oldest organ donor was over 90 and the oldest tissue donor was over 100. There is always the potential to be a donor and it should

not stop someone from registering. Anyone over the age of 16 can register.

Current or past medical history does not prevent someone from registering to be a donor. Individuals with serious illnesses can sometimes be organ or tissue donors. Each potential donor is evaluated on a case-by-case basis.

All major religions support organ or tissue donation, or respect an individual's choice.

Organ and tissue donation do not impact future funeral plans, and an open casket funeral is possible.

In Ontario right now, 1,100 people are waiting for a kidney, 252 are waiting for a liver and 46 of those on the wait list are under the age of 17. When we register, we give hope to the thousands of Canadians waiting for transplants. Those on the transplant wait list are often living with organ failure, like my friend Ron Newman. Tissue donors can enhance the lives of recovering burn victims, help restore sight and allow people to walk again. Transplants not only save lives, but return recipients to productive lives.

I want to remember my friend Bob Hepburn. Bob was a kind and generous soul, a teacher and librarian who was a role model for hundreds of students at Abbey Park High School in Oakville. Bob was generous beyond words, so much so that he was twice a living donor: once donating his bone marrow and another time his kidney. Bob died quite suddenly a short time ago, and those to whom he had given the gift of life came to his funeral.

Last but not least, I want to recognize my friend Tim Batke who donated his kidney to his brother over a decade ago.

These selfless acts by Hitesh, Bob and Tim have changed lives, but also highlight the need for more people to register as organ donors.

I want to thank again my colleague across the floor, the member for Calgary Confederation. I know this is an issue he has been committed to for years. I am proud to call him a friend and even prouder to have been asked once again to be a seconder of this bill. It is my sincere hope that this bill receives swift passage so that Canadians will soon have another simple option to register as donors on their income tax returns thanks to his private member's bill.

Those who are watching today should talk to their loved ones about their wishes and go online and register today. In Ontario one can go to [beadonor.ca](http://beadonor.ca) right now. It only takes two minutes to register.

*Private Members' Business*

[Translation]

**Mr. Luc Desilets (Rivière-des-Mille-Îles, BQ):** Madam Speaker, we are here today to once again debate the bill to amend the Canada Revenue Agency Act with regard to organ donors. This bill comes from the member for Calgary Confederation, who first introduced it in 2015. It was known then as Bill C-316, and it went as far as first reading in the Senate in late 2018.

This bill seeks to authorize the Canada Revenue Agency, or CRA, to enter into an agreement with Quebec, a province or a territory to be able to collect from individuals via their income tax return the information required for establishing an organ donor registry. This bill also seeks to enable the CRA, if authorized by the individual on their income tax return, to share the information collected with the province or territory in which the individual resides under that agreement.

The Bloc Québécois does not have a problem with this bill and we support it. However, it is unlikely that the Government of Quebec will want to enter into an agreement with the CRA because Quebec already has its own income tax return and, as the Government of Quebec has said and continues to say, we want to implement a single tax return that would be managed by Quebecers.

This bill does not actually have any bearing on what we want. Again, what is good for Quebec is good for the Bloc Québécois. That said, even if Quebec did want an agreement, we would not have a problem with sharing that information. Quebec is free to sign an agreement or not in this case because this bill does not commit Quebec to anything or limit it in any way. It is when the opposite is true that we strenuously object.

We are fine with letting the CRA collect information and provide it to those provinces that want to participate in such an arrangement. We actually think it makes sense because the CRA handles all the tax returns outside Quebec.

I would point out that the number of transplants performed in Canada has increased by 33% over the past 10 years. Even so, there is still an organ shortage. According to the latest data from the Canadian Institute for Health Information, or CIHI, 4,351 Canadians were on a transplant waiting list in 2018. That is a huge number. That same year, only 2,782 organ transplants were performed in Canada.

For example, the number of Canadians with end-stage kidney disease rose by 32% over the past decade, which partly explains the increased demand for organ transplants.

According to information from CIHI's Canadian organ replacement register, in 2018, there were 1,706 people who received one or two kidneys, 533 who received a liver, 361 who received lungs, 189 who received a heart and 57 who received a pancreas.

I want to thank all the donors who have signed their cards and have consented to organ and tissue donation. It is one of the most noble gestures a person can make, but one that is not easy, I admit. I also want to commend the work done by doctors who specialize in organ and tissue retrieval and those who perform transplants.

We need to do more, however. On December 31, 2018, there were 3,150 people waiting for a kidney, which represents twice the

number of kidneys available, 527 waiting for a liver, 270 for lungs, 157 for a heart and 156 for a pancreas. We need to use every conceivable means of reducing this long waiting list.

• (1135)

In 2018, 223 people died while on a waiting list for transplant. That is obviously 223 too many. Every new initiative gives hope and can save a life or lives.

Our great sovereignist family was privileged to be able to count on one very courageous, generous and engaged supporter. Tomy-Richard Leboeuf-McGregor sadly passed away nearly two years ago on November 19, 2018, at the age of 32.

Tomy was born with cystic fibrosis, a serious, degenerative lung disease. Tomy's life not only changed but was actually saved when he received a lung transplant in 2013. Driven by a will to live, to give and to give back to others, he became very committed to the organization Living with Cystic Fibrosis, whose mission is to promote quality of life for people living with cystic fibrosis. He even served as its executive director.

Tomy was a staunch advocate for Quebec independence. He was active in the Parti Québécois and the Bloc Québécois. He ran for the Parti Québécois in 2014 and for Projet Montréal in 2017. One of his goals was to promote organ donation.

I want to say to him and his brother Jonathan, his partner Éric, his grandparents and his two sources of pride and joy, Alexis and his niece Sarah-Joan, that we proudly continue to be his voice and carry on his fight.

For all these rather emotional reasons the Bloc Québécois will be voting in favour of the bill introduced by our colleague from Calgary Confederation, which seeks to amend the Canada Revenue Agency Act with regard to organ donors, on behalf of all these people waiting for a transplant, their family and Tomy.

• (1140)

[English]

**Mr. Brian Masse (Windsor West, NDP):** Madam Speaker, I am pleased to rise to speak to Bill C-210, and I also want to commend the work of the member for Calgary Confederation on the bill. There is no doubt that it has been around several times. This most recent effort is commendable given the fact that this Parliament is on an extended tour at the moment, from just the week before when we had confidence votes. Hopefully we will see something take place this time.

*Private Members' Business*

I would disagree that this is not a political issue. If it were not a political issue, it would have been done ages ago. If it were not a political issue, it would have been completed in the Senate as opposed to the Senate finding other business to do when there was plenty of time to get it done. The former minister of health, Jane Philpott, and the cabinet voted against the bill saying it was provincial jurisdiction. That is where there needs to be some recognition.

I think the Bloc's intervention was very strong today on this matter, because this is about giving provinces some control and some capabilities and an enhancement of responsibilities. It allows them now, through the Canada Revenue Agency, to enter into an agreement to be responsible for their citizens. It does not make anything have to happen. It provides the course, the window, the opportunity and most importantly the hope for organ donation in this country to go up.

We have heard from a number of different members that we have a low rate. We have a low rate because there has not been enough education. I do not think it has been a normal custom in Canadian society and it has been a struggle for us to get this in hand.

In my municipality, there has been some really good work with the Windsor Regional Hospital and the "Be a Donor" campaign and the Trillium group, but at the same time, we rank very low. I come from an area that has high cancer rates. The high industrial contaminants related to pollution and the type of work we did creates sickness and illness that is beyond some of the norms across this country and North America. Therefore, we would be a recipient of this, but we still struggle to get that message out.

The member for Calgary Confederation deserves credit for bringing this back in a Parliament that might have a shortened life in general because of the conditions of a minority Parliament, but it does provide an opportunity for us to get work like this done. Let us not ignore that the bill did pass very recently in this chamber. It went to the health committee, where it had good support, and then it moved back to the chamber and ended up in the Senate again.

We need to find a way this time to be extra determined if there is going to be all-party support for this on the surface, because the surface does not always show the real thing. Behind the scenes, there could be other things taking place. Hence, that is why we saw the bill die in the Senate last time because it was not seen as a priority.

I know this because I have seen many private members' bills, some I have been the custodian of, that have gone to that place. It is not good enough for the government to blame, like the parliamentary secretary did, the Senate, when the fact is that their work moves further, quicker and faster. That is why we have an abysmal record in this chamber of private members' bills dying a death in the Senate because it did not get dealt with.

It is unfortunate because there are some very excellent senators. Regardless of my feelings with regard to the other chamber and whether it should be democratically elected or not, there are strong, capable individuals who have been appointed. There are strong, capable individuals who have won their election in the few cases there have been. There are strong, capable individuals in the most recent selection process who are working on behalf of Canadians.

However, the reality is that there is still political partisanship and games with regard to the ordering and the system in the Senate, which has several layers of committees and groups breaking apart. We cannot ignore that.

How do we actually fix that situation?

We unify even stronger in the House, pass it quickly at committee and get it back here in the chamber, or we could move it through unanimous consent. I will leave that to the member for Calgary Confederation to decide if that would be the appropriate way to go. I would support that because it already had its due diligence and its day here very recently.

It has been well recognized. I will give the government credit for this. There is money sitting right now that could help people and it has been funded. Just as I am critical, I am also very encouraging and respectful of the fact that we have money that is available for a program. In my 18 years here, I do not know many programs like this that would come through as a private member's bill and already have funding sitting on a shelf somewhere. It just cannot be triggered by legislation. I do not think I have ever run across something like that before. It shows there is a sound support structure within our public institutions and bureaucracies to move this along, and that the way this has been done is well respected.

The real holdup at the end of the day is us. The real holdup is Parliament through process. The real holdup is the Senate. What is behind the times and lagging and failing people right now is us as an elected body and the other place, which have to deal with this to get royal assent to get this done.

• (1145)

Everything else has been done to save lives, and they count for anyone, the two-year-olds and 30- and 40-year-olds. I have seen these cases because I served them when I was formerly an employment specialist on behalf of persons with disabilities.

When somebody got an organ transplant, I saw what it did for their life. Not only did it give them hope and opportunity for themselves and the immediate circumference of their friends and family, but it also led to what I did as an employment specialist, which was help them find employment in the community. There needs to be some work on and recognition of that because it benefited not only the individuals, but also the people introduced to this person who had had this second chance at a full life. When employment was added to their curricula of activities, they become taxpayers and contributed back.

We see that these people have not only a recognition of what they have gotten from the community, but also a respect for the unconditional love that was provided when somebody filled out a form and gave them that gift. We see that not only through their emotions and their eyes, but also through their gestures.



*Private Members' Business*

Most recently, we had in this country the Kidney Walk. With COVID-19, we cannot do walkathons the way we would normally do them because of social distancing. The organizers of the Kidney Walk put a process in place where people got their shirt and a pin with their number on it, as I did. They then put them on and went out, wherever they wanted to, by themselves to find their walk. It was fun.

It was different because people reflected on it. I have done a lot of walkathons over the years, but this was really different. I was out by myself, just thinking about it. They said to pick the time, whenever, and just a few weeks ago, Canadians raised over \$600,000 on that alone, despite everything. The people involved are often people who have had an organ transplant, or they are a family member or somebody else associated with them.

The legislation being presented here, as I noted earlier, has been around for many years. I noted the Liberal member who originally put forth a bill related to this was Mr. Lou Sekora in 1999 and 2000, just prior to my coming to this chamber. To suggest that we have unanimous support for this and that we actually have no politics behind it is not right, because it never got done.

I do not want to go back on a blame train with regard to why it did not take place with Judy Wasylycia-Leis, Malcolm Allen or, most recently, Liberal members, who introduced it and then saw cabinet vote against it. What I want to do is recognize that, because it is a potential pitfall we could face going forward to get this done. Let us not ignore that.

We can have these moments in this chamber when we feel good about coming together to speak about this, but if we do not get the job done, then we are part of the problem and not the solution. If we keep talking about this, with its real human existence connection among children, adolescents and seniors, then we have an obligation to follow through with those words to make sure the deed is actually done. We have to give the government credit for the fact that there is money on the shelf waiting for this, and it actually could help people right away.

If we look at Australia, Belgium and Spain, we see the results. When we move to a system like this with discussion about it and also inclusion, the numbers for organ donations go up because people feel better educated about it. They know that the process has been fully vetted through their parliamentary system and their democracy. They know there has been inclusion and consultation, such as what we had at the health committee before.

However, again, if we do not actually move on this, if we just give it lip service and do not have a plan to get it done, especially in a Parliament that potentially has a limited time, it could happen or maybe it could not. While maybe this Parliament will go on, as I have seen some minority governments go on for years, we all know the terms and conditions that we have right now.

As I conclude, I want to thank the member for Calgary Confederation and all the members who intervene here, but it is only worth something if we get it done. If we do not get it done this time, then we are just part of the problem that goes back to 1999.

• (1150)

**Mr. Scott Aitchison (Parry Sound—Muskoka, CPC):** Madam Speaker, I want to thank my friend and colleague, the hon. member for Calgary Confederation, for sponsoring this bill, for his perseverance through our legislative process, and for his lifetime of advocacy and action on the issue of organ and tissue donation. I am honoured to second Bill C-210, a bill which would improve organ and tissue donation registration in Canada.

Organ and tissue transplants improve life, extend life and save life for thousands of Canadians every year. In fact, one deceased donor can potentially save up to eight lives through organ donation and improve the lives of 75 more through tissue donation. This is an incredible field of medicine, which Canadians wholeheartedly support. In fact, 90% of Canadians indicate that they support organ and tissue donation.

Canada has been a world leader in the development of transplant surgeries, having performed the world's first successful heart valve transplant in Toronto in 1956, the world's first successful lung transplant in 1983 and the world's first successful double lung transplant in 1986. All were performed right here in Canada. However, despite Canada's pioneering role in transplant medicine, the undeniable success of these life-saving procedures and the overwhelming support of 90% of Canadians, merely 20% of Canadians have registered for organ and tissue donation.

Sadly, the impact of this gap between intention and action can be measured in lives lost. In 2019 there were 4,527 Canadians waiting for transplant surgery. Of those 4,527 people, 710 either withdrew from the list or died. Those 4,527 Canadians do not tell the full story. The Kidney Foundation of Canada reports that of the 22,000 Canadians whose kidneys have failed, only 16% are on the transplant wait list. Why the discrepancy in the face of such need and also such support?

In testimony before the Standing Committee on Health in 2018, Ms. Ronnie Gavsie, the president and CEO of the Trillium Gift of Life Network, explained that the variety of reasons for this discrepancy includes misconceptions about donation. Some people think that their age or health may prohibit them from being a donor, or that becoming a donor would affect their care in the hospital. Another factor is, quite simply, procrastination. Ms. Gavsie also explained that in 10% to 15% of circumstances, organ donor registrants' wishes are overturned by their loved ones at the time of their death.

Remarkably, the most common reasons for the gap in organ donor registration could be solved with a conversation. Canadians need to be reminded of their intention, and Canadians need to be encouraged to have a conversation with their loved ones about organ donation. Public education, awareness campaigns and greater opportunities to register could most certainly help, and as we have heard, tragedies have spurred Canadians to register as donors as well. An option to register for organ donation on the federal income tax form will spur the conversation, and it will save lives.

### *Government Orders*

Laurie Blackstock was among the witnesses the Standing Committee on Health heard from while preparing its 2018 report on organ donation in Canada. Laurie arrived home one day to find her husband unconscious and suffering multiple seizures. He was rushed to the hospital where he then suffered a heart attack. The medical staff at The Ottawa Hospital brought him back to life, but he was transferred to the intensive care unit and put on life support.

After he had been in the intensive care unit for two days, Laurie knew that her seemingly healthy 57-year-old husband, Stephen, would not survive. Stephen had told Laurie that he had checked the organ donor registry and the doctors knew that Stephen was a registered donor. Laurie, along with Stephen's mother, met with the Trillium Gift of Life coordinator in the hospital and the decision was made. Through their despair, they knew that potentially eight families could be spared their grief and pain, and that their loved ones could be saved and go on to live a much healthier life.

• (1155)

Many weeks later, Laurie received a thank you note from a young man who had been the recipient of both Stephen's lungs. She described how in that note he wrote that he thinks of his donor family every time he breathes and that the word "grateful" could not begin to describe his feelings. He thanked her and her family for saving his life.

Laurie went on to say:

I'm here to emphasize that organ and tissue donation doesn't just help the recipients and their families. It doesn't just reduce the tremendous cost of long-term kidney treatment. It can also be an incredible gift to bereaved families like mine, because when presented gently and ethically, at the right time, when there's little or no hope of a loved one's survival, it is a gift. Knowing that five people's lives probably improved dramatically with Stephen's lungs, kidneys, and corneas doesn't change his death and the intensity of our grief, but it gives us moments of relief.

Stephen lives on through those five people.

What an extraordinary gift.

Today, all members of Parliament have an opportunity to come together to give the gift of life. We have a chance to work together in a non-partisan way to help our constituents. Let us rise to this opportunity. Let us show Canadians the best of this Parliament. For the sake of thousands of Canadians who desperately need an organ donation, I ask all members to support Bill C-210.

**Mr. Kevin Lamoureux (Parliamentary Secretary to the President of the Queen's Privy Council for Canada and to the Leader of the Government in the House of Commons, Lib.):** Madam Speaker, I appreciate the comments made by both the mover and the seconder. No doubt there is a number of seconders out there who believe in their heart the importance of this legislation.

In my question to the mover of the legislation, I posed this issue: The House has previously reflected on the legislation, and it received unanimous support. Members of all political parties see the merit and the strength of this legislation. There was a certain level of sadness when it did not pass through the Senate. There had been an expectation, and I do not know the understanding or the in-depth thinking that went on in that chamber.

This legislation is much like that which the government just introduced a few days back in regard to sexual assault. That was

something the then leader of the Conservative Party Rona Ambrose had brought to the floor of the House, and we expedited its passage.

The opportunity is still here for us in this Parliament. I really and truly believe that. Given the manner the member is presenting the legislation, and his willingness to work with members on all sides of the House, I am actually encouraged that we will in fact see the bill get through the House of Commons. I would love to see it get through before the end of December. If there are ways in which I could assist, I am prepared to do so.

However, at this time I do want to allow for ongoing debate on the legislation, and I hope the member will understand. I am more than happy to sit down afterwards to have a discussion—

• (1200)

[*Translation*]

**The Assistant Deputy Speaker (Mrs. Alexandra Mendès):** The time provided for the consideration of Private Members' Business has now expired, and the order is dropped to the bottom of the order of precedence on the Order Paper.

---

## GOVERNMENT ORDERS

[*English*]

### CRIMINAL CODE

**Hon. David Lametti (Minister of Justice, Lib.)** moved that Bill C-6, An Act to amend the Criminal Code (conversion therapy), be read the second time and referred to a committee.

He said: Madam Speaker, it is my pleasure to commence second reading debate on Bill C-6, which proposes to criminalize conduct related to conversion therapy, a cruel exercise that stigmatizes and discriminates against Canada's lesbian, gay, bisexual, transgender, queer and two-spirit communities.

Bill C-6 is identical to former Bill C-8, which I introduced on March 9, 2020. Bill C-6 and former Bill C-8 signal our government's continuing commitment to eradicating a discriminatory practice that is out of step with Canadian values.

[*Translation*]

Our government is committed to protecting the human dignity and equality of members of the LGBTQ2 community by ending conversion therapy in Canada.

The bill delivers on that commitment and complements other measures, including former Bill C-16, which provides increased protection for transgender Canadians in the Criminal Code and the Canadian Human Rights Act.

[*English*]

I am pleased to present another initiative that will further protect LGBTQ2 people from discriminatory practices.

So-called conversion therapy refers to misguided efforts to change the sexual orientation of bisexual, gay and lesbian individuals to heterosexual; change a person's gender identity to cisgender; or repress or reduce non-heterosexual attraction or sexual behaviour. Conversion therapy can take many forms, including counselling, behavioural modification and talk therapy, and may be offered by professionals, religious officials or laypersons.

[*Translation*]

This practice is a manifestation of the myths and stereotypes surrounding LGBTQ2 individuals. More specifically, it suggests that sexual orientation other than heterosexual and gender identity other than those genders can and must be corrected. This type of discriminatory message stigmatizes LGBTQ2 individuals and violates their dignity and their right to equality.

[*English*]

Conversion therapy has also been discredited and denounced by many professional associations as harmful, especially to children. For example, in its 2014 position paper on mental health care for people who identify as LGBTQ2, the Canadian Psychiatric Association stated that it opposes the use of conversion therapy given that the practice is based on the assumption that LGBTQ2 identities indicate a mental disorder and that LGBTQ2 people could or should change their sexual orientation or gender identity. The Canadian Paediatric Society has identified the practice as “clearly unethical”, and the Canadian Psychological Association, in its policy statement on conversion therapy, opposes the practice and takes note of the fact that “Scientific research does not support [its] efficacy”.

• (1205)

[*Translation*]

The position of these professional associations and of many other Canadian and international associations reflects the scientific evidence that people subjected to this practice must deal with its negative effects such as anxiety, self-hate, depression, suicidal ideation and attempted suicide.

[*English*]

Studies indicate that children are particularly susceptible to these negative effects. For example, research shows that negative mental health outcomes among youth who have been exposed to conversion therapy include, in addition to the negative impacts I have already mentioned, high levels of depression, lower life satisfaction, less social support and lower socio-economic status in young adulthood.

What do we know about conversion therapy in Canada?

Thanks to the community-based Sex Now survey, we have a better picture of who is most affected by conversion therapy. The survey's most recent results, from 2019-20, indicate that as many as 20%, or one in five, of respondents had been exposed to the practice, so we know that this harmful practice is currently happening in Canada. Moreover, a recent Canadian Journal of Psychiatry article that interpreted the Sex Now survey's previous results indicates that transgender, indigenous, racial minority and low-income persons are disproportionately represented among those who have been exposed. It also notes that transgender overrepresentation “may be ex-

### *Government Orders*

plained by the ‘double stigma’ experienced by those who simultaneously occupy sexual minority and gender minority social positions.”

This data is significant cause for concern. Not only does conversion therapy negatively affect marginalized persons, but it negatively affects the most marginalized within that group.

[*Translation*]

Given the inherent cruelty of conversion therapy and the evidence of its effects, which are not only harmful but also discriminatory for the most marginalized, Bill C-6 proposes amendments to put an end to this practice.

First, the bill would define conversion therapy, for the purposes of the Criminal Code, as a practice, treatment or service to change a person's sexual orientation to heterosexual or gender identity to cisgender, or to repress or reduce non-heterosexual attraction or sexual behaviour.

[*English*]

I note that Bill C-6's proposed definition of conversion therapy is restricted to practices, treatments or services that are aimed at a particular purpose, that is, changing a fundamental part of who a person is. Accordingly, practices, treatments or services designed to achieve other purposes would not be captured by the definition, such as treatments to assist a person in realizing their choice to align their physical appearance and characteristics with their gender identity, and therapies that assist a person in exploring their identity, known as gender-affirming treatments.

However, out of an abundance of caution, the bill contains a “for greater certainty” clause, which clarifies that the definition would not capture certain practices, services or treatments, specifically those that relate

(a) to a person's gender transition; or

(b) to a person's exploration of their identity or to its development.

This clause comprehensively responds to any concern that the definition could be misinterpreted to include legitimate gender-affirming practices that help people explore their identities or realize their choice to gender transition. It is also consistent with the 2009 report of the American Psychological Association's Task Force on Appropriate Therapeutic Responses to Sexual Orientation, which describes affirmative therapeutic interventions for those experiencing distress, for example, because of same-sex sexual attraction. Specifically, the report notes that legitimate interventions involve exploring and countering the harmful impact of stigma and stereotypes on the person's self-concept and maintaining a broad view of acceptable choices. To be clear, legitimate gender-affirming interventions do not share the same purpose as treatments that are designed to change or suppress who a person is.

*Government Orders*

• (1210)

[*Translation*]

Consequently, the offences proposed by Bill C-6 do not apply to recognized therapies, first, because the main objective of gender affirming treatments is not to change a person's sexual orientation to heterosexual or to restrict their gender identity to cisgender only, or to repress or reduce attraction or sexual behaviour. In case this is still not clear, the proposed legislative measures specific to these types of practices are not included in the definition of "conversion therapy".

Since this seems to be very important to the Leader of the Opposition, I want to explicitly reassure him. This bill does not prohibit conversations about sexuality between an individual and their parents, family members, spiritual leaders or anyone else. The legislative measure we are debating today does not prohibit these conversations, but criminalizes an odious practice that has no place in our country.

[*English*]

Building on its clear definition of conversion therapy, the bill would also create five new Criminal Code offences to criminalize causing minors to undergo conversion therapy, removing minors from Canada to undergo conversion therapy abroad, causing a person to undergo conversion therapy against their will, profiting or receiving a material benefit from the provision of conversion therapy and advertising an offer to provide conversion therapy.

[*Translation*]

This approach will protect all minors who are disproportionately affected by conversion therapy, whether it be provided in Canada or elsewhere. No one would be able to provide conversion therapy to minors, and no one would be authorized to take a person who is ordinarily resident in Canada abroad to receive conversion therapy.

[*English*]

The approach would also protect persons who are at risk of being forced to receive conversion therapy. No one would be allowed to cause another person to undergo conversion therapy.

The approach would also protect all Canadians from the commercialization of conversion therapy. No one would be allowed to profit from the practice, regardless of whether it is provided to minors or adults.

Finally, the approach would protect all Canadians from public messaging suggesting that a person's sexual orientation or gender identity can and should be changed. No one would be allowed to advertise conversion therapy, regardless of whether a fee is charged for it. Courts would also be authorized to order the seizure and forfeiture of conversion therapy advertisements or their removal from the Internet, which is similar to existing powers with respect to hate propaganda.

I cannot emphasize enough that telling someone they cannot be who they are is wrong and needs to be condemned in the strongest possible terms. The balanced approach in this legislation factors in the interests of every implicated person.

To be clear, the bill's main purpose is to protect the equality rights of marginalized people in Canadian society, but we know that conversion therapy not only causes individual harms to those subjected to it, but also causes harm to all of society by sending the message that a fundamental part of who a person is, their sexual orientation or gender identity, is a transitory state that can and should be changed. Such messaging is anathema to Canadian values, as reflected in our charter, which protects the equality rights of all Canadians, including LGBTQ2 people. Respecting equality means promoting a society in which everyone is recognized at law as equally deserving of respect and consideration. This starts with promoting a society in which everyone can feel safe to be who they are. The law must provide the same protection for LGBTQ2 people as it does for others.

[*Translation*]

To promote these values, we need legislation to discourage and denounce a practice that hurts LGBTQ2 people and perpetuates the myths and stereotypes surrounding LGBTQ2 people.

As stated in the preamble of the bill, it is our duty to discourage and denounce the provision of conversion therapy, in light of all of the social and individual harms it causes. It is our duty to protect the human dignity and equality of all Canadians. That is precisely what we are doing with Bill C-6.

• (1215)

[*English*]

We recognize the proposed amendments limit certain choices, including, for example, for mature minors. We made this policy decision because research shows us that all minors, regardless of their age, are particularly vulnerable to conversion therapy's harms. Moreover, if mature minors were allowed to consent to receive conversion therapy, it would be the providers who would have to determine whether the child is mature enough to consent, but most so-called conversion therapy providers are not medical professionals and are not in a position to assess whether a minor is truly capable of making their own treatment decisions. That is why we have drawn a hard line at 18 years of age. That is the best way to protect the most vulnerable among those who are at risk of being subjected to this abhorrent practice.

We also recognize that criminalizing profiting from conversion therapy means that consenting adults would be prevented from accessing conversion therapy unless it is available free of charge. That is because deterring this harmful practice requires placing limits on its availability, and these limits assist in avoiding psychological harm to the individuals who may be subjected to it, as well as harm to the dignity and equality rights of a marginalized group.

Criminalizing advertising conversion therapy furthers that same important objective and reduces the presence of discriminatory public messaging.

*Government Orders*

Significantly, nothing in the bill limits a person's right to his or her own point of view on sexual orientation and gender identity, nor the right to express that view, including, for example, in private conversations between individuals struggling with their sexual orientation or gender identity and counsellors, family members, friends or religious officials seeking to support that individual. Ensuring everyone's ability to express his or her point of view is fundamental to a free and democratic society, and this is true regardless of whether there is agreement on that point of view.

[*Translation*]

Now that I have described the proposed amendments and what they will and will not prevent, I would like to commend former Senator Joyal for his work on this issue. He introduced former Senate public bill, Bill S-202, an act to amend the Criminal Code regarding conversion therapy, which was taken over by Senator Cormier after Senator Joyal retired. This bill had previously been known as Bill S-260.

[*English*]

The proposed offences in the legislation fill a gap in the criminal law because we currently have no offence directly targeting the heinous practice of conversion therapy. Together with existing offences, the new offences would create a comprehensive criminal law response to the harms posed by conversion therapy.

Let us not forget that criminal law responses would complement existing provincial and municipal responses as well. Three provinces, Ontario in 2015, Nova Scotia in 2018 and Prince Edward Island in 2019, have enacted legislation under their responsibility for health-related matters. This legislation specifies that conversion therapy is not an insured health service and bans health care providers from providing conversion therapy to minors.

Significantly, other Canadian jurisdictions are following suit. Earlier this year, both the Yukon and Quebec introduced bills that would implement similar reforms. Although Bill C-6 is an exercise of criminal law because it would amend the Criminal Code, it is consistent with provincial health regulation.

[*Translation*]

Some Canadian municipalities, such as Vancouver, Calgary and Edmonton, have also prohibited companies from providing conversion therapy in their cities. All levels of government have roles to play in eliminating this harmful practice. I was pleased to get the support of my provincial and territorial colleagues when we met in January to discuss Criminal Code reforms to address conversion therapy.

There is no reason for anyone in the House to oppose this bill.

● (1220)

[*English*]

We are proud that so much is being done in Canada to address this destructive practice. Our efforts place us at the vanguard of the international community. For example, Malta is the only jurisdiction known to have criminalized various aspects of conversion therapy. Its approach criminalizes conversion therapy to vulnerable persons, which is defined as persons under the age of 16 years, persons with a mental disorder or persons considered by the court to be at

risk. Malta also criminalizes advertising conversion therapy as well as involuntary conversion therapy.

[*Translation*]

The approach that we are proposing goes even further. We are proposing to protect all children under the age of 18 from conversion therapy in Canada or abroad. We are also proposing to protect all Canadians from the negative messages associated with the advertisement of this harmful practice and those profiting from it.

[*English*]

We hopefully will be joined by others soon. For example, in March of 2018, the European Parliament passed a resolution condemning conversion therapy and urging European Union member states to ban the practice. Shortly thereafter, in July of 2018, the United Kingdom government announced that it intended to bring forward proposals to ban conversion therapy. I understand that work is ongoing.

In short, there is growing recognition worldwide of the destructive nature of this practice and acknowledgement that the criminal law is an appropriate way to address that harm.

**Mrs. Cathay Wagantall (Yorkton—Melville, CPC):** Madam Speaker, in response to the minister's speech today, there are direct consequences regarding the fact the definition of conversion therapy is flawed. The bill would restrict freedom of choice and expression for all Canadians, including LGBTQ2 individuals.

I want to quote Lee, one of many young transgender individuals who has detransitioned and realized some important truths for detransition. She said, "There were all these red flags and I honestly wish that somebody had pointed them out to me and then I might not have transitioned in the first place. If I had realized that somebody with a history of an eating disorder, a history of childhood sexual abuse, a history of neglect and bullying for being a gender non-conforming female, a person with internalized homophobia and misogyny should not have been encouraged to transition. .... I wish that somebody had sort of tried to stop me ... transition .... did not work for me."

Lee reflects on her realization that with all of her issues she should not have been encouraged to transition, but rather wished that somebody would have tried to stop her as transitioning did not work for her.

Does the minister affirm that Bill C-6 would take away Lee's rights to have conversations of her choosing with anyone of her choosing in private or in the public square to change the outcome of what she recognizes in her case as a regrettable transition?

**Hon. David Lametti:** Madam Speaker, I thank the member for giving us an example of where the law, as drafted, intends to protect the legitimate conversations that a person would have with a health care provider, a parent, a religious mentor or other persons in the legitimate exploration of one's identity.

*Government Orders*

I repeat that nothing in this law bans these kinds of legitimate discussions about one's identity or finding one's identity. Rather, it is banning a practice that is saying something about one's identity is wrong and therefore needs to be changed. That is what we are banning and it is critically important we do so.

[*Translation*]

**Mr. Xavier Barsalou-Duval (Pierre-Boucher—Les Patriotes—Verchères, BQ):** Madam Speaker, I congratulate the Minister of Justice on the bill we are debating today.

In my opinion, it is important for those who have undergone so-called conversion therapy to see that we are addressing the problem. I am surprised to hear my Conservative colleagues saying that the bill is not clear. It seems to me that the bill clearly prohibits conversion therapy for minors and forcing someone to undergo conversion therapy without their consent. That is very clear to me. This is a fundamental issue. The minister can certainly count on our support. The bill addresses abhorrent and I would even say barbaric practices stemming from extremist religious practices.

I would like to know whether the government intends to address other extremist religious practices, such as female genital mutilation or the imposition of sharia law in some courts.

I would like to know what the Minister of Justice thinks about that.

• (1225)

**Hon. David Lametti:** Madam Speaker, I thank my hon. colleague for his question and his support of this bill.

We absolutely must act together on this. As a Quebecker and a Canadian, I am proud that, a few weeks ago, my Quebec counterpart, Minister Simon Jolin-Barrette, announced his intention to introduce a complementary measure.

It is important to talk about this bill today. This bill is very important to the LGBTQ2 community because it will protect their rights. I will let the bill speak for itself.

[*English*]

**Mr. Randall Garrison (Esquimalt—Saanich—Sooke, NDP):** Madam Speaker, I want to thank the minister for introducing the bill and assure him, once again, that New Democrats will be supporting Bill C-6 at second reading.

My question for the minister is very simple. Survivors of conversion therapy have been outspoken in their concern that this bill falls short of a total ban on conversion therapy and that its language might not be comprehensive enough to capture all current practices directed at transgender and non-binary Canadians to try to force them to deny their true selves.

Will the minister confirm that he is open to both these kinds of changes at the justice committee to address these concerns?

**Hon. David Lametti:** Madam Speaker, I thank the member not only for his support but his leadership on these very important issues.

It is true that this does not represent a total ban. He is correct in his reading of the legislation. There will be a charter statement that

I will table very soon in the House which explains our reasons for not going further.

I want to reassure the hon. member publicly, as I have in our private conversations, that I am open to all good faith attempts to improve the bill. If he believes there is a way in which we can explore a larger definition, I am always prepared to consider that.

**Ms. Elizabeth May (Saanich—Gulf Islands, GP):** Madam Speaker, as the hon. member for Fredericton has already put on the record, the Green Party is also very much in support of a complete ban on conversion therapy. I join the member for Esquimalt—Saanich—Sooke in thanking the minister for bringing forward Bill C-6.

How open will the government be to amendments that, without violating the charter considerations, provide moves toward a more complete ban on this monstrous practice? It cannot be called therapy; it is so destructive.

**Hon. David Lametti:** Madam Speaker, I agree that one ought to put therapy in quotation marks when discussing this practice. I agree it is a horrific practice.

As I have just assured the member for Esquimalt—Saanich—Sooke, I am open to all good faith amendments that seek to clarify or work within the confines of the charter to extend the parameters of the legislation.

We want Canada to be leaders on this and therefore I am willing to work with members across the aisle to make it better.

**Mr. Adam Vaughan (Parliamentary Secretary to the Minister of Families, Children and Social Development (Housing), Lib.):** Madam Speaker, much of the health care system of the country is governed by provincial and territorial jurisdiction and government. I am curious as to what kind of conversations the minister has had with his provincial counterparts to ensure there is no back-door access to a practice we are seeking to severely limit and restrict.

• (1230)

**Hon. David Lametti:** Madam Speaker, as I said in my main speech, I have raised this with provincial and territorial counterparts. There was widespread support. I mentioned Quebec most recently, but a number of those jurisdictions have already moved to ensure this is not a “health care service” given at the provincial level, health care being within the jurisdiction of the provinces.

They also regulate the medical profession and other health care professions. There are movements within those professions to make the conduct unethical, according to the code of ethics or deontological ethics of these various professional bodies. Municipalities can also work with us by banning it as a business practice within their jurisdictions.

I would assure the hon. member that there is a great deal of cooperation across the levels of government and across Canada, and I am very proud of that.

*Government Orders*

**The Assistant Deputy Speaker (Mrs. Alexandra Mendès):** A very short question from the member for Hastings—Lennox and Addington.

**Mr. Derek Sloan (Hastings—Lennox and Addington, CPC):** Madam Speaker, unfortunately my questions are slightly longer than very short, but I will try to keep it brief.

For me, the devil is in the details in all of this. I have two quick questions for the hon. minister.

In the CPA policy statement, which is linked to on the justice website, prayer is listed as being a part of conversion therapy. In the context of this definition, would the wrong type of prayers be criminalized under the legislation? I have one follow-up question on the same CPA policy statement. It only mentions—

**The Assistant Deputy Speaker (Mrs. Alexandra Mendès):** I am sorry, but we will have to stay with just one question.

The hon. Minister of Justice.

**Hon. David Lametti:** Madam Speaker, as is clear in the legislation and as was clear in my remarks, what we are banning is a practice. There is a great difference between whether one is in a discussion or whether one is praying. There is a great difference between trying to determine who someone is on the one hand, and telling someone that who they are is problematic or wrong and then trying to change it to something else. We are trying to—

**The Assistant Deputy Speaker (Mrs. Alexandra Mendès):** Resuming debate, the hon. member for Stormont—Dundas—South Glengarry.

**Mr. Eric Duncan (Stormont—Dundas—South Glengarry, CPC):** Madam Speaker, I am pleased to rise today as the first speaker at second reading from our caucus on Bill C-6, an act to amend the Criminal Code regarding conversion therapy, formerly Bill C-8 before COVID-19 changed our model here and we lost a few months on this legislation.

I am honoured to stand in the House of Commons today to provide some comments and feedback on the bill and at times a personal perspective, as we all share a common goal to eliminate the harmful practice of conversion therapy across Canada.

I want to start on a personal note about the debate in this chamber. In the last few weeks many colleagues have stood to ask questions and offer commentaries in the debate around Bill C-7, on medical assistance in dying. As I mostly watched that from my office on television, I want to commend members on the tone and the civility of the debate. The questions and the debate going back and forth have been very civil, constructive and very worthy of the House and the debates that we hope to have similarly on a piece of legislation such as this.

I want to acknowledge the work of the provincial partners, as the minister mentioned in his comments, that did work in provincial jurisdictions before we were dealing with this piece of legislation in Ottawa. In Ontario in 2015, a law was passed, and in Manitoba in 2015 and Nova Scotia in 2018.

I may be a bit biased, being from Ontario, but I want to acknowledge the work that was done at Queen's Park in the provincial legislature. It is my understanding that it was the first in Canada, but al-

so that all the parties worked together to get unanimous support for that bill, which proceeded to ban conversion therapy in the province of Ontario.

It shows how legislatures and parliamentarians from different parties can work together on issues of common concern. I believe we can achieve the same goal here in Ottawa. We all agree with the common goal, calling out conversion therapy for what it is: a terrible, inhumane, dangerous practice against the LGBTQ community that needs to be eliminated in Canada.

As I start my comments here today, I want to acknowledge the many organizations that have worked for years to raise awareness of this issue. As we debate and discuss the details of the legislation, we need to always remember the stories and the scars of those who have suffered through some form of conversion therapy.

There are many who have come forward to share their stories, to help educate us and to bring light to this issue. Unfortunately, there are some who have not been able to share their stories with us, because they are not with us anymore. The torture, the pain that they faced was too much to handle. Many suffered in silence. Too many have taken their lives because of the harms that conversion therapy caused them.

We often talk in the House about making our Parliament more diverse and reflective of Canada, by gender, by race, by profession, by sexual orientation and by lived experiences. As we debate this legislation, this is exactly why we aspire to that goal: to bring perspective from across the country, and to share stories and experiences that could help guide us all. I want to do that today for a few moments.

I have said a few times over the last year that I have talked more about my sexual orientation this past year than I have in my entire 33 years. I am a proud gay man who lives in rural eastern Ontario, and I have come to realize that my story matters. If I could get personal here for a moment, I want to talk about my story and my coming out.

It was back in 2017, in my hometown of Winchester, Ontario, a small town with lots of churches and a mix of bedroom community people working in Ottawa and people who have called the rural community home for their entire lives. People coming out maybe was not as common as it would be in downtown Ottawa or downtown Toronto or other places. I served as the mayor of my community at that time. I was out to my family and friends, and I had decided that it was important for me to let my community know that I am a proud gay man so that I could live my life openly, happily and freely.

I wrote a letter on a Sunday morning at about nine o'clock, posted it on Facebook and it went viral. I was not expecting the reaction. It was the lead story on the news channel the next day, and it went viral on Facebook.

### *Government Orders*

What I was hoping from that was indifference, that people would just move on and not care, in a good way, showing how far we had come. However, what I got was the absolute opposite. The love, compassion and support I got from people was overwhelming, people from all different backgrounds and different life experiences. I find that as more people share their stories, it becomes a degree of separation.

I went to bed that night very happy and on a high. Unfortunately, it did not last too long. A couple of days later, in a community just south of my hometown, a young gay man only a couple of years younger than I was took his life. The high I had felt a few nights previous was equally emotional a couple of days later in the struggles he had faced, a variety of struggles. If that were not enough, there was a further degree of separation that broke my heart.

A friend of mine had let me know that a friend of his was a closeted gay man who had married a woman but was actually gay and struggling with his sexual orientation. He was nervous about coming out to his family, friends and community, and he hid it. He suffered and suffered in silence until he could not take it anymore.

● (1235)

I share these stories not because I know that any of the individuals were subject to conversion therapy, but it shows the struggles that people still face. Even with the positive experience I had with my family, friends and community, we need to acknowledge that it is not the same for everybody. We need to show compassion and care and understanding, whether someone is coming to terms with their sexual orientation or their gender identity.

Adding on something like conversion therapy to a child, any sort of therapy in that regard to change somebody, would be devastating for them to go through. What they would have to go through and what they are subjected to is so fundamentally wrong and dangerous. Subjecting a child to it to change them to be who they are not is wrong. It is dangerous and it must end.

I want to talk about the first speech our new leader gave here in the House when there was an opportunity to speak to this legislation when it was tabled by the minister. I have to say I am really proud of his response, his compassion and his understanding of the issue. He spoke of his military service. He spoke about how a fundamental part of his job, of that service, was to defend the rights of all Canadians wherever his service took him. He did that proudly in our military and he has done that as a member of Parliament here in this chamber when legislation has come forward. The NDP legislation a few years ago on gender identity was a key example of that.

I want to reflect on and put back on the record a quote from what our leader said that day, which really stuck with me. He said:

I stood and was counted for rights that day. As a parliamentarian, I am here to secure the rights of every Canadian, including those in the LGBTQ community, and to build an inclusive and prosperous country for all. Now, as leader of the Conservative Party, I pledge to continue this work.

Conservatives agree that conversion therapy is wrong and should be banned. No Canadian should be forced to change who they are, whether it be their sexual orientation or their gender identity. We know that too many Canadians have been harmed by this practice and, as parliamentarians, we have a responsibility to protect the most vulnerable in our society. That includes members of the

LGBTQ community, who have been the target of degrading and dehumanizing practices in an effort to change their sexual orientation against their will. Everyone deserves to be treated with dignity and respect.

The bill states:

This [legislation] amends the Criminal Code to, among other things, create the following offences:

- (a) causing a person to undergo conversion therapy against the person's will;
- (b) causing a child to undergo conversion therapy;
- (c) doing anything for the purpose of removing a child from Canada with the intention that the child undergo conversion therapy outside Canada;
- (d) advertising an offer to provide conversion therapy; and
- (e) receiving a financial or other material benefit from the provision of conversion therapy.

I want to talk briefly about the details of the legislation and something that I have been able to speak about with many colleagues on different sides of the House, and even my constituents back home in Stormont—Dundas—South Glengarry, as they have questions and comments about the legislation. I will use a specific quote. The bill says, “repress or reduce non-heterosexual attraction or sexual behaviour” as part of the definition of conversion therapy.

I want to talk about the difficulty sometimes, in my opinion and my own life experiences, of trying to come up with a definition of conversion therapy that acknowledges how conversion therapy has changed in what it is over the years. Many people think of it as electroshock therapy, a terrible, horrible practice that I hope and believe is mostly eradicated in our country. I am not saying it is completely gone, but there has been an evolution over the years of what conversion therapy is, from that visual of electroshock therapy to what is more of a repression. It is some sort of therapy session to suppress feelings: It is okay to be gay but just do not act on it, or it is okay to have a different gender identity but just do not act on it. The suppression of that thought is equally as damaging as anything else.

● (1240)

When we talk about that, I want to acknowledge that the latest unfortunate trends and those who promote or offer conversation therapy are not so much the vision of something we saw decades ago, but something that is treated more as a therapy, when in fact it is anything but that.



*Government Orders*

As we move forward in the debate on this legislation and when the bill hopefully gets to second reading and into committee where the bill can be studied and discussed further, my Conservative team has noted that we will be proposing a reasonable amendment that will bring even more support to this legislation. I believe it to be fair, reasonable and bipartisan. I believe it should have the support of the government. That is because I believe we can simply add the words of its own news release earlier this year to confirm what the minister has said before.

As I am not a legal expert, the words the minister acknowledged in his comments could be put into the legislation for greater certainty, saying that private conversations are not subject to criminal prosecution. I will read the quote because I believe it. It is the intent of the legislation and I believe the legislation would be better off if the minister's words in the news release were put into the legislation. He stated:

These new offences would not criminalise private conversations in which personal views on sexual orientation, sexual feelings or gender identity are expressed such as where teachers, school counsellors, pastoral counsellors, faith leaders, doctors, mental health professionals, friends or family members provide affirming support to persons struggling with their sexual orientation, sexual feelings, or gender identity.

I believe that to be the intent of this legislation, in my own personal view. It would be reasonable and appropriate if we could work, as the minister said, in good faith, which he has from myself and members of my party, to bring that forward and get it included.

I am happy to see that Parliament is tackling the issue of banning conversion therapy. The sooner that we put a stop to it, the more lives we will save and the better quality of life and promising future we can give young members of the LGBTQ community.

I mentioned earlier that I talk a bit more often about my sexual orientation and being a proud gay man, but something I have talked less about is my faith. I know for many Canadians in every part of this country their faith guides them in the decisions they make and values they have.

As I reflect on my own personal faith, I will say this. My faith and the values my church taught me have not guided me away from this legislation, but the opposite. They have taught me to support it, to stand up for vulnerable neighbours and friends, to show empathy and compassion, to be there and stand up for those who cannot do it on their own. That is what my faith has taught me and where it has guided me. It is guiding me to be behind this legislation and seeing it enacted as we work together through committee, third reading and eventually on to the Senate.

I will end my comments today not with debate on the specific legislation, but with a message to young gay or trans children. It is okay to be gay. It is okay to be trans. It is right for them to live their lives as who they are and be who they are. Canadians know that subjecting anyone to conversion therapy is wrong and we must protect those who are vulnerable.

I am grateful for the time today to offer my support for ending conversion therapy, for working together here in second reading, in committee and in the Senate to make this happen and get the job done together. We need to do this for the young children I mentioned and for those who are tragically not with us anymore. We

must act on their stories and struggles to do better. Let us continue this work and get it done for them.

• (1245)

**Mr. Adam Vaughan (Parliamentary Secretary to the Minister of Families, Children and Social Development (Housing), Lib.):** Madam Speaker, I would like to thank my colleague opposite for what can only be described as a beautiful speech. Beautiful speeches often have a shadow of pain to show the contrast that creates that beauty. I want to thank him for sharing his thoughts and experience with us today. It makes us all better to know each other that way and to understand where we have come from and where we are trying to get to. I truly wish to express my gratitude for his good words today.

He talked about words he has for young people who are struggling as they emerge into their sexuality and gender, but he also comes from a community where older people have seen the world change. If we go back 10 years in this House, we will see a debate around same-sex marriage, which was not quite so beautiful and had some very painful moments for all of us who have family members who have benefited from the changes that we have lived through.

What are the words he would share with older people in his community who have seen this change to give them comfort that their best interests and their loved ones are being cared for with this legislation?

• (1250)

**Mr. Eric Duncan:** Madam Speaker, I thank my colleague for the kind words.

After I came out, I had a Facebook post to thank everyone, and the line that I have used many times since to talk about it is that every person who shares their story opens up new hearts and new minds. This is where I believe we have made a lot of progress in our country in the last 10 or 15 years. It has been a more comfortable environment, albeit not a perfect one, for more people to come out with their gender identity, sexual orientation, and to live their lives the way they were born to do.

What I have tried to do in my service here in Ottawa as an MP, and before that as a mayor or just somebody from a small, rural community where maybe there is that degree of separation and of not knowing somebody that is there all the time, is to say that I believe, as with the legislation before us, that we can send a message to say that conversion therapy is wrong, because a person does not need to be converted. Regardless of a person's sexual orientation or gender identity, one can live and be free in who they are. However, I also acknowledge that for the progress that we have made, there is still a long way to go, and that it is not as easy for everybody under certain circumstances.

*Government Orders*

I believe this legislation goes in the right direction, and it takes away what I feel is such a negative force in somebody's life if they were subject to conversion therapy. If we can ban and get rid of the practice, take it right off the table, I believe it would give more young people, whether it be with sexual orientation or gender identity, a better hope for a better future and better support from their community and their Parliament.

[*Translation*]

**Ms. Louise Chabot (Thérèse-De Blainville, BQ):** Madam Speaker, I am participating remotely, but I heard the member get some enthusiastic and justly deserved applause. I too applaud him for sharing his story.

The Bloc Québécois will support this bill. It is about basic dignity and fairness for the entire LGBTQ2 community.

I do have a question for my colleague, though. He emphasized that the bill needs amending. Would the member tell us more about the amendments he wants to see? Private conversations between family members and a child will not be banned.

In what ways would the member like to amend this bill?

[*English*]

**Mr. Eric Duncan:** Madam Speaker, as I mentioned in my speech, I believe that we are proposing what we feel are reasonable amendments. In my comments, I used a bipartisan approach to this. I know that many of my colleagues thought the same when they read the news release from the Department of Justice back in March with the comments about what the legislation does not entail. It was worded better, and I think that parts were not in the legislation. Simply taking what was in the government's own news release with its own intent and clarification and putting those words in the legislation, we would have even more support for this and can give further clarity.

If there is comfort for the government to put those words in its news release, then there should be comfort in putting that in for greater clarity in the legislation itself. I take the minister at his word on good will, good-intentioned amendments, and this is one of them. I firmly believe we can send an even stronger message in this Parliament with that amendment and with more support.

**Mr. Randall Garrison (Esquimalt—Saanich—Sooke, NDP):** Madam Speaker, I will start by thanking the member for Stormont—Dundas—South Glengarry for adding a diverse voice to this Parliament. I thank him for standing up and very bravely sharing his story with us and, of course, I thank him for his strong support for the bill before us.

There are many things that we may share as out-gay men, and there are many things we will probably agree on, but I have to say that I have some concerns about the kind of amendment the member is talking about, because conversion therapy in Canada goes on in the shadows. We have to be careful to bring it out of the shadows and ban it.

However, my question for the member is a more difficult question. Since he has said that Conservatives believe that conversion therapy is wrong, and he has stressed that he sees it as an attack on fundamental rights of our community, then how is it that he sees

that a free vote is appropriate, allowing his colleagues to vote against fundamental rights and freedoms for members of our community, and to vote against our right to be protected against harmful practices like conversion therapy?

• (1255)

**Mr. Eric Duncan:** Madam Speaker, I want to begin acknowledging the work that the hon. member has done in his time in Ottawa and the leadership he has shown, to pave the way for people such as myself to follow in his shoes as we talk about LGBTQ issues in legislation.

A fundamental building block of the Conservative Party of Canada is free votes on these types of issues. I would not want to be subject to vote for something that I do not want to on something like this. I am proud to be able to, on issues that come forward for free vote, vote the way that I want. As we work together and debate this legislation here and as we get to committee, as our leader said, there are many members who want to get to yes on this, who want to get clarification and study some of the details of the bill.

I think, from our Conservative Party and the comments that our leader has made and many of our colleagues have raised, there is good intention here to get to yes, to understand what conversion therapy exactly is and want to ban it. I am proud to be able to have a free vote. That goes for myself on a myriad of different issues in our caucus. That is a fundamental building block of our party that I think makes our party stronger.

**Mr. Jeremy Patzer (Cypress Hills—Grasslands, CPC):** Madam Speaker, I want to thank my colleague for his personal story and for the amendment he is proposing. I think a lot of us would welcome that if it were included in the legislation.

If there are no amendments to this bill, is he concerned that it will suffer the same fate that the medical assistance in dying bill faced when it was struck down in court and is now back in front of us in the House of Commons yet again?

**Mr. Eric Duncan:** Madam Speaker, I have been a member of Parliament for one year and I am getting the legal hang of things bit by bit, but I will not presuppose what may happen if the amendment is not there. My focus right now is working with my colleagues who are on the justice committee, as we get to second reading, and talking about it. As the minister just said in his speech, he is open to good-faith amendments that can improve and strengthen the bill. I believe right now we should focus on that. We have an opportunity here.

My colleagues from the Bloc had said in their comments, as well, what this bill is not. I agree with what it is not, so let us put it in for greater certainty. I do not want to presuppose what may happen. My goal is that we can work together here in Parliament, support a reasonable amendment like this and get a very large number of members on third reading to support this. I think this builds on the strength of the legislation and, more importantly, sends a strong message to all of the country that whether a person is a member of the LGBTQ community or a supporter of it, Parliament strongly supports the rights of the LGBTQ community, and sends a strong message to end conversion therapy.

*Government Orders*

**Mr. Majid Jowhari (Richmond Hill, Lib.):** Madam Speaker, I have a quick question on the positive impacts of this bill on the mental health of those individuals who were previously exposed to this type of treatment.

**Mr. Eric Duncan:** Madam Speaker, I think this legislation would correct for the future subjecting children to this dangerous practice. So, it would eliminate and go there. I also think, as I said in my comments, this is a testimony and a tribute to those who have been victims of conversion therapy. Although we could not have stopped it in the past, we send a message here today that it is wrong, that their stories do matter and they have made a difference on future members who may not be—

[*Translation*]

**The Assistant Deputy Speaker (Mrs. Alexandra Mendès):** Resuming debate.

The hon. member for Laurentides—Labelle.

**Ms. Marie-Hélène Gaudreau (Laurentides—Labelle, BQ):** Madam Speaker, I ask for consent from the House to share my time with the hon. member for Berthier—Maskinongé.

**The Assistant Deputy Speaker (Mrs. Alexandra Mendès):** Does the hon. member have the consent of the House?

**Some hon. members:** Agreed.

**The Assistant Deputy Speaker (Mrs. Alexandra Mendès):** The hon. member for Laurentides—Labelle.

**Ms. Marie-Hélène Gaudreau:** Madam Speaker, I am pleased to rise today to speak to an important bill, Bill C-6, an act to amend the Criminal Code with regard to conversion therapy. In my opinion, this bill should be passed quickly to ensure that LGBTQ2 individuals receive all the respect they deserve.

Bill C-6 proposes to amend sections of the Criminal Code in order to create offences related to the practice of conversion therapy. It is identical to Bill C-8, which was introduced in March 2020, before Parliament shut down. I hope it will pass unanimously in the House in this 43rd Parliament.

Historically, Quebec has been a leader in human rights protection. The Quebec Charter of Human Rights and Freedoms has recognized sexual orientation as a prohibited ground of discrimination since 1977, and same-sex marriage was legalized by the National Assembly of Quebec in 2002, under the PQ government of Mr. Landry, when it instituted civil unions. Equality between Quebeckers is a fundamental value and an inalienable right in Quebec. Practices that deny the existence of a person's core identity must be condemned.

What is conversion therapy? It is a practice, treatment or service designed to change a person's sexual orientation to heterosexual or gender identity to cisgender, or to repress or reduce non-heterosexual attraction or sexual behaviour. That is appalling.

I want every member to put themselves in the shoes of a vulnerable person and imagine just how much this can violate their identity and how much distress it can cause. I find it inconceivable that this type of treatment is still being used today because of a lack of acceptance by parents or any organization.

In Quebec, respect for gender identity and sexual orientation is an incontrovertible value, and conversion therapy violates that value.

Who are we to judge what is good for a person and to attempt to convince them that they should be different, in a society that is so inclusive and respectful of human rights? Experts say that conversion therapies are pseudoscience. Not only are they dangerous and degrading, but many studies show that, obviously, they do not work.

According to the World Health Organization, these practices represent a serious threat to the health and well-being of affected people. Furthermore, according to the Canadian Psychological Association, conversion or reparative therapy can result in negative outcomes such as distress, anxiety, depression, negative self-image, a feeling of personal failure, and even difficulty sustaining relationships and sexual dysfunction. That is very serious. Unfortunately, it is happening here, in the shadows. I personally was appalled to learn that these practices are still being used in 2020. I am ashamed.

Let us look to the example of the courageous Gabriel Nadeau, a former member of a Pentecostal Protestant community who spoke out publicly about his painful experience undergoing conversion therapy three times. I would respectfully like to share what happened to him. Describing his therapy sessions, Gabriel said:

Four people physically held me down while the “prophet” shouted into my ears for 30 minutes, calling for the demon to get out, and they made me drink “holy olive oil”.

● (1300)

He added:

In my community, it was believed that homosexuality was an evil spirit, a demon. That is what I was taught, and I believed it myself. I knew that exorcisms were performed.

Here is what he said about how this kind of therapy affected him:

I think that the hardest part for me, harder even than the exorcism, was the self-rejection that followed, the feeling of being completely disgusted by myself, wanting to change completely, and being so desperate every day.... It was truly awful.

This gives me shivers. It is terrifying. As a mother, it breaks my heart. This must change, and it needs to change as fast as possible. Fortunately, as distinct as they are, Quebec and Canadian societies have a lot in common, particularly in terms of values. We agree on a number of issues and adopt similar policies that translate into progress when it comes to rights.

As the Bloc Québécois critic for living together, I want to highlight the Quebec government's initiative in protecting human rights. We welcome Bill 70, which was introduced by the Quebec justice minister with the goal of outlawing conversion therapy.

In closing, here is what Gabriel said in an interview in July 2019:

*Government Orders*

I found self-acceptance, and I realized that I didn't always have to conform to what other people wanted or thought, when it came to my sexuality or anything else. It is wonderful, and I would never go back to that religious prison.

I want to tell Gabriel and everyone watching right now that, no matter their gender identity or sexual orientation, they are seen, they are loved and they are beautiful.

I am happy to say that the Bloc Québécois has always been deeply committed to protecting and promoting the rights and freedoms of the people of Quebec. I am very proud to belong to a political party that shares my values and that has always been an ally in the fight against discrimination based on sexual orientation and gender.

For all these reasons, the Bloc Québécois supports the Criminal Code amendments in Bill C-6. The Bloc Québécois will support this bill.

• (1305)

[*English*]

**Mr. Kevin Lamoureux (Parliamentary Secretary to the President of the Queen's Privy Council for Canada and to the Leader of the Government in the House of Commons, Lib.):** Madam Speaker, I really appreciate the tone of the discussions. It would seem members from all sides of the House recognize the importance of the legislation before us, and conversion therapy has been an issue for a great deal of time. It is encouraging to see this get to second reading today.

I am wondering if the member has any sense of specific amendments the Bloc would like to see to the legislation, or are Bloc members waiting for it to go to committee before they provide further comment with respect to amendments?

[*Translation*]

**Ms. Marie-Hélène Gaudreau:** Madam Speaker, I thank my esteemed colleague for his question.

Considering what we have to work with now, and considering that this bill was originally introduced last March, I think we need to get a move on. That is what I said earlier during my speech. We need to act fast.

[*English*]

**Mrs. Cathay Wagantall (Yorkton—Melville, CPC):** Madam Speaker, my hon. colleague just gave an example of a very serious and inappropriate intervention, which I would definitely identify as conversion therapy. That is why comments from individuals who have been exposed to this type of thing are important.

I just want to share that Cari spoke to her own experience when she was prescribed hormones after four sessions of therapy. She noted that no attempts were made, at these therapy sessions, to process personal issues that she raised, and that no one in the medical or psychological field ever tried to dissuade her from her gender transition, or to offer any option other than maybe to wait till she was 18. This revelation, of medical and psychological professionals not providing balanced options for Cari, would be validated by this legislation with its current definition of conversion therapy.

Is the member concerned that medical and psychological professionals are being prevented from providing individuals with other

options because of the fear of being penalized within their own fields? As an example, Ken Zucker, a world-renowned Canadian gender expert, was fired from CAMH for his "watchful waiting" approach with young gender-dysphoric youth. Today, he could possibly also be prosecuted.

• (1310)

[*Translation*]

**Ms. Marie-Hélène Gaudreau:** Madam Speaker, I thank my colleague for her question.

I want to reiterate that we must do something quickly to make sure that what Mr. Nadeau went through never happens again. Nothing should be happening against the person's will.

This bill will allow us to take action and to impose the necessary restrictions. We can then look at whether there are other issues, but for now, we must focus on quickly eliminating conversion therapy, which still exists today, in 2020.

[*English*]

**Mr. Brian Masse (Windsor West, NDP):** Madam Speaker, just last year there was a case in which a young man was brought into a workplace that was receiving government assistance. He was confronted about being gay and asked to convert to keep his job. These situations are still real.

How does the hon. member feel about someone like that now having to walk away from a job? They are pursuing it in other ways now, but what would she say to a youth who thought they were going to be working at a dream job, and then actually has to face that circumstance and leave the job?

[*Translation*]

**Ms. Marie-Hélène Gaudreau:** Madam Speaker, I thank my colleague.

It is appalling to think that people are still being discriminated against not only by parents or religious organizations, but also at work.

I sincerely hope that the amendments in this bill are made. I mentioned that it is important to be respected and loved for who we are, and I think this is a step in the right direction for 2020.

**Mr. Yves Perron (Berthier—Maskinongé, BQ):** Madam Speaker, I am honoured to rise today to speak to Bill C-6 on behalf of the Bloc Québécois and on behalf of my constituents in Berthier—Maskinongé.

Members will not be surprised to hear that Bloc Québécois members support this bill, if for no other reason than to show respect for members of the LGBTQ+ community.

I must say that I have some mixed feelings. I should be thrilled to see Parliament pass such a bill and finally address this issue. However, it is 2020, and it makes absolutely no sense that this has not yet been addressed. I urge my 337 colleagues to quickly pass this bill, as my colleague from Laurentides—Labelle said so well.

We have a duty to protect and advocate for rights and freedoms. We have a duty to protect the equality of all Quebeckers and Canadians. We must protect them from any form of discrimination, and in particular discrimination based on sexual orientation.

We must condemn such practices, which deny the very existence of the person and do not respect their core identity. Quebec has a charter of human rights and freedoms that has prohibited all forms of discrimination based on sexual orientation since 1977. Quebec has allowed civil unions between same-sex partners since 2002. We are proud of that, but we need to go one step further and respect everyone's gender identity and sexual orientation.

If my colleagues in the House take the time to read up on this and read testimonials, some of which have already been referenced this morning, it quickly becomes apparent that all of these therapies are an appalling form of violence. As my colleagues already know, the Bloc Québécois denounces all forms of violence, without exception.

Conversion therapy is one of them. They are based on a dangerous, demeaning and ineffective pseudoscience promoted by minority groups—I would even say splinter groups—related to some form of religious belief.

I am sure my colleagues would agree that we must respect people's beliefs, but that respect must be reciprocated through respect for individual freedom. As such, there are lines that cannot be crossed.

I applaud the action that the House of Commons is about to take. I also applaud the action of the Government of Quebec, which is preparing to pass similar legislation. I am pleased that the Government of Canada is recognizing, through its bill, that in a democracy, there is reason to affirm collective values and regulate religious practices that go contrary to those values under the law.

This bill seeks to prohibit forcing a person to undergo conversion therapy against their will. We also want to prohibit subjecting a child to conversion therapy or doing anything to remove children from Canada to have them undergo conversion therapy outside the country. We want to prohibit advertising related to conversion therapy and prohibit anyone from receiving material or other benefit from providing conversion therapy.

My colleagues will have noticed that two of those points refer to children. We want to protect children and prevent them from having to endure this torture. That is the duty of any society that claims to be civilized.

Before I became a member of the House of Commons, I was a high school teacher. As such, I am very much aware of how feeling accepted, listened to and supported contributes to personal development. For 25 years, I have witnessed first-hand the upheaval of adolescence, which we all know is not always easy. Some think that

### *Government Orders*

it is an impossible challenge, but I have always thrived on challenge.

My thoughts go out to all the young people who are currently questioning their core identity and sexual orientation. We too, all of us, questioned ourselves in that regard when we were their age. These young people are afraid. They are full of doubt and a desire to be “normal”. They want to be popular and accepted by others. When it comes to acceptance, we also need to think about how traumatizing it must be for someone to not be accepted by their own parents and the terrible harm that would cause.

• (1315)

The teen years are extremely important for self-esteem. Teens may be susceptible to depression, they are exposed to tremendous social pressure and they experience a lot of frustration. Most individuals, at some point in their teen years, feel alone in the world and misunderstood by everyone.

We all question ourselves and we all, at some point, feel defiant. Parents who sometimes disapprove of their teen's behaviour should realize that it is actually a positive sign for mental health. These young people are normal, they are challenging things. That is a good thing.

As everyone knows, it is a difficult time in a person's life. Just imagine the trauma of conversion therapy, which scars people. They feel judged by their parents, they may become depressed or suicidal, and so on. The pseudoscience of transformation may appear to be successful, but just imagine how dismal it must be to not express one's true identity, to not live life to the fullest.

Let me say this to the House: it is a loss for that person and a loss for society as a whole. We must live and let live.

I will conclude by talking about my experience as a teacher. I have had the pleasure of seeing people's attitudes and judgments change over the past 25 years. I have seen homosexual relationships being formed and not subjected to the crushing judgment of others. It has been wonderful to see. Today, I am asking that we take one more step forward. Let us guarantee individual freedom.

Earlier, we heard about a young man, Gabriel Nadeau. He said that four people held him while a prophet yelled in his ears and they made him drink holy olive oil. Other accounts describe people who say the Holy Spirit dwells in them and that, in the name of Jesus, they will release the wicked devil. That is ridiculous.

Our civil society must protect youth while respecting general religious beliefs. That is our duty. How can we not be shocked or outraged by such accounts? It is utterly absurd. It is our duty to protect our children from these charlatans. That is our responsibility. Today, I appeal to the dignity of elected members.

*Government Orders*

It is our responsibility to protect young people regardless of their orientation. Let us be worthy and overwhelmingly support this bill. Statistics show that more than 47,000 men have been subjected to this type of therapy. Many organizations offer this type of therapy for a fee that can run as high as \$12,000.

The World Health Organization recognizes these practices as a health threat. The Canadian Psychological Association identified the very serious adverse effects of this practice. I named them earlier: stress, anxiety, depression, and the list goes on. The Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Human Rights described these practices as abusive. Almost every organization around the world agrees that these practices are unacceptable. The report of the Alliance Arc-en-ciel de Québec speaks volumes and shares several accounts of confinement, assault, physical and emotional abuse, parents who failed to protect their child from bodily and mental harm by leaving them with a third party who would torture them. In fact, that is what we are talking about. Let's call a spade a spade. This is torture.

Of course Quebec society and Canadian society are distinct societies. That is a theme that comes up a lot in our speeches. However, these societies also have the privilege of sharing several common values such as the protection of individual rights, protection of the integrity of individuals, and the protection of diversity.

Today I am pleased to see that Quebec's legislative assembly and Canadian Parliament see eye to eye for once. That feels good.

• (1320)

Let's tell the world that being yourself whether you are gay, lesbian, transgender or any other identification is fine; it is normal. This should not even be up for debate in a parliament. Everyone—

**The Assistant Deputy Speaker (Mrs. Alexandra Mendès):** I must stop the member, because his time is up. He will have more time to speak during questions and comments.

**Mr. Francis Drouin (Glengarry—Prescott—Russell, Lib.):** Madam Speaker, I thank my colleague from Berthier—Maskinongé for his speech.

The member raised a good point. No matter how different our parties are, individual freedoms and the right to life are extremely important in Canada. Although I come from a different party, 17 years ago, I fought for the rights of gays and lesbians and everyone in the LGBTQ2 community to marry.

Today we are saying no to conversion therapy. I would like to hear my colleague's thoughts on the importance of criminalizing this deplorable activity in our community.

**Mr. Yves Perron:** Madam Speaker, I sincerely thank my colleague for his heartfelt question. There is a reason that we generally agree on things, and that is because we share the same values.

This is important because there must be consequences for those who torture others. It is as simple as that. There must be consequences if someone fails to protect a child.

We need to send a message. It is all well and good to have legislation, verdicts and consequences, but ultimately, Parliament needs to send a clear message that respect for the individual comes first.

I am sure that my dear colleague would not mind letting me read the last sentence of my speech, because it is quite beautiful. Everyone who finds the strength to love should be able to do so freely.

• (1325)

[*English*]

**Mrs. Tamara Jansen (Cloverdale—Langley City, CPC):** Madam Speaker, in the case of one YouTuber, Elle Palmer, she started taking testosterone at the age of 16. She struggled for many years with issues of self-hatred and, in her words, began the process of transitioning, not in order to look more masculine but in order to hide elements of her body. In her opinion, transitioning was the ultimate form of self-harm. She wanted to change everything about herself and did not see a future in which she could ever be happy in her own body. At the time, she did not realize it was possible to not hate her body.

Right now Bill C-6 would criminalize someone like Elle for sharing her transition story. Does the member suggest that we need to restrict her free, respectful and exploratory speech because her story reaches out to others who may be considering detransition?

[*Translation*]

**Mr. Yves Perron:** Madam Speaker, I thank my colleague for her very relevant question.

It gives me an opportunity to set the record straight and to make a general appeal to the House. I would ask members not to confuse the issue. Of course, there will be cases where people will want to undergo the reverse process. It happens a lot. I know people like that. Last year I taught some students who are currently undergoing this sort of transformation. I know what I am talking about, but I cannot speak for everyone. There will always be exceptions. We are talking here about medical treatment. The age of consent for a medical treatment is under 18. We need to be careful and be sure not to confuse matters.

The law is worded very reasonably. It does a lot to protect children. I gave examples earlier. We are talking about therapy against a person's will. We are not talking about prohibiting an adult from undergoing some kind of treatment. I think this is a very reasonable first step and I invite all members of the House to pass this bill unanimously or at least by a large majority.

**Mr. Alexandre Boulerice (Rosemont—La Petite-Patrie, NDP):** Madam Speaker, I thank my colleague for his speech. I completely agree with him. It was actually inspiring.

I am a member from Montreal and I am proud of that. We have one of the biggest, nicest pride parades every year. In recent years, some people have been wondering whether we even still need the flags, music and floats, but I still hear horror stories. My colleague used the words “charlatan” and “torture”. I do not think those words are too strong to describe what is happening.

*Government Orders*

Does this not show that there is still a lot of work to do for the LGBTQ2 community and that we need to continue to stand up for the rights of its members?

**Mr. Yves Perron:** Madam Speaker, I thank my colleague from Rosemont—La Petite-Patrie for the nice compliment and for agreeing with me.

People who are open-minded and accept others for who they are sometimes tend to wonder if we still need pride parades after all this time. I would say we do, and for one simple reason: As long as people feel the need to hold such parades, and as long as such concerns persist, awareness raising must continue. The struggle for equal rights is never over.

[*English*]

**Mr. Randall Garrison (Esquimalt—Saanich—Sooke, NDP):** Madam Speaker, I am pleased to speak to Bill C-6 today. As always, I look forward to the day that we can all be back in the chamber instead of speaking to pinhole cameras, though I am mindful of the fact that any inconveniences or challenges we face as MPs pale in significance to the impact of COVID on ordinary Canadians who have lost loved ones, lost livelihoods or who are still working on the front lines in this pandemic. These impacts have been even more strongly felt by the most marginalized among us, and especially the community I come from.

I speak today as the NDP spokesperson on sexual orientation and gender identity and expression, or SOGIE for short, but I also speak as an out gay man, someone who has been out in public life for nearly three decades. I wish we had a more representative Parliament today when it comes to topics affecting my community, like conversion therapy. Unfortunately, many of those voices we should be hearing from are absent. In the House, we have only four out gay MPs, and we have no out lesbians and no transgender or non-binary MPs. We are short about 30 MPs from my community.

Some jurisdictions have done better. In fact, New Zealand just elected what has been described as the gayest Parliament in the world, at 10% representation. While it is great to celebrate this as a milestone, I might suggest a more accurate headline that goes something like “New Zealand finally elects a Parliament that nears fair representation of the SOGIE community”. Then the story would have to go on to say that the total does not include any trans or non-binary MPs, despite New Zealand having elected the first trans MP in the world, Georgina Beyer, who served from 1999 to 2007.

I also want to give a quick shout-out today to British Columbia, which has just re-elected six SOGIE MLAs. It looks like the number will still be six when the dust settles, but that is about 7% of the legislature again and ties the U.K. This is compared to a mere 1% in the House. That is a hint to both SOGIE individuals and parties when it comes to nominations for the next election, and as someone who is always recruiting, as the gay stereotype goes, I know this remains a challenge.

Why is there a long preamble on representation? I firmly believe that the most diverse parliaments make the best legislation. It is not only that diverse parliaments are likely to have more MPs with lived experience on the topics at hand, although that is true, but that, perhaps more importantly, they will have the networks in the

communities they represent and in Canada as a whole to bring those diverse experiences and voices to bear on the matters at hand. Besides, it is also important to remember, as one wag once said, “If you're not at the table, you're much more likely to be on the menu.” Clearly, in this Parliament we have more work to do to make sure diverse voices are heard on the topic of conversion therapy.

When it comes to Bill C-6, which seeks to end the practice of conversion therapy in Canada, I want to start by saying three things, at least two of which should be obvious to all but clearly are not.

The first is that no one in the SOGIE community needs to be fixed because of their sexual orientation, gender identity or gender expression. The prevalence of homophobia and transphobia makes it hard enough for many of us to live authentic lives as who we are, at home, at work and everywhere else in our daily lives. The very idea that we can or need to be fixed, which is fundamental to the concept of conversion therapy, only serves to reinforce homophobia and transphobia. The idea that one's sexual orientation or gender identity could possibly be changed is especially problematic for those who, early in their lives, are still working their way toward figuring out exactly who they are. For queer youth, the idea they need to be fixed can and does contribute to both self-hate and fear of rejection by family and friends, both very damaging to mental health.

The second thing that should be obvious, which I think is to most people, is that certain sexual orientations and gender identities and expressions are not better than others. It is certainly not appropriate for governments to prefer some sexual orientations and gender identities over others. Nor is it appropriate to disadvantage or fail to protect some of our citizens because of their gender identity, gender expression or sexual orientation. All of us are equally deserving of equal protection under the law, and that is the essence of the issues raised in Bill C-6.

*Government Orders*

Finally, the third thing I want to raise at the outset of this debate is apparently less well understood, though it is a clearly established fact. It is impossible to change someone's sexual orientation or gender identity, and as a result, conversion therapy is harmful to those who are subjected to it.

As for the outcomes of these practices, whether they are called conversion therapy, reparative therapy, aversion therapy or gender affirming therapy, those names do not really matter: The results are always the same. There is no change, and those who are subjected to therapy suffer from outcomes that include guilt and shame, depression, social isolation and often self-harm or even death by suicide.

● (1330)

Fortunately, I was never subjected to conversion therapy, though some in my own family were anything but accepting. I recognize now, ironically, that attempts to beat the gay out of me may have been actually less harmful in the long run than being subjected to conversion therapy. That is because the overt violence allowed me to focus the resulting anger and hostility outward rather than inward on myself.

Frankly, it is hard to imagine that some of the torture that was carried out in the past, under the name of therapy, ever actually took place. Far too many Canadians were subjected to barbaric practices, such as electroshock therapy, chemical castration and even exorcism, as we heard today. It is equally hard for me to accept the idea that conversion therapy should still be going on in Canada to this day, no less harmful in its results, even if somewhat less brutal sometimes in its means.

The fact that conversion therapy is harmful to those subjected to it is the reason this pernicious practice has been condemned internationally and domestically by health professionals. More than eight years ago, on May 17, 2012, on the 22nd anniversary of the removal of homosexuality from the list of recognized mental disorders, the World Health Organization issued a statement labelling conversion therapy to be "a serious threat to the health and well-being—even the lives—of affected people."

Eight years ago, the World Health Organization called for action at the national level to ban and place sanctions on conversion therapy. No organization of health professionals in Canada currently approves of or allows the practice of conversion therapy. No provincial health plans allow for the practice of conversion therapy as part of the public health care system.

Conversion therapy is no longer supposed to be taking place within the formal health care system in this country, yet we know that it still goes on in the shadows. Not only is it taking place in Canada, but some Canadians are still being sent for conversion therapy in the United States. A report on conversion therapy in Canada was published in February of this year. It surveyed over 7,200 gay, bisexual and two-spirit men. More than 20% reported being subjected to some form of conversion therapy. When it comes to transgender and non-binary Canadians, the numbers approach 50%.

It is one thing to know from formal studies that this is still taking place, but it is quite another to hear the brave survivors who have

come forward to tell their stories of the harm they suffered as a result. I encourage all MPs to listen carefully to those stories.

When it comes to Bill C-6, let me say again, as we did last March and when the bill was reintroduced recently, the New Democrats will be supporting Bill C-6 at second reading. What the bill does can briefly be summarized as follows. It specifically criminalizes subjecting minors to conversion therapy and transporting minors out of Canada for the purpose of conversion therapy. It criminalizes subjecting adults to conversion therapy against their will, and it criminalizes what we call the business of conversion therapy.

The main strength of Bill C-6 is its focus on youth, for it is young people who conversion therapy is almost always directed against. It is young people who suffer the greatest harm from the attempts to force them to be someone they are not.

Its second strength is the suite of comprehensive measures to ban the practice or promotion of the business of conversion therapy, which would help ensure the practice is actually shut down by making it illegal to charge for, to profit from or to advertise conversion therapy for both minors and adults. The bill contains significant power to seek court orders to remove offending materials from on-line platforms.

Let me stop here for a moment to address the reddest of red herrings concerning this bill. This is the "what about" argument: "What about the rights of others?" and in particular, "What about the rights of others whose religious freedoms might be infringed by this bill?" For me, it is always a red flag when I hear arguments that start with "what about". The resort to what about-ism is rarely about promoting real dialogue, and is instead usually a diversionary tactic to take the argument onto grounds that what about-ers think will make it easier for them to win the argument. What I am saying is that arguments that start with "what about" are most often exercises in distraction rather than attempts to confront the real issues before us.

● (1335)

Clause 5 of Bill C-6 says clearly that the definition of "conversion therapy" in the bill does not refer to "a person's exploration of their identity or to its development." This means that there is nothing in the bill that prevents parents from talking to their children about their sexual orientation or gender identity. Nothing in the bill prevents spiritual leaders from discussing these topics with their followers. Nothing in the bill prohibits anyone from holding bigoted and outdated ideas about sexual orientation or gender identity or expression. What it does prevent is taking those beliefs and ideas and turning them into hateful and harmful practices disguised as "therapy". How the bill is an appropriate bill for a free vote is a question that I will continue to have for my Conservative colleagues.



*Government Orders*

Returning to the NDP position on the bill, again, as I have said, we will support it at second reading. However, we do believe the bill can and should be improved. What are those improvements we are looking for?

First, we would like to see the government respond positively to the demand from the SOGIE community for a full ban on conversion therapy, a ban for adults as well as for children.

The minister has made the argument previously that his goal here is to have a bill that is charter challenge proof. His solution has been to design Bill C-6 to avoid possible charter challenges by focusing on non-consenting adults, minors and the “business” of conversion therapy. It sets aside the question of so-called “consenting adults.”

This is a good argument in that I do believe the bill would survive a charter challenge as the provisions around the business of conversion therapy included will result in an effective ban on the practice for consenting adults, at least when it comes to paid services. However, a total ban would also survive a charter challenge. I would very much like to see any legal opinions that the government might have saying that it would not.

In brief, my argument here is that there is an equally compelling charter argument that it is a reasonable limit on fundamental rights to prohibit anyone from giving consent to a practice that is clearly harmful to those subjected to it. Without going too far down the legal rabbit hole here, there is parallel jurisprudence that has upheld restrictions on things like fight clubs, which leads me to conclude that a full ban would also be found charter compliant.

The second and perhaps more significant area in which the bill can be improved is in the language used to define what conversion therapy is. The language in Bill C-6 is actually pretty good when it comes to the traditional conversion therapy practice directed at sexual orientation. I am also glad that there is language in the bill attempting to ensure it covers banning conversion therapy directed at trans and non-binary Canadians.

This kind of practice is often styled as “gender-affirming therapy” or “transition treatment” or other such positive-sounding names. However, this is where the language in the bill is not so good. The committee will need to have a close look at this clause of the bill to ensure it is as comprehensive and up to date with current practice as possible when it comes to so-called therapies aimed at transgender and non-binary Canadians.

Now let me address a bit of revisionist history that has crept into the discussion of the bill. I want to take a moment to remind the House how we got here to second reading on a bill to ban conversion therapy. Of course elected officials have played a role, but not everyone who is on side now was always there.

Former Saskatoon West NDP MP Sheri Benson, the only out lesbian in the previous Parliament, sponsored petition e-1833 in the last Parliament, which called on the government to ban conversion therapy. That petition received nearly 20,000 signatures. When the petition was presented to the government in March of 2019, the Liberal government said it would take no action as it argued conversion therapy was a provincial responsibility.

In his 2019 Pride message, the NDP Leader, the member for Burnaby South, called for a ban as part of the NDP Platform. The Liberals still refused to budge. Then on September 29, in the midst of the election campaign just over a year ago, the Prime Minister suddenly changed course and promised a federal ban on conversion therapy. His December 2019 mandate letter for the justice minister included instructions to bring forward legislation to ban conversion therapy. I thank the minister for doing so and I welcome this conversion. I have no doubt also in the sincerity of his intentions to get a bill through this Parliament, which will end this practice.

However, let me stress today as always that no progress on SOGIE rights has ever taken place that has not been fought for by courageous members of our community and no place has that role been more important than in the case of brave conversion therapy survivors who have stepped up to tell their stories. Without them, the rest of us might have gone on blithely assuming that formal professional condemnation of conversion therapy was enough and had actually stopped this practice.

• (1340)

I cannot name all those who have spoken up, but let me quickly point to two who have helped deepen my understanding of how harmful this practice can be and how it continues to go on. I thank Erika Muse and Matt Ashcroft for speaking boldly and publicly.

There are days when the younger me is still surprised that I can stand in the House of Commons and speak as an openly gay man, and even more surprised that I do so as an official party spokesperson on sexual orientation, gender identity and expression. However, there are also days when I am discouraged about the long distance we still have to go to reach full equality and acceptance, especially for transgender and non-binary Canadians. There are also days when I am hopeful that we will soon see more MPs from my community, including trans and non-binary representatives. We need those diverse voices in the House and young Canadians need to see those role models.

*Government Orders*

It is time to act and in fact long past the time to bring an end to this harmful practice. As welcome as new laws banning the practice are, new laws alone will not be sufficient to repair the past damage from conversion therapy nor combat the hate that underlies these practices. The government will need to fund capacity building within the SOGIE community so these challenges can be addressed by our community ourselves. Unfortunately, for some from our community it is far too late and they will never be able to be brought back to us.

I look forward to the speedy passage of the bill so we can get on with the important work of healing. I look forward to the day when we can say that all forms of conversion therapy have been banned from Canada and are no longer practised. I look forward to the day we can fully celebrate the full range of sexual and gender diversity in our country.

• (1345)

**Mr. Adam Vaughan (Parliamentary Secretary to the Minister of Families, Children and Social Development (Housing), Lib.):** Madam Speaker, I would like to thank my hon. colleague for a very strong and principled speech. I would expect nothing less from him on this topic, in fact on virtually every topic he stands on. He challenges us in his comments. I am not going to ask a question about his comments; they stand for themselves and are well reasoned.

My question for him is simply this. Those of us who want to see the day realized have work to do with him. I would like to know from his perspective what the next steps Parliament, in fact Canada, needs to take to realize that vision and dream of his of full equality and what he challenges us as Parliamentarians to take up in battle with him to ensure that all members of his community enjoy the full rights to which he speaks.

**Mr. Randall Garrison:** Madam Speaker, I know we do not have time enough in response to really answer that question. It is one of the reasons I focused on representation in my speech today. I look forward to the day we have a more representational House on all grounds, including sexual orientation and gender identity and expression.

Conversion therapy is an urgent matter because unfortunately these harms are taking place regularly within our society. I would like to see the bill pass expeditiously and be in force by the end of the year, if we can possibly manage that.

**Mr. Scott Aitchison (Parry Sound—Muskoka, CPC):** Madam Speaker, I want to thank my hon. colleague for his advocacy, his bravery and his words today. I really do appreciate it.

I wanted to give the member an opportunity to provide a bit more to his comments relating to a charter challenge and ensuring this important legislation, which bans something truly heinous and wrong, is not the subject of a charter challenge in the courts. I felt he had to speak to it too quickly and wanted to give him an opportunity to speak a bit more about the importance of protecting this from a charter challenge.

**Mr. Randall Garrison:** Madam Speaker, unfortunately I believe that no matter what we do the bill will be challenged in court because of the prevalence of homophobia and transphobia. Yes, I agree that it is important we write the best bill we can, but we can-

not write a bill that deals with the questions of the “whataboutisms” to which I referred.

The bill is about ending a harmful practice directed at members of my community. To put it in the most simple terms, the charter is subject to reasonable limits. One of those reasonable limits is the rights of others stop at the harm that is done to me. Therefore, I believe this bill will ultimately survive any charter challenge.

• (1350)

[*Translation*]

**Mr. Denis Trudel (Longueuil—Saint-Hubert, BQ):** Madam Speaker, I thank my colleague for his excellent, very moving and very eloquent speech on this issue.

I have to admit that until just a few weeks ago, I did not even know that conversion therapy was allowed in Canada. I did not think that such a barbaric practice could exist. I am so glad that we are passing legislation today to prohibit it, or at least moving in that direction. I do not even find this to be an especially progressive bill. Today we are simply bringing Canada into the 20th century. Now we need to go even further.

My colleague mentioned something that was very interesting, picking up on something my colleague across the aisle asked about. In New Zealand, 20% of elected representatives are homosexual; in Canada, it is only 2%. Is there something we can do about that from a legislative standpoint? Are there any measures we could bring forward? How did New Zealand achieve that level of representation?

I would like to hear my colleague's thoughts on that.

[*English*]

**Mr. Randall Garrison:** Madam Speaker, again, the member's belief that this was not taking place in Canada is representative of the beliefs of many Canadians. I want to thank the conversion therapy survivors, both in Quebec and in English-speaking Canada, who have told their stories and allowed us to realize this actually goes on.

As for New Zealand, about 10% of the new parliament is representative of the SOGIE community. How did they do that? Again, I am always recruiting. What I say is that the best protection for any community in Canadian society and the best way to get representation is to be out and proud of who we are, at work, at home, in all the social groups, in our church, wherever. If we are presenting ourselves as who we really are, that will help Canadians understand that all of us share the same basic humanity.

*Government Orders*

**Ms. Rachel Blaney (North Island—Powell River, NDP):** Madam Speaker, I would like to thank the hon. member for Esquimalt—Saanich—Sooke for having this voice that needs to be represented. I could not agree more that it needs to be more represented. I welcome all people of diverse backgrounds to engage in politics. It is important that we do this work so we make the space for them.

I wonder if the member could talk a bit more about how secretive this can be. One of the things that concerns me is this terminology of body affirming therapy, which really is a way of hiding the toxic nature. Can we be talking more about how that does not happen to anyone from this community?

**Mr. Randall Garrison:** Madam Speaker, that is an important question. The first thing we need to do is listen to those transgender and non-binary Canadians who have been subjected to what is often labelled with these positive-sounding names like “gender affirming” or “transition therapy”, which sound like they will be helpful when they are actually quite harmful. I am hopeful that in committee we will be able to hear from those brave survivors who can help us understand how this takes place.

The question of the shadowy nature is very important. As I said in response to the member for Stormont—Dundas—South Glengarry on his comments concerning private conversations. This concerns me. Conversion therapy goes on in the shadows. I worry that if we open the door to protecting so-called private conversations, we are opening the door for this conversion therapy to continue in those shadowy areas.

We will have those discussions at committee, but I would like to see a stronger bill that has a complete ban of conversion therapy in it.

**Mr. Pat Kelly (Calgary Rocky Ridge, CPC):** Madam Speaker, the member touched on part of my question, so I will let him continue. I completely support what the bill says that it would do and the remarks from the minister this morning.

However, I would like the member to comment further on the suggestion by the member for Stormont—Dundas—South Glengarry. The member for Esquimalt—Saanich—Sooke said that he considers some of the “whataboutisms” to be red herrings, yet would it not be better to craft a bill that is stronger and better and that would just undercut some of the red-herring arguments that have been made?

• (1355)

**Mr. Randall Garrison:** Madam Speaker, the thing about red herrings is that they take us away from the harm we are trying to address. They bring in lots of theoretical problems and theoretical discussions about rights that are not the real topic of the bill.

I say yes to a strong bill, and yes to a clear bill. However, I am not wanting to qualify this bill in order to respond to the people raising what I believe are somewhat extraneous concerns.

**Mr. Garnett Genuis (Sherwood Park—Fort Saskatchewan, CPC):** Madam Speaker, it has been a pleasure to work with my colleague on a variety of issues. We share a strong opposition to conversion therapy. I have some concerns about the definition of the bill as written. I want to clarify the member's views on this point.

Let us say that an Orthodox rabbi, an imam or a Catholic priest expresses the sincerely held view that sexual activity should be limited to within a heterosexual marriage. I understand many of us in the House might disagree with that view. However, if someone expresses that view, should that person be subject to criminal sanction?

**Mr. Randall Garrison:** Madam Speaker, the hon. member's question brings a very large red herring into the room. Nothing in the bill would criminalize comment on sexual orientation or gender identity by spiritual leaders. When we take those outdated ideas of what it means to be gay or transgender and try to turn them into a so-called therapy that is applied to people, that is what we are criminalizing in the bill. We are not criminalizing people's thoughts or opinions. We are criminalizing a practice that is harmful to Canadians.

**Mr. Randeep Sarai (Surrey Centre, Lib.):** Madam Speaker, I will be sharing my time with my friend from Longueuil—Charles-LeMoyne. I also want to thank the member of Parliament for Esquimalt—Saanich—Sooke, who gave a very passionate speech on this and shared his own life experiences. I really appreciated it and received a lot of insight from that.

It is my pleasure to voice support for Bill C-6, which proposes Criminal Code amendments aimed at ending so-called conversion therapy in Canada. The bill proposes the same reforms as those proposed in former Bill C-8. They underscore the government's continuing commitment to ban an inherently discriminatory practice. Conversion therapy harms the well-being, dignity and equality of lesbian, gay, bisexual, transgender, queer and two-spirit Canadians by proposing that they can and should change their sexual orientation or gender identity, a fundamental and immutable part of their identity.

Diversity is what makes Canada a great country. Respecting and valuing differences defines us as Canadians. I am proud to support a bill that reflects these fundamental Canadian values. Conversion therapy's origins explain why it is an inherently discriminatory practice. The practice comes from a time when any sexual orientation other than heterosexual, and any gender identity other than cisgender, would have been considered a sickness or a disease that required repairing. It just seems obvious to say that a therapy founded on ignorance and prejudice toward the targeted recipients also harms them.

We need to acknowledge these harms because they are documented by the evidence. Not only does relevant research show that conversion therapy causes significant harm to those subjected to it, it also shows that the practice disproportionately harms children. That is why Bill C-6 proposes comprehensive protections for children.

*Statements by Members*

Bill C-6 would define conversion therapy as any “practice, treatment or service designed to change a person's sexual orientation to heterosexual or gender identity to cisgender, or to repress or reduce non-heterosexual attraction or sexual behaviour”. This means that gender affirming therapies or interventions, including for children whose identity is not congruent with their biological sex, do not constitute conversion therapy. This is primarily because the objective is not to change anything about the person receiving the therapy, but rather to support their identity exploration and development.

To be clear, we want to protect children from illegitimate treatments, not prevent them from accessing treatment that provides them with the support they need. Supporting children who may not conform to heteronormative standards also means protecting them from practices that harm their development and exploration of self. That is precisely what Bill C-6 does.

The government needs to make sure that Canada is providing the right incentives for industry investment when it comes to CCS. An investment in CCS is an investment in the future of Canada's environment and well-being.

My thanks to the Boundary Dam Power Station for being a great leader in this technology.

\* \* \*

**HARVEY LEWIS**

**Mr. Mike Kelloway (Cape Breton—Canso, Lib.):** Madam Speaker, it is with great sadness that I speak in the House today in honour of Harvey Lewis, a strong community leader in Cape Breton—Canso, who passed away this month.

A proud citizen of Louisbourg for all of his life, Mr. Lewis knew what it meant to be community-minded. He served as mayor from 1979 through 1988 and held many other positions of leadership within the Cape Breton Regional Municipality. He co-chaired the Louisbourg '95 Commemoration Society, served as chairman of the Cape Breton school board and held regional positions on boards serving vulnerable populations. Mr. Lewis even worked in Ottawa at the National Research Council during the Second World War, before returning to Louisbourg to join his family business.

On behalf of Cape Breton constituents and members of the House, I offer my sincere condolences to his family and to the community of Louisbourg. Those who knew Mr. Lewis well knew him as a kind, generous and patient man, and as somebody who always thought deeply about what was right. He held firm to those principles. It is my hope that we can carry forward Mr. Lewis's principles about putting community first and thinking deeply about what is right for our communities.

\* \* \*

[*Translation*]

**SAMUEL PATY**

**Mr. Stéphane Bergeron (Montarville, BQ):** Mr. Speaker, after teaching a lesson on freedom of expression, history and geography teacher Samuel Paty was brutally murdered by an Islamic fundamentalist. France was justly outraged, and this vile and barbaric act was vigorously and roundly condemned. A national memorial service was held for Mr. Paty, and all of France showed its solidarity. Banners stating “I am a teacher” could be seen at many candlelight vigils.

By murdering Samuel Paty, the terrorists were attacking freedom of expression. The Quebec National Assembly lowered its flag as a sign of support for France, and Quebec parliamentarians observed a minute of silence at the instigation of Liberal member Marwah Rizqy.

On behalf of the Bloc Québécois, I wish to extend our sincerest condolences to Mr. Paty's friends and family and to our friends in France.

**STATEMENTS BY MEMBERS**

• (1400)

[*English*]

**HINDU HERITAGE DAY**

**Mr. Chandra Arya (Nepean, Lib.):** Madam Speaker, I am pleased to state that I hosted the third annual Hindu Heritage Day on Parliament Hill, virtually, last Saturday.

Hindu Heritage Day on the Hill is done to highlight the contribution of Hinduism, the oldest religion in the world known to mankind. This is also an opportunity to educate Canadians on Hindu heritage and its importance in the fields of art, culture, science, astronomy, medicine and many other areas.

Hindu Heritage Day is also an occasion to recognize, appreciate and celebrate the contributions of Hindu Canadians to our great country. Hindus arrived in Canada from different parts of the world and have immensely contributed to the socio-economic development of Canadian society and economy.

\* \* \*

**CARBON CAPTURE AND STORAGE**

**Mr. Robert Kitchen (Souris-Moose Mountain, CPC):** Madam Speaker, I rise today to highlight the incredible work being done right here in Canada and around the world on carbon capture and storage technology, CCS. CCS is being utilized to significantly reduce emissions created by power-generating stations and industrial emitters through the capturing and sequestering of CO<sub>2</sub> underground.

This innovative green technology can be utilized by numerous industries, such as cement and steel, to drastically cut their emissions while also creating jobs. Indeed, many other countries have recognized the value of CCS. In September, the International Energy Agency released a special report, which is said to be the most comprehensive global study of CCS to date. It stated, “Carbon capture is critical for ensuring our transitions to clean energy are secure and sustainable”.

### POPPY CAMPAIGN

**Mrs. Marie-France Lalonde (Orléans, Lib.):** Mr. Speaker, branches of the Canadian Legion have been in serious financial difficulty since the start of the pandemic. The poppy campaign will get under way on October 30. I encourage all my colleagues to support their local branch by purchasing a poppy and wearing it proudly. On Saturday, October 31, my team and I will be at one of the booths of Orléans Legion Branch 632 to help with its fundraising campaign.

To comply with health guidance, the legion has changed how it sells poppies by setting up four outdoor sales locations over four days. People will be able to drive up to the booths to purchase poppies or lawn signs, a featured item this year.

In closing, I wish to thank our Canadian Legions for their strength, resilience and community spirit.

\* \* \*

● (1405)

[English]

### COVID-19 COMMUNITY RESPONSE

**Mr. Dan Mazier (Dauphin—Swan River—Neepawa, CPC):** Mr. Speaker, I rise to thank and recognize the constituents of Dauphin—Swan River—Neepawa for their extraordinary response to the challenges of COVID-19. As I have said before, it is an honour and a privilege to represent them in the House each and every day. This was further proved by their flexibility, willpower and commitment to protecting their families, friends and communities by slowing the spread of COVID-19. Over the past few months, they have demonstrated exceptional leadership, working together as rural Canadians always do. They have saved lives, protected the most vulnerable and supported our front-line workers like never before. For that I sincerely commend them.

Going forward, it is critical that we continue to do our part. We must remain vigilant and follow the advice of our public health officials in order to slow the spread of COVID-19. This is not a time to relax our commitment and forfeit our tremendous hard work.

\* \* \*

### NIGERIAN HUMAN RIGHTS

**Mr. Ramesh Sangha (Brampton Centre, Lib.):** Mr. Speaker, in recognition of the brutal killing of youth by the Nigerian authorities, and on behalf of the Canadian Nigerian community, I would like to express my deep concern here today in the House.

This act of brutality has shaken the entire Nigerian community not only in my riding but all over Canada, and they have expressed their concern to me. In 2017, during my visit to Alex Ekwueme Federal University, Ndufu-Alike, and upon interacting with youth, I realized that they wanted their country to flourish for the better.

Abuse of power has no place in the global community. Those responsible for cruel human rights violations must be brought to justice and held accountable.

### Statements by Members

#### CARE WORKERS

**Mr. Kevin Lamoureux (Winnipeg North, Lib.):** Mr. Speaker, I want to take this opportunity to recognize a very special group of people. I am talking about live-in caregivers: our home-care service providers.

Over the year, they perform all sorts of tasks that enable people to remain in their homes, improving the quality of life for Canadians in all regions of our country. They often provide the type of care that is necessary for people to be able to go to work. In general, they make our communities a better place, because of their sense of dedication and love of caring for people.

I want to take this opportunity to express my appreciation, and appreciation on behalf of the Government of Canada, for the fine work that they do, day in and day out, for all Canadians.

\* \* \*

#### CBC/RADIO-CANADA

**Mr. Ted Falk (Provencher, CPC):** Mr. Speaker, the Liberal government is drowning in ethics scandals and conflicts of interest, such as SNC-Lavalin and WE Charity. Most recently, it awarded a \$237-million contract for ventilators to a shell company for a former Liberal MP. There was no call for bids and the price per unit was \$10,000 more than it should have been. That is a \$100 million signing bonus for a Liberal insider.

What else bothers me is just how little coverage this has been given by the CBC: a single passing reference in a single article. The CBC already receives \$1.2 billion from taxpayers. Now the Liberals are teeing it up for an additional \$34 million. Despite the obvious public interest in investigating this latest Liberal ethics lapse, the CBC is nowhere to be found. This is both frustrating and concerning. Taxpayers deserve value for their money. They do not need another broadcaster propping up the corrupt Liberal government.

\* \* \*

[Translation]

#### FRANK MCKENNA CENTRE FOR LEADERSHIP

**Hon. Ginette Petitpas Taylor (Moncton—Riverview—Dieppe, Lib.):** Mr. Speaker, last fall, the Hon. Frank McKenna made a generous contribution of \$1 million to the University of Moncton in order to create the Frank McKenna Centre for Leadership. On Friday, this centre celebrated its official opening.

*Statements by Members*

The centre's mission is to build the next generation of leaders in Acadia by enabling students to take part in a training program that explores very important themes such as leadership, social innovation and entrepreneurship. The centre will also give them the opportunity to complete their university degree while participating in activities to prepare for the job market and gain unforgettable experience on the ground in civic and social engagement.

As a University of Moncton alumna, I want to thank Frank McKenna's family for all their contributions to our university.

\* \* \*

• (1410)  
[English]

**STAN SCHUMACHER**

**Mr. Damien Kurek (Battle River—Crowfoot, CPC):** Mr. Speaker, today I rise to pay tribute to Stan Schumacher, who passed away this past month at the age of 87. Stan was a political institution from east central Alberta, who served as both a member of Parliament and a member of the Alberta legislative assembly. He also served as speaker in the Alberta legislature, where he could always be counted on to stand up for our parliamentary institutions and democracy. Stan was also a veteran, having served in the Royal Canadian Armoured Corps. After retiring from elected politics, he continued his law practice and remained a constant voice for his community and grassroots politics. This was where I got to know and appreciate Stan, where we could always count on his voice of experience.

Today, on behalf of the people of Battle River—Crowfoot, I want to pay tribute to Stan's life of service and the impact he made on our region, Alberta and Canada. I share condolences with his wife, Virginia, his family and friends, and the communities he spent his entire life serving.

\* \* \*

**WOMEN ENTREPRENEURS**

**Mrs. Tracy Gray (Kelowna—Lake Country, CPC):** Mr. Speaker, entrepreneurs across the country are struggling just to get by during the pandemic, with female entrepreneurs being hit particularly hard and with Liberals continually getting emergency programs wrong. These are women like Angie, who is a professional hairstylist. In order to meet safety protocols, her salon is using a three-day work week rotation. She also has to now work 12-hour days, taking her away from her family, to bring in revenue that would normally take eight hours. This is because stacking is not being allowed, which is when one rotates between two clients at a time for efficiency. Women like Heather, who is a professional registered massage therapist, similarly have to work longer days to due to client distancing and cleaning protocols. She is a self-employed health care provider whose hourly rates are regulated, and she receives no PPE assistance. Both of these self-employed women are not eligible for any programs unless they dramatically reduce booking their long-time loyal clients.

It is obvious the Liberals do not understand the working environments of these entrepreneurs. Instead of focusing right now on ways to avoid scrutiny for their scandals, they should be focusing

on fixing programs so Angie and Heather, and other Canadian women like them, can stop falling through the cracks.

\* \* \*

**THE ENVIRONMENT**

**Mr. Taylor Bachrach (Skeena—Bulkley Valley, NDP):** Mr. Speaker, this past summer I sent a letter to the people of northwest B.C. asking them what concerned them most. A huge percentage listed the climate crisis as an urgent concern. The throne speech promised a climate plan immediately, yet it has been over a month. The Prime Minister promised two billion trees would be planted, yet a year later we have zero. Now he seems to think Canada needs an election. Time is ticking. We need every day, every hour and every minute to fight the climate crisis.

While other countries invest heavily in a sustainable pandemic response, Canada is being left behind. We have the people we need. We have the ideas we need. We are only lacking the political will on the part of the government for urgent climate action: action that measures up to the magnitude of the challenge before us and that allows us to look our kids in the eye and tell them that we did everything we could with the time that we had.

\* \* \*

[Translation]

**MICHEL LETARTE**

**Mrs. Louise Charbonneau (Trois-Rivières, BQ):** Mr. Speaker, I want to acknowledge Michel Letarte for his exceptional contribution to the Trois-Rivières community.

Mr. Letarte was a police officer for nearly 30 years and became known for his community involvement and his infectious humour and kindness. He owns an eco-friendly cycling company and has stepped up to help the Artisans de la paix en Mauricie with their food deliveries. He has also been a professional singer for 20 years. Mr. Letarte is also a founder of a growing movement in Quebec. The events industry is a cultural tool whose primary purpose is to promote this sector, which has been hit hard by the public health crisis. Mr. Letarte is a model of perseverance and generosity.

On behalf of the people of Trois-Rivières, I want to thank Michel.

## Oral Questions

## ORAL QUESTIONS

• (1415)

[English]

## COVID-19 EMERGENCY RESPONSE

**Mr. Jeremy Patzer (Cypress Hills—Grasslands, CPC):** Mr. Speaker, we have seen Canadians all across this great country step forward to help out with responding to COVID-19. Businesses have adapted, with many of them retooling and refocusing on producing the PPE and medical equipment our country needs. Sadly, there are people in my riding and region who are ready for the job, but they were not picked for the Liberals' team Canada approach.

My constituent, Brad, wanted to manufacture PPE. While bidding for a contract, he first had to prove his production capacity. Then he was left with no deal and \$300,000 worth of equipment lying around. Meanwhile, companies with Liberal connections are having no problem. Former MP Frank Baylis only had to prove he was a Liberal before he was part of a \$237 million contract. His is not the only questionable case of a Liberal insider who was offered a massive contract.

Canadians are struggling, and they are sick and tired of seeing a Liberal government prioritize its friends and supporters in business. Canadians deserve better.

\* \* \*

## MENTAL HEALTH AWARENESS MONTH

**Mr. Paul Lefebvre (Sudbury, Lib.):** Mr. Speaker, COVID-19 has impacted the lives of Sudburians and all Canadians in many ways, including their mental health.

October is Mental Health Awareness Month. As Canadians, we must take care of our mental health just as we take care of our physical health. The three pillars of mental health are sleep, nutrition and exercise. We must eat healthy food at regular times, incorporate regular physical activity into our day and make sleep a priority. As all northern Ontarians know, getting outside for fresh air improves both physical and psychological well-being.

[Translation]

Small changes can play a big part in reducing stress, building confidence and increasing energy. Instead of focusing on what they cannot control, people should focus on what they can control.

[English]

If help is needed, one can look up cmha.ca for mental health services and supports nearby. There is no health without mental health.

\* \* \*

[Translation]

## SAMUEL PATY

**The Speaker:** Following discussions among representatives of all parties in the House, I understand that there is an agreement to observe a moment of silence in memory of teacher Samuel Paty, who was killed in France on October 16, 2020.

I invite hon. members to rise.

[A moment of silence observed]

[English]

## FISHERIES AND OCEANS

**Hon. Erin O'Toole (Leader of the Opposition, CPC):** Mr. Speaker, on Friday the government put out an urgent news release on the fisheries crisis at 10:18 p.m. Nova Scotia time. It appointed a former Liberal politician to cover up its inaction on the fishery issue. The only thing the two sides agree on is that the fisheries minister is failing Nova Scotia.

We are months into this crisis. When is the government finally going to take the lives and livelihoods of Nova Scotians seriously?

**Hon. Chrystia Freeland (Deputy Prime Minister and Minister of Finance, Lib.):** Mr. Speaker, the people of Nova Scotia and, I believe, the people of all of Canada strongly agree on one thing, and that is that all of us want a peaceful, constructive solution to the fisheries dispute in Nova Scotia. All of us appreciate the huge priority of honouring the rights of indigenous people and first nations in our country. All of us also understand the importance of conservation. That is the approach our government will take.

\* \* \*

• (1420)

## INDIGENOUS AFFAIRS

**Hon. Erin O'Toole (Leader of the Opposition, CPC):** Mr. Speaker, the rights of indigenous Canadians are important. That is why it is disappointing the Prime Minister once again walked back a promise to end all boil water advisories on indigenous reserves by the end of 2021. Test results have revealed harmful substances in the water at Neskantaga, which has led to a full-scale evacuation of the community. As winter begins to set in in northwestern Ontario, the people of Neskantaga have been forced to flee their homes. All of this after having lived with boil water advisories for 25 years.

How many more walk backs will there be from the Prime Minister? To show that he cares, will he get it done?

*Oral Questions*

**Hon. Chrystia Freeland (Deputy Prime Minister and Minister of Finance, Lib.):** Mr. Speaker, I am very glad to hear the leader of the official opposition talk about the importance of ending boil water advisories. I noted that he spoke about how this problem has been going on for 25 years. That is a time of both Liberal and Conservative governments.

I would say we have a shared responsibility, all members in this House, to address the huge historical injustices against indigenous people. We are working hard to end the boil water advisories, and we will end them.

\* \* \*

**FOREIGN AFFAIRS**

**Hon. Erin O'Toole (Leader of the Opposition, CPC):** Mr. Speaker, the government's new tone on China always comes with conditions. In the House the foreign minister is all bluster, but he then issues a statement claiming his change in tone is the result of political cycles. On Sunday the health minister said that if China misled the world about COVID-19, it should be held accountable. The rest of the world knows Beijing held back critical information. Only the minister seems to have some doubt.

Why does the government find it so hard to face the facts when it comes to Communist China?

**Hon. Chrystia Freeland (Deputy Prime Minister and Minister of Finance, Lib.):** Mr. Speaker, I do not find it hard to face the facts about authoritarian communist regimes. I have lived in one, and I have reported on them extensively. When it comes to China, let me say a few things.

First and foremost, our government is standing up for the 300,000 Canadians in Hong Kong. Let me say to them that we are with them. They are Canadian and our government will always support them. Let me also say how appalled our government is by the treatment of Uighurs. We are going to speak up for human rights everywhere in the world.

[*Translation*]

**Hon. Erin O'Toole (Leader of the Opposition, CPC):** Mr. Speaker, the Minister of Health always took the Chinese communist regime at its word regarding its handling of the pandemic. All of our allies say that the figures from China are false. Because of this inaccurate information, our country was not prepared for the pandemic. Now, the minister says that China must be held accountable if the figures are incorrect.

How much longer will the minister keep defending China, and when will she admit she was wrong?

**Hon. Chrystia Freeland (Deputy Prime Minister and Minister of Finance, Lib.):** Mr. Speaker, I think it is very important for all members of the House to be aware of the difference between a democracy and an authoritarian country. Democracies are more transparent.

I want to stress the importance of the 300,000 Canadians in Hong Kong right now. We are with them, and our government will always be with them.

[*English*]

**Hon. Erin O'Toole (Leader of the Opposition, CPC):** Mr. Speaker, in French, the Deputy Prime Minister just informed us that the difference between a democracy and a communist country is transparency.

This is from a government that was about to force an election rather than answer some reasonable questions on the WE scandal. This is from a government that suggested the health committee looking into the pandemic would shut down our economy.

My question is this: Is the Deputy Prime Minister going to vote in favour of transparency and democracy later today, or will she follow the leader's basic admiration for dictatorship?

**Hon. Chrystia Freeland (Deputy Prime Minister and Minister of Finance, Lib.):** Mr. Speaker, let me just say that it is either ignorance or pure partisan insinuation to, in any way, suggest any similarity between a democratic government of Canada and the leadership of a communist regime, between any Canadian Parliament and the authoritarian government of China.

We need to draw these lines very carefully, and we need to use words such as "democracy" and "transparency" with great care. I do. I would urge the members opposite to do the same.

\* \* \*

● (1425)

[*Translation*]

**COVID-19 EMERGENCY RESPONSE**

**Mr. Alain Therrien (La Prairie, BQ):** Mr. Speaker, on September 30, five million Quebecers found themselves in red zones, with the resulting business closures. The next day, the Quebec government announced financial assistance to businesses to pay for fixed costs.

The response from this government has been non-existent. It has been a month, and we are still waiting for help from the government. Today, the Quebec government will announce that the confinement will continue. It is in the second month of managing the pandemic; this Liberal government did not even get involved in the first.

When will SMEs be offered assistance? This is important.

**Hon. Chrystia Freeland (Minister of Finance, Lib.):** Mr. Speaker, I greatly appreciate the very important question.

I absolutely agree that SMEs need help to cover fixed costs. In the coming days, I will present measures to the House to help businesses. I hope the Bloc Québécois will vote in favour of these important measures.



**Mr. Alain Therrien (La Prairie, BQ):** Mr. Speaker, I have been discussing this with the government since the pandemic hit. It was agreed that businesses need help with their fixed costs. When did we agree to put that in the motion? On April 11. That was over six months ago. After threats of an election, the Liberals are telling us that they are finally going to help businesses. SMEs have been waiting for six months.

How many bankruptcies have occurred because of their inaction?

**Hon. Chrystia Freeland (Deputy Prime Minister and Minister of Finance, Lib.):** Mr. Speaker, we have already given a lot of help to SMEs across Canada, including through the emergency wage subsidy and the Canada emergency business account, which goes directly to SMEs. I agree that we need to do more, and we will in the coming days.

I hope all members in the House will support these important measures.

\* \* \*

#### INDIGENOUS AFFAIRS

**Mr. Jagmeet Singh (Burnaby South, NDP):** Mr. Speaker, the Neskantaga First Nation has not had access to clean drinking water for 25 years. Five years ago, the Prime Minister promised clean drinking water to all indigenous communities. Five years have passed, and the people of Neskantaga have had to be evacuated during a pandemic because they do not have running water.

Will the Prime Minister admit today that he never intended to keep his promise?

**Hon. Chrystia Freeland (Deputy Prime Minister and Minister of Finance, Lib.):** Mr. Speaker, I thank my colleague for his question.

I have to disagree with the member. True, the lack of clean drinking water in indigenous communities is a tragedy and a Canadian crisis. Our government is working on it. We have made progress, but we still have a lot of work to do, and we will do it.

[English]

**Mr. Jagmeet Singh (Burnaby South, NDP):** Mr. Speaker, for 25 years, the first nation of Neskantaga has not had access to clean drinking water. Five years ago, the Prime Minister promised all indigenous communities that they would have access to clean drinking water. Five years later the first nation of Neskantaga has had to evacuate during a pandemic. Will the Prime Minister admit today that this was just another empty promise that he had no intention of keeping?

**Hon. Chrystia Freeland (Deputy Prime Minister and Minister of Finance, Lib.):** Mr. Speaker, I cannot agree with one of the assertions of the leader of the NDP. I know that he knows that in our government, like his party and I believe like all members of this House, we all understand that the boil water advisories are a national tragedy and a national shame. Our government is working earnestly to get those advisories lifted. Ninety-one long-term advisories have been lifted since 2015, but I would be the first to admit that there is a lot more work to do and we are going to do it.

#### Oral Questions

[Translation]

#### HEALTH

**Mr. Gérard Deltell (Louis-Saint-Laurent, CPC):** Mr. Speaker, more and more Canadians are realizing that, unfortunately for the Government of Canada, the Minister of Health is becoming an embarrassment. I do not want to talk about the photo of her yesterday at Pearson airport. Rather, I want to talk about her management of rapid tests. First, she dragged her feet when it came time to approve them. Now, she is starting a fight with the provinces, as if we need this in the middle of a pandemic. On Friday, in an interview on CTV, she said that some provinces had chosen to deny the government's guidance.

Why is she lecturing the provinces again?

● (1430)

[English]

**Hon. Patty Hajdu (Minister of Health, Lib.):** Mr. Speaker, I want to thank all the provinces and territories for working on national testing guidance that indeed can guide provinces and territories how best to shepherd and use testing resources to get to the best outcomes, which is to truly understand where the virus is and how to trace the close contacts and then isolate people who are potentially infected with the virus. It will take all hands on deck to do so, and we continue to support provinces and territories to have the best tools possible.

[Translation]

**Mr. Gérard Deltell (Louis-Saint-Laurent, CPC):** Mr. Speaker, by all means, let's talk about supporting the provinces, which are particularly in need of rapid tests. My province of Quebec has a major problem: it passed the milestone of 100,000 cases in the last few days, and it really needs rapid tests.

Now the minister has started distributing the rapid tests. It has not been completed yet, but some distribution has taken place. What we are seeing is that Quebec did not get nearly enough.

Does the minister think that the Quebec government did not follow the guidance and therefore does not deserve her help?

[English]

**Hon. Patty Hajdu (Minister of Health, Lib.):** Mr. Speaker, when it comes to delivering procurement supplies, whether it is rapid testing, whether it is personal protective equipment or anything else, we work closely with provinces and territories to develop a sharing agreement. That is exactly what has happened with rapid tests as well, and many of them are out the door this week, arriving in provinces and territories in the days to come.

I want to thank all of my colleagues, the ministers of health, for working out these agreements that allow us to have a shared approach to ensuring the resources get to where they are needed the most.

*Oral Questions**[Translation]*

**Mr. Pierre Paul-Hus (Charlesbourg—Haute-Saint-Charles, CPC):** Mr. Speaker, over the weekend, we learned that Canada might be three months behind other countries like the United States or Great Britain in getting vaccines.

The Prime Minister's performance in managing COVID-19 reminds me of a baseball player who always swings just a second too late. He was late in closing the border and late in getting rapid testing. Now, the government is signing contracts that will not give us access to a vaccine until three months after our allies.

How does the Prime Minister always manage to ensure that Canada is lagging behind other countries?

*[English]*

**Hon. Anita Anand (Minister of Public Services and Procurement, Lib.):** Mr. Speaker, the hon. member is somewhat mistaken in the analysis he is providing. On the contrary, we have signed seven agreements with vaccine suppliers, we have signed agreements for over two billion items of PPE to support our health regime. In addition, regarding delivery dates, we are working very aggressively with our suppliers to ensure that Canadians will have access to vaccines as soon as they pass Health Canada approval.

*[Translation]*

**Mr. Pierre Paul-Hus (Charlesbourg—Haute-Saint-Charles, CPC):** Mr. Speaker, could the minister explain why she frightened Canadians this morning in a press conference by saying that the Conservative motion concerning the Standing Committee on Health would be problematic?

She just gave us some information. It is not hard to get the facts. Will the minister agree to pass our motion and for the work to be done for Canadians? Above all, will she stop frightening everyone?

**Hon. Pablo Rodriguez (Leader of the Government in the House of Commons, Lib.):** Mr. Speaker, after trying to plunge the country into an election last week, the Conservatives are moving another motion that our greatest experts and scientists are saying is dangerous. It is dangerous because it undermines the negotiation of contracts for vaccines, tests and protective equipment.

What is important here is to not let partisanship jeopardize the work of the government. Instead, we should be working together for all Canadians.

\* \* \*

## ACCESS TO INFORMATION

**Mr. Luc Berthold (Mégantic—L'Érable, CPC):** Mr. Speaker, the Minister of Health said last week, "not once has a Canadian asked me to put more resources into freedom of information officers."

That is false, completely and utterly false. One Canadian in particular did precisely that, and she was not just anyone. The Information Commissioner of Canada tweeted that she was very disappointed by the minister's statement.

Will the Prime Minister, who tried to trigger an election last week against the backdrop of a pandemic, do the right thing and vote in favour of transparency and our motion this afternoon?

*[English]*

**Hon. Patty Hajdu (Minister of Health, Lib.):** Mr. Speaker, we take openness and transparency very seriously. I will be speaking with the Information Commissioner later this week about her concerns and make sure we are living up to our commitments at Health Canada to provide information as it is requested by Canadians.

*[Translation]*

**Mr. Luc Berthold (Mégantic—L'Érable, CPC):** Mr. Speaker, a Liberal member once told the House that redacted documents with information missing were not disclosures, that non-answers in the House were not disclosures and that rhetorical personal attacks were not disclosures. Who said that? It was the Prime Minister himself.

This government has been and continues to be an advocate of openness and transparency since it was elected, yet we have a minister who refuses to support a motion to shed light on her management of the pandemic. This afternoon the government is going to vote in favour of hiding information from Canadians. Why?

● (1435)

**Hon. Pablo Rodriguez (Leader of the Government in the House of Commons, Lib.):** Mr. Speaker, a Conservative member said the following:

The decision on what to reveal is made by non-partisan public servants, for whom it has long been a tradition not to reveal cabinet confidences. That has been the case going back to all previous governments of all party stripes.

Who said that? It was the member for Carleton.

\* \* \*

## JUSTICE

**Mr. Rhéal Fortin (Rivière-du-Nord, BQ):** Mr. Speaker, the Liberals are so used to cronyism that they do not even notice it anymore.

Last year, they got caught looking up candidates for judicial appointments in the infamous "Liberalist" database to see which ones had donated the most. The Liberals are so accustomed to doing this that they kept doing it even after they got caught. The Prime Minister could even admit as much to the House.

Do the Liberals realize that ordinary people, normal people, I should say, might not think Liberal Party connections should increase a person's chances of becoming a judge?

**Hon. David Lametti (Minister of Justice and Attorney General of Canada, Lib.):** Mr. Speaker, Canadians expect judges to have all the information they need to understand the whole context of cases before them, and they respect the principle of judicial independence. They also expect their leaders to work together across party lines in Canadians' best interest. We implemented a transparent, merit-based judicial appointment system that promotes diversity. I am very proud of the results.

## PUBLIC SERVICES AND PROCUREMENT

**Mr. Rhéal Fortin (Rivière-du-Nord, BQ):** Mr. Speaker, the minister is not listening to the questions. That is not what I was talking about.

As I said, the Liberals are so used to cronyism that they do not even notice it anymore. There is also the matter of the \$237-million contract for medical equipment that they awarded to FTI, a shell company that did not even exist seven days before it got the contract and that does not even manufacture medical equipment, which is why it subcontracted the job to Frank Baylis, a Liberal who had a seat here until less than a year ago.

A newly created company does not just get \$237 million from the federal government during its first week of existence. Why did the government choose FTI, if not as a favour to Frank—

**The Speaker:** The hon. minister.

**Hon. Anita Anand (Minister of Public Services and Procurement, Lib.):** Mr. Speaker, I very much appreciate the hon. member's question.

There was a process before the contract was awarded.

[*English*]

In fact, Innovation, Science and Economic Development Canada launched a call-out for contracts for suppliers. There was an independent process. Five contracts were granted, and one of those contracts went to the company mentioned. There were other contracts with parties of all political stripes. It is important that ventilator companies, like all companies, stepped up for—

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

\* \* \*

[*Translation*]

## ETHICS

**Mr. Stéphane Bergeron (Montarville, BQ):** Mr. Speaker, as my colleague said, the Liberals are so used to cronyism that they do not even notice it anymore.

Look at the WE Charity scandal. It could have been avoided. If the government wanted to provide grants to students, it could have simply provided grants to students, through transfers to Quebec. This would have been settled and even avoided. But no, they chose to build an entirely new program tailor-made for their cronies at WE Charity.

Is it just me, or do the Liberals not even seem to realize that it is not normal to create a high-priced program for their friends to run?

[*English*]

**Hon. Bardish Chagger (Minister of Diversity and Inclusion and Youth, Lib.):** Mr. Speaker, I appreciate the opportunity to share with the member and all Canadians that when it came to the response to COVID-19, this government put out a \$9-billion program for students as well as youth. The federal government stepped up in partnership with provinces and territories, because when it comes to the response to this pandemic, it is really important that we all work closely together. We are still in the midst of this pandemic.

## Oral Questions

When it came to the Canada emergency student benefit, over 700,000 students benefited. When it came to making sure that student entrepreneurs would be able to benefit, we increased funding to future entrepreneurs. When it came to making sure that students could pay back their student loans, we actually put a moratorium on student loan payments, as well as interest. The list goes on.

We are all working in this together, and the Bloc should realize it is going to take all of us to fight this pandemic. We have a lot more work to do.

\* \* \*

● (1440)

## HEALTH

**Hon. Michelle Rempel Garner (Calgary Nose Hill, CPC):** Mr. Speaker, while question period has been going on, the leaders of 11 municipal governments in the greater Toronto area have released a statement saying that they want to reopen after the current 28-day pause, which is reasonable given that we are nine months into the pandemic.

I have questions for the health minister. We see that cases are increasing. Why are cases increasing even though we are wearing masks and we have had restaurant closures? How much do restaurant closures actually reduce the spread of COVID-19? What data is she basing that information on, and has she shared that with the provinces?

**Hon. Patty Hajdu (Minister of Health, Lib.):** Mr. Speaker, the question reflects some misinformation on behalf of the member opposite. It is actually not the federal government that makes decisions about restrictions at a local level. It is provincial governments. In fact, I would encourage the member to have a conversation with her provincial colleagues about what data they are using to determine what public health measures they will apply.

Our advice remains the same. There are things that people can do to reduce the risk of infection, including keeping a distance from one another, washing our hands, staying home when we are sick and wearing a mask in public spaces.

**Hon. Michelle Rempel Garner (Calgary Nose Hill, CPC):** Mr. Speaker, that exact answer, blaming the provinces for things like not having rapid tests, as if it is their responsibility to procure, and her not even taking her responsibility as a health minister seriously are why Parliament needs to study the government's response.

Just this weekend, we had the minister seated without a mask, seated beside a snack bag as her excuse, and we had the procurement minister say that Canada would not get vaccines or that we are on track for it, even though Radio Canada says that we are not. The government is all over the place on this.

Parliament needs to do its job in order to scrutinize the government's response and spending. Why it is not doing its job?

### Oral Questions

**Hon. Patty Hajdu (Minister of Health, Lib.):** Mr. Speaker, I think we can all rise above the partisan attacks and understand that all of us are working really hard to ensure that we get Canadians through the worst pandemic in a century.

I am proud of the work that we have done with the provinces and territories, including the \$19 billion that we transferred to provinces and territories to ensure they had capacity for testing, contact tracing and data collection, all of the tools that the member opposite is talking about that the provinces are currently using to manage the pandemic in their jurisdiction of authority, which is health care delivery.

It is incumbent on all members of Parliament to understand exactly what levels of government are responsible for and have levers to control.

**Hon. Michelle Rempel Garner (Calgary Nose Hill, CPC):** Mr. Speaker, there is not only one taxpayer. There is not only one single mom who cannot get a rapid test. There is not only one person who had to close their business down. We are responsible for this. We are all in it together. That is why Parliament needs to come together and scrutinize this response.

What the health minister just said was the antithesis of what we should be doing in this space in this time of crisis. We need to be reviewing the government's response. It does not have it together. That is where Parliament can help. That is what can unite our country.

Why is the minister so hell-bent on preventing Canadians from getting answers on the government's failed response to COVID-19?

**Hon. Patty Hajdu (Minister of Health, Lib.):** Mr. Speaker, what I am "hell-bent" on is getting Canadians through this pandemic with their health and their economic security, as I would hope all members in this House are hell-bent on.

We have been working day and night, supporting the provinces and territories, supporting individuals with economic concerns, supporting small business with wage subsidies, low-interest loans and rent subsidies. We will be there for Canadians for the long haul. I am proud of the work of the government in making sure that every Canadian has the protection they need.

\* \* \*

### TELECOMMUNICATIONS

**Mr. Taylor Bachrach (Skeena—Bulkley Valley, NDP):** Mr. Speaker, in just 66 days, residents in the rural community of Tlell on Haida Gwaii are going to lose their only Internet access when an agreement between Xplornet and Telesat expires. These residents need to run businesses, attend school, book medical appointments, bank online and stay connected with their families, all over the Internet. This pandemic has shown us that broadband Internet access is far from a luxury. It is essential for daily life.

What is the minister doing to ensure that people in Tlell and across rural Canada do not lose their Internet access?

**Ms. Gudie Hutchings (Parliamentary Secretary to the Minister for Women and Gender Equality and Rural Economic Development, Lib.):** Mr. Speaker, I live in a rural area and I understand that Internet access is not a luxury; it is essential. In the last

seven months, many more people are working from home. They are accessing goods and services online. The kids are doing their classes from the kitchen table. More than ever, it is important that all Canadians have access to the Internet.

As confirmed in the throne speech, we will accelerate the connectivity timelines and the ambitions of the universal broadband fund. We are going to ensure that all Canadians, no matter where they live, have access to high-speed Internet.

\* \* \*

● (1445)

### HEALTH

**Mr. Don Davies (Vancouver Kingsway, NDP):** Mr. Speaker, since COVID hit Canada, we have seen a series of errors and poor decisions from the government. The Liberals failed to ensure our front-line responders had enough protective equipment. They cancelled Canada's early warning system, costing us precious time and, worse, Canadians' lives. They created a vaccine task force that operates in total secrecy and suffers from conflicts of interest. There are concerns that we are months behind other countries.

Canadians need answers to build a better future. Is the real reason the Liberals fear transparency is that they are failing to protect Canadians?

**Hon. Patty Hajdu (Minister of Health, Lib.):** Mr. Speaker, this government has been fully transparent with Canadians all along. In fact, many officials of both the Public Health Agency of Canada and Health Canada and I have appeared in front of the health committee a number of times. We have provided documentation. We have included and briefed the opposition critics all along the way.

We will continue to be there for Canadians, working with provinces and territories in the worst global pandemic of our lifetimes.

## PUBLIC SERVICES AND PROCUREMENT

**Mr. Mark Gerretsen (Kingston and the Islands, Lib.):** Mr. Speaker, when COVID-19 hit Canada last spring, our government put out a call to Canadian companies telling them Canada needs their help. Canadian companies did what Canadians do best: They sprung to action. They retooled and manufactured personal protective equipment. They reached out to their contacts around the world to get equipment to Canada that we needed. Those companies are now concerned about the Conservatives' political games around the motion being voted on after question period today.

Could the Minister of Public Services and Procurement comment directly on the industry's concern?

**Hon. Anita Anand (Minister of Public Services and Procurement, Lib.):** Mr. Speaker, I want to say that as a government, our obligation from day one has been to protect the health and safety of Canadians. It is not just our government that is concerned with the motion on the table today. We have heard from doctors, the vaccine task force, suppliers, manufacturers, exporters, the immunity task force and vaccine suppliers about their concerns with the motion, if it goes forward. Why? It is because it puts their sensitive commercial proprietary information at stake.

I hope that all members of the House will vote against the motion today.

\* \* \*

## THE ECONOMY

**Hon. Pierre Poilievre (Carleton, CPC):** Mr. Speaker, at the bottom of the sea lie approximately six different rust-gathering, fiscal anchors the Prime Minister has cut loose from his ship. The deficit is only \$10 billion for only three years. The deficit debt-to-GDP ratio will never rise and we will never be downgraded. All those anchors have since been abandoned. In fact, we have not had a budget in well over a year, the longest period ever.

What is Canada's new fiscal anchor?

**Hon. Chrystia Freeland (Deputy Prime Minister and Minister of Finance, Lib.):** Mr. Speaker, let me tell members what our economic policy is right now. Our economic policy is to do what is necessary to fight COVID and support Canadian workers while doing so. Our policy is working. Some 76% of jobs have now been recovered in Canada since the depths of the COVID recession, versus only 52% in the United States. We are going to keep doing what we are doing because it works.

**Hon. Pierre Poilievre (Carleton, CPC):** Mr. Speaker, it works to make sure Canadians cannot work. In fact, we have the highest unemployment in the G7, even higher than the United States. As for all the programs, we support the wage subsidy, the emergency benefits to Canadians and the emergency loans to businesses, but they only account for \$175 billion of the \$380-billion deficit. In other words, the majority of the money is not going to everyday Canadians. If it were, every household would have \$40,000. That is their share of the deficit.

The money is going missing from the time it leaves the government to the time it goes out to the economy. Where is all that money? Is it at the bottom of the sea with those missing fiscal anchors?

## Oral Questions

**Hon. Chrystia Freeland (Deputy Prime Minister and Minister of Finance, Lib.):** Mr. Speaker, if the Conservatives want to offer Canadians an economic policy of austerity in the face of COVID, they are more than welcome to do so.

Let me mention TD Economics and what it has to say about how our policies are working. It states, "No matter how...[we] slice the data, the Canadian labour market has been on a steadier road to recovery relative to the U.S." The report concludes that perhaps the old adage, "When the U.S. sneezes, Canada catches a cold," should be changed to, "When the U.S. sneezes, Canada builds antibodies."

\* \* \*

● (1450)

## FOREIGN AFFAIRS

**Hon. Michael Chong (Wellington—Halton Hills, CPC):** Mr. Speaker, last year the government suspended arms exports to Turkey because it was not upholding its obligations. Last April, the Prime Minister spoke with Turkish President Erdogan and reports indicate he committed to addressing Turkish concerns about the suspension of these arms exports. Subsequently, seven drone systems were approved for export from Canada to Turkey.

Did the Prime Minister or foreign affairs minister override the recommendations of Global Affairs officials and approve these exports to Turkey?

**Mr. Robert Oliphant (Parliamentary Secretary to the Minister of Foreign Affairs, Lib.):** Mr. Speaker, over the last several weeks, allegations were made regarding Canadian technology being used in the military conflict in Nagorno-Karabakh. Upon learning of these allegations, the minister immediately directed Canadian officials to investigate the claims. In line with our robust export control regime and due to ongoing hostilities, the minister suspended immediately the relevant export permits to Turkey to allow time to further assess the situation. We call for all measures to immediately stabilize the situation on the ground. We want a peaceful resolution.

**Hon. Michael Chong (Wellington—Halton Hills, CPC):** Mr. Speaker, the last two previous investigations took a year and a half and six months, and led to nothing conclusive being done. The government still has not answered the question. It is clear that Canadian drone systems were diverted to the conflict between Armenia and Azerbaijan in clear violation of the Arms Trade Treaty, the Wassenaar Arrangement and Canadian law.

Once again, did the Prime Minister or foreign affairs minister override the recommendations of the Global Affairs risk analysis and approve these drone systems for export to Turkey?

*Oral Questions*

**Mr. Robert Oliphant (Parliamentary Secretary to the Minister of Foreign Affairs, Lib.):** Mr. Speaker, let us be very clear: Our government is committed to a strong and rigorous arms export system, and that is why we have acceded to the Arms Trade Treaty. Human rights considerations are at the centre of our exports regime and Canada has one of the strongest export control systems in the world, respecting human rights. These are enshrined in our Canadian legislation.

The minister will deny any permit application where there is substantial risk of human rights violations in keeping with Canadian law and in keeping with human rights obligations.

[Translation]

**Mr. Alexis Brunelle-Duceppe (Lac-Saint-Jean, BQ):** Mr. Speaker, the Prime Minister promised that Canada would do more for peace missions around the world. He promised the UN a quick reaction force of nearly 200 soldiers for peacekeeping missions.

Last year, the government said it was a done deal, but the UN says otherwise. This force is not part of the available resources.

Will the Minister of Foreign Affairs set the record straight and apologize to the House?

[English]

**Mr. Robert Oliphant (Parliamentary Secretary to the Minister of Foreign Affairs, Lib.):** Mr. Speaker, as has been very clear, a mistake was indeed made in officials' testimony to the committee in what was presented. An apology has been given, and we will continue to respect the work of our peacekeepers around the world and we will continue to do the work that Canadians want us to do.

\* \* \*

[Translation]

**AIRLINE INDUSTRY**

**Mr. Xavier Barsalou-Duval (Pierre-Boucher—Les Patriotes—Verchères, BQ):** Mr. Speaker, for seven months the Minister of Transportation has refused to require airline companies to give their clients refunds for cancelled flights. Instead, he told people to complain to the Canadian Transportation Agency.

People listened to him and complained to the Canadian Transportation Agency, which has received more than 10,000 complaints. Guess how many of these complaints have been dealt with. None. Not one single complaint has been dealt with. Instead of doing his job, the minister directs people to a dead end. People want to get their money back, and they do not want to wait until hell freezes over.

When will he require airlines to give their customers a refund?

**Hon. Marc Garneau (Minister of Transport, Lib.):** Mr. Speaker, as I have said many times, this is not an ideal situation, and I certainly understand the frustration of Canadians who want refunds. At the same time, we are encouraging airlines to refund passengers.

We must also realize that these companies are under extreme financial pressure. That is why we are working on measures that will ensure that Canadians have a transportation system that is safe, reliable and affordable.

• (1455)

[English]

**AGRICULTURE AND AGRI-FOOD**

**Mr. Mark Strahl (Chilliwack—Hope, CPC):** Mr. Speaker, when the Canadian Food Inspection Agency falsely accused Fraser Valley Specialty Poultry of illegally shipping product across provincial boundaries, they told the owner to just admit he was guilty and pay the fine, but Ken Falk refused. He fought back and was found not guilty of all charges. Now the government is refusing to pay back his over \$100,000 in legal fees and will not even tell him how to avoid being falsely charged again.

Why are the Liberals running roughshod over this hard-working Canadian farmer?

[Translation]

**Hon. Marie-Claude Bibeau (Minister of Agriculture and Agri-Food, Lib.):** Mr. Speaker, I can assure him that, together with the Canadian Food Inspection Agency, we are working very closely with businesses. We must deal with a multitude of challenges with respect to trade barriers. I can assure him that we are doing everything we can to protect our inspection system, so that it is always robust and recognized, and to support all our producers and processors as effectively as possible.

\* \* \*

[English]

**WOMEN AND GENDER EQUALITY**

**Ms. Marilyn Gladu (Sarnia—Lambton, CPC):** Mr. Speaker, every week in Canada, a woman is killed by her domestic partner. With the pandemic, there is an increase in human trafficking and in domestic violence.

Although this government has talked a lot about eradicating violence against women, little action has been taken. In fact, the MAPI funding was eliminated and the murdered and missing aboriginal women's report recommendations were shelved.

When is this government going to take real action to address violence against women in Canada?

**Ms. Gudie Hutchings (Parliamentary Secretary to the Minister for Women and Gender Equality and Rural Economic Development, Lib.):** Mr. Speaker, I agree with my colleague 100%. There should be no violence against women in Canada. Everybody deserves to be safe. We know that all Canadians are feeling the impact of COVID, but we know it is clear that women are feeling it more and more to a greater extent. However, we have taken measures to support them. We have given \$90 million to help improve capacity at shelters and sexual assault centres and an additional \$10 million from Indigenous and Northern Affairs. We are supplying over 1,000 organizations with funding to help women in need.

\* \* \*

#### HEALTH

**Mrs. Tracy Gray (Kelowna—Lake Country, CPC):** Mr. Speaker, we are only in October and already the drug overdose deaths in the Okanagan have surpassed that for the entire year of 2019. Unfortunately, the numbers are similarly surreal across British Columbia. One does not have to look far to find someone in my community who has a family member who has, unfortunately, fallen victim to addiction. This is a crisis and we need action now.

Why is the health minister continuing to drag her heels in taking action on addiction and recovery?

**Hon. Patty Hajdu (Minister of Health, Lib.):** Mr. Speaker, my heart goes out to the member opposite. I do not think any of us in this room can say we are not touched by someone who struggles with substance use or mental health issues. That is why we have taken this issue so seriously. In fact, with regard to the opiate overdose crisis, it is this government that restored harm reduction to Canada's drug strategy, that brought back compassion to an approach to supporting people who use substances to recover, to ensure that people could access a safer supply of substances and use substances in a way that could connect them to resources and begin that hard process of recovery.

This is not an easy problem, it does not have an easy solution, but we are working very hard with in particular B.C. and all of the provinces and territories.

\* \* \*

#### INFRASTRUCTURE

**Mr. Tony Van Bynen (Newmarket—Aurora, Lib.):** Mr. Speaker, throughout the COVID pandemic, people in York Region have appreciated this government's continued support for public transit. Transit services, like the proposed Yonge North subway extension, are critical to getting people to work and home quickly and safely each day.

Would the Minister of Infrastructure and Communities share with this House the government's ongoing investments in public transit in York Region?

**Mr. Andy Fillmore (Parliamentary Secretary to the Minister of Infrastructure and Communities, Lib.):** Mr. Speaker, public transit investments create good jobs and help Canadians get around their communities. This is why this government funded the planning and preliminary engineering of the Yonge North subway extension into York Region, while Conservatives ran on a platform of

#### Oral Questions

funding cuts for infrastructure. Our government has committed over \$5 billion to transit projects in the greater Toronto area. These investments mean better jobs, reduced emissions and more resilient communities.

\* \* \*

● (1500)

#### COVID-19 EMERGENCY RESPONSE

**Mr. Philip Lawrence (Northumberland—Peterborough South, CPC):** Mr. Speaker, many organizations in Canada are suffering through the pandemic. Among them are the legions. The legions are struggling through it and part of the reason, according to their Dominion Command, is because legions do not often have to file tax returns because they are non-profits, which makes them ineligible for pandemic relief.

When will they be eligible for all pandemic relief?

[Translation]

**Hon. Diane Lebouthillier (Minister of National Revenue, Lib.):** Mr. Speaker, our priority is to ensure that the money promised under the emergency financial support measures is delivered to eligible Canadians quickly and effectively. The same goes for other benefits and audit activities. In some cases, the CRA will ask individuals to provide additional information to verify their eligibility.

\* \* \*

[English]

#### NATURAL RESOURCES

**Mr. Matt Jeneroux (Edmonton Riverbend, CPC):** Mr. Speaker, the government continues to put policies that hurt Albertans front and centre. Not even 24 hours after Alberta announced its plan to diversify the economy by becoming a recycling hub, the Liberals announced that plastics will be labelled as a toxic substance. This new label is toxic to Alberta's economy and the men and women who work hard in the plastics manufacturing sector, like the Teamsters Local 987.

Why is the Prime Minister so intent on leaving Albertans behind?

*Oral Questions*

**Hon. Seamus O'Regan (Minister of Natural Resources, Lib.):** Mr. Speaker, one in every three workers in mining and oil and gas were able to stay in their jobs, thanks to the Canada emergency wage subsidy. That is a subsidy that is going to continue right through until next summer. It represents hundreds of millions of dollars to support energy sector workers. It also represents tens of thousands of families in Newfoundland and Labrador, Alberta and Saskatchewan who will continue to be able to go to work and put food on the table, thanks to this Liberal government.

We are supporting workers, we are supporting families and we are supporting our oil and gas sector proudly.

\* \* \*

**SMALL BUSINESS**

**Mr. Pat Kelly (Calgary Rocky Ridge, CPC):** Mr. Speaker, the government has consistently failed small businesses by attacking them with draconian tax changes, calling them cheaters, designing aid programs that have not reached struggling small businesses and bungling the availability of rapid testing, which small businesses need for recovery. After six months of announcements, the government claims it has finally fixed the emergency bank account for personal accounts.

When will the government fix the rest of its botched aid programs and table a credible plan for economic recovery?

**Hon. Mary Ng (Minister of Small Business, Export Promotion and International Trade, Lib.):** Mr. Speaker, nothing is more important to us than helping our small businesses get through this very difficult time. Whether it is the small business loan that has helped almost 800,000 small businesses, relief for fixed costs such as the rent subsidy or helping businesses with payroll, there are literally millions of Canadians who are benefiting from the support to our small businesses. We will stop at nothing to keep supporting the work they do because they are so important to our communities.

\* \* \*

**POST-SECONDARY EDUCATION**

**Mr. Bob Bratina (Hamilton East—Stoney Creek, Lib.):** Mr. Speaker, we know that access to high-quality education for young people is critical to the success of not only individuals but local economies and Canada as a whole. However, we know that access to post-secondary education is not equal across the country. In the north, entrants to post-secondary now have an option to pursue their studies north of 60 with the creation of Yukon University, but more needs to be done for access to education across the north.

Could the Minister of Northern Affairs update the House on our government's work on this important file?

**Hon. Dan Vandal (Minister of Northern Affairs, Lib.):** Mr. Speaker, I thank the member for Hamilton East—Stoney Creek for his hard work.

The creation of Yukon University this year was an important milestone for the north. Building on this, last Friday I was proud to announce the creation of the northern post-secondary education task force, which will play an important role in delivering on the objectives of the Arctic and northern policy framework to close the gaps that exist between the north and the rest of Canada. By ad-

ressing long-term inequalities in the north, we are building healthier communities, respecting the rights and interests of indigenous peoples and supporting a strong economy.

\* \* \*

**ROYAL CANADIAN MOUNTED POLICE**

**Ms. Rachel Blaney (North Island—Powell River, NDP):** Mr. Speaker, people are seeing systemic racism in action in Canada. We have the indigenous services minister publicly stating that he disagrees with the RCMP commissioner. The RCMP commissioner is defending the police response, which left Mi'kmaq fishers in danger and resulted in devastating property damage. The government and the RCMP commissioner must own that the lack of planning is systemic racism and finally address it. On Friday, the Assembly of First Nations called for the commissioner's resignation.

I ask the minister to be clear. Does he have confidence in the RCMP commissioner?

● (1505)

**Hon. Bill Blair (Minister of Public Safety and Emergency Preparedness, Lib.):** Mr. Speaker, all police services, including the RCMP, must be committed to ensuring the people they serve and protect are treated with dignity and respect.

I had a conversation today with the national chief about his concerns. The issues we discussed are serious, complex and long-standing, and they must begin with an acknowledgement that systemic and structural racism and bias exists throughout our criminal justice system. Police reform must ensure justice and fairness for all Canadians. That reform is the mandate we have given to the RCMP commissioner and what we expect from the RCMP.

\* \* \*

**HEALTH**

**Mr. Marwan Tabbara (Kitchener South—Hespeler, Ind.):** Mr. Speaker, the number of reported cases of COVID-19 continues to rise, as we have seen this past weekend. We know that the key tool to combat the further spread of the virus is the COVID Alert app. Unfortunately, not all Canadians have downloaded the app or even have access to the app at this time.

Could the minister please update the House and Canadians about the government's plan to increase the use of the COVID Alert app?



**Hon. Patty Hajdu (Minister of Health, Lib.):** Mr. Speaker, the member is absolutely right. Downloading COVID Alert is a way we can help protect ourselves and the people around us. It is an app that protects privacy. In fact, it was reviewed by the Privacy Commissioner as such.

We are very thrilled that many provinces have onboarded the app, and I encourage all Canadians to download the app. It is very simple. It takes only a second, and it is another way we can make sure we are protecting our own safety and the people around us.

## GOVERNMENT ORDERS

[English]

### BUSINESS OF SUPPLY

#### OPPOSITION MOTION—INSTRUCTION TO THE STANDING COMMITTEE ON HEALTH

The House resumed from October 22 consideration of the motion, and of the amendment.

**The Speaker:** It being 3:06 p.m., pursuant to an order made on Wednesday, September 23, the House will now proceed to the taking of the deferred recorded division on the amendment to the motion by the member for Calgary Nose Hill relating to the business of supply.

Call in the members.

*Before the Clerk announced the results of the vote:*

• (1550)

**Mr. Greg McLean:** Mr. Speaker, on a point of order, I was bumped off with technical difficulties and my screen froze. As a result, I did not hear your question. I was on just before you asked the question and had technical services get me on shortly after you asked the question, but I did not technically hear the question. Am I eligible to vote?

**The Speaker:** Thank you for your honesty. I am afraid we cannot accept the vote.

**Mr. Jack Harris:** Mr. Speaker, on a point of order, I was present for the question and the question was dispensed, so I do not know if that makes any difference. The member would not have heard anything if he had been listening.

**The Speaker:** That is a good point. Unfortunately there was no way for him to know whether I dispensed or not, and he had to be here online when everyone asked me to dispense.

**Hon. Pierre Poilievre:** Mr. Speaker, on a point of order, I noticed that the member for Winnipeg North was out of his seat throughout the vote. I ask that you nullify his abstention so that it does not unduly affect the result.

**The Speaker:** That is a fair request.

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

### Business of Supply

(Division No. 12)

#### YEAS

##### Members

Aboultiaif	Aitchison
Albas	Alleslev
Allison	Angus
Arnold	Ashton
Atwin	Bachrach
Baldinelli	Barlow
Barrett	Barsalou-Duval
Beaulieu	Benzen
Bergen	Bergeron
Berthold	Bérubé
Bezan	Blaikie
Blanchette-Joncas	Blaney (North Island—Powell River)
Blaney (Bellechasse—Les Etchemins—Lévis)	Block
Boudrias	Boulerice
Bragdon	Brassard
Brunelle-Duceppe	Calkins
Cannings	Carrie
Chabot	Champoux
Charbonneau	Chiu
Chong	Collins
Cooper	Cumming
Dalton	Dancho
Davidson	Davies
DeBellefeuille	Deltell
d'Entremont	Desbiens
Desilets	Diotte
Doherty	Dowdall
Dreeshen	Duncan (Stormont—Dundas—South Glengarry)
Duvall	Epp
Falk (Battlefords—Lloydminster)	Falk (Provencher)
Fast	Findlay (South Surrey—White Rock)
Finley (Haldimand—Norfolk)	Fortin
Gallant	Garrison
Gaudreau	Gazan
Généreux	Genuis
Gill	Gladu
Godin	Gourde
Gray	Green
Hallan	Harder
Harris	Hoback
Hughes	Jansen
Jeneroux	Johns
Julian	Kelly
Kent	Kitchen
Kmieciak	Kram
Kurek	Kusie
Kwan	Lake
Larouche	Lawrence
Lehoux	Lemire
Lewis (Essex)	Liepert
Lloyd	Lobb
Lukiwski	MacGregor
MacKenzie	Maguire
Manly	Masse
May (Saarich—Gulf Islands)	Mazier
McCauley (Edmonton West)	McColeman
McLeod (Kamloops—Thompson—Cariboo)	McPherson
Melillo	Michaud
Moore	Morantz
Morrison	Motz
Nater	Normandin
O'Toole	Patzer
Paul-Hus	Pauzé
Perron	Plamondon
Poilievre	Rayes
Redekopp	Reid
Rempel Garner	Richards
Rood	Ruff

*Business of Supply*

Sahota (Calgary Skyview)	Saroya
Savard-Tremblay	Scheer
Schmale	Seeback
Shields	Shin
Simard	Singh
Sloan	Soroka
Stanton	Steinley
Ste-Marie	Strahl
Stubbs	Sweet
Tabbara	Thériault
Therrien	Tochor
Trudel	Uppal
Van Popta	Vecchio
Vidal	Viersen
Vignola	Vis
Wagantall	Warkentin
Wagh	Webber
Williamson	Wilson-Raybould
Wong	Yurdiga
Zimmer— 175	

## NAYS

Nil

## PAIRED

Nil

**The Speaker:** I declare the amendment carried.

[*Translation*]

The next question is on the main motion, as amended.

Pursuant to order made on Wednesday, September 23, we will not call for the yeas and nays. As a result, if a member of a recognized party present in the House wants to request a recorded vote or request that the amendment be passed on division, I invite them to rise and so indicate to the Chair.

*And one or more members having risen:*

**The Speaker:** We will now proceed with the vote.

*During the taking of the vote:*

• (1630)

[*English*]

**Mr. Randeep Sarai:** Mr. Speaker, I am rising on a point of order. The hon. member for Regina—Qu'Appelle left the video and also was not wearing a jacket for the first half of the question, and then turned the video off and returned back. I think he is an hon. member and his vote should not count for this.

**The Speaker:** I believe we have gone through the first half, so we are on the second one now. We are going to deal with this one, if that is okay.

Before we get the results, I want to bring members' attention to Natalie Foster, principal clerk, journals branch. This was her first time calling the vote today. Well done.

**Some hon. members:** Hear, hear!

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

*(Division No. 13)*

## YEAS

## Members

Aboultatif	Aitchison
Albas	Alleslev
Allison	Angus
Arnold	Ashton
Atwin	Bachrach
Baldinelli	Barlow
Barrett	Barsalou-Duval
Beaulieu	Benzen
Bergen	Bergeron
Berthold	Bérubé
Bezan	Blaikie
Blanchet	Blanchette-Joncas
Blaney (North Island—Powell River)	Blaney (Bellechasse—Les Etchemins—Lévis)
Block	Boudrias
Boulerice	Bragdon
Brassard	Brunelle-Duceppe
Calkins	Cannings
Carrie	Chabot
Champoux	Charbonneau
Chiu	Chong
Collins	Cooper
Cumming	Dalton
Dancho	Davidson
Davies	DeBellefeuille
Deltell	d'Entremont
Desbiens	Desilets
Diotte	Doherty
Dowdall	Dreeshen
Duncan (Stormont—Dundas—South Glengarry)	Duvall
Epp	Falk (Battlefords—Lloydminster)
Falk (Provencher)	Fast
Findlay (South Surrey—White Rock)	Finlay (Haldimand—Norfolk)
Fortin	Gallant
Garrison	Gaudreau
Gazan	Généreux
Genuis	Gill
Gladu	Godin
Gourde	Gray
Green	Hallan
Harder	Harris
Hoback	Hughes
Jansen	Jeneroux
Johns	Julian
Kelly	Kent
Kitchen	Kmiec
Kram	Kurek
Kusie	Kwan
Lake	Larouche
Lawrence	Lehoux
Lemire	Lewis (Essex)
Liepert	Lloyd
Lobb	Lukiwski
MacGregor	MacKenzie
Maguire	Manly
Masse	Mathysen
May (Saanich—Gulf Islands)	Mazier
McCauley (Edmonton West)	McColeman
McLean	McLeod (Kamloops—Thompson—Cariboo)
McPherson	Melillo
Michaud	Moore
Morantz	Morrison
Motz	Nater
Normandin	O'Toole
Patzer	Paul-Hus
Paupé	Perron
Plamondon	Poilievre
Rayes	Redekopp
Reid	Rempel Garner

*Business of Supply*

Richards  
Ruff  
Saroya  
Scheer  
Seeback  
Shin  
Singh  
Soroka  
Steinley  
Strahl  
Sweet  
Therrien  
Trudel  
Van Popta  
Vidal  
Vignola  
Wagantall  
Waugh  
Williamson  
Wong

Rood  
Sahota (Calgary Skyview)  
Savard-Tremblay  
Schmale  
Shields  
Simard  
Sloan  
Stanton  
Ste-Marie  
Stubbs  
Thériault  
Tochor  
Uppal  
Vecchio  
Viersen  
Vis  
Warkentin  
Webber  
Wilson-Raybould  
Yurdiga— 176

Mendès  
Miller  
Morrissey  
Ng  
Oliphant  
Petitpas Taylor  
Qualtrough  
Regan  
Rodriguez  
Romanado  
Saini  
Samson  
Scarpaleggia  
Schulte  
Sgro  
Sheehan  
Sidhu (Brampton South)  
Simms  
Spengemann  
Tassi  
Turnbull  
van Koeverden  
Vandenbeld  
Virani  
Wilkinson  
Young  
Zann

Mendicino  
Monsef  
Murray  
O'Connell  
O'Regan  
Powlowski  
Ratansi  
Robillard  
Rogers  
Sahota (Brampton North)  
Sajjan  
Sarai  
Schiefke  
Serré  
Shanahan  
Sidhu (Brampton East)  
Sikand  
Sorbara  
Tabbara  
Trudeau  
Van Bynen  
Vandal  
Vaughan  
Weiler  
Yip  
Zahid  
Zuberi— 152

**NAYS**

Members

Alghabra  
Anand  
Arseneault  
Badawey  
Bains  
Battiste  
Bendayan  
Bessette  
Bittle  
Blois  
Brière  
Chagger  
Chen  
Dabrusin  
Dhaliwal  
Dong  
Dubourg  
Duguid  
Dzerowicz  
Ehsassi  
Ellis  
Fergus  
Finnigan  
Fonseca  
Fragiskatos  
Freeland  
Garneau  
Gould  
Hajdu  
Holland  
Hussen  
Iacono  
Joly  
Jordan  
Kelloway  
Khera  
Kusmierczyk  
Lambropoulos  
Lamoureux  
Lauzon  
Lebouthillier  
Lightbound  
Longfield  
MacAulay (Cardigan)  
Maloney  
May (Cambridge)  
McDonald  
McKay  
McKinnon (Coquitlam—Port Coquitlam)

Amos  
Anandasangaree  
Arya  
Bagnell  
Baker  
Beech  
Bennett  
Bibeau  
Blair  
Bratina  
Casey  
Champagne  
Cormier  
Damoff  
Dhillon  
Drouin  
Duclos  
Duncan (Etobicoke North)  
Easter  
El-Khoury  
Erskine-Smith  
Fillmore  
Fisher  
Fortier  
Fraser  
Fry  
Gerretsen  
Guilbeault  
Hardie  
Housefather  
Hutchings  
Jaczek  
Jones  
Jowhari  
Khalid  
Koutrakis  
Lalonde  
Lametti  
Lattanzio  
LeBlanc  
Lefebvre  
Long  
Louis (Kitchener—Conestoga)  
MacKinnon (Gatineau)  
Martinez Ferrada  
McCrimmon  
McGuinty  
McKenna  
McLeod (Northwest Territories)

**PAIRED**

Nil

**The Speaker:** I declare the motion as amended carried.

**Ms. Rachel Blaney:** Mr. Speaker, I rise on a point of order. I want to let the Speaker know that during this vote I saw election signs behind people. I saw someone driving and pulling over to vote. I saw multiple cameras off or people walking off the screen. I also saw a member wearing a hat. I just want to remind the House that I think it was in 1983 there was a debate about a member choosing to wear her hat and she was eventually asked to remove it.

I just want to remind all members that this is the House of Commons. We are doing it virtually, but I believe we should treat it as sacredly and specially as we do at normal practice.

**The Speaker:** I thank the hon. member for North Island—Powell River for bringing that up. I hope everyone got to hear that.

I just want to remind the House leaders to discuss among themselves, and with the whips as well, as to what the protocol is in the House.

**Ms. Elizabeth May:** Mr. Speaker, I am rising on a point of order. In the same vein as the hon. member for North Island—Powell River, I would hope, Mr. Speaker, you could advise whether these rules still apply in our Standing Orders.

Once a question has been read and while we are voting, the rules actually say, for decorum, that no noise should be made in the House: no interruptions and no talking.

It certainly is tempting, I know, for the members who are present physically in the House to continue to talk. Those of us working remotely have a mute button. Perhaps you, Mr. Speaker, could find a way to suggest to the hon. member for Carleton that he needs to find his mute button because we could hear him, from coast to coast to coast, making good sport during the voting. It is a lot of noise even across the country on Zoom.

*Routine Proceedings*

• (1635)

**The Speaker:** I thank the hon. member for bringing that up. I do want to remind the hon. members that the rules that apply in the House are exactly that, so out of respect for the process I encourage the members to be as quiet as possible.

---

## ROUTINE PROCEEDINGS

[English]

### CANADA SHIPPING ACT, 2001

**Mr. Alistair MacGregor (Cowichan—Malahat—Langford, NDP)** moved for leave to introduce Bill C-250, An Act to amend the Canada Shipping Act, 2001 (anchorage prohibition).

He said: Mr. Speaker, for years, communities in and around the Salish Sea have had to deal with the presence of large freighters using our waters for extended periods of time while they wait their turn in the Port of Vancouver. Today, I am pleased and honoured to introduce a private member's bill to address this issue by amending the Canada Shipping Act, 2001.

The bill proposes to introduce a new section 23.1 to the act, which would prohibit the anchoring of large vessels in an area surrounding the southern Gulf Islands and the east coast of Vancouver Island. Any vessel contravening this prohibition would be committing an offence and would be liable for a fine of up to \$100,000.

The coastal communities in this area are frustrated by years of inaction by the federal government. These anchorages were established on traditional territories without the free, prior and informed consent of local first nations. If the federal government values these same waters enough to establish a national marine conservation area, then they also deserve protection from being used as an overflow industrial parking lot. This bill would do just that.

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

\* \* \*

## PETITIONS

### HUMAN ORGAN TRAFFICKING

**Mr. Arnold Viersen (Peace River—Westlock, CPC):** Mr. Speaker, it is my honour and privilege to rise in this place to present a petition. This petition is calling on the government to pass forthwith Bill C-350 and Bill S-240 from the last Parliament. These bills deal with the forced organ harvesting that happens around the world and also Canadians that go abroad to receive a forcibly harvested organ.

The people who have signed this petition are asking for these bills to be passed forthwith in this place and made into law.

### INDIGENOUS AFFAIRS

**Ms. Elizabeth May (Saanic—Gulf Islands, GP):** Mr. Speaker, I acknowledge I am speaking to you from the traditional territory of the WSÁNEĆ peoples and I raise my hands to them. *Hych'ka Siem.*

I am presenting petition no. 10672056, pertaining to the failure to implement the United Nations Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples. The petitioners specifically take note of the Canadian

Constitution and our human rights obligations, and specifically ask the government to move without delay to nation-to-nation talks with the Wet'suwet'en First Nation and to fully implement the United Nations Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples.

• (1640)

### PHYSICIAN-ASSISTED DYING

**Mr. Garnett Genuis (Sherwood Park—Fort Saskatchewan, CPC):** Mr. Speaker, I am pleased to be presenting four petitions in the House today.

The first petition is with respect to the government's euthanasia bill. People are concerned that it eliminates the mandatory reflection period, effectively bringing in the possibility of same-day death. This would be someone requesting and receiving euthanasia on the same day. Petitioners are hoping that the government will leave in place the reflection period.

### FIREARMS

**Mr. Garnett Genuis (Sherwood Park—Fort Saskatchewan, CPC):** Mr. Speaker, the second petition deals with the rights of law-abiding firearms owners. It notes that the order in council brought in on May 1 of this year does nothing to address the real problem of gun crime, which is illegal and smuggled guns. It calls for the government to reverse the order in council, and instead put in place meaningful measures that will combat the problem of gun smuggling and illegal guns.

### AFGHAN MINORITY COMMUNITIES

**Mr. Garnett Genuis (Sherwood Park—Fort Saskatchewan, CPC):** Mr. Speaker, the third petition highlights the plight of the Sikh and Hindu minority in Afghanistan. It calls for the Minister of Foreign Affairs to raise the struggles of this minority community with his Afghan counterparts. It also calls upon the Minister of Immigration, Refugees and Citizenship to use the powers granted to him to create a special program to help persecuted minorities in Afghanistan.

### HUMAN RIGHTS

**Mr. Garnett Genuis (Sherwood Park—Fort Saskatchewan, CPC):** Mr. Speaker, the fourth and final petition draws attention to the plight of the Uighur people. It specifically asks the government to use the Magnitsky act, the Justice for Victims of Corrupt Foreign Officials Act, to sanction those responsible for the heinous crimes against the Uighur people, including deportation to modern-day concentration camps.

## BELARUS

**Mr. Chandra Arya (Nepean, Lib.):** Mr. Speaker, I would like to present a petition on behalf of Belarusian Canadians on the recent rigged elections. The petitioners call for the dictator, Lukashenko, to resign immediately and that all political prisoners be released. It also calls upon the Government of Canada to apply Magnitsky law against all people involved in falsifying the recent 2020 election results.

## ROYAL CANADIAN MOUNTED POLICE

**Mr. Paul Manly (Nanaimo—Ladysmith, GP):** Mr. Speaker, I am pleased to present today e-petition 2471. This e-petition is about body cameras for the RCMP.

The petitioners note that body cameras are a feasible way of improving police accountability. It can alter the behaviour of people aware that their actions are being recorded and reduce violence. Body cameras protect police officers from liability when they are the target of false accusations and protect citizens from false police testimony. They improve accountability resulting in greater trust, leading to greater public co-operation with the police, and they can be used for powerful evidence in courtrooms to provide greater detail and accuracy than memory alone.

The petitioners are calling on the Government of Canada to grant the RCMP funding for body cameras and the associated costs, such as data storage, to equip nearly all personnel interacting with the public, with rare exceptions such as for undercover officers, with this technology. In addition, as deemed best, funding should be either additional to the RCMP's budget, a proportionate deduction from the RCMP's budget to cover the expense, or a combination thereof.

\* \* \*

## QUESTIONS ON THE ORDER PAPER

**Mr. Kevin Lamoureux (Parliamentary Secretary to the President of the Queen's Privy Council for Canada and to the Leader of the Government in the House of Commons, Lib.):** Mr. Speaker, I would ask that all questions be allowed to stand.

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

**Some hon. members:** Agreed.

## GOVERNMENT ORDERS

[Translation]

## CRIMINAL CODE

The House resumed consideration of the motion that Bill C-6, An Act to amend the Criminal Code (conversion therapy), be read the second time and referred to a committee.

**The Deputy Speaker:** Before we continue, I would like to inform the House that because of the deferred recorded division, Government Orders will be extended by 83 minutes.

In addition, 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 Edmonton Strath-

## Government Orders

cona, Health; the hon. member for North Island—Powell River, Veterans Affairs.

[English]

When the House last took up debate on the question, the hon. member for Surrey Centre had seven minutes remaining in his time for his remarks.

We will go to the hon. member for Surrey Centre.

• (1645)

**Mr. Randeep Sarai (Surrey Centre, Lib.):** Mr. Speaker, to resume, Bill C-6 proposes a number of offences. Some protect everyone affected by conversion therapy and others specifically protect children. Everyone would be protected by Bill C-6 offences that propose to criminalize profiting from conversion therapy, as well as advertising and offering to provide it. These offences would reduce the availability of conversion therapy, as well as its discriminatory public messaging. That is intended to prevent Canadians from being subjected to this heinous practice.

Critically, Bill C-6 takes a strong stance on protecting children from conversion therapy. It would criminalize causing minors to undergo conversion therapy and removing minors ordinarily resident in Canada from Canada to undergo conversion therapy abroad.

In short, Bill C-6's protections for children are comprehensive. They amount to a complete criminal law ban. This approach is directly responsive to the lasting damage that conversion therapy is known to cause children. Evidence shows that efforts to change an adolescent's sexual orientation are associated with multiple indicators of poor health and adjustment in young adulthood. Specifically, such attempts to change a fundamental part of who a young person is are associated with elevated young-adult depressive symptoms and suicidal behaviour, and with lower levels of young-adult life satisfaction, social support and socio-economic status.

We know that conversion therapy is associated with multiple domains of functioning that affect self-care, well-being and adjustment. We also know that youth are particularly vulnerable to being coerced or compelled to receive conversion therapy. The American Psychological Association noted, in its 2009 systemic review of peer-reviewed literature on conversion therapy, that coercive intervention and residential centres for youth pose serious concerns “due to their advocacy of treatments that have no scientific basis and [their] potential for harm due to coercion, stigmatization, inappropriateness of treatment level and type, and restriction of liberty.”

The association noted that such interventions:

...may pose serious risk of harm, are potentially in conflict with ethical imperatives to maximize autonomous decision making and client self-determination, and have no documented benefits.

### *Government Orders*

We know that children are often subjected to the most invasive forms of conversion therapy, while at the same time being least likely to have the power or authority to oppose undergoing it. They are also the most vulnerable to conversion therapy harm. The research tells us that those formative years, when a youth develops and explores their identity, may be determinative of their future well-being. Messaging that their identity or sexuality is wrong, in efforts to seek to determine their identity for them, particularly at this early stage in life, may lead to serious psychological harm or even death by suicide.

Bill C-6 responds to this disturbing evidence with its proposed offences that would protect all children under the age of 18 from conversion therapy harms. Bill C-6 sends a clear message by carving out a protected space for children to grow and develop. It tells Canadians the truth: that dictating to children who they should be harms them. It should never be done. Significantly, Bill C-6 also ensures legitimate support for youth who express uncertainty about their sexual orientation or gender identity would not be unintentionally captured by criminal law. This is because legitimate therapies and interventions for children and others, for that matter, involve providing support and acceptance for the person's self-definition without dictating a particular result. Legitimate support is provided in an environment that accepts difference.

The American Psychological Association's 2009 report recommends that adolescents' exploration of identity should be supported by:

- accepting homosexuality and bisexuality as normal and positive variants of human sexual orientation,
- accepting and supporting youths as they address the stigma and isolation of being a sexual minority,
- using person-centered approaches as youths explore their identities and experience important developmental milestones (e.g., exploring sexual values, dating, and socializing openly),
- reducing family and peer rejection and increasing family and peer support.

Perhaps even more helpful than describing legitimate therapies for youth and distinguishing them from the harms of conversion therapy is the American Academy of Child and Adolescent Psychiatry's statement on conversion therapy, which clarifies that:

● (1650)

Comprehensive assessment and treatment of youth that includes exploration of all aspects of identity, including sexual orientation, gender identity, and/or gender expression is not "conversion therapy". This applies whether or not there are unwanted sexual attractions and when the gender role consistent with the youth's assigned sex at birth is non-coercively explored as a means of helping the youth understand their authentic gender identity. In the presence of...distress related to incongruence between gender identity and sex assigned at birth, the standard of care may involve exploration of living in a different gender role.

I wholeheartedly agree, and nothing in Bill C-6 would capture the legitimate therapies and treatment that I have just described. This is because the Bill C-6 definition of conversion therapy only captures practices, treatments or services designed to effect a particular result. Changing a person's sexual orientation to heterosexual, or gender identity to cisgender, does not capture therapies or interventions for other purposes, such as to support a person in their own identity without requiring a particular result.

I am certain that Bill C-6 would make a significant contribution toward creating an environment that fosters the healthy develop-

ment of all children who may be questioning, developing or exploring their sexual orientation or gender identity.

**Mrs. Tamara Jansen (Cloverdale—Langley City, CPC):** Mr. Speaker, a young woman here in the Lower Mainland, Susan, identified as a boy for as long as she could remember. At age 10, she was raped. These early sexual molestations led her to reject her feminine identity and feel unsafe as a girl. At the age of 16, she was so distraught that she was admitted to Vancouver General Hospital. Later in life friends invited her to church and though the experience was not perfect, she felt embraced and loved. She chose to start seeing a counsellor to help deal with unwanted non-heterosexual behaviour. She looked forward to each counselling session because she felt deeply encouraged by each session. Susan wants the government to know that it must protect the right of Canadians to seek the counselling of their choice.

Would the legislation, with the current broad definition of conversion therapy, put Canadians like Susan at risk of not receiving the counselling they chose?

**Mr. Randeep Sarai:** Mr. Speaker, this does not prohibit counselling, conversations with a spiritual counsellor, spiritual priest or other types of advice. It would particularly protect vulnerable young children from being forced to undergo conversion therapy or being taken abroad to have that done. Scientists, psychiatrists and psychologists have proved this is harmful. It is very dangerous, and it is counterintuitive. In fact, it creates a higher chance of youths committing suicide or having other adverse personal risks in their lives. This would not prohibit, in my understanding, any conversations, counselling or identity exploration for individuals, especially young adolescents.

**Mr. Pat Kelly (Calgary Rocky Ridge, CPC):** Mr. Speaker, I listened carefully to the member's speech. I wonder if he would comment on some of the concerns that have been raised both here in debate and outside.

As legislators, we have a responsibility to try and create the best legislation we can. Would he be open to amendment at committee to make this bill stronger, better and improve upon and clarify the definition to ensure that many of the concerns some people have raised about the bill can be very clearly dealt with so we can ensure we meet the objective of the bill, which is to ensure the horrible practice of conversion therapy not legally occur in Canada?

*Government Orders*

• (1655)

**Mr. Randeep Sarai:** Mr. Speaker, part of our legislative process is to explore, refine and make even better bills that are proposed by government, private members or otherwise. We will always look for positive comments that will help protect our citizens, particularly our youth who are under age and those who are defined under the charter. I am open to hearing anything that will help protect their lives. The intent must be to protect the individuals who the bill was designed to protect to avoid any harm they may face from this very harmful practice of conversion therapy.

**Ms. Rachel Blaney (North Island—Powell River, NDP):** Mr. Speaker, one of the things I am personally very concerned about is that we ensure different language is not used to hide this very poisonous practice. I think of people calling it body affirming therapy. This is really about protecting young people, protecting people who are transgender or gender non-conforming individuals, supporting them in moving forward, not having this toxic barrier.

Could the member talk a bit about how some of these services are hidden and how unsafe that makes these communities?

**Mr. Randeep Sarai:** Mr. Speaker, when growing up, I still remember my member of Parliament, Svend Robinson, coming out for the first time. I was in grade 8. I remember the impact it had on me and everyone else in his constituency.

I knew him very well. As a young child I helped with his campaigns. It was a big learning experience for me to converse and talk with him to find out why he had not done it before, why he came out later, what the social implications and difficulties were. I remember explaining that to many others, specifically to my community, the South Asian community, which were not familiar with a lot of these principles, thoughts and identities. They did not relate to them at the time.

It is more imperative that we learn about these and protect those who are in that young age, still trying to figure things out and having challenging thoughts. Society has come a long way now. I hope we as a government can help facilitate that and give people a safe environment to do so.

**Mrs. Sherry Romanado (Longueuil—Charles-LeMoine, Lib.):** Mr. Speaker, it is my pleasure to speak to Bill C-6, which proposes to promote the equality rights of lesbian, gay, bisexual, transgender, queer and two-spirit Canadians by taking important steps to end a practice that discriminates against them. Because of the individual harm conversion therapy causes to those subjected to it and the societal harms it causes by propagating the myth that a person can and should change a fundamental part of who they are, their sexual orientation or gender identity, Bill C-6 proposes new criminal offences that criminalize the practice with a view to ending it.

[*Translation*]

I am proud that this bill puts Canada at the forefront of the international community in the fight against a destructive practice. There is no doubt that Canada is a leader in criminal law reform in the area of conversion therapy, but we are not alone. In fact, we are part of a growing movement to protect LGBTQ2 communities from a practice that stigmatizes and harms them.

Most countries that have taken steps to combat this practice have not proceeded with criminal law reform. However, there is growing recognition that criminal law is an appropriate tool to fight the harm caused by conversion therapy.

[*English*]

Bill C-6 defines conversion therapy with respect to its purpose. It is any practice, treatment or service designed to change a person's sexual orientation to heterosexual or gender identity to cisgender or to repress or reduce non-heterosexual attraction or sexual behaviour. Such a definition excludes practices, treatments or services designed for other purposes, most notably gender-affirming treatments. Such treatments are designed to provide support in an accepting environment, not to change the person receiving them.

• (1700)

[*Translation*]

On the basis of this clear definition, Bill C-6 creates the following offences: causing a minor to undergo conversion therapy, removing a minor from Canada with the intention that they undergo conversion therapy, causing a person to undergo conversion therapy against the person's will, receiving a financial or other material benefit from the provision of conversion therapy, and advertising an offer to provide conversion therapy.

This approach will provide general protection for all persons under the age of 18, whether the conversion therapy is provided in Canada or outside Canada. It would also protect all Canadians by reducing the availability of conversion therapy and discriminatory messaging through proposed offences that would prohibit advertising conversion therapy or financially benefiting from it. This bill does not just protect children.

[*English*]

How does such an approach measure up on a global scale? The only known jurisdiction to have implemented a criminal law response is Malta. In 2016, Malta made it an offence to perform conversion practices on vulnerable persons, defined as a person under the age of 16 years, a person suffering from a mental disorder or a person considered by the court to be at risk. Malta also criminalizes performing involuntary conversion and advertising such practices.

Of course, each country's response has been tailored to its own legal system and reflects the lived realities of its own people.

*Government Orders*

I am pleased to note that Bill C-6 provides protection to all children under 18 years of age, given the evidence indicating that this group is the most adversely impacted. Canada is proposing an added measure that would serve to denounce and reduce the availability of conversion therapy. That is a criminal offence that would prohibit profiting from the practice in any circumstance.

Although it appears that other countries have yet to implement criminal law responses, Canada and Malta may not be alone for long. In March 2018, the European parliament passed a resolution condemning conversion therapy and urging European Union members to ban the practice. In July, the U.K. announced that it would study the issue and then bring forward plans to ban conversion therapy. A bill proposing a ban on performing or advertising conversion therapy is currently before Ireland's parliament.

[Translation]

While countries are looking at how to combat conversion therapy, the United Nations took a firm stance against this practice. This summer, an independent expert on protection against violence and discrimination based on sexual orientation and gender identity presented a thematic report on conversion therapy practices at the 44th session of the United Nations Human Rights Council.

The report recommends that countries ban practices of conversion therapy from being advertised and carried out in health care, religious, education, community, commercial or any other settings, public or private. It also recommends that countries establish a system of sanctions for non-compliance with the ban on practices of conversion therapy.

[English]

Although only one country is known to have adopted a criminal law response, many countries have implemented civil bans in an attempt to reduce the prevalence of conversion therapy, particularly its delivery by health care professionals. Many American states, for example, have enacted legislation that prevents health care professionals from providing conversion therapy to minors, such that professionals who violate this rule are subject to disciplinary measures.

Three Canadian provinces have followed a similar approach. Ontario, Nova Scotia and P.E.I. have passed legislation specifying that conversion therapy is not an insured service and banning health care providers from doing it to minors unless they are capable of consenting and do in fact consent. Also, both Yukon and my home Province of Quebec have recently introduced bills that would affect similar reforms.

[Translation]

To my knowledge, none of Canada's provinces or territories consider conversion therapy to be an insured service, whether that is set out in legislation or not. This practice has been discredited and condemned by the relevant professional associations. However, three provinces have demonstrated leadership in protecting minors by prohibiting health care providers from subjecting them to conversion therapy.

Nova Scotia's approach offers additional protection by prohibiting those in a position of trust or authority over young people from subjecting them to conversion therapy.

[English]

These are important elements of the suite of protections that Canada is building to promote the equality of LGBTQ2 Canadians. Bill C-6 builds on these responses and fills gaps. Provincial legislation protects minors in the health care context, but what about other contexts?

We know that conversion therapy is provided by a range of different people, not just health care professionals. In fact, some providers have no training at all. Provincial health care laws cannot apply to lay persons providing conversion therapy. Provincial legislation also only protects minors who are incapable of making their own treatment decisions. What about minors who are capable of making those decisions and what about adults?

These gaps are where Bill C-6 would play a critical role. It would provide protection to children and adults, while building on existing provincial responses. All of these provincial statutes conceptualize the problem in the same way. They define conversion therapy with respect to its objective to change a person's sexual orientation and gender identity, which necessarily excludes all legitimate gender-affirming treatments, practices or services. The various statutes might use slightly different terminology but their respective definitions amount to the same thing.

• (1705)

[Translation]

I am pleased that Bill C-6 is part of a broader Canadian response. Bill C-6 will protect all individuals under the age of 18, whether they have the capacity to consent to treatment or not, regardless of who is providing said treatment.

[English]

Together, responses at all levels of government convey the clear message that conversion therapy is wrong. It harms those subjected to it and it harms society by implying that there is something wrong with difference.

As Canadians, we cannot tolerate such messaging. It runs contrary to who we are as a people and as a nation. We are a society that promotes these fundamental values. Bill C-6 reflects who we are as Canadians. Conversion therapy must stop. I urge all members to join me in support of this critical legislation.



*Government Orders*

**Mr. Brad Vis (Mission—Matsqui—Fraser Canyon, CPC):** Mr. Speaker, I will make it very clear that I am opposed to conversion therapy and its practice and use on minors in Canada. However, I do have some challenges with the bill in its current form, especially as it relates to a child-parent relationship.

The definition of “conversion therapy” in the legislation is that it is a practice to reduce one's sexual behaviour. What protections would this proposed law provide in its current form for parents having a discussion with their child when the child might not be in agreement with the parents?

The bill seems to lack support and protection for parents who have to have those challenging and difficult conversations with their children.

**Mrs. Sherry Romanado:** Mr. Speaker, this bill would not take away conversations, which I hope families are having when children have questions about their identity and their sexual orientation. I am hoping that they are having those conversations with their parents, and this bill would not take away those conversations.

In fact, regarding the concerns members may have, this is where we have those debates. This is where we bring it to committee, and this is where we have those questions answered, but in no way would this bill take away conversations between family members and support for children who are facing this.

**Mr. Ziad Aboultaif (Edmonton Manning, CPC):** Mr. Speaker, the hon. member on the other side mentioned a few countries, such as Malta, those in the European Union and throughout the United Nations. It seems from what she mentioned that the bill does not agree with other practices or laws out there. Can she be specific on where the disagreement lies between Bill C-6 and other countries?

**Mrs. Sherry Romanado:** Mr. Speaker, as I said, every country is dealing with its own lived experiences. Here in Canada we have a Canadian-made approach. Bill C-8, which was brought forward before, has now been brought back as Bill C-6, and it is really a Canadian approach.

I know that some people would say that it does not go far enough in terms of protection, especially of those who are vulnerable, such as our children, who are facing incredible discrimination and horrors, which we have heard of in this House and through our history. What may work in Malta, Ireland and the U.K. may not work here, and that is why we made a point of bringing forward legislation that will work here in Canada.

• (1710)

**Ms. Leah Gazan (Winnipeg Centre, NDP):** Mr. Speaker, I want to let members know how excited I am about the bill and how important it is. It has made me think of my former colleague at the University of Winnipeg, Catherine Taylor, who won a precedent-setting ethics committee review to allow kids who are part of the 2SLGBTQIA community to participate in a research study, which resulted in her receiving death threats.

I reiterate how critical it is to protect kids when we are still evolving as a society to allow people to live who they are. This is a human right, and I want to express my support for Bill C-6.

Members of the Conservative Party have raised concerns about parental control. I would ask the member why is it so critical that kids who perhaps are in families where parents are not supportive of their identity are still provided with the protection they deserve and require to protect this human right.

**Mrs. Sherry Romanado:** Mr. Speaker, I want to touch on exactly that when we talk about families. Many years ago my aunt came out. The family was not sure how to answer that question, because it was unfortunately a very different time. Those conversations now happen very openly.

I am hoping, and I know I am going off target, that even with this pandemic she will be celebrating her nuptials with her long-time partner in a couple of weeks. I am hoping to be there to witness it. She has had a long road, and I am really proud of her.

I am proud of so many Canadians who are who they are, are not afraid to stand up for who they are and know there is nothing wrong with them. They are free to be who they are.

**The Deputy Speaker:** Before we go to resuming debate, I notice the topic before the House this afternoon is, of course, of great interest during questions and comments. I do see a number of members trying to get in, both here in the House and by virtual connection. I am going to do my best to make sure everyone gets a chance to pose a question. We will take them in order and make it as equal as we can across the House and each of the parties. In that sense, it would help if members could make their questions and comments succinct.

Resuming debate, the hon. member for Kildonan—St. Paul.

**Ms. Raquel Dancho (Kildonan—St. Paul, CPC):** Mr. Speaker, I was first elected just over a year ago. When I stepped foot in the House of Commons and sat in one those famous green chairs, I instantly felt the enormous weight of the responsibility to ethically and professionally represent the 85,000 people in my riding of Kildonan—St. Paul.

It is a very diverse riding. There are many seniors and young families, hard-working small business owners, trades professionals and public servants. There are thriving faith communities, which have risen to the enormous challenges of the pandemic and provided much needed to those hit hardest by the economic and health challenges. There are also many people from the LGBTQ community and many more parents, friends, sisters and brothers and neighbours to LGBTQ people.

*Government Orders*

As the member of Parliament to all these wonderful groups and many more, I have the responsibility to defend our country's freedoms and civil liberties on their behalf and to help create a society that treats all people with dignity, compassion and respect, especially our society's most vulnerable. That is why the discussion on Bill C-6, an act to amend the Criminal Code concerning conversion therapy and the LGBTQ community is important to me as a parliamentarian and the federal representative of Kildonan—St. Paul.

We know history has not been kind to the LGBTQ community. In Canada, in the 1800s, same-sex relationships between men were punishable by death. In the 1950s and 1960s, there were efforts to eliminate all homosexuals from the public service, the RCMP and the Canadian military. Following the decriminalization of homosexuality in 1969, things began to slowly change for the better for the LGBTQ community. The Canadian pride movement gained traction in the 1970s, but police continued to raid gay bars and arrest and intimidate LGBTQ Canadians.

However, in 1982, Canada patriated the Charter of Rights and Freedoms, and section 15 of the charter guaranteed for all Canadians equality before and under the law, and the right to equal protection and equal benefit of the law without discrimination. This section became critical for the LGBTQ community in 1995 when the Supreme Court of Canada ruled that sexual orientation should be read in or applied to section 15 of the charter.

Further, in 1992, former Conservative justice minister Kim Campbell lifted the ban on homosexuals in the military. Canada became one of the first modern countries in the world to do so. In 2005, Canada became the fourth country in the world to officially legalize same-sex marriage nationwide. These rights and many more in Canada were hard fought and won by the LGBTQ community and their allies, so they could live free and be equal under the law.

I was born in 1990, so the rights and acceptance of LGBTQ Canadians has largely been the norm for my entire life, and the 2005 same-sex marriage debate occurred just as I was entering young adulthood. For me, protection of sexual orientation, identity and expression are a given in a society that is as free, diverse and accepting as Canada.

However, we know that even today, LGBTQ Canadians face discrimination and immense hardship. When I was the shadow minister for diversity, inclusion and youth, I had the opportunity to meet with many support groups for the LGBTQ community. They shared with me truly heartbreaking stories, stories of how they provided emergency supports for young people who were, for example, kicked out of their homes for being gay, whose parents had disowned them. I was told it happens more often than one thinks.

They shared how trans kids are so often abused by others, whether at home, walking down the street or at school. They also shared how they helped older adults struggling with coming out because they grew up in a different time, when LGBTQ Canadians had to hide in the closet, so to speak. These were very eye-opening conversations for me of the realities faced by many LGBTQ people in Canada.

A young person who recently transitioned, who I have come to know, shared with me what this bill meant to her. She said, "The hardest thing for young LGBTQ people is believing your family won't support you or love you for who you are. This bill says it's wrong to pressure or force someone to be someone they—

● (1715)

**The Deputy Speaker:** I will interrupt the hon. member for a moment.

On a point of order, the hon. member for Banff—Airdrie.

**Mr. Blake Richards:** Mr. Speaker, I believe the member will be splitting her time with the member for Mégantic—L'Érable.

**The Deputy Speaker:** Is the hon. member for Kildonan—St. Paul wishing to share her time?

**Ms. Raquel Dancho:** Yes, Mr. Speaker. My apologies for not saying that at the beginning.

I am going to continue with the quote from my friend, who said, "This bill says it's wrong to pressure or force someone to be someone they are not. It would say that being LGBTQ is just as valid as being straight or cisgender. What we need as young people, is to be loved and supported for who we are."

Although there are limited statistics and studies on conversion therapy, the data tells us that conversion therapy is happening in Canada, that over 20,000 LGBTQ Canadians have been subjected to it, and a further 11% of trans individuals in Canada are survivors of conversion therapy. We call them survivors because we know that conversion therapy can result in suicide, depression, self-harm, social isolation and many other horrible long-term impacts.

As a result, jurisdictions across Canada began banning this practice a few years ago, whether at the provincial level in the public health system or at the civic level with business licences. Now we are debating legislation to ban it at the federal level by using the Criminal Code.

I am proud to be a member of a party that believes conversion therapy is wrong and should be banned. We believe no Canadian should be forced to change who they are. We know that too many Canadians have been harmed by conversion therapy and have been a target of degrading and dehumanizing practices in efforts to change their sexual orientation against their will.

I was very proud of our Conservative leader when he said:

I am here to secure the rights of every Canadian, including those in the LGBTQ community, and to build an inclusive and prosperous country for all.

Further, he acknowledged the persecution this community continues to face:

*Government Orders*

For too many LGBTQ Canadians, that persecution may have even involved the threat or use of conversion therapy. To be forced to change who they are is not okay. That is something I hope no Canadian ever endures again....

I agree wholeheartedly with our leader, and that is why I hope Parliament can pass a bill that protects LGBTQ youth and the rights and freedoms of all Canadians.

However, when this bill was introduced in the last session of Parliament this past March, I received many calls, emails and letters from Canadians who were concerned about the lack of clarity in this bill. Parents were concerned that the language used in this bill meant they would be prohibited from speaking to their children about sexuality and gender, from setting house rules about sex and relationships, and from having free and open conversations with their children about sexuality. I assured those concerned that when this bill was first tabled in March, the Liberal government provided clarity in its bill's news release, which clearly stated:

These new offences would not criminalise private conversations in which personal views on sexual orientation, sexual feelings or gender identity are expressed such as where teachers, school counsellors, pastoral counsellors, faith leaders, doctors, mental health professionals, friends or family members provide...support to persons struggling with their sexual orientation, sexual feelings, or gender identity.

Upon hearing this, many of the fears about this bill were assuaged. However, fears and concerns remain that the language from the news release was not included in this bill. These fears are well known by the Liberal government. If the Liberals truly want to build consensus in our diverse Canadian society, I encourage them to listen to these concerns and simply put the wording of their own news release into the legislation, so more Canadians can support this bill.

This is an opportunity for Parliament and all parties to come together and support the rights, freedoms and equality of LGBTQ Canadians, but by ignoring the concerns expressed by some Canadians about this bill, the Liberals, it would seem, have opted to turn this critical issue into a divisive one. The LGBTQ community has for so long been unfairly persecuted, and I do not believe anyone would advocate for the unfair persecution of others and the criminalization of private conversations.

Our leader spoke to this point very well when he said:

People need to be free to talk openly to people they trust in their families or communities. That could be about coming out. That could be about their orientation or their gender identity. It could also be about their own faith or their own personal life journey. They should feel free to talk to others without the fear of a public prosecution.

He rightly pointed out that in this smart phone age, when young people are glued to social media, we cannot criminalize talking. Rather, we must facilitate it.

The issue of conversion therapy and the harm done to LGBTQ Canadians is too important. We need to get this right. It is our legislative duty to do so, which is why we will be proposing reasonable amendments at the justice committee, so the legislation will better protect all Canadians and is clear in its meaning.

In conclusion, I believe conversion therapy should be banned to protect young people who identify as LGBTQ. I also believe the Charter of Rights and Freedoms must be honoured as we move forward and build a more inclusive society.

There are many difficult conversations to be had in my future as a legislator. In fact, very few of the issues debated in the House of Commons seem to be simple or easy. After all, we live in a very diverse, multicultural, pluralistic society with many different world views, and I want my constituents and all Canadians to know they can count on me to stand up for the rights and freedoms of every citizen in this country. I will always lead with the intent to treat others with dignity, compassion and respect.

• (1720)

**Ms. Rachel Blaney (North Island—Powell River, NDP):** Mr. Speaker, I found the member's intervention interesting. I hope that every member has an understanding that members of the SOGIE community, which stands for sexual orientation and gender identity and expression, do not need to be fixed and that it is impossible to change someone's sexual orientation through counselling or aversion therapy. In fact, any attempt to alter a person's sexual orientation, gender identity or gender expression is extremely harmful to those subjected to it, leading to depression, social isolation, often self-harm and even death by suicide. It is important to recognize the part about suicide, because so many people are gone and will never get the chance to find a safe reality.

This is not a question of conversations. This is a question of oppressive counselling that can harm people fundamentally. Could the member explain how she could confuse the two?

**Ms. Raquel Dancho:** Mr. Speaker, I agree with the member, and if she had listened to my speech, she would have heard how much I wholeheartedly understand the harms of conversion therapy and the detrimental effects it has had on the citizens of Canada over the last 100 years.

What I have heard from my constituents, whom I have a duty to represent in the House of Commons, is concerns that this bill is criminalizing conversations. That is their understanding. If the member was listening, I mentioned that I talked to concerned citizens about the Liberals' news release. They included a section in their news release that was not in the legislation, and with it, many of the fears about criminalizing conversations were assuaged. What I asked for in my speech was further clarity and initiative from the Liberal government to ensure that everyone understands their rights with this bill.

• (1725)

[*Translation*]

**Ms. Andréanne Larouche (Shefford, BQ):** Mr. Speaker, I thank my colleague for her speech. During the last session, I had the honour of sitting with her on the Standing Committee on the Status of Women, where we discussed gender equality. Today, we are debating conversion therapy.

*Government Orders*

Much has been said about the fact that women were hit particularly hard by the pandemic, as was another community. That is, of course, the LGBTQ+ community. Before the pandemic, it was already in great distress, which was exacerbated by the pandemic. The pandemic revealed the true extent of their distress. It is the reason why, with this bill, we are sending a strong message to this community that we stand with it, we support its efforts and we must dispel the myths and prejudices spread by conversion therapy.

**Ms. Raquel Dancho:** Mr. Speaker, I thank my colleague from the Standing Committee on the Status of Women for her question.

[*English*]

I agree with her that the pandemic has exacerbated many of the societal problems we see. Home is not a safe place for many folks, so having to isolate at home or stay at home because there is no other option further endangers folks who are not in a safe home. That plays right into the issues of conversion therapy and abuse against women and children. If the Liberals had not shut down Parliament for five months and then prorogued it for six weeks, we may have debated this legislation sooner and could have passed it sooner.

**Mrs. Cathay Wagantall (Yorkton—Melville, CPC):** Mr. Speaker, I concur with my colleague that conversion therapy is definitely an issue we need to deal with.

I have a concern for individuals who I think the member would have a heart for as well. Max said her gender transition was not the solution to her severe depression and did not deal with her negative feelings of self-image and self-identity. Lee said she should not have been encouraged to transition. Elle said that at the time, she did not realize it was possible to not hate her body.

These are just a few of many individuals who are now sharing and talking among themselves. They have transitioned and then de-transitioned, though they are not being rude in any way to those who continue to be their friends and have gone through this transition. I am concerned for them. They are sharing in the public square through YouTube, which is what the younger generation does, and they had all transitioned before age 18. I believe they do not feel safe in the circumstances with the definition of conversion therapy in the bill.

**Ms. Raquel Dancho:** Mr. Speaker, I understand where my colleague is coming from. A number of individuals have sent me those same YouTube links and information about individuals who have had a very difficult time with their transition, regardless of where they are on the spectrum, whether they are transitioning or de-transitioning.

What I have come to learn over the last year I have studied this issue, and formerly as the diversity, inclusion and youth shadow minister, is that there are many heartbreaking stories. That is why it is important that as parliamentarians we protect the support, in the family and in the community, for individuals dealing with these very challenging issues. That is why I think it is important for Parliament to ensure that we are not criminalizing conversations through this legislation.

[*Translation*]

**Mr. Luc Berthold (Mégantic—L'Érable, CPC):** Mr. Speaker, it is with great humility that I decided to speak to Bill C-6 today. For the benefit of anyone watching our proceedings in the House, I would like to remind everyone what Bill C-6, which we have been debating since this morning, is about.

The bill aims to discourage and denounce conversion therapy by criminalizing certain activities related to it, with the further intention of protecting “the human dignity and equality of all Canadians.” It amends the Criminal Code in order, among other things, to prohibit anyone from advertising services related to conversion therapy; forcing persons or causing a child to undergo conversion therapy; removing a child from Canada to undergo conversion therapy abroad; and receiving a material benefit from the provision of conversion therapy.

Why did I decide to speak to this today? It is simple: because I am a father. I have three amazing children, a beautiful family, and I want what is best for their future. I love them for who they are, not who I wish they were. I love them because they are complete, autonomous individuals who make their own choices. Of course, as a father, I can try to influence their choices. I can help them make the right choices and help them get back on track when they make the wrong choices. I can be there for them at all times. However, as a father, I could never change what they are or who they are. Never, ever would it have occurred to me to pay for them to undergo therapy to change who they are.

I will be clear. A person can make poor choices, but they cannot choose who they are. A person's sexual orientation and gender are not a matter of choice. As I prepared my speech, I read the testimony of young people who had been subjected to conversion therapy. As a father, I never would have subjected my children to such treatment. Those are the values I hold and they are based on the knowledge I have and what I intrinsically believe to be the right thing to do. Many Canadians and Quebecers share those values.

I wanted to know more about conversion therapy. I found this report from the Ordre des psychologues du Québec, which issued a statement about conversion therapy in 2012. I will read an excerpt so that members and all Quebecers and Canadians can understand my position.

Research on these issues has shown that it would be unethical to offer homosexuals wishing to undergo psychotherapy a procedure designed to change their sexual orientation as a treatment option. Not only is this practice unproven, but it also runs the risk of creating false hope and could cause more suffering when the treatment inevitably fails.

Furthermore, offering conversion therapy, especially if the individual did not explicitly request it, may reinforce the false belief that homosexuality is abnormal, worsen the distress or shame some feel about not conforming to expectations, and undermine self-esteem. Research shows that procedures designed to change sexual orientation may have a significant negative impact and cause greater distress than that for which they originally sought psychotherapy.

*Government Orders*

The report then lists some mental health issues.

Instead, psychotherapy should focus on treating the depression or anxiety, relieving stress, building self-esteem and helping the individual face any challenges they may encounter. In other words, the treatment should help them grow without consideration for their sexual orientation.

This report was from 2012, and I think it is very clear. It is a good introduction and helps set the stage for Bill C-6, which would criminalize the practice of conversion therapy in Canada.

Had the Liberal government not prorogued Parliament, conversion therapy would probably be on the verge of being banned in Canada. The debates would have been held, everyone's views would have been heard, and the majority of the House would have already voted to ban this offensive practice, which, I must humbly admit, I did not even know about before I became a member of Parliament.

I also want to share the position taken by the Government of Quebec, which just announced that it plans to ban conversion therapy in the province. This reflects how the majority of Quebecers feel about this practice. The practice of conversion therapy will be banned in Quebec.

• (1730)

It will soon be against the law in Quebec to offer a homosexual person heterosexual conversion therapy. Bill 70 will ban anyone from soliciting another, whether free of charge or for payment, to engage in a process of converting their sexual orientation. Once the bill becomes law, an offender could be fined up to \$50,000, or even \$150,000 in the case of a corporation. That is significant, and it speaks to the importance of this issue.

Across Canada, an estimated 47,000 men have been subjected to conversion therapy. Unfortunately, I did not find any statistics on women, but I am sure that many women have been affected. There are little to no statistics on the number of cases in Quebec, because the phenomenon is under-reported there. That probably explains why I had never heard of conversion therapy before being elected a federal MP.

No Canadian should be forced to change who they are. We know that far too many Canadians have been victims of this practice. As parliamentarians, we have a duty to protect the most vulnerable members of our society. That includes members of the LGBTQ+ community who have been victims of degrading or dehumanizing practices intended to change their sexual orientation against their will.

Everyone deserves to be treated with dignity and respect. We need to do things properly. That is why we are going to propose a reasonable amendment to the Standing Committee on Justice and Human Rights to ensure this bill does a better job of protecting Canadians.

The government could have chosen an approach that would have garnered the support of even more MPs if it had taken into account comments received when the first version of the bill to ban conversion therapy was introduced. Again, for those tuning in, an identical bill, Bill C-8, was introduced during the first session of the 43rd Parliament, but it died on the Order Paper when Parliament was prorogued on August 18, 2020.

I had an opportunity to speak to the House during that session, and I emphasized the fact that, unfortunately, the form and the content were different and needed clarification. Although the Department of Justice's website makes it very clear that private conversations between parents and children are protected, the bill did not. The Department of Justice's website states the following:

These new offences would not criminalise private conversations in which personal views on sexual orientation, sexual feelings or gender identity are expressed such as where teachers, school counsellors, pastoral counsellors, faith leaders, doctors, mental health professionals, friends or family members provide affirming support to persons struggling with their sexual orientation, sexual feelings, or gender identity.

However, this explanation is not included in the section of the bill with the definition of conversion therapy. Adding it would provide greater clarity.

We know that the member for Winnipeg North talks a lot, but sometimes he makes good requests. Today, I heard him request, perhaps unusually, that an hon. Bloc Québécois member tell him what amendments would improve Bill C-6 so it would garner greater support from members of the House and Canadians.

I am taking this opportunity to humbly submit this small improvement to Bill C-6. We will propose an amendment that will seek to guarantee that voluntary conversations between these people and their teachers, school counsellors and all those I mentioned will not be criminalized, as indicated on the department's website.

I do not mean to imply that the Liberals or the minister asked that this part of the description of the bill be removed so that they could play petty partisan politics on this important issue. If such is the case, then that is unacceptable. If it was an error, then it can be fixed. I would prefer that it be fixed than to speak about partisanship and petty politics.

However, these words, which come from the government itself and are found on the department's website, open the door to greater support from Canadians for this bill. That is important for our country and for the LGBTQ+ community. The government wants to be honest, open and transparent. Now it has a unique opportunity to show that the Liberals are able to rise above the fray for once and give more Canadians the opportunity to see themselves reflected in Bill C-6, which has the vital objective of putting an end to conversion therapy in our country once and for all.

In closing, I do not identify with an LGBTQ+ group. I cannot claim to understand how a person who has been ostracized, bullied or mocked because of who they are must feel. However, as a father, a Quebecker and a Canadian, I know that it is high time that this country put an end to conversion therapy.

• (1735)

[English]

**Ms. Rachel Blaney (North Island—Powell River, NDP):** Mr. Speaker, I thank the member for his discussion on this very important issue.

*Government Orders*

I would like to ask him about the reality that the SOGIE community does not need to be fixed and that it is absolutely impossible to change someone's sexual orientation through any type of therapy. I find it interesting that the Conservative leader has said that the vote on Bill C-6 will be a free vote for his caucus. How is this vote a question of conscience, since it seeks to protect SOGIE individuals from harm?

• (1740)

[*Translation*]

**Mr. Luc Berthold:** Mr. Speaker, as I said, until I was elected to the House of Commons, I was not even aware conversion therapy existed.

That is why the best thing our leader could do today was tell members of our party that this will well and truly be a free vote. There is something the government can do to get more MPs on board: make sure Bill C-6 reflects what is on the department's website. That is simple, and it would be a non-partisan and objective way to end conversion therapy. I think that is worth remembering. We have an opportunity to work together. The ball is in the Liberals' court. The next move is theirs.

[*English*]

**Mrs. Tracy Gray (Kelowna—Lake Country, CPC):** Mr. Speaker, we know that conversion therapy is wrong and harmful and that we have a responsibility to protect the most vulnerable in our society as parliamentarians. Why does the member think it is important to have some clarification in the definition since the bill would amend the Criminal Code? Could he address why having a reasonable amendment would be an appropriate approach for this legislation?

[*Translation*]

**Mr. Luc Berthold:** Mr. Speaker, once again, I cannot put myself in the shoes of fathers and young people who have overcome society's reluctance to accept who they are.

The problem is that some parents still need convincing. Conversations still need to happen with some people. Conversations still need to happen in our society. Those conversations need to be protected from criminal prosecution. I think that is how we evolve and how we have evolved. Those conversations—primarily conversations between parents and children—should not be subject to criminal charges someday because a parent wanted to better understand their child or to better understand the situation in general. It is simple, but that clarification must be in the bill to get more support from parents who are concerned they will no longer be able to have those conversations with their children.

**Mr. Maxime Blanchette-Joncas (Rimouski-Neigette—Témiscouata—Les Basques, BQ):** Mr. Speaker, I thank my colleague from Mégantic—L'Érable for his speech. I also appreciate his openness about Bill C-6. I do have a few questions for him.

On June 15, the leader of the Conservative Party, the hon. member for Durham, tweeted, "Let me be clear, conversion therapy has no place in Canada and should be banned". However, he did not provide a translation for that tweet. This is one of the rare tweets that was not translated. The Conservative Party's translation machine was broken that day. Was it the same people who were in

charge of compiling the votes during the Conservative Party leadership race? We have to wonder.

I would like to know what my colleague has to say about that. What does he think of the fact that there was no translation to perhaps avoid reaching a particular audience about a struggle as important as conversion therapy?

**Mr. Luc Berthold:** Mr. Speaker, I will not comment on what my colleague said during the Conservative Party leadership race that allowed us to choose the next Prime Minister of Canada in a rather extraordinary way.

One thing is certain: No matter how Bloc members vote, they will never elect a Prime Minister of Canada. They will never be seated on the side where they can change things. They will never be seated on the side where they can ensure that conversion therapy is banned in Canada. In their case, it is all ambition without the achievement.

[*English*]

**Hon. Bardish Chagger (Minister of Diversity and Inclusion and Youth, Lib.):** Mr. Speaker, I want to begin by acknowledging that the House sits on the ancestral lands of the Algonquin Anishinabe.

[*Translation*]

It is a privilege to be here to take part in the second reading debate of Bill C-6, introduced by my colleague, the Minister of Justice, on October 1.

The bill's intent is clear: to ban conversion therapy in Canada.

• (1745)

[*English*]

Conversion therapy is rooted in the wrongful premise that an individual's sexual orientation, gender identity or gender expression can and should be changed to a narrow ideal of what is natural or normal.

[*Translation*]

Conversion therapy is harmful and degrading, and it has no place in Canada.

Today, I again call on all members of the House to stand in solidarity with LGBTQ2 individuals who are subjected to one of the most heinous and violent attacks on their gender identity, namely, conversion therapy.

[English]

It is important we all do everything we can to protect the Canada we know and love. Our communities should be places where everyone is free to be authentically who they are, free from violence or discrimination. On behalf of all those who are being hindered in their ability to truly be themselves, to love who they love and to live fulfilling lives and fully contribute to our society, I ask all members to support the bill and send it to committee.

[Translation]

Too many people in Canada are still the innocent victims of conversion therapy. That is not the Canada we want. We must abolish this practice once and for all and we must do it quickly.

Everyone in the country is standing shoulder to shoulder right now, as we face one of the greatest challenges in our history, the COVID-19 pandemic. As a society, we are blazing new trails. There is no clear path laid out. As a government, we are more determined than ever to build on this collective solidarity to build a more inclusive Canada. The pandemic has opened our eyes. It has revealed unacceptable injustices. It has made the most vulnerable communities even more vulnerable, and it has hit the LGBTQ2 community particularly hard.

[English]

The COVID-19 pandemic has shown us that there is still much work to be done to build a truly safe and inclusive Canada. Since March, we have been navigating this crisis together. We all remain cautious and follow the advice of local officials and public health authorities.

[Translation]

Faced with a crisis of this scope, we must rethink our laws and policies and expand our efforts to be inclusive. That is the commitment our government made in reintroducing bill.

[English]

The Speech from the Throne emphasizes that the country we are protecting against COVID-19 is a country that is proud of the contribution of its LGBTQ2 communities, an inclusive country. I am sure my colleagues in the House would agree that the best Canada is an inclusive Canada. We must do all we can to achieve equity and inclusion for all Canadians. I am dedicated to this objective and, as members likely know, it forms an important part of the mandate given to me by the Prime Minister.

My parents immigrated to Canada before I was born and worked hard to provide a good life for us. Their belief was that in Canada anything was possible. We all have the possibility of living free from prejudice and discrimination, of expressing our identity and exercising our rights. People deserve the freedom to be who they are, free to love who they love. We all have a role to play so that LGBTQ2 persons feel safe and welcome, to be their authentic selves.

[Translation]

One of our government's roles is to move towards this objective. By reintroducing this bill, we are taking a major step. We are mov-

### *Government Orders*

ing towards the elimination of conversion therapy, which is unacceptable in Canadian society today.

[English]

The changes to the Criminal Code proposed in Bill C-6 will go a long way to protect the dignity and equality rights of lesbian, gay, bisexual, transgender, queer and two-spirit Canadians.

[Translation]

The bill proposes to criminalize certain aspects of conversion therapy. This harmful and outdated practice seeks to change a person's sexual orientation by forcing them towards heterosexuality, to repress or reduce non-heterosexual attraction or sexual behaviour and to change a person's gender identity to conform to their sex at birth.

• (1750)

[English]

It is important to note that the proposed changes are not intended to reach far beyond a rational scope. We recognize that it is crucial to protect those who offer affirming and supportive guidance or advice to anyone who has questions or is coming to terms with who they are. In the same spirit of wanting all Canadians to be true to who they are, we also want all Canadians to be free to follow their faith as they interpret it for themselves of their own volition. Our legislation aims to balance this to support and protect the rights of all Canadians.

We need to address the myth that gay, lesbian, queer, trans and non-binary identities are pathologies that can and should be changed. Diverse forms of gender identity, gender expression and sexual orientation are simply part of human diversity. The proposed legislation aligns with our government's commitment to put an end to conversion therapy in Canada by amending the Criminal Code with new penalties for those who conduct the practice, in particular, against minors.

[Translation]

We must adopt legislation that protects the dignity and equality rights of all Canadians, especially those of LGBTQ2 individuals and youth. This legislation will ensure that every Canadian is not afraid to be who they are and to live a full life.

[English]

The types of changes we are now proposing to the Criminal Code are also aligned with approaches already implemented elsewhere, and I will offer here just a few examples.

Ontario, Nova Scotia and Prince Edward Island have enacted legislation specifying that conversion therapy is not an insured health service and have banned health care professionals from providing treatment to minors unless they are capable of consenting. Some Canadian municipalities, such as Vancouver, Calgary, Edmonton, St. Albert and Strathcona County have also banned businesses from providing conversion therapy within their city limits.

*Government Orders*

Internationally, Malta is the only other country known to have criminalized aspects of conversion therapy, while the United Kingdom and its LGBT action plan has committed to further explore the issue. In the U.S. several states have put in place bans that resemble provincial and municipal bans in Canada.

[Translation]

I would like to thank all those dedicated to building a fairer and safer society. I would like to especially thank my colleagues, our partners and stakeholders, who are working hard to ensure that Bill C-6's amendments to the Criminal Code are adopted.

[English]

The amendments that we propose in Canada are yet another step along the way toward a safer and more inclusive country. I am proud of the concrete actions our government has taken to date.

Our Prime Minister apologized to LGBTQ2 people in Canada for the past injustices experienced at the hands of their government. Our government passed legislation, Bill C-16, to protect against discrimination based on gender identity and expression. We transformed the former Status of Women Canada into a full department, the Department of Women and Gender Equality, with an expanded mandate to advance social, political and economic equality with respect to sex, sexual orientation, gender identity and gender expression.

We made a historic investment of \$20 million to help build the capacity of Canadian LGBTQ2 organizations to address the unique needs and persistent disparities facing LGBTQ2 communities, and, proudly, my appointment in November by the Prime Minister as Minister of Diversity and Inclusion and Youth, supported by Canadian Heritage, where the LGBTQ secretariat is now housed.

[Translation]

Before the COVID-19 pandemic, I led several round tables with key stakeholders from across the country to discuss LGBTQ2 issues. We spoke primarily about conversion therapy. The Minister of Justice also spoke about this issue with different stakeholders, in particular his provincial and territorial counterparts.

[English]

As members can see, the process leading to the proposed change to the Criminal Code to address the harmful practice of conversion therapy has been informed by the lived experiences of LGBTQ2 communities. This work has come from LGBTQ2 communities. It has come from advocacy. It has come from a place of struggle and pain but also of resiliency and strength. Most important, we are indebted to survivors for their bravery in helping and pushing this road forward for us and with us.

As I have mentioned a few times, our government is committed to continuing our conversations and working together until the full implementation of these proposed changes to the Criminal Code.

• (1755)

[Translation]

We also recognize the importance of continuing our work to prevent conversion therapy, to support the communities to make them even stronger and more resilient, and to deconstruct the myths

about sexual orientation and gender identity. Together, we must end the stigmatization and discrimination of LGBTQ2 communities.

[English]

We are here today as a direct result of the collective strength of survivors and their steadfastness in the face of adversity. We honour them and those who came before them.

[Translation]

In our society, every individual has a unique and important role to play to make Canada inclusive and safe, a Canada where every person can thrive. Not so long ago, solidarity with LGBTQ2 communities was not part of any government agenda. Today, we are trying to promote LGBTQ2 equality, protect the rights of LGBTQ2 individuals and fight discrimination against LGBTQ2 communities. All these commitments require that our elected officials listen to the communities and work tirelessly to create the Canada that we want to leave to future generations.

We cannot change the past, but we can learn from it and do better. Like everyone else, I still have a lot to learn and a lot to do. Like everyone else, I am here to ensure that every human being is respected because I have hope that we will one day live in a country where everyone is treated with dignity and respect, period.

[English]

While the past has not always been easy, today is a hopeful day. By acting on historical injustices we are building a better future for all. It is our duty to do everything we can to make a better future for the children in this country. When children arrive in the world they are full of love. They have not learned to hate. A child is taught to hate or discriminate, taught to be ashamed of who they are, and taught there are only certain ways to live. We have to provide a better future, a different future, for the next generation. We know that with these proposed amendments to the Criminal Code we are helping LGBTQ2 people feel safe and enabling them to participate fully in Canadian society.

[Translation]

Our work does not stop there. We are determined to continue the dialogue and work closely with LGBTQ2 communities right across the country.

I have a mandate to consult with LGBTQ2 communities to lay the foundation of an LGBTQ2 action plan that will guide the federal government's work on important issues affecting them. My mandate also involves investing more in LGBTQ2 organizations.



*Government Orders*

[English]

This will offer future opportunities for community-led interventions, because one of my goals is also to build stronger and more resilient LGBTQ2 communities through local, regional and national organizations that can respond to the evolving needs of their communities.

Together, we can help create a country where everyone is free to be who they are, and where human rights are human rights for all. Our Prime Minister often says that, in Canada, diversity is our strength. We are a diverse country made up of people from all types of backgrounds. Our Canada includes everyone, of every colour, of every background, of every identity. LGBTQ2 people exist in our communities. They are our friends, neighbours, colleagues and families. They are people, people we love and cherish.

The proposed amendments help get us once step closer to equality and recognition for LGBTQ2 people. We need to ensure that Canada is a country where everyone, regardless of their sexual orientation, gender identity or gender expression, can live in equality and freedom. Our task is clear. The time to act is now. I urge all members to support this historic groundbreaking legislation as we advance protections for LGBTQ2 communities together.

● (1800)

**Mr. James Cumming (Edmonton Centre, CPC):** Mr. Speaker, I thank the member for her speech. I listened to it with great attention to detail. I was struck by how this is such an important piece of legislation to ban such a horrific practice. My question to her is this. Why was this legislation not introduced in the first part of the last Parliament?

**Hon. Bardish Chagger:** Mr. Speaker, this legislation was created by communities for communities. As the member of Parliament for the riding of Waterloo and as the Minister of Diversity and Inclusion and Youth I speak to many constituents and stakeholders. It is important to act now. This is an opportunity. We can send this legislation to committee so it can be further studied, but what is clear is that conversion therapy does not have a place in Canada. It needs to be banned so people can live their authentic lives. The damage that has been done to certain generations has already happened, but we can act to ensure future generations never have to go through this destructive practice.

[Translation]

**Mr. Mario Beaulieu (La Pointe-de-l'Île, BQ):** Mr. Speaker, I would like to commend my colleague on her speech.

I want to raise a point. The bill does not ban conversion therapy for consenting adults, but, if I understood correctly, it prohibits deriving a monetary benefit from such therapy. The advertising of such therapy is prohibited.

Will that not make it difficult to enforce the law?

I would like to hear my colleague's thoughts on that.

**Hon. Bardish Chagger:** Mr. Speaker, the bill that we introduced and that is before us today is another step in ensuring that every individual can be their authentic selves. I recognize that members have comments and questions and the committee can consider those and do its work.

In my opinion, it is very important that we, as members, move forward with this bill, which will protect children and young people. The bill also establishes parameters to protect non-consenting adults. However, consenting adults can continue to make their own decisions.

[English]

**Mr. Brian Masse (Windsor West, NDP):** Mr. Speaker, I want to share a scenario that did take place. A young man applied for a job at a not-for-profit agency that got funding from the federal government. The agency required him to sign a form to say that he was not gay, and this intervention took place at the work location. This took place in the last year.

I would ask the minister: What would the bill do to protect those individuals? What does the government think about the fact that this still takes place? What should happen to those organizations that are receiving federal funds but still have conversion therapy at the workplace?

**Hon. Bardish Chagger:** Mr. Speaker, it is clear that, as a country, we still have a lot of work to do. I offer my commitment to ensure that this work is done, which is why, in my comments, I shared that I have a lot to learn but I also have a lot to do. Today, we have an opportunity to see this legislation advance to committee to see conversion therapy banned in Canada. Will our work end there? No, but what it will do is establish another step.

To the member and the individual he is referring to, I think it is absolutely horrific that took place. I am ashamed that that takes place in our country to this day. The COVID-19 pandemic has actually shone a lot of light on the inequities that exist, and that is exactly why we know that there is systemic discrimination and racism that exists in our country. We will do whatever we can to fight it. I feel that I have the member's support and that he will work alongside us to make that happen.

● (1805)

**Mr. Tim Louis (Kitchener—Conestoga, Lib.):** Mr. Speaker, I have the honour of being the member of Parliament for the neighbouring riding to the hon. member's. I am proud that in my riding of Kitchener—Conestoga, indeed, in Waterloo Region and throughout Canada, we are moving forward together. I am also proud to have stood in the Township of Wilmot as we flew the pride flag for the first time. We truly are moving forward.

I have had town halls with local stakeholders and also a town hall with the hon. member discussing LGBTQ+ issues. In her role as minister, she has met with groups throughout Canada. Can she please discuss some of the responses she has received on the bill and the message of inclusion that we are sharing from some of the local groups in our shared region?

*Government Orders*

**Hon. Bardish Chagger:** Mr. Speaker, I will start by commending the member for Kitchener—Conestoga for doing the important work, as a member of Parliament, of listening and engaging. We have very tough conversations as elected members, and it is important that we not only listen to people we agree with but also to people we can learn from.

The member for Kitchener—Conestoga has ensured that every constituent, every organization within the Waterloo Region has the opportunity to have their voices heard, and I want to commend the leadership of organizations within our communities. They know that they have a full voice at the cabinet table, which is why the appointment as Minister of Diversity and Inclusion and Youth was so exciting.

I can tell the member that we will continue to do this work, because our work is not done yet. This is just another step, and we still hear concerns in this debate. Human rights should be human rights for all, and that is why this proposed legislation should go quickly to committee so that it can be studied and scrutinized. It should then quickly go to the Senate so that it can become law and we can ban conversion therapy once and for all.

**Mr. Bob Saroya (Markham—Unionville, CPC):** Mr. Speaker, I had never heard of conversion therapy until a couple of weeks ago.

Could the member outline some of the witnesses they will be putting before the committee, so we could learn more about the bill?

**Hon. Bardish Chagger:** Mr. Speaker, I just want to start off by saying that this is the same legislation we had introduced, and that is why this legislation has been viewed by all members of Parliament in this House.

I have heard this comment made a couple of times, that some fellow Canadians do not know about this destructive practice. What we are sharing and what members within the LGBTQ2 community are expressing and sharing is that this destructive practice exists in Canada. It is a clear choice: either it belongs or it does not.

For our government, it is clear. We need to ban conversion therapy. People should be free to be who they are, and to love who they want to love. Committees will do their important work, and I am sure amongst members on the committee, they can determine who will come in as witnesses. I encourage this bill to go to committee so that that work can be done. I hope we have that member's support to see this bill advance swiftly.

**Mr. Paul Manly (Nanaimo—Ladysmith, GP):** Mr. Speaker, indeed, this is a very important subject. Someone's sexual orientation cannot be changed through some conversion process.

The hon. member talked about banning a number of times. The legislation talks about forced conversion therapy being illegal. However, I am wondering about coercion. People who are of age get coerced into doing things by other members of their family, based on their finances or their situation in life. An hon. member talked about someone applying for a job.

I am just wondering about banning this practice outright, not having definitions for forced conversion therapy or figuring out what coercion would look like, just banning it outright.

**Hon. Bardish Chagger:** Mr. Speaker, a lot of work has gone into introducing and reintroducing this legislation.

I am really proud of this legislation because we consulted with stakeholders, members of the community, academics, experts and the list goes on, prior to introducing the legislation. We know that conversion therapy has no space in Canada. We also understand that there are people who are trying to understand themselves and having these conversations.

That is why these amendments will not criminalize those who would provide affirming support to persons struggling with their sexual orientation or gender identity, nor would the amendments criminalize private conversations between consenting adults.

What we do know is that there are numerous individuals who have been forced to undergo a therapy that is not a therapy at all. This legislation does protect them so that they can be their authentic selves, and we ensure that we do not have another generation that have lost their ability to be their authentic selves.

• (1810)

**Mr. Larry Maguire (Brandon—Souris, CPC):** Mr. Speaker, I will be splitting my time with my colleague from Fundy Royal.

I want to start by saying that there is nothing more important in life than being true to oneself. People only live once and there are no mulligans or do-overs. During one's short time on this earth if one can find love and, in return, be loved back, there are no words to appropriately describe that partnership. Likewise, little is as important to the core of one's being than the ability to express who one truly is.

At this very moment, there are LGBTQ2 Canadians who are listening to us debate this legislation while they are struggling to be who they are. Some are afraid of what others will think or say. Some are concerned people will disown them or think less of them. Some think there is something wrong with them. Here is the thing: There is nothing wrong with them.

Just two weeks ago, it was National Coming Out Day. Every year, people across the country come out and say they are proud of who they are. When many people shared this with their closest family and friends, they did something brave, which was to tell the world who they were. It has not always been that way. During the 19th century, same-sex activity between consenting adults was considered a crime punishable by imprisonment. The mental health professionals of that era deemed homosexuality as a mental illness. If we fast-forward to modern times, it was not too long ago when people had to live in the shadows. Many were targeted. They were discriminated against because of who they dated or fell in love with. Some lost their jobs or were looked over for a promotion.

While we have made tremendous strides toward equality, there is more work to be done. As a Conservative, I have advocated for fundamental freedoms my entire life: freedom of speech, freedom of religion, freedom of conscience, freedom of assembly and association, and that every individual has the right to equal protection and equal benefit of the law without discrimination. Those are not just words. They are in our Charter of Rights.

I support the end goal of the legislation before us today because I am a Conservative. Back in 2016, I voted in favour of Bill C-16, which amended the Canadian Human Rights Act to add gender identity and gender expression to the list of prohibited grounds for discrimination. We know that transgender Canadians face elevated levels of sexual violence. They have been bullied and have had to face discrimination in applying for jobs and securing housing. Many within the transgender community have taken their own lives due to depression and feeling that there was no future.

I believe in the right of individuals to live their lives as they see fit. Liberty as defined by the Oxford Dictionary is:

The state of being free within society from oppressive restrictions imposed by authority on one's way of life, behavior, or political views.

The spirit of liberty must be renewed in all of us, for if we waver or deny our fellow citizens the same freedoms that we so cherish, we will have failed to protect them in their time of need. If we are free to decide where we work, go to school, practise our religion and whom we vote for, then it is within that spirit that people must be free to be who they are. We must protect them from those who wish they were someone else.

In almost every other example of trampling on one's fundamental freedoms, such as forcing someone against their will to change religions or their political allegiances, there would be an uproar and rightfully so.

At its very core, the end goal of this legislation is to defend freedom. As a Conservative, I believe that we as parliamentarians have a role to do just that.

During this debate, and inevitably at the justice committee, we will get into the finer details such as the definition of conversion therapy, as explained in the bill. For those who worry that this legislation would criminalize private conversations, spiritual guidance or infringe on religious liberties, the best approach to resolve those concerns is to specifically carve out what the legislation does not do. When there are concerns about the clarity or implications of a bill, the obvious remedy is to provide them those reassurances.

For example, back in 2016, when we were debating Bill C-14, the government's medical assistance in dying legislation, the phrase "does not" was used six times to provide clarity for what the legislation covered and what it did not cover. If we take that same approach to this legislation, we immediately resolve many questions while improving the bill. In fact, we do not have to look too far as the government's own press release contains some of the language that we could insert into the bill to alleviate concerns.

• (1815)

When the original legislation was tabled on March 9, the Liberals' press release stated that the legislation "would not criminalise private conversations in which personal views on sexual orienta-

### *Government Orders*

tion, sexual feelings or gender identity are expressed such as where teachers, school counsellors, pastoral counsellors, faith leaders, doctors, mental health professionals, friends or family members".

Inserting this clarification in the bill would go a long way to better clarify what would be fenced off from the five new proposed Criminal Code offences. It is my sincere hope that the Minister of Justice reaches out to his fellow MPs and incorporates their views and insights, particularly when he needs the support of opposition parties.

If the Liberal government is determined to ignore the following advice, it was due to its own political calculations, as I believe there is a path to garner even further support from all MPs regardless of their political persuasion. As the leader of the official opposition said, we will put forward amendments. We want the legislation to be crystal clear in its intentions and ensure that it meets its intended goal, which is to ban the practice of forcing individuals and minors to undergo conversion therapy.

Since my good friend from Durham became the leader of the official opposition, I have been impressed with his message and how he is building bridges to those who have not traditionally seen themselves as Conservatives, which includes those in the LGBTQ2 community. I know he is sincere in getting this legislation right. He wants to ensure that no Canadian is ever forced to undergo this dangerous and discredited practice that has already hurt so many.

According to a study released by the Community-Based Research Centre, as many as one in five sexual-minority men has experienced sexual orientation change efforts. The long-lasting harm done to survivors is real and far too many Canadians have taken their lives. Both the Canadian Psychiatric Association and the Canadian Psychological Association oppose any therapy that tries to change a person's sexual orientation. Expert after expert has proven that conversion therapy can lead to depression, anxiety, drug use, homelessness and suicide. No longer will people be forced against their will to change who they are.

When this legislation is referred to the justice committee, I know the members will hear the horror stories from Canadians who have been unjustifiably subjected to this harmful practice. They will hear how close people went to the very edge of committing self-harm.

*Government Orders*

Let me be clear: For the millions of Canadians who are part of Canada's LGBTQ2 community, being who they are is not a defect, it is not an illness and it is certainly not something that needs to be changed. The expression of their identity and uniqueness is welcomed and celebrated in Brandon—Souris, throughout Manitoba and across Canada. This bill is not merely symbolic. It is an important step forward in protecting and upholding Canadians' charter rights. This is about ensuring that all Canadians can live their lives as they see fit.

It is with that in mind that we must turn our efforts to making sure we get this right. I urge every MP to review the legislation and to put our collective heads together to ensure the definition of conversion therapy as defined in this legislation is succinct and will meet its intended goal for the benefit of all Canadians.

• (1820)

**Mr. Kevin Lamoureux (Parliamentary Secretary to the President of the Queen's Privy Council for Canada and to the Leader of the Government in the House of Commons, Lib.):** Mr. Speaker, I appreciate many of the comments that my colleague from Manitoba has put on the record. In many ways, it is very encouraging when we hear members from all sides of the House get engaged in the debate and talk about just how important the issue and the legislation are. It sends a very encouraging and positive message to those who would be following the debate or those who would be interested in the debate.

I wonder if my colleague could provide further thoughts in regard to the fact that at some point the legislation will pass and be sent to the committee stage, and how important that process will be from his perspective.

**Mr. Larry Maguire:** Mr. Speaker, I outlined very clearly in my presentation today what my colleague from Winnipeg North is asking. Just to let us know how important it is, as previous speakers have said, it is important to send it to committee. It is important that the members of the committee look at the definition, get the clear context of it in place during those discussions and perhaps amend it, so that it can be a much more clarified bill.

[*Translation*]

**Mr. Sébastien Lemire (Abitibi—Témiscamingue, BQ):** Mr. Speaker, according to the Canadian Psychological Association, conversion or reparative therapy can result in negative outcomes, such as distress, anxiety, depression, negative self-image, a feeling of personal failure, difficulty sustaining relationships and sexual dysfunction. It can even lead to suicide.

What does the member have to say about these aspects of psychological distress?

[*English*]

**Mr. Larry Maguire:** Mr. Speaker, certainly the psychology and the psychiatry associations in Canada are concerned about self-harm to these individuals, the mental stress of that, and they do not want to put them through that. We should not have to. They should not be put through that, as I said very clearly in my presentation. That is something we need to look at in making sure there is clarity in the bill when it comes back, if there are amendments to it.

**Ms. Rachel Blaney (North Island—Powell River, NDP):** Mr. Speaker, it is interesting to have this discussion, but it is also important that we focus on the reality that this bill has no effect on the rights of parents to discuss questions of sexual orientation or gender identity with their children. What it does is assure conversion therapy is harmful and cannot be practised in Canada. It acknowledges that the LGBTQ2+ community does not in any way need to be fixed.

I am curious if the member could answer why the Conservative leader has allowed this to be considered a free vote. How is this vote a question of conscience, since it is really about seeking to protect SOGIE individuals from harm?

**Mr. Larry Maguire:** Mr. Speaker, I would hope that it is a free vote for all parties. People are free to make up their minds, as I said.

This is certainly a situation where I agree with the member regarding the clarity as to what individuals should not have to go through in terms of this bill and conversion therapy. We would hope there is no pressure to be forced into a conversion therapy process when it is a right in our Charter of Rights to have the freedoms that we have.

• (1825)

**Mr. Garnett Genuis (Sherwood Park—Fort Saskatchewan, CPC):** Mr. Speaker, many of us on this side of the House are in agreement that conversion therapy is bad and should be banned, and that we need a proper definition and clear law so that there are no ambiguities. At the same time, it is a bit frustrating because we had a bill proposed in the previous session of which people said we should fix the definition, but then the government chose not to use the opportunity to put forward a clearer definition that clearly excluded, for instance, private conversations.

I was wondering if the member wants to comment on the fact that the government missed an opportunity to send a positive signal about its desire to work together to move this forward by not clarifying the definition in the bill it put forward in this new session.

**Mr. Larry Maguire:** Mr. Speaker, it is very clear that the government has missed an opportunity. Liberals know from their own dialogue they have had, in the writing subsequent to the bill and in the discussions that took place when they announced it, that there is a clear manner of defining "conversion therapy". I pointed out the quote in my speech today. The government has clearly missed an opportunity to make real clarification so that there is no ambiguity in this bill when it finally comes back to the House for a final vote.

**Hon. Rob Moore (Fundy Royal, CPC):** Mr. Speaker, it is a pleasure and an honour to speak this evening to Bill C-6, an act to amend the Criminal Code, conversion therapy.

I want to thank all those colleagues today who have been participating in the debate. I have been following it with interest and we look forward to continuing debate on the legislation.

By way of a bit of history, in March 2019 the Liberal government rejected a petition for a national ban on conversion therapy. It said at the time that it did not reflect the values of the government or Canadians, but noted that the governance of conversion therapy was largely a provincial and territorial issue. A number of provinces have banned conversion therapy within their jurisdiction and a number of medical professions have raised concerns about its use and effectiveness.

Conversion therapy is wrong and should be banned. No Canadian should be forced to change who her or she is. This is particularly the case when it could be threatened against people against their will or when it is used to denigrate or demean people for who they are.

The Liberal government knows that most Canadians do not want to see the conversion therapy I mentioned, but it also knows that most Canadians do not want conversations between a parent and a child, or a teacher or religious leader and a young person to be criminalized either. In that vein, the government has missed an opportunity to get the bill right. Everyone deserves to be treated with dignity and with respect. All Canadians deserve that we get the bill right and we owe them no less as Parliament.

I want to echo our leader, the member for Durham, in my opposition to conversion therapy. All practices that seek to coerce or forcibly change a person's sexual orientation should be banned.

The summary of the legislation is something with which most Canadians would agree. It states that it would create offences for "causing a person to undergo conversion therapy against the person's will." This should be banned. A person should not be forced to partake in any activity against his or her will. It further states, "causing a child to undergo conversion therapy"; the offence to remove "a child from Canada with the intention that the child undergo conversion therapy outside Canada"; and also the offence of: "advertising an offer to provide conversion therapy" or to receive a benefit for providing it. Overall the summary makes sense.

We are at second reading of the bill, which is an opportunity to debate the general scope of a bill and focus on the principle within the bill. To be clear, I have significant concerns with the construction of the bill, but there is merit in bringing it to committee and to work in good faith to improve it.

We heard the Minister of Justice today say that he was open to working with all members on improving the bill, and will I take him up on that. It is for that reason I will be supporting the bill at second reading, but I do so with the insistence that any flaws in the bill must be addressed at the justice committee.

We are prepared to work in good faith with government to make a bill that properly captures coercive practices, while ensuring good faith discussions are not criminalized. The bill does need to be amended at committee to ensure that happens.

Much of the concerns that have been raised with my office and perhaps many of my colleagues' offices are from individuals, groups and medical professionals who are concerned with the broad definition of conversion therapy. That is where the government had an opportunity to get things right after it prorogued earlier this year.

### *Government Orders*

It could have come back with a more definitive definition of what conversion therapy is.

While most Canadians would define conversion therapy as an inherently coercive or forced practice, the bill does not. Further, it describes conversion therapy as a practice, treatment or service to repress or reduce non-heterosexual attraction or sexual behaviour regardless of what a person's sexual orientation is. Many faiths, whether it is Islam, Christianity or Judaism, disapprove of intercourse before marriage and they teach that. The definition should strictly target coercive practices while not targeting any good faith conversations.

• (1830)

The definition says that it does not apply to a practice, treatment or service related to a person's exploration of his or her identity or to its development. With this, it may be that the government intends to send the signal that genuine conversations to help individuals navigate their sexuality are protected. As I have heard from many organizations, that is not clear. If that was indeed the intention, the government should make that explicit in the bill.

Concerns have been raised that the legislation could criminalize therapy that intends to help reduce gender dysphoria. We need to hear from stakeholders at committee to ensure this legislation does not unintentionally impact good faith conversations that medical practitioners would have with their patients to help them navigate issues like this. We need to ensure Canadians, and in particular youth, are given all the support they need.

When the bill was introduced last session, there was language on the Department of Justice website that would address some of the concerns I heard today in debate and some of the concerns I heard from individuals on the legislation. The department website states:

These new offences would not criminalize private conversations in which personal views on sexual orientation, sexual feelings or gender identity are expressed such as where teachers, school counsellors, pastoral counsellors, faith leaders, doctors, mental health professionals, friends or family members provide affirming support to persons struggling with their sexual orientation, sexual feelings, or gender identity.

If this is indeed the case, let us work in committee to address these concerns being raised and incorporate the very language that the Minister of Justice and the Department of Justice website has used into the bill to clarify for Canadians that this would not impact on good faith conversations.

I want to be very clear for my Liberal colleagues across the aisle. We have an opportunity here to have a bill that would address the concerns being raised and gain the support of a wider range of Canadians. I have heard from many who are concerned with the construct of the bill, but note they do support a ban on conversion therapy.

*Government Orders*

For example, the Evangelical Fellowship of Canada wrote to the minister earlier this month on this very bill. They wrote, “Many people who have experienced conversion therapy describe despair and suicidal ideation as a consequence. We recognize that initiatives to ban conversion therapy arise from a desire to protect Canadians from such damaging effects.” The letter continues with “Coercive and involuntary efforts to change sexual orientation have no place within our communities.”

My point in raising the letter is that there is a broad consensus in the House that conversion therapy should be banned, but there is also a need to ensure we get the bill right. There is a broad consensus among many stakeholder groups across the country that we need to get the bill right.

We already know that mental health services across the country are often lacking. This means kids, but also grown adults, are often not able to receive the mental health support they need. In a one-year period, one in five people in Canada will experience a problem with mental health or mental illness. This is especially the case for youth who are struggling with their own development and seeking guidance on how to be comfortable with themselves and grow into adults. It is important that frank conversations are protected between those seeking help and those who wish to help youth navigate difficult or confusing time periods in their life.

I want to reiterate my previous point. We have an opportunity here to improve the bill to capture a ban on coercive practices that seek to forcibly change a person's sexual orientation. Some concerns have been raised about how the bill has been crafted, particularly around the definition and it targeting good faith conversations with young people and those trying to support them. To ensure the bill is as effective as possible when we pass it into law, the government needs to be willing to listen to stakeholders who raise concerns about the legislation and work with them in the committee process to improve the bill.

I will use the minister's language from earlier today where he indicated he was open to good faith improvements to the bill. We in the Conservative Party are willing to work with the government to help address the concerns that have been raised.

● (1835)

**Mr. Adam Vaughan (Parliamentary Secretary to the Minister of Families, Children and Social Development (Housing), Lib.):** Mr. Speaker, concern was raised that the bill had not been perfected in its representation, but rather was being left to committee to work on it. I am curious. When he said that work needed to be done, who does he think needs to be called to that committee to help guide parliamentarians as we go forward? What voices does he believe are missing from this debate right now that would make this a stronger bill if we listened to them?

**Hon. Rob Moore:** Mr. Speaker, a good starting point would be to look at the words of the minister straight from the justice department website. The minister has said that the conversations of those who work with young people, teachers, school counsellors, pastoral counsellors, faith leaders, doctors, mental health professionals, friends and family members, would not be impacted by the bill. However, the bill does not say that. A good starting point would be to hear from a large variety of individuals who are impacted, those

who support the coming into force of the legislation and those who support ending conversion therapy and want to ensure we get the legislation right.

[Translation]

**Ms. Andréanne Larouche (Shefford, BQ):** Mr. Speaker, we all know that religious groups and religious pressure are behind these conversion therapy practices. There is a myth that homosexuality is a sickness and that it leads straight to hell.

The Pope himself has recognized same-sex civil unions, so I would like to hear about why we must move faster to eradicate these prejudices. I would like to hear my colleague's thoughts on this, because prejudice against the LGBTQ+ community is no longer acceptable.

[English]

**Hon. Rob Moore:** Mr. Speaker, this is an opportunity. There is support for the idea of banning conversion therapy even among faith communities, but there is also a need for the government to get the legislation right so we do not ban conversations where someone is seeking support, whether from school counsellors, teachers, pastoral counsellors, faith leaders, as the minister said. This is not included in the bill. The concern we and many have raised is with respect to the definition of “conversion therapy”. There has not been a Criminal Code definition of “conversion therapy” and the government's first try at a definition is one that could very well capture things we do not wish to be captured as a Parliament.

● (1840)

**Mr. Ron Liepert (Calgary Signal Hill, CPC):** Mr. Speaker, I listened with interest to my colleague's remarks. I also listened very attentively earlier this afternoon to the member for Stormont—Dundas—South Glengarry, who gave a very impassioned speech to the House. I know some of the things he mentioned are exactly what the current speaker has talked about. I would like to get an opinion from the member as to whether he feels that by not including some of these conditions in the legislation, it will lead to court challenges that could work against what we are trying to do here and delay this taking effect.

**Hon. Rob Moore:** Mr. Speaker, any legislation that amends the Criminal Code will ultimately be challenged in the courts. It is our job to write these laws. That is why it is incumbent upon parliamentarians to take into account the rights of all Canadians and ensure that legislation does what we intend it to do.

If we want to ban conversion therapy, it is important our legislation does that and does not cast a net so wide that it takes into account things that we do not intend it to. The minister has said that it is not his intent to cast the net that wide, but the issue is the language in the legislation, and that is ultimately what is before the courts when they consider a criminal case.

**Mr. Adam Vaughan (Parliamentary Secretary to the Minister of Families, Children and Social Development (Housing), Lib.):** Mr. Speaker, before I begin, for my first time rising in the House since we broke from normal proceedings way back when, I would like to thank the staff at the centre table, the support staff in the halls and throughout the centre block, for not only pulling off such an extraordinary presentation of democracy but also for their service to all of us in Parliament, and in particular the pages. As a former page myself, the pages might be here for the shortest time, but their contribution is never not noted. We are glad to have them here and hope they stay safe with all Canadians as we begin this parliamentary speech.

I rise today as the Parliamentary Secretary of Families, Children and Social Development. That is a great title to speak to this issue on because how we deal with children and families, and how we develop our society, are at the heart of what we are debating today as we seek to realize and protect the rights of our neighbours, friends and family: all of us who call Canada home. There have been some very emotional presentations from members today. As society has become more comfortable discussing these issues and embracing these people, not “othering” them, their stories and their backgrounds can be told more easily, and the emotional bridges and journeys that some of us have had to take become much more profound. I want to thank the members who have stood today and shared stories of themselves, their families and their communities. They make us all stronger parliamentarians when they come here with that much personal experience.

This issue has changed so much, in just my lifetime. We look at the letters that are often attached to this debate: LGBTQ2+. I can remember when there was only one initial, and I remember when each initial was added to that list and what it meant for different communities at different times, in the city and community I represent and the family I come from. I remember, very distinctly, the bath house raids in Toronto. I remember very distinctly, because one of the people who was caught in that process, who had to be smuggled out the back door because of political implications, was a friend of the family. I remember a staff member at Legal Aid Ontario, where my mother worked, whose life was almost destroyed by that night. I remember how it gave rise to the Pride marches, and I remember how it gave rise to what was then called gay liberation.

I apologize for interrupting, but I will be sharing my time with the member for Milton in this speech.

I remember when the gay liberation movement had the word lesbian attached to it, and how trans people, bi people and all their struggles led to a stronger, better and more compassionate understanding of some of the challenges that people in our society faced. I also remember, shortly after the bath house raids, the rise of AIDS and HIV, and I remember how the stigma prevented people from getting treatment and prevented them from being comforted by family members and loved ones.

Every time we have had to achieve a transformational change in the civil rights and human rights of members of the community has been a really difficult time for politicians. I remember, for example, a debate at Queen's Park when the NDP government of the day tried to bring forth a bill that would have simply provided family benefits to families that happened to be configured differently from

### *Government Orders*

what was perceived to be the norm. I remember the free vote that broke into a riot at Queen's Park, because I was covering it as a reporter. I remember the pain in people's eyes because they knew, coming out of the AIDS epidemic, that the failure to recognize people as full families meant that they could not be there at the end of life with people who loved them, cared for them and were quite often the only ones providing them with the medicine and medical care they needed through their struggle with AIDS and HIV.

We have come a long way as a society by opening our hearts and our minds simultaneously to these issues. Today's debate is profoundly important because society is starting to understand that the sooner we deliver people their human rights, recognize their civil rights and deliver the understanding that we see a person's humanity, the quicker that person starts to come to terms and become a citizen like everyone else, contribute like everyone else but also get loved like everyone else. That is what is at the heart of this debate today. I recognize that when we start trying to move the emotional into the legal and trying to bring social practice into law and statute, there are difficulties.

• (1845)

Some of the opposition members are starting to talk about things they want to explore in committee and changes they think might be important. If those things are brought forward in the spirit of recognizing and deepening our common human rights and our common civility, then nothing but good will come from those debates.

I look forward to the committee taking hold of this issue and trying to find a way to improve this bill. No piece of legislation is ever presented in perfection. They are never passed in perfection. That does not mean we should not be trying. On this issue, it could not be more important.

I was a reporter here when the same-sex marriage debate was kicking up. I remember being a reporter at the City of Toronto, when the two Michaels came forward and decided they were going to present themselves to city hall and dare the city not to marry them. I remember being in a press conference. The city manager was there, and the politicians were there, including Kyle Rae, one of the first elected politicians in Canada to come from the gay community.

I remember asking the city clerk, “Why do you not just marry them, and let someone else deny them their human rights?” There was a brief moment when I thought the city clerk might actually just rip up the letter of disqualification right there on the spot. We all sort of stopped and hoped for it.

I was lucky enough to be invited to the wedding reception of the two Michaels. I was lucky enough to be a city councillor when Toronto became the first place in this country, and the first place on this continent, to open the doors of the wedding chapel to everybody. We would get called in the middle of a debate in the council chamber because the wedding chapel was just across the way. We would get called in and have to go to witness people's marriages.

*Government Orders*

I have to say, it only took one or two marriage ceremonies, even for those of us who were convinced in our hearts it was the right and proper thing to do, to understand that just the act of seeing that happen was transformational. We knew, from the minute we saw an old uncle or a questioning sister or a troubled sibling, that when they saw the love that was being expressed and the humanity that was being embraced, they would see this was actually a celebration of life, and not a denial of someone else's belief structure. It was actually just people expressing love.

We saw that over and over again, and we knew from that moment on society would very quickly embrace it. People have. They embrace it because as soon they witness it and they see the humanity we are trying to stand up for, protect and defend today, they are forever changed by the glory of what happens when love, and who people are, are simply honoured.

This is a profound act. This is a really important piece of legislation we are debating here today. What it does, most importantly for me as the parliamentary secretary for families, children and social development, is it goes to the heart of something which is incredibly important in this country. We know from studying homelessness that if someone is homeless at 16, the chances of them remaining and becoming chronically homeless is in the range of 80% to 90%.

Let us think about that. For someone on the streets at age 16, the chances they will be on the street at 28 or 35 go off the chart. We also know that young people who come to terms with their sexuality and are kicked out of their homes end up on the street faster than any other child in this country. When our government commits to ending homelessness, this is part of that agenda. Make no mistake about that.

I will leave the House with one last thought. Two things happened when I was a member of Parliament on a pride march. I met a young kid from North Bay, who had left North Bay because he was afraid that his sexuality would mean he could never teach in that school system. It does not matter which school system it was, but he left North Bay because he was afraid he would never be allowed to teach up there. He was just not sure the level of tolerance of his sexuality was there to give him a place where he would have a career. He came to Toronto, and he went to the pride march. I was on a truck with him, and we had not quite turned from Bloor onto Yonge. I asked, "Are you ready?" He asked, "Why?"

We turned the corner onto Yonge Street in pride, and there were a million people in front of us celebrating people for who they are. I have never seen somebody cry so hard, so fast and so joyfully in my life. The reason I knew turning that corner was going to be so important was because the year before I had done the same thing with my sister. When that happens in a family, when love does not skip a beat, but just gets deeper, and people find new ways to love and new people in the family to love with, it changes a person forever.

• (1850)

This legislation is going to protect people to find that experience. It is going to protect the opportunity for young people in this country to be who they are, to love who they need to love, to love them-

selves and to be loved by not just their families but by the whole country and this Parliament.

Let us pass this legislation. Let us take it to committee and make it better. Let us make sure the Senate gets it passed. Let us make sure that children in this land know they are free to love, free to be loved and can love freely. If we can make this country the safest place in the world to fall in love, we will have done good work as parliamentarians.

**Mrs. Tamara Jansen (Cloverdale—Langley City, CPC):** Mr. Speaker, Colette, a young woman in Lethbridge, Alberta, reached out. She is a young teenager, an ordinary girl from a traditional home. Her life was turned upside-down when she was gang-raped and became addicted to hard-core porn. She has said in testimony, "Being a traditional kind of girl, I rejected the bisexual feelings and non-heterosexual behaviours that my brain suggested I ought to act on."

Since the incident, however, she suffered from sex addiction. One day, Colette made the decision to go find therapy at her local university to help reduce the feelings she was experiencing after the trauma and porn use. She said that this counselling, along with a sex addiction support group that she attended, saved her life as suicidal thoughts and despair began to affect her deeply.

What would a bill like Bill C-6 do to support the systems Colette had sought out and would the member opposite be willing to ensure that the bill is far more clear as to what is being covered? Many legal minds have been suggesting that the bill is just not clear enough—

**The Deputy Speaker:** We will have to leave it there. There are other members wishing to pose questions.

The hon. parliamentary secretary.

**Mr. Adam Vaughan:** Mr. Speaker, that is a horrible story. It points to the critical importance that we all play a role in eliminating sexual and gender-based violence in this country.

However, in the way it was presented to me, and maybe it was because the question was not finished, it does not tell me why we should not be protecting children seeking love to be loved. What it tells me is that children need to be protected from violence and they need to be protected from becoming victimized by systems and societies. Children need to be protected. This bill would not stop difficult conversations in families, in church basements, in schools and in the hallways of Parliament, but it would stop the systematic and engineered cruelty that conversion therapy is. That is what the bill seeks to deal with.

The horrors that the member spoke about need to be spoken to in other legislation, but voting for or against this bill will not stop horrific acts of violence from traumatizing people and creating confusion in their lives going forward.



*Government Orders*

• (1855)

[*Translation*]

**Mr. Alexandre Boulerice (Rosemont—La Petite-Patrie, NDP):** Mr. Speaker, I thank my colleague for his speech.

We agree with the bill, and we will vote in favour of it. The bill needs to move forward, and it is long overdue.

If we start from the premise that conversion therapy is not only dangerous, but insulting, since a person is being told that they need to be healed, why not follow that logic and ban conversion therapy altogether? Right now the door is being left open a little bit by saying that we should have conversations.

Why are the Liberals not going all the way?

[*English*]

**Mr. Adam Vaughan:** Mr. Speaker, that is one of several ways of asking a question that has been asked many times here today.

The space between a private conversation and where that trips into a form of conversion therapy is a very difficult line to draw in legislation. Part of the way in which our laws work in a democratic parliamentary society is that those definitions evolve over time, to a degree. Fundamentally, what we are doing is taking away the institutional structures, the political fight and the legal ability to force people into situations where they are no longer agents of their own lives.

The issue that the member raised is a good one, as to how to stop private conversations from being damaging conversations. I am not sure we can do that with the law. I think if there was a way to do that, we would all be writing those laws and a whole—

**The Deputy Speaker:** We are going to take one more short question and short response.

The hon. member for Yukon.

**Hon. Larry Bagnell (Parliamentary Secretary to the Minister of Economic Development and Official Languages (Canadian Northern Economic Development Agency), Lib.):** Mr. Speaker, I ask people watching what they would do if someone asked them to change their sexual orientation or gender identity, or, even worse, tried to force them to do it as a kid. They should think about how they would feel.

I am moved and gratified that we are criminalizing the horrendous act of trying to change who someone is. I congratulate the high school students at Porter Creek Secondary School and others who brought this up. The Yukon government, two weeks ago, passed second reading of a bill against conversion therapy. Conversion therapy leads to a lack of self-esteem, increased anxiety and depression, and even suicide, so I thank MPs from all parties who support making five new criminal offences against conversion therapy.

**Mr. Adam Vaughan:** Mr. Speaker, I know the member for Yukon and the work he has done on a whole series of children's rights issues.

The last two initials that have been added to the long string of letters that we now identify as communities are "2S", or two-spirited. One of the great things about being a parliamentarian is how

much detail we get to learn about other parts of the country and other people who make up this great country. The indigenous community, with the concept of two-spirited people, has really raised the bar. The notion that being different makes someone special is always a little awkward, but it gives a person something else. The sense that a person has two spirits and is therefore regarded within a community as exceptionally spiritual really turns this issue on its head.

When we celebrate our children for who they are, they do better, and we do better as a country when we celebrate that love, so let us do this and get the bill passed.

**Mr. Adam van Koevorden (Parliamentary Secretary to the Minister of Diversity and Inclusion and Youth and to the Minister of Canadian Heritage (Sport), Lib.):** Mr. Speaker, I would like to start by acknowledging that I am joining members from the traditional and ancestral territory of the Mississaugas of the Credit First Nation here in Milton.

It is my honour to join the House from my office to discuss amendments to the Criminal Code that would move us one step closer to banning the horrific practice of conversion therapy. While it is daunting to follow my colleague, the parliamentary secretary with the same initials as me, I want to say that I was moved by the idea of making Canada the safest country in the world in which to fall in love.

For far too long, harmful attitudes, stigma and outright bigotry and discrimination have negatively impacted the health and well-being of LGBTQ2+ people throughout the country. That is why this is such an important bill. Conversion therapy is rooted in the wrongful premise that an individual's sexual orientation and gender identity or gender expression can or should be changed. By moving forward with stopping this harmful practice, we are sending an important message. The message is that our gender identities, our gender expressions and our sexual orientations are an essential part of who we are. Nobody should be made to feel less than or as though they should change. It is not people who need to change; it is attitudes.

LGBTQ2+ persons should be understood, appreciated and celebrated. Only then can we have a truly inclusive society. This is true of everyone, whether they happen to be gay, straight, bisexual, cisgender or transgender. However, queer Canadians are the ones who are currently facing the consequences of constantly being told that only heterosexual and cisgender sexual orientations and gender identities and expressions are okay. LGBTQ2+ Canadians should never feel coerced or forced to change into people they are not.

### *Government Orders*

Conversion therapy is known to cause pain, suffering and harm, and it is terrible and wrong. Canadian society needs to include, embrace and celebrate everyone as they are. This includes the full breadth of sexual orientations, gender identities and gender expressions. Regardless of sexual orientation, gender identity and gender expression, who we are is not only valid but respected and valued.

The COVID-19 pandemic has highlighted how much work needs to be done to build a truly safe and inclusive Canada. In fact, the evidence is all there. It was there before the pandemic. Discrimination is real in Canada, and harmful attitudes and beliefs are fuelling that discrimination.

As recently as 2014, Statistics Canada found that 31% of lesbian and gay individuals and 39% of bisexual individuals reported experiencing discrimination in the previous five years. This is simply not acceptable. Consider that in Ontario alone, my home province, an ongoing study of transgender people found that 50% of transgender youth lived in low-income neighbourhoods compared with 37% of the general population. In addition, LGBTQ2+ youth are still at particular risk of experiencing homelessness. A national youth homelessness study found that almost 30% of homeless youth are part of the LGBTQ2+ community. A 2017 study found that 75% of transgender youth in Canada aged 14 to 18 reported self-harm in the previous year compared with less than 20% of cisgender youth of the same age.

All of this is totally unacceptable and only underscores the very basic fact that stigma and discrimination are very real and continue to exist. These harmful myths, attitudes and beliefs about the LGBTQ2+ community are persisting, and they need to be stopped.

However, there is some hope and progress. In 1995, the Supreme Court of Canada ruled that individuals are protected against discrimination on the basis of sexual orientation through the Canadian Charter of Rights and Freedoms. In 2017, the Canadian Human Rights Act added gender identity and gender expression as prohibited grounds for discrimination. Of course, more needs to be done, but these and other measures have provided incremental progress.

Today's proposed amendments to the Criminal Code regarding conversion therapy are part of that progress. Legislative measures such as these signal a broader acknowledgement that LGBTQ2+ people are valued and appreciated and they must be embraced just as they are. There is no need for the queer community to become heterosexual or cisgender. Rather, the LGBTQ2+ community must be afforded the same opportunity as everyone to be treated with full dignity, which is the same dignity afforded to other Canadians.

● (1900)

Much progress is possible when hearts and minds move forward in their understanding and appreciation of LGBTQ2+ people.

For instance, among transgender youth, suicide attempts are reduced by 93% in cases where parents strongly support their children's gender identity and gender expression. I am going to say that again: Suicide attempts are reduced by 93% in cases of youth with supportive parents. That is all it takes. It is incredibly powerful. If supportive parents can have such a meaningful impact, we should be encouraging more education and deeper, more compassionate understanding so that LGBTQ2+ Canadians, particularly queer

youth, can fully participate and contribute without living in fear of having to face attempts to change who they are.

PFLAG Canada is a national charitable organization founded by parents who wish to help themselves and their family members understand and accept their LGBTQ2+ children. Recently, in partnership with Arts Milton and PFLAG Halton, I supported a public art project here in Milton. It is on the side of my community office, just downstairs. Small acts of love go a long way. I want to thank the artist, JR Marr, for telling their story through art and spreading that love.

There is hope in public support. According to the Fondation Émergence, 74% of Canadians say that their knowledge of issues faced by transgender people has increased in the last five years, while 72% of Canadians believe that transgender people are being discriminated against by their employers. Canadians are becoming more aware and more alive to these very real issues and that there are, indeed, real impacts to the stigma and discrimination that LGBTQ2+ people and communities face.

Conversion therapy and efforts to force LGBTQ2+ individuals to change into people they are not reflect ongoing and long-standing views that only heterosexual and cisgender identities are valued, and that only heterosexual and cisgender identities should be valued. This is a myth that must be abolished. Sexual diversity is part of the human experience. Efforts to change and to limit that diversity cause harm, and that harm needs to end. Stopping this harm will protect LGBTQ2+ people throughout Canada, but putting an end to this harm will also benefit Canada overall. We know that there is strength in diversity. There is also strength in inclusion.

When we can all be fully included in Canadian society, when we can all fully participate, and when we can all be fully appreciated and celebrated as we are and as we were meant to be, everyone wins. That is a society that is not only surviving, but a society that is thriving.

I want to close by acknowledging again how meaningful and moving the previous speaker's mention was of creating the country that is the safest one in the world in which to fall in love.

● (1905)

**Mr. Garnett Genuis (Sherwood Park—Fort Saskatchewan, CPC):** Mr. Speaker, of course, Conservatives are supportive of efforts to ban conversion therapy. We are also asking questions about the definition and suggesting that there could be improvements to fix the definition to ensure broader consensus.

In particular, I want to ask the member about one aspect of the definition. I think that most people would understand conversion therapy as involving an attempt to change a person's sexual orientation. The definition, though, also includes efforts to reduce sexual attraction or behaviour.

*Government Orders*

I can imagine many cases in which individuals might see a counsellor or seek advice from mentors in an effort to reduce or, in some way, change the way they are acting sexually. They might find that their sexual behaviour is getting them into problems in their lives, and they want to seek counselling in order to reduce sexual attraction or behaviour. Language around sexual attraction or behaviour, to me, is very distinct from the kind of conversion that we typically think of as conversion therapy.

Would the member agree that one way to fix this definition is to focus only on the changing of orientation aspect, as opposed to the kind of counselling someone might seek as support for changing or mainly reducing their sexual behaviour?

**Mr. Adam van Koeverden:** Mr. Speaker, I think this will become better legislation as we discuss these issues more thoroughly. I am thinking back to Catholic school and the earliest experience that I had when I was a young boy talking to the chaplain about sexuality. I recall him saying that we love the person, but we hate the act. Then I came to know Jesus Christ through bible study and I never really imagined Jesus Christ being capable of hating somebody or an act that involved love. As we seek to improve upon this, the question from the hon. member was about behaviour. This is about identity. We are focusing on identity and changing people, which is rooted in—

• (1910)

**The Deputy Speaker:** We have to get on to the next question.

Questions and comments, the hon member for La Pointe-de-l'Île.

[*Translation*]

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

We in the Bloc Québécois agree with the essence of the bill. However, I would like to know my colleague's opinion on the provisions of the bill making it illegal to promote conversion therapy and to receive money for providing such therapy, except in the case of consenting adults. Does this mean that therapists could be paid to provide conversion therapy to a consenting adult?

If so, I can hardly see how the legislation will apply. How can we better define this?

**Mr. Adam van Koeverden:** Mr. Speaker, I thank my colleague for his question.

[*English*]

It could be said the bill does not go far enough to make conversion therapy illegal and criminal. I am not a lawyer, but I know it is very difficult to tell consulting adults exactly what they can do with their time and their money. My hope through the bill is that we broaden the definition of what accepted love is in Canada and that we change attitudes. As I said in my speech, it is not people who need changing, it is that conversion therapy is based on two false premises: one that people can change and two, that people should change. Both are false and perhaps this is an iterative approach to making it completely illegal, but that is what committee is for and I look forward to discussing it further there.

**Ms. Leah Gazan (Winnipeg Centre, NDP):** Mr. Speaker, we know conversion therapy does real damage. I am wondering why

the Liberal government is choosing not to outlaw it outright. I say that because in the sixties there were behavioural experiments where they found long-term or permanent damage done to people participating in these experiments. We know that is true for conversion therapy, so why is the government choosing not to ban conversion therapy outright?

**Mr. Adam van Koeverden:** Mr. Speaker, I am thankful to expand on the previous member's question. I am not a lawyer. I am not an expert on these types of legal matters, but I know it is very difficult to put into law restrictions on what consenting adults can do with their time and their money. I am with the member. I would love to see conversion therapy be illegal, but I also know that people have the right to explore these types of things. Sadly, the member and I can agree that they are wrong, but there are also rights that we need to protect, I suppose. I look forward to discussing this further.

**Mr. Garnett Genuis (Sherwood Park—Fort Saskatchewan, CPC):** Mr. Speaker, in a particular sense, Bill C-6 is about people, about the trauma people have experienced but also about the ways they have overcome that trauma. Before I get into some of the arguments around the provisions of this bill, if members could indulge me for a minute, I want to engage in that human side of the conversation, as well, with stories of particular LGBTQ people whose struggles and victories have shaped our collective history and whom I personally deeply admire. Unlike some of the speeches, the people I am going to talk about are not friends of mine. In fact, they are heroes of mine. They are people whose courage and wisdom informed their public service and shaped the 20th century.

Just over 100 years ago, the greatest leaders from virtually every country in the world came to Paris for the making of the peace to end all war, what would become the Versailles settlement. This was a critical crossover in time. The transition from an era of Pax Britannica, European colonial expansion and the economic gilded age, into a new era in which post-revolutionary powers would dominate global affairs through heightened ideological conflict and an era in which the demands of nations that had been suppressed for hundreds or even thousands of years would re-emerge.

This moment in history has rightly captured the imagination of many, especially because discussions in Paris contained the spark of many of the great innovative ideas of the 20th century. Still, like the spark of so many things, the Versailles settlement got wrong more than it got right. It failed to deliver functioning international institutions, an effective global economic system or a durable peace.

### Government Orders

In the midst of this generally failed exercise, there were two very notable British Cassandras, men who got things right in their areas of speciality at a time when those who actually held the levers of power were getting it wrong. These two men were T.E. Lawrence, better known as Lawrence of Arabia, and John Maynard Keynes.

Lawrence wanted the British to keep the promises they had made to their Arab allies for the creation of a great, new, independent Arab state under Hashemite control. The Hashemite leaders already had come to a general understanding with Zionist authorities, which could have led to early peace and understanding between Arabs and Jews. Instead, the powers at Versailles opted to generally divide the Middle East into British and French control. Many of the tragic events in the Middle East that followed could have been avoided if Lawrence had had his way.

Keynes' area of focus was economics, not the Middle East. While in Paris, he advanced the critical importance of establishing the conditions for trade integration and shared economic prosperity in Europe if the settlement was to lead to a durable peace. He fought back against those who wanted, in his words, a Carthaginian peace. Despite his efforts, louder voices in Europe calling for punishing reparations to be paid by all belligerent powers and American insistence on the honouring of war debts created the conditions of economic vulnerability that allowed fascism to emerge. Keynes directly foresaw how economically punishing terms would lead to the rise of authoritarianism.

In Paris in 1919, Lawrence and Keynes were, in different ways, dramatically bucking the tendencies of their time. It is interesting then to wonder what characteristics set Lawrence and Keynes apart. What factors shaped these brilliant men and gave them the awareness, as well as the intellectual and practical courage, to challenge the currents of that moment. Although applying the term after the fact is a bit anachronistic, Lawrence and Keynes both almost certainly had sexual orientations that were either the G, the B or the Q in LGBTQ.

There was no proof of it in the case of Lawrence, but there is plenty in his writings to imply it. The first chapter of his famous book, *Seven Pillars of Wisdom*, for example, alludes to non-heterosexual sexual practices that he saw as arising naturally from the circumstances of the Arab campaign. The opening dedication of *Seven Pillars of Wisdom* was written to "S.A.", a likely reference to a young man named Selim Ahmed, who was close to Lawrence and who died during the campaign.

The dedication reads:

I loved you, so I drew these tides of men into my hands  
and wrote my will across the sky in stars  
To earn you Freedom, the seven-pillared worthy house,  
that your eyes might be shining for me  
When we came.

Death seemed my servant on the road, till we were near  
and saw you waiting:  
When you smiled, and in sorrowful envy he outran me  
and took you apart:  
Into his quietness.

Love, the way-weary, groped to your body, our brief wage  
ours for the moment  
Before earth's soft hand explored your shape, and the blind

worms grew fat upon  
Your substance.

Men prayed me that I set our work, the inviolate house,  
as a memory of you.  
But for fit monument I shattered it, unfinished: and now  
The little things creep out to patch themselves hovels  
in the marred shadow  
Of your gift.

● (1915)

Early on, Keynes was generally known to be gay by his close friends, known as the Bloomsbury Group, who expressed various forms of sexuality that were unconventional at the time. Much more is known about Keynes's sexuality than Lawrence's. While Lawrence couched his references to it in the subtlety and poetry that characterized his writing, Keynes catalogued his encounters with economic efficiency, but Keynes eventually surprised his friends, and probably himself, by falling madly in love with a woman. She was a famous Russian dancer who was actually married at the time, so Keynes was still bucking conventional orthodoxy, just not in the ways that his friends expected.

During the same era, many gay and lesbian people were not given the same opportunity as Lawrence and Keynes to serve their countries in important roles or, if they had been, they were removed from those roles once information came out about them. People were driven out of public service following intrusions into their private lives. It is indeed a great injustice that people were so denied the opportunity to serve their countries, and it was also a great loss to their communities. As Lawrence and Keynes demonstrate, sexuality is but a small part of the whole picture of what makes a person who they are. Imagine how much further behind we would be today if we had been deprived of the public service of Lawrence and Keynes, and imagine how much further ahead we would be if the public service of other LGBTQ2+ individuals had not been cut short by those who sought to reduce their identities to only one aspect and unjustly excluded them on that basis.

In the early part of the 20th century as well, we saw the emergence of something called conversion therapy: a particular set of dehumanizing practices that sought to rewire people's brains to make them straight. These practices sought to associate pain, violence and degradation with homosexuality and create positive associations around heterosexuality. Conversion therapy involved the use of pornography and heterosexual prostitution as well as shame and violence. These methods have been thoroughly debunked as to whether they lead to any change in sexual identity. Even more importantly, these practices are contrary to human dignity.

It is worth underlining that point about human dignity, because the idea of dignity is used in various debates in the House, often with little precise definition. There is this idea, critical to our modern concepts of human rights, that human beings have intrinsic value, not based on what they do or what they feel, but based on the fact that they are human. Dignity is essential to all human beings, and is a characteristic that denotes intrinsic worth and value. It is always present in human beings, by virtue of who and what they are, but social structures or other individuals may still falsely deny or ignore a person's dignity, or suggest it is contingent on some characteristic or circumstance. We must always firmly assert the immutability of human dignity: the fact that dignity ought not to be denied, even by the person themselves, and that subjecting people to violent or degrading treatment because of their sexuality is necessarily a violation of that dignity.

The practice of conversion therapy has been largely discredited, but for greater certainty and to give assurance to those who have been its victims in the past, I fully support efforts to ban conversion therapy. I hope to have an opportunity to support a bill that does that. I want to get to a yes on this. In fact, I think we can get to more than a yes for me: I think we can get to unanimity in the House, if we have a clear definition, because I do not believe there is any member here who wants to see the kind of violent practices that have been associated with conversion therapy for far too long.

As the lives of Lawrence and Keynes demonstrate, human sexuality is complex. It seems that, for some people, sexual expression varies over the course of their lives, with certain expressions predominating at different times. Others have fixed inclinations that do not change. For most, sexual activity changes under different circumstances, such as changing relationships. Any person, of any orientation, living out their sexuality obviously takes into consideration different aspects of their identity. The great writer and Catholic priest Henri Nouwen, for example, identified feelings of same-sex attraction and also sought to live out the commitment to celibacy that all Catholic clergy make. Nouwen's writings about his journey are both beautiful and haunting, illuminating a life rich in meaning and challenged by loneliness. Nouwen lived out a personal choice. All of us make personal choices that reflect personal decisions about how to reconcile competing desires, competing aspects of identity and competing concepts of what constitutes "the good life."

So, while supporting efforts to ban conversion therapy, I am concerned that Bill C-6 misdefines the term. The definition is, of course, central to the matter. If we say we are banning conversion therapy, but in the process define conversion therapy as including things that are not conversion therapy, then we will end up banning things that are not conversion therapy. Good intentions here are not enough.

• (1920)

We hear members speaking about what this bill seeks to do, but it is also important that the bill does the things that it seeks to do and does not do things that it does not seek to do. This is where we have to engage with the substance and the details. Bill C-6 defines conversion therapy as:

a practice, treatment or service designed to change a person's sexual orientation to heterosexual or gender identity to cisgender, or to repress or reduce non-heterosexual attraction or sexual behaviour.

### *Government Orders*

This definition goes significantly outside of the practices referred to earlier, which seek to use pain, violence and degradation to force a change in sexual feelings. Such therapies are ineffective and repugnant, as mentioned, but this bill would heavily restrict all efforts for a person to reduce their sexual attraction or sexual behaviour or any conversations or interactions that seem to have the effect of changing a person's feelings of sexual attraction or behaviour.

If a parent tells their teenage son or daughter that he or she cannot have sex until they reach a certain age or until he or she moves out, that would amount to an attempt to reduce sexual attraction or behaviour. If an Orthodox rabbi, in good faith and with good intentions, simply shares his beliefs with respect to sexual activity, that would also be a case of encouraging self-imposed limits on sexual behaviour. If a group of LGBTQ evangelical Christians meet together to study and explore how to live out their faith, and they debate and discuss strategies for limiting or redirecting sexual feelings, those private conversations would certainly come under scrutiny if Bill C-6 is passed unamended. What about a young transgender person who wishes to preserve a relationship with his grandparents even though they tell him that they think his identity is just a phase?

Whatever we think of such interactions or conversations, surely they are not a place for law enforcement intervention. We are talking, yes, about conversations where people might encourage particular identification or sexual behaviour. However, they are conversations, not therapies, in which everyday people with goodwill simply are expressing their opinions with the best of intentions for family or friends. They are cases where people of like mind gather together in an attempt to support each other, or where people voluntarily seek counselling or support to live their lives as they choose.

It is not unusual for people to seek to reduce sexual attraction or behaviour. If a person is in a committed relationship and is compulsively cheating on their partner, I suspect that any counsellor or physician would discuss with them strategies for reducing sexual attraction or behaviour. In my consultations around this bill, I spoke to a father in a heterosexual marriage who had started to experience same-sex attraction. He chose not to act on those attractions and instead chose to preserve his marriage. I do not think anyone should force him to make that choice, but I do think he has a right to make that choice and to seek counselling and support in order to help him do that.

### *Government Orders*

In general, I suspect that most parents and mentors encourage in young people some constraints on sexual behaviour or expression, and that applies whether those young people are straight or gay. Dan Savage, a leading American author and founder of the It Gets Better Project, made the following observation about parenting LGBTQ young people. He said, “The trap that people who have gay kids fall into is that they feel that they can't hold their gay kids to the same standards that they hold their straight kids to, that they will be perceived as homophobic if they don't let their gay child run off and do things that they won't let their straight kids do. But equality is what we're after. If your straight kids are not allowed to have their boyfriend or girlfriend stay the night, he's not allowed to have his boyfriend stay the night.”

By making efforts to reduce non-heterosexual attraction or behaviour criminal, this law as written forces a legal inequality into the home, where parents would be perfectly within their rights to require constraints on sexual behaviour for a straight son but not for a gay son. I do not think that makes sense. I do not think constraining the ability of parents to make house rules about sexual behaviour and applying them equally has anything to do with conversion therapy if properly defined. We are not just talking about the freedom of religious conservatives, the sexually unconventional people of our day. We are talking about any private conversations in which people might recommend limits to sexual attraction or behaviour for any reason, inserting the long arm of the law into those conversations.

I am not a regular reader of the Toronto Star, but in researching this speech I took a look at the relationship advice section, Ask Ellie. Perhaps unsurprisingly, it contains plenty of entries where strategies are suggested for reducing sexual attraction or behaviour. For example, last week, a woman whose husband was on a dating app was affirmed for informing the people he was corresponding with that he was already married, and it was suggested that the woman tell her husband to stop spending time on the dating app and instead to seek a counsellor.

• (1925)

This kind of advice from the Toronto Star clearly does not constitute conversion therapy, properly defined, but it does involve an effort to reduce sexual attraction or behaviour and advice to see a counsellor, who would presumably encourage the husband in question not to cheat on his wife. This would constitute an effort to reduce or modify sexual behaviour.

I do not really think the intention of the legislation was to go after Ask Ellie, but it does underline the technical and drafting problems with the legislation as it is currently written. Parenthetically, it is a bit ironic that some of the same people who want to defund the police and replace it with social workers are now interested in having police intervene to ensure that conversations about sexually fit into defined parameters.

This odd and flawed definition goes a long way to limit what are likely often loving and sincere conversations people might have with parents, counsellors, friends and other authority figures about sexual identity and behaviour. Under the current definition as written, I wonder if John Maynard Keynes's friend would have had a case to bring against his wife for seeming to be the catalyst for his

dramatic change in sexual expression. The circumstances are such that there may well have been a case, indeed.

The fact is that sexuality is complicated and the culmination of ways in which free people construct their identities, taking into consideration upbringing, culture, faith and sexuality, are often even more complicated. Therefore, let us ban coercion, violence and bullying and then let us allow free people to have conversations about how they want to identify and live. Our mistake at the beginning of the 20th century was, in a world of complex sexuality and identity, to try to prescribe legal limits to what people could think, say or do. Let us not go down a similar road with a ban that, in reality, goes far beyond conversion therapy.

I have spoken about ambiguities in the current definition. There are big questions about how the legislation would apply in certain cases. The initial definition is followed by a proviso that, for greater certainty, this definition does not include a practice, treatment or service that relates to a person's gender transition or a person's exploration of his or her identity or to its development. It is not at all clear what that proviso means, but it certainly provides no protection specifically for conversations or for parents, counsellors or religious leaders who want to provide guidance in terms of sexual behaviour to their congregations or those seeking that guidance.

With these gaps and ambiguities, the legislation, as written, would no doubt spawn a litany of legal challenges. Again, when we define something as being conversion therapy which is not in fact conversion therapy, then I think we have to be honest about it and honestly debate what we are trying to do. As written, this is not a bill that bans conversion therapy. Rather, it bans the expression of any opinion, in public or private, that suggests individuals should, in certain situations, exercise voluntary control and limits on their sexual feelings or behaviour. It is a far more expansive effort to constrain the thoughts and discussions that free people are able to have.

Efforts to ban conversion therapy are right and justified, but the bill, as written, is a trick, calling things conversion therapy that are not in fact conversion therapy. It is a trick which exploits the real suffering of some LGBTQ individuals and seeks to use them for political purposes and in so doing, limit their rights to have open conversations about their sexual feelings. The bill is the wrong response to a real issue. Let us have a better bill, a bill that is clearly drafted and that actually bans conversion therapy, no more and no less.

I recommend that the bill be amended to remove the current definition of “conversion therapy” and replace it with a definition that recognizes conversion therapy as a professional service that seeks to compel a change to a person's sexual orientation through degrading or violent means. This is, after all, what conversion therapy is, so let us ban conversion therapy. Let us fix the definition and move forward with this ban right away.

Some members think that these concerns are unjustified, that they are a red herring. Let us kill the red herring and then proceed in a united fashion by amending the bill.

I fear that I may have angered some of my political base with too many favourable references to John Maynard Keynes. I certainly do not endorse all his economic conclusions or the ways in which his ideas have been misused at certain times in history. I will now therefore now seek to mollify any potential critics with a favourable reference to Friedrich Hayek.

Hayek, who also argued for the repeal of laws restricting homosexual behaviour, noted that in economics, “knowledge of the circumstances of which we must make use never exists in concentrated or integrated form but solely as the dispersed bits of incomplete and frequently contradictory knowledge which all the separate individuals possess.” Like Hayek, I think individuals, and not paternalistic governments, should be allowed to make their own decisions about their own lives as much as possible.

Our goal should be to protect the ability of free people to seek, understand and integrate their identities, not to prescribe a hierarchy of identities. Therefore, let us ban conversion therapy and ensure we define it correctly.

• (1930)

**Mr. Kevin Lamoureux (Parliamentary Secretary to the President of the Queen’s Privy Council for Canada and to the Leader of the Government in the House of Commons, Lib.):** Mr. Speaker, I can appreciate the leader of the Conservative Party has opted to have this as a free vote within the Conservative Party. Listening to the member opposite, particularly as he was winding up his comments, makes it fairly clear that he is going to be voting against the legislation. If I am wrong in my interpretation, I would ask him to let me know.

I want to get his thoughts with respect to this. This is not a bill that appeared out of nowhere. This is a bill, as the Minister of Diversity and other ministers have made reference to, that has engaged Canadians in a very real and tangible way. I wonder if he might be discarding that very important aspect of the legislation by just throwing it out.

**Mr. Garnett Genuis:** Mr. Speaker, what I would like to do is throw out the bathwater and keep the baby. I would like to be able to confidently vote for this bill at third reading. I hope to be able to have the opportunity to vote for an improved, clear bill that bans conversion therapy at third reading.

When it comes to second reading, I am conflicted between an agreement with the principle of banning conversion therapy and significant concerns about the implications of this bill unamended. I recognize the government had an opportunity to listen to the concerns that were raised and fix the problems, fix the definition, in between the first and second session of Parliament. The fact that it did not take that opportunity raises some significant concerns about whether it is actually proceeding in good faith to put forward a bill that bans conversion therapy and only conversion therapy.

### *Government Orders*

• (1935)

[*Translation*]

**Mr. Rhéal Fortin (Rivière-du-Nord, BQ):** Mr. Speaker, I am a little surprised at how concerned my colleague from Sherwood Park—Fort Saskatchewan is about conversations that a father might have with his son about his sexual orientation. I do not think that has anything to do with conversion therapy, any more than a conversation about a bank robbery has anything to do with a plot to rob a bank.

That said, I am much more concerned about another aspect of the issue. People are very interested in conversion therapy, but they are also concerned because of the connection with the somewhat extreme ideas espoused by certain religious communities.

During the latest Conservative Party leadership race, my colleague from Sherwood Park—Fort Saskatchewan said that he was working a lot with people who were privately and discreetly looking for support from evangelical churches in Quebec. Is my colleague not concerned that religious communities’ influence on his party could interfere with a healthy debate on this important issue?

[*English*]

**Mr. Garnett Genuis:** Mr. Speaker, I will say to the Bloc that the Conservatives are here to represent all Canadians and all Quebecers, including Quebecers who that party will not represent, such as Muslim or Sikh Quebecers who are concerned with restrictions on their ability to practise their faith, and people from other communities.

The Conservatives believe in a pluralism that respects diversity and lets people have different perspectives and participate in the public square together. I completely reject the insinuation of his question that people who practise a faith somehow should be excluded from public conversation, that only those who do not have a faith perspective are the ones who are allowed to participate in the public square.

Let me respond to the first part of his question, which I think was in some ways more reasonable. He said we are talking about two completely different things, conversations and conversion therapy. I agree they are two different things, but the problem is the definition, as written, brings private conversations that people might have about issues of sexuality into the definition of “conversion therapy”. The member is right that we should not really be talking about private conversations in the context of this debate, except there is a flawed definition that brings those things in, so we need to fix the definition.

**Ms. Leah Gazan (Winnipeg Centre, NDP):** Mr. Speaker, I would like to thank my hon. colleague for his comments, although I am quite confused. Nowhere in this bill does it mention anything about limiting the ability of parents to have discussions with their children. We are talking about a barbaric practice that violates human rights and dignity, something he said was not clearly defined, but it is under our charter, so it also violates charter rights.

*Government Orders*

Conversion therapy has been deemed, through much research, to cause irreparable damage to some people's lives. It is something that, when they do different practices in psychology, they eliminate because they know it has a long-term, severe psychological and emotional impact. The member gave us a lot of prose and stories. I am wondering if he has done any research with respect to his assertion on the long-term psychological impacts conversion has on individuals and why, knowing that, he supports that—

**The Deputy Speaker:** We will have to leave it there. We still have a few more questions.

The hon. member for Sherwood Park—Fort Saskatchewan.

**Mr. Garnett Genuis:** Mr. Speaker, the best response is just to restate what my argument was, which is I am opposed to conversion therapy. I agree that conversion therapy should be banned and it needs to be properly defined.

The definition, as written, is what we are debating. We are debating a bill that has a definition in it and that is the definition that will become the law if the bill is passed unamended. It is not the common-sense definition of what conversion therapy is. It is the text of the definition. The text of the definition includes any effort, could be a private conversation, any practice, treatment or service, and practice is not defined in the legislation, which involves reducing or repressing non-heterosexual attraction or sexual behaviour.

I used some examples in my speech of cases in which there might be a private conversation that aims at supporting someone in his or her efforts to reduce or modify the individual's sexual behaviour. That falls into the definition, unfortunately, as it is written. It is a fixable problem. I hope we can get to a bill on which we can all agree.

It is very important to highlight that fixable problem. What becomes the law is the text of the bill, not the intentions of the speakers in the House.

● (1940)

**Mr. Jeremy Patzer (Cypress Hills—Grasslands, CPC):** Mr. Speaker, at the conclusion of the hon. member's speech, he talked about how it should be individuals, not paternalistic governments, who make their own decisions in life.

Would he elaborate on how the bill would impact people's ability to make their own decisions within their own life?

**Mr. Garnett Genuis:** Mr. Speaker, all of us have different aspects of our identity that we seek to reconcile. People choose to reconcile those things in different ways.

I gave the example of a well-known Catholic priest and writer, Henri Nouwen, who identified a same-sex attraction and who sought to live out his vows of celibacy. That was a personal choice that reflected, for him, the way in which he wished to construct his identity.

I would not say for a second that anyone should be forced to make that choice, but people should be allowed to make a choice and should seek support in doing that. Others who wish to respond to those attractions differently should be absolutely free to do so, and to be loved and treated with respect as they do so.

I do not think there is any reason for governments to prescribe a particular way in which people construct their identities. What we need to be concerned about, as politicians, are cases where there is bullying, coercion, violence and torture. We can work together to address those situations, while recognizing that people may make all kinds of different choices about sexual action, behaviour or relationships, and it is up to them to make those choices.

**Mrs. Cathay Wagantall (Yorkton—Melville, CPC):** Mr. Speaker, I would like to draw my colleague's attention to Cari.

Cari was a minor when she transitioned. Now she is publicly expressing her experience. She was prescribed hormones after four sessions of therapy. She noted that no attempts were made at these therapy sessions to process personal issues that she raised and no one in the medical or psychological field tried to dissuade her from her gender transition or offer an option other than possibly waiting until she was 18.

This was all Cari's decision, but what she is saying is that she did not feel she was provided with all the tools that she needed to make that decision properly for herself. I know the justice shadow minister expressed that terminology is important here and that we need to see some amendments that protect individuals who are responsible for communication with people like Cari. That would be the medical and psychological professions.

What would the member's perspective be on that?

**Mr. Garnett Genuis:** Mr. Speaker, it is important to talk about cases of real people and their lived experiences. I know members on all sides of the House have.

The concern that anecdote gets at is that there may be cases in which counsellors are unsure about where this unclear definition is leading them. In a context that has absolutely nothing to do with conversion therapy, they might be trying to talk through what somebody is saying and experiencing and have a fear they will run afoul of the law if they ask questions of someone, who initially presents as identifying as transgender, that may in some way seem to challenge that identification.

We should have good, professional training for counsellors to ensure they are having conversations in a proper, effective way. However, we want to ensure we are not sticking in the arm of the criminal law in a way that creates a chill and maybe even an unwillingness to see or counsel people who are in these kinds of situations.



*Government Orders*

• (1945)

**Mr. Kevin Lamoureux (Parliamentary Secretary to the President of the Queen's Privy Council for Canada and to the Leader of the Government in the House of Commons, Lib.):** Mr. Speaker, I have had the opportunity to listen to many members from different sides of the House contribute to the debate thus far and I am inclined to share some thoughts in regard to this very important issue. I really want to emphasize a couple of points in particular. At my core, I believe that people should feel comfortable and have the freedom to be who they are. That is really important. It matters to us as a society and it should matter to all of us as individuals, given the country that we live in.

That is why I was encouraged and it has been said a couple of times that Canada wants to be known as the best, safest country in the world to fall in love. There is a lot that can be read into that and a lot of positive things that speak boldly about our diversity, tolerance and acceptance. Through the years, I am somewhat dating myself around the 57-58 mark, there have been significant changes and I want to reference some of those things as we have seen a very slow evolution of this very important issue.

Before I do that, I want to reflect on what the member for Sherwood Park—Fort Saskatchewan said. It is encouraging that the Conservative Party has agreed to free the vote so that members can vote whatever way they want. It is a bit of a surprise. I would have thought it might have been a mandatory or a whipped vote coming from the new leader, but for whatever reason, he has chosen to leave it as a free vote. I am a big advocate for the Charter of Rights and Freedoms and our Constitution. I understand the value of freedom to our nation. I thought that the leader of the Conservative Party would have had a whipped vote.

The member for Sherwood Park—Fort Saskatchewan seemed to be of the opinion that the bill as it is written is not worth voting in favour of going to committee. I am anxious to see how he votes. I am hoping that he will be of the minority and we will see the legislation go to committee. The member could look at what the legislation would do to protect minors from conversion therapy provided within or outside Canada, adults who are vulnerable to being forced to undergo conversion therapy and Canadians from commercialization and conversation therapy. These are admirable and based on one part of the member's speech that he would be encouraged to support the legislation.

There has been a great deal of effort put into this legislation. I know the Minister of Diversity and Inclusion and Youth is very anxious to see the bill come before the House. She approached me on a couple of occasions and asked when we were going to debate this bill. There is a great deal of consultation that has taken place in different regions of our country. A great deal of effort has been put into place to date in terms of making sure that we have it right. Obviously, the minister indicated that there is always the possibility of amendments as long as they are given in good faith. I suspect there will be opportunities once it gets to committee.

• (1950)

It would be nice if every government bill, or anything that comes before the House, could have endless debate, but in order to get things passed, sometimes we have to allow it to go to a vote. I look

forward to the vote, and ultimately the bill going to committee, because of what this bill would actually do.

The bill would criminalize causing a person under the age of 18, which is a minor, to undergo conversion therapy. It would criminalize removing a minor from Canada to undergo conversion therapy abroad. It would criminalize causing a person to undergo conversion therapy against their will. It would criminalize receiving a financial or other material benefit from the provision of conversion therapy. It would criminalize advertising and offering to provide conversion therapy. Of these initiatives, based on what I have heard today, most if not all would be supported, because everyone seems to be fairly hard on the issue of conversion therapy and for good reason.

I am a big fan of one of my former colleagues, Randy Boissonnault, from Edmonton. Many members will remember him. I always saw him as not only a dear friend, but also as a strong advocate who really understood LGBTQ2 issues. He made a point of explaining it and talking to anyone who had an interest. I recall an awkward situation I was in a number of years ago, and I was not exactly sure where to turn. I went to Randy to get his advice regarding something that was taking place in my own constituency and, as an individual, he made himself available to help us get through a very difficult issue.

Whether we like it or not, there is a great deal of discrimination out there today. Sadly, there are too many people who are made to feel something they should not, and it is having a profound impact on the lives of so many Canadians in all regions of our country. I do not believe that Randy is alone in this. I believe there are people like Randy throughout our country, and these advocates, these people with passion, can speak far greater than I could ever speak on the issue. Not only do they educate people like me, but they are also there for individuals in a very real and tangible way, because there is no shame, and there should be no shame.

I realize my time is coming to a close for the day, but I will hopefully continue tomorrow to talk about some of the changes that we have seen in a relatively short time span, such as the Winnipeg pride parade back in the late 1980s when it came into being and why. Winnipeg was the first major urban centre in North America to elect an openly gay mayor, Glen Murray.

There are many things we have seen over the years that give us all hope and encouragement, but I will continue my remarks tomorrow as my time has expired for this evening.

**The Deputy Speaker:** The hon. parliamentary secretary will be delighted to know that he will have 10 and a half minutes remaining in his time when the House gets back to debate on the question. It appears all hon. members will be just as pleased. He will also have the extra 10 minutes for questions and comments. Of course, that will happen when the House gets back to debate.

*Adjournment Proceedings***ADJOURNMENT PROCEEDINGS**

A motion to adjourn the House under Standing Order 38 deemed to have been moved.

• (1955)

[*English*]

## HEALTH

**Ms. Heather McPherson (Edmonton Strathcona, NDP):** Mr. Speaker, like millions of other Canadians, I owe my life to our universal public health care system. In 2017, I was diagnosed with and successfully treated for cancer. In the years since, I have received regular diagnostic screenings and follow-up care thanks to a public health care system built on the fundamental value of freedom. Regardless of who they are, where they live and of how much money they have, all Canadians have the freedom to access quality, publicly delivered health care.

However, today in Alberta, health care is under attack. Jason Kenney and his Conservative government are making no secret of their attempts to dismantle the public system to which I and so many others owe our lives.

In just a few months, Kenney's Conservatives have unilaterally cancelled contracts with doctors and opened the door for the corporatization of care. They have increased reliance on for-profit delivery of surgeries and are planning to spend \$200 million for a private orthopaedic surgical facility. They have announced the privatization of health support services, resulting in the layoff of 11,000 Alberta workers. Just last week, they voted to support a private two-tiered health care system that would allow the wealthy to access publicly funded services while everyone else has to wait for care. They have done all of this in the middle of a global health pandemic.

As a result of Jason Kenney's actions, physicians are leaving Alberta, and rural and northern communities do not have access to health care. Medicine Hat is losing its maternity health clinic, where there are 6,000 to 9,000 prenatal appointments every single year and where more than half the babies born in that city are delivered. Today, thousands of front-line health care workers across Alberta walked off the job to protest the cuts that are threatening Alberta safety.

Health care is in crisis in Alberta and it is only getting worse. It should be obvious to all Canadians, especially now, that an American-style health care system is not the answer. If we did not understand how critical our public health care system was before COVID-19, we certainly understand it now.

While most of us watch in horror as thousands of Americans die every day from COVID-19 and millions lose their access to health care as they lose their jobs, Jason Kenney and the Conservatives aspire to turn our public health care dollars into private profit for his friends, for billionaires and for corporations. At this moment in time, when quality, accessible health care is so clearly a moral and economic necessity and Canadians' lives are on the line, we should be expanding our health care system to better meet our needs, not allowing it to be dismantled. Too many families in Canada go without the medicine they need because they cannot afford it. The diagnosis may be free but the treatment is not. Too many families in

Canada suffer because they cannot afford mental health care. Too many families go without dental care until they end up in the hospital with emergency services.

Instead of improving and expanding health care, we are forced to defend it from people like Jason Kenney. However, defend it we must. The Canada Health Act is very clear. Canadians are guaranteed the right to health services without financial or other barriers.

What will the government do to protect Albertans against attacks on our public health care and protect the Canada Health Act?

**Mr. Darren Fisher (Parliamentary Secretary to the Minister of Health, Lib.):** Mr. Speaker, let me assure my colleague that this government is firmly committed to actively defending our publicly funded health care system and to vigorously upholding the Canada Health Act that underpins it. Like all Canadians, we share the strong belief that all individuals deserve access to timely, quality health care, regardless of their background, where they live or how much they make. This is part of our national identity. Canadians believe in the equality of citizens, and our health care system reflects that fundamental belief.

The Government of Canada does not support a two-tiered health care system where patients may choose, or be required, to pay for quicker access to medically necessary services. Access to the insured services of our publicly financed health care system must be based on need, not on the ability or willingness to pay.

This is why the Minister of Health's mandate letter includes specific direction from the Prime Minister to ensure compliance with the Canada Health Act on matters of private delivery and extra billing. Patient charges undermine the principles of fairness and equity. If a province or territory permits extra billing or user charges for medically necessary hospital or physician services, a mandatory dollar-for-dollar deduction must be taken from the jurisdiction's federal cash transfer. The Minister of Health has made it very clear that she intends to enforce the CHA in this regard, wherever extra billing and user charges occur.

That is why, in March 2019, deductions in respect of patient charges that occurred in 2016-17 were taken from three provinces. There was \$1,349 deducted from Newfoundland and Labrador's Canada health transfer payment, in respect of user charges for insured health services; \$8,256,024 deducted from Quebec's payment, based on the amount of patient charges confirmed by the Quebec ministry of health; and \$16,177,000 deducted from British Columbia's payment, based on the findings resulting from the Health Canada and British Columbia audit agreement and publicly available evidence.

*Adjournment Proceedings*

The goal of our government in administering the Canada Health Act is not to take deductions from federal transfers, but to ensure patients can access the care that they need. Patient charges for medically necessary services pose a barrier to care. The new reimbursement policy provides an incentive for provinces and territories to eliminate patient charges. Under this policy, those provinces and territories facing deductions will be eligible to have them reimbursed if they eliminate patient charges in a timely manner. The first deductions eligible for reimbursement under this policy were those taken in March 2018.

Our commitment to the publicly insured health care system is reflected in our actions. In addition to mandatory deductions for patient charges, the diagnostic services policy, which came into effect on April 1, 2020, aims to eliminate patient charges for medically necessary diagnostic services such as MRI or CT scans, whether they are provided in a hospital or a public or private clinic.

Let me point out that the Government of Canada acknowledges that our health care system has always had a place for the private sector. The Canada Health Act does not prohibit provinces and territories from contracting for the delivery of health care services to third parties, provided patients are not charged for what is normally covered by publicly insured services. Ultimately, such fees create barriers to accessing health care, and this government is committed to seeing such fees eliminated. Let me conclude by confirming—

• (2000)

**The Deputy Speaker:** We are at the time of expiry, so we will go back to the hon. member for Edmonton Strathcona.

**Ms. Heather McPherson:** The problem is that what the member is describing allows us to have a two-tiered health care system, and the Canada Health Act is very clear. Provinces are obligated to meet the requirements for public administration, comprehensiveness, universality, portability and accessibility; and the Canada Health Act is meaningless unless it is enforced.

Therefore, I would very much like to go back to my province and tell Albertans that while their Conservative provincial government has abandoned them and has chosen profit and privatization over health care, the federal government will protect them, but I am not hearing that from you. I am not hearing that you are going to be protecting the people of Alberta.

I am going to continue to stand in this House and ask for you to fight for our cherished public health care system, and demand that we protect it from people who seek to privatize it and create a two-tiered American-style system.

**Deputy Speaker:** I would remind the hon. member to direct her comments to the Chair. The member spoke in the second person instead of the third person. The word “you” is what usually tips us off to that. It is not meant as a criticism.

The hon. Parliamentary Secretary to the Minister of Health.

• (2005)

**Mr. Darren Fisher:** Mr. Speaker, I would like to reiterate that the Government of Canada is firmly committed to actively defending our publicly funded health care system. We will ensure Canadian citizens continue to have quality health care in accordance with the principles enshrined within the Canada Health Act. This in-

cludes striving to eliminate extra billing and user charges, which create barriers to accessing care.

Our government will work collaboratively with its provincial and territorial counterparts to realize the Canada Health Act's goal of ensuring that access to necessary health care in Canada is based on medical need and not one's ability or willingness to pay, as I said earlier. As a government, we take that goal seriously and our administration of the Canada Health Act reflects that.

The values underpinning Canada's universal public health care system are more important than ever as we continue to respond to the unprecedented challenges presented by the COVID-19 outbreak. The Government of Canada will continue to defend universally accessible health care for all Canadians.

## VETERANS AFFAIRS

**Ms. Rachel Blaney (North Island—Powell River, NDP):** Mr. Speaker, I am here again today to talk about the immense wait list for veterans across Canada. We know that veterans who are facing multiple challenges are having a further challenge of not being able to get their disability pension. In fact, well over 40,000 veterans are now on the wait list.

A report from the Parliamentary Budget Officer highlighted the fact that if an investment of just over \$120 million were made over the next few years, Veterans Affairs would be able to address two fundamental things. First, it would be able to get through the terrible wait list, which many members have been on for more than a year, in one year. Second, the Parliamentary Budget Officer pointed out that this plan would ensure it never happened again. This is incredibly important.

We know that Veterans Affairs workers have been very clear. They are doing the very best they can. They are working very hard, but they cannot get to the end of the wait list because they simply do not have enough people to do the work. With this situation, we are seeing a higher level of burnout of caseworkers and veterans are falling behind because there is simply is not the staff to support them.

I am very confused about why the minister keeps talking about the hires Veterans Affairs is making as temporary positions. It is very clear from the significant wait list that it is not a temporary job. Long-term jobs need to be there to support our veterans.

*Adjournment Proceedings*

It is very important that the Liberals take responsibility for making the choices they have made and stop blaming the Conservatives, although I agree the Conservatives did cut back significantly on the places veterans could go to get the support they needed and also cut staffing. That is partially why we are where we are today, but the government has had five years to get it right and it still has not done it.

We also have heard that because of COVID-19, the application process could become even harder, so the wait list is going to grow immensely. There was recently a Globe and Mail article that quoted Brian Forbes, chairman of the National Council of Veterans Associations, which represents over 60 veterans serving organizations. He said, "The reason the new applications are down is because advocates like ourselves are facing the reality that without medical evidence, they're not going to give us a decision." Here we are, more veterans waiting longer.

I also asked another question earlier this month. The government is spending money to fight veterans in court. One of the most terrible examples is Mr. Charles Scott, a veteran who has sadly had to sue the ministry to get action. The member for Edmonton Strathcona, his MP, updates me regularly on this very sad case. Mr. Scott's file had been lost in the pile due to many factors. This reflects the fact that there is not enough staff to address the urgent needs of veterans. Because of this, Mr. Scott lost his chance to lock in the supplementary career replacement benefits before the system was phased out.

This is wrong. He fought for our country and now because of the choices the government has made, he is in a position where he is fighting his own country for his rights. We all want to know that veterans are cared for. They step up for us. It is absolutely essential that the government finally steps up for them.

I will not stop fighting for veterans. The wait list is atrocious. Enough excuses, it is time for action.

• (2010)

**Mr. Darrell Samson (Parliamentary Secretary to the Minister of Veterans Affairs and Associate Minister of National Defence, Lib.):** Mr. Speaker, my hon. colleague is always on point, and I appreciate that. It is important to have these discussions.

With regard to the member's comment about litigation, it would be inappropriate to speak on a matter that is currently before the court. However, I will say this. The Government of Canada knows that all of us in this country are enormously indebted to the past and present members of the Canadian Armed Forces for the sacrifices they have made on our behalf.

That is why the well-being of veterans is a priority for our government. Since 2016, we have invested over \$10 billion of new money into our veterans and their families. That is money for educational opportunities and career transition services for veterans, tax-free benefits for caregivers and services for families. It is money that has gone toward increasing physical and mental health supports, and research into new treatment for PTSD and related health conditions.

[Translation]

These are considerable investments that have truly improved the lives of our veterans and their families. Can we say the system is working perfectly? Absolutely not.

[English]

We are well aware that the service delivery gap exists and that it is still taking too long to process applications, benefits and services, but we also know we are taking many steps to address these issues.

[Translation]

In June, we introduced a strategy to reduce wait times for veterans that includes reorganizing teams, improving and leveraging technology, and streamlining certain steps in the process. This strategic document describes the mission that Veterans Affairs Canada has undertaken to change the way it works, make faster disability benefits decisions, and better serve our veterans as a result.

[English]

We have committed nearly \$200 million over the next two years to retain case manager employees and 168 disability adjudication resources, provided in budget 2018, as well as hired an additional 350 employees dedicated to making decisions and reducing wait times. According to the PBO report, the impact of new hires made as part of this investment will significantly reduce the backlog.

[Translation]

According to the PBO report, the additional employees hired as part of this investment will contribute substantially to clearing the backlog. These important measures build on what the department has been doing for the past several years to improve benefits for our veterans.

[English]

It is also worth noting that the most recent Speech from the Throne announced, a few months ago, the intention to create a \$20-million veteran organization emergency support fund. This fund will help organizations with the resources they need to continue to help veterans and their families on the ground.

[Translation]

We are grateful to each and every one of them for their service and their sacrifices, and we will continue to support them.

[*English*]

**Ms. Rachel Blaney:** Mr. Speaker, I thank the member for being here to respond to my questions and concerns, but I want to say that these are hollow promises and I am sure they are not making veterans, who are having to take their own country to court, feel any better.

The history of veterans over the last two different party governments is this: The Conservatives shut down offices and fired workers, and the Liberal government is hiring a few people, but not enough, and then closing all of them temporarily. We have a backlog that is continuing to grow and a plan that tells veterans they have to wait another two and a half years before they get the supports they need.

Veterans are in desperation. We need action. I ask the government to please listen to veterans.

● (2015)

[*Translation*]

**Mr. Darrell Samson:** Mr. Speaker, it is widely recognized that everything we have today in Canada, we owe to the service and

*Adjournment Proceedings*

sacrifices of Canadian women and men in uniform. These individuals have helped make this country what it is today, namely a nation that works to build peace and promote the ideas of freedom, democracy, human rights and the rule of law.

[*English*]

We can never forget the enormous toll this important work has taken on many individual Canadians, nor must we ever forget to stop working to create systems that allow our veterans and their families to receive proper care and support in post-service life.

This government is listening to Canadian veterans and we will keep doing what we need to do to support these veterans as we move forward.

[*Translation*]

**The Deputy Speaker:** The motion that the House do now adjourn is deemed to have been adopted. Accordingly the House stands adjourned until tomorrow at 10 a.m. pursuant to Standing Order 24(1).

(The House adjourned at 8:15 p.m.)

---



# CONTENTS

Monday, October 26, 2020

## PRIVATE MEMBERS' BUSINESS

### Canada Revenue Agency Act

Mr. Webber .....	1191
Bill C-210. Second reading .....	1191
Mr. Lamoureux .....	1193
Mr. Masse .....	1193
Mr. Dreeshen .....	1193
Ms. Damoff .....	1193
Mr. Desilets .....	1195
Mr. Masse .....	1195
Mr. Aitchison .....	1197
Mr. Lamoureux .....	1198

## GOVERNMENT ORDERS

### Criminal Code

Mr. Lametti .....	1198
Bill C-6. Second reading .....	1198
Mrs. Wagantall .....	1201
Mr. Barsalou-Duval .....	1202
Mr. Garrison .....	1202
Ms. May (Saanich—Gulf Islands) .....	1202
Mr. Vaughan .....	1202
Mr. Sloan .....	1203
Mr. Duncan (Stormont—Dundas—South Glengarry) .....	1203
Mr. Vaughan .....	1205
Ms. Chabot .....	1206
Mr. Garrison .....	1206
Mr. Patzer .....	1206
Mr. Jowhari .....	1207
Ms. Gaudreau .....	1207
Mr. Lamoureux .....	1208
Mrs. Wagantall .....	1208
Mr. Masse .....	1208
Mr. Perron .....	1208
Mr. Drouin .....	1210
Mrs. Jansen .....	1210
Mr. Boulерice .....	1210
Mr. Garrison .....	1211
Mr. Vaughan .....	1214
Mr. Aitchison .....	1214
Mr. Trudel .....	1214
Ms. Blaney (North Island—Powell River) .....	1215
Mr. Kelly .....	1215
Mr. Genuis .....	1215
Mr. Sarai .....	1215

## STATEMENTS BY MEMBERS

### Hindu Heritage Day

Mr. Arya .....	1216
----------------	------

### Carbon Capture and Storage

Mr. Kitchen .....	1216
-------------------	------

### Harvey Lewis

Mr. Kelloway .....	1216
--------------------	------

### Samuel Paty

Mr. Bergeron .....	1216
--------------------	------

### Poppy Campaign

Mrs. Lalonde .....	1217
--------------------	------

### COVID-19 Community Response

Mr. Mazier .....	1217
------------------	------

### Nigerian Human Rights

Mr. Sangha .....	1217
------------------	------

### Care Workers

Mr. Lamoureux .....	1217
---------------------	------

### CBC/Radio-Canada

Mr. Falk (Provencher) .....	1217
-----------------------------	------

### Frank McKenna Centre for Leadership

Ms. Petitpas Taylor .....	1217
---------------------------	------

### Stan Schumacher

Mr. Kurek .....	1218
-----------------	------

### Women Entrepreneurs

Mrs. Gray .....	1218
-----------------	------

### The Environment

Mr. Bachrach .....	1218
--------------------	------

### Michel Letarte

Mrs. Charbonneau .....	1218
------------------------	------

### COVID-19 Emergency Response

Mr. Patzer .....	1219
------------------	------

### Mental Health Awareness Month

Mr. Lefebvre .....	1219
--------------------	------

### Samuel Paty

## ORAL QUESTIONS

### Fisheries and Oceans

Mr. O'Toole .....	1219
-------------------	------

Ms. Freeland .....	1219
--------------------	------

### Indigenous Affairs

Mr. O'Toole .....	1219
-------------------	------

Ms. Freeland .....	1220
--------------------	------

### Foreign Affairs

Mr. O'Toole .....	1220
-------------------	------

Ms. Freeland .....	1220
--------------------	------

Mr. O'Toole .....	1220
-------------------	------

Ms. Freeland .....	1220	<b>The Economy</b>	
Mr. O'Toole .....	1220	Mr. Poilievre .....	1225
Ms. Freeland .....	1220	Ms. Freeland .....	1225
<b>COVID-19 Emergency Response</b>		Mr. Poilievre .....	1225
Mr. Therrien .....	1220	Ms. Freeland .....	1225
Ms. Freeland .....	1220		
Mr. Therrien .....	1221	<b>Foreign Affairs</b>	
Ms. Freeland .....	1221	Mr. Chong .....	1225
		Mr. Oliphant .....	1225
<b>Indigenous Affairs</b>		Mr. Chong .....	1225
Mr. Singh .....	1221	Mr. Oliphant .....	1226
Ms. Freeland .....	1221	Mr. Brunelle-Duceppe .....	1226
Mr. Singh .....	1221	Mr. Oliphant .....	1226
Ms. Freeland .....	1221		
		<b>Airline Industry</b>	
<b>Health</b>		Mr. Barsalou-Duval .....	1226
Mr. Deltell .....	1221	Mr. Garneau .....	1226
Ms. Hajdu .....	1221		
Mr. Deltell .....	1221	<b>Agriculture and Agri-Food</b>	
Ms. Hajdu .....	1221	Mr. Strahl .....	1226
Mr. Paul-Hus .....	1222	Ms. Bibeau .....	1226
Ms. Anand .....	1222		
Mr. Paul-Hus .....	1222	<b>Women and Gender Equality</b>	
Mr. Rodriguez .....	1222	Ms. Gladu .....	1226
		Ms. Hutchings .....	1227
<b>Access to Information</b>			
Mr. Berthold .....	1222	<b>Health</b>	
Ms. Hajdu .....	1222	Mrs. Gray .....	1227
Mr. Berthold .....	1222	Ms. Hajdu .....	1227
Mr. Rodriguez .....	1222		
		<b>Infrastructure</b>	
<b>Justice</b>		Mr. Van Bynen .....	1227
Mr. Fortin .....	1222	Mr. Fillmore .....	1227
Mr. Lametti .....	1222		
		<b>COVID-19 Emergency Response</b>	
<b>Public Services and Procurement</b>		Mr. Lawrence .....	1227
Mr. Fortin .....	1223	Mrs. Lebouthillier .....	1227
Ms. Anand .....	1223		
		<b>Natural Resources</b>	
<b>Ethics</b>		Mr. Jeneroux .....	1227
Mr. Bergeron .....	1223	Mr. O'Regan .....	1228
Ms. Chagger .....	1223		
		<b>Small Business</b>	
<b>Health</b>		Mr. Kelly .....	1228
Ms. Rempel Garner .....	1223	Ms. Ng .....	1228
Ms. Hajdu .....	1223		
Ms. Rempel Garner .....	1223	<b>Post-Secondary Education</b>	
Ms. Hajdu .....	1224	Mr. Bratina .....	1228
Ms. Rempel Garner .....	1224	Mr. Vandal .....	1228
Ms. Hajdu .....	1224		
		<b>Royal Canadian Mounted Police</b>	
<b>Telecommunications</b>		Ms. Blaney (North Island—Powell River) .....	1228
Mr. Bachrach .....	1224	Mr. Blair .....	1228
Ms. Hutchings .....	1224		
		<b>Health</b>	
<b>Health</b>		Mr. Tabbara .....	1228
Mr. Davies .....	1224	Ms. Hajdu .....	1229
Ms. Hajdu .....	1224		
		<b>Public Services and Procurement</b>	
<b>Public Services and Procurement</b>		Mr. Gerretsen .....	1225
Mr. Gerretsen .....	1225	Ms. Anand .....	1225
Ms. Anand .....	1225		



## GOVERNMENT ORDERS

### Business of Supply

#### Opposition Motion—Instruction to the Standing Committee on Health

Motion .....	1229
Amendment agreed to .....	1230
Motion agreed to .....	1231

## ROUTINE PROCEEDINGS

### Canada Shipping Act, 2001

Mr. MacGregor .....	1232
Bill C-250. Introduction and first reading .....	1232
(Motions deemed adopted, bill read the first time and printed) .....	1232

### Petitions

#### Human Organ Trafficking

Mr. Viersen .....	1232
-------------------	------

#### Indigenous Affairs

Ms. May (Saanich—Gulf Islands) .....	1232
--------------------------------------	------

#### Physician-Assisted Dying

Mr. Genuis .....	1232
------------------	------

#### Firearms

Mr. Genuis .....	1232
------------------	------

#### Afghan Minority Communities

Mr. Genuis .....	1232
------------------	------

#### Human Rights

Mr. Genuis .....	1232
------------------	------

#### Belarus

Mr. Arya .....	1233
----------------	------

#### Royal Canadian Mounted Police

Mr. Manly .....	1233
-----------------	------

### Questions on the Order Paper

Mr. Lamoureux .....	1233
---------------------	------

## GOVERNMENT ORDERS

### Criminal Code

Bill C-6. Second reading .....	1233
Mr. Sarai .....	1233
Mrs. Jansen .....	1234
Mr. Kelly .....	1234
Ms. Blaney (North Island—Powell River) .....	1235
Mrs. Romanado .....	1235
Mr. Vis .....	1237
Mr. Aboultaif .....	1237

Ms. Gazan .....	1237
Ms. Dancho .....	1237
Ms. Blaney (North Island—Powell River) .....	1239
Ms. Larouche .....	1239
Mrs. Wagantall .....	1240
Mr. Berthold .....	1240
Ms. Blaney (North Island—Powell River) .....	1241
Mrs. Gray .....	1242
Mr. Blanchette-Joncas .....	1242
Ms. Chagger .....	1242
Mr. Cumming .....	1245
Mr. Beaulieu .....	1245
Mr. Masse .....	1245
Mr. Louis .....	1245
Mr. Saroya .....	1246
Mr. Manly .....	1246
Mr. Maguire .....	1246
Mr. Lamoureux .....	1248
Mr. Lemire .....	1248
Ms. Blaney (North Island—Powell River) .....	1248
Mr. Genuis .....	1248
Mr. Moore .....	1248
Mr. Vaughan .....	1250
Ms. Larouche .....	1250
Mr. Liepert .....	1250
Mr. Vaughan .....	1251
Mrs. Jansen .....	1252
Mr. Boulerville .....	1253
Mr. Bagnell .....	1253
Mr. van Koeverden .....	1253
Mr. Genuis .....	1254
Mr. Beaulieu .....	1255
Ms. Gazan .....	1255
Mr. Genuis .....	1255
Mr. Lamoureux .....	1259
Mr. Fortin .....	1259
Ms. Gazan .....	1259
Mr. Patzer .....	1260
Mrs. Wagantall .....	1260
Mr. Lamoureux .....	1261

## ADJOURNMENT PROCEEDINGS

### Health

Ms. McPherson .....	1262
Mr. Fisher .....	1262

### Veterans Affairs

Ms. Blaney (North Island—Powell River) .....	1263
Mr. Samson .....	1264

Published under the authority of the Speaker of  
the House of Commons

---

### SPEAKER'S PERMISSION

---

The proceedings of the House of Commons and its committees are hereby made available to provide greater public access. The parliamentary privilege of the House of Commons to control the publication and broadcast of the proceedings of the House of Commons and its committees is nonetheless reserved. All copyrights therein are also reserved.

Reproduction of the proceedings of the House of Commons and its committees, in whole or in part and in any medium, is hereby permitted provided that the reproduction is accurate and is not presented as official. This permission does not extend to reproduction, distribution or use for commercial purpose of financial gain. Reproduction or use outside this permission or without authorization may be treated as copyright infringement in accordance with the Copyright Act. Authorization may be obtained on written application to the Office of the Speaker of the House of Commons.

Reproduction in accordance with this permission does not constitute publication under the authority of the House of Commons. The absolute privilege that applies to the proceedings of the House of Commons does not extend to these permitted reproductions. Where a reproduction includes briefs to a committee of the House of Commons, authorization for reproduction may be required from the authors in accordance with the Copyright Act.

Nothing in this permission abrogates or derogates from the privileges, powers, immunities and rights of the House of Commons and its committees. For greater certainty, this permission does not affect the prohibition against impeaching or questioning the proceedings of the House of Commons in courts or otherwise. The House of Commons retains the right and privilege to find users in contempt of Parliament if a reproduction or use is not in accordance with this permission.

---

Also available on the House of Commons website at the following address: <https://www.ourcommons.ca>

Publié en conformité de l'autorité  
du Président de la Chambre des communes

---

### PERMISSION DU PRÉSIDENT

---

Les délibérations de la Chambre des communes et de ses comités sont mises à la disposition du public pour mieux le renseigner. La Chambre conserve néanmoins son privilège parlementaire de contrôler la publication et la diffusion des délibérations et elle possède tous les droits d'auteur sur celles-ci.

Il est permis de reproduire les délibérations de la Chambre et de ses comités, en tout ou en partie, sur n'importe quel support, pourvu que la reproduction soit exacte et qu'elle ne soit pas présentée comme version officielle. Il n'est toutefois pas permis de reproduire, de distribuer ou d'utiliser les délibérations à des fins commerciales visant la réalisation d'un profit financier. Toute reproduction ou utilisation non permise ou non formellement autorisée peut être considérée comme une violation du droit d'auteur aux termes de la Loi sur le droit d'auteur. Une autorisation formelle peut être obtenue sur présentation d'une demande écrite au Bureau du Président de la Chambre des communes.

La reproduction conforme à la présente permission ne constitue pas une publication sous l'autorité de la Chambre. Le privilège absolu qui s'applique aux délibérations de la Chambre ne s'étend pas aux reproductions permises. Lorsqu'une reproduction comprend des mémoires présentés à un comité de la Chambre, il peut être nécessaire d'obtenir de leurs auteurs l'autorisation de les reproduire, conformément à la Loi sur le droit d'auteur.

La présente permission ne porte pas atteinte aux privilèges, pouvoirs, immunités et droits de la Chambre et de ses comités. Il est entendu que cette permission ne touche pas l'interdiction de contester ou de mettre en cause les délibérations de la Chambre devant les tribunaux ou autrement. La Chambre conserve le droit et le privilège de déclarer l'utilisateur coupable d'outrage au Parlement lorsque la reproduction ou l'utilisation n'est pas conforme à la présente permission.

---

Aussi disponible sur le site Web de la Chambre des communes à l'adresse suivante :  
<https://www.noscommunes.ca>