



HOUSE OF COMMONS  
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CANADA

44th PARLIAMENT, 1st SESSION

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# House of Commons Debates

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(Hansard)

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Thursday, December 9, 2021

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Speaker: The Honourable Anthony Rota



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# HOUSE OF COMMONS

Thursday, December 9, 2021

The House met at 10 a.m.

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*Prayer*

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## ROUTINE PROCEEDINGS

• (1005)

[*English*]

**The Speaker:** Pursuant to order made Thursday, November 25, 2021, it is my duty to inform the House that today we will begin using the electronic voting system.

[*Translation*]

As a result, as of today and until June 23, 2022, members who are voting remotely will use the electronic voting system.

[*English*]

Members are reminded that IT ambassadors are available to help them confirm their access to the system.

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### PRIVACY COMMISSIONER

**The Speaker:** It is my duty to lay upon the table, pursuant to subsection 40(1) of the Privacy Act and subsection 25(1) of the Personal Information Protection and Electronic Documents Act, the Privacy Commissioner's report for the fiscal year ended March 31, 2021.

[*Translation*]

Pursuant to Standing Order 108(3)(h), this report is deemed permanently referred to the Standing Committee on Access to Information, Privacy and Ethics.

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### INFORMATION COMMISSIONER

**The Speaker:** It is my duty, pursuant to subsection 94(2) of the Access to Information Act and subsection 72(2) of the Privacy Act, to lay upon the table the reports of the Information Commissioner on the administration of these acts for the fiscal year ending March 31, 2021.

[*English*]

Pursuant to Standing Order 108(3)(h), these reports are deemed to have been permanently referred to the Standing Committee on Access to Information, Privacy and Ethics.

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## COMMITTEES OF THE HOUSE

PROCEDURE AND HOUSE AFFAIRS

**Hon. Bardish Chagger (Waterloo, Lib.):** Mr. Speaker, as today is the first time I am rising in the 44th Parliament, I would like to thank the kind people of the riding of Waterloo, who have given me the honour to represent the diversity of their voices in this place.

[*Translation*]

Pursuant to Standing Orders 104 and 114 and pursuant to the order adopted by the House on Thursday, December 2, 2021, I have the honour to present, in both official languages, the first report of the Standing Committee on Procedure and House Affairs regarding the membership of committees of the House.

[*English*]

I would like to thank all involved for making this happen.

**The Speaker:** Pursuant to order made Thursday, December 2, 2021, the report is deemed adopted.

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### EARLY LEARNING AND CHILD CARE ACT

**Ms. Lindsay Mathyssen (London—Fanshawe, NDP)** moved for leave to introduce Bill C-208, An Act respecting early learning and child care.

She said: Mr. Speaker, I would like to thank the member for Winnipeg Centre for seconding this bill and for her work on this file.

There is an affordability crisis in this country. Being able to afford housing, food and other necessities is becoming increasingly difficult, and the pandemic has only exacerbated the struggles that many encounter. Families are struggling to find early learning and child care spaces and costs are not affordable in many cities. Parents are forced to make impossible choices between delaying their return to work and paying huge amounts for the child care they need.

*Routine Proceedings*

After promising an affordable child care program for 28 years, I am glad to see that the Liberals are finally moving forward on their many promises. However, there is still a lack of critical details on the agreements signed with the provinces and the long-term stability and universality of this program.

I am tabling this bill today to establish the core principles of a universal early learning and child care program, one that is based on accountability, quality, universality and accessibility, and to establish the standards needed to meet these principles. I am calling on the government to work with us to continue to move child care forward. It is too important to get wrong.

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

\* \* \*

[*Translation*]

**CRIMINAL CODE**

**Ms. Elizabeth May (Saanich—Gulf Islands, GP)** moved for leave to introduce Bill C-209, An Act to amend the Criminal Code and the Controlled Drugs and Substances Act and to make consequential amendments to another Act.

She said: Mr. Speaker, I have the honour to introduce this private members' bill, which seeks to eliminate mandatory minimum penalties in the Criminal Code and various other laws.

[*English*]

I note, as members may note, that we have recently received a similar government bill, Bill C-5, that also aims to eliminate mandatory minimum penalties. However, Bill C-5 only removes some, not even all, of those that have already been found to violate the charter by the courts in Canada.

I was the member for Saanich—Gulf Islands representing my constituents when mandatory minimums were increased. It was during the Parliament when Mr. Harper was the Prime Minister. It was then that we dove deeply into the evidence around mandatory minimum penalties. It became very clear that no criminologists anywhere in the world, nor any jurisdictions, had found that using mandatory minimum penalties actually reduced or addressed crime. They did have the effect, though, of increasing the number of people incarcerated, with additional financial burdens on the provinces.

I am very honoured to put forward the bill this morning, and I hope that it will meet with the approval of my colleagues.

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

\* \* \*

● (1010)

**PETITIONS**

THE ENVIRONMENT

**Ms. Elizabeth May (Saanich—Gulf Islands, GP):** Mr. Speaker, I am honoured to present a petition this morning from constituents who are very concerned with the state of the law within Canada to protect our water. Watercourses and watersheds are inadequately protected, the petitioners assert, from certain industrial activities. They are calling on the government to update the laws in Canada to

protect fresh water and the ecosystems that sustain and maintain water for human and non-human use.

[*Translation*]

**Mr. Alexandre Boulerice (Rosemont—La Petite-Patrie, NDP):** Mr. Speaker, I am pleased to table in the House a petition whose signatures were collected by a Montreal resident, Ms. Sally Livingston.

The petitioners are very concerned about the climate crisis. They are calling on the federal government to do more, to set targets that are consistent with science and the Paris Agreement, to significantly reduce our greenhouse gas emissions, to eliminate our dependence on fossil fuels, to end fossil fuel subsidies, to transition to a decarbonized economy while respecting human rights, workers' rights and indigenous communities, and to create good green jobs for the future in renewable energy, all in the interest of saving our planet.

ROAD SAFETY

**Mr. Simon-Pierre Savard-Tremblay (Saint-Hyacinthe—Bagot, BQ):** Mr. Speaker, there is a very dangerous intersection in Sainte-Marie-Madeleine in my riding. Accidents happen there all the time. There have been quite a few news reports about them lately, including in *Le Journal de Montréal*.

I know I am going to hear about how road signage is a municipal matter. However, there is a railway, and that means Canadian National and Transport Canada are involved.

Every local stakeholder is calling for movement and action on this. Everyone agrees that CN and Transport Canada are not working together. I have personally tried to contact both of them, but my efforts have been in vain, which I find unacceptable.

In June, right before the parliamentary session ended, I tabled this petition in the House. Then, as everyone knows, there was that pointless election that put us all back at square one, and all the documents that were tabled became null and void.

I am therefore tabling the petition again. The first time around, it had 1,200 signatures. This time it has 1,155, which is roughly the same number of petitioners.

Why am I presenting a parliamentary petition? It is because of the legal obligation to obtain a response after a specific number of days.

The petitioners want all stakeholders to meet and sit down together. This would include staff from my office, staff from the office of the Quebec National Assembly member for Borduas, and officials from Transport Canada, CN and the Quebec department of transport.

A meeting is not too much to ask. It needs to happen soon. We need to do something. Until then, the accidents, injuries and deaths will continue.

[English]

### QUESTIONS ON THE ORDER PAPER

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

**The Speaker:** Is that agreed?

**Some hon. members:** Agreed.

\* \* \*

● (1015)

### POINTS OF ORDER

#### ADMISSIBILITY OF BILL S-2

**Mr. Mark Gerretsen (Parliamentary Secretary to the Leader of the Government in the House of Commons (Senate), Lib.):** Mr. Speaker, I rise on a point of order to briefly respond to the statement you made yesterday with respect to the admissibility of Bill S-2, an act to amend the Parliament of Canada Act.

As Bill S-2 made clear in its coming-into-force clause, the government has always had the intention of introducing a bill in this House, with the accompanying royal recommendation, to implement changes to the Parliament of Canada Act with respect to the evolution in the Senate.

I will draw to the attention of members that there have been many instances of bills being introduced in the House and the Senate that contain non-appropriation clauses. In some of these instances, we have had Speaker's rulings to confirm that the use of non-appropriation clauses was in order, both in this House and in the other place.

Without reflecting at length on the other place, I will note that the bill was adopted with the support of all groups, including the Conservative senators, in the previous Parliament. Given there have been some changes in the Senate since the last Parliament, the government wanted to confirm that the approach of Bill S-2 remains acceptable to the Senate. The fact that the bill was passed at all stages certainly is confirmation of that.

In light of the Speaker's statement, the government has proactively given notice of a government bill in the House to amend the Parliament of Canada Act, for introduction in the coming days. The bill will be accompanied by a royal recommendation, as the case requires. As such, the government has no intention of seeking to proceed with Bill S-2.

I thank members for their attention and look forward to working collaboratively with all parties to advance this important initiative that has received broad support from our colleagues in the other place.

## *Business of Supply* GOVERNMENT ORDERS

[English]

### BUSINESS OF SUPPLY

#### OPPOSITION MOTION—HOUSING SUPPLY

**Mr. Matt Jeneroux (Edmonton Riverbend, CPC)** moved:

That, given that,

(i) the government has failed to increase the housing supply in Canada,

(ii) the government's \$400 billion of new spending has produced a surge of inflationary pressure that has driven home prices more than 30% above pre-pandemic levels,

the House call on the government to:

(a) review and consolidate all federal real estate and properties in Canada in order to make at least 15% available for residential development;

(b) ban foreign investors from purchasing Canadian real estate; and

(c) commit to never introducing a capital gains tax on the sale of primary residences.

**The Speaker:** Since today is the final allotted day for the supply period ending December 10, 2021, the House will go through the usual procedures to consider and dispose of supply bills. In view of recent practices, do the hon. members agree that the bill be distributed now?

**Some hon. members:** Agreed.

**Mr. Matt Jeneroux (Edmonton Riverbend, CPC):** Mr. Speaker, it gives me pleasure to stand here on the last opposition day of the year. It also gives me great pleasure to split my time with the hon. member for Saskatoon West.

There is a housing crisis facing Canadians. Across the country, there are places where a couple with a dual income can simply no longer afford to live, where seniors cannot afford their monthly payments, and where university and college students have completely given up on ever owning property.

The average home price in Canada is \$717,000. Do members want to know what it was last year? It was \$606,000. That is an 18.2% increase. To put this in perspective, when the Prime Minister came into office it was \$450,000. We are seeing house prices rise this year over last year by 20%. New-build homes dropped 5.2%. We have the lowest supply of homes in the G7, with the fastest-rising house prices in the G7. This simply cannot continue.

I want to highlight an example of a young couple right here in Ottawa. They reached out to me and shared their story. Tony and Amanda live in a 667-square-foot apartment. They just had a baby named Clara. A 667-square-foot apartment is a small place to raise a new baby, so Tony and Amanda are looking for a new home. They searched for months and months, and put in 26 offers on 26 different homes. All their offers were above the asking price. Do members know how many homes they got? Zero.

*Business of Supply*

I also want to share the story of Samy, a nurse in Calgary, Alberta. Samy has been saving since he was in high school for his future. He told me that he grew up in a family where the values were to work hard, get a good education and eventually own a home. Samy checks realtor.ca almost every day. He says he is just devastated seeing the prices. One area of the city where he thought he would be able to afford five years ago is now selling above asking price consistently. To this day, Samy still rents, Samy still checks realtor.ca every day and Samy is slowly losing hope.

Let me tell members about another couple. They are from Burnaby, British Columbia. Ryan and Sarah both graduated from university in the last three years and have good jobs. Ryan is a financial analyst and Sarah is a teacher. Both were raised with a dream that if they work hard and study hard, they will be able to afford a home one day. However, they spent the last two years looking, put in some offers, but again, zero offers were accepted. They do not want to rent forever, but what Sarah said to me is heartbreaking. She said she has simply given up. This is a young couple on the cusp of their future together. They have the majority of their lives ahead of them, but have simply given up.

These are three of the many stories we have heard since the election across this country. This brings us to what the Liberal government plans to do. The Liberals have told us that they are going to build 100,000 new homes across this country by 2025. Do members know how many homes Scotiabank has predicted that Canada needs? It said we need 1.8 million new homes, and not in four years, but right now. Simple math tells us that the Liberals are 1.7 million homes short. The promise is 100,000 new homes. It would be almost laughable if it were not so sad when I think about Ryan and Sarah, Samy, and Tony and Amanda.

What the government seems to not understand with this promise is that we need housing supply. We can offer all the tax incentives in the world, but we need the homes for people to move into first. Essentially, what they are saying is come into my store, everything is 100% off, but then someone walks in and there is nothing on the shelves. There is simply no inventory. This is where the Liberals have failed to address the real problem of housing supply and that is where our motion comes in today.

● (1020)

Over the past few weeks during question period, a number of Conservative members of Parliament have raised very thoughtful solutions on what could be done, such as looking at the tremendous number of buildings and amount of land the federal government owns. It owns 37,246 buildings and nearly 41 million hectares of land. This is a substantial amount of property and buildings that it could immediately provide to the municipalities and provinces to help with supply. We can go to the Treasury Board real property report and see the countless number of buildings that are in critical condition, or the land that is in areas that could really help Canadian families find a home. This is a tangible policy solution the Liberals could take from us right here today.

Another policy suggestion is the tying of infrastructure dollars from the federal government to new housing supply. We know the government had extreme difficulty getting infrastructure money out the door, but we are hopeful that might change. We put forth a poli-

cy idea that was widely supported by a large number of stakeholders and communities. It was to ensure that we are working with the municipalities receiving federal funding for public transit to increase density near funded projects. We see projects that are not necessarily built being announced over and over again. There is no connection to the housing crisis we are facing here in Canada. Our motion helps fix that.

Our motion also touches on the issues we are facing when it comes to foreign ownership. There are 1.3 million empty homes in Canada. The Liberal solution is to tax them 1%. If it were not so sad to tax a billionaire in another country 1%, it would almost be completely laughable. I am sure they are really shaking scared. In this motion, we are generously offering another solution, which is to implement a policy to ban foreign ownership. Imagine some of the 1.3 million homes I spoke of in places like Vancouver, where a young couple can now afford to have that home, or a place in Montreal where one can dream again of the possibility of home ownership. Homes simply are not available and a lack of a plan from the other side has only made it more challenging for Canadians to buy homes.

A recent survey that came out yesterday from Sotheby's International Realty stated that the majority of young Canadians have completely given up on home ownership. According to the survey, over 80% of young Canadians aged 18 to 28 said that the possibility of home ownership in Canada is completely out of their reach. These are Canadians with their future ahead of them just simply giving up on ever owning a home. That is not only sad, but speaks to the failure of the government over the last six years to fix the housing crisis. It is not like the crisis has snuck up on it; it is something that experts have been warning about since the government came into office in 2015.

The Canadian Real Estate Association has written budget submission after budget submission offering solutions to the supply issue. The Appraisal Institute of Canada has put forth possible solutions that would get more homes into the market. Other groups, like Inclusion Canada, have submitted solutions to the government that would not only address housing affordability, but also affordable housing. These are terrific organizations that are doing their part to offer solutions to what so many Canadians have identified as a crisis. That is what we are doing here today, offering the government solutions.

The number of available homes is failing to keep up with demand and the government has simply hoped it would fix itself. It has said it had a plan all along, but the numbers speak for themselves. We are hearing from real estate agents, home builders and not-for-profit organizations. They all say that the plan will do little to alleviate lack of supply. Most importantly, we are hearing from young Canadians themselves who simply do not know what else to do.

I will end with this. We are in a position to offer a detailed plan to tackle home prices for Canadians. We are here to offer solutions for Canadians. We are here to make life affordable for Canadians. Will the Liberals join us and enact these measures for Canadians?

• (1025)

**Mr. Mark Gerretsen (Parliamentary Secretary to the Leader of the Government in the House of Commons (Senate), Lib.):** Madam Speaker, I look forward to the opportunity to speak to the intervention a bit later.

I did want to address one point that I have heard on a number of occasions coming from the Conservatives, which is this talk about millions of hectares of available federal land. In my previous work before coming to this place, I was on Kingston City Council. I can say that, from a planning perspective, the only land that is really valuable with respect to building housing is that which is within close proximity to actual services, especially if we are talking high density. Can the member expand on this? Of these millions of hectares of land that is available, how much of it is within reach of services to be developed? If he cannot give me a number with respect to hectares, can he give me a percentage?

**Mr. Matt Jeneroux:** Madam Speaker, the answer is 41 million hectares of land. Not only did the member listen to my speech and recognize that is a huge amount of land that the government should explore and where we could possibly build more homes, but he also indicated he was part of the problem before he even came here, being on municipal council.

I think the member should probably look back at some of the decisions he made in his own municipality and think maybe this should have been on top of mind when he was there. Now, as part of the government, he has an opportunity to expand on the solutions we have offered here today. I hope he will support this motion and I hope we will be able to get these homes built for young Canadians.

**Ms. Jenny Kwan (Vancouver East, NDP):** Madam Speaker, the NDP would like to propose an amendment for the member's consideration.

In the stipulation of providing federal lands available for residential development, one thing that needs to be made clear is that the residential development needs to be non-profit and co-operative housing in the permanent sense. It does not make sense, if the federal government is going to make land available to a developer, to build high-rise, high-priced, luxury condos, for example. We want to make sure that these lands are used for non-profit and co-operative, affordable housing permanently.

Would the member support this amendment?

• (1030)

**Mr. Matt Jeneroux:** Madam Speaker, I thank the member for also offering the government solutions. At the end of the day, it has been such a failure on that side that we are seeing the opposition members using days like today to offer these solutions to the government.

To the particular amendment, I was in the member's riding recently and toured a wonderful affordable housing opportunity that is right there off the rail line. It is for Black and indigenous members of the community, recognizing their history in the Vancouver

### *Business of Supply*

area, and allowing them to have affordable housing. That is part of where we need to go. What we really want to focus on in today's motion is how unaffordable homes have been for Canadians.

[*Translation*]

**Mr. Denis Trudel (Longueuil—Saint-Hubert, BQ):** Madam Speaker, the issue we are discussing today is indeed very important. The housing crisis is one of the worst crises we have seen in quite some time and one of the worst we are facing right now.

In their motion, my Conservative friends really focus on the increase in the price of houses. In Quebec, however, the situation is very problematic for renters. In Quebec alone, 450,000 households are in urgent need of housing.

I did not hear much from the Conservatives about the need for the government to invest in helping people, either during the election campaign, or this past week, or in their motion this morning. However, we have seen for years now that the private sector is not doing the work required to house the most vulnerable.

Would my colleague not agree that the government needs to make massive investments in the construction of social housing in Quebec and Canada?

[*English*]

**Mr. Matt Jeneroux:** Madam Speaker, my colleague raises a very important point that is missing from any sort of policy plan that the government has right now and that is the rent-to-own piece. We heard a lot in my community, and I suspect the member's community, about how we get that market in ensuring more young Canadians can have home ownership. That is what we are trying to address in the motion today.

**Mr. Brad Redekopp (Saskatoon West, CPC):** Madam Speaker, today I will be speaking to the housing affordability crisis in Saskatoon and to our motion, which attempts to get something done on housing, compared with six years of Liberal inaction.

This is my first speech in the 44th Parliament, and I would like to give some quick thanks.

I want to thank the residents of Saskatoon West for choosing me to represent them here in Ottawa. It is my honour and privilege to do so. I want to thank the people who live in our diverse neighbourhoods, such as Riversdale, Hampton Village, Downtown, Caswell Hill, Blairmore, Confederation, Montgomery and the many other areas of the riding. It is my honour to serve everyone there.

*Business of Supply*

I want to thank my family and friends, including my wife, Cheryl; my sons, Kyle and Eric; my parents, Alvin and Irene; and my extended family and friends. I would also like to thank the member for Carlton Trail—Eagle Creek and her husband Milton Block for their support and encouragement over the years. Of course, I also thank my campaign team who got me here, including Steven, Daniel, Lisa, Jared, Sam, Carol and Oliver, and all the other folks who donated and worked tirelessly to get me elected.

I also want to thank the leader of the official opposition for appointing me as deputy shadow minister for citizenship and immigration.

The last speech I gave in the House was in June, six months ago. Instead of coming back after the summer break, we had an unnecessary election, and it saddens me to say that on August 15, when Kabul was falling to the Taliban and when Afghan interpreters, who had risked their lives for our troops, were fearing for their own lives, our Prime Minister was scheming with his party to call an election. We know the outcome of that election: \$600 million spent to keep the status quo and Parliament quiet for five months. Now, we are back to the same old game of the New Democrats supporting the Liberals. The sad part is that it was not necessary.

Before the election, the leader of the NDP pledged his unwavering support to the Prime Minister. In February he said, “We will vote to keep the government going.” In August, he tweeted a plea to the Prime Minister to not hold an election, saying that New Democrats were eager to help expedite legislation. Just in November, he said that, if the government wanted to pass legislation, it could count on them. Meanwhile, tens of thousands of Afghans wait.

Speaking of elections, the Prime Minister has been quick to mischaracterize our election platform when it comes to housing. This gives me a chance to remind him and the entire Liberal caucus of our real plan.

Canada's Conservatives committed to building one million homes in the next three years; addressing corrupt practices, such as money laundering, which have driven up prices; making it easier for more families to get mortgages; building more homes near publicly funded transit; banning foreign investors from buying homes if they are not planning to move to Canada; partnering with municipalities and the private sector to build new rental units; encouraging foreign investment in affordable, purpose-built rental housing for Canadians; addressing, in the spirit of reconciliation, the housing needs of our indigenous communities; and redeploying underutilized government buildings as housing. This is the Conservative plan for housing in action.

Someday soon, we will be in government. When we are, Parliament will be sitting and ministers will have mandate letters. We will implement sound legislation that builds Canada up instead of tearing it down. In the meantime, we will do our best to hold the government to account. Our motion today is just one of the ways that we can do that.

We know that the government, with over 37,000 buildings, is the largest property owner in the country. We also know that much of

this space is underutilized. Conservatives want to turn over at least 15% of this space for homes.

In Saskatoon, the federal government owns 37 properties with over 1,000 hectares of land. This includes 98 buildings with a combined floor area of 146,000 square metres, so 15% of that is 22,000 square metres, or about 75,000 square feet of housing. At 750 square feet per house, that is 100 new homes in Saskatoon alone. This is the Conservative plan for housing in action.

I am also calling on the Liberal government to commit to never introducing a capital gains tax on the sale of a primary residence. The Liberal campaign plan, on page 13, promised to begin taxing the sale of primary residences. Initially, only primary residences owned for less than one year would pay the tax; however, we all know these rules change over time.

The Liberals' spending spree will eventually force them to expand this tax. It is a slippery slope that I want to stop before it even gets going. I know that folks in Saskatoon would be very upset by such a tax, and that is why I am calling on the Liberals to stop their plan to tax primary residences.

I would like to provide an update on the housing situation in Saskatoon. Much of the focus is on the large metro centres like Toronto and Vancouver, but we have many of the same housing affordability problems in Saskatoon. I held a town hall on this very subject in the spring and received significant feedback. Participants spoke about the impacts on everyday working people, the impacts on seniors, and especially the impacts for those living on minimum wage and government support.

● (1035)

First, they talked about the price of homes, which is continuing to rise. In Saskatoon it is not as high as in the bigger centres, but it is still increasing by 6% year over year. Even at that rate, a house will increase in price by 70% in 10 years. For a young couple, it seems impossible to save up enough for a down payment, and it forces nearly everyone to opt for the 5% down payment option. The problem is that CMHC insurance fees eat up almost all of that down payment, so the typical first-time homebuyer claws and scratches to save, only to give that down payment to the government.

At least interest rates are low, but they will not be for long. The historic lows are coming to an end, meaning big surprises for homeowners at renewal time. To provide context, my first mortgage 30 years ago was at 13%. Do members know why rates were that high? If they stay tuned, I will talk about it in a minute.



*Business of Supply*

The second thing I heard was that the cost of rent keeps getting higher. A cheap place in Saskatoon is \$1,000 a month now. That is well beyond the affordability of many lower-income folks. It forces people to share housing, couch surf or simply live on the streets. I have had many immigrants say to me that they came to Saskatoon because rent and house prices were low. This is no longer the case, causing some of them to have to move away to larger centres.

Third, people spoke about the direct impact on our homeless population. More and more people are sleeping on the streets. Besides COVID, addictions and mental health problems, the cost of housing is now further complicating the lives of our homeless population. Just this morning, Saskatoon city council was forced to approve a plan for a temporary shelter to house 50 people over the winter as an emergency measure.

What about the Liberals' rapid housing initiative? As our local paper said, "Saskatoon struck out in the first round of...\$1 billion". Apparently, Saskatoon was not a target area for the Liberals' spending. Finally, last week the government did pledge \$7.5 million to build 34 homes, but it is a very modest start, and I believe the government should be embarrassed, considering that Saskatoon is one of Canada's 20 largest cities.

I mentioned that 30 years ago my first mortgage was 13%. Do members know why rates were so high back then? Out-of-control government spending led to inflation. Which government was in power for most of the years leading up to this crisis? It was the Liberals. Who was the prime minister who started all the excessive spending? It was Pierre Elliott Trudeau. There is a direct link between excess government spending and inflation. Excess spending increases inflation, which increases interest rates. It is just a matter of time, and it appears that time is now.

We cannot just blame COVID. The Liberal spending spree started long before COVID, as reported by the Parliamentary Budget Officer this week. The Liberals have been adding programs and civil servants from the first day they were elected. Their philosophy is that government is the solution to every problem. The more government and the bigger it is, the better. The finance minister said it would be irresponsible not to borrow money, since interest rates are so low. The Prime Minister famously said he does not think about monetary policy, which means he is not worried about inflation or the economy.

The Liberals made a trillion-dollar bet that interest rates would stay low. It appears that they were wrong, and homeowners will pay the price. We have seen food inflation at 15% and housing inflation at more than 20%. Average paycheques are barely rising. These are real-life consequences for a Prime Minister and a finance minister who have clearly stated they do not care about the economic consequences of their actions. Inflation is rising, and interest rates will surely follow.

We can contrast that with the Conservative plan, which has two underlying foundations. One is that deficit spending and massive debt will hurt our long-term prosperity. Any Canadian who has piled credit card debt on top of credit card debt knows that reality. Eventually it gets out of control. The second is that the current macroeconomic reality means that inflation is out of control. Wages

are stagnant and prices are going up. Purchasing power goes down and people get poorer.

The Conservative Party has always been the party Canadians turn to when the economy needs mending. We are here to provide solutions to Canada's housing crisis. Conservatives have always fixed the mess created by the Liberals, and we will do it again.

• (1040)

**Mr. Chris Bittle (Parliamentary Secretary to the Minister of Canadian Heritage, Lib.):** Madam Speaker, the Conservatives talk about almost 41 million hectares of land that the federal government owns and should be redeveloped. However, of that nearly 41 million hectares, almost 36 million hectares is managed by Parks Canada, 2.3 million is managed by Environment and Climate Change Canada and 2.2 million is managed by National Defence, so that is about 99% of the land owned by the federal government.

What bases does the member propose closing, or what parks does the member propose closing, to build houses on those sites?

**Mr. Brad Redekopp:** Madam Speaker, land is one way to look at this, but the way we are looking at it is actually through buildings. Buildings are what our concern is. There are ways to take underused buildings and convert them to residential areas. They are often in places where we can use them in the city and that are close to transit. We know that the government has underutilized resources, underutilized buildings, and those are what we hope to convert and use for residential property.

[Translation]

**Ms. Monique Pausé (Repentigny, BQ):** Madam Speaker, we know that Canada has the lowest housing unit per capita rate in the G7. That rate has even gone down in the past five years, in other words, since the Liberals came to power.

Does my colleague think that the government might want to invest more in housing?

• (1045)

[English]

**Mr. Brad Redekopp:** Madam Speaker, I think that we need to look at all options for investing into housing. Of course, the government can invest in housing, but we also need to look at having the private sector and other organizations invest in housing. There are many charitable organizations that want to do this work. There are a lot of options.

This is a case where, as the member pointed out, we need 1.8 million new homes in Canada, and we need to look at all the options. All options need to be on the table. We cannot restrict any particular thing, and we need to encourage organizations, governments, and those in the private sector, everybody, to work together to solve the housing crisis in Canada.

*Business of Supply*

**Mr. Matthew Green (Hamilton Centre, NDP):** Madam Speaker, we have heard the hon. member and, in fact, all Conservatives flaunt the private sector and flout government investments of around \$400 billion. However, they never seem to talk about the \$750 billion that went into Bay Street and the big banks, which was absolutely the gasoline on the dumpster fire of this housing crisis.

Given all they have created in the Conservative plan for housing, the Conservatives have never once talked about rentals, and they have never once talked about the financialization of housing. Would the hon. member agree that there need to be steps to eliminate the preferential tax treatment enjoyed by financial firms and big companies such as REITs, particularly through CMHC, which are gobbling up all of our rental stock?

**Mr. Brad Redekopp:** Madam Speaker, we have talked a lot about increasing the rental supply. As I said before, we need to look at all the different ways of increasing that supply, whether it is through the private sector, the public sector or the not-for-profit sector. All of these areas can contribute to the solution.

The sad part is that 50% of young people today have completely given up on the hope of even owning a single-family home, and those are the people we need to target. We need to increase the supply, so those young people can actually have hope again, and so we can solve the housing crisis in Canada.

[Translation]

**Ms. Soraya Martinez Ferrada (Parliamentary Secretary to the Minister of Housing and Diversity and Inclusion (Housing), Lib.):** Madam Speaker, today I am very pleased to rise in the House as the parliamentary secretary to the very first Minister of Housing and Diversity and Inclusion of Canada.

This new portfolio recognizes that these three issues are closely linked. Affordable housing is essential to supporting diversity and creating inclusive communities that will allow everyone to flourish.

The hon. member for Durham and other colleagues across the way like to talk about capital gains tax on Canadians' primary residences. I just want to note that they are the only ones talking about that. They have been talking about that for months, even after we clearly and repeatedly said that our government will not impose such a tax. It simply will not happen.

Canadians can clearly see through an unfounded partisan political narrative. Our approach to housing is visionary and seeks to address a flagrant lack of investment by the Conservative Party, which left a legacy of inaction.

In the throne speech, we confirmed that the government wants to continue investing in more affordable housing. The new housing accelerator fund and the other commitments announced in the throne speech are only the latest in a series of measures our government has taken to support affordable housing since 2015.

In fact, investment in affordable housing is at the heart of our government's efforts to build diverse and inclusive communities that strengthen our economy and support our prosperity.

Earlier this year, the Minister of Finance tabled the fifth consecutive budget in which our government recognized the importance of

housing for Canadians. We are proposing concrete investments to improve housing for Canadians. We are making these investments because we believe that everyone deserves to have a home.

When I was very young, I remember that my mother looked for an apartment for a very long time. We ended up on the third floor in a small two-bedroom apartment with no special adaptations for my brother, who was in a wheelchair. I am thinking about Mohammed, about Johanne, and about all of the people, even in my riding, who are looking for somewhere to live. We need stable and affordable units that offer refuge in times of uncertainty, like the one we have been going through for the past two years, and that give every Canadian the chance to succeed, every child a good start in life and every family the opportunity to prosper.

Housing is a key driver of economic activity and helps create well-paid jobs for the middle class. Home construction and repair provide more jobs for more skilled workers across the country. Investments in housing also increase the demand for products and services offered in Canada, generating significant economic benefits in our communities.

In the past six years, our government has invested almost \$30 billion in housing. In collaboration with the provinces and territories, municipalities, non-profit organizations, developers, financial institutions and many other partners, we contributed to the construction of more than 110,000 housing units across the country. Federal investments also contributed to the renovation and repair of approximately 370,000 existing affordable housing units, making them compliant with modern standards and available for future generations.

More than one million people benefited from these investments. More than 35,000 people who were either homeless or at risk of becoming homeless now live in safer housing because of federal investments and our commitment to eliminating chronic homelessness in Canada.

As my colleagues are aware, most of this federal funding was paid out as part of the very first national housing strategy in Canada. Introduced by our government in 2017, this plan, and the more than \$72 billion over 10 years, continues to grow and produce results each year. Our government also took the major step of passing legislation obliging future governments to maintain a national housing strategy and to report regularly on its results.

With respect to the national housing strategy itself, one of its most recent and most successful programs is the rapid housing initiative, or RHI.

• (1050)

Phase 1 of the RHI was introduced by the government almost exactly a year ago with a view to rapidly creating housing units for Canadians in housing need due to COVID-19.

After investing \$2.5 billion, we are now seeing construction of more than 9,200 units to support the most vulnerable Canadians from coast to coast to coast. Once the funding is released, these indispensable units are designed to welcome new residents in under 12 months. I am pleased to note that at least 25% of the remaining funding under the RHI will go to housing projects for women.

Another cornerstone of the national housing strategy is the national housing co-investment fund, which directly addresses the main problem at the root of the housing crisis in Canada: short supply. The aim of the co-investment fund is to solve this problem by creating up to 60,000 new housing units and refurbishing up to 240,000 existing affordable units. Of course, we will do this in partnership with other governments, non-profit organizations, the private sector and other stakeholders in order to maximize investments.

This program is well on its way to achieving its objectives. At the end of September, almost 300 applications had been approved, accounting for a commitment of more than \$4.6 billion in federal funds for the construction and repair of more than 118,000 housing units in Canada.

Recognizing the value and benefits of the co-investment fund, the government allocated \$750 million of existing funding in this program in the 2021 budget to accelerate the creation of 3,400 new units and the repair of 13,700 units over the next two years.

Another \$250 million will be reallocated to support construction, repair and operating costs for more than 500 transitional housing units and shelters for women and children fleeing violence. The increase in the fund will help our government fight gender-based violence, which I know is a goal shared by all parties in the House.

The rental construction financing initiative offers low-cost loans to municipalities, non-profit organizations and private developers to encourage the construction of rental properties in communities across Canada, where the need is greatest.

To date, more than \$12 billion has been allocated to support the creation of more than 34,600 units, most of which will be affordable, and \$300 million in funding for the construction of rental properties was reallocated to help convert vacant commercial properties into market-based rental housing units, which will free up affordable units for other households.

We also took measures to renew and extend the affordable housing innovation fund, which encourages new financing models and innovative construction techniques in the affordable housing sector. More than 19,000 units have already been approved for financing under this initiative, 85% of them designated as affordable housing.

We also improved the Canada housing benefit, which provides direct financial support to help eligible households pay the rent. More specifically, we will invest more than \$315 million over the next seven years to increase direct financial assistance for low-income women and children fleeing violence.

### *Business of Supply*

The federal community housing initiative also received a boost in its funding. This initiative supports community housing providers offering long-term housing to many of the most vulnerable Canadians.

Our government also recognizes the unique challenges associated with the construction and maintenance of sustainable housing in the North. As a result, we are providing \$25 million in new funds to the Government of the Northwest Territories to support the construction of 30 new social housing units across the territory.

An additional \$25 million will be given to the Nunavut government to meet short-term housing and infrastructure needs in the territory, including priority projects involving the remediation and redevelopment of approximately 100 housing units.

Earlier this year, we took measures to extend the first-time home buyer incentive in order to enhance eligibility in high-cost markets, namely the census metropolitan areas of Toronto, Vancouver and Victoria.

• (1055)

For people purchasing a first home in these regions, the income eligibility threshold is now \$150,000, up from \$120,000. Moreover, the maximum insured mortgage and incentive will rise from four times to four and a half times annual eligible income.

In short, with a small down payment, this targeted extension will increase the maximum price of housing by more than \$200,000 for people purchasing eligible properties in these cities, from a little over \$500,000 according to current parameters to approximately \$722,000.

We took measures to ensure that non-resident foreign buyers who invest passively in housing in Canada, thereby causing increases in the purchase price of properties for Canadians, pay their fair share. Starting on January 1, a new 1% tax will be levied on the value of residential real estate belonging to non-residents or non-Canadians that is considered vacant or underused. This new tax should increase federal revenues by \$700 million over four years starting in 2022-23. These revenues will help support the major investments we are making in housing.

All these investments that I have mentioned today are helping to make housing more affordable for Canadians, especially for those who are vulnerable, thereby ensuring that our economic recovery is inclusive and resilient and that no one falls through the cracks.

*Business of Supply*

Our government is determined to continue this important work by making new commitments and by putting forward innovative approaches to get the pandemic under control. It is determined to grow an economy that works for everyone and to make progress in terms of reconciliation with indigenous peoples, racism and discrimination, climate change, and child care.

I know that my hon. colleagues on both sides of the House, as well as the Canadian people, support these goals, and that they will move us forward as a diverse, equitable and inclusive society. I look forward to working with my colleagues in our efforts to accomplish the difficult work ahead.

• (1100)

**Mr. Denis Trudel (Longueuil—Saint-Hubert, BQ):** Madam Speaker, I congratulate my colleague on her appointment. The government is sending a fine message by appointing the member for Hochelaga, a Quebec riding next to mine, as the Parliamentary Secretary to the Minister of Housing. My compliments to the government.

I have a very specific question for my colleague, but I do not know if she has the answer. Funds were disbursed during the pandemic, including special funds through the Reaching Home homelessness strategy, to support organizations working with the homeless. These investments have been extended until March 2022.

These organizations are wondering what will happen after March 2022. There is considerable uncertainty, because they can no longer make do without the special resources made available during the pandemic, which did not exist before. Does my colleague know if these programs will be extended after March 2022?

**Ms. Soraya Martinez Ferrada:** Madam Speaker, my colleague from Longueuil—Saint-Hubert and I are neighbours, as we are separated only by a river. We see one another from our respective side of the river, and I want to congratulate him for the work he is doing in his riding.

I would like to reassure my colleague. I know that there is a major project under way in Longueuil—Saint-Hubert to organize a summit on housing. We would be very pleased to participate and to respond to the concerns of my colleague and stakeholders about supports for projects under Canada's homelessness strategy. I would be pleased to work with him as we go forward.

**Mr. Alexandre Boulerice (Rosemont—La Petite-Patrie, NDP):** Madam Speaker, my colleague and I are also riding neighbours, although we are not separated by a river.

I thank her for her speech, but it was just a long litany of projects, programs and figures, along with a whole lot of lip service. That is unfortunate, since there appears to be a disconnect between what she said and the realities of the housing crisis.

I would remind her that the Liberals' definition of "affordable housing" considers \$2,225 a month to be affordable rent in Montreal. Would the people of Hochelaga consider \$2,225 a month affordable? If not, what will the parliamentary secretary do to change the definition?

**Ms. Soraya Martinez Ferrada:** Madam Speaker, I thank my next-door neighbour for his question. Indeed, there is no river separ-

rating the two of us. I also congratulate him for the work he is doing in his constituency.

My colleague and I understand that the housing crisis in Montreal and the rise in housing prices are being felt everywhere. Just like him, I am concerned about my constituents who are looking for solutions.

However, I would remind him that our government is the one that introduced the national housing strategy, the very first housing strategy. The Liberal government has made historic investments in housing, and I am very proud of that.

I look forward to working with my colleague on housing issues and projects in our respective ridings.

[English]

**Mr. Mike Morrice (Kitchener Centre, GP):** Madam Speaker, I want to offer my congratulations to the parliamentary secretary on her new role.

I want to pick up on a question asked by the hon. member for Vancouver East earlier in this conversation. We know activists across the country have been calling out the need for more investments in non-market, public, subsidized and co-op housing. We have not built co-op housing in this country since the early 1990s.

Can the parliamentary secretary comment on that need, and the commitment from the government to begin reinvesting in co-op housing?

[Translation]

**Ms. Soraya Martinez Ferrada:** Madam Speaker, I thank my colleague for his question and for the opportunity to point out that when his party was in power, it invested the least in housing.

I know that because at the time, I was a private citizen trying to get funding for co-operative projects, but there was no money.

Today, our government plans to fund co-operative, affordable and social housing projects across the country to fix the previous Conservative government's mistakes and make up for its long history of inaction.

• (1105)

[English]

**Mr. Irek Kusmierczyk (Parliamentary Secretary to the Minister of Employment, Workforce Development and Disability Inclusion, Lib.):** Madam Speaker, I want to congratulate my hon. colleague for her excellent work on this file.

*Business of Supply*

In the last two years, I was able to participate in a number of historic announcements in Windsor—Tecumseh on affordable housing, which is a critical issue there. There was a \$170-million partnership, through the repair and renewal fund, to repair and renew 4,700 units across Windsor-Essex with local partners; a \$25-million partnership with a private developer to build 33 or 31 new units in the town of Tecumseh; \$22 million, again in partnership with local partners, to build affordable housing in the Meadowbrook project; and \$9 million to build new units for the rapid housing initiative, as well.

I notice that in the opposition motion there is no mention of partnerships. I wanted to ask the parliamentary secretary this: Is that one reason why we have seen more investment in affordable housing in Windsor—Tecumseh over the last two years? These are historic investments, more than we ever saw in 10 years of Conservative government.

[Translation]

**Ms. Soraya Martinez Ferrada:** Madam Speaker, I thank my colleague for his question and for the opportunity to point out that it was the Conservative government that pulled out of all of the housing partnerships and abandoned the housing file altogether.

The funds that we have created, including the national housing co-investment fund, will enable us to create at least 60,000 new housing units over several years and invest more than \$13 billion over 10 years. I believe that these historic investments will deliver meaningful results every year for all Canadians across the country.

**Ms. Monique Pauzé (Repentigny, BQ):** Madam Speaker, let us tell it like it is. The government is making big funding promises for all of its programs, but very little money is actually being spent. Sometimes, only 25% of the expenses are covered. Other times, the program criteria are so restrictive that no one is eligible. The reality is that the current government is not spending that much more than in the Harper era.

Given that we are at the height of the housing crisis, does my colleague not think that the government should stop talking and actually take action?

**Ms. Soraya Martinez Ferrada:** Madam Speaker, I thank my colleague for her question. However, comparing our government's track record to the Harper government's is just plain bad faith.

I worked in the renovation and affordable and social housing field for many years, and I have to say that real results are being achieved.

Two low-income housing providers in my riding waited for over 30 years to get funding. Some of the housing units were boarded up. Thanks to federal government investments, those units can be renovated. That will deliver real results across the country and provide Quebecers and Canadians with affordable, accessible housing.

[English]

**Ms. Jenny Kwan (Vancouver East, NDP):** Madam Speaker, the reality is that Canada is actually losing more affordable housing and social housing than it is creating. During the campaign, the Liberal government only committed to 20,000 units of non-profit affordable housing to be built and created.

My question to the parliamentary secretary is this. Would she call on her own government to do what the NDP has been advocating for? That is to build 500,000 units of affordable, co-operative housing so that we can, in fact, give people who need housing and who are unhoused the opportunity to have a home?

[Translation]

**The Assistant Deputy Speaker (Mrs. Carol Hughes):** I would ask the hon. parliamentary secretary to provide a brief response.

**Ms. Soraya Martinez Ferrada:** Madam Speaker, I thank my colleague for the question. I do not have a lot of time, but I can say that during the last election campaign, I was surprised to see that the Liberal Party platform was 10 times more progressive and ambitious than the NDP's.

I would be pleased to talk to her about all the measures we committed to. If there is one platform that made housing a priority, it is the Liberal Party's platform.

• (1110)

**Mr. Denis Trudel (Longueuil—Saint-Hubert, BQ):** Madam Speaker, I am very happy not to be sharing my time for this speech. I am going to try to speak for 20 minutes on the issue of housing. I am very glad that we are talking about this issue today. I thank my Conservative friends for bringing forward a motion on this issue today.

I have noticed, and I am sending them the signal, that this issue has been very much on the table since we resumed two weeks ago. I am pleased with that. The Conservatives have been asking a lot of questions, and the Liberals have even been planting questions on this issue to pretend that they are dealing with it. In fact, one of the things I hate most in the House is seeing a Liberal backbencher read out a question to a minister, who then thanks them for asking such a good question and doing such a wonderful job. I think it is bad acting and a huge waste of everyone's time.

That is where we stand. Six months down the road, we are going to talk about housing. I remember doing a speech about housing in June. Unfortunately, the situation has not changed. It has gotten even worse.

*Business of Supply*

There is quite a contradiction that I need to point out, because it makes no sense. We just had a totally useless election. We wasted a lot of time, energy and, most of all, money. We just spent \$600 million on an election that yielded the same results as the previous one. Do my colleagues know how many social housing units \$600 million would build? We could have helped 3,000 people, like women fleeing domestic violence, people with mental health issues, and seniors made more vulnerable by the pandemic. We could have used that money to house these people.

It is shocking how much time we wasted, all to end up with the same result. We have the same Parliament: The Conservatives are in the same place, the Liberals are in the same place, the NDP is in the same place, near the door. It is all the same in the same Parliament. It is outrageous.

During the election campaign, one thing kept coming up. At least, the people in the Bloc Québécois heard it a lot, and I cannot help but mention it today because it is very important. We kept hearing that the Bloc Québécois will never be in power, which means that, on a number of issues, there is nothing it can do or decide, and that the Bloc will never be the one making the decisions. We heard that a lot during the election campaign.

Consider Montreal, for example. Right now, 23,000 people in Montreal are on the waiting list for low-cost housing. Since 2015, when the Liberals came to power, the numbers have only grown. If we look at the electoral map, Montreal is almost entirely red. Some 25 Liberal MPs, including nine ministers, are supposed to be sitting down making decisions. There are nine federal government ministers on the Island of Montreal, including the Prime Minister. They were told that they should be sitting at the table where decisions are made. I imagine that the Prime Minister is also at that table and that he can make decisions. His own riding, Papineau, is one of the ridings struggling most with the housing crisis on the Island of Montreal. That is something worth mentioning. What is our Prime Minister working on? What does he do all day?

Let us be honest. We are going through a difficult time. There is a housing crisis, but that is not the only crisis there is. In fact, right now, there are four major crises in Canada.

There is, of course, the health crisis, which we hope to get out of as soon as possible. There is also the climate crisis, about which the Liberals are doing absolutely nothing. They have one of the worst records of the G7. Just because they have a former environmental activist in their ranks it does not mean that we think they will make quick progress. This is one of the worst crises of our time.

In Quebec, there is also a language crisis looming, and we are still waiting. Six months ago, we were supposed to pass legislation to reform the Official Languages Act, but we are still waiting. We put everything on hold for five weeks. There was an election and, six months later, there is still nothing. French is in decline everywhere in Montreal and across Quebec, but no legislation was passed because of the election.

Ultimately, the government is unable to do much to improve the situation, but it can do a lot to make it worse. We in the Bloc want to keep them from making things worse.

• (1115)

There is the housing crisis. The Liberal record on housing is disastrous.

Let us talk about the current situation in Quebec, where 450,000 households are in dire need of housing. That is a lot of people—those who pay 30% of their income for housing or who are in unsuitable or substandard housing. Someone might be able to find decently priced housing, but it is unsuitable if eight people have to share a one-bedroom apartment. Nearly 200,000 households see over 50% of their income go to housing; that is when things start to get deeply troubling.

I am referring to pre-pandemic numbers here, but I will point out that all of these numbers have gone up during the pandemic.

Around 82,000 households in Quebec spend 80% of their income on rent. That is right, I said 80%. If someone makes \$20,000, \$16,000 goes to rent and they have \$4,000 left for 12 months, which means times will be tight, as my mother used to say. It is easy to imagine the anxiety and problems that come with that, which is terrible.

The situation has not changed after six years of Liberal government. The parliamentary secretary to the Minister of Housing just buried us in statistics. I think her intentions are good, but she cannot really see what is going on out there.

More people are homeless. It was one of the most important issues in the Quebec municipal campaign, if not the key issue in Longueuil, Montreal, Laval, Gatineau and Quebec City, and for the mayors of all of Quebec's big cities. In fact, I have a meeting tomorrow with the new mayor of Longueuil, who has made this one of her crusades and wants to set up a round table with Montreal and Laval to find solutions.

The problem is that the municipality does not have the means to meet this challenge. It takes massive investments. Where is the money? It is in Ottawa. Obviously, housing is a provincial jurisdiction, but over time, the federal government clawed back spending power, which it is misusing. My colleague talked about that earlier.

A national housing strategy was introduced. Let us go over a bit of its history, without going back to the beginning of time. Where did it come from? Why did we hear so much about it? It is because it was the first one. Before that, there was nothing going on in housing.

In the 1930s, 1940s and 1950s, the government decided that it had to get involved in housing the most vulnerable, people who could not afford it themselves. The federal government made investments in the 1960s, 1970s and 1980s, and housing was built for the most vulnerable in Quebec and across the country.

Then, in the early 1990s, the Conservative government of the day stopped those investments in the name of budget cuts. They axed that funding, and then nothing happened.

*Business of Supply*

In 1993, the Liberals returned to power under Jean Chrétien. During the election campaign, he promised that he would start building again, that everything would go well, that he would take care of the most vulnerable. What happened? He did not keep their word. He did not start investing again.

According to a study by FRAPRU, if the government had resumed investing in 1993 at the same pace it had been in the 1960s, 1970s and 1980s, nearly 80,000 social housing units could have been built in Quebec. We could have housed a bunch of people, all sorts of people who have all sorts of problems, as we are seeing right now in the streets.

For 30 years, nothing happened.

• (1120)

Then, three or four years ago, the Liberal Party decided to launch a program. As my colleague said so well earlier, the national housing strategy comes with big numbers, namely \$70 billion. However, those numbers are inflated with helium, because the investments will be made over 10 years and they include investments from the municipalities, organizations and the provinces. That is where things stand.

The national strategy caused major problems in Quebec, because for three years, nothing happened. Since this is a provincial jurisdiction and the federal government was slow to come to an agreement with Quebec, for three years, no money was spent on housing the most vulnerable.

Last May, a mother and victim of domestic violence from Longueuil made the front page of the *Journal de Montréal* because she could not find housing for herself and her three children. She was trapped in a difficult and toxic relationship, but could not find housing and she was very anxious. This woman lives in Longueuil.

Had the agreement with Quebec been signed when the national strategy was launched in 2017, we could have found housing for her. This woman needs an apartment suitable for herself and her three children. A three-bedroom apartment in Longueuil costs \$1,500 a month and that is considered affordable. That is the average rent for a three-bedroom in Longueuil. Who can afford that? It makes no sense. In short, had this agreement been signed, we could have provided these people with housing.

Let us talk about the national housing strategy. Beyond the fact that it took three years for an agreement to be signed, which has caused all kinds of problems in Quebec, there is another problem. As my colleague mentioned earlier, the suite of programs intended to create affordability under the national housing strategy means that in Montreal, for example, a unit that costs \$2,200 a month is considered affordable. That is just crazy.

During the election campaign, the Bloc Québécois proposed to shuffle all the programs, take the money and put it where the needs are, by giving it to organizations on the ground or to technical resource groups. Since the groups know what the needs are, they could take the money and look after people's real needs. The groups working on the ground are the ones that have the required expertise. That was our proposal during the election campaign.

Right now, a lot of money is being spent for nothing because it is missing the mark. That makes no sense.

Let us now talk about the rapid housing initiative, RHI, which is interesting. Two years ago, the government sort of woke up. It realized that the situation made no sense, that it needed to invest in housing for the most vulnerable, not just those with money. That is why the government launched the RHI. It is not a bad program, but it is grossly underfunded.

The government announced that it would invest \$1 billion to build housing units. The plan was to quickly renovate low-income housing units that had fallen into disrepair and to turn small highway motels into bachelor units for people experiencing homelessness. That is a good program.

However, there was a big problem with this \$1-billion program, which included \$500 million for major cities. Out of that \$500 million, \$200 million went to Toronto and \$57 million to Montreal. We did not understand that at all.

In total, \$63 million, or 13%, of that \$500 million for major cities went to Quebec, yet Quebec accounts for 23% of the population of Canada. The decisions are made in Ottawa, and the minister responsible for this file is from Toronto. This may be a coincidence, but something is not right here. It makes no sense that Quebec contributes \$50 billion a year in taxes and that some of that money gets spent on people in Toronto who are unhoused. It makes no sense.

This \$1-billion initiative is not a bad one, but it was not enough money. Do my colleagues know how many requests the government received for projects to house the most vulnerable when this program was launched?

• (1125)

It was actually a good program; people had three months to apply, and tenants had to be able to get into the unit a year later. That, in itself, was very good. In fact, it was almost too fast, because organizations that could not afford to submit projects had only three months to do so. There were even organizations that applied for grants from CMHC, the Canada Mortgage and Housing Corporation.

I spoke with a representative of an organization in the Montérégie who applied to CMHC for \$40,000 in funding to help him submit the project. His application ended up being rejected. It is completely ridiculous.

The government received \$4 billion in project applications, when it had an envelope of only \$1 billion.

Everyone knows that people do not have any fun on Saturday night or Sunday morning. Not having anything to do, they concoct the idea of whipping up an application for housing meant for the homeless. That is not what happens. These people are involved in their community, and they are familiar with what the community needs. They know where the needs are.

*Business of Supply*

The Federation of Canadian Municipalities applied for \$7 billion under the same program. They saw the big pot of money and said that it was a good program to apply for \$7 billion.

It is a fine program, but it is underfunded. The government launched it with \$1.5 billion, but, again, that will not solve the problems.

The national housing strategy is supposed to build 4,000 units in Quebec over 10 years, but Quebec has 40,000 people waiting for low-income housing. That 10-year plan will not meet those needs.

We are talking numbers, and we are going to talk numbers all day. That is fine because this is an important issue. The housing issue is about people. One of the things I have enjoyed most over the past two years is meeting all the people at work on the ground in Longueuil. There are people everywhere working on homelessness, right in Montreal and all over. This is a good time to salute their incredible work.

I was talking to the parliamentary secretary about homelessness earlier.

An organization called La Halte du coin was founded in Longueuil during the pandemic. It is an incredible organization that offers resources 24/7. What is more, its threshold for entry is low, meaning it accepts anyone and everyone.

At the beginning of the pandemic, we realized that many people experiencing homelessness were going to the Longueuil metro to get out of Montreal, and there was a significant risk of an outbreak. All the homelessness advocacy organizations immediately came together and quickly developed an amazing project, La Halte du coin. They are anxious to find out if they will get funding.

Among the people who worked on this project was Danielle Leblanc, an extraordinary woman who works to tackle homelessness. My riding is home to a program called Repas du passant, a resource that offers meals for \$4, five days a week, to people experiencing homelessness. Ms. Leblanc is an incredible woman. There is also Danielle Goulet, from Macadam Sud, who goes around on the bus to connect with young people in Longueuil; Lucie Latulippe, from Abri de la Rive-Sud; Marlène Harvey, from Casa Bernard-Hubert, a transitional resource for men; Nicholas Gildersleeve, the new director of La Halte du coin; Sonia Jurado, a pillar of housing advocacy in Longueuil who founded Les Habitations Paul-Pratt, a seniors' residence; Marie-Claire McLeod, who has been working to address homelessness for years and is calling for federal investments; and Christene Lesperance, who has a homelessness resource in my riding.

These people are there and they are ready. It is now our turn to make decisions and send them cheques. They are going to be looking after people because they know how to do it and how to do their job. Now they want us to do our job, which is to send them a cheque in order to meet the needs of the most vulnerable. That is what they are asking for, and I am certain that they are watching us right now.

• (1130)

Gilles Beaugard and Hélène Bordeleau of the Table Itinérance Rive-Sud are fascinating people, just like Lazard Vertus and Sonia Langlois, who runs L'Antre-Temps, a resource for homeless youth.

Just imagine how terrible it must be for a 50- or 60-year-old to find themselves homeless on the streets of Montreal—

**The Assistant Deputy Speaker (Mrs. Carol Hughes):** I must interrupt the hon. member, because his time has expired. He can add anything else during questions and comments.

The hon. member for Montmagny—L'Islet—Kamouraska—Rivière-du-Loup.

**Mr. Bernard Généreux (Montmagny—L'Islet—Kamouraska—Rivière-du-Loup, CPC):** Madam Speaker, we were treated to a fiery speech, to say the least.

We are quite familiar with the issue. In fact, we are the ones who brought it forward for debate today.

My colleague spoke about community organizations, which are indeed very important in Canada's 338 ridings. In our election platform, we suggested taking 15% of federal buildings and making them available for co-operatives that could be offered to community organizations.

Does my colleague think that this is a good idea?

**Mr. Denis Trudel:** Madam Speaker, that is an excellent idea. The Bloc Québécois even suggested it in its election platform. That means we can conclude it is a very good idea.

However, we must ensure that these lands will actually meet the needs of the most vulnerable. They should be used to build social housing, not office towers or condos. That is the challenge we face.

The Bloc Québécois agrees with the idea of using surplus federal land. However, it really should go to the most vulnerable.

[*English*]

**Mr. Alistair MacGregor (Cowichan—Malahat—Langford, NDP):** Madam Speaker, I truly enjoy listening to my Bloc colleague's speeches in the House. They are always very vibrant and full of passion, and I sincerely believe that he comes to this place with a deep sense of caring for the housing situation we see in Canada.

The situation is quite dire. In my riding of Cowichan—Malahat—Langford, we regularly see properties being overbid by \$100,000. It is a real crisis.

I agree with the member's comments on the election. It was an unnecessary election that cost \$600 million. However, the fact that all the major parties spoke so eloquently and passionately about housing gave me some hope and optimism that it would be addressed in this Parliament.



The motion before us today is a missed opportunity because the Conservatives do not make any mention of an indigenous housing strategy. They do not make any mention of giving aid to municipalities to help them with their land-use decisions. There is also no mention of building affordable non-market housing, which is so desperately needed.

I am wondering if my Bloc colleague could expand on the missed opportunities we see in the motion.

[*Translation*]

**Mr. Denis Trudel:** Madam Speaker, I thank my colleague for his question. He is absolutely right.

Getting housing out of the speculative market is the big challenge that we face when it comes to the housing crisis. There was actually a motion adopted here in 2017. It recognized that housing is a right, like health.

As soon as we recognize it as a right, we must act accordingly. If we leave it up to the market to set prices, housing will end up costing \$2,000 a month, putting it out of reach for the most vulnerable.

We need to find a way to get housing out of the speculative market. That is the major challenge.

[*English*]

**Mr. Chris Bittle (Parliamentary Secretary to the Minister of Canadian Heritage, Lib.):** Madam Speaker, the member had a throwaway line in his speech about housing being an area of provincial jurisdiction, and the rest of his speech was focused on federal intervention. I think we both agree that there should be federal intervention, but as an Ontario MP, I have noticed the absence of our provincial partner, the Ford government. It has not been there on housing the way previous governments have been.

The hon. member really glossed over what the provincial government is doing in Quebec. If this is a provincial area of jurisdiction and things are getting worse, is it time for the Government of Quebec to stand up? I think the Province of Ontario, the Ford government, needs to step up as well.

• (1135)

[*Translation*]

**Mr. Denis Trudel:** Madam Speaker, we must avoid partisanship when dealing with such an important issue. We need to take care of people.

I know this issue falls under provincial jurisdiction, but I will not start judging what the Government of Quebec is doing, and whether or not it is enough.

There are problems with housing, and mistakes have been made on both sides. However, I think that I made it pretty clear that the way the money is being spent by Ottawa is not working at all.

**Ms. Sylvie Bérubé (Abitibi—Baie-James—Nunavik—Eeyou, BQ):** Madam Speaker, I would like to commend my hon. colleague for his great speech. I would like him to explain the national housing strategy. The government is promising significant amounts of funding, but, in the end, those promises end up broken.

### *Business of Supply*

**Mr. Denis Trudel:** Madam Speaker, in 2017, Quebec was supposed to receive \$3.8 billion under this national strategy, shared equally between the federal and the provincial governments, but nothing much happened for three years. There was money for renovations and for building new housing units, but as members have mentioned and as we have talked about a lot today, a lot of funding was earmarked for making housing more affordable.

However, one of the big problems is the definition of the word “affordable”. Often, federal programs are loans that are based on the fair market value in a particular community or region, when really, they should be based on the ability of households to pay. That is the problem right now.

The strategy was announced, we did not get any funding for three years and now we are making do. The crisis is acute, and the funding needs to be distributed more quickly.

**Mr. Stephen Ellis (Cumberland—Colchester, CPC):** Madam Speaker, I would like to thank my colleague for his speech and his passion for this issue.

I would like to comment on the government's efforts, the action it has taken and the money it has spent. We have a plan for this, and I would like to know if the member will support this initiative.

**Mr. Denis Trudel:** Madam Speaker, as I was saying, this motion is not perfect.

I think that everyone in the House agrees with the first part of the motion, which states that “the government has failed to increase the housing supply in Canada”.

However, the motion does not go far enough. I wonder what the Conservatives would do if they were in power. Would they invest money, and if so, how much? That is what we want to know today.

Anything that allows the House to improve the situation or at least address the matter is truly important. We support this motion, but it is far from perfect.

[*English*]

**Ms. Jenny Kwan (Vancouver East, NDP):** Madam Speaker, is the member concerned at all about the fact that in the motion, it is not stipulated that when making federal lands available for residential development, they are to be for non-profit and social housing? Otherwise, that land could be made available for luxury condo developers, which I do not think is the purpose of what we are trying to do here.

[*Translation*]

**Mr. Denis Trudel:** Madam Speaker, my colleague is right. That is not specified, which could be risky. The devil is always in the details. If we do not force the government's hand and tell it exactly what to do with that land, it will give the land to the highest bidder, and the most vulnerable will end up with nothing, as usual. That needs to be clearer for sure.

*Business of Supply*

This is a major concern. During the municipal election campaign we just had in Quebec, one of the issues that came up most often was the availability of land. Organizations have ideas for projects, but they do not know where to implement those projects or how to proceed. In contrast, the federal government has land, and it has to make that land available to house our most vulnerable people. That is what needs to happen.

[*English*]

**Mr. Mark Gerretsen (Parliamentary Secretary to the Leader of the Government in the House of Commons (Senate), Lib.):** Madam Speaker, I am perplexed by the response from the Bloc. The member said a moment ago that they were supportive of this motion, but then agreed with the NDP that the motion is problematic because it suggests that these lands should be opened up to developers.

Why would the Bloc support a motion that the member has identified has problems that lead to the concern raised by the NDP?

• (1140)

[*Translation*]

**Mr. Denis Trudel:** Madam Speaker, my colleague is trying to pit us against the farm team, but that will not work. We are not the farm team; the NDP is. They are the Liberals' midget AAA team.

It is a huge problem and a huge concern. It is too important to fight over. We should spend a lot more time talking about the housing file before us today, and the government needs to do more now.

**Mr. Alexandre Boulerice (Rosemont—La Petite-Patrie, NDP):** Madam Speaker, I want to start by saying that I will be sharing my time with my excellent colleague from Vancouver-East.

I feel compelled to follow up on the comments of my colleague from Longueuil, who very proudly represents the Quebec wing of the Conservative Party, by voting for a motion that is full of holes. I will, however, correct something he said when he stated that the Liberals took up the entire Island of Montreal. All of it? No, there is a little orange dot still holding out against the invader.

**An hon. member:** There is a little blue dot too.

**Mr. Alexandre Boulerice:** There is a little blue dot too, Madam Speaker.

We are debating a motion from the Conservative Party that identifies a real problem but offers a bad solution. I think it is important to have this discussion to actually see what the real solutions are for this housing crisis.

The housing crisis has reached catastrophic levels in many Quebec and Canadian towns and cities, particularly in Montreal, where housing prices have skyrocketed in recent years. People are struggling to find housing and are having to change neighbourhoods because they cannot afford to pay \$1,400, \$1,500 or \$1,750 a month in rent. The Liberals have been promising strategies ever since they came to power six years ago, but we have not seen any concrete changes or results on the ground. On the contrary, the situation has only gotten worse following years of Conservative and Liberal neglect.

People who spend more than 30% of their income on rent tend to be poor and vulnerable. In Canada, that is the reality for 1.7 million households, which means the number of people is even higher. This means that 1.7 million families, couples or individuals spend more than 30% of their income on housing. That is serious. It is catastrophic. In Quebec, 38,000 people are waiting for social housing, for truly affordable housing. In Montreal, 23,000 people are waiting, and that number is growing.

I recently had the chance to take part in an event organized by the Front d'action populaire en réaménagement urbain, or FRAPRU, which is well known in Quebec, as well as a coalition called the National Right to Housing Network.

We spent a long while listening to testimony from people who live in unsafe housing, who were victims of renovations, or who are living in housing that is too small, ill-suited to their needs or poorly lit. All of this was detrimental to their mental, and sometimes physical, health. It was heartbreaking to hear these stories in a country as rich as Canada, a G7 country that could be doing so much better.

We heard stories about five people living in a one-bedroom apartment because it was all they could afford. Every night the parents would pull out the sofa bed to sleep, but it blocked the path the kids would take to go to the bathroom during the night. There were five of them in that one-bedroom apartment. We heard from people who have kids with disabilities but do not have the resources or the means to adapt the entryway for their child, who has to come in the back door. It is dangerous and not well lit. These people are living with mould, with fungi, and their health is affected. This, in turn, overwhelms our health care system, because people are living in unsafe conditions in inadequate housing. It is a big problem.

We were talking about the 1.7 million households that spend more than 30% of their income on housing in Canada. In Rosemont—La Petite Patrie, some people spend more than 40% or 50% of their income on housing. Then, when the price of groceries goes up, they are stretched to the limit. It makes no sense. Three thousand households in Rosemont—La Petite Patrie have to spend more than half of their income on housing. It is completely unacceptable. This has been a failure of the Liberal strategy for years.

The motion before us speaks to this real housing problem and to the issue facing young families and young couples who want to buy their first home. It is becoming increasingly difficult. Condos and houses often sell for more than they are listed on the market for. This creates a kind of bubble of speculation that is completely crazy.

The Conservatives may be identifying a real problem, but they seem to be unable to say certain words. For example, they are unable to say the words "social housing". It seems that social housing is on their lips. They just cannot say it.

• (1145)

The proposed solutions in the motion before us are extremely ideological.

That being said, some aspects of the motion make sense. The NDP is also against taxing capital gains on the sale of a primary residence, but the motion does not offer any real solution to this problem. Everything in the opposition motion is highly ideological and tied to market forces. If there is greater demand then we simply need to increase supply and, like magic, the prices will automatically drop.

Anyone who knows this file and works on the ground, including groups and organizations, knows full well that although part of the problem can be solved by the lucrative market, in other words the supply of profit-driven products, the most effective solution is indisputably more non-market housing.

Such housing does not generate profit. It is community housing, low-income housing, co-operative and social housing. This kind of social housing has to be incorporated in project plans. A developer proposing a project should be required to build social housing, and the federal and Quebec governments should have to provide money to get that social housing built.

There is no solution that does not include not-for-profit housing. Social housing is crucial. That is why the Conservatives' solution is flawed and fails to address what really needs to be done. The Conservatives have their ideological blinders on. They are all about capitalism no matter the cost, and nothing else is even worth considering.

Regarding non-market solutions, members touched on the fact that new co-ops are not being built. That is essential. I had a chance to be at the Montreal premiere of a documentary called *Le coop de ma mère* by filmmaker Rosemont Ève Lamont. The documentary made it clear just how well those solutions have worked. Co-operatives that were built in the 1970s, 1980s and 1990s are still around today, and they are great places to live. Anything considered profit is reinvested in maintaining and upgrading the co-op spaces for the people who live there.

This is also a lesson about working together, participatory democracy, and collective empowerment. The residents of co-operatives become collective owners of the co-operative, and that changes their lives. Without these co-operatives, these people would not be able to live in these neighbourhoods or in these communities. This is something that the NDP is calling for.

I would like to tell my Bloc Québécois colleagues, who seem to want to vote for the Conservative motion, that the NDP is going to move an amendment that I think is in line with the speeches we have heard. We want to add the following to the motion: investments for non-market, non-profit affordable housing; investments to create co-operatives; and the construction of 500,000 new homes, affordable housing, and social housing over the next 10 years. The Liberals are promising 160,000 social housing units, but the NDP is proposing half a million. We are also proposing to create a “for indigenous, by indigenous” housing strategy, which is not in the Conservative motion or in the Liberal’s national housing strategy action plan, even though they have been promising it for years.

These are concrete things that the NDP is putting forward in response to the flaws in the Conservative proposal. I really hope that

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there will be consistency between what is said and what is done, and that we can count on the support of the Bloc Québécois. These NDP amendments would make for a much more meaningful and logical motion, when it comes to practical solutions.

In this regard, as I spoke earlier with the Parliamentary Secretary to the Minister of Housing and member for Hochelaga, based on the rules in place, which were set by the Liberals, housing that is considered affordable is not affordable at all. We recently learned that, according to the Canada Mortgage and Housing Corporation, or CMHC, a Montreal home that costs \$2,200 a month is considered affordable. People are being taken for fools.

We need to put our heads together and we need to consider the right to housing as a fundamental right for which someone could go to court when housing is inadequate. It is a life-changing thing, and I think that as parliamentarians we need to make a significant effort to invest in social housing and truly affordable housing. That is a priority for the NDP.

● (1150)

[*English*]

**Mr. Jeremy Patzer (Cypress Hills—Grasslands, CPC):** Madam Speaker, one thing we quite often miss when we talk about housing is seniors housing. We have a golden opportunity for this with our motion. We talk about the 37,000 federal buildings and how we can utilize some of them for housing going forward.

Would the member agree that maybe we should be focusing on using those spaces for seniors housing, for those seniors who are looking to move out of their single dwelling homes and into a condo setting or an assisted-living facility?

[*Translation*]

**Mr. Alexandre Boulerice:** Madam Speaker, once again, it is the same thing. Is housing a problem for seniors in this country? Yes, it is. These individuals are often on a fixed income and they are seeing rents go up. It is a real problem.

However, the Conservatives offer no real solutions. If the federal land they want to free up is used by developers to build condos for the wealthy, that will not help impoverished seniors who are struggling and have very minimal resources.

In Montreal, the Peel Basin is federal land and it has potential. I hope it will be used for affordable social housing and not for a baseball stadium, which would be a waste of space. I at least hope that neither government, Quebec nor Ottawa, puts a penny into that, because it would be madness.

*Business of Supply*

[English]

**Mr. Kevin Lamoureux (Parliamentary Secretary to the Leader of the Government in the House of Commons, Lib.):** Madam Speaker, when we look at the motion before us, one of the suggestions the Conservatives have put forward is that a minimum of 15% of federal real estate and properties in Canada be converted. As the Parliamentary Secretary to the Minister of Canadian Heritage pointed out, 35.7 million of those hectares are from Parks Canada. Let us keep in mind that the figure the Conservatives are talking about is 41 million.

If we do the math and add Parks Canada, Environment Canada or National Defence together, it adds up to 39 million or 40 million hectares. The Conservatives are talking about 41 million. Their numbers just do not make sense.

Would the member opposite agree that some fundamental flaws in the Conservatives' basic arithmetic just do not seem to make sense? Could he provide his thoughts on that?

**The Assistant Deputy Speaker (Mrs. Carol Hughes):** It is the hon. member for Rosemont—La Petite-Patrie who will be answering the question, so I would ask the members of the official opposition to hold off on any questions or comments they may have. They will be able to ask a question or comment when it is their time.

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

[Translation]

**Mr. Alexandre Boulerice:** Madam Speaker, the member is looking at this all wrong.

The problem is not the amount of land. The problem is that people are spending too much money on housing and living in poverty. I am less interested in the 12% or 19% of available lands than I am in the 23,000 Montreal households on waiting lists for social housing.

We have to take care of people first. If more land is needed after that, fine. The problem is the 1.7 million people in this country who spend more than 30% of their income on housing. The problem has nothing to do with physical space.

**Mr. Bernard Généreux (Montmagny—L'Islet—Kamouraska—Rivière-du-Loup, CPC):** Madam Speaker, I thank my hon. colleague for his speech and the ideas he has shared about the housing crisis.

My colleague stated earlier that the Conservatives cannot say the words “social housing”. I am therefore going to say them: “social housing”.

In 2009 and 2011, when I was here in the House of Commons under a Conservative government, funding was made available for housing co-operatives in my riding. Members cannot say that Conservatives never did that. On the contrary, we did so several times.

Regardless of the percentage of land available or not, what we proposed in our election platform was to make land available to volunteer organizations or co-operatives in order to create social housing. I will say it again, “social housing”. Does my colleague think that is a good solution?

• (1155)

**Mr. Alexandre Boulerice:** Madam Speaker, I am pleased to hear him say those words. My colleague proved that I was wrong and that the Conservatives can say the words “social housing”. However, they cannot commit them to paper because they forgot to put them in their motion. The problem is only partly solved, and there is still a long way to go.

If my colleague is concerned about truly affordable social housing, co-operatives and an indigenous housing strategy developed for and by indigenous people, I hope that he will act accordingly and vote in favour of the NDP amendments.

[English]

**Ms. Jenny Kwan (Vancouver East, NDP):** Madam Speaker, I am delighted to enter into this debate. As members may know, housing is one of my deepest passions.

I got into electoral politics back in 1993. Why? Because the federal Liberal government cancelled the national affordable housing program at that time. I was working as a community legal advocate in the Downtown Eastside. I was absolutely devastated because I saw first-hand what it was like for individuals who could not get access to safe, secure affordable housing. I worked day and night to find people housing, sometimes inadequate housing.

That was back in 1993. Look at what is happening today. Things are even worse. I have never seen it so bad as it is now. During the election campaign, believe it or not, the Liberal candidate came after me and asked me what I had done in the last six years, having been elected as member of Parliament. I told the Liberal candidate to ask the Prime Minister, the leader of his party, what he had or had not done to deliver housing to those in greatest need.

Vancouver East had the largest homeless encampment in the country. For months this went on. From the summer to the fall to the winter, it persisted. I begged the Minister of Housing to come to my community and see for himself what was going on. I offered solutions day and night whenever I saw the minister. Sometimes it was at the airport, while we were waiting for our flight. Sometimes I would walk across the floor of the House. I wrote countless letters to the government. I even wrote a joint letter with Mayor Kennedy Stewart and the local MLA, the Hon. Melanie Mark, begging for the government to come to the table.

The provincial B.C. NDP government had said that it would match the funding from the federal government to address this crisis. Did the federal government come to the table? No, it did not, and yet the Liberals sit here today and talk about what a swell job they are doing with their national affordable housing initiative. Let us be clear about what is going on with the national affordable housing initiative. The reality is that initiative is not producing the housing needed most by those who are unhoused and by those who are living precariously with their housing conditions.

The co-investment fund that the parliamentary secretary talked about, yes, is a great program, with the exception that it is so riddled with red tape that it is almost impossible for non-profits to make applications. They literally have to hire consultants to get through the stack of pages and reams of questions. Worse than that, after they are able to answer all the questions and submit their applications, CMHC barely has the wherewithal to process them expeditiously, and we wonder why housing is not getting developed. We wonder why things are not changing on the streets.

With regard to the co-investment fund, I must also take a moment to say where the problems lie with smaller communities, rural communities and northern communities, communities that do not have the large infrastructure as my city does in an urban centre to make those complicated applications. They are left out in the cold. That is the reality of what is going on.

Prior to and during the campaign, the Liberals bragged about the largest program within the national housing strategy, the RCFI. The RCFI has constructed housing that is simply not affordable. Housing experts have looked into this program and have found that the developments are way above market, somewhere between 30% to 130% above market. This is the kind of housing they are building. How will that help the people on the ground?

• (1200)

One would think the government would want to bring in a program to support private developers in developing housing that is below market, but no, not this government, not the Liberals. The Liberals go on to say, “What a great job we are doing,” and they send out reams and reams of press releases making these announcements. Holy moly, I almost fell off my chair. In what universe, in what sane perception could one possibly accept the notion that housing builds 100% or more above market are acceptable? Even 30% above market is not acceptable.

In addition, there was a project in Quebec where the Liberals made the announcement but then reporters found out that the project was not even built. Money had not even flowed to it. The Liberals are not embarrassed about that at all, and they just send out those press releases bragging about it. My goodness, I do not know what planet people are from. In my universe, truth matters, and what matters even more is action, because people on the ground need that housing. It makes me want to weep.

When I came to Ottawa this week, our flight was delayed because of the snow. It was around three o'clock in the morning, I cannot remember exactly now, but I was in a cab. As the cab drove up to my apartment, I saw that there was a homeless man outside at three o'clock in the morning in Ottawa, in the bitter cold. I said to the cab driver, “Oh my God. That is a homeless man at this hour on this night, on the street.” I walked up to him, and he did not even have a piece of cardboard on the ground to cover the sidewalk for him. I just cannot imagine that situation. It is not just in the Downtown Eastside that we have a homelessness crisis; we have it everywhere across the country. Please could the Liberal government stop talking about what a great job its members are doing and actually do the job and deliver the housing for the people in the greatest need?

### *Business of Supply*

To our Conservative friends, I will say that the motion in and of itself could be a good one, except that all the Conservatives are thinking about is supply and how to get that “gotcha” moment with the government.

The motion proposes to make federal lands available without any stipulation whatsoever to require that residential development be tied permanently to affordable, non-profit, social and co-operative housing. That is not acceptable. It is exactly how the Liberals get away with driving a truck through the loopholes with their arguments about what a great job they are doing, which is producing housing that is way above market and still saying they are producing affordable housing. We have to do better and we must do better, because people's lives depend on it.

I support the other aspects of the motion, such as the call to say to the government that we should never charge capital gains tax for people who are selling their primary home. I absolutely support that, no question. I also support the second component of the motion, which is to say that we need to ban foreign investment. We absolutely need to do that, and we need to do more than that. We need to stop the financialization of housing and stop treating housing as though it is a stock market. We need to deal with REITs and bring in measures to stop those kinds of investments, because all that does is drive up the cost of housing for those who need affordable rentals. I am not saying there is no place for market rentals; there is, but there needs to be some limit, and it cannot be at such a rate that people cannot live there.

• (1205)

I move that the motion be amended in paragraph (a) by adding, after the words “available for” the following: “permanently affordable non-profit and co-operative”; and by adding after the words “primary residences”, the following: “(d) commit dedicated funding in the December 14, 2021 fall economic statement toward the development of the urban, rural and northern indigenous housing strategy promised in 2017, including the creation of a fully funded 'by indigenous, for indigenous' national housing centre; and (e) build 500,000 additional new homes that people can afford, including co-operative housing.”

If the Conservatives would accept this amendment, it would be a fulsome amendment and we could make a difference. Let us do it.

**The Assistant Deputy Speaker (Mrs. Alexandra Mendès):** It is my duty to inform hon. members that an amendment to an opposition motion may be moved only with the consent of the sponsor of the motion.

Therefore, I ask the hon. member for Edmonton Riverbend if he consents to this amendment being moved.

**Mr. Matt Jeneroux:** Madam Speaker, no, I do not.

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**The Assistant Deputy Speaker (Mrs. Alexandra Mendès):** There is no consent. Therefore, pursuant to Standing Order 85, the amendment cannot be moved at this time.

Questions and comments, the hon. member for Elgin—Middlesex—London.

**Mrs. Karen Vecchio (Elgin—Middlesex—London, CPC):** Madam Speaker, I thank the member for Vancouver East for her speech. I know her passion. I have watched her work on this file for a number of years for those who are in need of social supports. To any candidate who has ever questioned how hard she works on this, I would say they should look at her record, because she has made many speeches on these types of actions.

Some of the greatest concerns I see, though, are with home ownership, recognizing the difficulties of getting a down payment. My son has about \$30,000 in the bank, which does not give him much of an option to try to get into the housing market. I believe that the inability to save money is because of inflation and the cost of living. Everything is going up. How can someone afford to get into a home if they cannot afford to save money?

I do not mean to sound silly, but does the member for Vancouver East believe this is because of “just inflation”?

**Ms. Jenny Kwan:** Madam Speaker, my thanks to the member for her kind words.

There are many, many factors impacting home ownership. There is no question that there is a hot housing market and that people cannot afford to get into owning a home. Some of those issues tie into people flipping land, such as the Liberal member for Vancouver Granville, who actually, prior to the election, would not even answer the question of when he was participating in flipping land to make a profit. How much money did he make? What impact did that have, for example, on the cost of housing and on people who wanted to get into the housing market?

Banning foreign ownership is also one step that can curb this, but it is not the only step. Addressing the issue of financialization of housing is a key factor within that. I wish the motion the Conservatives tabled would include that piece as well. If we want to have—

**The Assistant Deputy Speaker (Mrs. Alexandra Mendès):** Questions and comments, the hon. member for Kingston and the Islands.

**Mr. Mark Gerretsen (Parliamentary Secretary to the Leader of the Government in the House of Commons (Senate), Lib.):** Madam Speaker, I always think that when the federal government has surplus lands available for the opportunity to be used, in particular by community and in this case by housing, those lands should be made available through the proper process.

What we are hearing from the Conservatives is a bit of a story on 41 million hectares of land, which includes 37 million from Parks Canada alone. The numbers they are throwing out do not really represent the reality in terms of the federal land available.

I am wondering whether the member knows of any federal land within her riding that would be in close proximity to the services available in order to build housing and, to her passion, affordable housing more specifically.

• (1210)

**Ms. Jenny Kwan:** Madam Speaker, it is true that the amount of land that is available is not to the tune the Conservatives have suggested. Having said that, it does not mean to say there is no land available. What we should and could do, of course, is look and see what land is available and then make it available to the non-profit sector to develop affordable social and co-operative housing.

I am not here to get market luxury condos developed. That is not what I am interested in. That may be what the Conservatives are interested in, but I am not. That is why I moved the amendment to change the motion and include that stipulation.

**Ms. Lindsay Mathyssen (London—Fanshawe, NDP):** Madam Speaker, I truly appreciate the incredible work done by my colleague from Vancouver East, who is such a strong advocate for those in need of the affordable housing piece that New Democrats fight for on a daily basis.

In my riding, in the city of London, there are 5,000 people on the wait-list for affordable housing. It is indeed at a crisis level. One of the things I am always upset with regarding what has happened through government inaction over the years is the role the federal government has played.

It used to be that the government would build en masse affordable, co-operative housing. This was done at the provincial and federal levels, but—

**The Assistant Deputy Speaker (Mrs. Alexandra Mendès):** The hon. member for Vancouver East has five seconds to answer; it is all the time that is left.

**Ms. Jenny Kwan:** Madam Speaker, I know New Democrats will always fight for safe, secure and affordable housing for all, and we strongly believe adequate housing is a fundamental basic right. That is why my colleague—

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

[*Translation*]

**Mrs. Stephanie Kusie (Calgary Midnapore, CPC):** Madam Speaker, I will share my time with the member for Wellington—Halton Hills.

[English]

It is always an honour to rise in the House and to speak, especially on the important motion we have before us today, which is our opposition day motion. Before I get started, I would like to give some credit. I am a shameless team promoter. I love this team. I will say it time and again. I want to give credit to the member for Mission—Matsqui—Fraser Canyon for all of the incredible work he did on this file in the last Parliament. In fact, his work was used as the basis for a lot of our platform development. It received accolades from many groups across the country for the great ideas within our platform regarding housing. I wish him the best in the Asia-Pacific development file as he continues on. I also wish the best for the residents of B.C. as they come out of the difficult time they have been going through.

I would also like to recognize the wonderful member of Parliament for Edmonton Riverbend, who gave me the honour of speaking here today. I do not know if members know this, but he is the father of three children, including the beautiful baby Hugh. He knows this issue very well, because he is a family man. I have family who lives in his riding. I have mentioned that to him before. This affects him and his family and everyone in his community, so I am really happy to see him taking the charge on this motion and on the discussion here today.

I held this file under families, children and social development when I served as the shadow minister in that role. With that, I would like to recognize the new member for Fort McMurray—Cold Lake. What a fireball she is. I love that lady. She is a new mother and a strong voice for her constituents and for Albertans. When she got this role, I told her that this file was hard. I will tell members what I saw when I held that role of families, children and social development and housing was still under that file.

I saw government members traipse across the country, announce new housing initiatives, pat themselves on the backs and call it a day. They would make outrageous claims. In fact, the Minister of Housing and Diversity and Inclusion continues to make claims. For example, on November 29 of this year, he said, “Mr. Speaker, every Canadian deserves a safe and affordable place to call home. Since we came into office, we have helped over a million families get the housing they need”. He also said, on December 2, 2021, “We will keep working to make sure every Canadian has an affordable place to call home.”

That is not what I saw in my role at that time. I read the files. I looked around my community and I saw two things. I saw a government destroying my local economy with glee and forcing businesses and residents to vacate buildings, because all the business was gone and all the jobs had been lost. These buildings were being purchased by the government for a song and being turned into subsidized housing, and then the government declared a victory. This is what I saw time and again.

I will repeat that. The government would destroy the economy, force all the businesses to close, take all the good jobs away, purchase the buildings for a song, turn them into subsidized housing and say it had done a great job. It was terrible. There are no winners in that model.

### *Business of Supply*

While the government was passing Bill C-69, the no-more-pipelines bill, Bill C-48, the tanker moratorium bill, and the clean fuel standard, jumping, cheering and drinking out of their soggy paper straws, my constituents were suffering. They were wondering whether they could keep their houses or if they would have to move in with their sisters. They wondered how they were going to make rent that month, but the government did not care. Its members would show up on this floor week after week, claiming victory.

The second thing I saw was that all of these government programs the government was claiming victory over were the result of two things: a poor economy and higher taxation.

• (1215)

Every single benefit and every program that I considered, and wondered why Canadians would need, always came back to no jobs or no good jobs. While the government was destroying the economy, killing good jobs and taxing Canadians with one hand, it was handing out a measly little portion of what it had killed and collected with its other hand. What could Canadians do? Could they say no to the small amount that was offered to them? There were no jobs, and certainly no good jobs, to go back to.

I have the best riding in all of Canada. Calgary Midnapore was built on the backs of the generation that fuelled this nation for decades. Communities thrived in lakes and parks that were created by a love of what they did and what it meant for Canada. However, that all started to change six years ago. Jobs became scarce. Businesses went out of province and out of country, and people had to turn to these benefits. They had no choice, and they were grateful because their jobs were gone. I am starting to worry that some people are getting conditioned to believe that they do not deserve any better.

Now, we add affordability and inflation to this mix.

*Business of Supply*

Canadian housing affordability deteriorated for a third consecutive quarter in Q3 of 2021. The mortgage payment on a representative home as a percentage of income rose 1.7 points after a 3.2-point increase in Q2 of 2021. Seasonally adjusted home prices increased 4.6% in Q3 of 2021 from Q2 of 2021, while median household income rose only 0.8%. Affordability deteriorated in all 10 markets covered in Q3. On a sliding scale of markets, from worst deterioration to least, were Vancouver, Victoria, Toronto, Ottawa-Gatineau, Hamilton, Montreal, Calgary, Quebec, Winnipeg and Edmonton. That was the third consecutive quarter with a worsening in all of those markets. Countrywide affordability deteriorated 0.7% in the condo portion, versus a 2.3% deterioration in the non-condo segment. Prices continued a relentless upward trajectory, rising 4.6% in the quarter and 18.6% year on year. That annual figure was the most it has been since 1989, which was before I graduated high school in Calgary Midnapore.

Let us talk about inflation. There is hardly a commodity that has not been touched. Natural gas is up 18.7%. Gasoline is up 41.7%, and I certainly think twice before I decide that it is time to fill my car. Ground beef is up 8.2%. Sausages are up 11.3%. Steak is up 13.6%. I examine the cuts way more thoroughly now before making my choices at the grocery market. Eggs, which are not even a direct meat product, are up 7.4%. Butter, another Canadian staple, is up 5.5%. Syrup is up 11.6%. Coffee is up 3.7%. Chicken is up 8.3%. A year ago I could buy the whole bird, and nothing but the whole bird, for \$10. Now it is \$14 when I go to the grocery store.

The current government wants to claim victory on this file, but I will not let it. The Liberals destroyed our economy, took away the good jobs and increased taxation, and they want to pat themselves on the back. I will not let them, and neither will Canadians.

• (1220)

**Mr. Mark Gerretsen (Parliamentary Secretary to the Leader of the Government in the House of Commons (Senate), Lib.):** Madam Speaker, I am still processing a lot of that.

The motion that the member's colleague and the Conservatives put forward today suggests that we consolidate all of the land that the federal government owns and then make 15% of it available for housing. If we look at the math and go to Statistics Canada, we can see exactly where the Conservatives get their number of 41 million hectares of available land. Of that, 97% is in Parks Canada, Environment Canada and National Defence.

To get to 15% and, assuming we got rid of all the other land that the federal government has, the remaining 3%, what 12% of Parks Canada, Environment Canada and National Defence would the member like to see disposed of for affordable housing?

**Mrs. Stephanie Kusie:** Madam Speaker, that question is totally irrelevant to everything that I talked about. It does not matter about the parkland, where we are going to get it or what parklands we are going to take. We love conservation. Conservatives were in fact the original conservators. We love nature.

I know what the government will continue to do. The Liberals will continue to destroy the economy so that they can get those buildings, and they can have more affordable housing for Canadians through taking away their jobs. That is not a solution.

[*Translation*]

**Mr. Denis Trudel (Longueuil—Saint-Hubert, BQ):** Madam Speaker, today's motion aside, I always get the feeling the Conservatives love blaming the Liberals for any and every increase.

The big problem with housing is speculation and the fact that people use it to make money in the markets.

Does my colleague agree that it is time to shake up all federal government programs to get housing out of the hands of speculators and pass that responsibility on to community groups that know what people need so we can make sure the most vulnerable people get housing?

• (1225)

**Mrs. Stephanie Kusie:** Madam Speaker, after listening to my colleague's question, I think we share the same idea. The most important thing to facilitate Canadians' access to housing is a strong economy. We need to ensure that lots of good jobs are available to Canadians. I think we agree on those ideas.

[*English*]

**Mr. Alistair MacGregor (Cowichan—Malahat—Langford, NDP):** Madam Speaker, in my riding of Cowichan—Malahat—Langford, the market has failed my residents, and it is still failing residents. We are regularly seeing houses overbid by \$100,000.

I am wondering why the Conservatives did not take this opportunity to make mention of an indigenous housing strategy or of making a commitment to building non-market affordable housing. In my neck of the woods, and I think this is the same right across Canada, this is the type of housing that is in demand. People cannot afford to go out and buy houses. They need something that is non-market and affordable, and that is going to resolve their needs right now.

**Mrs. Stephanie Kusie:** Madam Speaker, I can hear that my colleague's constituents are facing the same problems I referenced in my speech, and that many Canadians are facing from coast to coast to coast. I am not sure if the member missed the beginning part of my speech when I gave credit to our member for Mission—Matsqui—Fraser Canyon. He developed incredible platform contributions regarding this specific piece and indigenous housing in particular, which actually received accolades from indigenous communities across the country.

Again, I can see that, with my colleagues from the Bloc and the NDP, we have the shared objectives of better lives and housing for all Canadians.



*Business of Supply*

**Hon. Michael Chong (Wellington—Halton Hills, CPC):** Madam Speaker, the government's failure to properly oversee and regulate Canada's banking system and its failure to properly manage fiscal policy are the two reasons Canadian families are struggling with skyrocketing housing prices and why Canadian families are burdened with record high levels of household indebtedness. The government is also putting the stability of our financial system at risk. It is mispricing risk, leading to the misallocation of capital toward residential real estate. As David Rosenberg has said, Canada's economy is overly reliant on "credit, cannabis and condos".

The average house price in this country has skyrocketed over the six years the government has been in power. According to The Canadian Real Estate Association, the actual benchmark price for a home in this country has gone from \$430,000 in November 2015, when the government was appointed to office, to \$726,000 in October of this year, the last month for which we have data. This is a massive increase of 77% over the last six years. That is an annual compounded rate of increase of about 10% per annum, far ahead of the nominal growth of GDP. It is putting the cost of housing out of reach for many young families and individuals looking to get a start to their lives.

The average house price for a single detached home in Toronto is now \$1.8 million. It is \$2.9 million in Vancouver. In Fergus and Elora, two small towns in the rural area of my riding of Wellington—Halton Hills, the typical house price has trebled in the last five years. It has gone from approximately \$325,000 in 2015 to \$950,000 in 2020.

These prices are way, way above the long-term average of three and a half times household income. Prices in many Canadian communities are now eight, nine and 10 times household income. We are an outlier among advanced economies of the OECD. In fact, our housing prices are some of the most expensive in the world.

As housing prices have skyrocketed, so too has household debt. Mortgage debt makes up the vast majority of household debt. Mortgage debt comprises two-thirds of overall household debt, and the remaining one-third of household debt is closely tied to real estate in facilities such as HELOCs and other forms of credit.

In 2016, the first full year the government was in office, household debt stood at \$1.9 trillion. Today, it is \$2.6 trillion, an increase of almost 40% and an annual compounded rate of increase of almost 6%, far ahead of the nominal rate of increase of our GDP. That amount of household debt is reflected in the fact that household debt as a percentage of household income has also increased since the government took office. It now stands at 173%.

The government has allowed this to happen. We have a housing crisis in this country, and it is because of the government's failure to properly oversee and regulate the banking system and its failure to properly manage fiscal policy.

The government has had plenty of warning about this problem. Before I get into who has warned the government about it, let me tell members one of the unintended consequences of these skyrocketing housing prices and skyrocketing levels of household indebtedness.

Small to medium-sized enterprises have found it difficult to get financing. Canada has low levels of business investment relative to many of our economic peers. This low level of business investment is one reason for our low productivity growth rates. This low productivity growth rate is of particular concern because it is the only long-run determinate of wealth and prosperity.

• (1230)

These two challenges, namely the challenge of skyrocketing household debt and the difficulty many small and medium-sized businesses have in getting financing to make investments in plant capital and equipment, are two sides of the same coin. The government needs to take a hard look at the macroeconomic policies it has put in place, which have made life less affordable for Canadian families, and the policies that are making it difficult for businesses to invest, grow and create jobs.

The government is ultimately responsible for the regulation of our banking sector through the Office of the Superintendent of Financial Institutions. It is also responsible for mortgage financing through the Canada Mortgage and Housing Corporation, tax expenditures, government programs and Finance Canada. It has allowed mortgage credit to grow at unsustainable levels. Its responsibility is to oversee mortgage credit through OSFI and CMHC.

The IMF has warned Canada repeatedly over the last number of years about its oversight of housing finance. In addition, the IMF found, through its studies, that government intervention in housing finance exacerbated house price swings and amplified mortgage credit growth in advanced economies in the years before the global financial crisis. Moreover, the IMF's studies also concluded that government participation did not provide a cushion against economic crises, and countries with greater government involvement in mortgage financing experienced deeper house price declines.

In a 2011 analysis, the IMF concluded, "rapid mortgage credit growth and strong house price increases go hand in hand." It added, "government participation in housing finance exacerbated house price swings and amplified mortgage credit growth during the run-up to the recent crisis, particularly in advanced economies." It concluded by saying, "Countries with more government involvement also experienced deeper house price declines."

*Business of Supply*

The officials at Finance Canada and CMHC have warned the government. For example, last year in September, officials at Finance Canada discussed forcing private mortgage insurers to tighten eligibility rules, but left CMHC to try to manage the risk in mortgage credit markets on its own. Evan Siddall, the CMHC CEO at the time, said, “We had that conversation and you’ll have to pose the question to [the government] as to why it didn’t happen.” In reference to the rejection of the tightening of the rules to reduce risks, he added, “The minister of finance could have done it.”

OSFI itself has warned about skyrocketing levels of mortgage credit and mortgage credit growth, but when it proposed higher mortgage stress test levels in 2018, otherwise known as the B-20 guideline, the Minister of Finance opposed the rule. In March of last year, when OSFI announced changes to capital requirements for Canada’s systemically important banks, the government did not ensure that additional liquidity, measured in the hundreds of billions of dollars, would not exacerbate the growth in mortgage credit. As a result, household debt, primarily mortgage credit, has jumped 4% in the last year, picking up sharply in the middle of last year, after the March 2020 changes that OSFI had introduced.

The Governor of the Bank of Canada, Tiff Macklem, warned earlier this year that Canadian households were taking on too much debt. In other words, the governor was warning the government that it is not using the tools it has at hand to properly regulate mortgage credit growth in this country.

Canadian families are finding it harder to make ends meet. They are being squeezed by the increasing cost of living and by the cost of housing. This is due to the government’s failure to properly oversee and regulate Canada’s banking sector and properly manage fiscal policy.

• (1235)

**Mr. Kevin Lamoureux (Parliamentary Secretary to the Leader of the Government in the House of Commons, Lib.):** Madam Speaker, my question is about the broader context of the motion that has been brought forward. Members of the Liberal caucus have been challenging the opposition to provide some detail as to where they believe they will get the minimum 15% from Canada’s land bank given that, in essence, our military, Environment Canada and Parks Canada have close to 90% of it.

Where did the Conservatives get their numbers? Did they pull them out of the sky? Is there any substantiation to justify the numbers they are talking about?

**Hon. Michael Chong:** Madam Speaker, we are proposing constructive solutions to the housing crisis we are facing. The government is not coming forward with anything constructive to deal with what is a real crisis.

The government has overseen a regulatory system in our financial sector that is putting households at risk, which is leading to skyrocketing housing prices, and it is also overseeing fiscal policies that have exacerbated the problem we see in the country today. We are proposing solutions to address this, and the government is not. What is the government going to do about this situation?

**Mr. Richard Cannings (South Okanagan—West Kootenay, NDP):** Madam Speaker, I welcome the opportunity to have a de-

bate in the House on the housing crisis in Canada, because that is what it is, certainly in my riding of South Okanagan—West Kootenay. The average income in my riding is \$30,000 and the median house price is \$900,000. It is one of the worst ratios in the country. This is affecting the labour market. People simply cannot afford to live there, so we are having a hard time finding workers.

We support parts of this motion. We support the ban on foreign investment and support the idea that governments should not be taxing people on their primary residences. However, there is not a single mention in here about affordable housing. The Conservatives are just talking about giving up federal lands for housing—

**The Assistant Deputy Speaker (Mrs. Alexandra Mendès):** The hon. member for Wellington—Halton Hills.

**Hon. Michael Chong:** Madam Speaker, quite simply, here is the problem: The government’s affordable housing measures are a drop in the bucket given the challenge that Canadian households are facing. Household debt in this country, largely made up of mortgage credit debt, has skyrocketed from about \$1.9 trillion the first year the government was in office to \$2.6 trillion in the most current year. That is a \$700-billion jump in household debt. The government can come forward with all the affordable housing programs it wants, but they are a drop in the bucket of the \$700 billion in additional mortgage debt and other forms of household credit debt that Canadian families have had to take on because of the government’s mismanagement of housing finance.

We are focused on the root causes of the problem rather than on using band-aids that will do little to deal with the housing crisis in this country.

• (1240)

[Translation]

**Mr. Denis Trudel (Longueuil—Saint-Hubert, BQ):** Madam Speaker, we are facing a housing crisis, and the market alone will not fix it. It has failed to do so thus far.

Groups involved in housing advocacy in Quebec, such as the Réseau québécois des OSBL d’habitation, FRAPRU, federations of housing co-operatives and even municipalities across Canada are unanimous. Somewhere in the process, the federal government must invest money to house the most vulnerable. The market alone will never do it.

If the Conservatives were in power, would my colleague agree that the government should invest 1% of its budget to house the most vulnerable in this country?

**Hon. Michael Chong:** Madam Speaker, I agree. We need more affordable housing in this country.

[English]

However, no matter how much money the government puts into affordable housing programs in this country, it is not going to address the underlying problem, which is our skyrocketing levels of household indebtedness and skyrocketing housing prices.

*Business of Supply*

Governors of the Bank of Canada only have one or two tools at their disposal to deal with monetary policy: the overnight rate and quantitative easing. The government has an immense number of tools available at its disposal. It has dozens and dozens of tools through finance regulation, CMHC and OSFI to get a handle on this problem, tools it is not using to deal with the underlying problem.

**Mr. Kevin Lamoureux (Parliamentary Secretary to the Leader of the Government in the House of Commons, Lib.):** Madam Speaker, I want to expand upon the question I posed to my colleague across the way. There are serious fundamental flaws with this motion. Over the years I have seen many opposition motions. When I look at this motion, I really do not know where it is coming from. I do not know what math the member for Carleton, who is likely one of the authors behind it, used.

I want to be very specific about clause (a), which reads, “review and consolidate all federal real estate and properties in Canada in order to make at least”, and I would underline this part, “at least 15% available for residential development”. The member who introduced the motion said there are 41 million hectares, so it would be 15% of that 41 million hectares. Basic math tells me that we are talking about over six million hectares.

**An hon. member:** That is ridiculous.

**Mr. Kevin Lamoureux:** The Conservative member says it is ridiculous. It is a Conservative motion. I agree it is ridiculous.

Let us think about it. Parks Canada has 35.7 million hectares, Environment Canada has 2.3 hectares and National Defence has 2.2 million hectares. If we add up those three, it equals 40 million hectares. The Conservatives are saying 15% of 41 million, so are they suggesting that we get rid of parklands? Yes, based on their own numbers, they are. I do not understand where the Conservatives are getting their numbers. When we read the motion, we see that this is just one example.

Most take housing very seriously. Some understand that the national government has a role to play. I have been a parliamentarian long enough to have witnessed Conservatives oppose any sort of investment in housing from a national government perspective. When I was first elected back in 1988 to the Manitoba legislature, I was given two titles: deputy whip and critic for housing. Provinces play a critical role in housing. Municipalities are creations of provincial laws passed in provincial legislatures. Municipal and provincial governments have predominantly played the lead role in housing in Canada.

I remember having a debate with NDP member of Parliament Bill Blaikie back in 1993, in which I said the national government needed to play a stronger role in housing, but Bill Blaikie argued that was not the case. I represent a riding in Winnipeg North where there has been a need for social housing for decades. It was marginally addressed in 15 years of a provincial NDP administration. Political parties of all stripes need to do a little reflection and come to the table about what can be done, but to say that this government has not been concerned about housing is so misleading.

We would have to go back generations, 50-plus years, to find a prime minister or government that has done more for housing at the national level. The opposition could not show, over the last 50 or 60

years, a prime minister who has committed more financial resources to support Canada's housing. That can be substantiated by real dollars and real commitments. It is easy for the NDP to click their heels and say it will build 500,000 homes.

● (1245)

I kind of miss Adam Vaughan. He had a way of expressing the degree in which the Liberal Party and this government understood the housing issue and the many ways in which we were tackling that problem.

However, I can tell members that it will take more than the federal government to resolve this issue. Yes, the federal government has a role to play. Since 2015, we have seen hundreds of millions to billions of dollars go to the first-ever national housing strategy, which was put in place by the Prime Minister, by this government, which is something no other opposition party in the last six years, or prior to that, argued for. There are plans out there, and there are real, tangible dollars being put forward and on the table. However, we recognize that we need to get partners. We have worked very hard at having provinces and municipalities do what they can and play the role they need to play.

We have a very proactive Minister of Housing, and he is out in the communities virtually every day. We thought of making him an honorary member of Parliament for Manitoba because of his interest in Manitoba and the presence he has had in the province of Manitoba. He genuinely cares for all regions of our country and understands the issues of housing, whether it is in Vancouver, Montreal, Halifax or the many rural municipalities out there.

We understand, whether it is the Prime Minister or the Minister of Finance, how important it is that we fight to have adequate homes for all Canadians where they can feel comfortable. We can provide that hope. This is something we are not only striving for, but that we can also cite examples of. However, when we talk about those examples, opposition members will say that we are patting ourselves on the back.

This government has likely accomplished more on housing than the previous Harper government. I do not know the actual number, but I think we are at or getting close to 100,000 homes or units in the last number of years under this administration. There are about 300,000 that the government has assisted with in some form of repair. There is also the ongoing support of tens of thousands of non-profit housing units, which is something the federal government continues to commit to and look at ways of expanding.

*Business of Supply*

I hear, especially from my New Democratic friends, talk about the importance of housing co-ops, and I agree. Housing co-ops are important, which is one of the reasons we were there, shortly after we got elected back in 2015, to support housing co-ops that were having great difficulty because of mortgages and related issues. We supported a number of housing co-ops, and the minister is very open to looking at how we can expand housing co-ops.

We want to talk about a resolution, and the NDP members are not too far off on this. They are talking about indigenous leaders coming forward to the table with indigenous housing plans. We have to appreciate indigenous people's housing needs and how we can support it.

However, there are many other types of housing programs. If we take a look at Canada's housing stock, we get a better appreciation. There is a need for us to make sure that we maintain that housing stock.

● (1250)

We came out with a program just last year called the Canada greener homes grant. It is \$5,000 for people to improve their homes. A few hundred thousand people could be eligible for that particular grant. That improves the quality of homes in our current housing stock, which does help out significantly. It is better for our environment. It creates jobs. It improves the housing stock.

I am a big fan of encouraging and promoting members in our communities to get engaged in housing co-ops. Housing co-ops and condominiums are great ways to get people engaged in ensuring they will be able to have ownership because there is a big difference between a tenant and someone who is a resident in a co-op. A resident in a co-op has a vested interest. It is his or her community in a very real way. It is a big difference from being a tenant, and I am a strong advocate of it, as I know many of my colleagues are.

We have organizations in our communities, and I want to give a special shout-out to Habitat for Humanity Canada, particularly here in my city of Winnipeg. Habitat for Humanity has done more than three levels of government for building new homes in our communities. It definitely has done a super fantastic job in Winnipeg North. Whether it is in Point Douglas, along Selkirk Avenue, in the Maples or everywhere in between, new homes have been popping up in Winnipeg North, and it is because of Habitat for Humanity. The work they do bring people together to ensure that people who would not normally have the ability to get a home do, in fact, become homeowners.

I have raised this organization as a model organization that government should get behind, and I am glad that the federal government today is providing some support. I would appeal to the current minister to continue that support. Habitat for Humanity is an organization that I believe has a very important role to play in dealing with the housing crisis we are in. The people who are involved in organizations like Habitat, because there are other organizations, also need to be taken into consideration.

We have resident groups, as an example, in our communities. We have advocates for people who are financially challenged. We have people who do not have homes. There are so many people who are out there. The idea of having that debate on the floor of the House

is far better than what is being proposed today, even though I am still allowed to talk about it, but that is not what we are actually voting on.

What we are voting on has significant flaws to it. I made reference to the land usage, and yes, we need to see more land and more homes. That is nothing new. We all know that, but it is not going to be the federal government releasing 41 million hectares and closing down our parks and so forth. The way we are going to see the number of homes that are needed being built is not by Ottawa opening the purse and building them all.

● (1255)

Ottawa needs to keep doing what it has been doing, coming to the table with substantial financial resources, working with the different organizations and levels of government, trying to develop a strategy that will see more homes being built in our communities. That is why the motion before us misses the mark.

The primary recommendations I would have put forward in a resolution dealing with housing in Canada would be all-encompassing. They would address the finances, but I do not believe there is a member in the House who can say that as a government we have not committed enough financial resources. If members attempt to do that, I would ask them to reflect on their own election platforms.

We are at the table. We want to work with the different stakeholders toward a resolution that encourages not only Ottawa, but provincial jurisdictions of all political stripes and municipalities of all different sizes to recognize that we have a national situation, from coast to coast to coast, with which Canadians want us to deal. We want to build the consensus. We want to see the different levels of government move forward on the file. We want to empower the many different stakeholders that have the ability to contribute.

The riding of Winnipeg North has a lot of things within it that could be carried throughout the country, such as the demographics and economic fabric of the community. In Amber Trails, for example, beautiful brand-new homes are being built, ranging from \$600,000 to \$700,000 or even more. More modest homes, around the \$300,000 range, are being built in Tyndall Park. Some of the older and more established homes with a great deal of character are in the traditional north end, ranging from \$150,000 to \$200,000 in the Point Douglas area. I could be out somewhat with my prices, but the point is that we need to take a holistic approach to dealing with housing in Canada.

For the first time in generations, the Prime Minister, the Minister of Housing and the Liberal caucus are committed to being at the table and making a difference when it comes to housing. We would appeal to all members of the House of Commons to get on board, to realize what actually is on the table and to start to work with the different levels of government. They can talk to their MLAs, city councillors, rural municipal reeves and mayors, and reach out to organizations like Habitat for Humanity and the many other non-profit social progressive-minded organizations and others to tap into how they might be able to contribute to a housing plan, a plan that the Prime Minister and all of us want to see.

People have a right to have a home. We need to continue talking about that and saying it. It is important we do that.

• (1300)

**Mr. Dan Albas (Central Okanagan—Similkameen—Nicola, CPC):** Madam Speaker, I want to debate with the member for Winnipeg North around one specific point. He is misrepresenting the motion before us.

In the previous election, we said that we would like to review “the extensive real estate portfolio of the federal government – the largest property owner in the country with over 37,000 buildings – and releasing at least 15 per cent for homes”, while improving the federal lands initiative.

The government has properties within places like Toronto, like Ottawa and even just across the bridge in Gatineau, Quebec. We are talking about taking existing structures that the federal government has and going to the provincial and the not-for-profit societies, saying that we have land that can be reconverted. They may be able to take the existing envelopes and translate them into apartments for people who need them.

Would the member agree that the federal government has these properties and its right place is to give those properties? Especially since we have so many people working from home now, this becomes more and more of an option.

**Mr. Kevin Lamoureux:** Madam Speaker, I am happy the member seems to be backing away from the Conservative idea of the 41 million hectares. He can read the speech of the Conservative member who brought that idea forward. I am happy to hear the Conservatives are retracting that. It makes sense.

With regard to his specific question, the federal lands initiative is already happening today. He can look at it. I am very proud of the fact that in south Winnipeg, what used to be Kapyong Barracks is being redeveloped for housing, an indigenous-led initiative.

We are very much aware of our current stock. That is why we established the federal lands initiative, to do exactly what—

**The Assistant Deputy Speaker (Mrs. Alexandra Mendès):** The hon. member for Repentigny.

[*Translation*]

**Ms. Monique Pauzé (Repentigny, BQ):** Madam Speaker, in his speech, my colleague from Winnipeg North spoke a lot about how much money the government has invested. In reality, most of this money has been invested on paper. We now know that many programs and initiatives are expected to spend just a small amount of

### *Business of Supply*

that money. This is not something the Bloc Québécois is saying; it is coming from the Parliamentary Budget Officer.

I encourage my colleague to urge his government to spend money and start large-scale construction of housing units.

• (1305)

[*English*]

**Mr. Kevin Lamoureux:** Madam Speaker, in my closing comments, I spoke of this. If members generally believe what they are saying, one of the most important things they can do is talk to their provincial counterparts, city councillors, mayors, rural reeves and so forth.

If we allocate the money and some of that money is tied to provincial and municipal participation and prioritization, that is partnerships. I suspect that not all of the money will be spent, but at least, for the first time in generations, we have a Prime Minister and a federal government saying we have a role to play. We are going to play that important role in dealing with housing in all regions of Canada.

**Ms. Jenny Kwan (Vancouver East, NDP):** Madam Speaker, the member waxed eloquently about how his government was doing such a great job in addressing the housing crisis. I wonder if the member knows that the Parliamentary Budget Officer, just prior to the election, indicated that under the Liberals' watch Canada lost over 180,000 units of social housing because the federal government did not provide the necessary subsidies or renew their operating agreements in time to save those units. We are losing more units than we actually are creating to ensure that people without houses have access to safe, secure, affordable housing.

Does the member even realize that?

**Mr. Kevin Lamoureux:** Madam Speaker, one thing I realized early in politics is that statistics can be easily manipulated. The member is trying to leave the impression that 150 or a thousand or so housing units that were being subsidized are no longer being subsidized. I would have to look into that a little more. Maybe she can provide that information for me. I would be more than happy to take a look at it.

One only needs to take a look at the national housing strategy. Never before, in the history of Canada, has such a dollar commitment been seen—

**The Assistant Deputy Speaker (Mrs. Alexandra Mendès):** The hon. member for Kitchener Centre.

**Mr. Mike Morrice (Kitchener Centre, GP):** Madam Speaker, on the topic of the national housing strategy, in 2019, the PBO identified that the same strategy reduced the amount of funding for those in core housing need.

I heard the member speak about 1993 in his speech. I am curious if he would like to share more about the need to invest in building new co-op housing. I heard him talk about supporting co-ops.

*Business of Supply*

Could the member reflect on the fact that he is in government and is in a position where he could influence the need to build new co-op housing?

**Mr. Kevin Lamoureux:** Madam Speaker, when I was with the Weston Village Residents' Association, one of the things we did was establish the Weston residents co-op. Very early after leaving the military, I understood and appreciated the true value of housing co-ops.

Shortly after coming to the government benches, we provided the assurances to many co-ops in Canada in regard to the mortgage issue that would have caused a great deal of relief for the future of co-ops. Many members within the Liberal caucus are very strong advocates for housing co-ops, because it is an excellent form of housing. We need to expand upon it.

**Hon. Michael Chong (Wellington—Halton Hills, CPC):** Madam Speaker, the motion calls on the government to look at freeing up 15% of federal real estate. The member opposite keeps talking about parks.

We are not referring to parks in our country, which all Canadians treasure and want to protect. We are talking about real estate like the federal government building at Front and Bay Street in downtown Toronto. It is a five-story building right next to Union Station, some of the most prime real estate in the country. It is across from the Royal Bank towers, which are 41 stories high. If that building was repurposed and redeveloped to allow for a condo to be built of some 40 or 50 stories, it would create additional supply in one of Canada's hottest real estate markets. That is the kind of real estate we are talking about in our motion and not our national park system.

• (1310)

**Mr. Kevin Lamoureux:** Madam Speaker, I am sensing some writer remorse over on the other side. If you do not like it and you want to keep the parks open, then my suggestion to you is to delete paragraph (a). While you are deleting paragraph (a), please—

**The Assistant Deputy Speaker (Mrs. Alexandra Mendès):** I will remind the hon. parliamentary secretary that I did not write anything.

**Mr. Kevin Lamoureux:** Madam Speaker, I should know better. My advice for the Conservative opposition members would be to delete paragraph (a) and then they do not have to worry about taking away parks from Canadians. While they are doing that, please delete paragraph (c) as well, because paragraph (c) says “commit to never introducing a capital gains tax on the sale of primary residences.” That is just a silly thing to say, because we have been saying that for a long time.

**Mr. Mark Gerretsen (Parliamentary Secretary to the Leader of the Government in the House of Commons (Senate), Lib.):** Madam Speaker, if the member for Central Okanagan—Similkameen—Nicola is curious about why we are talking about 41 million hectares of land, he should really go back and pay closer attention to the speech given by the member for Edmonton Riverbend. He is the one who started with this number earlier today.

I will go back to another comment from the member for Edmonton Riverbend. He accused me, in my previous role as a municipal politician, for not building enough affordable housing, as if to say it

should have been the responsibility of city councils across the country. Here is the interesting thing: When I was on city council, the Ontario provincial government was investing in affordable housing and housing more generally in Kingston and throughout the province. Who was not? Stephen Harper.

The member has been around for a while. Could he reflect on Stephen Harper's legacy as it relates to affordable housing?

**Mr. Kevin Lamoureux:** Madam Speaker, that is one of the reasons I was surprised to see the motion. I sat in opposition when Stephen Harper virtually ignored the housing issue. In my comments, I made reference to the fact that all levels of government have an important role to play when it comes to housing in Canada.

That is why I am very proud of the fact that for the first time in generations, we have a Prime Minister and a national government that recognizes that importance and has not only put the money on the table, but is working diligently with organizations and different levels of government to improve our housing stock and supply.

**Mr. Pat Kelly (Calgary Rocky Ridge, CPC):** Madam Speaker, I will be sharing my time with the member for Carleton.

I am pleased to rise in debate today to talk about today's opposition motion. Prior to 2015, I was in the mortgage brokerage industry. I spent 21 years in the residential mortgage brokerage business, so access to housing, home ownership and mortgage credit are issues that have been dear to me for many years and are also dear to my constituents.

There is clearly a crisis in affordable housing in Canada, and in affordability generally in Canada. The average home price is now a staggering \$717,000. Even if we subtract Vancouver and Toronto, the average is still \$561,000 across Canada. People have generally thought for a long time this is a peculiarity to two markets, maybe even especially Vancouver, but it is no longer the case. Affordability is a crisis across Canada.

The average weekly wage is just over \$1,000, so if the average worker saved 10% of their wages, it would take them almost 10 years just to save enough for the minimum down payment on the average house in Canada. Even that would be futile, though, because at that income level they would not come even close to qualifying for the nearly \$700,000 in mortgage debt they would need to take on to buy this average house with this average weekly wage.

Generations of Canadians have achieved a degree of financial security and independence through home ownership by buying a home probably around the time of family formation and then paying it off over a generation. Today's young people have simply given up on that dream. As with all questions of people's unlimited wants and needs, this really is a question of supply and demand.

*Business of Supply*

Canada's increasing population has always fuelled demand for housing, but since this pandemic, Canadian interest rates have been artificially suppressed through quantitative easing, wherein the Bank of Canada buys the Canadian government's debt in order to facilitate the staggering national deficits triggering inflation. This inflation is nowhere more obvious than in our housing market, where we have seen an extraordinary increase in the price of real estate amid an economic contraction.

Let us think about that. During a once-in-a-lifetime economic contraction, housing prices actually went up. During a crisis where there is a massive collapse in economic activity, real estate has gone up. The effect of interest rates being artificially suppressed has clearly added to the demand for housing while doing nothing to address supply.

What about housing supply? A recent report says that Canada lacks 1.8 million homes; that is the deficit in housing supply. Developers have complained about delays in bringing new land under development. Regulation and red tape from all three levels of government cause delay and uncertainty that restrict development. These issues are not new, and we were approaching crisis levels long before COVID.

The government now takes enormous credit for its national housing strategy, which includes its signature program first announced just before the 2019 election: the first-time homebuyer incentive. I want to talk about this program, because as recently as during these past two weeks, the beginning of this Parliament, the Prime Minister has cited this program in question period in response to questions from the opposition about inflation and housing affordability.

This program was designed to help first-time homebuyers struggling to access mortgage credit under the government's so-called stress test. The stress test was actually put in the first place to try to cool the housing market by restricting access to mortgages. When the government realized the people who were being punished the most by the stress test were first-time buyers in real estate markets other than Vancouver and Toronto, it announced this program and called it "transformational", claiming 100,000 Canadian families would achieve the dream of home ownership through the program.

• (1315)

Under this program, a would-be homebuyer must be an absolute top-tier borrower in terms of credit eligibility, employment and whatnot. They would have to have saved 5% down from their own resources, and they may apply to have the government supply another 5%, which would have the effect of very slightly reducing the amount that they need to borrow from the bank and therefore slightly reduce their monthly payment. The borrower can repay the government later, either when they sell the home or by paying out and discharging the government's interest in the property based on a future appraised value. This was the government's 2019 solution for access to home ownership.

This solution is to offer something to people who would have qualified anyway and would have had access to mortgage credit. By giving them the chance to have the government be an equity partner with them in their own home, when the homeowner eventually sells the property, the government gets half of the profit, but if the property goes down in value, the taxpayer shares in the loss.

This was the Liberals' solution to access home ownership before the 2019 election. They are still talking about it now as if this is somehow part of their solution to the current crisis that we are in. This program was launched just before the election, and it is now entering its third year. As of July, only 9,000 Canadians had accessed this program; this "transformational" program, they claimed.

Last night, during committee of the whole, I asked the Associate Minister of Finance for an up-to-date figure, because that 9,000 figure was from July. He had several, very capable Finance Department officials around the table, but he chose to ignore that question, and so the July number is the most up-to-date one we have. However, there is no question that this program has been a complete failure. It has not really addressed anything. It is hardly "transformational". The problem of affordability and home ownership being out of reach for so many Canadians has gotten much worse since this program was announced.

Today, Conservatives are proposing meaningful solutions that will actually address some of the limitations on housing supply while assuring existing homeowners and prospective homeowners that owning a principal residence, we believe and the House affirms, is an important foundation for stable families and communities, and that the government will not tax the primary residences upon sale.

The Conservatives are proposing that the federal government review and consolidate federal real estate properties and make 15% available for residential development. We heard today that the federal government owns tens of thousands of buildings. These buildings are in various states of repair or disrepair, with wildly varying degrees of functionality or obsolescence. Many of these buildings may not be worthwhile and may not be in the public interest for the Crown to continue to hold them. Commercial buildings have a life cycle, and the highest and best use for land varies over time. We ask the government to take a serious look at whether it is in the public interest to continue to own many of these properties. With large amounts of land and thousands of buildings, surely there are some that the federal government can use to add to the supply of housing to do something to arrest this out-of-control, continuing inflation in real estate.

Another factor limiting the supply of homes is the existence of unoccupied homes in Canada. Conservatives are proposing to prevent foreign investors from parking their money in Canada as a place to sit money in a vacant property. For many years now, it has been widely known that Canada's real estate market has been a prime destination for wealthy foreigners to, at best, take advantage of Canada's relative stability and rule of law as a hedge on their foreign wealth or, at worst, use as a haven for money laundering among the world's kleptocrats. It is time for meaningful action. No foreign national should be permitted to buy a home in Canada just to have it sit vacant while Canadian families give up the dream of ownership.

*Business of Supply*

To conclude, I will add that the Liberals have sent out mixed signals on the issue of taxing capital gains. In a recent interview with a former CEO of CMHC, he talked about and affirmed his support for such a tax. We know that Adam Vaughan, who was this government's principal spokesman on housing issues, favoured such a tax. We also know that this government will eventually have to reckon with the debt and deficits that have accumulated, and were accumulating long before the COVID crisis. Its instincts will always be to pass on these costs in new taxes.

• (1320)

**Mr. Mark Gerretsen (Parliamentary Secretary to the Leader of the Government in the House of Commons (Senate), Lib.):** Madam Speaker, it is fascinating to see how this day is going. We started off with Conservatives talking about 41 million hectares of land in the first few speeches and now, suddenly, since holes have been blown into that argument, somebody back there is scratching out “41 million hectares” in the speeches and writing “thousands of government buildings that exist”.

We have heard it already said in this House, and the member put forward what I think is a good idea, that we should declare surplus land available for various purposes, but it already exists. As we heard the parliamentary secretary say earlier, it already exists in the form of a land bank through the federal lands initiative.

Can the member comment on why Conservative speeches in the House have suddenly adopted this tone of making thousands of buildings available when this already exists?

**Mr. Pat Kelly:** Madam Speaker, is the member asserting that the Liberals are successfully managing, as I think I heard in the speech by the member for Edmonton Riverbend, 37,000 buildings, that they have succeeded in ensuring that buildings that have reached the end of their life cycle, that are no longer functional for their intended purposes, meet the best use of land and that they are succeeding in transitioning these lands for private development? Is that his assertion? I would suggest that he vote in favour of this motion and commit to 15%.

[Translation]

**Ms. Monique Pauzé (Repentigny, BQ):** Madam Speaker, the motion itself does not mention social housing, but it implies that the ultimate objective is to increase the number of available housing units, which are currently lacking.

Could my colleague clarify whether the official opposition's motion includes social housing?

[English]

**Mr. Pat Kelly:** Madam Speaker, when a motion is put forward, it is always tough when we talk about all the things it could have said in addition to the things that it actually says.

The member is correct in terms of drawing attention to many of the deficiencies of the government on housing. This motion and my remarks on this motion primarily address the failure of supply and the role that the federal government can play in increasing the supply of real estate available for development and for sale for Canadians to buy.

• (1325)

**Mr. Richard Cannings (South Okanagan—West Kootenay, NDP):** Madam Speaker, my colleague said he had a background in real estate. The Conservatives refused to accept the NDP amendment to this motion that specifically asked for non-market housing, for affordable housing. As an example, another Conservative just brought up an example of a building we could use in downtown Toronto, right across from Union Station. I am wondering if the member could opine on what a condo in such a building would cost.

**Mr. Pat Kelly:** Madam Speaker, a new development in that particular location would add to the overall supply and put a damper on the endless increase in demand. The condo building that the member for Wellington—Halton Hills spoke about would add to the supply throughout the market and would have a positive effect on affordability. This is the problem. Demand is being fuelled in part by the government's deficits, which are being facilitated through quantitative easing. We need to get past that. We need to increase supply and quit pouring gasoline on demand.

**Mr. Matt Jeneroux (Edmonton Riverbend, CPC):** Madam Speaker, I often watch House proceedings on TV or come into the chamber and I feel sorry for the member for Kingston and the Islands. Today again he tied himself directly to the Kathleen Wynne government. I would ask the Prime Minister to please throw him a bone and help him. He is sitting on the backbenches and continues to heckle.

What I want to address is something that the member for Winnipeg North mentioned about the motion, which was to remove clause (c), the piece on a capital gains tax. I have not heard the member for Vancouver Granville speak yet today. I wonder what he thinks of that.

**The Assistant Deputy Speaker (Mrs. Alexandra Mendès):** A very brief answer from the hon. member for Calgary Rocky Ridge.

**Mr. Pat Kelly:** Madam Speaker, it sounded like there were some questions for a few other members there. Regarding the third part of the motion, there was an interesting response from the member for Winnipeg North. It seems that the—

**The Assistant Deputy Speaker (Mrs. Alexandra Mendès):** We will have to leave it at that.

Resuming debate, the hon. member for Carleton.

**Hon. Pierre Poilievre (Carleton, CPC):** Madam Speaker, why? That is the most basic question anyone asks when something strange happens anywhere in nature. Why is it that a family in Riverside South, a suburban community 25 minutes from here, has been bid out on seeking a house eight times, most recently watching one normal middle-class house go \$400,000 over the asking price, from \$800,000 to \$1.2 million? Why? Why have housing prices gone up 32% in a period of just a year and a half, while the economy has actually shrunk?



*Business of Supply*

Why are housing prices going up while wages in real, inflation-adjusted terms are going down? Why is this incredible bubble filling with air? Let us go through the reasons that we have been given for the recent housing bubble. Some people blame house prices in Canada wrongly on immigration. We know that cannot be true, because throughout COVID there was almost no immigration, yet house prices went up. The normal flow of roughly 300,000 newcomers seeking houses nearly came to a grinding halt. Immigration cannot explain the ballooning house prices.

Some have blamed inflation in general on supply chain problems, but of course land does not have supply chains. It is already right beneath our feet. We do not import land on a ship. It is not stuck at a port. It was put here by billions of years of geological development. We cannot blame foreign supply chains for the booming price of housing.

Nor can we blame it on global factors, because housing inflation here has been far worse than in any other nation, with the exception of New Zealand. According to Bloomberg, Canada has the second most inflated housing bubble. Similarly, The Economist magazine has named Canada along with New Zealand and Australia as the countries it thinks might experience a massive crash on the scale of the 2008 crisis in the United States of America. If this was a global problem, we would not be suffering a much bigger bubble than the rest of the globe.

Some trendy commentators have said it is just that Canadians' preferences have changed. Because of all of the cabin fever that came with lockdowns, people want to live in the countryside and have more space; therefore, they are paying more for real estate. If that were true, we could verify it simply by seeing a drop in housing prices for inner-city condos. If people were all unloading those condos to go and live in the countryside, we would see the prices of urban condos drop. In fact, they too are up 15%.

Finally, and more plausibly, some people have pointed to the fact that it is very hard to build anything here in Canada. That is true, and that is one of the long-term structural reasons why we have inordinately high real estate prices in Canada. We all are aware of the incompetent municipal and provincial governments that drive up housing prices with their bureaucracies, and the rich urban snobs who like to prevent people from living in their neighbourhoods by lobbying city councillors to prevent development.

That is all true, but it does not explain the rocketing prices that began in the spring of 2020 because, of course, snob-zoning and incompetent bureaucracies are nothing new. They did not appear in Canada. We did not suddenly have an airdrop of one million inner-city snobs on Canada when COVID hit. They have long been here with the bureaucracies backing them up, blocking us from building housing for other communities for a very long time.

That is nothing new, so what is new? Why all of a sudden, when the economy fell off a cliff, did the price of housing suddenly rocket? If we look more microscopically at the data, we will see that in March and April of 2020, house prices actually started to drop. We forget that now. It was just as our number one housing agency predicted.

• (1330)

CMHC said that house prices would drop 10% to 14%, and then suddenly there was a change of direction. Prices went up and up, until they were far out of reach for everyday, ordinary working-class people. What happened in the spring of 2020 that would cause this inexplicable phenomenon to begin? The answer is that in late March, and running through until about a month ago, the government had the central bank pump \$400 billion into the financial markets in order to make it cheaper for the feds to run deficits. The thinking was that if the central bank printed cash to buy bonds, it would drive down interest rates enough for the Government of Canada to be able to run consequence-free deficits, at least in the short term. The problem is that much of that money overflowed into the mortgage market. Just this week, we found out that mortgage borrowing totalled \$193 billion in that period of time.

That is almost a quarter of a trillion dollars of mortgage lending, and what do we know? When the financial and mortgage markets are flooded with cash, that cash goes out and bids up the price of houses. In fact, the multiplication effect of a dollar inserted into the housing and financial system is really powerful. To simplify, let us say that we have 10 houses in a given country and each is worth \$100. The total market value of all those 10 houses is \$1,000. If one person manages to get some of that money from the central bank and bids up the price to \$200 for one of those 10 houses, that house then has a market value of \$200. What happens to the entire street? That entire street's market value now doubles, so \$100 of extra purchasing power adds \$1,000 of market price. This is the incredible multiplication power that leads to housing bubbles. That \$400 billion led to \$200 billion of new housing demand, which led to many more multiple increases in market value.

What happens with that? People then go out and borrow against their new home equity. They have unrealized gains in their homes that they use to collateralize more debt to buy more assets, which further inflates asset bubbles. We have seen a massive increase in the market price of assets across the economy since this experiment with central bank money printing began.

Here is the problem. What goes up can come crashing down. People are basing their economic decisions on assets that are floating on top of a bubble. When that bubble bursts, all of those assets, and the people who rely on them, come crashing down. In the meantime, the poor and the working class can no longer afford to purchase those assets. Thus, we see a massive expansion in the gap between the rich and the poor.

*Business of Supply*

Trickle-down economics has never worked. Giving money to large financial institutions and expecting it to reach the working-class people at the bottom is a figment of the government's imagination. The people who do the work will pay the price in the crash, but get none of the benefit during the bubble. The answer is to stop printing money, free up more land and start building housing. We need to incentivize our municipalities to clean away the red tape and create work for our carpenters, framers and other tradespeople. We need to open up more land to supply our young people with homes and restore the great Canadian dream of having a place to live and a roof over one's head in a country that is a meritocracy, not an aristocracy.

• (1335)

**Mr. Mark Gerretsen (Parliamentary Secretary to the Leader of the Government in the House of Commons (Senate), Lib.):** Madam Speaker, we have now seen this Conservative member come back to talking about land to build again. That is not the narrative that we have heard. More members are clapping again, which is good.

Here is what we know. This motion is asking for 15% of the federal 41 million hectares of land to become available for redevelopment, as this member would like, yet we know 97% of that land is tied up in Parks Canada, National Defence and Environment Canada.

Can the member just let us know what, within Parks Canada, the Conservative Party is looking to divest in order to build what he is speaking of?

**Hon. Pierre Poilievre:** Madam Speaker, I wonder if we might have a messenger service here that I could use to deliver the member the actual motion. I would ask him not to be shy and to come on over. I will read it for him right here.

Come back. Do not run away. Come on now, I am going to help you read the motion.

**The Assistant Deputy Speaker (Mrs. Alexandra Mendès):** Do the hon. members know and realize that they have to speak through the Chair? This is not a theatre. The hon. member speaks through the Chair.

**Hon. Pierre Poilievre:** I am sorry, Madam Speaker, I was just trying to help. Come on. He was having trouble making sense of the motion, so I was going to read it for him, right before him. It says here:

review and consolidate all federal real estate and properties in Canada in order to make at least 15% available for residential development;

It is not the Parks Canada land. Parks Canada land does not have buildings. The motion says, "federal real estate and properties". That member should—

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

• (1340)

**The Assistant Deputy Speaker (Mrs. Alexandra Mendès):** I remind the hon. members this is not a conversation. Thank you.

**Hon. Pierre Poilievre:** There could be a little less conversation and a little more action please, as Elvis would say, Madam Speaker.

**Mr. Dan Albas:** Madam Speaker, on a point of order, during the previous engagement we had a member walking around the chamber without a mask on. I would just like us all to be mindful of each other by wearing masks in the House.

**The Assistant Deputy Speaker (Mrs. Alexandra Mendès):** The point is well taken. Yes, I remind all members to wear their masks when they are not speaking.

The hon. member for Vancouver East.

**Ms. Jenny Kwan (Vancouver East, NDP):** Madam Speaker, I hope that the two members had some fun with their theatrics.

The reality, of course, is that there are a great many people across the country who need safe, secure, affordable housing: people who right now, at this moment, are homeless in the snow in the dead of winter.

I noted that, in this motion from the Conservatives, there was no mention whatsoever of the need for an urban, rural and northern "for indigenous, by indigenous" housing strategy. Indigenous people are overrepresented in the homeless population. They are 11 times more likely to use a shelter than non-indigenous people.

Do the Conservatives not care about indigenous people's need for housing? Why—

**The Assistant Deputy Speaker (Mrs. Alexandra Mendès):** The hon. member for Carleton.

**Hon. Pierre Poilievre:** Madam Speaker, not only do we care about it, but we are the only party that has a solution to it. The approach of the NDP, the Liberals and the Bloc is all the same: more big, fat government programs in Ottawa that do nothing for first nations people on the ground.

Our approach, if I could continue, is that we believe in empowering local first nations to give their people the opportunity to have title over their own properties. That is the fundamental problem. People cannot get mortgages if they cannot own property. If they cannot get mortgages, then they cannot develop home equity and they cannot get a credit history or collateral or participate in the modern economy. That is what we—

**The Assistant Deputy Speaker (Mrs. Alexandra Mendès):** Questions and comments, the hon. parliamentary secretary.

**Mr. Kevin Lamoureux (Parliamentary Secretary to the Leader of the Government in the House of Commons, Lib.):** Madam Speaker, it is interesting to see the Conservatives backtrack somewhat on this motion, and I have read the motion. The person who introduced the motion made it very clearly about 41 million hectares and at least 15% of that. We cannot have it both ways. We cannot have the critic stand up and introduce it, and then farther down the speaking line have the finance critic say that he did not know what he was talking about.

Let us be clear. Does the Conservative Party realize that it made a mistake, and that maybe it should amend its resolution so it reflects what the member for Carleton is saying and not what their critic said at the beginning?

**Hon. Pierre Poilievre:** Madam Speaker, it says it right here in the platform: “Review the extensive real estate portfolio of the federal government—the largest property owner in the country with over 37,000 buildings—and release at least 15% for housing, while improving the Federal Lands Initiative.”

There are 37,000 buildings that are underutilized, and with an increased tendency to work from home, more of that space will be freed up for—

**The Assistant Deputy Speaker (Mrs. Alexandra Mendès):** The parliamentary secretary is rising on a point of order.

**Mr. Kevin Lamoureux:** Madam Speaker, the member is intentionally misleading the House. Members are not allowed to intentionally mislead the House. He said that he is reading the motion, when he is in fact reading a platform.

**Hon. Pierre Poilievre:** Madam Speaker, there are 37,000 buildings and many of them are empty. Increasingly, people are working from home. We are paying to heat those buildings and occupy that space. Meanwhile, we cannot house our people. Let us free them up to housing.

**Hon. Bardish Chagger (Waterloo, Lib.):** Madam Speaker, I will be splitting my time with the hon. member for Sackville—Preston—Chezzetcook.

I rise today for the first time in debate in the 44th Parliament, and I would like to thank the good people of the riding of Waterloo for re-electing me and providing me the honour and privilege to represent the diversity of their voices, their perspectives and their experiences in this place—

• (1345)

**The Assistant Deputy Speaker (Mrs. Alexandra Mendès):** Order, please.

Could we keep order and allow the hon. member to give her speech in peace and quiet?

**Hon. Bardish Chagger:** Madam Speaker, I would like to also thank all the people, regardless of political stripe or affiliation, who volunteered, asked tough questions, worked so hard, contributed in numerous ways, and voted and participated in our country's democracy. I am proud to continue to serve as their member of Parliament.

I often say that, as much as the world needs more Canada, Canada needs more Waterloo. Last month I participated virtually in Waterloo Region's 20th National Housing Day celebration. The stories that were shared were tremendous. I agree that all Canadians deserve housing that is safe, affordable and enables them to raise healthy children and pursue opportunities to build better lives for themselves and their families, thereby benefiting our communities, our country and our economy.

As we have learned and experienced during the pandemic, home is a sanctuary, a place of safety and refuge. It should be, but that is not the case for everyone. COVID-19 has exposed the inequities

### *Business of Supply*

that exist in our society. The global health pandemic has impacted the whole world, all Canadians and disproportionately certain segments of our population and sectors of our economy. We know that by staying at home and keeping physically distanced, we have helped flatten the curve and reduce the spread of COVID-19 in our communities. Additionally, by getting vaccinated, we are further helping reduce the spread, even as new variants are discovered.

I want to appreciate those Canadians who have gotten vaccinated. I encourage those who have been waiting to raise their concerns with professionals and to do their part to protect their friends, their families and their neighbours. For me, getting vaccinated was personal. My father, who was my backbone, had a massive heart attack in October 2020. Our pharmacist, who has since passed away and whom we miss, and my father's family doctor told him to go to the hospital, and my mom got him there.

I will forever be grateful to the on-call emergency doctor who called in the heart specialist. They had to revive my dad, and the damage that has been done to his heart cannot be undone. Therefore, I will do whatever I need to keep my dad, my family and my loved ones safe. If I may, I wanted to share my heartfelt appreciation for the amazing and hard-working health professionals at St. Mary's General Hospital in Kitchener for saving my dad.

Clearly, I digress. Let us get back to housing.

This is something that comes up very often, especially in the Waterloo area. Just this past November 22, Waterloo Region had its 20th National Housing Day celebration. I commend the numerous housing advocates and housing champions, and I congratulate the award recipients. So many of the people who attended the event, and even some angels who I believe were watching from above, have helped inform our government's housing plan.

Our government's national housing strategy, the first national housing strategy in Canada, is a 10-year, \$72-plus-billion plan. It will give more Canadians a place to call home, while ensuring that Canadians across the country can access affordable housing that meets their needs. We also launched Reaching Home, Canada's homelessness strategy, which supports the goals of the national housing strategy. The Government of Canada's homelessness programming now represents a \$3.1-billion investment over 10 years.

*Business of Supply*

Reaching Home is a community-based program aimed at supporting local efforts to prevent and eliminate homelessness by streamlining access to housing and supports for people experiencing or at risk of homelessness. This outcomes-based approach not only keeps decision-making at the local level, but also gives communities greater flexibility to address their local priorities, including investing in homelessness prevention and programming designed to meet the needs of underserved or under-represented communities. These include women and children fleeing domestic violence, seniors, youth, indigenous people, people with disabilities, people experiencing mental health and substance-use issues, veterans, LGBTQ2 individuals, racialized and Black Canadians, and recent immigrants or refugees.

While homelessness is often more visible in larger urban centres, it is an issue for rural communities and communities like Waterloo Region. Our government has made it a priority to design programs and supports that meet the needs of smaller communities. As an example, the rapid housing initiative invested approximately \$2.5 billion to help address the urgent housing needs of vulnerable Canadians by including the construction of modular housing, as well as the acquisition of land and the conversion of existing buildings to affordable housing.

● (1350)

The rapid housing initiative, through the national housing strategy, is investing in Waterloo Region, building units that will provide supports for some of the most vulnerable in our community. We know the pandemic has placed significant new funding pressures on homeless-serving sectors in Canada, which, like all sectors, have had to transform how their services are delivered in order to prevent outbreaks, especially among those who are at heightened risk of contracting or transmitting COVID-19 due to underlying health conditions or reduced opportunities to self-isolate.

That is why our government has invested an additional \$400 million under Reaching Home, and to support the homeless-serving sector in its efforts to reduce the transmission and impacts of COVID-19, and to support communities to implement more permanent housing solutions.

As a government and as members of Parliament, we have been listening and engaging. That is why we knew we had to adapt our program in these extraordinary times. In addition to these investments, the program's directives were updated to provide increased flexibility to communities for investing federal funds to support their local responses to COVID-19. However, we did not stop there. As part of budget 2021, our government proposed a number of additional key investments to make sure no one in Canada is without a place to call home.

This includes an additional investment of \$567 million under Reaching Home, because this program is making a positive difference and it works. We also provided \$45 million for a pilot program aimed at reducing veteran homelessness, and allocated \$480 million to address indigenous homelessness needs in urban, rural and northern areas. This includes investments of \$157 million for distinctions-based priorities with first nations, Inuit and Métis partners, as well as with indigenous governments.

Addressing homelessness and housing issues means we need ongoing collaboration. We will continue to work with our provincial and territorial partners, and hopefully all members in this House, to get the job done. Unfortunately, in the province of Ontario, the provincial Conservative government has been silent on two key issues that would help with the rising cost of living: housing and child care.

I want to compare that with our government's priorities, and I will quote from the recent Speech from the Throne. It states:

[W]e must keep tackling the rising cost of living. To do that, the Government's plan includes two major priorities: housing and child care.

Whether it is building more units per year, increasing affordable housing, or ending chronic homelessness, the Government is committed to working with its partners to get real results.

The Speech from the Throne goes on to say the following:

The Government will continue working with the remaining two provinces to finalize agreements that will deliver \$10-a-day child care for families who so badly need it. Investing in affordable child care—just like housing—is not just good for families. It helps grow the entire economy.

One of those two provinces is Ontario. All to say, the Conservatives talk a lot when they are in opposition, but when they are in government, their actions speak louder than their words. The Conservative cuts that have been made on the backs of Canadians have been exposed in this pandemic.

Our government, from day one, has remained focused on Canadians and the most vulnerable. When we lowered taxes on the middle class and raised them on the wealthiest 1% of Canadians, Conservatives voted against it. When we gave the tax-free Canada child benefit to families with children, who needed it the most, by asking the wealthiest families not to take it, Conservatives voted against it. Every time we have invested in the national housing strategy, Conservatives have voted against it. The Conservatives know very well that our government will not tax primary residences, yet again, in their opposition motion, they repeat this false narrative.

It has been such a challenging time for too many people, but the Conservatives add to the uncertainty. This pandemic has demonstrated some of the best of humankind and, clearly, some of the worst. Everyone deserves a safe and affordable place to call home, and our government will continue to work toward a long-term shared vision to do just that.

**Mr. Marty Morantz (Charleswood—St. James—Assiniboia—Headingley, CPC):** Madam Speaker, the member opposite and her colleagues love to brag about their housing program. However, on August 10, four days before the call of the unnecessary election, the Parliamentary Budget Officer himself, Mr. Giroux, in his report entitled “Federal Program Spending on Housing Affordability in 2021” commented on the federal government's program. He said the program is having a limited impact.

Why is the Parliamentary Budget Officer calling this program such a failure, when the Liberals love to brag about it so much?

• (1355)

**Hon. Bardish Chagger:** Madam Speaker, I am not sure if the member heard my entire speech. Clearly there is a lot more work to do, and we would like to do that with different levels of government and with all members of Parliament. It is important that we make a collective effort in ensuring that every Canadian has a place to call home.

The national housing strategy has massive investments within it, but we have never been able to gain the support of Conservatives. In 2015, homelessness was never mentioned in the Conservative platform. The last election gave them an opportunity to mention homelessness two times in their platform.

It is important that we actually consider people who do not have a safe and affordable place to call home. They matter, and we are going to keep fighting for them.

[Translation]

**Mrs. Caroline Desbiens (Beauport—Côte-de-Beaupré—Île d'Orléans—Charlevoix, BQ):** Madam Speaker, obviously, they talk about investments and money, but nothing concrete ever comes from it.

The Bloc Québécois is proposing that 1% of the federal budget be invested permanently in very affordable social housing. This would allow for the kind of predictability I think is needed to turn a large amount of money into something concrete.

What does my colleague think about our proposal?

[English]

**Hon. Bardish Chagger:** Madam Speaker, I thank the hon. member for her very thoughtful comment and suggestion. I think it is important that we have these kinds of respectful debates so that more Canadians have a safe and affordable place to call home. Something our government has been doing is making sure there are carve-outs when it comes to some of the most under-represented and underserved communities.

I have plenty of time to have this conversation, and the Minister of Housing has definitely demonstrated that his approach is a collective one. I think it is also important to note that all levels of government have a responsibility to be part of this narrative, and we need to see all levels of government doing their fair share.

**Ms. Jenny Kwan (Vancouver East, NDP):** Madam Speaker, the member talks as though she really supports affordable housing and those who are homeless, but given the trajectory in which we are going with the government's national affordable housing initiative, we are not going to meet the targets. We will not end homelessness.

### Statements by Members

Given that perspective, would the member support what the NDP is calling for, which is the injection of 500,000 units of social and co-operative housing, so that we can in fact address the housing crisis in this country?

**Hon. Bardish Chagger:** Mr. Speaker, it is important that we keep working together to hit and exceed targets, but I have noticed something about the NDP. They believe that if we cannot meet them, we should not try.

**Ms. Jenny Kwan:** Oh, oh!

**Hon. Bardish Chagger:** We are going to keep trying, we are going to keep investing and we are going to keep making a difference. The rapid housing initiative, as an example, is making a difference in my community in the region of Waterloo. I am really proud of investments like that.

The member can continue to yell at me, but we are going to keep putting in effort to make a difference. Every house makes a difference and we need to keep doing more.

\* \* \*

### AUDITOR GENERAL OF CANADA

**The Speaker:** I have the honour to lay upon the table the fall 2021 reports of the Auditor General of Canada.

[Translation]

Pursuant to Standing Order 108(3)(g), these reports are deemed permanently referred to the Standing Committee on Public Accounts.

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## STATEMENTS BY MEMBERS

[English]

### EVAN SMITH

**Mr. Sven Spengemann (Mississauga—Lakeshore, Lib.):** Mr. Speaker, I rise to honour and pay tribute to Evan Smith. Evan had a thirst for adventure and relished challenges that took him outside his comfort zone. He loved to explore the great outdoors and camped in every kind of weather, even at 20°C below zero. An experienced paddler, Evan canoed up the Missinaibi River to Moosonee, followed by a dip in James Bay.

He served our community through Scouts Canada. A talented musician and an award-winning student, Evan focused on math and the sciences, and it was no surprise to his family that he chose to study engineering at university. Above all, Evan left an indelible mark on everyone he met, with his humour, kindness and down-to-earth demeanour.

His parents Debbie and Adam, his sister Jasmine and brother Sean, his loved ones and friends and all others who knew him are devastated by his sudden and tragic death in September at age 18. Evan Smith will be remembered with full yet broken hearts.

*Statements by Members*

● (1400)

**VACCINE REQUIREMENTS FOR SERVICE WORKERS**

**Mrs. Rachael Thomas (Lethbridge, CPC):** Mr. Speaker, service workers in large part have carried this country through the pandemic. They have continued to care for the sick, to transport food and to provide vital services. They are heroes. Their work has been critical and they have rightfully been afforded allowances for essential travel throughout the pandemic.

It is confounding, then, that the Prime Minister is now going to impose vaccine requirements for these essential workers, starting on January 15. If these new requirements come into effect, 20% of Canadian truck drivers who run international routes have indicated that they will quit.

It is easy for some in the House to be dismissive of this, but it is important to pause and understand. We are already short 18,000 truck drivers in this country, which means we cannot afford to lose any more because of this arbitrary and harmful policy. More than two-thirds of goods going between Canada and the U.S. travel on roads and highways, so consider for a moment the ramifications: goods will not flow, shortages will result and prices will go up.

Let us exercise some common sense and not penalize our essential service workers. Let us stand up for our heroes.

\* \* \*

**FORMER MEMBER FOR BRAMALEA—GORE—MALTON**

**Ms. Ruby Sahota (Brampton North, Lib.):** Mr. Speaker, I am honoured to stand in the House today to share some wonderful news about my dear friend and former member of Parliament the Honourable Gurbax Malhi.

Mr. Malhi is an inspiration to both the Sikh community and Brampton. In 1993, Mr. Malhi was elected to serve as the Bramalea—Gore—Malton representative in Ottawa and continued to serve for an impressive 18 consecutive years. While he achieved great things through his role as parliamentary secretary to various ministers, he truly made waves and revolutionized politics by being the first-ever turban-wearing Sikh to be elected in Canada and in any legislature in the western world. In fact, Mr. Malhi's election led to the revocation of a Canadian law prohibiting members of Parliament from wearing any headgear, paving the way for future leaders to wear their religious garments freely and with pride.

I am thrilled to announce that Brampton named a park in honour of Mr. Malhi this week. I know that I speak on behalf of Brampton when I share my heartfelt congratulations. I thank Mr. Malhi for being a trailblazer and inspiring us all.

\* \* \*

[Translation]

**MICHÈLE LALONDE**

**Ms. Marie-Hélène Gaudreau (Laurentides—Labelle, BQ):** Mr. Speaker, on November 7, Michèle Lalonde was elected mayor of Sainte-Adèle in my riding of Laurentides—Labelle with 66% of the votes.

Before running for office, she was the president of the Sainte-Adèle chamber of commerce and tourism. During an interview with the Laurentians' Journal Accès, she spontaneously answered the following question: When was a time in your life when you showed courage? She very quickly and sincerely answered that it was when she decided to make a gender transition. I believe that this new mayor of Sainte-Adèle is very determined. She is a self-assured person who succeeds in her endeavours without being prejudiced.

For those struggling with their transition, she is a role model of success with her positive and constructive spirit. That is why I stand in solidarity with her.

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**ALFRED-PELLAN FOOD DRIVE**

**Mr. Angelo Iacono (Alfred-Pellan, Lib.):** Mr. Speaker, the holiday season is upon us and while some Canadians are preparing to celebrate, it is important to remember that, for some families, the need is even greater during this time.

Almost 200 families in my riding rely on food banks. This year, I am again bringing together the people from Jeunes Youth Laval to help me with the Alfred-Pellan food drive, which will brighten the holidays for the less fortunate.

Last year, more than 400 pounds of food were collected and the goal is to do even better in 2021.

● (1405)

[English]

Thanks to the generosity of businesses, farmers organizations and constituents, this initiative aims to make the season merry for everyone as much through the joy of giving as through the one of receiving.

[Translation]

Thank you to the young and not so young for their contribution. Thank you to the individuals and businesses who, through their solidarity, make this initiative so successful.

Merry Christmas to all.

\* \* \*

[English]

**CALGARY ROCKY RIDGE**

**Mr. Pat Kelly (Calgary Rocky Ridge, CPC):** Mr. Speaker, let me thank the amazing people of Calgary Rocky Ridge for returning me to represent them in the House of Commons. I wish to thank my incredible volunteer team, without whom I would not be here today.

I thank my parents Marnie and Duane Kelly, my loving wife Kimberley, her parents Brian and Melodie McBeath and our incredible daughters Katie, Jessica and Meaghan for their love and unwavering support. I also thank the other candidates, their teams and the poll workers for ensuring that voters had a choice in a free and open election.

I grew up in my riding and have in turn raised my own family in Calgary Rocky Ridge, where the people have elected me in opposition to the government. I will carefully consider all the measures proposed in this chamber, and if the government persists in the policies that have caused so much harm and disappointment in my riding since 2015, my constituents can count on me to oppose them with all the tools available to me in the House of Commons.

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#### BRAMPTON CENTRE

**Mr. Shafqat Ali (Brampton Centre, Lib.):** Mr. Speaker, I am truly humbled and honoured to rise for the first time as a member of Parliament in the House of Commons. I want to thank the residents of Brampton Centre for placing their trust in me, and also thank my team, who worked so hard in the election campaign.

After losing my father when I was 10 and being raised by a single mom, family means everything to me. I am grateful to my wife Nazia and our children Ibrahim, Mariam and Marwa for their continued support. I love them.

Like many newcomers, I moved to Canada with a dream to succeed in this beautiful land of opportunity. Going from a humble beginning to an immigrant success story, I understand what it means to make ends meet and the struggle of a single mother or a university student unable to pay their tuition fees. I will proudly be their strong voice in the House of Commons.

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#### CHILD CARE IN HAMILTON MOUNTAIN

**Ms. Lisa Hefner (Hamilton Mountain, Lib.):** Mr. Speaker, I am honoured to rise as the member of Parliament for Hamilton Mountain, and I am so grateful to my constituents for electing me to be their voice in the House.

Over and over I have heard that our government's plan for a national affordable child care system will be transformative for families in Hamilton Mountain. I recently visited one of the Umbrella Family and Child Centres in my riding with the Minister of Families, Children and Social Development.

[*Translation*]

The children I played with at the Templemead centre were completely engaged with their friends and teachers.

[*English*]

I spoke at length with the executive director, Darryl Hall, who told me that more child care spaces will ease his wait-list and that our plan will save families in Hamilton Mountain \$16,000 a year by 2026.

[*Translation*]

We are still waiting for an agreement with the Government of Ontario.

[*English*]

I am proud to fight for families in Hamilton Mountain and to be part of a government that is committed to delivering high-quality, inclusive and affordable child care in Ontario.

#### Statements by Members

**The Speaker:** Order. Before continuing, I want to remind everyone that statements are being made and we all want to hear what is being said. If members can keep the chatter down, it will make things that much more interesting.

The hon. member for Oxford.

\* \* \*

#### LOU MARSH TROPHY RECIPIENT

**Mr. Dave MacKenzie (Oxford, CPC):** Mr. Speaker, it is my honour and privilege to congratulate Damian Warner, Canada's 2021 recipient of the Lou Marsh Trophy, awarded to Canada's top athlete of the year.

Damian had the attention of not only all of Canada but the world when he broke the record for the decathlon at the Tokyo Olympics earlier this year. Damian became just the fourth person to ever break the 9,000-point mark and the first in the Olympics. Damian joins a long list of great Canadian athletes who have received this award, but to me, the greatest accomplishment of his is being an outstanding father to my first great-grandson.

Congratulations to Damian on his outstanding accomplishment.

\* \* \*

● (1410)

#### BIRTHDAY CONGRATULATIONS

**Mr. Taleeb Noormohamed (Vancouver Granville, Lib.):** Mr. Speaker, on December 13, Ismaili Muslims across Canada will celebrate the 85th birthday of His Highness Prince Karim Aga Khan.

An honorary Canadian citizen and honorary companion of the Order of Canada, the Aga Khan has worked tirelessly to reduce global poverty, advance gender equality and improve health care and education around the world.

His Highness continues to inspire the Ismaili community to serve our fellow citizens and improve the quality of life of those around us every day.

As Ismailis prepare to celebrate 50 years of settlement in Canada, they recall the partnership between Canada and the Aga Khan, which enabled our community to flee hardship in East Africa in the 1970s and make this our home. Since then, Ismailis from Syria, Iran, Bangladesh and Afghanistan have found refuge in Canada, embracing the Canadian values of pluralism, kindness and compassion.

As we mark the 85th birthday of His Highness Prince Karim Aga Khan, we express our gratitude for his leadership.

I ask all members of the House to join me in wishing Ismailis across Canada *Salgirah Khushali Mubarak*.

*Statements by Members***WINNIPEG BLUE BOMBERS**

**Mr. Marty Morantz (Charleswood—St. James—Assiniboia—Headingley, CPC):** Mr. Speaker, I rise in the House today to proudly congratulate the Winnipeg Blue Bombers on their nail-biting victory against the Saskatchewan Roughriders just this past weekend.

Our shared pride of the CFL never fails to bring excitement for the whole family to enjoy. Whether fans are watching from their television at home or cheering on the Bombers in person at the IG Field, this season has truly been one for the history books. No team scored more points than the Bombers. No team turned the ball over less or forced more giveaways than the Bombers. No team's margin of victory was consistently well into the double digits the way the Winnipeg Blue Bombers' was.

I call on every member of the House to join me in wishing the best of luck to our team in blue as it faces the Hamilton Tiger-Cats for the coveted Grey Cup this coming Sunday. I hope Hamilton is ready; I know we are.

Go, Bombers, go.

\* \* \*

**HAMILTON TIGER-CATS**

**Mr. Dan Muys (Flamborough—Glanbrook, CPC):** Mr. Speaker, I am going to have to disagree with my colleagues from Winnipeg and Manitoba, because, as a proud Hamilton area MP, it is a great pleasure to rise and recognize the champions of the CFL's east division, the Hamilton Tiger-Cats.

The Hamilton Tiger-Cats have had an incredible season. It has been one of sheer grit and determination, which is much like the story of Hamilton itself. It is a team that now looks to avenge the loss it suffered to the Bombers two years ago, except this time we are playing on home turf on Hamilton's own Tim Hortons Field.

Let me conclude with the famous chant that has been recited at many Tiger-Cat games over the years and will surely be recited again on Sunday as the Tiger-Cats go on to win the 108th Grey Cup: "Oskee wee wee! Oskee wa wa! Holy mackinaw! Tigers! Eat 'em raw!"

\* \* \*

[*Translation*]

**ORGANIZATIONS IN VAUDREUIL—SOULANGES**

**Mr. Peter Schiefke (Vaudreuil—Soulanges, Lib.):** Mr. Speaker, as the holiday season approaches, I rise today in the House to salute the organizations in my community of Vaudreuil—Soulanges and their support teams, who work tirelessly to help people in need. They include the Dorion Dream Center, L'Actuel in Vaudreuil-Dorion, Le Pont Bridging and Meals on Wheels in Hudson, Café de la Débrouille in Rigaud, La Source d'Entraide in Saint-Lazare, as well as Moisson Sud-Ouest and the meals on wheels program at the Centre communautaire des aînés Vaudreuil-Soulanges.

[*English*]

We are fortunate to have such a diverse group of dedicated and organized volunteers. On behalf of this entire community and the House, I express my sincere thanks and gratitude.

I also invite everyone in Vaudreuil—Soulanges to continue showing the solidarity that we have always shown and give to these organizations that have always given to us.

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**GOVERNMENT POLICIES**

**Mr. Alistair MacGregor (Cowichan—Malahat—Langford, NDP):** Mr. Speaker, Ottawa can be both a rewarding and frustrating place, rewarding because of the many opportunities we have in making a real difference in the lives of our constituents, but frustrating in that many of the proposed solutions can be too slow or ineffective in addressing the challenges our country is facing.

I believe that politics is an inherently optimistic enterprise and that we are all here to do right by our communities and make this country a better place. We have the ability, and the responsibility, to enact policies and transformational change that will leave a legacy for future generations. We owe it to them to be bold in confronting climate change, enacting health care reform, pursuing justice and reconciliation with indigenous people, and setting Canada on a path toward the renewable and clean energy economy of the future.

I am very thankful to the residents of Cowichan—Malahat—Langford for again putting their trust in me to be here to fight for this bold future.

Finally, allow me to wish you, Mr. Speaker, and all my colleagues in the House a happy and healthy holiday season.

\* \* \*

● (1415)

[*Translation*]

**100TH ANNIVERSARY OF THE SOCIETY OF SAINT VINCENT DE PAUL**

**Mr. Yves Perron (Berthier—Maskinongé, BQ):** Mr. Speaker, this year we are celebrating the 100th anniversary of the Sainte-Geneviève-de-Berthier conference of the Society of Saint Vincent de Paul, an institution that makes a huge difference in the lives of Berthier—Maskinongé residents.

I would like to highlight the contribution of the volunteers, who work together to keep this conference of the Society of Saint Vincent de Paul alive and well. They have big hearts and they give of their precious time to ensure that second-hand clothing, furniture and other household items can be sold at very low prices by providing financial support to the Groupe d'entraide En toute amitié thrift store and furniture counter.

Long before going green was the thing to do, these individuals made it a priority to encourage people to recycle and reduce waste. They also organize an annual food drive in Berthier and run Opération Bonne Mine, which helps families get their kids what they need for school and contributes to student retention.



I tip my hat to them, and I wish the Sainte-Geneviève-de-Berthier conference of the Society of Saint Vincent de Paul a very long life.

\* \* \*

[English]

#### TORONTO DISTRICT SCHOOL BOARD

**Ms. Melissa Lantsman (Thornhill, CPC):** Mr. Speaker, we are guaranteed freedom of expression in our Constitution except, apparently, according to the Toronto District School Board, when it comes to calling out anti-Semitism.

School board trustee Alexandra Lulka was unfairly singled out for her criticism of anti-Semitic resources distributed back in May. They promoted terrorism. Even a review concluded that the pamphlets were anti-Semitic and Lulka was right, but the TDSB's integrity commissioner went ahead and recommended censure of this trustee.

The threat of censuring trustee Lulka not only shows that the TDSB does not consider the lived experiences of Jews who have faced dangerous consequences of vile hate to be valid; it also shows that it does not care. It is extremely concerning given we have spent the last year facing a reckoning on racism.

Last night, TDSB trustees listened to reason and made the only justifiable decision. They voted no; it was 10 to seven. It should have been 17 to zero. This should have never been considered, and it is far from over in the largest taxpayer-funded school board in the country. I will never let it go unnoticed in the House.

\* \* \*

[Translation]

#### OSAMA ALSAMMAN

**Mr. Sameer Zuberi (Pierrefonds—Dollard, Lib.):** Mr. Speaker, I sincerely thank the voters and residents of Pierrefonds—Dollard, as well as my volunteers and family for helping to send me back to the House of Commons for the second time.

[English]

I would also like to take this opportunity to pay homage to a volunteer in my recent campaign.

Two weeks ago today, Osama Alsamman passed away at the age of 35 due to complications related to COVID. Osama was a refugee, who could not return to his native Syria because of the political situation there. He was someone who enthusiastically believed in the promise of Canada and, despite not yet being a citizen, actively contributed to our democracy.

Osama is survived by his wife Kawthar and two young children, Qusai and Sana, ages four and two. A fund is also being established to help his young family live in dignity.

His sudden passing reminds us how precious life is, and how short it is.

Osama Alsamman will be remembered and forever loved by his family and friends. May he rest in peace.

#### Oral Questions

### ORAL QUESTIONS

[English]

#### HOUSING

**Hon. Erin O'Toole (Leader of the Opposition, CPC):** Mr. Speaker, half of Canadians under 30 have given up on owning a home. The Canadian dream used to be that we worked hard so that our kids would have even more opportunity than we had. The Liberals have dashed that dream.

Inflation is driving up the price of everything. Even a quarter of those who can afford a home are vulnerable to next year's interest rate hikes.

Why is the finance minister still ignoring the inflation crisis hitting Canadian families?

• (1420)

**Hon. Ahmed Hussen (Minister of Housing and Diversity and Inclusion, Lib.):** Mr. Speaker, every Canadian deserves a safe and affordable place to call home. We are the party in government that brought federal leadership back into the housing issue by bringing in the national housing strategy. We have committed to implement a \$4 billion housing accelerator fund. We will also make enhancements to the first-time home buyer incentive and put in a rent-to-own program to turn more Canadian renters into homeowners.

\* \* \*

#### THE ECONOMY

**Hon. Erin O'Toole (Leader of the Opposition, CPC):** Mr. Speaker, national leadership? We are the only country with housing price increases approaching 40%, and food inflation is the worst it has been in more than a decade.

Next year, it is going to take another \$1,000 out of every family's budget. Canadians are going to be paying more for everything from bread to vegetables, and paycheques are already being squeezed to the breaking point.

My question is pretty simple. Maybe that minister will answer, after the Prime Minister and Deputy Prime Minister have refused.

Will the Liberals finally start thinking about monetary policy?

*Oral Questions*

**Hon. Randy Boissonnault (Minister of Tourism and Associate Minister of Finance, Lib.):** Mr. Speaker, the hon. member across the way knows that the Bank of Canada mandate is reviewed every five years. This process is under review right now. The bank has undertaken an extensive process on this matter. There have been good conversations between the government and the Bank of Canada. We look forward to announcing the results of that review in due course.

**Hon. Erin O'Toole (Leader of the Opposition, CPC):** "We are increasingly concerned that the BoC's mandate may change." Mr. Speaker, that is a quote from one of Canada's leading economists, and that quote should have all Canadians concerned.

Young Canadians are already priced out of owning a home. All Canadians are watching their grocery bills go up by thousands of dollars and the Liberals want the bank to stop trying to control inflation.

The Prime Minister was asked 11 times yesterday and did not answer, so maybe the new minister will answer. Why is the Liberal government going to abandon the Bank of Canada's 2% inflation target?

**Hon. Randy Boissonnault (Minister of Tourism and Associate Minister of Finance, Lib.):** Mr. Speaker, the hon. Leader of the Opposition knows that the Bank of Canada is independent and has been so since 1991, when monetary policy became its province. Canada was the second country in the world to establish an independent central bank, an approach that has become an international best practice.

Canadians quite rightly expect better from all MPs than taking cheap shots at the strong, independent institutions that have served the national interest with so much predictability and good service.

[Translation]

**Hon. Erin O'Toole (Leader of the Opposition, CPC):** Mr. Speaker, all parents want to give their children a better future. The dream of owning their first home is out of reach for young people because of this government. The Liberals want the Bank of Canada to stop controlling inflation.

Why is this government abandoning future generations?

**Hon. Ahmed Hussen (Minister of Housing and Diversity and Inclusion, Lib.):** Mr. Speaker, all Canadians deserve safe and affordable housing.

[English]

The fact of the matter is that we brought federal leadership back into the housing market. Every single time we proposed more investments in affordable housing, the leader of the official opposition and his party voted against that. When we brought in measures to bring in the first-time home buyer incentive, they voted against that. Even today, there is no mention of affordable housing in their motion. They have no credibility on this issue.

[Translation]

**Hon. Erin O'Toole (Leader of the Opposition, CPC):** Mr. Speaker, Canadians deserve the truth. Prices are going up but wages are stagnant. Inflation is out of control and the Liberals are doing nothing. Canadian families are watching their grocery bills

get higher every week. The necessities, like food, are not affordable.

Why are the Liberals doing away with the Bank of Canada's 2% inflation target?

**Hon. Randy Boissonnault (Minister of Tourism and Associate Minister of Finance, Lib.):** Mr. Speaker, we know that inflation and affordability are pressing issues for Canadians. We know these are global phenomena, not a problem unique to Canada.

I also want to reassure Canadians that we are working hard to make life more affordable for them. Our child care plan will reduce family expenses significantly. We are determined to make the cost of living more affordable.

\* \* \*

**HEALTH**

**Mr. Alain Therrien (La Prairie, BQ):** Mr. Speaker, travel is complicated. After going through 108 steps at the border, travellers have to go home and take a COVID-19 test. Then they have to quarantine and wait for the results.

Some time later, having heard nothing, they figure they do not have COVID-19. They go out in the community. They go to restaurants. The thing is, not getting results does not mean they do not have COVID-19, because the government loses 30% of those tests. That is what the Auditor General told us today: three of every 10 tests go missing or are incorrectly identified.

When will the government start doing its job properly?

• (1425)

**Hon. Jean-Yves Duclos (Minister of Health, Lib.):** Mr. Speaker, I thank my hon. colleague for giving me the opportunity to thank the Auditor General, who plays a fundamental role in our democracy and in Parliament.

We greatly appreciate her review, and we will take her perspective and her findings into consideration as we look forward and continue to protect the health and safety of Canadians.

**Mr. Alain Therrien (La Prairie, BQ):** Mr. Speaker, travellers go home, take a COVID-19 test, quarantine themselves and wait for the results. After a while, they do not hear back so they assume they do not have COVID-19. They start going out into the community and going to restaurants.

If they never hear from the officials, it may be because 14% of those who tested positive were never contacted by the feds. That means 1,156 people had COVID-19 and did not know they had it.

I do not even know whether to laugh or cry. How could such a fiasco have happened?

*Oral Questions*

**Hon. Jean-Yves Duclos (Minister of Health, Lib.):** Mr. Speaker, this gives me the opportunity to remind people that COVID-19 is not over. Just this morning, we heard the health minister in the United Kingdom say that in the next few weeks or months, there could be one million cases of the omicron variant in that country.

In Canada, that would be the equivalent of 20,000 cases of that variant a day, or twice as many as the highest case number we have seen in the past 20 months. That is why we must continue to work together to protect people's health here in Canada.

\* \* \*

[English]

**THE ECONOMY**

**Mr. Jagmeet Singh (Burnaby South, NDP):** Mr. Speaker, the parliamentary budget office released a report today, which makes it clear that inequality is growing in Canada. Wealth is being concentrated into fewer and fewer hands. Workers struggling on lower incomes have fewer and fewer resources, which is not surprising. We also know the pandemic has probably made all of this even worse. As we know, the pandemic has hurt working-class people and lower-income folks more than those at the top. All of this underlines how important it is to have a fair taxation system.

Why does the Prime Minister continue to refuse to tax the super wealthy and invest those resources into making life more affordable for people?

**Hon. Randy Boissonnault (Minister of Tourism and Associate Minister of Finance, Lib.):** Mr. Speaker, let us review some of the ways that we are making life more affordable for Canadians: A single mom with two kids will receive \$13,600 from the Canada child benefit; the average family in Saskatchewan will get almost \$1,000 back with the carbon price rebate; seniors received \$500 this month; we are increasing OAS by 10%; and a student will save more than \$3,000 with the changes we made to the program. That is how we are making life more affordable. We will continue to do so.

[Translation]

**Mr. Jagmeet Singh (Burnaby South, NDP):** Mr. Speaker, that does not change the reality. Inequality is growing in Canada.

The Parliamentary Budget Office released a report that clearly shows inequalities are on the rise. It is quite likely that the pandemic has aggravated the situation. This is another reminder of the importance of having fair and equitable taxation.

Why is the Prime Minister refusing to bring in taxation that would see the ultrarich pay their fair share, which could be invested in people and make their life more affordable?

[English]

**Hon. Randy Boissonnault (Minister of Tourism and Associate Minister of Finance, Lib.):** Mr. Speaker, our government is committed to asking those who prospered during the pandemic to help a little more for those who did not. Our platform committed to raise corporate income taxes on the largest, most profitable banks in the country, as well as insurance companies, and introduced a temporary Canada recovery dividend given that they have recovered faster. We are also working to implement a global minimum tax and 136 OECD/G20 inclusive framework members have signed up.

**Mr. Blake Richards (Banff—Airdrie, CPC):** Mr. Speaker, amidst the cost-of-living crisis, hard-working Albertans are being forced to pay more and more for everyday goods. For example, I recently heard from a constituent who had to pay more than \$77 for two small cuts of beef, and yet the Liberals seem content to just dismiss the real-life implications of this crisis as simply a global issue, but that does not help my constituents afford the products they need every day.

Does the government really believe it is just inflation or is the Prime Minister just incompetent?

**Hon. Randy Boissonnault (Minister of Tourism and Associate Minister of Finance, Lib.):** Mr. Speaker, since taking office, this government has been focused on making life more affordable for Canadians. The very first vote I took in this place was to lower taxes on the middle class. We introduced the Canada child benefit to support families. We increased supports for seniors, lowered small business taxes, increased the Canada workers benefit, increased the Canada student grant, all making life more affordable.

In Alberta, thanks to the child care deal, Albertans will save thousands of dollars a month starting January 1. Life will be more affordable for Canadians. That is what we will do.

● (1430)

**Mr. Blake Richards (Banff—Airdrie, CPC):** Mr. Speaker, in my riding, there are entire areas in towns like Canmore where people are living in their vehicles. What does the member say to them? There are parents who have to make a decision about whether they are going to give their kids lunches for school or a Christmas gift. What does he say to them? There are people who cannot afford gas to drive to work. There are seniors who cannot afford to eat. What does he say to them? They do not want to hear about all the money the government can spend. They want to hear about actual results and they are not seeing anything from the Liberal government.

What is the government going to do about it?

**Hon. Randy Boissonnault (Minister of Tourism and Associate Minister of Finance, Lib.):** Mr. Speaker, we saw through the campaign that the Conservative Party was skilled at flip-flopping, but I find it particularly shocking that the flip-flopping is happening during the same question period.

Do they actually want us to invest more or less in Canadians? Because if it is more, then they should vote for Bill C-2.

*Oral Questions**[Translation]*

**Mr. Richard Martel (Chicoutimi—Le Fjord, CPC):** Mr. Speaker, according to the latest Canada Food Price Report, families will pay nearly \$1,000 more to feed themselves in 2022. The cost of groceries is going up, the cost of gas is going up, the cost of energy is going up and rents are going up. In the meantime, Canadians' purchasing power is going down. Inflation is squeezing the majority of Quebec households. The Liberal government is responsible for this situation.

When will it take meaningful action to stop the impoverishment of Quebec families?

**Hon. Randy Boissonnault (Minister of Tourism and Associate Minister of Finance, Lib.):** Mr. Speaker, our government has always been committed to making life more affordable for Canadians across the country. I would like to provide a few examples: A single mother with two children will receive \$13,600 from the Canada child benefit; the average family in Saskatchewan will receive almost \$1,000 from the carbon price rebate; seniors received \$500 this summer; a student will save an additional \$3,000. These are a few examples of how we are making Canadians' lives more affordable.

**Mr. Richard Martel (Chicoutimi—Le Fjord, CPC):** Mr. Speaker, the Liberal government may well wash its hands of the situation. That is not exactly surprising, since it has never assumed its responsibilities.

The Liberals have been accumulating deficits since 2015 and are increasing our debt. The government is keeping the prime rate artificially low and printing more and more money, and we have the second-biggest housing bubble in the world. This Prime Minister has told us that he does not think about monetary policy.

When will he take responsibility and do what is necessary to reduce inflation?

**Hon. Ahmed Hussen (Minister of Housing and Diversity and Inclusion, Lib.):** Mr. Speaker, each and every Canadian deserves a safe and affordable place to call home.

Since 2015, we have invested over \$27 billion in affordable housing and introduced Canada's very first national housing strategy. Our plan of more than \$72 billion has already helped more than one million Canadians get the housing they need.

**Hon. Pierre Poilievre (Carleton, CPC):** Mr. Speaker, the Liberal inflation tax is now hitting grocery stores.

Today, a report shows that the average family will have to spend \$15,000 on food. That is a \$1,000 increase. Canadians and Canadian families do not have \$1,000, especially after real estate inflation and with gas prices at \$1.50.

Yesterday, the Prime Minister admitted, in English, that there is something called “just inflation”. To respect linguistic duality, can he repeat it in French and say that it is just inflation?

**Hon. Randy Boissonnault (Minister of Tourism and Associate Minister of Finance, Lib.):** Mr. Speaker, the pressures created by the disruptions in the supply chain and the shift from purchasing services to purchasing goods are real, but they are also transitory.

In the meantime, other additional costs are making life unaffordable for Canadian families. That is why our government is so focused on reducing the cost of child care and the cost of housing.

We are here to make life more affordable, and that is what we are going to do.

• (1435)

*[English]*

**Hon. Pierre Poilievre (Carleton, CPC):** Mr. Speaker, all the other so-called experts have given up on the term “transitory inflation”, yet the Associate Minister of Finance is trying to resurrect it on the same day we get a report saying that the average family will have to spend another \$1,000 just to put nutrients on their kids' tables. We already have the second-worst housing bubble on earth and it is \$1.50 a litre for gas. The average family cannot keep up with the cost of living and the minister says it is transitory.

If so, how long until all of this price inflation reverses itself and the prices come back down?

**Hon. Randy Boissonnault (Minister of Tourism and Associate Minister of Finance, Lib.):** Mr. Speaker, once again, the other side is trying to paint a story of doom and gloom for Canadians, but Canadians know better. Inflation in Canada in November was 4.5%. In the United States, it was 6.2%. It was 6.2% in Mexico. It was 4.9% in New Zealand. The experts agree that this is not a made-in-Canada phenomenon. The former governor of the Bank of Canada, Stephen Poloz, agreed and even the leader of the Conservative Party has agreed that this is a global phenomenon.

\* \* \*

*[Translation]***PUBLIC SAFETY**

**Mr. Rhéal Fortin (Rivière-du-Nord, BQ):** Mr. Speaker, the Conservatives seem more concerned about the fact that street gangs used CERB to purchase illegal weapons than the fact that these illegal weapons are now freely circulating in the Montreal area.

We agree that CERB should not have been used for such things, but it would be just as bad if the weapons had been purchased with money obtained through fraud, pimping or extortion. The real problem here is that it is too easy to find handguns in the Montreal area.

How does the minister plan to stop gangs from accessing handguns?

**Hon. Marco Mendicino (Minister of Public Safety, Lib.):** Mr. Speaker, fraud in the system is unacceptable, and it should come with serious consequences.

At the same time, the benefits we implemented to help Canadians during the pandemic are necessary. We will be there for Canadians during the pandemic.

*Oral Questions*

**Ms. Kristina Michaud (Avignon—La Mitis—Matane—Matapédia, BQ):** Mr. Speaker, on the one hand, the Liberals are doing nothing to stop illegal arms trafficking; on the other, the Conservatives want to take issue with the CERB; and in the middle, families are worried, some people no longer want to walk the streets of Montreal at night, there are gunshots in libraries and stray bullets are ending up in the living rooms of law-abiding citizens. The problem is that there are illegal firearms circulating in Montreal and nobody is getting the sense that the federal government understands how urgent it is to take action.

When will the minister finally understand that this problem must be nipped in the bud?

**Hon. Marco Mendicino (Minister of Public Safety, Lib.):** Mr. Speaker, we are the government that strengthened gun control. We are the government that banned military-style assault weapons. We are the government that added resources at the border to combat gun violence.

We will continue to work with all members and all governments to advance this fight.

**Mr. Rhéal Fortin (Rivière-du-Nord, BQ):** Mr. Speaker, what we have to do is send a strong signal that the government intends to act now, not two months from now, and that the RCMP, border services and available resources will be deployed now.

We want concrete action commensurate with the urgency of the situation. We do not want a list of things that were done in the past. We do not want election promises. We do not want to hear what the government might do later if everything is fine and it feels like it.

What will it do now, today, to prevent access to illegal guns and end gun violence on the streets of Montreal?

**Hon. Marco Mendicino (Minister of Public Safety, Lib.):** Mr. Speaker, even one life lost to gun violence is one too many.

We have taken important steps to fight gun violence, and we will keep taking action to prevent further tragedies. We have made significant investments in boosting investigative capacity to curb illegal arms smuggling.

I have met with my counterparts in Quebec and even with municipalities. We will keep working with the Bloc Québécois and members of Parliament.

**Mrs. Stephanie Kusie (Calgary Midnapore, CPC):** Mr. Speaker, it was reported yesterday that Montreal street gangs defrauded Canadian taxpayers and used CERB money to purchase illegal firearms. It is inconceivable that the government would allow this to happen.

When did the minister learn that money intended for Canadians was being used by criminals?

• (1440)

**Hon. Carla Qualtrough (Minister of Employment, Workforce Development and Disability Inclusion, Lib.):** Mr. Speaker, our government has zero tolerance for fraud. We are working and will continue to work with all appropriate jurisdictions and authorities to ensure that these individuals and others who commit fraud are held accountable. The government remains firmly opposed to gun

violence, illegal activities and organized crime and is working hard to keep our communities and our country safe.

[English]

**Mrs. Stephanie Kusie (Calgary Midnapore, CPC):** Mr. Speaker, a Quebec court found that a street gang in Montreal fraudulently obtained over \$100,000 from the Canada emergency response benefit program to fund illegal firearms smuggling operations, not to mention reports of this money also being used for both human trafficking and prostitution. How can the government not take immediate action instead of funding organized crime with taxpayer dollars?

**Hon. Carla Qualtrough (Minister of Employment, Workforce Development and Disability Inclusion, Lib.):** Mr. Speaker, our government has zero tolerance for fraud. We have worked, and will continue to work, with all appropriate jurisdictions and authorities to ensure that these individuals, and others who commit fraud, are held accountable. We will always take a hard stance against gun violence, illegal activities and organized crime to ensure that we keep our communities and country safe.

I will remind the House that eight million Canadians benefited from the CERB.

**Mrs. Stephanie Kusie (Calgary Midnapore, CPC):** Mr. Speaker, there has been a surge of deadly shootings across Montreal, and now we have found out that criminals have been using CERB to purchase these illegal firearms. The irony of this being a government that purports to fight gun crime is overwhelming. What will the minister do to ensure this fraudulent activity ends and, more importantly, to bring these criminals to justice?

**Hon. Marco Mendicino (Minister of Public Safety, Lib.):** Mr. Speaker, I think that all members in this chamber agree that we have seen too many lives lost to gun violence. That is why we have taken concrete action by introducing a ban against military-style weapons and additional resources to fight gun trafficking at the border.

The only question I have now is this: When will Conservatives get on side and actually take the action necessary to reduce gun violence? Let us get the guns off of our streets.

\* \* \*

**SENIORS**

**Ms. Rachel Blaney (North Island—Powell River, NDP):** Mr. Speaker, Canadians are seeing the highest increase in food prices in over a decade. For seniors living on a fixed income, this is a crisis, especially for working seniors who are being punished by this government with the GIS clawback.

### Oral Questions

The minister keeps saying that she is working on the right solution. Well, where is it? Seniors are calling my office from across this country. They are losing hope. They are scared of homelessness and hunger, and they are talking about taking their own lives. When will this government step up, remove the GIS—

**The Speaker:** The hon. Minister of Seniors.

**Hon. Kamal Khara (Minister of Seniors, Lib.):** Mr. Speaker, I think we can all agree just how challenging this pandemic has been for seniors, especially those most vulnerable, but our government has been there to support those who are most vulnerable by strengthening their GIS. We moved very quickly to provide immediate and direct financial support for seniors this summer.

I can assure the hon. member that this is an issue we are working extremely closely on to find the right solution to and to support those affected. As always, we will be there for seniors.

\* \* \*

[Translation]

### LABOUR

**Mr. Alexandre Boulerice (Rosemont—La Petite-Patrie, NDP):** Mr. Speaker, 160 professionals at the Office of the Auditor General have been on strike since November 26. Seventy-five per cent of them are women. They have been working without a contract for three years. These employees ensure that the government is accountable to the public. They are essential. What are they asking for? They are asking to be treated the same as every other public servant, nothing more, nothing less. That is called equity and respect, but the Liberals are asleep at the switch.

Will the Treasury Board give the Office of the Auditor General the mandate to negotiate a fair and equitable agreement for these professionals?

**Hon. Mona Fortier (President of the Treasury Board, Lib.):** Mr. Speaker, our government is committed to working with all bargaining agents to sign agreements that are equitable for the employees and take the current economic and financial context into account. The Government of Canada is signing collective agreements that cover roughly 99% of public servants for the 2018 bargaining round. Negotiations are also under way with the Public Service Alliance of Canada for the next round of bargaining, and we plan to start negotiating with the other bargaining agents soon. We negotiate at the bargaining table, not in public.

\* \* \*

• (1445)

[English]

### JUSTICE

**Ms. Arielle Kayabaga (London West, Lib.):** Mr. Speaker, for far too long, many people, especially indigenous, Black and marginalized Canadians, have experienced, and continue to experience, systemic racism rooted within our criminal justice system.

Could the Minister of Justice and Attorney General of Canada inform the House on what steps the government will take to address this systemic discrimination and strengthen the confidence of all Canadians in the justice system?

**Hon. David Lametti (Minister of Justice and Attorney General of Canada, Lib.):** Mr. Speaker, the numbers speak for themselves. Past failed policies did not protect our communities, but targeted indigenous, Black and marginalized Canadians. This week I introduced Bill C-5, which will help our justice system become fairer and more effective. It shows that our government is committed to building a more equitable and inclusive Canada for everyone.

I encourage members across the aisle to join us in turning the page on failed policies and move forward in this positive fashion.

\* \* \*

[Translation]

### OFFICIAL LANGUAGES

**Mr. Alain Rayes (Richmond—Arthabaska, CPC):** Mr. Speaker, we have been waiting six years for the bill to modernize both official languages. All the consultations have taken place. All the organizations across the country have been consulted, and they are only asking for one thing: that Treasury Board be the central agency for enforcing the law with all the necessary tools.

When the minister introduces the bill, can she confirm that Treasury Board will be that agency, and that it will be fully empowered to enforce the act?

**Hon. Ginette Petitpas Taylor (Minister of Official Languages and Minister responsible for the Atlantic Canada Opportunities Agency, Lib.):** Mr. Speaker, I want to thank my colleague for his question.

I was very pleased this week to have a conversation with my colleague about modernizing official languages legislation. As I told him, protecting and promoting the French language is a top priority for this government and for me as minister. I look forward to reintroducing the bill shortly.

**Mr. Alain Rayes (Richmond—Arthabaska, CPC):** Mr. Speaker, I am glad that the minister is talking about the importance of this bill. However, one figure stands out: Since the commissioner took office, there have been 60,000 complaints across the country, but nothing has changed.

Organizations are asking for Treasury Board to be given the responsibility to legislate and oversee this legislation, to enforce it, and to have all the necessary tools. Organizations across the country that advocate for minority communities have been calling for this.

My question is simple. Will Treasury Board have this role and all the necessary tools, yes or no?

**Hon. Ginette Petitpas Taylor (Minister of Official Languages and Minister responsible for the Atlantic Canada Opportunities Agency, Lib.):** Mr. Speaker, once again, I want to thank my colleague for his question.

We have always said that both official languages are central to our identity, our culture and the future of our country. We will do all we can to reintroduce this bill as soon as possible.

Once again, as a proud Acadian, I am aware of the importance of protecting and promoting our official languages, and I look forward to reintroducing the bill. I hope that the opposition parties will support it.

\* \* \*

[English]

#### CANADA REVENUE AGENCY

**Mr. John Brassard (Barrie—Innisfil, CPC):** Mr. Speaker, I ask members to imagine a member of the Liberal caucus being accused of directing his constituents on how to fraudulently claim the CERB. According to a caller on a talk radio show the day after the election, the member had encouraged numerous people to claim CERB when they did not qualify by splitting self-employment income with family members. In fact, in one area of the member's riding, seven in 10 residents over the age of 15 received the CERB, which is one of the highest concentrations in Canada, according to a Canadian Press report.

If this is true, how seriously would the Prime Minister take claims of advising people to commit fraud against one of his MPs?

**Hon. Carla Qualtrough (Minister of Employment, Workforce Development and Disability Inclusion, Lib.):** Mr. Speaker, I can assure this House that the government has zero tolerance for fraud. We are systematically following up on every active case and every issue that we address through CERB. We said from the beginning we would give Canadians, eight million of them, CERB. At the end, we are enforcing our integrity and compliance measures. We have no tolerance for fraud.

**Mr. John Brassard (Barrie—Innisfil, CPC):** Mr. Speaker, I am awfully glad to hear the minister say that there is no tolerance for fraud.

The caller also stated that he had, for that savvy advice, given the member of Calgary Skyview his vote, and he was telling everyone to do the same. Asked by the host what he would do if the CRA came knocking, he said that he would send them straight to his office because it was all his idea, and everybody in Skyview did it, everyone 15 years of age and older.

Does the Prime Minister agree that CERB fraud is a serious issue, and that the possibility of a member of the Liberal caucus directing people to commit fraud requires an investigation?

• (1450)

**Hon. Carla Qualtrough (Minister of Employment, Workforce Development and Disability Inclusion, Lib.):** Mr. Speaker, I can assure this House that my office and my department follow up on every allegation of fraud, and this would be no exception.

\* \* \*

[Translation]

#### EMPLOYMENT INSURANCE

**Ms. Louise Chabot (Thérèse-De Blainville, BQ):** Mr. Speaker, Émilie Sansfaçon lost her battle to cancer in 2020, but the other battle she started, for an employment insurance system that supports workers with serious illnesses through their treatments, carries on.

#### Oral Questions

Tomorrow will mark two years since Émilie met with the Prime Minister, who promised her that he would increase the number of weeks of benefits. Since then, nothing has changed.

Fifteen weeks is not enough, nor is 26 weeks. When will the government realize that workers who are sick need 50 weeks?

**Hon. Carla Qualtrough (Minister of Employment, Workforce Development and Disability Inclusion, Lib.):** Mr. Speaker, we offer our condolences to Émilie Sansfaçon's family. I was at that meeting with the Prime Minister. That is why, in budget 2021, we committed to expanding benefits from 15 to 26 weeks. We are now engaged in a consultation on modernizing the EI system. Everything is on the table.

**Ms. Louise Chabot (Thérèse-De Blainville, BQ):** Mr. Speaker, Jessica Mimeault is among those who are continuing Émilie Sansfaçon's fight. She is in Ottawa and is in a good position to see whether the government is taking its commitment seriously.

The Prime Minister promised Émilie Sansfaçon that he would extend the benefits. He has a duty to honour that promise for all other sick people like Ms. Mimeault. They need 50 weeks of EI to recover.

Will the government finally meet their needs?

**Hon. Carla Qualtrough (Minister of Employment, Workforce Development and Disability Inclusion, Lib.):** Mr. Speaker, of course we know that people who are sick need more weeks of EI sickness benefits, which is why we committed to extending the benefits from 15 weeks to 26 weeks. With the consultations on EI modernization, we will certainly put everything on the table.

I fully understand. As I told those I spoke to before question period, I look forward to meeting the woman.

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[English]

#### HEALTH

**Mrs. Shelby Kramp-Neuman (Hastings—Lennox and Addington, CPC):** Mr. Speaker, Brian Laird left his home in Amherstview on December 1 to do some Christmas shopping in the U.S. On his way back into Canada, ArriveCAN crashed. Because of the government's refusal to accept paper or digital proof of vaccination, a position it now admits was wrong, Brian was forced into an eight-day quarantine, despite being double-vaxxed.

*Oral Questions*

The minister is now taking a big victory lap on this, but it is still happening. Yesterday, Brian was told 14 days. This does not make sense. When will the government release Brian from quarantine, and other—

**The Speaker:** The hon. Minister of Public Safety.

**Hon. Marco Mendicino (Minister of Public Safety, Lib.):** Mr. Speaker, this government will never hesitate when it comes to taking the measures that are necessary to protect the health and safety of all Canadians, especially now as we deal with the new variant of concern in omicron.

The ArriveCAN app is a vital tool in the fight against this pandemic. Over four million Canadians have already uploaded it, and it is increasingly important as we ensure that we are taking the steps that are necessary to fight against COVID. These decisions are informed by evidence, science and our top public health care experts. We will never hesitate to do what is necessary to protect Canadians.

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**FOREIGN AFFAIRS**

**Mr. Bob Zimmer (Prince George—Peace River—Northern Rockies, CPC):** Mr. Speaker, in recent years, Russia has refurbished and built over 30 Arctic bases, 14 operational airfields, 16 deepwater ports and over 50 military icebreakers. Further, the Russian foreign minister, Sergei Lavrov, also recently warned Canada that all the resources beneath the melting ice in the Arctic sea belong to the Russian government. When is the Liberal government going to stand up to this Russian aggression?

**Hon. Jean-Yves Duclos (Minister of Health, Lib.):** Mr. Speaker, I am very pleased to answer this question on behalf of the Minister of National Defence. She is obviously very mindful and on top of this file, and I know she is in contact with the parliament and will provide appropriate details.

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● (1455)

**SENIORS**

**Mrs. Anna Roberts (King—Vaughan, CPC):** Mr. Speaker, our seniors are struggling with the cost of inflation adding a strain to their finances. Mr. Frank Pellicori, an 80-year-old senior who lost his job due to the pandemic, is now facing the challenge of selling his home to ensure that he has enough funds to cover his wife's medical expenses.

Mr. and Mrs. Pellicori immigrated to Canada over 45 years ago and have worked hard to support their family. When will the government put the needs of our seniors first, or leave them behind?

**Hon. Kamal Khara (Minister of Seniors, Lib.):** Mr. Speaker, our government's priority has always been to support seniors, especially the most vulnerable. When it comes to supporting seniors, I am proud of our record. One of the first things we did was to restore the age of eligibility for OAS back to 65. We have enhanced the CPP. We have strengthened the OAS and GIS.

We have an ambitious agenda for seniors, and I look forward to encouraging the member to ensure we implement that ambitious agenda.

[Translation]

**THE ENVIRONMENT**

**Mr. Patrick Weiler (West Vancouver—Sunshine Coast—Sea to Sky Country, Lib.):** Mr. Speaker, the people of West Vancouver—Sunshine Coast—Sea to Sky Country are concerned about climate change and the environment. It was one of the concerns I heard most often during the election campaign.

Climate change is real, and it poses real challenges for communities across the country.

Can the Minister of Environment and Climate Change update the House on the government's progress in addressing climate change and protecting the environment?

**Hon. Steven Guilbeault (Minister of Environment and Climate Change, Lib.):** Mr. Speaker, I would like to thank the member for West Vancouver—Sunshine Coast—Sea to Sky Country for raising this important issue and for doing so in French.

In the last election, Canadians clearly told us that they wanted the government to move faster and do more to address climate change.

Whether it is our 2030 targets, reaching net zero by 2050, protecting 25% of our lands and oceans by 2025 and 30% by 2030, building greener homes and housing, or shifting to electrified transportation and public transit, that is the agenda we set for Canadians—

**The Speaker:** The hon. member for St. Albert—Edmonton.

\* \* \*

[English]

**FOREIGN AFFAIRS**

**Mr. Michael Cooper (St. Albert—Edmonton, CPC):** Mr. Speaker, Communist China has upped the ante against democratic Taiwan with provocative military pressure. The U.S. Secretary of State has warned China that any move to invade Taiwan will have serious consequences. The government has been absolutely silent.

Will the government join our allies and call on China to stop its campaign of aggression, and stand with Taiwan?

[Translation]

**Hon. Marie-Claude Bibeau (Minister of Agriculture and Agri-Food, Lib.):** Mr. Speaker, we are very concerned about recent tensions in the Taiwan Strait. The Minister of Foreign Affairs has talked to her counterparts.



The parties must abstain from any action that could potentially compromise peace and stability in the Taiwan Strait. We also recognize that Canada must support regional security and stability.

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[English]

### THE ECONOMY

**Mr. Martin Shields (Bow River, CPC):** Mr. Speaker, the federal government's negotiations with the RCMP left municipal leaders in my riding questioning who will pay for the five-year retroactive salary coverage. The RCMP deserves compensation for the hard work it does to protect my constituents, but negotiations did not include municipalities and will lead to property tax increases, compounding the Liberal inflation tax on homeowners and small businesses.

Will the Prime Minister be leaving my constituents responsible for even more burdens that are "just inflation"?

**Hon. Marco Mendicino (Minister of Public Safety, Lib.):** Mr. Speaker, the first thing I would like to do is thank the members of the RCMP, who provide public safety right across the country, including in my hon. colleague's constituency. I know we will continue to have good discussions at both the provincial and municipal levels to ensure that we continue to provide world-class law enforcement right across the country.

With regard to his comments about inflation, this government will always have Canadians' backs when it comes to the pandemic. We have, and we will continue to going forward.

\* \* \*

● (1500)

### GOVERNMENT APPOINTMENTS

**Mr. Damien Kurek (Battle River—Crowfoot, CPC):** Mr. Speaker, Alberta elects its senators, and on October 18, Albertans made this clear by electing three senators in waiting: Pam Davidson, Erika Barootes and Mykhailo Martyniuk. Up to now, the Liberal Prime Minister has alienated Alberta, and our country is as divided now as it was during the national energy program of the eighties.

My question is very simple. Will the Prime Minister respect the democratic will of Albertans, yes or no?

**Hon. Dominic LeBlanc (Minister of Intergovernmental Affairs, Infrastructure and Communities, Lib.):** Mr. Speaker, our government is very proud of the changes we made to make the Senate less partisan and more effective. I think members would agree with me that it is somewhat ironic, coming from the party of Stephen Harper, to be lectured—

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

**The Speaker:** I hear shouting from one side and clapping from the other, but I cannot hear the minister.

I would ask the minister to please start from the beginning.

**Hon. Dominic LeBlanc:** Mr. Speaker, the pleasure is mine.

I think members will agree with me that it is somewhat ironic for our government to be lectured by the party of Stephen Harper for

### Oral Questions

the quality of the women and men we have appointed to Canada's Senate. We strive to appoint outstanding people, while respecting the diversity of the country. We are very proud of the appointments we have made from the province of Alberta.

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### HOUSING

**Mr. James Maloney (Etobicoke—Lakeshore, Lib.):** Mr. Speaker, owning a home is a long-held dream for many Canadians, but it has become out of reach for many, especially young Canadians. I heard this at the doorsteps in Etobicoke—Lakeshore during the campaign.

Canadians were given a choice in this election and we know what they chose. Can the Minister of Housing share with the House how our government is going to make that dream more affordable?

**Hon. Ahmed Hussen (Minister of Housing and Diversity and Inclusion, Lib.):** Mr. Speaker, I want to thank the hon. member for Etobicoke—Lakeshore for his strong advocacy on this important issue.

Our government has been working hard to make sure that more young Canadians and more middle-class families have access to the dream of home ownership. In the throne speech, we committed to enhancing the first-time home buyer incentive and introducing an innovative and new rent-to-own program that will turn more Canadian renters into homeowners. We have committed to these and other measures to make sure that every Canadian has a safe and affordable place to call home.

\* \* \*

### EMERGENCY PREPAREDNESS

**Ms. Lisa Marie Barron (Nanaimo—Ladysmith, NDP):** Mr. Speaker, this October, 109 shipping containers were lost off the coast of Vancouver Island. The spill left behind toxic chemicals, has damaged marine ecosystems and has spread debris along our shores. The Liberal government did not immediately seek local or traditional knowledge or resources, allowing the spill to spread.

Climate change and increases in traffic will only make these disasters more common. When will the government deliver an emergency response plan to make sure communities and our environment do not continue to face such devastation?

**Hon. Joyce Murray (Minister of Fisheries, Oceans and the Canadian Coast Guard, Lib.):** Mr. Speaker, we are of course deeply concerned about—

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

**The Speaker:** I will stop the minister for a second. I cannot hear her at all and she just started, so I can imagine how loud it is going to be by the time she is finished. I understand the enthusiasm coming from on one side of the House, but I am sure they want to hear the answer as well.

*Government Orders*

The hon. minister.

**Hon. Joyce Murray:** Mr. Speaker, I remain concerned about the potential environmental impacts of these shipping containers, and we are continuing to monitor that closely.

The Canadian Coast Guard and its partners in the unified command did an amazing job of responding quickly and efficiently to ensure the safety of the crew, first responders and the public, and of communicating with partners. That is why we were able to mitigate even worse harm in the incident.

The Canadian Coast Guard is continuing to work—

• (1505)

**The Speaker:** The hon. member for Spadina—Fort York.

\* \* \*

**HOUSING**

**Mr. Kevin Vuong (Spadina—Fort York, Ind.):** Mr. Speaker, on December 7, there were 7,344 individuals staying in Toronto shelters. Unfortunately, this figure does not capture all of the people experiencing homelessness in my riding of Spadina—Fort York and across the city of Toronto. These people are desperate for a home. They are desperate to stay safe and stay warm. The concern for community safety is also one that I hear from my constituents on nearly a daily basis.

Could the Minister of Housing inform the House on how the government is addressing homelessness in Spadina—Fort York, Toronto and other urban centres?

**Hon. Ahmed Hussen (Minister of Housing and Diversity and Inclusion, Lib.):** Mr. Speaker, during the COVID-19 pandemic, we have substantially increased funding for the reaching home program to make sure that frontline organizations, including municipalities, have more flexible funding to address homelessness. We also introduced the rapid housing initiative, both its first and second round, which will result in over 9,200 new and permanent affordable housing units, to be built. We have introduced the Canada housing benefit to help all Canadians who find themselves on the street access independent housing. We will also make sure that we continue to invest in the co-investment fund to build permanent housing solutions for those who are experiencing chronic homelessness.

**The Speaker:** I am afraid that is all the time we have for question period today.

We have a point of order. We will start with the hon. parliamentary secretary to the government House leader.

**Mr. Mark Gerretsen:** Mr. Speaker, I rise on a point of order.

There have been discussions among the parties, and if you seek it I hope you will find unanimous consent for the following motion:

That, the House acknowledge and support the government's clear and repeated position that taxing capital gains on primary residences is not under any consideration; reiterate its support for the government's \$72-billion investments in housing through the national housing strategy, including \$2.5 billion through the rapid housing initiative; and declare its support for the commitments made by the government to ban foreign purchases of non-recre-

ational residential property in Canada for the next two years, implement Canada's first-ever national tax on non-resident, non-Canadian owners of vacant housing next year, and create a new homebuyers' bill of rights.

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

**Some hon. members:** Nay.

**Mr. John Brassard:** Mr. Speaker, I rise on a point of order.

In relation to the question I asked in question period, I would like to table two documents. One is a transcript from News Talk 770 CHQR's Shaye Ganam's show on September 21, and it is in relation to a discussion the host had about the fraudulent claims of CERB. The second is a letter that I wrote yesterday to the National Leads Centre of the Canada Revenue Agency.

With unanimous consent, I would like to table those.

**The Speaker:** All those opposed to the hon. member moving the motion and tabling the documents will please say nay.

**Some hon. members:** Nay.

**The Speaker:** I am afraid we do not have unanimous consent on that either.

**Mr. Matt Jeneroux:** Mr. Speaker, I am absolutely certain that if you seek it, you will find unanimous consent for the following motion: "That the House condemn the failed Liberal housing strategy, including its elections promise, found on page 13 of the platform, to impose a capital gains tax on the sale of primary residences."

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

**Some hon. members:** Nay.

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**GOVERNMENT ORDERS**

[English]

**CRIMINAL CODE**

The House resumed from December 8 consideration of the motion that Bill C-3, An Act to amend the Criminal Code and the Canada Labour Code, be read the second time and referred to a committee.

**The Speaker:** Pursuant to the special order adopted by the House on November 25, the House will now use, for the first time in this Parliament, the remote voting application. Accordingly, before proceeding with the vote, I would like to share some information on the process for the taking of recorded divisions that members may find useful.

As per the special order, votes will continue to take place as per the usual process for those in the chamber. Members present in the House must stay in their seats for the duration of the voting period and should not vote via the electronic system.

• (1510)

[*Translation*]

For members participating remotely using the electronic voting system, the process is as follows: Members will receive notifications informing them of the upcoming vote. Once the vote starts, they will have 10 minutes to cast a vote via the electronic system, indicating whether they are for, against or abstaining from voting on the motion. Members will then be required to take a photo to validate their identity and submit their vote. Members may change their vote during the 10-minute period, but all steps must be completed before the end of the voting period for a vote to be recorded.

After the in-person vote is completed, members may continue to vote via the electronic system if time remains for the voting period. During this time, votes cast via the system will be displayed on the broadcast feed and no points of order or interventions will be permitted.

[*English*]

When the House resumes its business, I will invite any member who encountered technical difficulties to identify themselves using the “raise hand” feature to cast their vote.

In accordance with the special order, I will then entertain any concerns raised by the house officer of a recognized party regarding the visual identity of a member using the electronic voting system. It is the responsibility of members to be ready to respond, should concerns be raised about their photo, failing which, as per the terms of the motion, the vote will not be recorded.

[*Translation*]

Once these steps are completed, the Table will then compile the results of the vote and the Clerk will announce the result to the House.

[*English*]

IT ambassadors are available before, during and after a vote to assist members if they encounter difficulties with the system or for any technical matter related to the virtual sitting. It remains the responsibility of members to ensure that they have adequate connectivity to fully participate in the proceedings and that they fully complete all steps of the voting process.

[*Translation*]

It being 3:12 p.m., pursuant to order made Thursday, November 25, the House will now proceed to the taking of the deferred recorded division on the motion at second reading stage of Bill C-3.

Call in the members.

• (1525)

[*English*]

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

## Government Orders

(Division No. 10)

### YEAS

Members

Aitchison	Albas
Aldag	Alghabra
Ali	Allison
Anandasangaree	Angus
Arnold	Arseneault
Arya	Ashton
Atwin	Bachrach
Badawey	Baker
Baldinelli	Barlow
Barrett	Barron
Barsalou-Duval	Battiste
Beaulieu	Beech
Bendayan	Bennett
Benzen	Bergen
Bergeron	Berthold
Bérubé	Bezan
Bibeau	Bittle
Blaikie	Blair
Blanchette-Joncas	Blaney
Block	Blois
Boissonnault	Boulerice
Bradford	Bragdon
Brassard	Brière
Brock	Brunelle-Duceppe
Calkins	Cannings
Caputo	Carr
Carrie	Casey
Chabot	Chagger
Chahal	Chambers
Champagne	Champoux
Chatel	Chen
Chiang	Chong
Collins (Hamilton East—Stoney Creek)	Collins (Victoria)
Cooper	Cormier
Coteau	Dabrusin
Dalton	Damoff
Dancho	Davidson
Davies	DeBellefeuille
Deltell	d'Entremont
Desbiens	Desilets
Desjarlais	Dhaliwal
Dhillon	Diab
Doherty	Dong
Dowdall	Dreeshen
Drouin	Dubourg
Duclos	Duguid
Duncan (Stormont—Dundas—South Glengarry)	Duncan (Etobicoke North)
Dzerowicz	Ehsassi
El-Khoury	Ellis
Epp	Erskine-Smith
Falk (Battlefords—Lloydminster)	Falk (Provencher)
Fast	Fergus
Ferreri	Fillmore
Findlay	Fisher
Fonseca	Fortier
Fortin	Fragiskatos
Fraser	Freeland
Fry	Gaheer
Gallant	Garneau
Garon	Garrison
Gaudreau	Gazan
Généreux	Genuis
Gerretsen	Gill
Gladu	Godin
Goodridge	Gould
Gourde	Gray
Green	Guilbeault
Hajdu	Hallan

*Business of the House*

Hanley  
Hepfner  
Holland  
Hughes  
Hutchings  
Idlout  
Jaczek  
Johns  
Jowhari  
Kayabaga  
Kelly  
Khera  
Kmiec  
Kram  
Kurek  
Kusmierczyk  
Lake  
Lambropoulos  
Lamoureux  
Lapointe  
Lattanzio  
Lawrence  
Lebouthillier  
Lemire  
Lewis (Haldimand—Norfolk)  
Lightbound  
Lobb  
Longfield  
MacAulay (Cardigan)  
MacGregor  
MacKinnon (Gatineau)  
Maloney  
Martinez Ferrada  
Mathysen  
May (Saanich—Gulf Islands)  
McCauley (Edmonton West)  
McGuinty  
McKinnon (Coquitlam—Port Coquitlam)  
McLeod  
Melillo  
Mendicino  
Michaud  
Moore  
Morrice  
Morrissey  
Murray  
Naqvi  
Ng  
Normandin  
Oliphant  
O'Toole  
Paul-Hus  
Perkins  
Petitpas Taylor  
Poilievre  
Qualtrough  
Redekopp  
Rempel Garner  
Roberts  
Rodriguez  
Romanado  
Ruff  
Sajjan  
Samson  
Savard-Tremblay  
Scheer  
Schmale  
Serré  
Shanahan  
Shields  
Sidhu (Brampton East)  
Simard  
Singh

Hardie  
Hoback  
Housefather  
Hussen  
Iacono  
Ien  
Jeneroux  
Jones  
Julian  
Kelloway  
Khalid  
Kitchen  
Koutrakis  
Kramp-Neuman  
Kusie  
Kwan  
Lalonde  
Lametti  
Lantsman  
Larouche  
Lauzon  
LeBlanc  
Lehoux  
Lewis (Essex)  
Liepert  
Lloyd  
Long  
Louis (Kitchener—Conestoga)  
MacDonald (Malpeque)  
MacKenzie  
Maguire  
Martel  
Masse  
May (Cambridge)  
Mazier  
McDonald (Avalon)  
McKay  
McLean  
McPherson  
Mendès  
Miao  
Miller  
Morantz  
Morrison  
Motz  
Muys  
Nater  
Noormohamed  
O'Connell  
O'Regan  
Patzner  
Pauzé  
Perron  
Plamondon  
Powlowski  
Rayes  
Reid  
Richards  
Robillard  
Rogers  
Rood  
Sahota  
Saks  
Sarai  
Scarpaleggia  
Schieffe  
Seeback  
Sgro  
Sheehan  
Shipley  
Sidhu (Brampton South)  
Sinclair-Desgagné  
Small

Sorbara  
Spengemann  
Ste-Marie  
St-Onge  
Stubbs  
Tassi  
Thériault  
Thomas  
Tochor  
Trudeau  
Turnbull  
Valdez  
van Koeverden  
Vandal  
Vecchio  
Vien  
Vignola  
Virani  
Vuong  
Warkentin  
Webber  
Wilkinson  
Williamson  
Zahid  
Zimmer

Soroka  
Steinley  
Stewart  
Strahl  
Sudds  
Taylor Roy  
Therrien  
Thompson  
Tolmie  
Trudel  
Uppal  
Van Bynen  
Van Popta  
Vandenbeld  
Vidal  
Viersen  
Villemure  
Vis  
Wagantall  
Waugh  
Weiler  
Williams  
Yip  
Zarrillo  
Zuberi— 332

NAYS

Nil

PAIRED

Nil

**The Speaker:** I declare the motion carried. Accordingly, the bill stands referred to the Standing Committee on Human Resources, Skills and Social Development and the Status of Persons with Disabilities.

(Bill read the second time and referred to a committee)

\* \* \*

[Translation]

**BUSINESS OF THE HOUSE**

**Mr. Gérard Deltell (Louis-Saint-Laurent, CPC):** Mr. Speaker, we see that the Parliament that sits here, inside this building in Ottawa, is working well—

**The Speaker:** Order. I cannot hear what the hon. member is saying.

[English]

We are trying to conduct business on the floor of the chamber and would appreciate a bit of quiet.

The hon. leader of the opposition in the House has the floor.

[Translation]

**Mr. Gérard Deltell:** Mr. Speaker, thank you. I could barely hear myself.

I will skip the preamble. I invite my ministerial counterpart to share with us what we can expect to be working on in the coming days.

**Hon. Mark Holland (Leader of the Government in the House of Commons, Lib.):** Mr. Speaker, I thank my hon. colleague, who asks an excellent question every Thursday.

This afternoon we will continue debate on the Conservative motion. Tomorrow will be the fourth day of debate on the address in reply to the Speech from the Throne.

[English]

Next Tuesday, the Deputy Prime Minister and Minister of Finance will present the fall economic statement in the House at 4 p.m. We will schedule a relevant ways and means vote the following day, on Wednesday afternoon.

Further, we will also focus our efforts to pass two bills next week, namely Bill C-2, an act to provide further support in response to COVID-19, and Bill C-3, which would amend the Criminal Code and the Canada Labour Code to provide workers in federally regulated sectors with 10 days of paid sick leave and make it an offence to intimidate or prevent patients from seeking care.

\* \* \*

• (1530)

[Translation]

### PRIVILEGE

#### ALLEGED BREACHES OF PRIVILEGE OF TWO MEMBERS—SPEAKER'S RULING

**The Speaker:** I am now prepared to rule on the question of privilege raised on November 23, 2021, by the member for Louis-Saint-Laurent concerning the failure to produce documents. I also want to deal with the question of privilege raised the same day by the member for Barrie—Innisfil concerning the second report of the Standing Committee on Access to Information, Privacy and Ethics during the second session of the 43rd Parliament. While they are distinct questions of privilege, the Chair intends to render a single ruling, given the procedural similarities of the two questions.

Before getting to the heart of the matter, the Chair wishes to briefly summarize recent events from the previous Parliament.

Regarding the question from the member for Louis-St-Laurent, on June 21, 2021, the president of the Public Health Agency of Canada appeared at the bar of the House to be admonished, but he did not hand over the documents required by the order adopted on June 17, 2021. The member for Louis-St-Laurent then raised a question of privilege concerning the failure to produce the documents. On June 23, 2021, the government applied to the Federal Court to seal these documents.

[English]

As for the question from the member for Barrie—Innisfil, on June 10 the Standing Committee on Access to Information, Privacy and Ethics had presented its second report to the House, which described the problems it encountered during its study, and the member for Leeds—Grenville—Thousand Islands and Rideau Lakes raised a question of privilege on the matter.

The House then adjourned for the summer on June 23, 2021, before a ruling on these questions was rendered. The 43rd Parliament was then dissolved on August 15, 2021.

### Speaker's Ruling

[Translation]

When he again raised his question of privilege in the current session, the member for Louis-St-Laurent argued that the government's application to the Federal Court on June 23, 2021, was unprecedented in Canadian history. While the court challenge ended with dissolution, the member argued that openly challenging the authority of the House before the courts, by attacking its fundamental rights, constituted contempt.

Citing the relevant authority, he pointed out that contempt committed in a previous Parliament can be punished in a new Parliament. He thus argued that dissolution did not eliminate the questions of privilege.

[English]

The member for Barrie—Innisfil also mentioned that the House can consider contempt committed during a previous Parliament, referring to the question of privilege previously raised by the member for Leeds—Grenville—Thousand Islands and Rideau Lakes. He explained that the committee report, which was not concurred in by the House, described several breaches of privilege. These included that the people summoned to appear had not appeared to give evidence, that the government had interfered by instructing them not to appear, and that the member for Waterloo, then a minister, had given evasive and inaccurate responses in her evidence.

The leader of the government in the House then intervened on the two questions of privilege by responding that all business from the previous Parliament ended with dissolution. He therefore argued that, in order to raise a question of privilege on these matters, a motion or a committee report would be needed in the new Parliament for the House to be seized of them. He later expressed the government's willingness to work with the opposition parties to find an appropriate mechanism to examine the documents that contain confidential national security information, like what was done in 2010 in the case of documents relating to the Afghan detainees. The member for Louis-St-Laurent countered that he did not believe such an approach was necessary in this case, given the mechanisms that had already been proposed to protect sensitive information.

The member for Winnipeg North also intervened to talk on the question of privilege raised by the member for Barrie—Innisfil. He argued that the quote from the 20th edition of *Erskine May*, to the effect that contempt can be punished during a different Parliament, does not apply in the current context. Moreover, unlike the members of departmental staff who were summoned to appear before the committee, it is the ministers who are responsible and who are accountable to Parliament.

• (1535)

[Translation]

The Chair has no doubt that the House or its committees can order a witness to appear or order the production of documents, as was the case with the orders adopted in the last session. It is not up to the government to decide what other people should have been summoned or to dictate the conditions for the production of documents.

*Business of Supply*

The order adopted must be respected. However, when the time comes to rule on the matters before us, the Chair must consider how dissolution affects the business of the House and its committees.

[English]

*House of Commons Procedure and Practice*, third edition, clearly stipulates, at page 397, the following:

With dissolution, all business of the House is terminated....The government's obligation to provide answers to written questions, to respond to petitions or to produce papers requested by the House also ends with dissolution....Committees cease to exist until the House reconstitutes them following the election. All orders of reference expire....

[Translation]

Consequently, as a result of the dissolution of the 43rd Parliament, the orders of the House from March 25 and June 2 and 17, 2021, have expired. The government and the people summoned to appear are released from their obligations. Similarly, the Special Committee on Canada-China Relations and the Standing Committee on Access to Information, Privacy and Ethics have ended, as have their studies. Any report presented in connection with the study involved only the committee from the previous Parliament.

[English]

As members have mentioned in their interventions, *House of Commons Procedure and Practice*, third edition, states at page 81, as follows:

Instances of contempt in one Parliament may even be punished during another Parliament.

[Translation]

A very similar formulation can be found in a previous edition of Erskine May, the procedural authority for the United Kingdom. As indicated by the member for Winnipeg North, it is not found in the current edition. The circumstances in which such an issue may be raised are, however, more limited than this citation suggests.

[English]

In fact, we find very few precedents where questions of privilege from a previous Parliament were raised during a new Parliament. The member for Leeds—Grenville—Thousand Islands and Rideau Lakes listed some of them in an intervention on November 24, 2021.

Distinctions must be made between the matter at hand and the precedents cited. When we examine the latter, the House had not expressed itself beforehand, because the incident or problem that occurred during the previous Parliament was brought to the House's attention for the first time in light of new facts. Speaker Parent, in his ruling of October 9, 1997, found no grounds in the absence of a committee report. When the questions of privilege were raised during the second session of the 43rd Parliament, they took account of the orders then in effect.

● (1540)

[Translation]

Dissolution put an end to the business of the House and of the committees and, thus, to the various orders. Since we are in a new Parliament, the issues raised are no longer before the House. It is up

to the House and its committees to decide whether it is desirable to adopt these orders once again in the new Parliament. Should that happen, it would be necessary to determine whether the government or the witnesses agree to comply before a question of privilege can be raised.

[English]

It is therefore not possible in the current circumstances to seize the House on these questions of privilege arising from the previous Parliament. Thus, the Chair cannot conclude that there is a *prima facie* question of privilege.

I thank the members for their attention.

[Translation]

I wish to inform the House that because of the deferred recorded divisions, Government Orders will be extended by 12 minutes.

\* \* \*

**BUSINESS OF SUPPLY**

OPPOSITION MOTION—HOUSING SUPPLY

The House resumed consideration of the motion.

**Mr. Darrell Samson (Parliamentary Secretary to the Minister of Veterans Affairs and Associate Minister of National Defence, Lib.):** Mr. Speaker, it is always a pleasure to be able to rise in the House and to speak on behalf of my constituents in Sackville—Preston—Chezzetcook. I look forward to sharing my views on affordable housing and our government's action plans.

In the Speech from the Throne, we focused on two very important issues: ensuring the health and safety of Canadians during the pandemic and building back better to grow the economy. That last point is crucial, and housing across Canada will be a key aspect.

During the election campaign, I heard from people all over my riding who talked about the need for more housing for various groups. I know this is true across the country.

During the pandemic, we became more aware of needs and acted swiftly to better respond to those urgent needs across Canada. That is why we launched the rapid housing initiative. We had to work with the provinces and municipalities to meet those needs as much as possible, and I am very pleased to say that we were successful. We were able to work quickly and build over 9,200 units across Canada in a very short period of time. I must congratulate the municipalities.

That being said, we have to recognize that we still have a lot of work to do. In the past, affordable housing challenges existed primarily in urban areas. We now see that the needs are elsewhere, in rural areas and across Canada.

*Business of Supply*

That is why we launched a national housing strategy a few years ago, the first of its kind in Canada. This clearly demonstrates that we realized how important this issue was when we took office a few years ago. At that time, we issued an action plan to move forward on housing.

The housing strategy is for seniors, the vulnerable, women and children fleeing violence, indigenous people and persons with disabilities. It is for many Canadians.

● (1545)

[*English*]

Our focus is that by 2027-28, we will see the elimination of chronic homelessness right across the country. We will see the construction of over 160,000 homes. We will see repairs and renovations to over 300,000 units. We will remove over 530,000 families from housing needs.

[*Translation*]

These numbers clearly show that we are getting down to work, and we are doing so in collaboration with the provinces and municipalities.

We launched another fund, the national housing co-investment fund, with a \$13.7-billion envelope, to invest in other levels of housing, which include the renovation of affordable housing that is aging or in disrepair and the construction of housing located near amenities, such as public transit, places of work, schools and families, in order to meet the needs.

I can confirm today that budget 2021 is providing more funding for this critical program.

In addition to all that, we have signed agreements with all 10 provinces and all three territories. That shows just how serious we are about this, how real the need is, and how keen the provinces and municipalities are to collaborate. That stands in stark contrast to the former Conservative government, which did not believe the federal government has any responsibility for housing here in Canada. These agreements are for \$13.5 billion over 10 years to help the provinces and territories achieve the goals in their action plans.

I am also extremely pleased to see another targeted investment to accelerate housing construction with municipalities. That means we will not have to work through the provinces quite as much to meet municipalities' needs. We will be able to work with them more directly to address more practical or unique situations, such as in places where problems and obstacles got in the way of this kind of construction.

By that, I mean the construction of new housing. We can invest in the infrastructure to enable construction. We can invest in land to help municipalities. We can invest in hiring many other people.

These initiatives are going a long way toward improving the situation on the ground.

I must also say that young people are in a difficult situation in terms of purchasing power or the ability to buy a new home, because the costs are very high. It is difficult to buy one's first home.

That is why our government is providing its support. It made a promise and will follow through on that promise to help young people with some strategies that give first-time homebuyers a lot more flexibility. Rent-to-own programs are also very worthwhile.

[*English*]

There is the rent-to-own program. The rent people pay contributes toward ownership. It is very important. This includes co-op homes as well. There are all kinds of strategies.

[*Translation*]

Our national housing strategy is definitely very useful, but we need partners. I want to thank the municipalities, provinces and territories that have worked with us and will continue to work with us to ensure that we can address urgent needs across Canada.

● (1550)

[*English*]

**Mr. Rick Perkins (South Shore—St. Margarets, CPC):** Mr. Speaker, I was impressed at the beginning of the speech by the hon. member for Sackville—Preston—Chezzetcook and the incredible list of things the Liberals hoped to accomplish in the future on housing. He shared an impressive number of statistics. I am sure the member knows that housing prices in our province have gone up 21% in the last year. That is more than the national Canadian average. The plans that the Liberal government has put forward clearly are not working.

Why should the people of Nova Scotia believe any of those promises on housing when the government and that party has promised a national child care program six elections in a row? If we are supposed to believe those numbers going forward on housing, could he tell me how many day care spaces his six elections of promises have created in Canada?

**Mr. Darrell Samson:** Mr. Speaker, my colleague is from Nova Scotia, as I am, and he is touching on topics of interest to me. Child care is one of the most important investments we can make. I am very proud that in January, we will be moving forward right across the country. We already have signed nine provinces. That is something of which to be proud. That is not talking; that is clear action.

I want to underline to my colleague that in the Conservative platform, the Conservatives wanted to give breaks to wealthy landlords. They were very clear in the Harper government that the federal government had no responsibility for housing across the country. We said that it was not right. That is why things are improving today, because we are on the ground working for Canadians.

*Business of Supply*

[Translation]

**Ms. Christine Normandin (Saint-Jean, BQ):** Mr. Speaker, my colleague mentioned that he is proud that agreements have been signed with 10 provinces and three territories. However, he did not mention that it took not one or two but three years for the agreement with Quebec to be signed. In those three years, no new housing could be built and the price of materials went up, which means that it costs more to build now than it did initially. Why is that? The reason is that the federal government decided that it wanted to build affordable housing, whereas Quebec already has expertise in social and community housing.

Would it not have been more efficient to simply transfer the money to Quebec?

**Mr. Darrell Samson:** Mr. Speaker, I thank my colleague from the Bloc Québécois for the question.

There is no doubt that housing is very important across Canada. Negotiations are negotiations. We want to make sure that we are meeting the needs on the ground. Whether we are talking about Canadians from Quebec, western Canada or Newfoundland, we have to meet their needs.

Here is something they can count on: Today our government has something on the ground. Both parties are satisfied. If the Conservatives were in power, there would not be any negotiations because they would not be investing in housing in Quebec.

[English]

**Ms. Bonita Zarrillo (Port Moody—Coquitlam, NDP):** Mr. Speaker, as someone who was on the ground for almost nine years in a municipality struggling with affordable housing, I wish we had seen this passion from the government when we saw money laundering, the lowest incomes, those with the most wealth taking advantage of housing to earn interest and the gentrification of family neighbourhoods.

I want to ask a question about the rapid housing initiative. We know that under the initiative, many applications were denied. I wonder if the member can tell us how many of the rapid housing requests submitted by municipalities were denied. My colleague from Courtenay—Alberni had a community-sponsored one, and it was denied.

**Mr. Darrell Samson:** Mr. Speaker, I can tell the member that if there is any reason some of the rapid housing projects did not hit the ground, it is the provincial government, not the municipal governments. This had to become a priority of the provincial government.

The good news for the member is that the new accelerator fund for municipalities will help directly. She can go back home and tell her constituents how this program will help her municipality and the people in her riding.

● (1555)

**The Deputy Speaker:** Before we move on, I will remind a few of the male MPs online that if they want to ask questions, they should be sure to wear a jacket and tie to do so. The dress code in the House is also the dress code for members joining us online.

Resuming debate, the hon. member for Kenora.

**Mr. Eric Melillo (Kenora, CPC):** Mr. Speaker, it is a pleasure to join the debate today on our Conservative opposition day motion addressing the topic of housing, which is so important to people in the Kenora riding and across northern Ontario. I am pleased to join my Conservative colleagues, who have done a great job speaking about this issue in their own ridings. I am looking forward to hearing more about what they have to say going forward, including the great member for Elgin—Middlesex—London, whom I am very pleased to be sharing my time with today. She has been a great advocate for her riding in this chamber and especially for women and girls across the country. I thank her for her work on that important file.

Housing is by far the number one issue I am hearing about in the Kenora riding right now. In my riding, I represent nine municipalities and 42 first nations across a very vast, diverse area. There is quite frequently a number of different issues, depending on where we are in the region. However, the one thing that has been unifying is the issue of housing, whether in a municipality, a first nation, or even the unincorporated areas.

Whether I am in Kenora, Dryden, Sioux Lookout, Sioux Narrows, Ear Falls, Slate Falls, Red Lake, Pickle Lake, Bearskin Lake or Kasabonika Lake, I am hearing about the housing issue. I recently had the chance, after the last election and before Parliament reconvened, to visit all nine municipalities in my riding and many first nations as well. I can tell members that municipal and first nation leaders have consistently raised this issue. What they tell me is that it is more than just a housing issue, but it is specifically about housing supply. “Supply, supply, supply” is all I hear across the riding, and I am sure that many members in this chamber have heard similar things at home as well.

The issues we are seeing are touching people from all walks of life, whether they are looking for affordable housing, starter homes or family homes. Even seniors looking to move into a seniors home are not able to find one. The only way we can address that is to increase the supply through, for example, the plan we put forward in the last election campaign, which is included in this motion, to free up and release 15% of federal land for development. I heard on the doorsteps that it was a very positive plan to put forward to help address the root cause of the crisis.

This is especially important in a region like mine. The Ear Falls community, for example, is quite large geographically. After passing the sign that says “Welcome to Ear Falls”, it feels like forever until we actually get to the community. The population is very small and the tax base is very small, and a bulk of the land within the municipal limits is Crown land. That has been a problem not just for residential development, frankly, but for commercial development as well. The community is having a lot of trouble growing because it has had difficulty acquiring the land that it needs for development and to attract people to the community.

Of course, in the last campaign we talked about the economy and our economic recovery from COVID-19. Many people noted to me that we cannot have a recovery in northwestern Ontario or in my riding of Kenora if people do not have houses to move into. That is really the crux of why this is such an important issue.



Another example I like to give is Kasabonika Lake First Nation, a community that some time ago was actually displaced by the federal government. The community is now essentially all on one island in the northern part of my riding. People there have really outgrown the area they are living on. They are looking for opportunities for development and for more housing units, but they have nowhere to go. They have had a very difficult time working with the federal government to access more land and expand their borders.

That is why, specifically on the supply side, I believe the motion we put forward today is taking a tremendous step in the right direction of addressing this housing crisis.

• (1600)

In the motion, we have also proposed to ban foreign investors from purchasing Canadian real estate. This issue is, I guess, a bit bigger in the larger centres. As we know, commonly, foreign investment is coming into centres like Vancouver and the GTA, not as much into the Kenora riding, frankly. However, it is important to note that the effects of market changes and the pressures that are put on rising home prices in the GTA, for example, expand beyond big city borders, as people are now looking to move to Huntsville, the Muskokas and other areas, and are expanding farther and farther away. Eventually, these higher prices will make their way into northern Ontario and rural and remote parts of the country, so I am happy to see that the motion is proposing this.

Something else has become a bit of a topic of discussion today. We are asking the government to commit to never introducing a capital gains tax on the sale of a primary residence. We know this is something the government had flirted with in the past. If I am not mistaken, the previous member for Spadina—Fort York was once a proponent of this. Government members have now gone to great lengths to try to distance themselves from their own platform and from their previous comments. Frankly, I am glad to see they are trying to do that, because we know this would only penalize and discourage Canadians from selling their homes, which is certainly not going to help us address the housing supply crisis.

The motion we put forward has a number of very important elements. Is it going to fix the housing crisis? Of course it will not. This is a deep-rooted issue. There are many facets to it and many things we need to do to move forward. However, this is an incredible step in the right direction, specifically the first point I mentioned about releasing 15% of federal land for development. Once again, I cannot reiterate strongly enough how important that would be for the people in my riding.

One thing has troubled me about the debate today. We put forward the plan that we ran on, which many economists and observers said was one of the strongest housing plans put forward in the last election, but what we are seeing from government members is they are digging in their heels and doing a bit of grandstanding. They are saying that nothing is broken, that they do not need to change gears and do not need to sway from the plan they are currently moving forward. The government has made some progress and has been trying to address this crisis. However, the fact of the matter is that housing prices are continuing to soar. I believe they have gone up 30% over the course of this government.

### *Business of Supply*

I think it is important that we have a very robust discussion about all the different ways we can address this. We can work together in the House. In my view, that is why we brought forward the motion today. It is so that we can have a discussion, find a path forward and start to build upon the work that this government and all previous governments have done to help address this issue. This is something we have been seeing for a number of years, but it has been exacerbated by the rising cost of living, inflation and many other factors.

I look forward to hearing questions and comments from my colleagues. I am hoping to hear some new ideas and a positive discussion on how we can move this motion forward and ensure that we make housing more affordable for all Canadians.

• (1605)

**Mr. Mark Gerretsen (Parliamentary Secretary to the Leader of the Government in the House of Commons (Senate), Lib.):** Mr. Speaker, I was really hoping that this afternoon, the discussion on this motion would not be the same train wreck it was this morning. It was all over the place.

We heard this morning the Conservatives try to backtrack on the fact that we were talking about land. They said no, it is not 15% of land; it is 15% of buildings. They meant the buildings on Bay Street in Toronto and whatnot. However, the member just said, “release 15% of federal land”. I would encourage him to go to Hansard to check it out. He actually said “federal land”.

Given that we know 97% of federal land is tied up in Parks Canada, Environment Canada and National Defence, can the member please explain to the House which parts of Parks Canada or National Defence he is looking to divest the country of so we can free up the land he referenced?

**Mr. Eric Melillo:** Mr. Speaker, I know the member really enjoys the theatrics of this place and likes to contribute to that quite a bit.

To reiterate, we need to be looking at ways we can work together, as I said, to ensure we are increasing the housing supply in this country.

I encourage the member to come and join me on a trip to the northern part of my riding to see how the housing crisis is manifesting itself and why it is so important for the government and this Parliament to work toward that. I hope the member will actually start working with the opposition, with all members, instead of just his political grandstanding.

[*Translation*]

**Mr. Luc Desilets (Rivière-des-Mille-Îles, BQ):** Mr. Speaker, Quebec will need 50,000 new housing units in the next five years.

I would like to know my colleague's opinion on the following. The Bloc Québécois is proposing that 1% of the federal government's revenue be invested directly into housing and housing only in order to have predictable and stable funding. What does my colleague think of that?

The goal is to avoid having ad hoc agreements, as we have seen in the past. Earlier my colleague talked about an agreement that took three years for Quebec and Ottawa to negotiate.

*Business of Supply*

[English]

**Mr. Eric Melillo:** Mr. Speaker, of course my colleague would understand the situation in Quebec far better than I would. This is definitely the kind of thing we need to be talking about. These are the discussions we need to have. Unfortunately, I do not have enough time to go into the detail I need to with the member, but those innovative ideas are all the things we need to be talking about to help find some unique and innovative ways to help address this crisis.

**Ms. Bonita Zarrillo (Port Moody—Coquitlam, NDP):** Mr. Speaker, I thank the member for the summary of the things being put forward by the Conservatives. I wanted to speak a little about using public assets for potential private development.

This happened at the provincial level in my very own riding with schools. What were considered to be excess school sites were sold off, but then, when development came around, we needed to buy land again for schools, so it is in my mind that I would not want that to happen to public assets.

My question is around the 15%. These are public assets, including public buildings and public real estate. Do the Conservatives support the idea that they should stay in the public's hands and that they should be social housing or subsidized federal housing?

**Mr. Eric Melillo:** Mr. Speaker, it is important we look at all solutions. We need to ensure we have affordable housing and that we have public units, no question about it, but we also have to work with the private sector. We have to encourage development in all areas.

What I am seeing in the Kenora riding is that this is something happening right across the board. There is a shortage of housing when it comes to affordable housing, starter housing and, really, housing for people in all stages of life, so we need to work to find a number of ways to work toward this.

**Ms. Elizabeth May (Saanich—Gulf Islands, GP):** Mr. Speaker, I want to begin by welcoming the hon. member for Kenora here. I have had the opportunity to exchange with him in the House, and I did not have the chance to say it, but I find his approach very respectful. I really enjoy engaging with him.

I want to ask whether he thinks there is a benefit, and this is not in the Conservative motion, to creating programs that encourage the building of purpose-built rental housing. It is a big gap, and I wonder if he has any thoughts on that.

• (1610)

**Mr. Eric Melillo:** Mr. Speaker, I believe the short answer is yes, this is definitely a very positive idea. Of course there are a number of things we can talk about at great length. Unfortunately, I do not have the time, as I see the Speaker is about to get up, but I appreciate the opportunity to respond.

**Mrs. Karen Vecchio (Elgin—Middlesex—London, CPC):** Mr. Speaker, I thank my colleague from Kenora for that great speech on a topic I believe all of us as parliamentarians are very concerned with.

To begin, I want to read the motion into the record. I have been listening to a lot of the questions throughout this debate, and I want

to get some people back on track as they ask questions because they have been a little off on things.

Our motion states:

That, given that,

(i) the government has failed to increase the housing supply in Canada,

(ii) the government's \$400 billion of new spending has produced a surge of inflationary pressure that has driven home prices more than 30% above pre-pandemic levels,

the House call on the government to:

(a) review and consolidate all federal real estate and properties in Canada in order to make at least 15% available for residential development;

(b) ban foreign investors from purchasing Canadian real estate; and

(c) commit to never introducing a capital gains tax on the sale of primary residences.

I am going to start with that because, after hearing so many of the questions being asked here, I think we really have to talk about what the housing continuum looks like and what happens when we have bubbles on each rung of the housing continuum ladder. Where we are now is a heck of a lot worse than where we were just two years ago. I want to talk a lot about the housing continuum.

In my former role as the shadow minister for families, children and social development from 2015 to 2019, housing was under that portfolio. During that time, in November 2018, the national housing strategy was announced, and we saw a lot of spending that was to be happening further into the future. However, we have to look at where we are now, the reality today.

I work a lot, and very closely, with LSTAR, the London St. Thomas Association of Realtors. Of course, that is part CREA, the Canadian Real Estate Association. I have had the opportunity to work with it in my role over the last six years, and previously in my role as an assistant to the member, so throughout those years I have really been paying attention to this. Perhaps it is because I am a mother of five and I do not want my 18-year-old living in the basement for the rest of his life, but these are things that are really important to me, such as the future for our children.

I am very fortunate that my husband and I were able to buy a house in 2002 at an expensive \$114,000. Today, that house, with the addition we put on, is worth over six times that price. I can say that the value is so not there. I wondered how this happened, so I started looking at some of the simple solutions to the issues we are having, and one of the first things I want to talk about is supply.

I want to focus on the London and southwestern Ontario region. When we look at its housing supply in November of 2021, we see it was 0.4 units. Its supply 10 years before, in November 2012, was 4.8 units. Therefore, we have seen a decrease in supply of 4.4 units. That is part of our problem. If we cannot get things built, we have a problem.

The active listings under LSTAR for November of this year, 2021, were only 210 compared to 2012, when there were 1,625. The math is very simple. That is a difference of 1,400 listings.

Right now, when looking at housing and the average prices, they are between \$625,000 and \$632,000, with a median price of \$662,500.

I represent Elgin—Middlesex—London. Part of that riding includes the County of Middlesex. In November of 2021, we saw that the average price for a home in Middlesex, and my colleague from Lambton—Kent—Middlesex is seeing the same prices, was \$991,000, so I have been really focusing on this and looking to see what we can do.

Mike Moffat, who is a member of the Ontario Home Builders' Association, has talked about this crisis we are going through. From July 1, 2016, to June 30, 2021, we have seen Ontario's population grow by one million people in just five years. The demand and supply are totally mismatched. There are one million new people living in Ontario, but they have no home.

That is something we need to be concerned with. If we continue to grow our population, this is part of what we need to do. We always talk about viewing the things we are looking at through a lens. This is one issue we need to look at through with this lens.

• (1615)

What are we going to do for our infrastructure? What are we going to do for jobs and employment? For me, the question is what are we going to do for housing because, as everybody knows, housing first is very, very important as that first step to home ownership, and for livelihood as well. The projections have indicated that an additional 911,347 households will be formed in the next 10 years, so I am hoping that we can all work together, recognizing that this problem is not going to go away, so we need a solution.

I want to go back, though, to the costs because this is something that I think of in relation to myself and my five children. I look at my 27-year-old son. He has a family. He would like to buy a home. He has been saving his money after leaving the Canadian Armed Forces, and he would like to provide a home for his family. He has put approximately \$30,000 into his bank account for savings, and we know that is far from enough for today.

I want to look at what the prices are today compared to what we saw pre-pandemic. In Elgin County, the benchmark price, what people are expecting to receive, is \$524,000, but the average price these houses were selling for in February 2021 was \$609,000. In South London, another part of my riding, \$527,000 is the benchmark, but they are selling right now for \$651,000. In Middlesex, we are seeing the same problems. In the city of St. Thomas, the area I live in, housing has gone up by \$100,000 for a medium house. We went from \$440,000 to \$548,000 in one year.

I want to look at some of the statistics and look back at where we were in 2020 for the county of Elgin, where we have the city of St. Thomas, but where we also have 10 different municipalities making up Elgin—Middlesex—London. The average price in February 2020, just weeks before this pandemic started, was \$387,000. In the city of St. Thomas, the average cost was \$376,000. I just shared that we saw other prices of over \$500,000.

I think of my constituents. What are they going to do? We have some of the best real estate agents and some of the best home

### *Business of Supply*

builders. I think of Doug Tarry Homes, which has been part of the Ontario Home Builders' Association and does a lot of things with NRCAN to make sure we have housing that is efficient. We are coming up with solutions. I am part of the LSTAR Libro housing coalition. We are working together in our region on what we can do better and look for some of the solutions. Therefore, land is something that we know is a problem.

I am going to refer back to the motion. When we talk about giving up some of the federal assets so we can build land, we are talking about, sometimes, open spaces. I think of my own downtown in St. Thomas. It is about two kilometres long. We know that there are a lot of offices. We know that there are a lot of private and government spaces that could be used for housing.

When it comes to working with our municipalities and our provinces, I urge members to make sure that, when we take a bite out of the housing problem we have, we have to work together. We have to look at how we can take some of these places and change them, and how we can take them from commercial entities to residential entities. That is the type of work we need to do.

We have talked a lot about what the future is for our children. I just want to read from a recent report from the Mustel Group and Sotheby's International Realty Canada. It revealed the issue of the dream. I just want to read from these statistics, which read, "75% of urban [Canadian] Generation Z adults are likely to buy and own a primary residence in their lifetime".

It then states that currently one in 10 people owns their own home, so that is a very small amount. One in 10 individuals owns their own home in generation Z. The article continues, saying that 82% are worried that they will not be able to buy in their community of choice due to the rising real estate costs.

I can say that is exactly what we are seeing. I am on that 401 corridor where we have seen people migrate from the GTA. I always say it is because we are one of the most beautiful constituencies in the entire country, but it is also because the cost of housing is lower there.

The article also states that 70% of people want to buy a family single home and that 50% have already given up the traditional dream.

We know that one of the top barriers is inflation. Before I finish, I will say that we have an issue. It is not just a housing crisis, but it is also the inflationary issue. If people are going to be putting money into their RRSPs so they can save money, the cost of living needs to be reduced. Therefore, I am asking the government to please step forward and help the next generation.

*Business of Supply*

• (1620)

**Mr. Kevin Lamoureux (Parliamentary Secretary to the Leader of the Government in the House of Commons, Lib.):** Mr. Speaker, my colleague and I could probably agree on the ways in which organizations in our communities can contribute positively to our current situation. Where I am inclined to somewhat disagree with the member is that the Conservatives seem to be of the opinion that there are vast quantities of land, millions of hectares, that the federal government can convert, taking it away from Parks Canada, National Defence and Environment Canada. That makes up 95%. They are talking about millions of hectares.

I am wondering if the member could explain to the House where the Conservatives got that number from. Was it the member for Carleton who said there were millions of hectares of land that we could convert? Where did they get the six million number from?

**Mrs. Karen Vecchio:** Mr. Speaker, that is a misleading question, so I am going to state the facts. There are 37,246 buildings. We know there has been a vast change when we look at employment. We know that more people are working from home, as I just heard the NDP member for Nanaimo—Ladysmith say.

We talk about converting buildings. In the city of St. Thomas, Scott Street Public School was converted and now there is affordable housing there. It is used for social housing, with the City of St. Thomas as the developer. We saw something happen, and it was good for all of the people who wanted to live there.

[*Translation*]

**Mr. Jean-Denis Garon (Mirabel, BQ):** Mr. Speaker, my colleague clearly has a lot of empathy for her constituents in Elgin—Middlesex—London.

I want to point out that, between 2011 and 2016, during the Harper era, Canada lost more than 320,000 housing units for the least fortunate Canadians.

I would like to know how my colleague defines a housing bubble. Once prices stabilize, will the Conservative Party lose interest in the housing shortage again?

[*English*]

**Mrs. Karen Vecchio:** Mr. Speaker, I am going to talk a bit about the housing bubble. There is a continuum that I call the rungs of a ladder. When a shelter has a bubble, when a rental unit or geared-to-income unit has a bubble, when a first-time home has a bubble, and when the market value has a bubble, it means people cannot get to the next rung. If that rung is busy, people cannot get up there. I think of so many people who try to leave shelters and geared-to-income housing. If there is no supply, they cannot move forward.

We need to work together at all levels of government to ensure that we are addressing each and every level.

**Ms. Michelle Ferreri (Peterborough—Kawartha, CPC):** Mr. Speaker, I would love to hear more from my colleague about how we are going to help the homeless situation, which is dire in my riding of Peterborough—Kawartha, with this motion.

How would implementing the three specific targets in the motion help the homeless crisis?

**Mrs. Karen Vecchio:** Mr. Speaker, it is something I see on my own streets. I am very passionate about Elgin—Middlesex—London, but I do not know if there is a street across the city, or a community where homelessness is not apparent. We have to work on this. Part of it is mental health and addictions, part of it is development and part of it is economic.

To me, the housing first strategy that the Harper government put forward in its 10 years was a good thing. Anybody who works in housing says housing first was what we ultimately needed to do. Yes, we need wraparound services and it can be better, but I am really proud of what Conservatives put forward.

• (1625)

**Ms. Bonita Zarrillo (Port Moody—Coquitlam, NDP):** Mr. Speaker, it looks like we may have some common ground on partnerships and potential social housing opportunities.

I would ask this again. Would the Conservatives consider an amendment to the 15%? That could be kept in public hands and used for social housing.

**Mrs. Karen Vecchio:** Mr. Speaker, an amendment has to be made through the member who moved the motion, but I will continue to advocate with the developers and all levels of government to ensure that social housing is also there. We need something that helps all Canadians. Whether it is the working poor, those without homes or those at the top of the scale, we need to be working with all Canadians.

**Mr. Mark Gerretsen (Parliamentary Secretary to the Leader of the Government in the House of Commons (Senate), Lib.):** Mr. Speaker, it is great to rise today to speak to this motion that has taken on a bunch of different forms today.

I will be sharing my time with the member for Scarborough Centre.

Where I will start is by properly answering the question that the parliamentary secretary asked the member for Elgin—Middlesex—London. He asked where the number of 41 million hectares of land came from. I can actually answer that question.

I would encourage anybody out there who is watching this, and who might be interested, to google the Treasury Board of Canada Secretariat and land. It will show the actual list of land that is owned by the federal government. It starts to break down how much land is owned by each department within the federal government.

The end result where it gives a total is just under 41 million hectares of land. That is where the member for Carleton, who first started talking about this a number of days ago in question period, got his number of 41 million hectares of land. It is from the Treasury Board of Canada Secretariat document that outlines where the land that the federal government owns is actually located.

The problem is that, when we start to dig into it and look at the various departments that own land, members will notice that the top three own 97% of the land. Parks Canada owns just under 36 million hectares of the 41 million hectares. Environment and Climate Change Canada owns 2.4 million hectares and National Defence owns 2.2 million.

Why is this so important to talk about? It is because the entire premise for this motion, and the narrative we have heard from the Conservative Party this week, has been the idea that the federal government has all of this land available that can suddenly become ready for housing. I want to dive into this for a second to examine why the Conservatives are making this claim and why it is such a false claim to make.

For starters, I do not think that any member in the House is going to actually suggest that Parks Canada land should be divested for housing. More importantly, there would be very little Parks Canada land that would be serviceable for the creation of housing.

Earlier, I mentioned to the member for Edmonton Riverbend the planning responsibilities of municipal councils. He was oddly critical of municipal governments for somehow being responsible for the problem we are in right now. I will come back to that in a second.

There is this idea that we can just take land and start using it. The truth is it is not developable land, and certainly not 15%, which is what they are suggesting. One has to ask: Why are the Conservatives talking about land as though that is the only solution to the problem that we have? It is twofold. First, they think that running around and saying this 41 million number sounds so incredible. If that was all someone knew, they would ask why we were not using that land until they started to understand, as I have tried to outline, where the land is from. It is a really good talking point because it will come off very well.

More importantly, why do Conservatives focus so much on land? Why do they not talk about buildings? Why does the member for Carleton not talk about buildings? It is because the Conservatives know that those who develop land are part of their base. When we sever off land and look to build housing on it, no federal government is going to go into an area and start severing individual property lots to sell to individual people to build housing on. They are going to sell to a developer.

• (1630)

They are going to sell hectares at a time to developers who are going to develop that land to build housing. It explains why they were dead set against the NDP amendment to this, because that is their base: developers and people who build things. It is fine. We should be supportive of developers, but that should not be the only area we look at. When we talk about developing housing affordability, we also need to talk about affordable housing. The term the member for Elgin—Middlesex—London was trying to get was “rent geared to income”. A lot of people out there need their rent geared to their income. Severing off land and selling it to developers who are going to build houses is not going to help the problem of people who need rent that is geared to their income.

### *Business of Supply*

The other issue that I wanted to go back to was how the member for Edmonton Riverbend criticized me earlier this morning, as though I was part of the problem that we are now in when I was on city council, because we were not able to tackle this problem as a municipal government. Members can imagine that. A member of Parliament, through one statement, has broadly accused every city council in the country that has a problem with housing for creating this problem.

I would like to educate the member for Edmonton Riverbend on what I went through. My introduction into politics was sitting on the affordable housing development committee in the city of Kingston. Do members know who brought forward money in order to enable that? It was the Dalton McGuinty provincial Liberal government. I brought this up earlier, and the member for Edmonton Riverbend started asking if I wanted to lump myself in with the McGuinty and Wynne governments.

They were the only ones doing anything for housing. Stephen Harper would not put any money into housing. I sat on the committee that received the funding from the provincial government and used it to build housing in the Kingston area. Not a dime came from the feds. It all came from the province. For this Conservative member to somehow accuse city councils throughout the country of creating this problem, when the previous Conservative government played a major role in limiting the funds, is extremely disingenuous.

The member for Kenora accused me of political grandstanding. He should read the first line in this motion, if he wants to talk about political grandstanding and implying that governments are failing. This is the problem with Conservative motions. They always do this: They bring in these motions that have one clause they know we will never support, and then try to put in a bunch of reasonable clauses, not because they actually think the motion will get passed, but because they want to say later on that they brought this forward and talked about capital gains, and the Liberals would not vote for it. They will say they told the House what we were doing all along.

This is the problem with these opposition motions from the Conservatives. Every time they bring them here, they do not actually expect them to pass. All they are trying to do is create ammunition for their next political fight, which is disingenuous to what they are supposed to be doing in this place: helping Canadians with the problems they are having. They refuse to do that. I feel bad for the Bloc, because I think that the Bloc members came in today thinking they would support this and that it made sense, but as the day has been going on and the holes have been shot straight through the opposition motion, they are probably starting to wonder how they can possibly reassess their position on this.

In any event, I have appreciated the time that I have had to speak on this today. This is, unfortunately, not a motion that I am going to be able to support. That is no surprise to the Conservatives. Nonetheless, this government will continue to fight for Canadians and make sure we can bring in as much housing supply as we possibly can.

*Business of Supply*

● (1635)

**Mr. Matt Jeneroux (Edmonton Riverbend, CPC):** Mr. Speaker, unfortunately, I did not catch the majority of the member's speech. It was on mute in the back, so I apologize to the member, but I can probably guess some of the things he said, so let me start from there.

He has had better days in this chamber. First of all, he tied himself to the Kathleen Wynne Liberals right off the bat. He brought up his failed tenure as mayor of Kingston and has yet to recognize that young families cannot afford a home in this country.

Maybe the member should pick a different day to show up. This day has been a terrible day for him.

**Mr. Mark Gerretsen:** Mr. Speaker, he should have kept it on mute and become aware that I was out here with that question. Kathleen Wynne and Dalton McGuinty were giving the cities money to build housing. Stephen Harper, his Prime Minister at the time, was not doing that.

[*Translation*]

**Mr. Rhéal Fortin (Rivière-du-Nord, BQ):** Mr. Speaker, my hon. colleague's speech sounded a lot like the other speeches I have heard from the other side of the House. I have been here for six years, the Liberals have been in power for six years, and things have not been going well for six years. The Liberals blame this on the Conservatives, and the Conservatives obviously throw the blame back on the Liberals.

I do not care about any of that. All I want to know is why can we not just agree on something? The Conservatives introduced a motion on a major problem. I am not a Conservative, but the Bloc Québécois will support their motion because we think it is a good idea and could help us out of this mess we are in.

Would my Liberal colleague agree that his party should take a step in the right direction, show some good faith and say that it will support the Conservatives on this? We could finally, for the first time in six years, say we did something reasonable.

[*English*]

**Mr. Mark Gerretsen:** Mr. Speaker, the cozy coalition between the Conservatives and the Bloc continues.

The member just said that the motion makes sense. The motion calls for 15% of the 41 million hectares of federal land, of which 97% are Environment, Parks Canada and National Defence.

I will ask a question back to the member. Can he tell us what part of those lands in Quebec he wants to give up in order to make this motion successful?

**The Deputy Speaker:** Obviously the member knows that is not how it works here.

Questions and comments, the hon. member for Port Moody—Coquitlam.

**Ms. Bonita Zarrillo (Port Moody—Coquitlam, NDP):** Mr. Speaker, I want to start by thanking the hon. member for his defence of the municipalities and city councillors in this country. They have been tirelessly working to find ways to get housing on the ground, whether it is variances, density bonuses or housing af-

fordability funds, because the federal government has not come forward with the funding that is needed. I thank him for those comments.

I wanted to talk about the 15% again. In my riding of Port Moody—Coquitlam, we recently had a federal post office close down. It is an excellent building in an excellent location, walkable to parks and services and schools. I wonder how much real estate is available for this kind of redevelopment.

**Mr. Mark Gerretsen:** Mr. Speaker, that is an excellent question and the member is right. There are city councils throughout this country that have been working tirelessly to build affordable housing for this country. For the member for Edmonton Riverbend to suggest that it is their fault that this all happened is ludicrous.

As the parliamentary secretary to the government House leader said earlier, we already have an initiative in place like this. We have a land bank, basically, where surplus federal land will go. There is a process to divest of that land. I believe, when I was on municipal council, it was first offered to the province and then to the municipalities. We can perhaps talk about adjusting that. How do we change that to be more effective at distributing those surplus lands?

The member is absolutely right. That is going to be where the success is. We need to find these parcels of property that are in highly dense areas and retrofit and rebuild them, not look for 15% of the 41 million acres of land the federal government owns.

● (1640)

**The Deputy Speaker:** Before continuing debate, 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 Lambton—Kent—Middlesex, Regional Economic Development; the hon. member for Kitchener Centre, Climate Change; the hon. member for Bay of Quinte, The Economy.

**Mrs. Salma Zahid (Scarborough Centre, Lib.):** Mr. Speaker, congratulations to you on your new role.

Affordable housing and the high cost of safe and suitable housing is one of the biggest issues for the residents of my riding of Scarborough Centre, so I welcome the opportunity to speak to this pressing issue and share some of the solutions our government is already working on, which, unlike the few actual specifics proposed in this motion, actually can and are addressing this issue in a serious and meaningful way.

*Business of Supply*

Our government is committed to ensuring that Canada's communities are healthy, sustainable and productive places to live and prosper. An essential part of attaining that goal is making housing affordable and accessible. In the Speech from the Throne, we committed to further investment in housing that will see more units built, increase affordable housing and ultimately put an end to chronic homelessness in Canada. In fact, investments in affordable housing are front and centre in our government's efforts to build diverse, inclusive communities that strengthen our economy and support our continued prosperity. Everyone deserves a safe, secure and affordable place to call home.

Since 2015, our government has invested close to \$30 billion in housing, and we have helped create more housing for over one million Canadians from coast to coast to coast. It is why we introduced Canada's first-ever national housing strategy in 2017, a 10-year, \$72-billion plan that is improving housing affordability for all Canadians.

The national housing strategy addresses housing security needs with an emphasis on populations made vulnerable, such as seniors, indigenous people, and women and children fleeing domestic violence. By supporting climate-compatible, resilient and affordable housing, we are taking important steps to support Canada's climate change initiative. The national housing strategy will help ensure that the current and next generation of affordable and community housing in Canada is sustainable and built to last.

As part of the national housing strategy, we have introduced the rapid housing initiative, a \$2.5-billion program to finance the construction of modular housing, as well as the acquisition of land and the conversion of existing buildings to affordable housing.

I had an opportunity earlier this year to take part in a modular housing announcement in my riding with the City of Toronto, a 57-unit supportive housing site that will be managed by a non-profit housing provider. This is the kind of initiative that makes a real and immediate difference in the lives of people made vulnerable across Canada.

Let me talk about another program, the rental construction financing initiative. This program has seen incredible uptake since it was launched five years ago, and it is making a real difference for middle-class Canadians. It is a well-known fact that there is a shortage of purpose-built rental supply in Canada. Many of our cities have extremely low vacancy rates. This has driven up prices to the point where the very people who make our cities run can no longer afford to live in them.

We cannot just keep pushing the middle class to the suburbs if we want vibrant, inclusive cities. I see this every day in Scarborough. Our rental stock is old and dated and ill-suited to the needs of the many multi-generational families who call Scarborough home. People are afraid to move to new rental housing that may be more suitable, because they just cannot afford the massive increases in rent they have been somewhat shielded from as long-term tenants in their current rental units.

The rental construction financing initiative addresses this exact problem. It gives developers low-cost loans during the riskiest phases of construction. This helps developers to better predict

costs, and they are more incentivized to build rental projects, all while meeting important criteria in terms of affordability, accessibility and energy efficiency.

From the beginning, the program generated great interest from the housing sector. To meet the growing demand, we increased our investments to \$13.75 billion. It is estimated that when the rental construction financing initiative comes to an end in 2028, the \$26 billion invested will have created more than 71,000 new rental housing units across this country. In other words, 71,000 more middle-class families will be able to find housing they can afford in the cities where they live.

● (1645)

We are taking steps to make housing more accessible, more sustainable and more affordable. These investments will give Canadians a healthier, greener and more affordable place to call home. We are helping communities implement more permanent housing solutions by providing them with the flexibility to direct funds toward local priority areas as part of the response to this pandemic. We have heard the concerns of Canadians, and they want us to do our part to ensure that they have affordable options wherever they are on the housing continuum. We know that housing affordability is a priority for people across Canada, as it is a priority for this government.

When I look at the motion from the opposition, I do not see much that will help my constituents in Scarborough. We do not have surplus federal land.

Our government is implementing, as of January 1, 2022, a national tax on non-resident, non-Canadian owners of vacant, under-used housing, and we will extend this to include foreign-owned vacant land within large urban areas. We also committed in our platform to temporarily banning new foreign ownership in Canadian housing, to ensure that Canadians have more access to purchasing homes.

The idea of a capital gains tax on the sale of a primary residence has never been considered by our government. It is a Conservative fiction designed to distract from their own lack of serious ideas and a decade of a Conservative government where they abandoned any federal role on housing.

Again, the Conservatives decry the support that our government provided to Canadians during this pandemic. This \$400 billion they villainize in the motion before us is money that allowed people in Scarborough and across Canada to make their mortgage and rent payments during the height of the pandemic. It allowed businesses to keep staff on the payroll, stay in business and keep their doors open in the darkest hours. These programs literally allowed people to stay in their homes. How can Conservatives say they want to solve the housing crisis when they oppose helping people keep their homes during a pandemic?

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On this side of the House, we are taking strong action to make a real difference in the lives of families. We laid out that plan in the recent Speech from the Throne. The government will help families buy their first home sooner with a more flexible first-time home-buyer incentive and a new rent-to-own program, as well as by reducing the closing costs for first-time buyers. The \$4-billion housing accelerator fund will increase the housing supply.

We are building stronger communities in which people can live, play, work and do business, and we are committed to working with the municipalities, provinces and territories as partners to address this housing crisis. Canadians expect serious leadership and collaboration, and that is what we will deliver.

• (1650)

[Translation]

**Mr. Luc Desilets (Rivière-des-Mille-Îles, BQ):** Mr. Speaker, my colleague will have to explain a few things to me. She talked about an effective measure that provides for the construction of 70,000 housing units in the next few years. However, Quebec alone needs 50,000 units in the next five years. Where is the logic behind that?

[English]

**Mrs. Salma Zahid:** Mr. Speaker, yes, there is a need for more housing units to be built, which is why, in this mandate, we are proposing a \$4-billion housing accelerator fund that will help to increase the supply of housing. It is why we are making it easier for new homebuyers to buy their new homes through the flexible first-time homebuyers incentive. We are trying to reduce the closing costs and to create a new rent-to-own program.

**Ms. Laurel Collins (Victoria, NDP):** Mr. Speaker, in my riding, we have an incredible organization, the Aboriginal Coalition to End Homelessness. It does incredible work in our community, but it needs permanent, stable core funding.

Indigenous advocates and the NDP have been calling on the government to develop and fund a “for indigenous, by indigenous” housing strategy. Although the funding component is critically important, it is also important that indigenous people be directly involved in developing and governing the strategy.

Why has this not happened yet? The Liberals have been in power for six years. Will the member commit to pushing her government for a “for indigenous, by indigenous” housing strategy?

**Mrs. Salma Zahid:** Mr. Speaker, it is really important that we have a housing plan for indigenous peoples. We have invested in a plan for indigenous people. The national housing strategy targets many groups like seniors, indigenous people, and women and children fleeing home.

I look forward to working with my colleague to ensure that we have more housing built for indigenous people.

**Mr. Colin Carrie (Oshawa, CPC):** Mr. Speaker, my colleague is my neighbour just down the street. I was wondering if she could comment on the government's proposals to make things more affordable.

I am getting a lot of complaints from young people. To put it in perspective, in 2015, in Oshawa, the average price of a home

was \$362,958. The prediction for this March coming up is going to be over \$1 million, \$1,157 million. Many young people are complaining that the dream of home ownership is out of reach. It is getting to a point where they just do not see a way of making it happen.

Could my colleague explain her government's plan for young people specifically?

**Mrs. Salma Zahid:** Mr. Speaker, yes, we are seeing inflation. It is a global phenomenon.

If the hon. member really wants to help Ontario families, it is really very important to talk to his Conservative cousins in the Ontario government on \$10 a day child care. That program will put more money in the hands of families in Ontario. They will save approximately \$1,000 every month if the Ontario government agrees to sign onto the \$10 a day child care and early learning program. It will be direct money to buy better and healthier groceries and to put their kids into programs.

**Ms. Bonita Zarrillo (Port Moody—Coquitlam, NDP):** Mr. Speaker, my ears perked up when I heard about inclusive housing, so I thank the member for those comments.

I have two amazing disability advocates in my area, who remind me often that the B.C. building code makes accessibility optional. They need protection in the national building code. I want to leave that comment with the member.

I also want to touch on the purpose-built rental and the fact that it is not accessible to not-for-profit groups. Is the government aware of the limitations for not-for-profits and co-ops to access the rental construction financing initiative, because they need to bring collateral?

• (1655)

**Mrs. Salma Zahid:** Mr. Speaker, it is really important that all levels of government work together to ensure that we have more housing built in Canada. The federal government should be a partner working alongside provinces and municipalities to ensure we can help those who want to rent affordable housing for Canadians.

**Ms. Melissa Lantsman (Thornhill, CPC):** Mr. Speaker, I am honoured to rise in the House to speak today to an issue that people in the great riding of Thornhill and across the country see as a priority.

Also, I will be splitting my time with my hon. colleague, the member for Mégantic—L'Érable.



We have a housing crisis. Our country is facing a severe housing shortage, contributing to unprecedented increases in housing prices in almost every part of the country, including one of the hardest-hit regions, the GTA. The government simply cannot ignore this.

I heard it on the campaign, in my constituency and from many young people, who continue to inspire me but whose dream of home ownership is falling further and further out of reach. Some even laugh at me when I suggest a future in which they own a home anywhere near my riding. Worse, any prospective home buyers have started tempering their expectations. I never thought I would describe our country as a land of tempering expectations, but here we are.

In my community, the biggest fear for parents, their constant refrain, is that their kids cannot afford to live in the same neighbourhood they grew up in. I hear over and over again how their kids “cannot afford to live here”, full stop. There is a bigger issue in all of this.

When people cannot afford to live where they grew up, when they are priced out of the market, there are deep impacts on families and the community. It impacts the connection between us, between one another, and has deep impacts on our connections to the institutions that help build our communities, such as our churches, synagogues and seniors centres. The connection points that do the work that government cannot, and never should, are further out of reach. Therefore, we live further from our parents, we see them less and they see us less, not because we want to but because we have been priced out. Many are leaving the communities entirely and are moving to more affordable parts of the country, wherever those places may be, and it does not sound like there are very many. That drives the prices up there, starting the same cycle.

A billboard in downtown Toronto reads, “Can't afford a home? Have you tried finding richer parents?” While this might be tongue-in-cheek, it is not untrue. Here is the problem. I do not have rich parents. Most Canadians do not have rich parents, although some do. The real estate forecast in Toronto, and in my riding at its gates, will see huge gains next year. The average price is expected to hit \$1.16 million in October. That is up 10% from this year. Over the past year, the average sale price increased 7%. That is 7% higher than the almost \$1.2 million that it will take to break into the market. Therefore, people are going to need some very rich parents to break into that housing market.

The government will tell us that it is all a product of global inflation, supply chains and whatever the buzzwords of the week happen to be. However, as this side of the House continues to point out over and over again, with the hopes that one day the government will realize it, land prices are not tied to global supply chains.

The Prime Minister has failed to take action and address the growing housing and affordability crisis in Canada. In fact, home prices have reached record levels. Prices have risen under the government by more than 20%. It had six years to fix the rising home prices in Canada, but the problem has only become worse.

Instead of putting forward policies to build homes, it has doubled down on failed policy and pumped billions of taxpayer dollars into a national housing strategy, which has resulted in higher home

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prices. Therefore, the government's affordable housing strategy has built housing units that are more expensive than the average rent, not less.

We will hear the government brag about spending money on this issue, a record amount of cash, yet \$1.2 million for a starter home in my riding is a record that nobody wants to break. It is one we cannot afford to break. Therefore, it is the wrong metric. We can never define the success of a federal strategy with the number of tax dollars the government can spend. The metric should be the number of Canadians who are able to access the home that they need, the home that they want.

With all those tax dollars and the promise to build and repair over a million homes, construction is down from the previous election to this recent one, which means things are getting worse.

● (1700)

Our motion today touches on something very serious. There is a lot of foreign money flowing into Canada's housing market. Some of this is being funded through money laundering and proceeds of crime. In some cases, foreign investors are sitting on the investments and leaving homes empty. There are 1.3 million empty homes in Canada. Obviously, we know this pushes prices up, putting home ownership further and further out of reach for more and more Canadians. The government's solution is to actually tax them 1%. Billionaires have the government on their Christmas card list because of how absolutely generous it is at the cost of Canadians.

Today's motion offers something better for Canadians. It is to ban foreign ownership. Billionaires abroad will not like it, but Canadians will, and our motion today has solutions. In fact, so many of my colleagues have provided thoughtful solutions in the House.

We can take, for example, the vast amount of land and number of buildings the federal government owns, more than 37,000 of them, and we have heard that number before, and nearly 41 million hectares of land. This is a substantial amount of property and buildings that could immediately provide the municipalities and provinces with help on supply. This is, after all, a supply-side problem. These are tangible solutions, and we are faced with a government that simply spends more to get less.

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I have more in the way of solutions. What can work well is if we tie the building of houses to infrastructure funding, infrastructure has dollars that the government spends on housing supply; that is if the infrastructure dollars ever get out the door. I know there is some trouble with that, but we suggested building more in high-density areas, working with municipalities that are already getting cash for infrastructure. Stakeholders agreed, communities in which they would be built welcomed it and it seemed the government also agreed to at least announce them over and over again, stopping short of just building them.

The motion makes clear that we also never want the government to commit to introducing a capital gains tax on the sale of primary residences. For communities like mine, for people like my parents who came to this country in the seventies and fulfilled their dream of home ownership through hard work, they did not have the benefit of fancy financial advisers or a retirement savings plan. For them, the equity in their homes is their retirement plan. That is it, and that is how it is for many. With that tax, I am sure we would not see very many home sales, regardless.

I hope members opposite understand that this is not a phenomenon that exists just in Thornhill. It exists for many others.

I have heard all day from those who have tied themselves in knots with reasons to not support this motion, but I will remind members that we have been talking about solutions. We have heard it from the member for Carleton, who apparently lives rent-free in the heads of the members opposite. Our own platform made commitments to increase the rate of home construction, to build a million homes over the next three years, to make homes more affordable by renewing the extensive real estate portfolio of the government, the largest property owner with over 37,000 buildings, and we are talking about buildings, and releasing at least 15% of that so we can build some more homes. We have talked about requiring municipalities receiving federal funding to tie them to high-density public transit and things like that. We brought forward the notion that encouraged Canadians to invest in rental homes by allowing the deferral of capital gains tax when selling a rental property. Imagine that from the current government.

There are many solutions. We want to see a government committed also to making it easier to get a mortgage.

For those reasons and many others, on this last opposition day of the year, I hope members of the House support the review and consolidation of all federal real estate in order to make 15% of that available for development. I hope members will vote to ban foreign investors from purchasing Canadian real estate and commit to never introducing a capital gains tax on primary residences, ever.

• (1705)

**Mr. James Maloney (Etobicoke—Lakeshore, Lib.):** Mr. Speaker, I am going to get right to the last point the member made. She raised the issue about capital gains tax on principal residences. Everybody on this side of the House has said at every opportunity that this will never happen. The finance minister has said it will never happen. The Prime Minister has said it will never happen.

Will she commit to stop saying this when she knows it is not true? The only reason those members are doing it is purely for po-

litical purposes, but it does not help the debate on housing in any constructive way.

**Ms. Melissa Lantsman:** Mr. Speaker, if that is not true, then I look forward to him supporting the motion.

[*Translation*]

**Mr. Jean-Denis Garon (Mirabel, BQ):** Mr. Speaker, the Bloc Québécois made a very simple proposal during the last election campaign. It proposed that, year after year and without exception, the government dedicate 1% of the spending budget to housing, not only to affordable housing, but also to social housing.

I have not heard much about tenants. In Quebec, however, there are over 400,000 tenants who spend more than 30% of their income on rent.

What does my colleague propose for those tenants? Not only do they not have a home but they also face a major problem with affordability and access to housing.

[*English*]

**Ms. Melissa Lantsman:** Mr. Speaker, this is part of a solution that needs to encompass all types of housing, including rental housing, including those who do not have housing and including those in social housing. I know that the hon. members on this side from my party had spoken about it. I look forward to engaging in a constructive conversation with the hon. member on solutions for the increased supply of rental housing.

**Mr. Gord Johns (Courtenay—Alberni, NDP):** Mr. Speaker, I want to thank my colleague for this motion today and for talking about housing. We talked a lot about housing for all people. One thing I am worried about is the homeless people in my riding. When the government rolled out its rapid housing initiative, it housed fewer than 5,000 people in its first round. It was the same thing in the second round. There are over 200,000 people who are homeless right now right across our country.

Does my colleague agree that the government needs to rapidly scale up its contribution to the rapid housing initiative so it can house more people? At the rate it is going, it is going to take decades to house the homeless, the most vulnerable people in our country. I am hoping she will support that call to action.

**Ms. Melissa Lantsman:** Mr. Speaker, our platform during the last election talked about reimplementing the housing first plan to deal with this. I think there are a lot of different measures we want to see from the government, such as more investment in mental health, a strategy on addiction and wraparound services on recovery. There are some core issues that I think affect some of that population. There could be a lot more done on the periphery of this, including engagement in the housing first plan.

**Mr. Kevin Lamoureux (Parliamentary Secretary to the Leader of the Government in the House of Commons, Lib.):** Mr. Speaker, I want to follow up on something. Today, after question period, there was a question posed for unanimous consent. That unanimous consent would have meant that a capital gains tax on the sale of primary residences would be a no-go factor. The Liberal government said that we wanted the Conservatives to be onside to vote against it, but the Conservatives denied that motion to even come forward.

Does the member not recognize that there seems to be a lot of hypocrisy coming from the Conservative Party? With the 15% of land that is going to be available, what parks are they going to shut down or take land from in order to fulfill that commitment?

• (1710)

**Ms. Melissa Lantsman:** Mr. Speaker, I will start by asking the member opposite to read the motion. I know my colleague just read it into the record again. He knows very well that he was talking about buildings. There was a period of 62 days after the last election before we recalled everybody to this place and he might have forgotten that promise was actually in the Liberal Party platform. It is on page 13 if the member opposite wants to revisit it. If he believes he is against this today, as he was not during the last election, then I look forward to him supporting the motion today.

[*Translation*]

**Mr. Luc Berthold (Mégantic—L'Érable, CPC):** Mr. Speaker, I would like to congratulate my hon. colleague on her great speech.

I think it is important to remember why we are here today. The opposition believes it is extremely important to address this cost-of-living crisis. Everything costs more, especially housing.

My colleague from Edmonton Riverbend would agree with me, since he is the one who moved this very important motion for all Canadians.

I would like to take a moment to read it.

That, given that, (i) the government has failed to increase the housing supply in Canada, (ii) the government's \$400 billion of new spending has produced a surge of inflationary pressure that has driven home prices more than 30% above pre-pandemic levels, the House call on the government to: (a) review and consolidate all federal real estate and properties in Canada in order to make at least 15% available for residential development; (b) ban foreign investors from purchasing Canadian real estate; and (c) commit to never introducing a capital gains tax on the sale of primary residences.

The motion is that simple.

I just received a message from my colleague from Lévis—Lotbinière that is hot off the press. It is a press release that was just issued by one of my colleagues, the finance critic, the member for Carleton.

The press release reads as follows: “‘Just inflation’ is coming to a grocery store near you. Families will pay an extra \$1,000 to feed themselves in 2022 as inflation balloons. Inflation hurts Canadians, and 80% say that the cost-of-living crisis is making their lives less affordable. Sixty per cent of families with children under the age of 18 are afraid that they will not have enough money to buy food. The report released today only makes the situation worse. The Prime Minister's inflation tax is eating into the paychecks of mid-

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dle-class Canadians while the Liberals plan to spend even more, pouring inflationary gas on the fire. Government spending increases the cost of living. Spending more money to buy fewer goods results in price increases. Enough is enough.”

That is exactly what we are talking about today. There is a report that tells us the cost of living is going up, not just for housing, but across society, particularly when it comes to groceries. That is worrisome.

The last line in the press release is also worth reading. It says, “It is clear that the Conservatives are the only party looking to lower prices, fight the rising cost of food, and bring an end to ‘just inflation’.”

I thank my colleague from Lévis—Lotbinière for sending me this press release. I thought that it was important to share it with all of my colleagues in the House, because this is exactly what we are talking about. We are talking about the cost of living. We are talking about young families who are struggling to make ends meet and are stretching their budgets so that they can have a decent standard of living. We are talking today about how more and more young families across Canada are having a tough time realizing their dream of owning their own home.

The member for Durham, the leader of the Conservative Party and the official opposition, said that a poll released yesterday shows that half of Canadians under the age of 30 have given up on the dream of home ownership. Canada is a country of wide open spaces, with room for everyone, and everyone should be able to realize that dream. When half of all young people under 30 give up on the dream of one day owning a home, we certainly have a problem as a society.

To make things worse, this dream will become even less attainable in the coming days, weeks and years, because real estate prices continue to rise. Some say that prices could rise by over 9% again next year. Add to that an expected rise in interest rates, and the dream of home ownership for young Canadian families is becoming increasingly out of reach.

I looked for information to find a way to keep the dream alive for young families and to give them hope.

• (1715)

I have done a lot of research and analysis, and I have talked to all kinds of banks and financial services, but I do not see good news on the horizon under the Liberal government.

The National Bank of Canada released a major report on housing affordability by Kyle Dahms and Alexandra Ducharme. Here is what it says:

Housing affordability in Canada worsened by 1.7 points in Q3'21, marking a third consecutive deterioration since the beginning of the year. Over the last 12 months, affordability has worsened the most in a decade.

It would now take 46.5% of income for a representative household [of the average population] to service the mortgage on a representative home in Canada.

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That is not necessarily good news. I have more like that. I did my research, and I tried to find some way to give back hope to young families under 30.

A survey conducted by the Regroupement des comités logement et associations de locataires du Québec found that the scarcity of housing has led to an explosion in costs, which the government's figures do not reflect at all. We see the numbers, but the reality is even worse than what the numbers suggest. According to this study, which was released in June 2021, there is a 49% gap between what the Canada Mortgage and Housing Corporation studies say and the reality.

The average cost of a rental unit is \$1,302 in the metropolitan Montreal census area, which is up 8% over last year. In Sherbrooke, Trois-Rivières and Granby, the situation is untenable because prices have increased there too. The situation is difficult because there has been a jump of about 12% compared to last year in what people have to pay for housing.

Other cities in Quebec are also affected. Rents in Granby have increased by 15% compared to last year. Prices have jumped by 10% in the cities of Drummondville, Joliette, Saint-Hyacinthe and Victoriaville. In short, it is never-ending.

A recent December 8 article in *Le Devoir* indicates that the price of houses spiked by 21%. According to the Quebec Professional Association of Real Estate Brokers, residential property sales in the Montreal area are down and the number of new listings has dropped. There are fewer sales, but the prices have spiked by more than 20% compared to last year, not compared to six years ago, but compared to last year. It is incredible. These people know that to be true because they are the ones selling the homes and making the transactions. They have to know what they are talking about.

The median price of buildings with two to five units increased by 15%. The median price of a single family home rose by 21% to \$525,000, and the median price of a condo rose by 18% to \$374,000.

I will keep going. I have more examples. Unfortunately, I have pages full of bad examples that will discourage Canadians and young families from finding the means to buy and own a home.

The motion being debated is clear and simple. It calls on the government to do something after six years of inaction. In my view, if the government is sincere about wanting to ensure that young families under the age of 30 can realize their dream of buying a home, it will do the only logical thing it can in the House. It will support the motion moved by my colleague from Edmonton Riverbend and vote with the opposition and the Bloc Québécois in favour of the motion.

• (1720)

[*English*]

**Mr. Kevin Lamoureux (Parliamentary Secretary to the Leader of the Government in the House of Commons, Lib.):** Mr. Speaker, I find it very difficult to support the motion, for many different reasons I articulated earlier today.

I am asking the member to recognize, if we are going to be successful at overcoming the housing crisis in Canada, that the nation-

al government has been at the table historically with this Prime Minister. We have not seen the dollars, financial resources and commitment brought to this particular issue in generations. We would have to go back 60 years or 70 years.

We have a Prime Minister and a government committed to the housing file, but we also need provincial governments and municipal governments. How important is it that provinces and cities continue to work with the national government to try to resolve this issue?

**Mr. Luc Berthold:** Mr. Speaker, I would like the hon. member to be elected in a municipal government instead of here. Maybe he would see what the responsibilities and roles are of each and every level of government. We are in the House to talk about the Liberal government, the Prime Minister and the Minister of Finance, who make life unaffordable for so many Canadians that they cannot dream of ever buying a new house.

[*Translation*]

**Ms. Christine Normandin (Saint-Jean, BQ):** Mr. Speaker, my colleague spoke about the accessibility of a first home. This summer, the Liberals talked about how young people under the age of 40 could put \$40,000 in a tax-free savings account.

That really seemed to be a gift for the rich. In today's world, very few young people under 40 can set aside \$40,000. We expect that rich parents will be the ones lending their children money to purchase property and that the property will end up being part of the children's inheritance.

I would like to know what my colleague thinks of this measure, which does not really target those who need help buying their first home.

**Mr. Luc Berthold:** Mr. Speaker, I can continue in the same vein. I was the mayor of a municipality. When a government starts throwing a lot of money at something, whether it is housing, construction, or infrastructure, what happens? Prices skyrocket, and then, eventually, nothing more can be done.

The solution of this government, the solution of the Prime Minister and of the Minister of Finance, is to spend more money. We hear the Liberals say that they have spent more money than ever before. The result is that, in this country's history, the dream of home ownership for people under 30 has slipped out of reach, since this government has been acting this way, thinking that money is the answer to everything.

What is needed is something more well-thought-out, more substantial, more adapted to the reality of today's young families.

[English]

**Ms. Laurel Collins (Victoria, NDP):** Mr. Speaker, my NDP colleagues and I support the ban on foreign homebuyers and remain committed to not introducing a capital gains tax on the sale of primary residences. This motion is crafted in a way that would allow governments to give up federal land to rich developers essentially for luxury condos. I think the member would agree that is not what we want and that is not what will fix the housing crisis. Would it not be better to ensure that we have public housing, non-market housing or, at the very least, stricter affordability criteria for any development from federal lands?

The Conservatives, while they were in power, decreased investments in co-ops and social housing and did not announce any plans to restore or expand the funds stemming from the expiration of operating agreements. Will the member admit that this was a mistake and we need more co-ops, public housing and non-market housing?

• (1725)

[Translation]

**Mr. Luc Berthold:** Mr. Speaker, I would like to reread paragraph (a) of the motion, which states that the House calls on the government to:

(a) review and consolidate all federal real estate and properties in Canada in order to make at least 15% available for residential development;

I do not see anything in the motion stating that we will favour one group over another. I think that the motion is quite clear. It says that the federal government should dispose of buildings and land in order to create more housing, and to make housing more accessible to Canadians. I see nothing in this motion saying that we are going to favour one group over another.

**Mr. Jean-Denis Garon (Mirabel, BQ):** Mr. Speaker, I will be sharing my time with the hon. member for Abitibi—Témiscamingue, whose mother is here with us today.

When I found out that we would be talking about housing today, the first thing that came to mind was a number since I am an economist. That number was 100,000, which is the number of additional housing units we would need in Canada today for our housing per capita ratio to be the same as it was in 2016. That means that since the arrival to power of the Liberals, who blame everything that is wrong in the world on the Harper government, we have generated a deficit of 100,000 housing units. That is serious.

The government blames a lot of things on the pandemic, but the housing crisis existed well before 2016. In 1994, the Liberals under Jean Chrétien and Paul Martin, in addition to eliminating the deficit on the backs of the provinces, withdrew funding from social housing, which may also happen in Quebec. At that point there was a deficit of 80,000 housing units, which was never filled. The years 1994, 1995 and 1996 were not so long ago when it comes to housing and buildings. Once the foundation for a building is laid, it will last 100, 150, or 200 years.

Therefore, the housing crisis existed before the pandemic, and the stage was set for even the slightest shock to raise concerns for our economy, given that there was so much pressure in this sector and that we had a hard time containing it.

### *Business of Supply*

The shock came in the form of a health crisis. What happened? The health authorities locked down the population and people had to stay home. What did people do? Their preferences and their relationship with space changed. We cannot blame Quebeckers and Canadians for wanting a bigger backyard, a bigger lot or a bigger house.

That is how a crisis that was mainly present in our major census metropolitan areas, as shown by the statistics, spread to a first suburb, then a second, then a third, and finally to our farm areas. The result is that, today, it is difficult to find a simple cottage on a recreational lake. It has come to this.

We must prepare for the recovery. Foreign students are returning. We want to increase immigration targets. We have problems recruiting workers. We are told and we believe that these immigrants we are welcoming are the future of Quebec and of our economy.

However, when we look at housing on a per capita basis, we can see that the Liberal government is prepared to make that future sleep on the street. This is a major problem.

Although at the beginning of my speech I showed that things have gotten worse under the Liberals, they are going to tell us that they have tried so very hard and have spent \$70 billion on the national housing strategy. Last week I said that I am very fair-minded. Therefore, I checked it out.

When we look at the numbers, we realize that the amount is not really \$70 billion but rather half of that, because the funding is shared equally between the federal government and the provinces plus other stakeholders.

One could then think that there is at least \$35 billion left over to help our people, those who are having a hard time accessing housing. However, most of this funding is in the form of loans, not supports or subsidies to those who need it the most.

One could then think that at least there is something left, but a closer look at the numbers reveals that 25% of the program funding has not been allocated to date, and that the 25% that has been allocated has not necessarily translated into any bricks being laid.

Even worse, only 6.3% of the funding for the rental construction financing initiative has been allocated. In political polling, 6.3% is within the same margin of error as zero. Less than half of the money of the national housing co-investment fund has been allocated. This is a problem.

*Business of Supply*

• (1730)

That is better than nothing, but what did we get over three years? Nothing. Quebec wanted to be able to spend and invest that money in accordance with its own model. It wanted the money to be transferred, it wanted things to be easy and fluid so it could help people now while they need help. They went back and forth for three years because Ottawa wanted a cute maple leaf in the corner of each cheque. The government is really focused on being there during announcements. People in Quebec could not even watch those announcements because they did not have a house or a living room where they could tune in. That is what happened.

Here is why I will support the motion. I think housing is important, I think we need to talk about it more often and more constructively, and I think there has to be a dialogue. What we are doing today is starting that dialogue. That is why I will support the spirit of the motion.

Now, I would like to talk about the Conservatives for a bit. There are some ambiguities in this motion. The Conservatives' definition of inflation, or at least their crusade against “just inflation”, is characterized by verbal inflation. In homage to the Conservative leader, I might even suggest that they are employing a little verbal “inflation”.

From the preamble to the motion, it seems as though the Conservatives never wanted to help people during the pandemic. They make it sound like the government took a bunch of Hercules aircraft, landed them across the street at the Bank of Canada, filled them with cash and then gave it to so many people that the price of houses went up.

I would remind the House that all parties in this place agreed to help Canadians in a time of crisis in a non-partisan way. Was it done how we wanted and exactly when we wanted? Not necessarily. Were all the amounts right? Not necessarily. Was there the necessary accountability? Perhaps not. Did it go on too long? Did we miss the mark? Maybe, but everyone agreed to it.

This suggests that the Conservatives may not be as willing as the Bloc to help those who are most vulnerable. Let us take the example of the federal lands. The Liberals are going to ask me what land we want. We want Mirabel back.

That said, when the decision is made to build more housing and to increase the housing supply—because, yes, the supply of housing needs to be increased—it is crucial to begin with those who are struggling the hardest, with those who need it most. Some will say that these housing markets are all interconnected. As an economist, I know this full well. We will hear that when a million-dollar house is built, a million-dollar family moves in, which will free up a smaller house for a less wealthy family. That in turn will free up an even smaller house for another family, and this will eventually free up a three-bedroom apartment for those who need it most. However, it takes a long time for all this housing to trickle down. Meanwhile, people are suffering. Meanwhile, hundreds of thousands of households in Quebec alone are spending more than 30% of their income on rent. This is unacceptable.

Yes, I support this motion, because I think that it is a way for the Conservatives to do some soul-searching, given the enormous dam-

age they did during the Harper years. I support it, and I will say that to the Liberals.

Obviously, some action has been taken, but that action has been flawed. In fact, it is much more flawed than they care to admit. This soul-searching is needed, because, with the government dragging its feet, taking too long to negotiate with Quebec, and failing to give Quebecers their own money back so that there can be a strategy made in Quebec for Quebecers, too many are left waiting, too many are left suffering.

• (1735)

[*English*]

**Mr. Kevin Lamoureux (Parliamentary Secretary to the Leader of the Government in the House of Commons, Lib.):** Madam Speaker, the Conservative/Bloc coalition is somewhat demonstrated through this motion. I kind of feel sorry for the Bloc, in that the Conservatives obviously did not share the motion with them before instructing them to support it. No doubt there would have been some changes. We heard from a couple of members of the Bloc that there are flaws in the motion.

I am not going to vote for this motion because I believe it is fundamentally flawed. I do not see the positive of misleading Canadians in this particular motion. I do not believe that we should be looking at closing down some of the parklands to provide additional housing. Those are the types of things that are incorporated, along with other misleading information.

Does the member not recognize that, yes, the federal government does have a role? I am glad the Bloc has conceded that the federal government does have a role to play in housing, but so do the provincial and municipal governments. We can talk to MLAs and city councillors, working—

**The Assistant Deputy Speaker (Mrs. Carol Hughes):** Unfortunately, I will have to allow for other questions.

The hon. member for Mirabel.

[*Translation*]

**Mr. Jean-Denis Garon:** Madam Speaker, I knew my colleague was a gentleman, but he surprised me today with his magnanimity. I thank him for his question to which I will respond that of course he has a role to play.

I wish that Quebecers had 100% of their income and that we did not have to beg Ottawa for that money. I am sorry we have to ask for it.

Quebec has its own housing priorities. The Quebec government knows its social and community system. Quebec is developing its own strategies, and it is because of the federal government's unwillingness to listen that everything takes far too long with Quebec.

The government must transfer the money.

[*English*]

**Mr. Ryan Williams (Bay of Quinte, CPC):** Madam Speaker, I thank the member for a very spirited debate. It is just great that we are talking about housing as a whole.

Now, I am not sure about Quebec, but in Toronto right now, to start and finish an apartment building is taking about 10 years. That is 10 years with the planning processes, and we are not even talking about the amount of time it takes to talk about it in the House.

My question to the member is this: Does it not make sense in this motion that we would be taking the federal buildings that are available now, today, that are up, and talking about their various uses and making them into housing? Does that make sense?

[*Translation*]

**Mr. Jean-Denis Garon:** Madam Speaker, I thank my hon. colleague for his question. He talked about how long it takes to build a building.

As we know, when the government introduced the national housing strategy, we expected it to solve all of the problems in the world in five years, when most of those problems originated under Chrétien in particular and have been around since the nineties, so we need to be patient.

We also know that these motions are a way of making proposals to the government, and I think it is quite healthy to take inventory of these properties. The fact that the government does not already have the inventory of these properties at its disposal is worrisome.

It is an entirely good thing to take that inventory and then determine what should be done with those properties.

**Ms. Elizabeth May (Saanich—Gulf Islands, GP):** Madam Speaker, I thank my colleague from Mirabel. I believe he is an economist. There are not too many economists here.

The Conservatives' motion makes no mention of the homeless. My question for my colleague is the following: What does he think is the best way to protect the most vulnerable members of our society?

**Mr. Jean-Denis Garon:** Madam Speaker, the Bloc Québécois never said that this motion would fix every problem and address all concerns related to housing, in particular for the most vulnerable.

I repeat, and I will say it as often as I need to: The Government of Quebec, which is responsible for municipalities, knows its people and its communities the best and is therefore in the best position to develop a strategy.

Unfortunately, the money is in Ottawa, which forces us to talk to each other. I would be happy to do so, especially since my Liberal colleague is very kind.

• (1740)

**Mr. Sébastien Lemire (Abitibi—Témiscamingue, BQ):** Madam Speaker, my colleague from Mirabel kind of gave it away, but I would like to recognize the presence of my mother in the House. It is quite moving to be able to—

**The Assistant Deputy Speaker (Mrs. Carol Hughes):** Order. The member cannot say who is in the House, even if they are not members.

The hon. member for Abitibi—Témiscamingue has the floor again.

**Mr. Sébastien Lemire:** Madam Speaker, I apologize.

### *Business of Supply*

Instead, I will say that I thank a woman present in the House, who really inspired me, especially with respect to the issue of social housing. My mother was a source of political inspiration for me. When I was young, she participated in the bread and roses march. All these calls to action became part of my young activist DNA, and I salute her.

The reality is that families across Quebec and Canada are finding it increasingly difficult to find adequate affordable housing. The demand for housing is high, and the demand for affordable housing is at a crisis level. In Quebec, statistics show that there is a need for 50,000 new social housing units in the next five years to address the current housing crisis.

In my region, there is a desperate need for social housing. In 2019, the vacancy rate for housing was only about 1% in certain towns in Abitibi—Témiscamingue. From 2005 to 2013, in towns such as Rouyn-Noranda, Amos and Val-d'Or, the vacancy rate ranged from 0.8% to 1%.

It gets worse. Sometimes, after a fire, or when a newcomer arrives, homeless families are unfortunately forced to move temporarily into schools. Today, in 2021, the vacancy rate is still hovering around 1%.

In Rouyn-Noranda, in my riding, when a decent place to live charging reasonable rent is advertised on social media, it is practically rented in less than 30 minutes. Landlords receive 20 to 30 applications for viewings within the first hour that the unit is advertised. This housing crisis is in part directly related to federal inaction on social housing over the past 20 to 25 years.

I believe that every resident in my region deserves safe and affordable housing. That is why the Bloc Québécois supports the Conservative motion, given that action is urgently needed.

The current housing situation in Abitibi—Témiscamingue, in Quebec, and in Canada is the result of a deep-rooted problem, mostly caused by the chronic shortage of available housing. This makes it imperative that more housing be built immediately.

We know that demand for housing will most likely continue to rise in the coming years. The federal government needs to quickly find innovative ways to encourage the construction of housing, particularly social, community and actually affordable housing. Increased supply will keep a lid on rents for different types of housing. Ultimately, all Quebecers and Canadians would benefit from lower costs, especially the less well-off.

I would now like to say a word about the labour shortage. For the Bloc Québécois, it is clear that the lack of affordable housing is one of the main barriers to attracting and retaining workers in Quebec's regions, particularly in my region of Abitibi—Témiscamingue.

### *Business of Supply*

Every day, economic development stakeholders and organizations in various sectors tell us about the seriousness of the housing shortage, which discourages workers from settling in our region for the long term, particularly when some of our businesses are forced to turn down contracts because of a lack of employees.

Several municipalities and organizations are working hard to recruit people from outside the region. More and more recruitment campaigns are being organized, but when it comes to actually retaining residents, it is becoming harder for communities to keep them. One of the main reasons for this is the inability to find decent housing.

It goes without saying that the recovery and the growth of our communities are also about development and land use. This situation also affects us on a more human level, because several groups in our society, including immigrants and newcomers, do not necessarily have a network of contacts and therefore might struggle to settle here. It also affects seniors with more precarious incomes, young families who cannot find appropriate or large-enough housing, and the less fortunate, who have to put more than 30% of their income towards housing.

I would be remiss if I did not mention that, in Abitibi—Témiscamingue, in northern Quebec and elsewhere in Quebec, the housing situation is particularly worrisome in our indigenous communities. Housing is a fundamental right, and I believe that the federal government has simply forgotten that.

In Pikogan, for example, the community receives funding from the federal government for one and a half houses per year, although, in reality, over 60 houses are actually needed for community housing. In Lac Simon, 90 new houses are needed, while the community is growing in numbers and some households have 15 or even 20 people living in the same home.

● (1745)

In those homes, no one ever sleeps. They take three- or four-hour shifts at night, going from the bed to the couch in front of the television. That is not how you create healthy development in a community, given the psychological impact this has.

Children in Pikogan and Lac Simon sleep away from their home and community, and stay with friends because there is not enough room. Unfortunately, I dare say this reality is shared by all the indigenous communities in Quebec.

The housing crisis has an impact not only on their quality of life, but also on their dignity. Many social problems stem from the lack of space and the overcrowding. According to the statistics, there is a shortfall of 40,000 to 80,000 housing units on the reserves. The federal government knows all that. There is not enough funding to deal with the deteriorating housing stock and the population explosion on the reserves. The government knows all that too.

We also have to talk about the everyday reality. I must remind the federal government that the latest report of the Parliamentary Budget Officer, entitled “Federal Program Spending on Housing Affordability in 2021”, indicates that the federal government is not achieving its objective of considerably expanding the affordable

housing stock in Canada, even though it invested several billion dollars more in housing.

I also want to point out that 84% of Quebecers consider the lack of affordable housing available for vulnerable populations to be a problem. Statistics Canada reports that 34% of renter households in Quebec spend more than 30% of their income on housing.

The federal government has been disengaging from social housing.

How did Quebec end up in the midst of the acute housing crisis we are facing today? Negotiations with Quebec surrounding the new national housing strategy dragged on because of the federal government's actions. It took far too long to come to an agreement. The negotiation period lasted three years. In the meantime, no money was disbursed in Quebec, since the funds were frozen until both levels of government found some common ground.

Quebec went from being underfunded to having no funding at all for three years. As is usually the case in negotiated agreements, the federal government wanted to impose its conditions. As usual, the federal government's objective was to see its maple leaf logo on the cheques given to Quebecers. Quebec has been dealing with the federal government's approach for a long time. The federal government holds Quebec taxpayers' money in one hand behind its back, while it dictates conditions and points the finger at Quebec with the other. When I say that the government was holding Quebec taxpayers' money in one hand behind its back, I am referring to disengagement of the federal government, both Liberal and Conservative, from social housing between 1995 and 2016.

The government spent more than 20 years withholding a portion of Quebec's money, neglecting needs and diminishing Quebec's rental stock when demand for social housing was just as critical then as it is today.

What is more, it is rather maddening to see the Conservatives table a motion that calls on the government to take immediate action to increase the housing supply in Canada given the skyrocketing cost of housing, when they bear a large share of the responsibility for this housing crisis. They are just as responsible as the Liberals for the serious deterioration of the housing situation in Quebec and Canada. The number of housing units subsidized by Stephen Harper's Conservative government drastically decreased between 2006 and 2015.

Inaction hurts a lot. The minute the Liberals and Conservatives got comfortable in the seat of power in Ottawa, they disengaged from the social housing file. That had a negative impact on socio-economic development in Quebec and its regions.



In closing, regardless of whether the party in power is Liberal or Conservative, I would just like to remind my colleagues that they are in the seat of power. The Bloc Québécois welcomes the Canada–Quebec Housing Agreement signed on October 6, 2020, for \$3.7 billion over 10 years, and it supports the Conservative Party's motion, but the Liberals' decision to delay negotiations in order to impose their conditions on Quebec is bad for Quebeckers. The Conservatives' attempt to balance the budget by further impoverishing the most disadvantaged Quebeckers is bad for Quebeckers. For more than 15 years now, we have only been making up for lost time, and the crisis is getting worse.

• (1750)

[English]

**Mr. Marty Morantz (Charleswood—St. James—Assiniboia—Headingley, CPC):** Madam Speaker, the proposal is 15% of those 37,000 buildings. That is roughly equivalent to 5,500 buildings, if we look at it that way. Of course, they would not all be in the same area, but that is roughly what we are talking about. We are not saying the federal government should just give them away. It could sell these buildings and potentially raise hundreds of millions, if not billions of dollars, which it could leverage into a forward-looking new housing policy. Would my hon. friend not agree that it would be a win-win in this regard?

[Translation]

**Mr. Sébastien Lemire:** Madam Speaker, I obviously agree. In that sense, I support the motion. However, we will have to take it further.

At the time of colonization, and this was a defining moment in Abitibi, there was what we call the “plan Vautrin”. I am not saying that the federal government has to do this, but at some point, it has to give it some thought. We have to drastically speed up housing construction. If we want to lower inflation and lower prices, then we need to build more houses, invest in our domestic market.

We are currently going through a softwood lumber crisis with the Americans. Can we take advantage of that and invest in the secondary and tertiary processing of our wood here at home?

We would be adding value so we could sell it more directly to the Americans duty-free, and at the same time we could develop our economy and ensure that the wood produced in Abitibi-Témiscamingue is used for building homes in the region and elsewhere.

Why not have a Quebec version of IKEA near La Sarre? How amazing would that be?

[English]

**Mr. Kevin Lamoureux (Parliamentary Secretary to the Leader of the Government in the House of Commons, Lib.):** Madam Speaker, part of the problem is that members do not necessarily know. The example just given is happening today. Civil servants are already looking at buildings with the idea of conversion. In fact the member who asked the question will know about Kapyong Barracks, former federal land now being converted to indigenous-led housing.

### *Business of Supply*

This motion is fundamentally flawed. There is all sorts of misinformation and the numbers just do not add up, yet the Bloc is cozy with the Conservatives and is supporting it blindly.

Would the member not rather support a motion that provides for co-op housing and other progressive measures, some of which the member himself referred to? Why not have that in a housing motion, a motion that calls upon the federal government to work with other stakeholders to make it happen? I wonder if the member would prefer a motion of that nature, as opposed to what he is obligated to vote in favour of today.

[Translation]

**Mr. Sébastien Lemire:** Madam Speaker, in answer to my colleague from Winnipeg North, what I would have liked to vote in favour of is a throne speech that made access to social and affordable housing a priority. The government has a responsibility to take action on that file.

The Bloc Québécois's approach is constructive. We put forward proposals, such as allocating 1% of the government's annual revenue to housing construction from now on. Knowing that there is money available to build that housing could send a message to the housing construction industry. That is one potential solution.

The national housing strategy could also include an acquisition fund that would enable co-operatives and non-profits to acquire housing unit buildings so as to protect that housing stock from speculation and ensure it remains truly affordable.

Those are two solutions that I hope the government will implement, and I would be very happy to support them.

**Ms. Andréanne Larouche (Shefford, BQ):** Madam Speaker, I thank my colleague from Abitibi—Témiscamingue, who, like my colleague from Mirabel, gave an eloquent speech.

My Conservative colleague from Mégantic—L'Érable referred to the city of Granby, which is in my riding of Shefford. We do have a social housing problem, with one of the lowest vacancy rates in Quebec. There is a desperate need.

Granby knows what to do. Ottawa just needs to transfer the money to Quebec and then to the municipalities. We can take care of social housing.

I have been listening to the Liberals and the Conservatives arguing today when they have been cutting funding for years. When I took part in a debate on social housing and homelessness in the Eastern Townships during the election campaign, there was no one there from the Conservative Party or the Liberal Party to offer up any ideas. That is what I find particularly insulting.

I was proud to be there to offer ideas for the Eastern Townships. I would have liked to see my Conservative and Liberal colleagues there.

**Mr. Sébastien Lemire:** Madam Speaker, I thank my colleague from Shefford for her eloquence.

*Business of Supply*

This shows how important it is to take action on this issue. It is truly appalling that the last strategy has sat on a shelf for three years.

Of course, no one could have foreseen the COVID-19 crisis or the skyrocketing prices, especially for basic building materials.

However, the government bears some responsibility in this. I will not go so far as to say that people have blood on their hands, because I do not want to be overly dramatic, but if we had not ignored the problem for so many years, perhaps more people would have a home and a roof over their heads. It is a matter of dignity.

● (1755)

[English]

**Mr. Dan Albas (Central Okanagan—Similkameen—Nicola, CPC):** Madam Speaker, it is certainly an honour to rise on behalf of the good people of Central Okanagan—Similkameen—Nicola to debate this very serious topic. I will be splitting my time with the member for Bay of Quinte. I am very proud to say that.

I suspect every member of this place knows of the housing affordability crisis many Canadians are facing. We all know it, and we certainly know the Prime Minister knows of this. How do we know this? Let us go back to September 9, 2015. On that day, the Liberal Party of Canada released a statement. The headline said, “[The member for Papineau] promises affordable housing for Canadians”. The article went onto say, “We have a plan to make housing more affordable for those who need it the most”. Where is that plan? That was back in 2015.

Today, we know that there is no plan. Those were just the usual “say anything” promises from the Prime Minister, who never once himself has faced an affordable housing crisis. Worse, in 2017, the Prime Minister actually raided the Canadian Mortgage and Housing Corporation to the amount of \$4 billion. That money came from CMHC premiums that first-time homebuyers had paid. That money was meant for CMHC to help more first-time homebuyers. Instead, the Prime Minister raided that money for general revenue, which did not help any first-time homebuyers.

In 2019, with an election fast approaching, and realizing he had gotten nowhere delivering on the affordable housing that he had promised in the 2015 election, the Prime Minister made another announcement. The first-time home buyer incentive program that the Prime Minister promised would “help 100,000 Canadian families buy their first home”.

In 2020, after the election, we learned that only 3,252 applications were made to CMHC and, of those, 2,730 were accepted. This program was not just a failure. It was a total disaster, but wait, there is more. In 2019, the Prime Minister also promised he would take on foreign buyers driving up housing costs, a promise he made right before the election.

It is now 2021, and soon to be 2022. I ask members of the House, do we have any measure from the Liberal government to take on foreign buyers that are driving up housing costs? No, we have zero. It is just another broken promise from this “say anything” Prime Minister. Of course, we are not done yet.

In the last Parliament, we had another motion come before this place on affordable housing. That motion called on the government to, “examine a temporary freeze on home purchases by non-resident foreign buyers who are squeezing Canadians out of the housing market”. That is not only a completely reasonable motion, but something that the Prime Minister himself promised Canadians he would do in 2019.

Guess what happened? Do we even need to guess? Despite all the opposition parties voting for that motion, the Prime Minister voted against it. Of course, he whipped up his whole caucus to vote against it as well. Let us think about this for a moment. This is a Prime Minister who promised to take action on foreign buyers driving up housing costs, and then, when he had the chance to vote for what he had promised Canadians he would do, he turned around and voted against it. It is literally unconscionable.

It is this type of thing that creates cynicism and distrust from everyday Canadians about what goes on here. These are concerns, by the way, that this Prime Minister also professed to care about. Of course, it did not just end there.

During this most recent election, an election only called by the Prime Minister because he believed he could win a majority government, he had the gall to say, “Houses shouldn’t sit empty when so many Canadians are trying to buy a home. So, we’re going to ban foreign ownership in Canada for the next two years.”

● (1800)

Seriously, this is the Prime Minister who, in the 2019 election, promised to take action against foreign buyers. He then, when presented with an affordable housing motion that would allow him to honour the very promise to Canadians that he made, he turned around and voted against his own promise. In yet another election, just three months after voting against taking action on foreign owners, he promised once again that he would ban foreign ownership in Canada for the next two years.

To recap, he made a promise, broke that promise, made the promise again, voted against that promise and then, finally made the promise yet another time. Who does that? No one who is serious about taking action on affordable action would do that. This is six years of demonstrated inaction, failure, broken promises, blatant hypocrisy and total failure. This Prime Minister is the *Groundhog Day* of failure when it comes to broken promises on affordable housing.

Here we are again, debating yet another motion on affordable housing because, of course, this Liberal government has made zero progress on affordable housing. This motion is very reasonable, as was the last one, yet the Liberal government voted it down. The motion, among other measures, proposes to ban foreign investors from purchasing Canadian real estate. Not only did the Prime Minister promise to do this in the 2021 election, but he also promised it again during the 2019 election. Will the government vote for this motion, or oppose it like the government did the last time?

This motion also proposes that the government commit to never introducing a capital gains tax on the sale of a primary residence. Once again, this is something the Prime Minister has already promised he would never do, but he also promised that he would never prorogue Parliament. We also know that this Prime Minister really does not care a lot about honouring his promises. However, we can hope this time that the Prime Minister will, for once, vote for a motion that would allow him to keep his word to Canadians.

We also know the motion proposes to increase the housing supply in Canada, which this Prime Minister has promised repeatedly throughout his time in government. Ultimately this motion is responsible and reasonable. That is to say, I am not quite certain that this Prime Minister is actually serious about any of his promises or commitments to affordable housing after reviewing the case that I have made, mostly because it is hard to believe a Prime Minister who promised Canadians so much but has delivered so little. I am not quite certain how people could think he would actually be serious about his commitment to affordable housing.

We know that this Prime Minister was serious about legalizing cannabis. He got that done, and he got it done in his first term. However, on affordable housing there is nothing but broken promises.

In conclusion, I will be voting in support of this motion. What is there to disagree with? We have some members are trying to make much of our suggestion to review and utilize existing federal buildings of the 37,000 that currently exist that the federal government has in its inventory, many of them in urban centres, such as Vancouver, Toronto, Ottawa, and Gatineau. There is so much there, and just 15% of that could be utilized. That is what we are talking about, not the outrageous claims by the member for Winnipeg North or by the member for Kingston and the Islands.

Many of the proposed measures are things this Prime Minister promised he would do, some several times in fact. Affordable housing is important and in my riding, communities like Merritt and Princeton, which have lost housing to devastating floods, are going to need affordable housing like never before. Otherwise, there are some people who will have nothing to come back to. Let us keep in mind that Merritt and Princeton, for many, were more affordable than communities like Vancouver or Surrey. We need to help them rebuild. We need to help this whole country be able to build up and give people a place to call home.

• (1805)

**Hon. Judy A. Sgro (Humber River—Black Creek, Lib.):** Madam Speaker, it is good to see my colleague back in the House. I have to say that I disagree with absolutely everything he said. I do not recall, in the years we have both been here, ever hearing the of-

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ficial opposition talk about establishing a national housing strategy or ever seriously talk about the need for affordable housing. I can tell members there have been millions of dollars spent in the Toronto area specifically for affordable housing. I can practically knock on the doors of many that have been built in the last two or three years.

Is it the intention of the official opposition to establish a national housing strategy, if they ever get back in as the governing party?

**Mr. Dan Albas:** Madam Speaker, I certainly appreciate the member's contribution, for her service and for being part of the debate tonight. I certainly hope she gets to ask that question from this side of the House in the future.

When I first became a parliamentarian, in the 41st Parliament, one of the things I remember is speaking to the previous minister responsible, Diane Finley, about this. She had worked out, with the Government of British Columbia, an affordable housing framework. We worked hand-in-glove with provincial governments, such as with the Province of Quebec, so that we would see those dollars go farther. We could always argue whether more or less money should go to something. Naturally, in this place there is going to be politicization, but I think we need to start seeing a focus on results, which is something the current Prime Minister unfortunately has failed repeatedly at.

**Ms. Bonita Zarrillo (Port Moody—Coquitlam, NDP):** Madam Speaker, one of the things I note, and some of my colleagues have also spoken about, is the need for not-for-profits, social housing and co-ops. I see that seems to have been forgotten or missed in this motion.

Why were the social housing, the co-ops and the not-for-profit opportunities not included in the initial motion?

**Mr. Dan Albas:** Madam Speaker, I would like to first congratulate a fellow British Columbian on her election, but also thank her for participating tonight.

The NDP has made its points today with regard to it. It also has the ability to raise its own opposition day motion specifically, because sometimes political parties are going to say where they see the main problems being. It is not to say there are not other areas that could be worked on, particularly in the social housing space. That requires a lot of work, as well. However, right now we know that the system of housing, and the markets, are not working as well as they should, and that is where we need to see more supply. That is where the 15% of federal buildings would help immediately. That is why we think banning foreign buyers from investing and displacing Canadians is important right now.

I will continue to advocate for the solutions I believe are important. I believe this member will do the same for her constituents and for her party's beliefs.

*Business of Supply*

**Mr. Colin Carrie (Oshawa, CPC):** Madam Speaker, I think this is going to be a first in the House: I am going to disagree with my colleague. He called the Liberal national housing plan a total disaster, and I want to let him know that it is not a total disaster. It can always be held up as an example of how not to do things. In Oshawa, in 2015 when the Liberals came in, the average single home was \$360,000. Almost seven years later, it is \$1.157 million. It is about three times more.

Could the member for Central Okanagan—Similkameen—Nicola please tell the House why it is so important that the opposition should get together, and about the urgency that we pass something like this? Young people are losing the dream of home ownership, and it needs to be done immediately.

**Mr. Dan Albas:** Madam Speaker, I attended, along with the member for Edmonton Riverbend, the FCM meeting in Quebec City. One of the things I attended was a forum on affordable housing, and the B.C. housing minister at the time, Selina Robinson, who now happens to be the finance minister, was asked about the national housing strategy. She responded that the government had come to the table, but it had yet to invest. I would be curious to hear from her. Some of my NDP colleagues might want to phone her and ask to see if that is still the case.

We want to see more results. That is why we are pushing the government.

• (1810)

**Mr. Ryan Williams (Bay of Quinte, CPC):** Madam Speaker, I think it is high time that we started not just using the word “crisis” when it comes to talking about our housing. As Elvis said, we need “a little less conversation, a little more action”. We need to declare housing a crisis. We need to swing hammers and get homes built in this country.

In my home riding of Bay of Quinte, housing is in an existential crisis that needs action. The lack of homes has resulted in sky-high costs for both housing and rental units. Only a massive increase of supply will fix the situation. We need to double new builds of homes in Canada right now, utilizing the private sector with government-assisted, affordable housing, utilizing existing housing inventory from the government, at 15%, and utilizing full collaboration among all levels of government. In Canada, it is the top issue right now, with a housing bubble that has absolutely been exacerbated by COVID-19 and the amount of cheap cash that entered this country's economy.

What does the housing crisis mean for Canadians? It means more poverty, further out-of-reach affordable housing and a further out-of-reach ability for first-time homebuyers to afford a home in this country. It has also resulted in increased homelessness. My riding has double the homelessness rate in the last two years that it did in the four years prior. Mortgage payments now eat 45% of an average homeowner's income, which is already being eroded by massive inflation. Speaking of the inflationary tax, rental in Vancouver, Toronto and Halifax is up over 16% while paycheques are down over 3% because of inflation.

When we talk about a crisis, we talk about citizens who are having trouble deciding whether to pay for rent, groceries, mortgages

or medication, or having to take several jobs in order to afford a down payment for a first home.

Take the case of Erica from my riding. Erica and her family have lived in the same home for six years over the time of the Liberal government. Now they are being forced to leave. Their landlord sold their home and the new owners want to renovate and flip the property for a profit. She wrote to me that they were paying \$1,000 a month plus all utilities and are now being served an N11 and made to move by January 31. Both she and her husband work full-time, but cannot find affordable housing. The cheapest housing they could find was \$2,000 a month plus utilities.

What is the cause of this housing crisis? It is supply. Building supply is going to be the solution alongside some other key government programs, but supply is the key ingredient. Take the Golden Horseshoe in Ontario as an example. In five years, again with the Liberal government from 2016-2021, the region added 780,000 new residents but only 270,000 new homes.

How much supply do we need in Canada? If we compare ourselves with other G7 nations, we are dead last in supply per capita. In fact, to meet the median of our friends in the G7, Italy, France, the U.K., Germany, Japan and the United States, we would need 1.8 million homes today, according to a study from Scotiabank on affordable housing.

The government would like to say that it is making a dent in supply. The hon. Minister of Immigration stated in the House that the Liberal government has created, in six years, 100,000 units. I have done the math, and members can believe that I am correct. For the government building supply to meet the median household demand today in Canada, not including the increased immigration we need and that is coming as COVID ends, it would take 108 years. This is why I am using the word “crisis” to describe housing. What has been happening is not working to quell our housing prices and rental prices. It is creating more poverty and it is creating unaffordability. In this country, we have the land. What we do not have is supply. The reason for that is an ample amount of red tape, Nimbysm and lack of coordination of programs to ensure that we take this crisis as seriously as we can.

To be clear, the government has never taken concerns seriously enough. According to home builders' associations, including home builders in my own Bay of Quinte, the government is just not engaging stakeholders in the trenches. Home builders who are more than capable of building homes are under-respected and under-represented at all levels of government. Here is the reality: The process of taking a parcel of land from concept to reality has become far too complex, expensive and slow. For a small subdivision, this is approaching 10 years.

• (1815)

The financial risks and amounts are so significant that they are becoming available only to large corporations that have little to no interest in small regions of Canada. If they do it is too little, too late for a local response to meet housing needs. The layers of approval agencies and utility corporations without accountability are so great that even if we build the housing we need, it fits into the Liberal plan of decades into the future. We need all levels of government to treat this as an issue to solve with the federal government leading the way.

We need to utilize the creative entrepreneurial skills of Canadians to solve the problems. We have some great ideas from the Conservative Party that can be implemented right away. One from our platform during the unneeded election involved freeing up the private sector to work alongside the government to build one million homes in three years. Another is this motion, which frees up 15% of real estate or 37,000 federal real estate buildings for affordable housing. It is absolutely incredible. It stops the time we need to start construction and utilizes supply that is there right now.

Implementing an immediate freeze of foreign home builders for two years is absolutely essential. We have heard support for that across the aisle. Yes, we have also heard universal support for not taxing primary residences.

The Conservative plan is an appropriate federal government response to this situation. I am suggesting that we also call this a national crisis. We must recognize that in this crisis there are broader solutions that will require collaboration among all parties and across all levels of government. There are solutions that the federal government can help take a leadership position on, including cutting red tape to increase building starts and building housing units through city urban core intensification.

One example includes having housing approvals take no more than 120 days. I mentioned earlier in the House that the average time to approve building an apartment building in Toronto is 10 years. We need to make sure we are starting to build and that we build now.

We need a staging and development policy in each municipality that ensures there are always shovel-ready lots in a five-year slot. If they are not fillable, they should have the tools to insert more buildable lots. There should be no reason for every municipality to not have builds occurring in every season to meet the needs of supply for this crisis.

We need to complete a housing needs assessment by the end of 2022 that works with, and develops newly recommended changes to, existing provincial legislation and municipal official plans. Too often we are seeing development come to councils with the public unaware of where housing is going or what kind of housing is needed to fix this crisis. This results in Nimbyism, or BANANA people: “build absolutely nothing anywhere near anyone”. It is terrible. We need a 25-year outlook on housing needs with clear communication to all who live there to convert Nimbyism into Yimbyism. There are examples around the planet where governments are working with developers, who are working with residents on creating more housing in their own backyards. They are saying yes.

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We need to work with the provinces, immigration and our local education institutions to attract and train the skilled tradespeople necessary to work in our housing industry and build new housing starts. We are missing tremendous numbers of skilled trades that pay incredible salaries in this country, and we need to make sure that we again start saying that skilled trades are great. People should get into the trades.

We need to increase the necessary infrastructure that supports increased housing units in all sectors. This includes intensification developments, transit systems, water, sewer and treatment plants and green energy developments. It includes building walkable cities and neighbourhoods, and looking at regional urban growth to name a few things.

We need to build a mix of housing units that represent our regional and local needs and demands, and we need to build up the downtowns in rural areas. We need intensification.

Something that has worked for affordable housing in Toronto and Vancouver is inclusionary zoning, but we need to ensure that there are enough carrots versus sticks to ensure we have the right types of housing incentives that will attract developers to invest in the area. Affordable housing is defined as housing that costs 30% of income or 80% of market rent. Going back to our Conservative motion, when we take the existing inventory we can do that. To my NDP friends, that is possible. That is a reason to vote for this motion.

There are measures that fit into all levels of government. The role I see the federal government having in a crisis is a leadership role in looking at emergency measures to build supply. The role I see Parliament taking is a leadership role to vote for good motions that produce housing and take a little bit of a bite out of this crisis. For rental and stand-alone housing for our citizens, and for newcomers to our country, as the second-largest country in the world we should not be in a housing crisis.

The measures undertaken to try to beat COVID-19 saw a cash influx into the economy instead of efforts focused on building supply. One hundred thousand units in six years is not enough. It is disgraceful. For the money, the \$29 billion touted as a success, alongside more than \$400 billion, has been fuel on the fire of this housing crisis. We are in a situation that will not leave many Canadians untouched by this crisis.

*Business of Supply*

• (1820)

**Mr. Kevin Lamoureux (Parliamentary Secretary to the Leader of the Government in the House of Commons, Lib.):** Madam Speaker, the member said “this good motion”. Even the Conservatives' coalition partners in the Bloc agree that this is not a good motion. They will still vote for it, but it is not a good motion.

We have a government that has invested historic amounts into social housing. The member across the way would not be able to point to another government that has ever invested as much in national housing.

My question for the member is this. Does he recognize the hypocrisy of the Conservatives? They are now calling for the federal government to act on social housing, when Stephen Harper did absolutely zip with respect to that, while this government has invested historic amounts.

**Mr. Ryan Williams:** Madam Speaker, I am listening to a government that has the worst housing crisis this country has ever had. If we want to talk about government support, we are giving it that support tonight. We are talking about fixing that and, as with trade and the other failed promises this week, looking at made-in-Canada solutions. We want all parties to agree to go forward to fix this today. We need to swing hammers. We have to stop talking. We need less conversation and more action.

**Ms. Laurel Collins (Victoria, NDP):** Madam Speaker, this year, the Parliamentary Budget Officer reported on how the federal government has spent less than half of the funding earmarked for its two main housing programs. He also talked about the limited impact of the Liberals' national housing strategy.

More and more people in my community of Victoria are struggling to pay rent. They are unable to afford a home, and the pandemic has only made things worse. The Liberals are failing Canadians when it comes to housing and at the same time patting themselves on the back.

My colleague, the NDP critic for housing, obtained data showing how the Liberals are failing to help provinces like British Columbia and prioritizing provinces like Ontario. I understand the member represents a riding in Ontario, but, especially with B.C. facing a housing crisis and the impacts of the climate emergency, which is making the housing crisis even more dire, can the member speak to the need for the government to prioritize housing across the country and make sure B.C. is getting its fair share?

**Mr. Ryan Williams:** Madam Speaker, I could not agree more. We have to prioritize housing and start prioritizing action on housing. This motion, and it sounds like the member should be agreeing with it, gets units that are existing or standing in government coffers into the housing supply system. We need 1.8 million homes. We should be making sure we take as much land and as many buildings as we can to convert into all kinds of housing for everyone who needs it. If we do not take action, we are going to be in a heck of a mess in little time. We are already in it.

**Mr. Jamie Schmale (Haliburton—Kawartha Lakes—Brock, CPC):** Madam Speaker, I listened to the Liberal question, and over and over again, all throughout this debate, all that was said on that side was how much money the government is spending on this project, yet the problem is getting worse. That is what we have

been trying to explain all day long, that the problem is growing. However, the government is saying it is going to spend more. Then it said it was going to fix it with yet another government program.

Does my friend from Bay of Quinte recognize, I know he has, that the government just continues to fail and cannot figure out how to get out of this?

• (1825)

**Mr. Ryan Williams:** Madam Speaker, absolutely. Cash is being handed out, and right now we see that people cannot make their mortgage payments or pay for groceries. They are having trouble with the next month's rent, and that is because of more cash. If the government's solution is more cash, what is going to happen three months from now? I will still be unable to feed my family because groceries will have gone up another \$200.

We need action. The best part about this plan for housing is this. If we can get tradespeople in to build units, we create jobs. What do jobs create? They create paycheques. That is what would fix this problem once and for all.

**The Assistant Deputy Speaker (Mrs. Carol Hughes):** The hon. member for Battle River—Crowfoot is rising on a point of order.

**Mr. Damien Kurek:** Madam Speaker, it is an honour to be able to rise to ask for unanimous consent to table some documents. I hope these documents will be of particular interest to every single member in this House, because they have to do with the very foundation of what our democratic system is, and specifically the impacts that has in the province of Alberta.

Today I ask for unanimous consent to table, in both of Canada's official languages, the results for the 2021 senatorial election race that took place in the province of Alberta on October 18. This is an opportunity to make sure these results are represented on the record here in this place.

I ask for unanimous consent to table these documents.

**The Assistant Deputy Speaker (Mrs. Carol Hughes):** Does the hon. member have unanimous consent to table the documents?

**Some hon. members:** No.

**Mr. Damien Kurek:** Madam Speaker, on a point of order, let it be noted the contempt for democracy that those Liberals who shouted down—

**The Assistant Deputy Speaker (Mrs. Carol Hughes):** This is a point of debate.

It being 6:27 p.m. and this being the final supply day in the period ending December 10, 2021, it is my duty to interrupt the proceedings and put forthwith every question necessary to dispose of the business of supply.

*[Translation]*

If a member of a recognized party present in the House wishes to request a recorded division or that the motion be adopted on division, I would invite them to rise and indicate it to the Chair.

*[English]*

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

**The Assistant Deputy Speaker (Mrs. Carol Hughes):** Call in the members.

• (1910)

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

*(Division No. 11)*

## YEAS

## Members

Aitchison	Albas
Allison	Arnold
Baldinelli	Barlow
Barrett	Barsalou-Duval
Beaulieu	Benzen
Bergen	Bergeron
Berthold	Bérubé
Bezan	Blanchet
Blanchette-Joncas	Block
Bragdon	Brassard
Brock	Brunelle-Duceppe
Calkins	Caputo
Carrie	Chabot
Chambers	Champoux
Chong	Cooper
Dalton	Dancho
Davidson	DeBellefeuille
Deltell	d'Entremont
Desbiens	Desilets
Doherty	Dowdall
Dreeschen	Duncan (Stormont—Dundas—South Glengarry)
Ellis	Epp
Falk (Battlefords—Lloydminster)	Falk (Provencher)
Fast	Ferri
Findlay	Fortin
Gallant	Garon
Gaudreau	Généreux
Genuis	Gill
Gladu	Godin
Goodridge	Gourde
Gray	Hallan
Hoback	Jeneroux
Kelly	Kitchen
Kmiec	Kram
Kramp-Neuman	Kurek
Kusie	Lake
Lantsman	Larouche
Lawrence	Lehoux
Lemire	Lewis (Essex)
Lewis (Haldimand—Norfolk)	Liepert
Lloyd	Lobb
MacKenzie	Maguire
Martel	Mazier
McCauley (Edmonton West)	McLean
Melillo	Michaud
Moore	Morantz
Morrison	Motz
Muys	Nater
Normandin	O'Toole
Patzer	Paul-Hus

Pauzé  
Perron  
Poilievre  
Redekopp  
Rempel Garner  
Roberts  
Ruff  
Scheer  
Seeback  
Shiple  
Sinclair-Desgagné  
Soroka  
Ste-Marie  
Strahl  
Thériault  
Thomas  
Tolmie  
Uppal  
Vecchio  
Vien  
Willemure  
Wagantall  
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Perkins  
Plamondon  
Rayes  
Reid  
Richards  
Rood  
Savard-Tremblay  
Schmale  
Shields  
Simard  
Small  
Steinley  
Stewart  
Stubbs  
Therrien  
Tochor  
Trudel  
Van Popta  
Vidal  
Vignola  
Vis  
Warkentin  
Webber  
Williamson

## NAYS

## Members

Alhabra  
Anand  
Angus  
Arya  
Bachrach  
Bains  
Barron  
Beech  
Bennett  
Blaikie  
Blaney  
Boissonnault  
Bradford  
Cannings  
Chagger  
Champagne  
Chen  
Collins (Hamilton East—Stoney Creek)  
Cormier  
Dabrusin  
Davies  
Dhaliwal  
Diab  
Drouin  
Duclos  
Duncan (Etobicoke North)  
El-Khoury  
Fergus  
Fisher  
Fortier  
Fraser  
Fry  
Garneau  
Gazan  
Gould  
Guilbeault  
Hanley  
Hepfner  
Housefather  
Hussen  
Iacono  
Ien  
Johns  
Jowhari

*Business of Supply*

Julian	Kayabaga
Kelloway	Khalid
Khera	Koutrakis
Kusmierczyk	Kwan
Lalonde	Lambropoulos
Lametti	Lamoureux
Lapointe	Lattanzio
Lauzon	LeBlanc
Lebouthillier	Lightbound
Long	Longfield
Louis (Kitchener—Conestoga)	MacAulay (Cardigan)
MacDonald (Malpeque)	MacGregor
MacKinnon (Gatineau)	Maloney
Martinez Ferrada	Masse
Mathysen	May (Cambridge)
May (Saanich—Gulf Islands)	McDonald (Avalon)
McGuinty	McKay
McKinnon (Coquitlam—Port Coquitlam)	McLeod
McPherson	Mendès
Mendicino	Miao
Miller	Morrice
Morrissey	Murray
Naqvi	Ng
Noor Mohamed	O'Connell
Oliphant	O'Regan
Petitpas Taylor	Powlowski
Qualtrough	Robillard
Rodriguez	Rogers
Romanado	Sahota
Saks	Samson
Sarai	Scarpaleggia
Schiefke	Serré
Sgro	Shanahan
Sheehan	Sidhu (Brampton East)
Sidhu (Brampton South)	Singh
Sorbara	Spengemann
St-Onge	Sudds
Tassi	Taylor Roy
Thompson	Trudeau
Turnbull	Valdez
Van Bynen	van Koevorden
Vandal	Vandenbeld
Virani	Vuong
Weiler	Wilkinson
Yip	Zahid
Zarrillo	Zuberi — 180

## PAIRED

Nil

**The Speaker:** I declare the motion defeated.

\* \* \*

## SUPPLEMENTARY ESTIMATES (B), 2021-2022

**Hon. Mona Fortier (President of the Treasury Board, Lib.)** moved:

That the Supplementary Estimates (B) for the fiscal year ending March 31, 2022, be concurred in.

[Translation]

**The Speaker:** If a member of a recognized party present in the House wishes to request a recorded division or that the amendment be adopted on division, I would invite them to rise and indicate it to the Chair.

[English]

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

● (1925)

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

(Division No. 12)

## YEAS

## Members

Aldag	Alghabra
Ali	Anand
Anandasangaree	Angus
Arseneault	Arya
Atwin	Bachrach
Badawey	Bains
Baker	Barron
Barsalou-Duval	Battiste
Beaulieu	Beech
Bendayan	Bennett
Bergeron	Bérubé
Bittle	Blaikie
Blair	Blanchet
Blanchette-Joncas	Blaney
Blois	Boissonnault
Boulerice	Bradford
Brunelle-Duceppe	Cannings
Casey	Chabot
Chagger	Chahal
Champagne	Champoux
Chatel	Chen
Chiang	Collins (Hamilton East—Stoney Creek)
Collins (Victoria)	Cormier
Coteau	Dabrusin
Damoff	Davies
DeBellefeuille	Desbiens
Desilets	Desjarlais
Dhaliwal	Dhillon
Diab	Dong
Drouin	Dubourg
Duclos	Duguid
Duncan (Etobicoke North)	Dzerowicz
Ehsassi	El-Khoury
Erskine-Smith	Fergus
Fillmore	Fisher
Fonseca	Fortier
Fortin	Fragiskatos
Fraser	Freeland
Fry	Gaheer
Garneau	Garon
Garrison	Gaudreau
Gazan	Gerretsen
Gill	Gould
Green	Guilbeault
Hajdu	Hanley
Hardie	Hepfiner
Holland	Housefather
Hughes	Hussen
Hutchings	Iacono
Idlout	Ien
Jaczek	Johns
Jones	Jowhari
Julian	Kayabaga
Kelloway	Khalid
Khera	Koutrakis
Kusmierczyk	Kwan
Lalonde	Lambropoulos
Lametti	Lamoureux
Lapointe	Larouche
Lattanzio	Lauzon
LeBlanc	Lebouthillier
Lemire	Lightbound
Long	Longfield
Louis (Kitchener—Conestoga)	MacAulay (Cardigan)



*Business of Supply*

MacDonald (Malpeque)  
 MacKinnon (Gatineau)  
 Martinez Ferrada  
 Mathysse  
 May (Saanich—Gulf Islands)  
 McGuinty  
 McKinnon (Coquitlam—Port Coquitlam)  
 McPherson  
 Mendicino  
 Michaud  
 Morrice  
 Murray  
 Ng  
 Normandin  
 Oliphant  
 Paupé  
 Petitpas Taylor  
 Powlowski  
 Robillard  
 Rogers  
 Sahota  
 Samson  
 Savard-Tremblay  
 Schiefke  
 Sgro  
 Sheehan  
 Sidhu (Brampton South)  
 Sinclair-Desgagné  
 Sorbara  
 Ste-Marie  
 Sudds  
 Taylor Roy  
 Therrien  
 Trudeau  
 Turnbull  
 Van Bynen  
 Vandal  
 Vignola  
 Virani  
 Weiler  
 Yip  
 Zarrillo

MacGregor  
 Maloney  
 Masse  
 May (Cambridge)  
 McDonald (Avalon)  
 McKay  
 McLeod  
 Mendès  
 Miao  
 Miller  
 Morrissey  
 Naqvi  
 Noormohamed  
 O'Connell  
 O'Regan  
 Perron  
 Plamondon  
 Qualtrough  
 Rodriguez  
 Romanado  
 Saks  
 Sarai  
 Scarpaiegia  
 Serré  
 Shanahan  
 Sidhu (Brampton East)  
 Simard  
 Singh  
 Spengemann  
 St-Onge  
 Tassi  
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 Motz  
 Nater  
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 Perkins  
 Rayes  
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 Richards  
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 Seebach  
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 Lawrence  
 Lewis (Essex)  
 Liepert  
 Lobb  
 Maguire  
 Mazier  
 McLean  
 Moore  
 Morrison  
 Muys  
 O'Toole  
 Paul-Hus  
 Poilievre  
 Redekopp  
 Rempel Garner  
 Roberts  
 Ruff  
 Schmale  
 Shields  
 Small  
 Steinley  
 Strahl  
 Thomas  
 Tolmie  
 Van Popta  
 Vidal  
 Vis  
 Warkentin  
 Webber  
 Williamson

## PAIRED

Nil

**The Speaker:** I declare the motion carried.[*Translation*]

**Hon. Mona Fortier** moved for leave to introduce Bill C-6, An Act for granting to Her Majesty certain sums of money for the federal public administration for the fiscal year ending March 31, 2022.

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

[*English*]

**Hon. Mona Fortier** moved that the bill be read the second time and referred to a committee of the whole.

[*Translation*]

**The Speaker:** If a member of a recognized party present in the House wishes to request a recorded division or that the amendment be adopted on division, I would invite them to rise and indicate it to the Chair.

The hon. chief government whip.

**Hon. Steven MacKinnon:** Mr. Speaker, I believe if you seek it, you will find agreement to apply the results from the previous vote to this vote, with Liberal members voting yes.

**Mr. Blake Richards:** Mr. Speaker, we agree to apply the vote, with Conservative members voting no.

**Mrs. Marilène Gill:** Mr. Speaker, the Bloc Québécois agrees to apply the vote and is voting in favour of the motion.

## NAYS

## Members

Aitchison  
 Allison  
 Baldinelli  
 Barrett  
 Bergen  
 Bezan  
 Bragdon  
 Brock  
 Caputo  
 Chambers  
 Cooper  
 Dancho  
 Deltell  
 Doherty  
 Dreeshen  
 Ellis  
 Falk (Battlefords—Lloydminster)  
 Fast  
 Findlay  
 Généreux  
 Gladu  
 Goodridge  
 Gray  
 Hoback  
 Kelly  
 Kmiec  
 Kramp-Neuman

Albas  
 Arnold  
 Barlow  
 Benzen  
 Berthold  
 Block  
 Brassard  
 Calkins  
 Carrie  
 Chong  
 Dalton  
 Davidson  
 d'Entremont  
 Dowdall  
 Duncan (Stormont—Dundas—South Glengarry)  
 Epp  
 Falk (Provencher)  
 Ferreri  
 Gallant  
 Genuis  
 Godin  
 Gourde  
 Hallan  
 Jeneroux  
 Kitchen  
 Kram  
 Kurek

*Business of Supply**[English]*

**Ms. Rachel Blaney:** Mr. Speaker, the NDP agrees to apply the vote and will be voting yea.

**Mr. Mike Morrice:** Mr. Speaker, the Green Party agrees to apply the vote and will be voting in favour.

**Mr. Kevin Vuong:** Mr. Speaker, I agree to apply the vote and vote in favour.

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

*(Division No. 13)*

## YEAS

## Members

Aldag	Alghabra
Ali	Anand
Anandasangaree	Angus
Arseneault	Arya
Atwin	Bachrach
Badawey	Bains
Baker	Barron
Barsalou-Duval	Battiste
Beaulieu	Beech
Bendayan	Bennett
Bergeron	Bérubé
Bittle	Blaikie
Blair	Blanchet
Blanchette-Joncas	Blaney
Blois	Boissonnault
Boulerice	Bradford
Brunelle-Duceppe	Cannings
Casey	Chabot
Chagger	Chahal
Champagne	Champoux
Chatel	Chen
Chiang	Collins (Hamilton East—Stoney Creek)
Collins (Victoria)	Cormier
Coteau	Dabrusin
Damoff	Davies
DeBellefeuille	Desbiens
Desjlets	Desjarlais
Dhaliwal	Dhillon
Diab	Dong
Drouin	Dubourg
Duclos	Duguid
Duncan (Etobicoke North)	Dzerowicz
Ehsassi	El-Khoury
Erskine-Smith	Fergus
Fillmore	Fisher
Fonseca	Fortier
Fortin	Fragiskatos
Fraser	Freeland
Fry	Gaheer
Garneau	Garon
Garrison	Gaudreau
Gazan	Gerretsen
Gill	Gould
Green	Guilbeault
Hajdu	Hanley
Hardie	Hepfner
Holland	Housefather
Hughes	Hussen
Hutchings	Iacono
Idlout	Ien
Jaczek	Johns
Jones	Jowhari
Julian	Kayabaga
Kelloway	Khalid
Khera	Koutrakis

Kusmierczyk	Kwan
Lalonde	Lambropoulos
Lametti	Lamoureux
Lapointe	Larouche
Lattanzio	Lauzon
LeBlanc	Lebouthillier
Lemire	Lightbound
Long	Longfield
Louis (Kitchener—Conestoga)	MacAulay (Cardigan)
MacDonald (Malpeque)	MacGregor
MacKinnon (Gatineau)	Maloney
Martinez Ferrada	Masse
Mathysen	May (Cambridge)
May (Saanich—Gulf Islands)	McDonald (Avalon)
McGuinty	McKay
McKinnon (Coquitlam—Port Coquitlam)	McLeod
McPherson	Mendès
Mendicino	Miao
Michaud	Miller
Morrice	Morrissey
Murray	Naqvi
Ng	Noormohamed
Normandin	O'Connell
Oliphant	O'Regan
Pauzé	Perron
Petitpas Taylor	Plamondon
Powlowski	Qualtrough
Robillard	Rodriguez
Rogers	Romanado
Sahota	Saks
Samson	Sarai
Savard-Tremblay	Scarpaleggia
Schiefke	Serré
Sgro	Shanahan
Sheehan	Sidhu (Brampton East)
Sidhu (Brampton South)	Simard
Sinclair-Desgagné	Singh
Sorbara	Spengemann
Ste-Marie	St-Onge
Sudds	Tassi
Taylor Roy	Thériault
Therrien	Thompson
Trudeau	Trudel
Turnbull	Valdez
Van Bynen	van Koeverden
Vandal	Vandenbeld
Vignola	Villemure
Virani	Vuong
Weiler	Wilkinson
Yip	Zahid
Zarrillo	Zuberi— 212

## NAYS

## Members

Albas
Arnold
Barlow
Benzen
Berthold
Block
Brassard
Calkins
Carrie
Chong
Dalton
Davidson
d'Entremont
Dowdall
Duncan (Stormont—Dundas—South Glengarry)
Epp
Falk (Battlefords—Lloydminster)
Ferreri

Findlay	Gallant
Généreux	Genuis
Gladu	Godin
Goodridge	Gourde
Gray	Hallan
Hoback	Jeneroux
Kelly	Kitchen
Kniec	Kram
Kramp-Neuman	Kurek
Kusie	Lake
Lantsman	Lawrence
Lehoux	Lewis (Essex)
Lewis (Haldimand—Norfolk)	Liepert
Lloyd	Lobb
MacKenzie	Maguire
Martel	Mazier
McCauley (Edmonton West)	McLean
Melillo	Moore
Morantz	Morrison
Motz	Muys
Nater	O'Toole
Patzer	Paul-Hus
Perkins	Poillievre
Rayes	Redekopp
Reid	Rempel Garner
Richards	Roberts
Rood	Ruff
Scheer	Schmale
Seeback	Shields
Shipley	Small
Soroka	Steinley
Stewart	Strahl
Stubbs	Thomas
Tochor	Tolmie
Uppal	Van Popta
Vecchio	Vidal
Vien	Vis
Wagantall	Warkentin
Waugh	Webber
Williams	Williamson
Zimmer— 117	

## PAIRED

Nil

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

(Bill read the second time and the House went into committee of the whole thereon, Mr. Chris d'Entremont in the chair)

(On clause 2)

**Mr. Kelly McCauley (Edmonton West, CPC):** Mr. Chair, could the President of the Treasury Board confirm that the bill is in its usual form?

[*Translation*]

**Hon. Mona Fortier (President of the Treasury Board, Lib.):** Mr. Speaker, the presentation of this bill is identical to that used during the previous supply period.

• (1930)

[*English*]

**The Chair:** Shall clause 2 carry?

**Some hon. members:** Agreed.

**Some hon. members:** On division.

(Clause 2 agreed to)

*Business of Supply*

[*Translation*]

**The Chair:** Shall clause 3 carry?

**Some hon. members:** Agreed.

**Some hon. members:** On division.

(Clause 3 agreed to)

**The Chair:** Shall clause 4 carry?

**Some hon. members:** Agreed.

**Some hon. members:** On division.

(Clause 4 agreed to)

[*English*]

**The Chair:** Shall clause 5 carry?

**Some hon. members:** Agreed.

**Some hon. members:** On division.

(Clause 5 agreed to)

**The Chair:** Shall the schedule carry?

**Some hon. members:** Agreed.

**Some hon. members:** On division.

(Schedule agreed to)

**The Chair:** Shall clause 1 carry?

**Some hon. members:** Agreed.

**Some hon. members:** On division.

(Clause 1 agreed to)

**The Chair:** Shall the preamble carry?

**Some hon. members:** Agreed.

**Some hon. members:** On division.

(Preamble agreed to)

[*Translation*]

**The Chair:** Shall the title carry?

**Some hon. members:** Agreed.

**Some hon. members:** On division.

(Title agreed to)

**The Chair:** Shall the bill carry?

**Some hon. members:** Agreed.

**Some hon. members:** On division.

(Bill agreed to)

[*English*]

**The Chair:** Shall I rise and report the bill?

**Some hon. members:** Agreed.

(Bill reported without amendment)

*Business of Supply*

**Hon. Mona Fortier (President of the Treasury Board, Lib.)** moved that the bill be concurred in.

**The Speaker:** If a member of a recognized party present in the House wishes to request a recorded division or that the motion be adopted on division, I would invite them to rise and indicate it to the Chair.

[Translation]

**Hon. Steven MacKinnon:** Mr. Speaker, notwithstanding our occasional differences in the House, I believe if you seek it you will find agreement, this time, to apply the results of the previous vote to this vote, with Liberal members voting yes.

[English]

**Mr. Blake Richards:** Mr. Speaker, we agree to apply the vote, with Conservatives voting no.

[Translation]

**Mrs. Marilène Gill:** Mr. Speaker, the Bloc Québécois agrees to apply the vote and will vote in favour of the motion.

[English]

**Ms. Rachel Blaney:** Mr. Speaker, the NDP agree to apply the vote and will be voting yea.

**Mr. Mike Morrice:** Mr. Speaker, the Greens also agree to apply the vote and will be voting in favour.

**Mr. Kevin Vuong:** Mr. Speaker, I agree to apply the results of the previous vote, voting in favour.

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

*(Division No. 14)*

## YEAS

## Members

Aldag	Alghabra
Ali	Anand
Anandasangaree	Angus
Arseneault	Arya
Atwin	Bachrach
Badawey	Bains
Baker	Barron
Barsalou-Duval	Battiste
Beaulieu	Beech
Bendayan	Bennett
Bergeron	Bérubé
Bittle	Blaikie
Blair	Blanchet
Blanchette-Joncas	Blaney
Blois	Boissonnault
Boulerice	Bradford
Brunelle-Duceppe	Cannings
Casey	Chabot
Chagger	Chahal
Champagne	Champoux
Chatel	Chen
Chiang	Collins (Hamilton East—Stoney Creek)
Collins (Victoria)	Cormier
Coteau	Dabrusin
Damoff	Davies
DeBellefeuille	Desbiens
Desilets	Desjarlais
Dhaliwal	Dhillon
Diab	Dong
Drouin	Dubourg

Duclos	Duguid
Duncan (Etobicoke North)	Dzerowicz
Ehsassi	El-Khoury
Erskine-Smith	Fergus
Fillmore	Fisher
Fonseca	Fortier
Fortin	Fragiskatos
Fraser	Freeland
Fry	Gaheer
Garneau	Garon
Garrison	Gaudreau
Gazan	Gerretsen
Gill	Gould
Green	Guilbeault
Hajdu	Hanley
Hardie	Hepfner
Holland	Housefather
Hughes	Hussen
Hutchings	Iacono
Idlout	Ien
Jaczek	Johns
Jones	Jowhari
Julian	Kayabaga
Kelloway	Khalid
Khera	Koutrakis
Kusmierczyk	Kwan
Lalonde	Lambropoulos
Lametti	Lamoureux
Lapointe	Larouche
Lattanzio	Lauzon
LeBlanc	Lebouthillier
Lemire	Lightbound
Long	Longfield
Louis (Kitchener—Conestoga)	MacAulay (Cardigan)
MacDonald (Malpeque)	MacGregor
MacKinnon (Gatineau)	Maloney
Martinez Ferrada	Masse
Mathysen	May (Cambridge)
May (Saanich—Gulf Islands)	McDonald (Avalon)
McGuinty	McKay
McKinnon (Coquitlam—Port Coquitlam)	McLeod
McPherson	Mendès
Medicino	Miao
Michaud	Miller
Morrice	Morrissey
Murray	Naqvi
Ng	Noormohamed
Normandin	O'Connell
Oliphant	O'Regan
Pauzé	Perron
Petitpas Taylor	Plamondon
Powlowski	Qualtrough
Robillard	Rodriguez
Rogers	Romanado
Sahota	Saks
Samson	Sari
Savard-Tremblay	Scarpaleggia
Schiefke	Serré
Sgro	Shanahan
Sheehan	Sidhu (Brampton East)
Sidhu (Brampton South)	Simard
Sinclair-Desgagné	Singh
Sorbara	Spengemann
Ste-Marie	St-Onge
Sudds	Tassi
Taylor Roy	Thériault
Therrien	Thompson
Trudeau	Trudel
Turnbull	Valdez
Van Bynen	van Koeverden
Vandal	Vandenbeld
Vignola	Villemure
Virani	Vuong

*Business of Supply*

Weiler  
Yip  
Zarrillo

Wilkinson  
Zahid  
Zuberi— 212

## NAYS

## Members

Aitchison  
Allison  
Baldinelli  
Barrett  
Bergen  
Bezan  
Bragdon  
Brock  
Caputo  
Chambers  
Cooper  
Dancho  
Deltell  
Doherty  
Dreeshen  
Ellis  
Falk (Battlefords—Lloydminster)  
Fast  
Findlay  
Généreux  
Gladu  
Goodridge  
Gray  
Hoback  
Kelly  
Kmiec  
Kramp-Neuman  
Kusie  
Lantsman  
Lehoux  
Lewis (Haldimand—Norfolk)  
Lloyd  
MacKenzie  
Martel  
McCauley (Edmonton West)  
Melillo  
Morantz  
Motz  
Nater  
Patzner  
Perkins  
Rayes  
Reid  
Richards  
Rood  
Scheer  
Seeback  
Shipley  
Soroka  
Stewart  
Stubbs  
Tochor  
Uppal  
Vecchio  
Vien  
Wagantall  
Waugh  
Williams  
Zimmer— 117

Albas  
Arnold  
Barlow  
Benzen  
Berthold  
Block  
Brassard  
Calkins  
Carrie  
Chong  
Dalton  
Davidson  
d'Entremont  
Dowdall  
Duncan (Stormont—Dundas—South Glengarry)  
Epp  
Falk (Provencher)  
Ferrerri  
Gallant  
Genius  
Godin  
Gourde  
Hallan  
Jeneroux  
Kitchen  
Kram  
Kurek  
Lake  
Lawrence  
Lewis (Essex)  
Liepert  
Lobb  
Maguire  
Mazier  
McLean  
Moore  
Morrison  
Muys  
O'Toole  
Paul-Hus  
Poilievre  
Redekopp  
Rempel Garner  
Roberts  
Ruff  
Schmale  
Shields  
Small  
Steinley  
Strahl  
Thomas  
Tolmie  
Van Popta  
Vidal  
Vis  
Warkentin  
Webber  
Williamson

## PAIRED

Nil

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

**The Speaker:** When shall the bill be read a third time? By leave, now?

**Some hon. members:** Agreed.

**Hon. Mona Fortier (President of the Treasury Board, Lib.)** moved that the bill be read the third time and passed.

**The Speaker:** If a member of a recognized party present in the House wishes to request a recorded division or that the motion be adopted on division, I would invite them to rise and indicate it to the Chair.

**Hon. Steven MacKinnon:** Mr. Speaker, as we gather for the last time in this way on this fine December evening, I believe if you seek it, you will find agreement to apply the results from the previous vote to this vote, with Liberal members voting yes.

[*Translation*]

**Mr. Blake Richards:** Mr. Speaker, we agree to apply the vote, and the official opposition votes no.

**Mrs. Marilène Gill:** Mr. Speaker, the Bloc Québécois agrees to apply the vote and will vote in favour of the motion.

[*English*]

**Ms. Rachel Blaney:** Mr. Speaker, the NDP agree to apply and will be voting yea.

**Mr. Mike Morrice:** Mr. Speaker, the Greens agree to apply the vote and will be voting in favour.

**Mr. Kevin Vuong:** Mr. Speaker, I agree to apply the results of the previous vote, voting in favour.

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

(*Division No. 15*)

## YEAS

## Members

Aldag  
Ali  
Anandasangaree  
Arseneault  
Atwin  
Badawey  
Baker  
Barsalou-Duval  
Beaulieu  
Bendayan  
Bergeron  
Bittle  
Blair  
Blanchette-Joncas  
Blois  
Boulerice  
Brunelle-Duceppe  
Casey  
Chagger  
Champagne  
Chatel  
Chiang  
Collins (Victoria)  
Coteau  
Damoff  
DeBellefeuille  
Desilets  
Dhaliwal  
Diab

Alghabra  
Anand  
Angus  
Arya  
Bachrach  
Bains  
Barron  
Battiste  
Beech  
Bennett  
Bérubé  
Blaikie  
Blanchet  
Blaney  
Boissonnault  
Bradford  
Cannings  
Chabot  
Chahal  
Champoux  
Chen  
Collins (Hamilton East—Stoney Creek)  
Cormier  
Dabrusin  
Davies  
Desbiens  
Desjarlais  
Dhillon  
Dong

*Business of Supply*

Drouin  
 Duclos  
 Duncan (Etobicoke North)  
 Ehsassi  
 Erskine-Smith  
 Fillmore  
 Fonseca  
 Fortin  
 Fraser  
 Fry  
 Garneau  
 Garrison  
 Gazan  
 Gill  
 Green  
 Hajdu  
 Hardie  
 Holland  
 Hughes  
 Hutchings  
 Idlout  
 Jaczek  
 Jones  
 Julian  
 Kelloway  
 Khera  
 Kusmierczyk  
 Lalonde  
 Lametti  
 Lapointe  
 Lattanzio  
 LeBlanc  
 Lemire  
 Long  
 Louis (Kitchener—Conestoga)  
 MacDonald (Malpeque)  
 MacKinnon (Gatineau)  
 Martinez Ferrada  
 Mathysen  
 May (Saanich—Gulf Islands)  
 McGuinty  
 McKinnon (Coquitlam—Port Coquitlam)  
 McPherson  
 Mendicino  
 Michaud  
 Morrice  
 Murray  
 Ng  
 Normandin  
 Oliphant  
 Pauzé  
 Petitpas Taylor  
 Powlowski  
 Robillard  
 Rogers  
 Sahota  
 Samson  
 Savard-Tremblay  
 Schiefke  
 Sgro  
 Sheehan  
 Sidhu (Brampton South)  
 Sinclair-Desgagné  
 Sorbara  
 Ste-Marie  
 Suds  
 Taylor Roy  
 Therrien  
 Trudeau  
 Turnbull  
 Van Bynen  
 Vandal  
 Vignola

Dubourg  
 Duguid  
 Dzerowicz  
 El-Khoury  
 Fergus  
 Fisher  
 Fortier  
 Fragiskatos  
 Freeland  
 Gaheer  
 Garon  
 Gaudreau  
 Gerretsen  
 Gould  
 Guilbeault  
 Hanley  
 Hepfner  
 Housefather  
 Hussien  
 Iacono  
 Ien  
 Johns  
 Jowhari  
 Kayabaga  
 Khalid  
 Koutrakis  
 Kwan  
 Lambropoulos  
 Lamoureux  
 Larouche  
 Lauzon  
 Lebouthillier  
 Lightbound  
 Longfield  
 MacAulay (Cardigan)  
 MacGregor  
 Maloney  
 Masse  
 May (Cambridge)  
 McDonald (Avalon)  
 McKay  
 McLeod  
 Mendès  
 Miao  
 Miller  
 Morrissey  
 Naqvi  
 Noormohamed  
 O'Connell  
 O'Regan  
 Perron  
 Plamondon  
 Qualtrough  
 Rodriguez  
 Romanado  
 Saks  
 Sarai  
 Scarpaleggia  
 Serré  
 Shanahan  
 Sidhu (Brampton East)  
 Simard  
 Singh  
 Spengemann  
 St-Onge  
 Tassi  
 Thériault  
 Thompson  
 Trudel  
 Valdez  
 van Koevorden  
 Vandenbeld  
 Villemure

Virani  
 Weiler  
 Yip  
 Zarrillo  
  
 Aitchison  
 Allison  
 Baldinelli  
 Barrett  
 Bergen  
 Bezan  
 Bragdon  
 Brock  
 Caputo  
 Chambers  
 Cooper  
 Dancho  
 Deltell  
 Doherty  
 Dreeshen  
 Ellis  
 Falk (Battlefords—Lloydminster)  
 Fast  
 Findlay  
 Gagné  
 Gladu  
 Goodridge  
 Gray  
 Hoback  
 Kelly  
 Kmiec  
 Kramp-Neuman  
 Kusie  
 Lantsman  
 Lehoux  
 Lewis (Haldimand—Norfolk)  
 Lloyd  
 MacKenzie  
 Martel  
 McCauley (Edmonton West)  
 Melillo  
 Morantz  
 Motz  
 Nater  
 Patzer  
 Perkins  
 Rayes  
 Reid  
 Richards  
 Rood  
 Scheer  
 Seeback  
 Shipley  
 Soroka  
 Stewart  
 Stubbs  
 Tochor  
 Uppal  
 Vecchio  
 Vien  
 Wagantall  
 Waugh  
 Williams  
 Zimmer — 117

Vuong  
 Wilkinson  
 Zahid  
 Zuberi — 212

## NAYS

## Members

Albas  
 Arnold  
 Barlow  
 Benzen  
 Berthold  
 Block  
 Brassard  
 Calkins  
 Carrie  
 Chong  
 Dalton  
 Davidson  
 d'Entremont  
 Dowdall  
 Duncan (Stormont—Dundas—South Glengarry)  
 Epp  
 Falk (Provencher)  
 Ferreri  
 Gallant  
 Genuis  
 Godin  
 Gourde  
 Hallan  
 Jeneroux  
 Kitchen  
 Kram  
 Kurek  
 Lake  
 Lawrence  
 Lewis (Essex)  
 Liepert  
 Lobb  
 Maguire  
 Mazier  
 McLean  
 Moore  
 Morrison  
 Muys  
 O'Toole  
 Paul-Hus  
 Poilievre  
 Redekopp  
 Rempel Garner  
 Roberts  
 Ruff  
 Schmale  
 Shields  
 Small  
 Steinley  
 Strahl  
 Thomas  
 Tolmie  
 Van Popta  
 Vidal  
 Vis  
 Warkentin  
 Webber  
 Williamson

## PAIRED

Nil

**The Speaker:** I declare the motion carried.  
 (Bill read the third time and passed)

• (1935)

#### MESSAGE FROM THE SENATE

**The Speaker:** I have the honour to inform the House that messages have been received from the Senate informing this House that the Senate has passed the following bills to which the concurrence of the House is desired: Bill S-214, An Act to establish International Mother Language Day, Bill S-216, An Act to amend the Income Tax Act (use of resources of a registered charity), and Bill S-223, An Act to amend the Criminal Code and the Immigration and Refugee Protection Act (trafficking in human organs).

### ADJOURNMENT PROCEEDINGS

A motion to adjourn the House under Standing Order 38 deemed to have been moved.

[English]

#### REGIONAL ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT

**Ms. Lianne Rood (Lambton—Kent—Middlesex, CPC):** Mr. Speaker, on November 30, I asked the minister why the Liberal government was always leaving rural Canadians behind, and I did not receive an answer to that question. In fact, what I did receive was a bunch of talking points on what the government hopes to accomplish with broadband by 2030. While I certainly will not downplay the importance of a well-formulated plan for rural broadband, what the government is offering is not that. There are many questions that deserve an answer, such as why 2030 was chosen as the target year. If rural Canadians are important to the government, then why not set a target for 2025, which is what the Conservatives proposed?

That is not all. I also wonder why the government is only targeting 50/10 megabits per second, a speed that certainly is not fast when compared with urban centres, which can have speeds of a gigabyte available. What about the cost of broadband in rural areas?

Constituents are calling my office about this all the time. They are very frustrated because they are paying upwards of \$1,000 a month for their cell phone bills because there is no high-speed Internet available. People are trying to work from home and kids are trying to do school from home, and they just cannot stream and do the video options without using cellular data.

I want to know what the government's plan is to deal with affordability and stability. There is no accountability for service providers, which take the federal funding for projects bringing broadband to rural areas and then delay the last mile. Why is there no accountability to get that last mile finished? Given the government's record on managing other affordability crises, I am really skeptical of any grand promises of help from the government.

Rural Canadians have little choice than to wait and rely on action from the government when they are consistently faced with a downward spiral for their livelihoods. Allow me to name a few priorities for the minister that go beyond broadband, priorities that would also make a difference in the lives of rural Canadians from coast to coast. Our migration from urban areas is driving the need for housing support and infrastructure. With municipalities unable to run a deficit, they often struggle to meet demands for

#### Adjournment Proceedings

such resources without assistance from provincial or federal governments.

Where does the minister stand on committing funding to partnerships with municipalities in need? It should come as no surprise that small businesses are a concern to rural Canada because they are the backbone of our economy. In rural Canada, a shortage of labour hurts the small community businesses that provide goods and services to towns. If it hurts small towns, it hurts our agriculture sector and our natural resource sector. It is a domino effect that will also affect revenue from exports.

Without fixing this problem quickly, it will compound. We need to be taking measures to encourage work in rural Canada to help our economy thrive. What is the minister doing to address the labour shortage to help get people into these vacant jobs?

• (1940)

**Mr. Stéphane Lauzon (Parliamentary Secretary to the Minister of Rural Economic Development, Lib.):** Mr. Speaker, I am pleased to respond to the comments made by the member for Lambton—Kent—Middlesex regarding rural economic development.

[Translation]

It is somewhat ironic that this matter is being raised by the Conservatives, who delayed Internet expansion for a decade.

[English]

The current crisis has highlighted the need for all Canadians to have access to fast and reliable Internet, no matter where they live. Canadians living in rural and remote communities identify a lack of high-speed Internet as the number one issue for them reaching their full economic potential.

Since 2015, improving connectivity has been the top priority for our government. In fact, our government has invested 10 times more than all previous governments combined, including the Conservatives. We have a plan to connect every Canadian across the country. I will tell the member how we are delivering on that plan.

[Translation]

Since 2015, our government has invested a total of \$7.2 billion for improved broadband access. When I was elected in 2015, that was the first file the rural caucus worked on, and we had several meetings about community access issues.

*Adjournment Proceedings*

Taken together, those investments will ensure that 98% of Canadians are connected to high-speed Internet by 2026 and 100% by 2030. Our government committed to bridging the digital divide from the start. Projects are under way to connect nearly 900,000 households. I had the opportunity to travel all over Canada and Quebec to make joint announcements with Ontario and Quebec.

The connect to innovate program launched in 2016 is an example of what we are doing. The program's funding is directed primarily at creating new basic infrastructure in rural and remote communities across Canada. Building that infrastructure is the modern equivalent of building roads to rural and remote areas, and it will connect these communities to the global economy. We recognized the vital importance of good connection and moved the Canadian connectivity file forward for our businesses, for education, for health care at home and for everything else.

The connect to innovate program will bring new or improved high-speed Internet access to more than 975 rural and remote communities, more than triple the 300 communities initially targeted, which includes 190 indigenous communities.

The universal broadband fund is the government's latest effort to support the expansion of high-speed Internet access across the country. This \$2.75-billion program to improve Internet access is the largest broadband investment in Canadian history.

The COVID-19 pandemic has highlighted the importance of connecting communities. That is why we acted quickly through the universal broadband fund. We heard all kinds of stories during the pandemic about people using the Internet to break their isolation. That demonstrated that the Internet is now a necessity.

• (1945)

[*English*]

**Ms. Lianne Rood:** Mr. Speaker, I thank the parliamentary secretary for his response. However, I must emphasize the importance of these concerns. Something the Liberal government needs to understand is that we are all Canadians regardless of geography and where we live, and we are all deserving of equal representation.

Here are a few concerns directly from my riding. A professor at Western University has written in to say he cannot offer his students the same services he did before the pandemic because of a lack of reliable Internet. Parents calling me are at their wits' end, frustrated that their children cannot receive a proper education or access online school because of poor Internet quality.

It is unacceptable that rural Canadians cannot connect to high-speed Internet and that the voices of rural Canadians have not been heard by the Liberal government. I will continue to raise the concerns of rural Canadians and fight for their issues until we get solutions.

[*Translation*]

**Mr. Stéphane Lauzon:** Mr. Speaker, I have heard the Conservatives say that they are listening to rural communities across Canada, even in the riding of my colleague across the way. I am rather pleased to hear that the member is protecting or trying to define the need for high-speed Internet.

Our government developed the rural economic development strategy with the goal of supporting the economic recovery. For education, as I said earlier, we focused on the resilience of rural regions across Canada, not just in one riding.

[*English*]

CLIMATE CHANGE

**Mr. Mike Morrice (Kitchener Centre, GP):** Mr. Speaker, I appreciate the chance to speak tonight with the Parliamentary Secretary to the Minister of Natural Resources and to the Minister of Environment and Climate Change on the topic of the climate crisis and fossil fuel subsidies.

In my community, no matter what neighbourhood I am in, the sentiment is the same: What is the point of anything else if we are not ensuring we have a safe climate future for our kids, nieces, nephews and grandkids, recognizing this is our last chance to ensure that we do so?

We are already seeing these impacts every day across the country. Recently there was the mudslides and flooding from B.C. to the east coast. This is a reminder that we must listen to scientists, indigenous leaders and young people who are calling for parliamentarians to act immediately, which will require bold and transformational action to reduce emissions by what scientists tell us is required to keep the possibility of 1.5°C alive, our fair share being 60% by 2030.

How are we doing on this? A couple of weeks ago, the commissioner of the environment and sustainable development released a scathing report, in which he wrote, "We can't continue to go from failure to failure; we need action and results, not just more targets and plans."

As of now, Canada's emissions have continued to increase since 2015, as of the most recent inventory, and we are the worst performer of any G7 country. One obvious reason is that we continue, in the midst of a climate emergency, to subsidize fossil fuels to the tune of approximately \$17 billion domestically in 2020, including over \$5 billion for the building of the Trans Mountain pipeline.



The report pointed to one example with a clear opportunity to improve the onshore program of a so-called emissions reduction fund. Launched in November 2020, part of Canada's COVID-19 emergency response plan, the government saw the onshore program as a way to help the energy sector deal with lower oil prices during the pandemic. It was designed to support emission reduction efforts by providing financial support to struggling companies in this sector. This is the important part. It offered up to \$675 million to oil and gas companies to maintain employment and reduce greenhouse gas emissions, with a particular focus on methane.

To date, the government has funded 40 projects via this \$675-million fund without verifiable emissions reductions, two-thirds of which actually led to increased oil and gas production. The good news is that we have only spent \$134 million of the \$675 million to date. Now we have an opportunity to use these funds for real climate action, for significant emissions reductions, by creating good jobs, for example, in retrofitting buildings, retraining workers in oil and gas and supporting their transition in a just economy.

Could the parliamentary secretary share what the government intends to do to ensure that the remaining \$541 million actually reduces emissions?

• (1950)

**Ms. Julie Dabrusin (Parliamentary Secretary to the Minister of Natural Resources and to the Minister of Environment and Climate Change, Lib.):** Mr. Speaker, I would like to congratulate the member for Kitchener Centre on his election to Parliament. I had a chance to meet with him at the all-party climate caucus meeting, and I am looking forward to working with him on these important issues about climate change and the environment.

It is important to remember that the emissions reduction fund was launched in response to the COVID crisis as a way to help workers and communities. It came at a time of record low, and at times negative, energy prices, and our government needed to help workers and communities that were reeling over these events. Canadians expected us to do that, and that is what we did, but we also had a policy objective to ensure that the industry continued to act on methane reduction.

I will note that, to date, this program is anticipated to reduce 4.6 megatons of greenhouse gas emissions, and those reductions are being tracked carefully. This is like taking one million cars off the road today, providing immediate environmental and health benefits for Canadians.

I would also like to draw the member opposite's attention to correspondence that we received from the Pembina Institute and the David Suzuki Foundation. Both organizations recognize the fund's success in reducing methane emissions and suggesting improvements. The Pembina Institute said, "During the pandemic, the emissions reduction fund has been one of the few programs around the world that addresses the economic impacts of the ongoing health crisis, while creating jobs and contributing meaningfully to reducing emissions in the oil and gas sector. This program has helped to drive Canadian leadership in methane abatement technology that will be in greater demand as the rest of the world increasingly acts on methane, and it will continue to do so if renewed."

### *Adjournment Proceedings*

The letter from the David Suzuki Foundation noted, "when your department announced the results from intakes one and two, we were pleased to see that 97% of the emissions reductions came from projects that eliminated intentional routine venting and flaring of methane, outcomes that go beyond 2023 methane regulations and that were achieved for less than \$20 per tonne of CO<sub>2</sub>. This is a notable achievement."

Those are two important statements about this program. We are carefully considering the commissioner's report, and will consider a broad range of perspectives. We are carefully considering all of the pieces that go into this, and I would urge members to consider a broader context and to take into account our bold actions to meet these ambitious climate targets. Take, for instance, our recent commitment to place a cap on emissions from the oil and gas sector. This is something no other oil-producing nation has done, at least so far, and there is more.

Consider that we have one of the highest prices on carbon in the world. Our government is also in the process of phasing out unabated coal-fired electricity by 2030, and we have signalled to the auto industry and Canadians that starting in 2035 all light-duty vehicles sold must be zero emitting.

These are big steps, and there are others, such as the upcoming clean fuel standard. That is why we are continuing to work to take these necessary steps.

• (1955)

**Mr. Mike Morrice:** Mr. Speaker, I will just speak briefly.

In the report from the commissioner, to be really clear, in terms of the reductions, we need to be mindful of the concept of additionality, meaning would these reductions have happened without the incremental funding?

In section 4.34, the commissioner was clear: "In the absence of an additionality analysis, there was no guarantee that it was designed to result in emission reductions beyond those that already would have happened".

More important than quibbling on what happened before is talking about what can happen now. We still have \$541 million left, so my question is the same. Can the parliamentary secretary speak to what the government intends to do as it looks to restructure this existing fund to work toward getting meaningful additional net new emission reductions?

*Adjournment Proceedings*

**Ms. Julie Dabrusin:** Mr. Speaker, I mentioned some of the initiatives we are working on, but there are many initiatives on energy efficiency in homes and buildings, and on hydrogen and nature-based solutions. The bottom line is that we know it will take nothing less than an all-out effort to confront this crisis, and that is how we are approaching this challenge.

I urge the member opposite to consider the broad range of measures in our climate plan. I will refer the member back to the fact that Canada maintains a higher price on pollution than even California, and is set to pass the EU next year. We are set to move forward on a cap on emissions for our oil and gas sector, and we have made significant investments in energy efficiency and renewable energy.

We know there is a lot of work to do, and that is exactly what we are doing.

THE ECONOMY

**Mr. Ryan Williams (Bay of Quinte, CPC):** Mr. Speaker, this is my first late show, and I am happy to have the opportunity to speak again on housing. At question period, I asked whether the government believed that the supply issue was serious and whether the lack of supply and supply inflation were causing the housing crisis.

I come from a region that is very much like all the other regions across Canada seeing such a dire position on housing, and this comes down to our lack of supply. Where did our numbers come from? When we compare ourselves with other G7 nations, we are dead last in supply per capita, even though we are the country with the second-largest amount of land on the planet. That means all of those countries, even the U.K., an island, have way more supply per capita than Canada does, a nation with an incredible amount of land.

When it comes to what is happening, we have all seen it and have been talking about it all day. We have people who right now, because of the lack of supply, are having trouble deciding whether they can afford rent or groceries. We have individuals who have become homeless by no choice of their own. My region has seen double the homeless population at a time when we do not need that because we have so many other problems. We also have many people who cannot find affordable housing.

When I talk to home builders in my region, those who are building homes, they say it is harder now than at any other time in their existence to build a home, and they are not finding support from the local government. We are now seeing it take up to two or three years before we even get subdivisions started in the ground. We have seen the conditions in Toronto, where from start to finish an apartment building now takes a decade. We have seen the conditions created when people want to put plans together and go into certain neighbourhoods. We get Nimbyism, or “not in my backyard”, because people are saying it is not something they desire. We are finding that it takes longer and longer in this country to build a home.

Let us look at how many homes we need. To meet the average number of houses in the rest of the G7 countries, we need, right now, 1.8 million homes. We have been hearing all week from the government about the programming that is going into building

homes. However, as confirmed by the Minister of Immigration this week in the House, the government only built 100,000 homes over six years, spending \$29 billion. That is not enough.

To build 1.8 million homes, we need to ensure that we are unleashing the innovation that comes from our home builders and that we are working with the provinces and municipalities to free up the red tape that is holding back our Canadian workers, our skilled trades and our municipalities from being able to put up enough homes to house not only the people we have here, but the backlog of immigrants whom we surely will have coming into this country. There is an opportunity to create jobs to make sure we have a lot of trade jobs and others that create paycheques for housing. This opportunity comes from unleashing innovation.

Will the government commit to working on creating supply, with bills that include discussions on all sides with all governments, to fix our housing crisis?

• (2000)

**Ms. Julie Dabrusin (Parliamentary Secretary to the Minister of Natural Resources and to the Minister of Environment and Climate Change, Lib.):** Mr. Speaker, I am thrilled that the member opposite would like to speak about the economy. Around the world, governments, including Canada, are taking immediate action to address the omicron variant. Earlier this week, Canada announced strong action at our borders and in regard to testing and entry. This is another reminder that all Canadians who can, should get their vaccines as soon as possible. There is no more important economic policy for Canada today than finishing the fight against COVID.

Today's renewed COVID fears are also a reminder of why the measures in Bill C-2, which provides targeted personal income and business supports, are so urgent and essential. Over the last 20 months, Canadians have faced tough times. Various health and safety precautions have caused financial and emotional distress for many people, not to mention those who have also had to care for or who have lost loved ones at the same time.

Across the country, many businesses have had to close, some temporarily and others permanently. The majority have experienced reduced revenues, even when they were open. This has translated into many people losing their jobs or having their hours reduced. That is why when the crisis hit, the government rapidly rolled out a full range of effective, broad-based programs under the economic response plan with much-needed support for individuals, businesses and communities to see Canadians through our country's greatest economic shock since the Great Depression.

In terms of its scale, Canada's economic response, including budget 2021 investments, was one of the largest and most expeditious among G7 countries. It helped engineer a near-term economic turnaround at a faster than anticipated pace compared with some industrialized countries. This support has worked. Many businesses are now safely reopening. Employment has recovered to pre-recession levels and of the three million jobs that were lost at the peak of the crisis, all have now been recouped, faster than any other recession. Canada's economic recovery is well on track and the pandemic economy is fading from view.

As our government looks to secure a more prosperous future for Canadians, it is helpful to look back and consider the key measures that have helped us to get to where we are today. These include the Canada emergency response benefit, the Canada emergency wage subsidy, the Canada emergency rent subsidy and lockdown support and the Canada emergency business account. Federal support also includes significant financing for the provinces and territories through its top-ups to the Canadian health transfer, as well as through the safe restart agreement, the safe return to class fund and the essential workers support fund. All told, more than \$8 out of every \$10 spent to fight COVID-19 and support Canadians has come from the federal government.

In budget 2021, the government promised that if additional flexibility was required, based on public health considerations later in the year, it would continue to do whatever it takes to be there for Canadians. That is why in October, we announced the Canada worker lockdown benefit. We are working to ensure continued support to Canadians throughout this pandemic.

• (2005)

**Mr. Ryan Williams:** Mr. Speaker, the fact is that we still are battling through COVID, but we now have different problems than we did prior to COVID. They require an immediate response from the government to tackle housing and supply issues, and to work with all members of government across all agencies. As stated, we have people now not able to afford their homes. We have people now who are finding themselves homeless.

### *Adjournment Proceedings*

The action we need now to swing hammers includes working with all levels of government, ensuring that we put enough resources in and that we start doing the work needed now; not just talking about it. We need less conversation and more action, ensuring that we have those homes built so that Canadians can then find a home for an affordable price.

Can the minister confirm that the government will look at supply in order to fix this problem?

**Ms. Julie Dabrusin:** Mr. Speaker, in the initial part, I talked about how we had announced in October the Canada worker lockdown benefit. This was to ensure that workers continue to have support and no one is left behind. This benefit would provide \$300 a week in income support to eligible workers should they be unable to work due to a regional lockdown until May 7, 2022, with retroactive application to October 24, 2021, if required. It would continue to offer support to those who still need it in case the pandemic requires further public health lockdowns in any part of the country, including workers who are both eligible and ineligible for employment insurance. The benefit would apply in any region of the country that is so designated by the government for the duration of the lockdown. This measure would be activated quickly to support affected workers in the event of a new lockdown in their region of work.

We are there to support Canadians. We have been and we will continue to be.

**The Deputy Speaker:** The motion to adjourn the House is now deemed to have been adopted.

[*Translation*]

Accordingly, the House stands adjourned until tomorrow at 10 a.m. pursuant to Standing Order 24(1).

(The House adjourned at 8:08 p.m.)



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