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Speaker: The Honourable Anthony Rota



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HOUSE OF COMMONS

Friday, May 6, 2022

The House met at 10 a.m.

Prayer

GOVERNMENT ORDERS

• (1000)

[*Translation*]

BUDGET IMPLEMENTATION ACT, 2022, NO. 1

The House resumed from May 5 consideration of the motion that Bill C-19, An Act to implement certain provisions of the budget tabled in Parliament on April 7, 2022 and other measures be read the second time and referred to a committee, of the amendment and of the amendment to the amendment.

Mr. Luc Berthold (Mégantic—L'Érable, CPC): Madam Speaker, I am pleased to say that I will be sharing my time with the member for Leeds—Grenville—Thousand Islands and Rideau Lakes.

I rise today to speak to Bill C-19, an act to implement certain provisions of the budget tabled in Parliament on April 7, 2022 and other measures, and, of course, to my colleague's amendment.

First of all, I would like to quickly revisit what happened in the House this week. Every day, I have tried to get answers from government representatives on various topics, including the Emergencies Act and the government's desire to keep information confidential, and therefore hidden from Canadians, about the reasons why it invoked the Emergencies Act.

I also asked the Prime Minister about his knowledge of our country's justice system, specifically whether someone should be allowed to avoid a criminal charge because the act was allegedly committed a long time ago. I also asked about the current delays in accessing various government services such as passports, immigration, employment insurance payments or access to information about the Canada Revenue Agency.

All week, the Prime Minister and the rest of the ministers consistently failed to answer the perfectly legitimate questions I asked about issues that affect all Canadians. I asked questions that affect each and every member of the House on a daily basis because each and every one of us gets calls from constituents who are concerned about how long it takes to get a passport or how long they have to wait on hold to talk to agents at various government departments.

Unfortunately, I got no answers, and the government has taken no action to inspire hope in the people dealing with these problems.

To make matters worse, yesterday, the minister responsible for Service Canada clearly invited people who cannot reach federal government services to try going through their MP's office. That is essentially taking a problem from over here and putting it over there, in hopes that the added delay will get people to wait just a little longer before they get an answer. That is unacceptable, and I hope the message we sent the minister, and especially her government, this week will be heard. People are sick of waiting and they are sick of this government's inability to make the right decisions. The right decision would be to let all federal employees go back to work doing what they were doing before the pandemic. The right decision would be to let federal employees go back to their offices so they can get back to a process that worked, sort of, but that at least gave people access to someone they could talk to on the phone and access to services. Unfortunately, that is not what is happening now.

I hope this message will be heard. The government says that it is in the process of reviewing the various health measures imposed on its federal employees. I hope that, one day, it will present us with a plan for getting back to normal and learning to live with COVID-19.

I remember very well that, at the time, we called on the Minister of Health to table any documents showing that the vaccine mandate and various other measures imposed on federal employees were based on science. Unfortunately, I still have not seen the Minister of Health or any other government minister table any documents in the House that would justify imposing these health measures or, more importantly, maintaining them, when every other country in the world is fully reopening their doors. Quebec is even going to lift its mask mandates almost everywhere on May 14.

• (1005)

Given what I just said, it should come as no surprise to anyone that I was rather disappointed with the budget the Liberal government tabled on April 7. This budget has Canadians shaking in their boots, for many reasons. It does not take an expert to realize that the highest inflation rate in 30 years poses a direct threat to the savings of young families, workers and seniors.

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Over the past few weeks, and months for that matter, the cost of living has risen dramatically everywhere. The price of groceries, gas and housing is at record highs. Yesterday in Quebec, the price of regular gas passed the psychological barrier of two dollars a litre. The Conservatives had asked the government to temporarily eliminate the GST on gasoline as a small gesture of goodwill. This would have left a little more money in the pockets of Canadian and Quebec families. Unfortunately, the NDP-Liberal government said no.

There is no doubt that with rising inflation and interest rates, families are finding it harder and harder to make ends meet. Small businesses are suffering from labour shortages, supply problems and rising costs on just about everything.

We need better leadership. Unfortunately, the government has none. In fact, when we ask members of this government for explanations, when we ask that they take action for young families and professionals or for young Canadians who are seeing their dream of homeownership completely disappear and go up in smoke because of rising interest rates and the cost of homes, which is scandalous, the Minister of Finance flat out dismisses all these claims and everything Canadians are going through by quoting us figures on Canada's performance globally.

According to the Minister of Finance, since Canada's global performance is so good, everyone in Canada is doing well. Families are not struggling and businesses are problem-free, because Canada's global economic record is so good. Families need not worry that milk, bread and everything else costs more at the grocery store, or that some products are hard to find. It is not so bad.

It is worrisome to hear such comments from the Minister of Finance of our country. It is insulting and very disrespectful to Canadian families. I hope that before the end of June the Minister of Finance will take two minutes to realize the magnitude of the extra financial burden that has been put on the shoulders of Canadian families and that she will stop reading talking points so she can finally respond to the concerns of Canadian families.

This is the first NDP-Liberal budget. Some may say that we had one before, because it was in fact the Liberals with the NDP, but we can now confirm that the NDP has joined forces with the Liberals and that this coalition, as the Minister of Mental Health and Addictions called it yesterday, has unfortunately done its job.

In this NDP-Liberal budget, there is \$56.6 billion in new spending that has nothing to do with COVID-19 or anything else other than the Prime Minister's desire to buy a majority that he did not earn in the election that was called in the middle of the pandemic. As he did not earn a majority, he bought one, and that is costing Canadians \$56.6 billion. Unfortunately, our children, grandchildren and great-grandchildren will have to pay for the decision made by the Prime Minister, who is putting his personal interests before those of Canadian families in order to remain Prime Minister of Canada as long as possible.

Naturally, for all these reasons, I will be opposing the budget, and I invite all my colleagues to do so for the good of all Canadians.

• (1010)

[English]

Mr. Kevin Lamoureux (Parliamentary Secretary to the Leader of the Government in the House of Commons, Lib.): Madam Speaker, the Conservative Party really needs to get its head into the world given what is actually taking place. It was not that long ago that the Conservative Party was criticizing the federal government because the price of oil was too low. When it was 88¢ a barrel, the Conservatives were saying it was too low and were blaming the government. Today, they are blaming the government because the price of oil is too high. They do not seem to understand that it is called the world price of oil, much as there are things happening in the world today, whether it is the war in Ukraine or the pandemic. All of these factors play a role in things such as inflation.

Will the member recognize that the world does have an impact, even on Canada?

[Translation]

Mr. Luc Berthold: Madam Speaker, yes, I recognize that. However, what is this government doing for Canadians other than saying that Canada is handling this crisis better than other countries? It is doing absolutely nothing.

Today, the cost of gas in Vancouver is \$2.11 per litre. That is the reality. When the government was asked to temporarily remove the GST to help Canadians currently struggling here, in Canada, what did the NDP-Liberals say? They said no. That is the reality.

Mr. Gabriel Ste-Marie (Joliette, BQ): Madam Speaker, I want to salute my colleague from Mégantic—L'Érable and thank him for his speech.

Bill C-19 is the first budget implementation bill introduced by the Minister of Finance, which would implement certain measures of the budget.

This bill is more than 420 pages long and it extends far beyond the content of the budget. This bill talks about laws being enforced in space, in a galaxy not so far away. The next division talks about strip-searches in prison.

Does my colleague think there is a legitimate reason to include all kinds of other bills in an already massive bill? Why does he think the government is choosing this approach?

• (1015)

Mr. Luc Berthold: Madam Speaker, in response to my colleague's excellent question, I will say that I think the government is lost in space. Stripping down in front of Canadians would involve a little more transparency.

Unfortunately, aside from one MP who already has some experience with that, I do not think that the Liberals are truly ready to show some transparency.

Anytime you talk to this government about transparency, the Liberals tell us that Canada is doing very well globally and Canadians do not need to know what is really going on within our borders.

Mr. Alexandre Boulerice (Rosemont—La Petite-Patrie, NDP): Madam Speaker, there are some things about the budget that we do not like either, namely, the oil subsidy increases.

However, there are also some worthwhile things in there that will help people in a meaningful way, things like funding for dental care and for children, youth, seniors, the poor and the middle class.

Does my colleague not agree that his constituents will benefit from these social measures?

Mr. Luc Berthold: Madam Speaker, I have a hard time understanding how the NDP could sell its soul by agreeing in advance to support a budget without knowing, or supposedly without knowing, what it would contain. Actually, we do not know if that is true, because we were not informed of all the negotiations that took place between the two parties.

The reality is that the NDP agreed in advance to support not only this budget, but also the ones for next year and the year after that without knowing the content of those budgets. Perhaps now that they are part of a new coalition, the NDP trusts the Liberals to keep their promises, but I would like to remind them that the Liberals have not been very good at keeping their promises since 2015.

[English]

Mrs. Tracy Gray (Kelowna—Lake Country, CPC): Madam Speaker, the member mentioned the amount of new spending, which is roughly \$57 billion. I am wondering if he can comment on whether there is something in the budget to show how that will be paid off. Is there anything in the budget about fiscal anchors or anything that leads to when and how all of this debt is going to be paid off?

[Translation]

Mr. Luc Berthold: Madam Speaker, the answer is no.

[English]

Mr. Michael Barrett (Leeds—Grenville—Thousand Islands and Rideau Lakes, CPC): Madam Speaker, the budget is a big document. It has a very nice cover, and it spends an awful lot of money. This year, Canadians are going to have an incredibly tough time getting by.

One of the questions for the previous speaker was whether it was appropriate for the budget document to have so many things jammed in it that did not address the *raison d'être* of the budget. No, it is not appropriate. The government had one job with this budget, and that was to make sure that Canadians could afford to live. We have seen, over the past two years, incredibly challenging times that were met with an incredible response, including incredible sums of money being spent by the government. However, there is \$57 billion in new spending at a time when the economy does not need more stimulus, but Canadians need a break. We are not seeing that. Canadians were looking for ways that the government was going to make their lives more affordable.

We have the highest inflation that we have seen in more than three decades: it has climbed up over 6.7%. We have not seen an inflationary hit like that since the introduction of the GST. What does this look like for families? We hear the government's response to the pleas, cries and assertions of the opposition that Canadians

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need help, and government members will say it is a global phenomenon and our net debt-to-GDP is pretty good when we compare it with other countries'. That does nothing to help Canadians who are going to spend, on average, \$1,000 more this year to feed their families. That word salad will still leave people with empty bellies.

The price of gas in this part of the country, eastern Ontario, is going to climb over \$1.90 a litre between today and tomorrow. It is not a question of if gas is going to hit \$2 a litre, but of which day it is going to hit \$2 a litre. What does that look like for someone who has to drive to work? What does that look like for someone who depends on their vehicle for so many things, especially in parts of rural Canada? In rural eastern Ontario, in my community of Leeds—Grenville—Thousand Islands and Rideau Lakes, people have to drive to get to a doctor's appointment, to get to work and to take their kids to school or recreational activities, to say nothing about social visits. It means that they cannot afford to. We also live in one of the world's coldest climates, and the price of home heating is going up, as well.

What is in this budget document? Is there a GST holiday for Canadians to help them when more than half of Canadians, nearly two-thirds, are within \$200 of insolvency and not being able to pay their bills? That would jeopardize their ability to keep a roof over their heads, to feed their families and themselves. No, it is not in there. With energy prices soaring and hitting the average Canadian especially hard, is there a break on the carbon tax increase, which does nothing to stop the necessity to drive? It is not correcting a bad behaviour. They are good people doing good things. No, there is no break on the carbon tax increase in there for them.

It is incredibly disheartening to see this document from the government after so much goodwill was given, by all members in this place, to support a team Canada approach in helping Canadians get through the pandemic. Canadians now need a team Canada approach to support them when life is so unaffordable.

● (1020)

Before the pandemic, the provinces and territories were asking for something in the range of \$28 billion in increased health care dollars, and during the pandemic, the Prime Minister said we would talk about health care spending when the pandemic was over.

I think that COVID is going to be with us for a long time and this is, arguably, the first post-pandemic budget, but the Liberals have not even started the conversation with the provinces about stable and predictable health care funding.

Instead, they introduced a separate bill to spend \$2 billion to address backlogs on surgical wait times and delayed and cancelled care and treatment appointments that are devastating Canadians with unbelievably negative results for their personal health. They have tied that \$2-billion commitment into this bill.

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We had hallway health care across this country, and hospitals operated at between 95% and 130% capacity before COVID. Instead of introducing new programs that are going to tax a health care system that is already experiencing a health care human resource shortage, and there is nothing to address that health care human resource shortage in the budget, they are putting in new programs that the provinces did not ask for. Health care is solely their responsibility, and a \$2-billion one-time payment is supposed to stand in the place of meaningful consultations between the Government of Canada, the Prime Minister and the provinces' premiers.

That is not partnership. It is not co-operation. It is certainly not going to give Canadians any comfort. Frankly, Canadians have been very patient over the past two years, and as I said the results have been of varying degrees. They have been terrible for those who had delayed, missed and cancelled treatment and care appointments and surgeries.

What does this budget do? We hear the parliamentary secretary to the government House leader say that it does a lot. It does a lot to make sure that the government gets to stay in power through its deal with the NDP. Voters are going to get an NDP budget, having voted Liberal.

It is incredibly disingenuous of the government to say that they are putting Canadians first when what we have seen is the same thing we have seen from the government time and again: that is a Prime Minister who will do anything to stay in power. If questions get too hot in committee, he prorogues Parliament. When all members of the House agree not to have an election during the pandemic and polls look good for the PM, he calls an election.

When there is a real opportunity to do right by Canadians, and to give them a break on this affordability crisis that we are facing, the Prime Minister saw a great opportunity to hitch his wagon to the NDP and continue for another year to hold on to power, instead of doing what Canadians elected us all to do. That is to look out for our neighbours, look out for each other and not look out for our own self-interest, which is what we have seen with this.

It is very disappointing, but I can assure members that the official opposition is going to continue to stand up for Canadians. We are going to continue to remind the government that on Main Street, life is getting more unaffordable, and even though they are getting their advice from Bay Street, we are going to be here fighting for Canadians every single day.

• (1025)

Mr. Kevin Lamoureux (Parliamentary Secretary to the Leader of the Government in the House of Commons, Lib.): Madam Speaker, I think the member has a little bit of confusion when it comes to health care. If we look at it, when he says that there is no planning or that we are not supporting health care, we have health care accords with all of the different provinces and territories, something that Stephen Harper was not able to accomplish, that give annual increases. In fact, when we look at over \$45 billion that we are investing, it is actually over 4% higher than it would have been in the previous fiscal year.

When he makes reference to the \$2 billion, that is to deal with the backlog of surgeries and procedures due to the pandemic. That

is over and above. Can we only imagine what Stephen Harper would have done?

We are a government that recognizes the importance of health care. We have supported health care, and we continue to support health care.

Is there anything that the member would like to retract when it comes to the issue of health care? That was one of the biggest, most dismal failures of the Harper regime.

Mr. Michael Barrett: Madam Speaker, it is interesting that, in attempting to correct what I said, the parliamentary secretary, who obviously only woke up halfway through my speech, repeated what I said: that the \$2 billion was to address backlogs caused by COVID-19 in the health care system.

What I said, and I will repeat it for the hon. gentleman, is that the provinces and territories asked for stable and predictable funding. They have since said they want to meet with the Prime Minister to negotiate what that agreement is going to look like going forward. The Prime Minister has refused to do it. Shame on him.

[*Translation*]

Mr. Gabriel Ste-Marie (Joliette, BQ): Madam Speaker, I would like to commend my colleague for his speech.

The government is using Bill C-19 to implement a new tax on luxury items—

• (1030)

[*English*]

The Assistant Deputy Speaker (Mrs. Alexandra Mendès): I would ask hon. members to please stop their conversations while the hon. member for Joliette is asking a question.

The hon. member for Joliette.

[*Translation*]

Mr. Gabriel Ste-Marie: Madam Speaker, the member for Winnipeg North is clearly on fire today, as is often the case.

Back to the question I would like to ask my colleague.

Bill C-19 establishes a tax for luxury items such as luxury cars, luxury boats and aircraft. People are either for or against this idea. The Bloc Québécois agrees with it.

However, during the pre-study in committee, the government and public service representatives informed us that no impact study has been conducted on the jobs and sales numbers for this manufacturing sector.

I would like to hear my colleague's views on that, but also, more specifically, on an aspect that is of great concern to us. The tax is supposed to apply to personal aircraft use. However, the structure of the tax suggests that it may apply to the business sector.

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Think of the mining companies that want to transport their workers. It will be difficult for them to opt out. Moreover, for everything that is exported, the tax will have to be paid first before being refunded—

The Assistant Deputy Speaker (Mrs. Alexandra Mendès): The hon. member for Leeds—Grenville—Thousand Islands and Rideau Lakes.

[*English*]

Mr. Michael Barrett: Madam Speaker, as for so many things, a special interest group or a lobby group picked up the telephone. It rang directly in the Prime Minister's Office. It answered, and said that it was not really concerned about the impact on Canadians, but that it sounded great so it was going to be included in the budget. The problem, when an analysis is not done on something like the impact of this particular tax, is what that looks like for jobs in the communities where people, for example, provide service on aircraft and boats. That is going to have a devastating impact on communities. It was an obligation of the government to study that impact and consider it before putting it in this omnibus bill.

Mr. Charlie Angus (Timmins—James Bay, NDP): Madam Speaker, to me, some of the fundamentals of Parliament are accountability and transparency. My hon. colleague was on the committee with me when we studied the government grant to the WE Charity. This was an opportunity for this children's charity to answer some straightforward questions, such as how many companies it owned, what the separation was between its for-profits and those with charitable status, and who owned the companies, yet we never did get those answers. It took four legal summonses to try and get answers, but still the man who handled all its finances, Mr. Victor Li, never did come before Parliament. We never got the kind of documentation we asked for.

I have a straightforward question. I would like to ask my hon. colleague this: Does he feel we still do not have the answers Canadians deserve about this international organization, the WE Charity?

Mr. Michael Barrett: Madam Speaker, we saw a scandal that involved a billion-dollar contract going to insiders again, as I mentioned in my previous response.

With respect to the CFO, Victor Li, who did not appear before the committee in person, as well as multiple members of government staff who were instructed by ministers not to appear before the committee, Parliament and Canadians have not received the answers. It is incumbent on all members in this place to make sure that our lawful powers and authorities are respected in this light.

Mr. Kevin Lamoureux (Parliamentary Secretary to the Leader of the Government in the House of Commons, Lib.): Madam Speaker, I will be splitting my time with the member for Scarborough—Rouge Park.

When I think of the budget, I think we need to recognize a few points right at the beginning. First, it invests in economic growth and innovation. If we read through the budget, we can see that amplified virtually throughout the budget. We believe in investing, not only investing in that area but also investing in people. We could talk about the environment, but in this budget we see an investment in the green transition. This is all good news in this budget.

Was anyone in this chamber or any Canadian surprised when the Conservative Party said it was going to vote against the budget? I was not. I do not think anyone was surprised. I believe the Conservatives already knew they were going to be voting against the budget even before the budget was presented. No one needs to be surprised.

What is surprising, to a certain degree, is the twisting that we are seeing. Conservatives are turning themselves into pretzels trying to justify why they do not support the budget. We see that in some of the procedural games they are playing. Yesterday, for example, they brought in a concurrence motion in order to prevent members from being able to debate the matter. We see members talking about the budget, but not necessarily recognizing the reality. For example, the member who spoke earlier talked about the price of oil and how it is somehow the Government of Canada's responsibility for the world price of oil. The Conservatives criticized us when the price of oil was too low, and now they are criticizing us because the price of oil is too high.

The Conservative Party does not have its mind in reality. The truth of the matter is that Canada, like every other country around the world, was inflicted with the worldwide pandemic. To deny its existence and its impact is unacceptable. We need to recognize that there is a war taking place today in Europe, the war put in place as a result of one person, President Putin, and the impact it is having in Ukraine. We are so grateful for the heroes of Ukraine. It goes beyond the borders of Ukraine, and there is a great solidarity movement worldwide in support of Ukraine. We need to recognize that as something that is having an impact worldwide, in terms of issues such as inflation.

How many times have we heard Conservatives talk about inflation, trying to push the panic button, as if Canada is alone, as if it is Canada's inflation and we are leading the world on inflation? Nothing could be further from the truth. We only need to look south to the United States to find that Canada's inflation rate is lower. Compared to many of the European countries, especially if we were to average it out, we would find that Canada's inflation rate is lower.

If we look at the job numbers, we see that Canada has recovered 112% or 115% of the jobs lost at the beginning of the pandemic. If we compare that to the United States, we will find that we have done exceptionally well. We are definitely doing far better than the United States. If we talk about economic growth, we are predicted to have the healthiest economic growth in the G7 countries, the most powerful nations of the world.

● (1035)

It is interesting when we listen to question period that we get these out-of-reality questions when it comes to the economy but the Conservatives avoid talking about the budget. I suspect it is with good reason, because the budget is fairly well received by Canadians. Canadians know that they have a government that truly cares, a government that is progressively moving forward in supporting Canadians.

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We love the fact that, for the first time ever, we have a national child care program, a program that is going to ensure affordability in day care from coast to coast. As with other things, we were able to achieve, through consensus, a health care and a child care agreement with all provinces and territories. As a result, we will have a healthier population and we will have more people engaged in the workforce. On the latter point, all one needs to do is look at the province of Quebec. The province of Quebec has demonstrated very clearly to the rest of Canada that making child care affordable enables more people to get engaged in the workforce, not to mention the quality of life for all. This is a government that has moved forward on that issue.

Within the budget, there are so many initiatives that it is impossible to get to everything in 10 minutes. I want to highlight a few points.

I made reference to the \$2 billion earlier, and I talked about it last night. Canada provides historic amounts of health care transfers to the provinces. We are talking over \$45 billion. Never before have we seen a federal government give that kind of cash to the provinces, but within this budget we are giving an additional \$2 billion top-up. Yes, it is targeted. I know that might upset some members of the Bloc, and some of the Conservatives are also a little upset with it. I hope my friends in the NDP are not upset with it, because it provides additional dollars, hundreds of millions of dollars, to our health care system to ensure that we can deal with some of the surgery and health care issues, such as backlogs. We can imagine the pain that is involved in a hip that needs to be replaced, or the individuals who had cancer detection and have not had the types of surgeries that are quite often necessary. These are the types of supports we are providing through the \$2-billion transfer because of the pandemic. That is over and above the health transfer agreements that we have achieved with the provinces and territories.

Critics will say that the provinces and territories want more money. I have been a parliamentarian for 30 years, and every year the provinces and territories ask for more money. Why would they not? That is not the only thing they ask for. I used to be a provincial health care critic and I understand the system. The greatest threat to health care today is not providing the funds and not dealing with the need for managing the changes that are necessary. That means investing in and looking at, for example, expansion in mental health care. It means looking at long-term care.

How can we ensure that seniors are spending more time in their homes? We have a wonderful initiative in this budget, which I would suggest is one of those gold nuggets. It is the multi-generational home renovation program. I believe this program is going to enable more seniors to live longer in their homes with their families. It is a program that is going to save health care dollars, but more importantly, it is better for our communities and for our families.

I see my time has expired and I only got to my first two points. Hopefully I will be able to get more time in the coming days.

• (1040)

[*Translation*]

Ms. Sylvie Bérubé (Abitibi—Baie-James—Nunavik—Eeyou, BQ): Madam Speaker, I thank my colleague for that interesting speech.

I have to say that Bill C-19 has its flaws, starting with the health transfers that Quebec and the provinces asked for. Nevertheless, I also have to say that there are some good things in it, such as the green transition, extending employment insurance by five weeks for seasonal workers and so on.

Here is my question. What can the government do to address the needs of Quebec and the other provinces, especially when it comes to health care, while respecting their jurisdiction?

[*English*]

Mr. Kevin Lamoureux: Madam Speaker, I believe we are meeting the needs of our provinces and territories with record-high health transfers. Those transfers are tied to the Canada Health Act, something that Canadians in all regions of our country genuinely believe in. Further to that, we are also emphasizing, not just talking about it but providing dollars to go toward it, standards on long-term care, expansion into dental programs, and expansion into mental health care.

The government recognizes that the provinces have the administrative responsibility for health care, but the federal government also has a strong leadership role. The Government of Canada and the Prime Minister are stepping up to the plate to fulfill that commitment.

• (1045)

Mrs. Laila Goodridge (Fort McMurray—Cold Lake, CPC): Madam Speaker, in listening to the debate from the member opposite, I did not hear a lot of clarity when it comes to actually understanding that some of these issues clearly are in provincial jurisdiction, as well as supporting the provinces and working in partnership and in consultation with the provinces. There was a lot of word salad in that last answer and not a lot of concrete understanding that it is not just a responsibility of the provinces, but it is a constitutional responsibility of the provinces. I just wonder if the member actually understands what provincial jurisdiction means.

Mr. Kevin Lamoureux: Madam Speaker, I was a member of the Manitoba legislature for almost 20 years. I understand the differences between federal and provincial responsibilities. I also understand what my constituents want. What my constituents want is for Ottawa to continue to play a leadership role. To say that Ottawa has no role in health care would be absolutely and totally wrong.

I dearly hope that my Conservatives friends will come to that understanding. It is in the long-term best interest of all Canadians that the official opposition recognize the degree to which Canadians love and appreciate their health care system. The Conservatives should not be dissing it; they should be supporting it. Our current Prime Minister has had more discussions with premiers in a few years than Stephen Harper ever did in his entire 10 years—

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The Assistant Deputy Speaker (Mrs. Alexandra Mendès): The hon. member for Port Moody—Coquitlam.

Ms. Bonita Zarrillo (Port Moody—Coquitlam, NDP): Madam Speaker, at this point in time, people are hurting on the street and this budget is leaving people behind. I want to speak specifically about persons with disabilities. Persons with disabilities are approaching a year now that they have been waiting for a bill to be brought to this House in regard to the Canada disability benefit. They are extremely disappointed, but not just that; they are suffering because this bill has not come to the floor.

When is this bill coming to the floor? Why have we not seen it yet?

Mr. Kevin Lamoureux: Madam Speaker, one of the things the Prime Minister indicated to cabinet, and in fact to the whole caucus, was that there are things we can improve upon and things we can learn from the pandemic. If the member wanted to take the time, she could read what I thought was a brilliant speech quite a while back from the minister responsible for persons with disabilities. The minister talked about the need to build that databank and start giving more attention to people with disabilities. I know she is charged with the responsibility of the issue that the member has raised. She takes it very seriously. Like the member, I await and will be patient because I know that the minister and this government take this issue very seriously and we hope to see some action on that front.

Mr. Gary Anandasangaree (Parliamentary Secretary to the Minister of Justice and Attorney General of Canada, Lib.): Madam Speaker, I am delighted to join members here and speak in favour of the budget implementation act. I would like to acknowledge that I am speaking from the unceded lands of the Algonquin people.

We were elected in 2015, and I want to highlight some of the major successes in my region of Scarborough, particularly Scarborough—Rouge Park.

As members are aware, we were able to support the extension of the Scarborough subway with an investment of \$2.26 billion. It is an unprecedented level of investment in Scarborough, and I am very proud of the work of our all of Scarborough colleagues in order to ensure this. We have also invested heavily in our community, including a hub in Scarborough—Agincourt.

Of course, in my riding of Scarborough—Rouge Park, the establishment of the Tamil Community Centre is the fulfillment of a dream for many in the Tamil community. It had an investment of over \$14 million from the federal government, and was established in partnership with the province and the City of Toronto.

I am very blessed to have one of the most beautiful ridings in Canada, and it is made more beautiful by the Rouge National Urban Park. This is something that we fulfilled right after being elected. I think every political party can take credit for the success of this park. Of course, under the leadership of Minister McKenna at the time, we were able to ensure that all the land for the park was secured and transferred to the federal government, and it is now under the able management of Parks Canada.

I am standing here six years later reflecting on the successes, but I will also reflect on the challenges we have ahead. One of the challenges is COVID-19, and we have seen the Scarborough Health Network, which is a primary health care provider in our region, work very hard during the pandemic, whether on the testing front or in terms of providing vaccines or educating people who had vaccine hesitation. It really made sure that we had among the highest vaccination rates in all of Canada. I want to thank and congratulate the Scarborough Health Network.

However, we also know that our health systems overall are not in their best form because of all the pressures. I want to assure the folks from the Scarborough Health Network that this budget and the budget implementation act does support the health network with \$2 billion set aside to ensure that we catch up on the surgeries and the appointments that were missed during the pandemic. The budget has robust measures to support our health network across Scarborough and also across Canada.

Of course, one of the major challenges we had during the pandemic was in long-term care homes. In one of my long-term care homes, we lost over 53 people, and I have spoken about this a number of times. This is a heart-wrenching realization of the failures of long-term care, and the need for all of us in all levels of government, despite the fact that it is a provincial responsibility. There is a federal component, which is to ensure that we have national standards for long-term care, and this budget implementation act definitely does support the need for this type of national standard. I am very proud that we were able to do that.

Scarborough is one of the most diverse areas of the country, and I want to talk about something that is near and dear to my heart: safe and inclusive communities. Members may recall late last year when the University of Toronto Scarborough, under the leadership of Professor Wisdom Tettey, instituted the Scarborough Charter, which essentially brings together academics, students and post-secondary institutions to ensure that academia reflects the Black communities in Canada, and the Scarborough Charter really is an important framework.

● (1050)

We have made, in so many different parts of Scarborough, a very concerted effort to address the issues of systemic racism. I am so proud that this budget expands on the national anti-racism strategy, which I was part of developing in 2019, to invest \$85 million toward the new anti-racism strategy and a national action plan in combatting hate.

Statements by Members

We know the impacts of racism in my community. My community comprises one of the largest communities of African-Caribbean descent in Canada, the largest Tamil population, the largest Guyanese population and a very strong, vibrant and diverse Muslim population. I could go on and on. The reality is that folks in my riding may not have the same opportunities as others, whether it is in employment, housing or essential services, so I am very proud that we are investing in ensuring that we achieve race equity, but at the same time, we are making sure that we are combatting hate. We saw that last year in London, Ontario. We see periodically with mosques, synagogues and even Hindu temples across Canada.

We know that violence, as well as hatred, toward racialized people is significantly on the rise. On that point, I want to highlight that we are investing significantly in establishing a special envoy on preserving Holocaust remembrance and combatting anti-Semitism, which again is very important to my community, as well as ensuring that we have a new special representative on combatting Islamophobia. In order for us to have safer communities, we need to invest in these measures.

However, we do not stop there. We go beyond in expanding the supporting the Black Canadian communities initiative with \$50 million. This is on top of what my friend from Hull—Aylmer often speaks about. We have invested over \$800 million since we have taken office in terms of ensuring that we have an even playing field for members of Canada's Black communities, but we know there is a lot more to do and the investment in this budget is a reaffirmation of the need to move forward. On a side note, we were able to ensure that the work of the Hon. Jean Augustine, who was an august member of this House, is recognized through a legacy contribution to an endowed chair in her name. These are some of the measures that are really going to the root of combatting racism and hatred in Canada.

We are also putting in \$100 million toward ensuring that we have a national action plan to support the LGBTQI community. We are doing significant work with respect to reconciliation. Unfortunately, I do not have time to talk speak to it extensively, but it is a path that we have taken over many years, and it is a journey that is going to take a great deal more from the federal government and all Canadians. I believe we are on the right trajectory, and while I recognize the frustrations and the slow pace of this, it is important that we double down and continue on this path. I invite all members in this House to support this.

On a final note, I want to finish up with the Rouge National Urban Park. We made a commitment to plant two billion trees across Canada, but we also have a carve-out for the Rouge park of \$2 million for the establishment of a new trail that will connect across Canada. I am very proud of that, and I hope to continue this work.

• (1055)

Ms. Melissa Lantsman (Thornhill, CPC): Madam Speaker, I am glad you mentioned Rouge national park, and I am happy—

The Assistant Deputy Speaker (Mrs. Alexandra Mendès): I did not mention anything.

Ms. Melissa Lantsman: Madam Speaker, I am glad the hon. member mentioned Rouge national park. I happen to be sitting in

the seat of a former member of this House, Peter Kent, who was a big proponent for it and a big reason that the park exists today.

The member talked about equity, the need for more workers and the pay gap between men and women still being very real. I am wondering if he can point to anything in the budget, other than words and rhetoric, that says that any of that is being fixed, whether it is training or money for hiring. The member calls it investment. There are a lot of words here.

Mr. Gary Anandasangaree: Madam Speaker, I do want to pay tribute to Peter Kent, who was very important in establishing the park. Of course, as I acknowledged, this is a park that political parties of all stripes can take credit for.

In terms of the wage gap, I think that one of the major ways we have been able to address it is through our agreements with the provinces on \$10-a-day child care. I think it is a transformational program that will particularly support women to not only enter the work force but also advance in their careers.

STATEMENTS BY MEMBERS

• (1100)

[English]

UKRAINIAN INTERNS

Mr. Kevin Lamoureux (Winnipeg North, Lib.): Madam Speaker, every member of this House, whether Conservative, Liberal, New Democrat, Green Party or Bloc, understands what is taking place in Europe. Around the world, there is a great movement of Ukrainian solidarity, one that wants to see Ukraine prevail. The heroes of Ukraine are making a difference that go far beyond the boundaries of Ukraine.

We are very fortunate here as members of Parliament, because some wonderful young ladies, over 40 Ukrainian interns, are going to be in Ottawa over the next two months. I know they will be contributing in a very real way for us. As a direct result, I personally will take the extra time to get a slightly better understanding of what is happening in Ukraine.

* * *

RETIREMENT CONGRATULATIONS

Mr. Alex Ruff (Bruce—Grey—Owen Sound, CPC): Madam Speaker, today I rise to thank my good friend, mentor and community leader, “Energizer Billy” Walker for his eleven years of service as the member of provincial parliament for Bruce—Grey—Owen Sound.

First elected in 2011, Bill has been a strong advocate for our riding throughout his time at Queen's Park. Since becoming part of the provincial government in 2018, he has served as the chief government whip, the minister of government and consumer services, the associate minister of energy, and most recently as the deputy speaker.

Earlier this year, Bill announced he would not be seeking another term in the upcoming provincial election, signalling an end to his remarkable political career.

Some highlights of MPP Walker's career include securing funding for the new Markdale Hospital along with five long-term care facilities across the riding, the opening of three new schools and child care centres, and over \$420 million in funding for projects across Bruce and Grey counties.

On behalf of the people of Bruce—Grey—Owen Sound, my personal thanks to Bill, his wife Michaela, and their sons Zach and Ben for their sacrifice and service to our riding.

I wish Bill all the best in his future challenges.

* * *

ORDER OF CANADA

Ms. Joanne Thompson (St. John's East, Lib.): Madam Speaker, I rise today to acknowledge the investiture as Officer to the Order of Canada of Mr. Thomas Foran, a remarkable constituent of St. John's East. Mr. Foran demonstrates a fervent commitment to Newfoundland and Labrador and has been a strong ambassador for the preservation of our province's unique heritage, as well as helping to nurture a thriving future.

A lifelong volunteer, Mr. Foran is a strong supporter of our province's talented artists, writers and performers and has been a champion of the local entrepreneurial ecosystem as an angel investor, board member, adviser and mentor.

In 2003, he joined the inaugural board of The Rooms Corporation and was instrumental in the Where Once They Stood, We Stand campaign, a First World War project that includes the Royal Newfoundland Regiment Gallery, created to commemorate the 100th anniversary of the Battle of Beaumont-Hamel.

To Tom, his wife Susan and their two sons, alongside their families, from all Newfoundland—

The Assistant Deputy Speaker (Mrs. Alexandra Mendès): The hon. member for New Westminster—Burnaby.

* * *

DAY OF ACTION AGAINST ANTI-ASIAN RACISM

Mr. Peter Julian (New Westminster—Burnaby, NDP): Madam Speaker, with respect to racism, misogyny, anti-Semitism, Islamophobia, homophobia and transphobia, we are seeing a disturbing rise in all these toxic forms of hate in Canada as far-right extremists mobilize in our country. We see this manifested in despicable acts of hate and violence across the country. Canadians need to stand up and speak out against far-right extremism and hate. We do that by fighting hate in all its toxic forms.

Statements by Members

We Canadians have our next opportunity to speak out next Tuesday, May 10, as the Stand with Asians Coalition and other important groups mark a day of action against increasing anti-Asian racism and hate. Cities representing over 15 million Canadians have already marked this day with proclamations.

Some of the most fundamental freedoms are freedom from hate and freedom from fear. Let us all stand together for freedom from hate in Canada.

* * *

[Translation]

NATIONAL CHILD AND YOUTH MENTAL HEALTH DAY

Mrs. Élisabeth Brière (Sherbrooke, Lib.): Madam Speaker, May 7 is National Child and Youth Mental Health Day, which is all about building caring connections between young people and the caring adults in their lives.

That is why we are investing \$39 million to promote the mental well-being of children, youth and others likely to experience inequities, and giving \$7.5 million to Kids Help Phone to provide crisis services to children and youth.

We also launched the Wellness Together Canada portal in 2020 to provide free and confidential online support in multiple languages, 24 hours a day, 7 days a week. Earlier this year we launched PocketWell, a companion app making the portal even more accessible to young people.

Our government will continue to support the mental health of young people. I encourage all parliamentarians and all Canadians to build caring relationships with the young people around them and to support them in taking care of their mental well-being.

Since every cloud has a silver lining, we certainly showed more empathy during the pandemic. Seeing the world through the eyes of people—

● (1105)

The Assistant Deputy Speaker (Mrs. Alexandra Mendès): The hon. member for Edmonton Manning.

* * *

[English]

STEPS FOR LIFE WALK

Mr. Ziad Aboultaif (Edmonton Manning, CPC): Madam Speaker, every year about 1,000 Canadians are killed in workplace accidents or die from work-related injuries. No matter how careful we are, sometimes accidents happen.

Statements by Members

These human tragedies affect individuals and families in my riding of Edmonton Manning. That is why I support the Steps for Life walk taking place on May 14 at Edmonton's Rundle Park. The money raised by walkers will be used to help families. Threads of Life, the walk organizers, are connecting those dealing with work-place death or injury with people who understand their situation because they have themselves experienced it. They provide one-on-one peer support, group networking and links to community agencies.

We thank the walkers and donors to the first in-person Steps for Life walk since 2019.

* * *

EID AL-FITR

Mr. Shafqat Ali (Brampton Centre, Lib.): Madam Speaker, earlier this week, Muslims in Canada and around the world celebrated Eid al-Fitr.

Eid al-Fitr is a festival that follows Ramadan's month after fasting. It is a spiritual celebration of Allah *subhanahu wa ta'ala's* gift of the strength and endurance that the fasting required. It is also a time to forgive and to seek forgiveness, to reflect on compassion, charity and generosity.

In some countries Eid is a three-day festival, but in Canada it is generally a one-day family holiday, when the community engages in prayers, feasting, family get-togethers, spending time with friends and neighbours, exchanging gifts and helping those who are in need. I want to thank all those who have contributed so much to building our great country and our amazing society. This is a place where everyone is free to celebrate their beliefs and cultures, and their religious practices are respected.

* * *

NATIONAL NURSING WEEK

Ms. Leah Taylor Roy (Aurora—Oak Ridges—Richmond Hill, Lib.): Madam Speaker, in 1954, my mother, Kate Taylor, a newly graduated nurse, worked in Moose Factory on James Bay. In 1979, my sister, India, began her nursing career in the north, in Hay River, Northwest Territories.

Now, as then, nurses are the backbone of patient care. Nurses step up and work very long hours when needed, and at no time was this more true than during the worst of the COVID-19 pandemic. Nurses should be celebrated every day. Let us all thank the nurses in our communities.

Nursing Week is May 9 to May 15, coinciding with the birthday of nurse and social reformer Florence Nightingale. I am proud of the five nurses following in her footsteps, running for all parties in our upcoming Ontario election. I am pleased that one of them, an outstanding nurse and person, Marjan Kasirlou, is in mine.

We thank all the nurses working in health care settings in Aurora—Oak Ridges—Richmond Hill and across our country. They will always be heroes.

MEDICAL ASSISTANCE IN DYING

Mr. Michael Barrett (Leeds—Grenville—Thousand Islands and Rideau Lakes, CPC): Madam Speaker, since the rollout of the Liberals' MAID regime, we have heard harrowing stories of folks who were abused and pressured to receive a medically assisted death by the same medical system that failed to offer them adequate care. Luckily, in some of these cases, there was an intervention to stop the process. In others, sadly, those people are no longer with us to tell their story.

Now, with the government becoming the legislative branch for certain radical lobby groups and blindly expanding medically assisted death to people with physical disabilities and mental illness, we are hearing more stories of abuse and victimization, stories of people who have received or are pursuing a medically assisted death because they have a disability and cannot afford adequate housing, or because life has become so unaffordable that they no longer have the means to live or to pay for treatment.

If this is what the government had in mind when it expanded the regime, what will it look like when it is expanded to medically assisted death for minors? The Liberals must ensure that no more Canadians are victimized by this medically assisted death regime.

* * *

• (1110)

MUSLIM LIFESTYLE EXPO

Mr. Peter Fragiskatos (London North Centre, Lib.): Madam Speaker, I rise to once again wish *Eid Mubarak* to all Muslims who finished observing the holy month of Ramadan this past Monday.

As a friend of mine put it so eloquently, Ramadan is a month when Muslims eat less and reflect more, sleep less and pray more, spend less and donate more, watch less and read more, and judge less and forgive more.

It is always a privilege to attend Iftar gatherings in London through this special month and to see the strength, resolve and dedication of the community. This weekend I am looking forward to being in London and attending the first ever Muslim Lifestyle Expo taking place at the Western Fair agriplex, running from today until Sunday. This gathering, hosted by The Events Co., will showcase artists, entertainment, halal food trucks and numerous vendors offering a range of products.

Please show support for this inaugural expo. It is events like these that showcase the multiculturalism that makes Canada the very best country in the world.

[Translation]

MARIO ROY

Mr. Luc Berthold (Mégantic—L'Érable, CPC): Madam Speaker, yesterday, Canada and Quebec lost a great journalist, renowned editorial writer and accomplished author who was passionate about politics, the arts and literature.

Mario Roy died in Montreal after a fruitful career in journalism. He joined La Presse in 1981, covering legal affairs and the National Assembly of Quebec, before becoming head of the newspaper's arts and culture section. He became an editorial writer in 1999 and held that role for 15 years until his retirement. He also published several books, including a biography of Gerry Boulet, a novel, a work of non-fiction and a book about a legal case.

Mario Roy shared and defended many values that were more conservative. Even though I did not always fully agree with his opinions and comments, day after day, his editorials contributed an important opinion to the political debate. His sharp pen and opinions made an impression on those with a keen interest in politics in Canada.

On behalf of my colleagues in the House of Commons, I offer my deepest condolences to his partner of 20 years, Joane Prince, and his two children, Juliette and Thomas.

* * *

[English]

BILL C-5

Mr. Michael Cooper (St. Albert—Edmonton, CPC): Madam Speaker, every day, four Canadians are killed at the hands of an impaired driver, yet the Liberal government wants to go soft on impaired drivers with its soft-on-crime Bill C-5. The bill would allow criminals convicted of impaired driving causing death to serve their sentence from home.

At the justice committee, the director of victim services of MADD Canada characterized Bill C-5 as hurtful and harmful to victims of impaired driving. The same is true for victims of sexual assault, kidnapping and human trafficking, given Bill C-5's reckless expansion of house arrest for these and other serious offences.

While the Liberals stand up for criminals, Conservatives will continue to stand up for victims by fighting Bill C-5.

* * *

[Translation]

UKRAINIAN REFUGEES

Mrs. Brenda Shanahan (Châteauguay—Lacolle, Lib.): Madam Speaker, this week the war in Ukraine marked its 70th day. We stand with the Ukrainian people.

I want to take this opportunity to highlight the generosity, compassion and empathy Canadians have shown towards families fleeing the atrocities of this war. I want to highlight the engagement of the Châteauguay—Lacolle community. At the outset of the war, organizations and individuals in the greater Châteauguay area came together to form a Ukraine welcoming committee.

Statements by Members

Led by the wonderful Nicoleta Caraulan and 20 or so helpers, our volunteers are already preparing to welcome even more Ukrainian families to our area.

* * *

[English]

CANADIAN HERITAGE

Ms. Lindsay Mathysen (London—Fanshawe, NDP): Madam Speaker, I am proud to rise today in the House to tell members about an incredible living history museum in my riding, Fanshawe Pioneer Village, and its project to preserve and restore London's Fugitive Slave Chapel. The slave chapel, built in 1848, served as a place of gathering and worship for London's Black community until 1868, and was one of the terminus points on the Underground Railroad.

The chapel was gifted to Fanshawe Pioneer Village to ensure it is protected and promoted properly. It is not only important to London's Black history but also to Canadian history. The preservation of this influential building at Fanshawe Pioneer Village will ensure that it is showcased, respected and honoured now. It offers a unique educational experience to future generations.

The village has received much community support from local groups but needs federal government support. As it stands, the building is at risk of further deterioration. If we do not act now, a key piece of London's history could be lost.

I have written to the Minister of Heritage requesting funding, and I now call upon this government to support this historic community treasure.

* * *

● (1115)

[Translation]

PROTECTION OF THE FRENCH LANGUAGE

Ms. Andréanne Larouche (Shefford, BQ): Madam Speaker, Camille Laurin, father of the Charter of the French Language, would have turned 100 today. To mark the occasion, every minister responsible for the French language over three decades paid tribute to him in an open letter. They reiterated the importance of constantly taking action to enhance and promote our national language.

On behalf of the Bloc Québécois, I am taking this opportunity to reach out to them for help. The federal government has declared war on the Charter of the French Language with its Bill C-13 to reform the Official Languages Act.

Oral Questions

Ottawa is legally overriding Quebec to prevent any Quebec language law from applying to federally regulated companies and to make the application of the Charter of the French Language optional. It is allowing companies to choose between the charter and Canadian bilingualism, or the Air Canada model, the model of least effort, of disrespect. One hundred years after the birth of Camille Laurin, our fight for the future of French continues, and one of the crucial battles is playing out right now, here in Ottawa.

* * *

[English]

FREEDOM OF SPEECH

Mrs. Rachael Thomas (Lethbridge, CPC): Madam Speaker, without the liberty to speak freely, we cannot profess to be truly free. It is through the use of speech that most of us share our thoughts, our ideas and our beliefs. This propels us forward and facilitates innovation. It is incredible. It also provides us with the means to criticize, to challenge and to correct when we believe someone to be in error. This includes the government of the day, no matter the party at the helm. If we believe progressing as a society is important, then we must contend for free speech. After all, it is the very foundation of democracy.

That is why it is beyond alarming to me that the government is moving forward with legislation that would censor free speech: Bill C-11, Bill C-18 and the upcoming online harms bill. These bills are a concerted effort to take autonomy away from individuals and put more power and more control in the hands of government.

I urge the House, therefore, and all Canadians, to stand on guard and do all they can to contend for and protect free speech, for it is the very foundation upon which all other freedoms in this country are formed.

* * *

NATIONAL NURSING WEEK

Mr. Terry Sheehan (Sault Ste. Marie, Lib.): Madam Speaker, this coming week, Canadians will be celebrating and thanking our nurses for all the hard work, dedication and care they provide to our communities. From assisting with life-threatening crises to delivering beautiful babies and caring for the elderly, nurses perform many of the most strenuous and difficult tasks in medicine and health care.

As professionals who perform essential points of health care services, nurses serve as the first point of contact for many Canadians. Throughout this pandemic, we have seen countless nurses step up and take on a new role and additional responsibilities to ensure that Canadians have access to stable health care, hospitals and treatments. Our government pushed for anti-harassment legislation to protect our health care workers in Bill C-3 so they could go to work and did not have to worry about violence in the workplace.

We all owe a debt of gratitude to nurses for their invaluable work in our communities, so I thank all nurses.

Madam Speaker, happy Mother's Day, and of course I give a special shout-out to my mother Linda, my wife Lisa and my mothers-in-law Carol and Claudette.

ORAL QUESTIONS

[English]

NATURAL RESOURCES

Mr. John Brassard (Barrie—Innisfil, CPC): Madam Speaker, gas is 194.9¢ per litre in Barrie today. Enbridge Line 5 provides more than 50% of the fuel to eastern Canada. An application was filed in the U.S. federal court to shut down this pipeline, and so far the Liberals have done nothing to oppose this U.S. court action. If Line 5 is shut down, there will surely be gas shortages and spikes in the price of gas that will cause an already unaffordable situation for families and businesses to get much worse.

Are the Liberals going to fight this or are they just going to roll over on Line 5 like they did with Keystone XL?

● (1120)

Hon. Jonathan Wilkinson (Minister of Natural Resources, Lib.): Madam Speaker, the continued operation of Line 5 is non-negotiable. We will take appropriate steps to ensure the continued safe operation of this critical infrastructure, and we will continue to work closely with the owner of Line 5.

Canada and the United States continue to be engaged in a process under the 1977 transit pipelines agreement to ensure the continued operation of Line 5, and until this issue is resolved, I will continue to raise it with my U.S. counterparts, as I have been doing on an ongoing basis.

* * *

PASSPORT CANADA

Mr. John Brassard (Barrie—Innisfil, CPC): Madam Speaker, the passport situation in this country is so bad that people are actually camping out overnight outside of Canadian government passport offices just to receive service. It is a complete failure on the part of the Liberals, not our public service, to plan for a surge of renewals that everyone knew was coming.

Canadians are angry and they are anxious, having to cancel long-anticipated trips to see loved ones or vacations because of the government's failure to deliver the most basic of services. There are no excuses.

When can Canadians expect a return to normal processing times?

Oral Questions

Ms. Ya'ara Saks (Parliamentary Secretary to the Minister of Families, Children and Social Development, Lib.): Madam Speaker, Canadians are travelling again, and there has been an unprecedented volume increase in the demand for passports for those who wish to travel. It has resulted in long lineups and wait times for in-person service. We do understand that this situation is difficult and stressful for many.

The minister has been travelling across the country visiting Service Canada locations to hear directly from frontline staff who have been working days, nights and weekends to alleviate the long lines and the wait times. We have hired 500 new employees, and the minister and the department will continue to turn every rock to find solutions to serve Canadians with the service they are entitled to.

Mr. John Brassard (Barrie—Innisfil, CPC): Madam Speaker, let us be honest. This whole mess and the inability to provide even the most basic government service like a passport renewal are entirely on the minister and the Liberals, not the public service. Everyone knew people would want to travel coming out of COVID. Everyone knew that the 10-year passports were expiring. Everyone knew, it seems, except the government, and here we are with long lineups around government buildings and phones not being answered.

Maybe it is time to get people back to their workplaces and re-hire those who have been fired because of vaccine mandates to fix this. Would the minister not agree with me on that?

Ms. Ya'ara Saks (Parliamentary Secretary to the Minister of Families, Children and Social Development, Lib.): Madam Speaker, we have been preparing for this for some time. As early as December, we hired 500 new employees to process passports. We opened three new processing centres around the country, and over the weekends we opened as many locations as possible to serve Canadians. In addition to that, over 300 Service Canada centres are processing passport applications for Canadians.

We continue to do more to alleviate this unprecedented level of demand for service.

[Translation]

Mrs. Dominique Vien (Bellechasse—Les Etchemins—Lévis, CPC): Madam Speaker, now that the pandemic is coming to an end, people are starting to travel again, which is good news. They need to renew their passports, but unfortunately, the wait times are atrocious.

People need an appointment to visit some Service Canada locations, but first they have to wait on the phone for hours just to get an appointment. That is completely unacceptable.

The problem is that the government has still not authorized Service Canada employees to fully return to work. What is the government waiting for?

[English]

Ms. Ya'ara Saks (Parliamentary Secretary to the Minister of Families, Children and Social Development, Lib.): Madam Speaker, we continue to work to open as many client counters as possible and passport offices. As I mentioned before, we have hired 500 new employees, and we continue to work with workload management and processing technology to increase efficiency in our

processing call centres and our offices. We have extended hours both on weekdays and weekends, and we continue to provide as much service as physically possible to Canadians for the service they are entitled to.

[Translation]

Mrs. Dominique Vien (Bellechasse—Les Etchemins—Lévis, CPC): Madam Speaker, the problems people are running into right now could have easily been foreseen. Telework works up to a certain point, but in the case of passport offices, employees need to be physically on site to provide proper service.

We have all come back to work in person here on Parliament Hill.

Why then are Service Canada employees not back at work on site?

• (1125)

[English]

Ms. Ya'ara Saks (Parliamentary Secretary to the Minister of Families, Children and Social Development, Lib.): Madam Speaker, as mentioned before, we have expanded the passport intake services at over 300 Service Canada offices across the country. We hired and trained over 500 staff already last December. We opened three new processing centres across the country and simplified the services. Canadians, Service Canada and our public service have been working night and day, and we need to thank them for all the work they have done throughout the pandemic.

We continue to work with public servants to make sure that Canadians are getting the service they are entitled to.

* * *

[Translation]

IMMIGRATION, REFUGEES AND CITIZENSHIP

Ms. Christine Normandin (Saint-Jean, BQ): Madam Speaker, a month after he announced that he would charter planes for people displaced by the war in Ukraine, the Minister of Transport has admitted that he has yet to send a single plane.

There is already an agreement with airlines, though. The planes are ready, but his government has hit the brakes, claiming that it is complicated because the refugees are moving around.

Women have already found a way to leave their country and flee the Russian army with their children. Does anyone seriously think that they will not be capable of figuring out how to make their flight?

When will the government arrange an airlift?

Oral Questions

Mrs. Marie-France Lalonde (Parliamentary Secretary to the Minister of Immigration, Refugees and Citizenship, Lib.): Madam Speaker, more than 24,000 Ukrainians have come to Canada since the beginning of January.

As the Prime Minister announced, we will charter planes to bring more Ukrainians to Canada.

I also want to acknowledge Canadians and Quebecers for being so generous and for coming together to welcome Ukrainians at this historic moment for Canada.

Again, I thank the member for her question.

Ms. Christine Normandin (Saint-Jean, BQ): Madam Speaker, I can assure the minister that the planes that are grounded here at our airports do not have a single damn Ukrainian family on them. That is guaranteed.

In the Laurentians alone, there are 60 families who offered to open their homes to refugees and there are already 260 volunteers ready to help. They have been ready for weeks. All that is missing are the refugees. Why?

Line Chaloux, director of the organization Le Coffret, said that they do not have money to purchase plane tickets. If there were chartered flights, they would be here.

Everyone is waiting on Ottawa. When will the government charter flights?

Mrs. Marie-France Lalonde (Parliamentary Secretary to the Minister of Immigration, Refugees and Citizenship, Lib.): Madam Speaker, as I said, more than 24,000 Ukrainians have arrived and hundreds more are arriving every day.

I would also like to mention that we have introduced an innovative program in partnership with Air Canada, The Shapiro Foundation and Miles4Migrants. It will allow us to welcome 10,000 Ukrainians and their families. These are free flights to Canada.

More than 2,000 Canadians have donated more than 140 million Aeroplan points to the Ukraine2Canada travel fund. On this side of the House, we are always going to do more, not less.

Mr. Alexandre Boulerice (Rosemont—La Petite-Patrie, NDP): Madam Speaker, for the past two years, immigration processing times have been ridiculous. Thousands of people are waiting. They have no idea what is going on, and the government is not treating them with respect.

These are human tragedies, uprooted lives and broken dreams. The Liberals can see that, yet they do nothing.

They tell people to contact their MP, but our offices can only handle five applications at a time. This is insane; we are getting dozens of desperate calls every day.

When will the Liberals commit the necessary resources to treat these people with a modicum of respect?

Mrs. Marie-France Lalonde (Parliamentary Secretary to the Minister of Immigration, Refugees and Citizenship, Lib.): Madam Speaker, I thank my colleague for his question.

Last year, we welcomed over 405,000 new permanent residents, the largest number of newcomers in a single year in Canadian history.

I would like to let my esteemed colleague know that, in the first quarter of this year, we set even more records. We processed over 157,000 permanent residence applications and issued over 100,000 work permits and over 10,000 study permits a week.

We have made considerable investments, and we will continue to be there for people who choose Canada.

[*English*]

Ms. Jenny Kwan (Vancouver East, NDP): Madam Speaker, Canada's immigration backlog now exceeds two million people, with significant backlogs in every stream. The minister said he was going to fix it, but the backlog is increasing, not decreasing. Afghans and Ukraine nationals in urgent need to get to safety are mired in red tape. Families are separated. Lives are put on hold. For the caregivers stream, processing time is not even available. Passport offices are jammed: My constituents are having to camp overnight to get their passports.

Will the minister stop using COVID as an excuse for the growing backlog, and do his job to fix this broken immigration system?

• (1130)

Mrs. Marie-France Lalonde (Parliamentary Secretary to the Minister of Immigration, Refugees and Citizenship, Lib.): Madam Speaker, I thank the hon. member for her advocacy on this. Last year, we welcomed more than 405,000 new permanent residents: the greatest number of newcomers in a year in Canadian history. In the first quarter of this year, we hit even more records, processing over 157,000 permanent residence applications and issuing more than 100,000 work permits, and we are processing over 10,000 study permits per week as we are further boosting the processing capacity at IRCC with an investment of—

The Assistant Deputy Speaker (Mrs. Alexandra Mendès): The hon. member for Calgary Midnapore.

* * *

THE ECONOMY

Mrs. Stephanie Kusie (Calgary Midnapore, CPC): Madam Speaker, inflation is skyrocketing under the Liberal government and wages are not keeping up. Statistics Canada said hourly wages increased 3.3% from April 2021, which is well short of the 6.7% inflation rate. The central bank raised its benchmark rate half a point in April, and the governor hinted that he would likely do so again.

The Liberal government is destroying our economy and only making life more expensive for Canadians. When will the government take this inflation crisis seriously and provide real relief for Canadians?

Ms. Rachel Bendayan (Parliamentary Secretary to the Minister of Tourism and Associate Minister of Finance, Lib.): Madam Speaker, the budget that we have just tabled includes many measures that would put money directly into the pockets of Canadians. I am thinking of the one-time payment for all Canadians having difficulty accessing affordable housing. Our continued funding for the Canada child benefit is indexed to inflation.

Based on what I have been hearing in the House from the Conservatives, and in their leadership debate last night, they have absolutely nothing concrete to propose to Canadians in order to help them face the cost-of-living increase that is due to the war in Ukraine.

Mrs. Shelby Kramp-Neuman (Hastings—Lennox and Addington, CPC): Madam Speaker, the cost of government is ballooning the cost of living. Gas in my hometown this morning was a disturbing \$1.92, and it is supposed to go up again this weekend. Every single day, I am hearing distressing examples of the impact that overdue bills and food prices are having on many people's day-to-day lives.

When will the government start listening to people and turn its talking points into action?

Ms. Rachel Bendayan (Parliamentary Secretary to the Minister of Tourism and Associate Minister of Finance, Lib.): Madam Speaker, we have reduced taxes for the middle class on two occasions and the Conservatives voted against it. We have created a Canada child benefit that has helped lift over a million people out of poverty. In our budget, we have concrete measures in order to help Canadians buy their first homes and in order to help Canadians pay for child care. We have been there for Canadians, and the Conservatives have not.

[Translation]

EMPLOYMENT INSURANCE

Mr. Richard Lehoux (Beauce, CPC): Madam Speaker, with the inflation rate at a 30-year high, Canadians are struggling to make ends meet. To make matters worse, Service Canada cannot keep pace with EI claims and fraud cases.

Many of my constituents have not received a cheque since November due to delays in fraud investigations. These are Canadians who have no money left and cannot wait any longer. The mental and physical well-being of these Canadians is at stake.

When will the government add the resources needed to finally reduce these interminable delays?

Ms. Rachel Bendayan (Parliamentary Secretary to the Minister of Tourism and Associate Minister of Finance, Lib.): Madam Speaker, I thank my colleague for the question.

I would like to draw his attention to our budget, which contains concrete measures to help Canadians. I just mentioned the one-time payment for all Canadians having difficulty accessing affordable housing. We are also bringing in measures to help Canadians buy their first home.

Oral Questions

I hope the Conservatives will vote in favour of the budget, because it is going to help Canadians.

AGRICULTURE AND AGRI-FOOD

Mr. Bernard Généreux (Montmagny—L'Islet—Kamouraska—Rivière-du-Loup, CPC): Madam Speaker, inflation is affecting everyone and every sector. The price of diesel is verging on \$3 a litre. It is awful. The impact is real, and it is especially hard on farmers who rely on fuel for transportation and for their farming equipment. They were being choked by Liberal taxes, and now they are being suffocated by them. The government blames external factors, but in reality, the government is responsible.

Will the government do what it promised and truly help farmers?

• (1135)

Mr. Francis Drouin (Parliamentary Secretary to the Minister of Agriculture and Agri-Food, Lib.): Madam Speaker, I thank my colleague for the question.

The war in Ukraine is a major cause of inflation and it is serious. My heart goes out to the farmers.

The Minister of Agriculture and Agri-Food recently made announcements about measures to help farmers pay the fees tied to these price increases. We are working on the issue of fertilizers, because we know that it is important for the farmers. It is important to get fertilizer into Canada, so that has been done. We are now working with the sector to ensure that the fertilizers are available at a fair price.

[English]

TAXATION

Mr. Mel Arnold (North Okanagan—Shuswap, CPC): Madam Speaker, only the NDP-Liberal government could be capable of killing two economic drivers with one blow. The proposed surtax on vessels would destroy capital investments in the charter boat industry, kill jobs and drive investment out of the country. Without new charter vessels coming into the market here, tourists will choose to go elsewhere to spend their vacation dollars, further crippling Canada's tourism recovery.

Does the finance minister understand that her high-tax regime will do nothing but kill jobs in the manufacturing and tourism sectors?

Mr. Terry Beech (Parliamentary Secretary to the Deputy Prime Minister and Minister of Finance, Lib.): Madam Speaker, to make sure that we have the resources needed to invest in Canadians and help our economy continue to recover from the pandemic, we are ensuring that the wealthiest pay their fair share. Our government is introducing a luxury tax that would apply on the sale of new luxury cars and aircraft with a retail price over \$100,000 and new boats over \$250,000.

Oral Questions

We are currently studying this measure at the finance committee, and will continue to work with Canada's entrepreneurs and businesses to grow our economy and to make life more affordable.

* * *

HOUSING

Mr. Tako Van Popta (Langley—Aldergrove, CPC): Madam Speaker, with the average price of a starter home in some parts of metro Vancouver now reaching the \$1-million mark, many people are giving up hope of ever owning their first home. It just keeps getting harder all the time. To quote the Vancouver Sun, "Young, educated, urban Canadians have many reasons to be angry with Ottawa for the ways it has worsened the housing crisis."

After so many failed housing programs, why should Canadians have any confidence in the government's latest iterations of failed programs?

[Translation]

Ms. Soraya Martinez Ferrada (Parliamentary Secretary to the Minister of Housing and Diversity and Inclusion (Housing), Lib.): Madam Speaker, I thank my colleague for his question.

We are well aware of the fact that Canadians across the country think that their dreams of home ownership are out of reach and next to impossible to achieve.

In the most recent budget, we presented practical measures, namely \$200 million to develop and expand rent-to-own programs, a tax-free savings account, a two-year ban on sales to foreign buyers and, of course, a homebuyers' bill of rights, which we are developing in co-operation with the provinces and territories.

We are dedicated to—

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

The hon. member for Manicouagan.

* * *

TELECOMMUNICATIONS

Mrs. Marilène Gill (Manicouagan, BQ): Madam Speaker, Valéry Bélisle, a young woman from my riding, got in a serious car accident about 70 kilometres from the closest cell network. She had to extricate herself from the car on her own and wait on the side of the road for 30 minutes before a good Samaritan, Tony Jean, who I sincerely thank by the way, stopped and drove her to the hospital. The Minganie RCM in Manicouagan has no cell coverage for 420 kilometres, and this is the result.

How many more accidents will it take before the minister puts pressure on the CRTC to finally grant the contracts necessary to complete—

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

The hon. parliamentary secretary.

Mr. Stéphane Lauzon (Parliamentary Secretary to the Minister of Rural Economic Development, Lib.): Madam Speaker, I thank my colleague for her question.

We know that Internet and cellular connectivity is very important for our safety in Quebec, in rural areas and on Route 138. The accident was most unfortunate. I am pleased that the victim was not seriously injured.

As we speak, no other government has done as much as we have for Internet connectivity. The Internet is now also available with a cell network, and we will work on this until it is completed.

Mrs. Marilène Gill (Manicouagan, BQ): Madam Speaker, it is unacceptable that in 2022, people in distress, like Valéry Bélisle, still cannot reach emergency services. The lives of tourists, the Innu, and the people of Havre-Saint-Pierre and Natashquan should not be a secondary consideration.

Ottawa is responsible for telecommunications. It has an obligation to make this an essential service that is accessible everywhere. The CRTC is a year late in announcing who will be awarded the contract for setting up the cell network. Why?

Can the minister finally announce who is getting the contracts for providing cell coverage along Route 138, between Sept-Îles and—

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

The hon. parliamentary secretary.

• (1140)

Mr. Stéphane Lauzon (Parliamentary Secretary to the Minister of Rural Economic Development, Lib.): Madam Speaker, we know there is a problem on Route 138, but this same problem exists all over Canada.

During the pandemic, we realized just how important it is to have Internet and cell coverage all across the country. We have already made an exceptional commitment to get Quebec connected to the Internet with a 98% connectivity rate by September 2022, in partnership with the Government of Quebec.

Work is ongoing, and we will continue until we have built an Internet network and a cell network.

* * *

[English]

HEALTH

Ms. Melissa Lantsman (Thornhill, CPC): Madam Speaker, our airports are becoming famous for long lines, for continuous flight delays and for changing departure times. That is because the government is still imposing out-of-date, unscientific restrictions on travellers.

Yesterday, Toronto's airports called for their elimination so that staffing actually goes where it is needed. Other countries have dropped these restrictions, while ours are expected to stay over the summer.

Will the government stop trying to make our airports famous with their incompetence, and scrap the ineffective restrictions and vindictive mandates?

Hon. Omar Alghabra (Minister of Transport, Lib.): Madam Speaker, as a traveller myself, and I know many of my colleagues here travel regularly, we are experiencing long lines and delays at airports—

Some hon. members: Oh, oh!

The Assistant Deputy Speaker (Mrs. Alexandra Mendès): I am going to have to ask the minister to start over. I could not hear the answer to the question.

Hon. Omar Alghabra: Madam Speaker, Transport Canada officials have been working with CATSA, the Canadian Air Transport Security Authority, leadership to ensure actions are taken to resolve the staffing issues leading to these delays.

I am meeting with the CEO of CATSA on Monday to discuss this. We are witnessing delays across all sectors of our economy that are a result of increasing demand imbalance in our economy. We are working with our partners to ensure that we respond to all of these delays and ensure that all resources necessary are available.

We want to make sure that travellers who want to travel—

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

Ms. Melissa Lantsman (Thornhill, CPC): Madam Speaker, regarding the decision to cling to restrictions and mandates, why is it such a secret?

Will the minister tell the House, finally, what specific advice he is getting to keep them, when he got it last, and when he is going to get it next?

Will he table that advice in the House for all Canadians, or will he continue to hide it from Canadians while they are stuck in line at Pearson?

Hon. Jean-Yves Duclos (Minister of Health, Lib.): Madam Speaker, the evidence is not secret. Everyone knows that vaccines save lives. In the United States, 165,000 lives would have been saved just during the omicron crisis if they had had a better vaccination uptake. One hundred and sixty-five thousand lives in the omicron crisis: that is 50% more people than in any one of our ridings in the House.

Mr. Dan Mazier (Dauphin—Swan River—Neepawa, CPC): Madam Speaker, I think the government has forgotten about its federal mandates, because every province is removing theirs. These mandates are preventing essential federal workers from doing their jobs.

I spoke to an employee from the Canadian Food Inspection Agency who was barred from providing the essential service of food inspection because the government would not let them.

The Liberals do not care about science. They only care about division. When will the government end its outdated mandates?

Hon. Mona Fortier (President of the Treasury Board, Lib.): Madam Speaker, from the beginning of this pandemic, we made a commitment to Canadians that we would protect their health and safety. We have done that. We will continue to do that, and we have

put in place measures to protect workers and our communities. As circumstances change, we adjust these measures.

We are currently reviewing the mandates, and we will come back to the House to report when these mandates will be reviewed.

* * *

CANADA BORDER SERVICES AGENCY

Mr. Rick Perkins (South Shore—St. Margarets, CPC): Madam Speaker, we hear more responses with no answers from the government.

The historic town of Lunenburg has taken a massive hit due to reduced tourism numbers, thanks to the pandemic.

International cruise ships have finally returned to Nova Scotia's ports but for some reason, CBSA has not restarted services in Lunenburg, which means that passenger ships cannot dock in the town. There are seven other ports of entry in the province of Nova Scotia where CBSA has restarted services, but Lunenburg is left out.

When will the minister boost the local Lunenburg economy, do the right thing and open the CBSA—

• (1145)

The Assistant Deputy Speaker (Mrs. Alexandra Mendès): The hon. Minister of Public Safety.

Hon. Marco Mendicino (Minister of Public Safety, Lib.): Madam Speaker, I want to thank my hon. colleague for his advocacy. My office is in close contact with both him and the community of Lunenburg.

Over the course of the last number of weeks, I am pleased to report to all members in this chamber that CBSA has been reopening ports of entry to meet the increased demand around trade and travel. This is good news, and we will continue to work with all members to see that this progress continues.

* * *

SMALL BUSINESS

Mr. Richard Cannings (South Okanagan—West Kootenay, NDP): Madam Speaker, Canadian businesses pay huge rates on their credit card transactions, almost twice as much as fees in Europe, Australia and New Zealand. In budget 2022, the government admitted that Canada's high credit card fees have been hurting small businesses, which were already hurt by the pandemic.

The NDP has been calling for lower fees since back in Jack Layton's campaign over 10 years ago, and despite recognizing the problem, the Liberals keep talking about more talks. When will the Liberals actually crack down on excessive credit card transaction fees and help small businesses?

Mr. Terry Beech (Parliamentary Secretary to the Deputy Prime Minister and Minister of Finance, Lib.): Madam Speaker, small businesses are the backbone of the Canadian economy. Before the pandemic, we cut their taxes from 11% to 9%. During the pandemic, we had their backs: We supported 450,000 businesses and 5.3 million Canadian workers.

Oral Questions

Now we are going even further by targeting a new small business tax. We are working on reducing credit card fees. This is good news for small business and great news for Canadians and the Canadian economy.

* * *

INDIGENOUS AFFAIRS

Ms. Lori Idlout (Nunavut, NDP): *Uqaqtittiji*, residents of Sanirajak have not seen the \$42.9 million that was delivered by the Baffinland Iron Mines Corporation to Inuit firms four years ago. This means that Inuit firms are not getting the resources they were promised. Baffinland told media that it cannot provide details about where the money went.

Nunavut firms that were promised contracts are being deceived by companies that are making massive profits and damaging the environment. What is the government going to do to stand up for the people and the land of Nunavut?

Hon. Dan Vandal (Minister of Northern Affairs, Minister responsible for Prairies Economic Development Canada and Minister responsible for the Canadian Northern Economic Development Agency, Lib.): Madam Speaker, we are engaged with the territory of Nunavut, and all of the hamlets and communities in Nunavut, to make sure that their interests are protected on so many fronts. We are guided by the Inuit Nunangat policy.

I will commit to looking into the comments made by the member for Nunavut and get back to her ASAP.

* * *

NATURAL RESOURCES

Mr. Ryan Turnbull (Whitby, Lib.): Madam Speaker, it goes without saying that Line 5 is crucial energy infrastructure for our country and for our continental energy security. There is another court case in Wisconsin that is threatening the line's operation.

Could the Minister of Natural Resources update the House on what he is doing to ensure that the line continues to operate?

Hon. Jonathan Wilkinson (Minister of Natural Resources, Lib.): Madam Speaker, the continued operation of Line 5 is, as I have said, non-negotiable. We will take appropriate steps to ensure the continued safe operation of this critical infrastructure, and we will continue to work closely with the owner of Line 5.

Canada and the United States continue to be engaged in the process under the 1977 transit pipelines agreement to ensure the continued operation of Line 5, and until this issue is resolved, I will continue to raise it with my U.S. counterparts, as I have been doing on an ongoing basis.

* * *

PASSPORT CANADA

Mrs. Laila Goodridge (Fort McMurray—Cold Lake, CPC): Madam Speaker, the lines are around the block at Service Canada centres across the country, and budding entrepreneurs are charging upwards of \$50 an hour to stand in line to help people get that golden walk-in appointment.

If we call the Service Canada passport line, we get a generic message saying “long processing time” and then it hangs up. However, when we go to the website, there is no mention of delays and no indication of a problem, leaving Canadians completely in the dark until it is too late in many cases.

Will the minister admit that this is a crisis?

Ms. Ya'ara Saks (Parliamentary Secretary to the Minister of Families, Children and Social Development, Lib.): Madam Speaker, Canadians are travelling again, and we understand that the lines are long and this is difficult and stressful for many. That is why last weekend, 12 of the busiest offices across the country were open throughout the weekend. Service Canada staff continue to work through weekends and through overtime to alleviate backlogs. More counters are being opened at passport offices every single day.

The minister and officials continue to explore options to do more, and we continue to push to improve the service standards and help Canadians access the services they are entitled to.

• (1150)

Mrs. Laila Goodridge (Fort McMurray—Cold Lake, CPC): Madam Speaker, unfortunately, Canadians deserve more than talking points. Gordon applied for his son's passport by mail in February. After a month, he made request after request, online and by fax, simply for a status update. Then he called and was number 543, and after an hour he gave up. He appealed to his local MP, the Minister of Fisheries and Oceans, but even then he could not get a status update. Clearly, the process is broken.

Will the minister drop the talking points and fix this serious problem?

Ms. Ya'ara Saks (Parliamentary Secretary to the Minister of Families, Children and Social Development, Lib.): Madam Speaker, I want to thank the hon. member for her advocacy for constituents.

We do know this is a frustrating time for many Canadians as they try to use the system. We have simplified the process to replace expired passports and have extended it to those that expired 15 years ago, treating them as renewals rather than new applications. We continue to find every avenue possible to address the needs of Canadians as they wish to travel again.

If there is a particular issue that a constituent, such as Gordon, is facing, I would be more than happy to speak to the member about it to see how we can find—

The Assistant Deputy Speaker (Mrs. Alexandra Mendès): The hon. member for Cumberland—Colchester.

Mr. Stephen Ellis (Cumberland—Colchester, CPC): Madam Speaker, we need some answers here, not talking points, so I will go with this “despicable” or “annoying” question, I suppose.

Oral Questions

I have heard from Madison and Michelle. They applied on March 14 for travel on May 4. They could have an expedited passport for extra money, and being held ransom, they paid. After over 400 phone calls and hours waiting on hold, they travelled one hour and 10 minutes to Halifax and slept on the floor overnight.

The government is downloading its ineptitude onto the backs of public service employees. When will it clean up this mess and put the “service” back in “Service Canada”?

Ms. Ya'ara Saks (Parliamentary Secretary to the Minister of Families, Children and Social Development, Lib.): Madam Speaker, I appreciate the hon. member sharing the frustrations that many Canadians are facing as they try to embark on travel again to see loved ones throughout the country.

With the easing of public health restrictions and Canadians resuming their travels, Service Canada is experiencing unprecedented volumes in the demand for passports. Our current priority is to ensure that Canadians with planned travel are able to travel. To avoid long lines, Canadians with no imminent travel can apply by visiting over 300 Service Canada centres—

The Assistant Deputy Speaker (Mrs. Alexandra Mendès): The hon. member for King—Vaughan.

Mrs. Anna Roberts (King—Vaughan, CPC): Madam Speaker, Canadians are lining up for days attempting to renew their passports so they can reunite with their families after two long years.

A constituent in my riding is feeling desperate. She is trying to visit a dying family member in the United States and is getting nowhere. Time is of the essence. If we fail to plan, we are planning to fail.

Will the government have compassion and fix the passport backlog so that Canadians can have the ability to say goodbye?

Ms. Ya'ara Saks (Parliamentary Secretary to the Minister of Families, Children and Social Development, Lib.): Madam Speaker, I want to thank the hon. member for her advocacy for her constituents.

We have compassion for those who are facing the need for imminent travel, particularly when it is to visit a loved one facing dire health conditions. That is why proof of travel is needed and required in these cases in order to approach a passport centre or Service Canada office. Priority is being given to those who have imminent travel needs, and I encourage the member to reach out to me to discuss the issue further.

* * *

[Translation]

AVIATION INDUSTRY

Mr. Gabriel Ste-Marie (Joliette, BQ): Madam Speaker, the government is once again punishing our aerospace sector. It is proposing yet another tax on this sector through the luxury tax on private jets set out in its budget bill.

The government wants companies to turn over 20% of their total sales and get reimbursed many months later if the aircraft ends up being exported.

We are talking about making companies advance the government half a billion dollars. Will the minister fix this situation and stop burdening our businesses?

• (1155)

[English]

Mr. Andy Fillmore (Parliamentary Secretary to the Minister of Innovation, Science and Industry, Lib.): Madam Speaker, we recognize that the aerospace sector is facing long-term impacts from COVID-19. That is why we are allocating \$1.75 billion over seven years from the strategic innovation fund to this sector. The funding will support projects totalling \$2 billion in investments in Canada, including close to \$1.6 billion in Quebec alone. It will also create more than 1,000 jobs in the Quebec aerospace industry and co-op placements for more than 6,200 students.

[Translation]

Mr. Gabriel Ste-Marie (Joliette, BQ): Madam Speaker, he unfortunately picked the wrong page. The luxury tax is supposed to be charged to the wealthy who are buying private jets, but that is not how the bill will work in practice.

For example, mining companies that buy a plane to transport workers rent it out when they are not using it. That is how these things work. Now, they will have to pay the tax if, one out of 10 times it is rented out, it is used for recreational purposes.

A company that is transporting workers to the regions should not have to pay the same price as a billionaire heading south to an island on their private jet. Will the government make the bill more flexible?

Ms. Rachel Bendayan (Parliamentary Secretary to the Minister of Tourism and Associate Minister of Finance, Lib.): Madam Speaker, I would like to thank my colleague for his question and for the work he does on the Standing Committee on Finance.

We introduced a luxury tax on boats and aircraft because we know that everyone must pay their fair share. The pandemic was difficult.

It is important for those of us on this side of the House to ensure that the wealthy, the 1% of Canadians, pay their fair share.

* * *

[English]

JUSTICE

Mr. Michael Cooper (St. Albert—Edmonton, CPC): Madam Speaker, several horrific cases have recently been reported of vulnerable Canadians who have ended their lives by medical assistance in dying for reasons such as inadequate housing and lack of access to care. That is precisely what the Liberals claimed would never happen.

Oral Questions

When will the Liberals acknowledge that so-called MAID safeguards are not being enforced, putting the lives of vulnerable Canadians at risk?

Mr. Gary Anandasangaree (Parliamentary Secretary to the Minister of Justice and Attorney General of Canada, Lib.): Madam Speaker, these issues are difficult and deeply personal and touch the lives of everyone across this country. We would like to thank those who have lent their voices to this important national conversation.

We look forward to seeing the findings and recommendations of the special joint committee as well as the expert panel, which are due imminently.

Mr. Michael Cooper (St. Albert—Edmonton, CPC): Madam Speaker, one such case involved an Ontario woman who ended her life by MAID after she could not find adequate housing. Her condition was not irremediable, as required by law. Rather, she was vulnerable and desperate and had lost all hope.

Do the Liberals believe that inadequate housing is an acceptable criterion for MAID?

Mr. Gary Anandasangaree (Parliamentary Secretary to the Minister of Justice and Attorney General of Canada, Lib.): Madam Speaker, I want to reiterate that there is an expert panel right now that is set to report imminently, and there is a special joint committee, on which the member opposite is a very active member. We look forward to the findings of both, in order for us to address additional issues that are likely to come up.

Mr. Michael Barrett (Leeds—Grenville—Thousand Islands and Rideau Lakes, CPC): Madam Speaker, we heard stories from across the country of vulnerable Canadians who have received or are pursuing a medically assisted death because they cannot afford housing, they cannot access indigenous services or they are poor. Is that what the government wanted when it let radical lobbyists dictate the policy?

The Liberals have extended medical assistance in death to people with physical disabilities and mental illness, and now they want to extend it to minors. Will the government ensure that no more Canadians will be victimized by this medically assisted death regime?

Mr. Gary Anandasangaree (Parliamentary Secretary to the Minister of Justice and Attorney General of Canada, Lib.): Madam Speaker, as I stressed earlier, these issues are difficult and deeply personal and touch the lives of everyone across this country. We would like to thank those who have lent their voices to this important national conversation.

We look forward to seeing the findings and recommendations of the special joint committee, on which the member opposite is also a very active participant, and of the expert panel report that we expect imminently. It is why we have ensured a further parliamentary review and independent expert report to study these issues closely before the expiry of the sunset clause. We look forward to these reports.

• (1200)

[*Translation*]

TOURISM INDUSTRY

Mrs. Sherry Romanado (Longueuil—Charles-LeMoyne, Lib.): Madam Speaker, businesses in my province depend on tourism and the pandemic has had a devastating impact on them.

There is some good news—

The Assistant Deputy Speaker (Mrs. Alexandra Mendès): Order. The hon. member for Barrie—Innisfil.

[*English*]

Mr. John Brassard: Madam Speaker, I have a point of clarification as to what the member's role is. Is she considered a parliamentary secretary? As you know, parliamentary secretaries cannot ask questions. I just need clarification.

The Assistant Deputy Speaker (Mrs. Alexandra Mendès): The hon. member for Longueuil—Charles-LeMoyne is not a parliamentary secretary. She is a deputy whip.

[*Translation*]

I would ask the hon. member for Longueuil—Charles-LeMoyne to start over, from the beginning.

Mrs. Sherry Romanado: Madam Speaker, businesses in my province rely on tourism, and the pandemic had a devastating impact on their work.

There is good news. On April 25, screening measures at the border were relaxed. Would the Parliamentary Secretary to the Minister of Tourism and Associate Minister of Finance tell us how this excellent news will affect the tourism sector?

Ms. Rachel Bendayan (Parliamentary Secretary to the Minister of Tourism and Associate Minister of Finance, Lib.): Madam Speaker, I thank my colleague for her question.

Our tourism sector was indeed hit hard by the global pandemic, but we have just received some very encouraging stats. Recently, for the first time since the beginning of the pandemic, Canada welcomed over one million travellers in a single week.

I would like to take this opportunity to thank all the workers, hotel operators, travel agents and everyone else who works in the tourism sector for their resilience and for everything they have done for our economy and to bring people from around the world here to discover our wonderful country.

[English]

MARINE TRANSPORT

Mr. Chris Lewis (Essex, CPC): Madam Speaker, the number of small vessel reporting sites was 400 prepandemic. This was cut to just 84 sites during the pandemic. As boating season opens up, boaters will have to travel hundreds of kilometres to report their vessels. The government is needlessly adding emissions, stifling our economy and putting boaters at risk if the weather changes while they travel excessive distances to reach one of the few reporting sites.

When will the government prioritize border safety by reopening small vessel reporting sites?

Hon. Omar Alghabra (Minister of Transport, Lib.): Madam Speaker, I want to thank my hon. colleague for his question and his advocacy on behalf of his constituents.

The pandemic has caused a lot of disruptions to many of our marine and other travelling sectors. As we have demonstrated from the beginning to Canadians, we have been there to support Canadians and Canadian businesses throughout this difficult period. As we are turning the corner from the pandemic, we are adjusting our measures and working with community stakeholders to ensure that we return to normal as quickly as possible.

Ms. Lianne Rood (Lambton—Kent—Middlesex, CPC): Madam Speaker, this is ridiculous. Boaters in my riding simply need to cross an 800-metre-wide river to get to Michigan, but the CBSA wants them to go 76 kilometres, round trip, just to check in. One constituent wrote to me to say that it would cost him \$1,200 per trip just to meet this requirement. This will cripple tourism and day shopping during the busiest time of the year, hurting small businesses and communities such as Wallaceburg, Mitchell's Bay and Port Lambton, just to name a few.

Will the government immediately lift the restrictions at marine points of entry?

Hon. Omar Alghabra (Minister of Transport, Lib.): Madam Speaker, my colleague, the Minister of Public Safety, and I are working closely to ensure that we are returning to normal as quickly as possible. We are ensuring that communities are safe and have the resources they need to access the businesses they had. I know it has been difficult over the past two years. Canadians have demonstrated a commitment to each other and to working together closely to ensure that everyone is safe, and that our economy is rebounding as quickly as possible.

* * *

TELECOMMUNICATIONS

Mr. Gary Vidal (Desnethé—Missinippi—Churchill River, CPC): Madam Speaker, following my question last month on the lack of cell service on the Hanson Lake Road, a constituent shared a heartbreaking story. Recently, he came across an unresponsive male in the driver's seat of a vehicle stopped on that road. He drove to cell coverage, called for an ambulance and returned to the scene. By the time he got back, the man was deceased.

Oral Questions

This is not a political issue; it is literally one of life and death. Will the minister approve today Saskatchewan's application to the CRTC for cell service on the Hanson Lake Road?

• (1205)

[Translation]

Mr. Stéphane Lauzon (Parliamentary Secretary to the Minister of Rural Economic Development, Lib.): Madam Speaker, Internet-based activities are just as important in Saskatchewan as they are in Quebec and the rest of Canada.

We know that cell service is very important, and that is one of our top priorities. We have undertaken a massive connectivity project for rural and remote communities. We will keep working on this until there is full Internet and cell coverage.

* * *

[English]

FOREIGN AFFAIRS

Ms. Julie Dzerowicz (Davenport, Lib.): Madam Speaker, Russia's illegal, unjustifiable invasion of Ukraine is not only a threat to European security, but also to world security. The NATO alliance has only become more important as we look to the future of transatlantic security.

This week, Canada welcomes Sweden's foreign minister as that country faces a choice of whether to join the NATO alliance. Finland is also facing the same consideration.

Can the Parliamentary Secretary to the Minister of Foreign Affairs share with the House whether Canada would support Sweden's and Finland's membership in the alliance?

Hon. Robert Oliphant (Parliamentary Secretary to the Minister of Foreign Affairs, Lib.): Madam Speaker, this gives me an opportunity to thank our colleague for her excellent leadership as chair of the Canadian NATO Parliamentary Association: work she does on behalf of all of us. Recently, the Minister of Foreign Affairs had a chance to meet with her counterpart in Helsinki. Even more recently, this week she met with her counterpart from Sweden here in Ottawa.

Let me be very clear that in the face of horrendous and illegal aggression by Russia in Ukraine, NATO is more united than ever. Sweden and Finland are among Canada's closest friends and NATO's closest partners. We would, of course, welcome their accession into NATO, should they choose to do it.

*Routine Proceedings***FISHERIES AND OCEANS**

Ms. Rachel Blaney (North Island—Powell River, NDP): Madam Speaker, the Powell River Salmon Society in my riding is one of several non-profits doing amazing work on local salmon enhancement and preservation, and the minister agrees.

Small local hatcheries have not seen federal funding increase for over 40 years, and they were ignored during all the federal consultations. The Liberals like to talk about saving the wild salmon, but they ignore the voices of volunteer-based hatcheries that do the work but are struggling every day.

Why is the minister not supporting these successful and existing hatcheries now?

Hon. Joyce Murray (Minister of Fisheries, Oceans and the Canadian Coast Guard, Lib.): Madam Speaker, I love that question, because I just had a chance to visit a local hatchery in metro Vancouver, meet the members and see the very important work that they do.

The protection of wild Pacific salmon populations is an incredibly important priority for British Columbia. I know that the work the hatchery groups do assists with that. It will be supported by an almost \$650-million historic investment in Pacific salmon and salmon enhancement, i.e. hatcheries, as one of the pillars of that initiative.

The Assistant Deputy Speaker (Mrs. Alexandra Mendès): That is all the time for question period today.

ROUTINE PROCEEDINGS

[*English*]

GOVERNMENT RESPONSE TO PETITIONS

Mr. Kevin Lamoureux (Parliamentary Secretary to the Leader of the Government in the House of Commons, Lib.): Madam Speaker, pursuant to Standing Order 36(8)(a) I have the honour to table, in both official languages, the government's response to 25 petitions. These returns will be tabled in an electronic format.

* * *

[*Translation*]

COMMITTEES OF THE HOUSE

ENVIRONMENT AND SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT

Mr. Francis Scarpaleggia (Lac-Saint-Louis, Lib.): Madam Speaker, I have the honour of presenting, in both official languages, the third report of the Standing Committee on Environment and Sustainable Development regarding the main estimates 2022-23.

• (1210)

[*English*]

JUSTICE

Mr. Michael Cooper (St. Albert—Edmonton, CPC) moved:

That it be an instruction to the Standing Committee on Justice and Human Rights that, during its consideration of Bill C-5, An Act to amend the Criminal Code and the Controlled Drugs and Substances Act, the committee be granted the power to divide the bill into two pieces of legislation:

(i) Bill C-5A, An Act to amend the Criminal Code, containing clauses 1, 2, 3, 4, 5, 6, 7, 8, 9, 10, 11, 12, 13 and 14,

(ii) Bill C-5B, An Act to amend the Controlled Drugs and Substances Act, containing the remaining clauses of the bill.

The Assistant Deputy Speaker (Mrs. Alexandra Mendès): Debate.

Is the House ready for the question?

The parliamentary secretary to the Government house leader.

Mr. Kevin Lamoureux: Madam Speaker, I am wondering if you can just repeat the title of the motion that is brought forward. I would like to speak to the bill.

The Assistant Deputy Speaker (Mrs. Alexandra Mendès): I have the hon. member for Barrie—Innisfil, who wants to speak first on a point of order.

Mr. John Brassard: Madam Speaker, I am seeking your guidance on this and perhaps the guidance of the Table. When you asked for debate, I asked that the question be put. I believe I was first to say that. Please seek the guidance of the Table.

Mr. Kevin Lamoureux: On that point of order, Madam Speaker, I would affirm that the member did ask from his seat that the question be put, and that is the reason why I stood. I would like to be able to speak to the motion. I understand it is in regard to the splitting of Bill C-5, and I have some thoughts on that to share with the members.

Mr. Rick Perkins: On the point of order, Madam Speaker, I believe I witnessed and saw that the House leader for the official opposition rose first.

The Assistant Deputy Speaker (Mrs. Alexandra Mendès): The hon. parliamentary secretary just confirmed it, yes.

When I asked the House if the House was ready for the question, the hon. parliamentary secretary did say no, which is an indication that debate should proceed, if I understand correctly, and this is the guidance I have received.

The hon. parliamentary secretary to the government House leader.

Mr. Kevin Lamoureux (Parliamentary Secretary to the Leader of the Government in the House of Commons, Lib.): Madam Speaker, I am a little surprised the Conservatives would choose to move a motion of this nature. My understanding is that, once again, we are seeing the Conservatives hoping to be able to cause a little confusion and frustration with government legislation. That does not necessarily surprise me, but I must say that I am somewhat disappointed in the official opposition.

We started by talking about the importance of Bill C-19. It is the budget implementation bill. That is something that I think Canadians, as a whole, are very much interested in. After question period, we would normally go through routine proceedings and then get back to debate. The purpose of debate today, I had thought, was to continue the discussion on the budget implementation bill. Instead, the Conservatives went into the procedures of the day and pick Motion No. 78, which I will read to see what they are hoping to achieve by this particular motion. It states:

Routine Proceedings

That it be an instruction to the Standing Committee on Justice and Human Rights that, during its consideration of Bill C-5, An Act to amend the Criminal Code and the Controlled Drugs and Substances Act, the committee be granted the power to divide the bill into two pieces of legislation....

Why would the official opposition move a motion of that nature on a Friday afternoon? It is surprising. The members opposite are very much aware of what was supposed to be debated today. Instead, they want to change the topic. They want to discuss separating out a bill and causing more votes on legislation that would ultimately make some significant changes to our justice system.

There is a significant gap between the approaches of the government of the day and the Conservative Party on the issue of incarceration. When we think of incarceration, we on the government benches, the Liberal Party, recognize that in a very real and tangible way there is a high percentage of people who become incarcerated in our jails who will ultimately come out of jail. To that degree, we need to recognize that it is better to have a system in place that ensures there is a greater likelihood of those people remaining in our communities and contributing in a positive way.

It is important that we recognize that. The Conservatives, on the other hand, seem to want to give an impression that the best way to keep Canadians safe is to put people in jail who break the law and keep them in jail. That is their speaking point. That is why we will often hear Conservatives talk about minimum sentences—

• (1215)

The Deputy Speaker: The hon. member for Joliette is rising on a point of order.

[*Translation*]

Mr. Gabriel Ste-Marie: Mr. Speaker, I would ask you to call quorum.

And the count having been taken:

The Deputy Speaker: I think we have it.

[*English*]

The hon. parliamentary secretary to the government House leader.

Mr. Kevin Lamoureux: Mr. Speaker, interestingly enough, we now have the “double blue”, the “true blue” and the “light blue”, with the Bloc being the “light blue”, as one of my colleagues called them. They kind of like to work together to cause a little bit of mischief. On the one hand there is the Conservative Party, the leading party of the “double blue coalition”, moving a motion to prevent debate, and on the other we have the “light blue” or the “mini blue” trying to look at ways in which we can end the session for the day.

It is amazing, truly amazing just how much the Bloc and the Conservatives feel that we do not need to debate Bill C-19. Think about it. The Conservatives are saying they want to change the topic today, as they do not want to talk about the budget. I can appreciate why. I can appreciate why because, at the end of the day, there is so much good news in this budget that the Conservatives do not want to talk about it, and that is—

An hon. member: Why are you filibustering? You are filibustering yourself.

• (1220)

The Deputy Speaker: Order. The member has the floor.

The hon. member for Winnipeg North.

Mr. Kevin Lamoureux: Mr. Speaker, technically I am not filibustering because I am talking about what we should be talking about today, which is the budget. That is the thing that the Conservatives do not want to talk about because it is such a good, healthy budget for all Canadians—

The Deputy Speaker: I have a point of order from the hon. member for Leeds—Grenville—Thousand Islands and Rideau Lakes.

Mr. Michael Barrett: Mr. Speaker, the parliamentary secretary has just informed you and the House that he is not debating the motion at hand. He is debating a different piece of legislation. On the subject of relevance, he has specifically said that his debate is not relevant to the matter at hand.

Perhaps the hon. parliamentary secretary could stop filibustering and let us return to the business of the House.

The Deputy Speaker: There is relevancy. I will cede that of course to the member for Winnipeg North.

Mr. Kevin Lamoureux: Mr. Speaker, if the member were actually listening, it is 100% purely relevant. Prior to their cousin in the Bloc's interruption, I was speaking specifically to the motion. After the Bloc's interruption, I made references to why the Conservatives are trying to change the topic to prevent us from being able to talk about C-19, and my Conservative friend got all upset and stood up to say that I am not being relevant. The Conservatives really need to start putting on their thinking caps.

At the end of the day, what we should be debating today is the good-news budget. There is no doubt that there are many things within it which they can raise, but they are the ones who have chosen not to want to debate it today. Instead, they want to have a discussion or a debate on a motion dealing with why we should split into sections a government piece of legislation through this particular motion.

It is interesting because, as I was pointing out, there are different approaches to justice. There is a Conservative approach versus our Liberal government's approach to justice.

I highlighted the one difference regarding incarceration, but that is not the only one. We have confidence in our judicial system. We recognize the independence of our judges and the judicial system. The Conservatives, on the other hand, have a difficult time with that. They really and truly do.

They believe that if we cannot trust judges, we put in minimum sentences. The legislation they are attempting to split up, and increasing the number of votes for, is a reflection of some of the reforms the Minister of Justice has been working for a good period of time now. He has been looking and listening to the different stakeholders, working with different jurisdictions, provincial or others, within the civil service.

Routine Proceedings

I know that we just have to listen to question period and we can understand that the Conservative Party has a lack of faith and trust in our civil service, but that is not shared universally. We recognize the hard work and the efforts that our civil servants put in, whether it is in passport offices or in ministerial offices formulating legislation and ensuring the type of legislation we bring forward is ultimately for the betterment of Canada.

That is what we are seeing here. I have had the opportunity, in the days in which I was an MLA, not only as a provincial justice critic, so I have fairly significant experience in dealing with justice-related issues, but also as the chair of the Keewatin youth justice committee for a number of years. The youth justice committee was where I learned a great deal about how communities can be involved in ensuring that justice is not just being seen as being done, but is in fact done.

One of the best ways I have seen this is through restorative justice, where we get the victim and person who committed the offence together, and that does happen. When it does happen, we see it as a good thing, because often through that process, we see that the victim will get a greater sense of satisfaction. Now, obviously, that does not work in all situations.

• (1225)

The youth justice committee would often have young offenders come before it. Committee members would listen to what the young offender has to say and come up with a disposition in terms of what the consequences should be for that young person for whatever offence was committed. To give a specific example, let us take shoplifting. We all know that shoplifting is a bad thing. However, because of the justice committee, it is personalized so that the victim, a store in this case, would have the opportunity to provide input from the victim's perspective, and then the offender would come before individuals in the community who are, in essence, honorary probation officers.

I raise this because, even at that level, there is a certain amount of expertise that is provided from constituents, from people who live and work in our communities. They get a good assessment of the environment that this young person was in, and through that assessment, they are able to give a disposition that is more fitting for the individual. I use this as an example because we can take some of the principles from that example and apply them even to a courtroom, where there are a judge, lawyers, a victim and an offender.

When we take a look at the legislation that the Conservatives want to divide, they are saying that if person *X* commits crime *Z*, that person has to serve a minimum amount of time. They want to override everything that has been said in the courtroom. They are saying to the judge that they do not have the confidence in the judge to get an evaluation of the situation that might have ultimately caused the crime and led to the actual offence itself.

When I think of minimum sentences, I think in terms of limitations. At times, there is a need for minimum sentences. However, the idea that we need to review them and make some changes is long overdue. We need to recognize that there is systemic racism within our communities. Not to consider our courts and our institutions when we think of the issue of racism would be a huge mistake.

I was not in committee during the discussions on second reading of the bill, but I suspect we would find a number of witnesses who recognized that systemic racism is found within our courts, and one of the ways we can minimize some of that racism is by looking at ways in which we can address the issue of minimum sentences.

• (1230)

When we really stop and think about it, the motion being brought forward by the Conservative Party does two things. One, it addresses the specifics of Bill C-5 in wanting to divide it up. One could question the motives of trying to do that. Is it as simple as having—

The Deputy Speaker: The hon. member for Leeds—Grenville—Thousand Islands and Rideau Lakes is rising on a point of order.

Mr. Michael Barrett: Mr. Speaker, I was just wondering if you could verify that quorum is currently being met.

The Deputy Speaker: There is a quorum call again.

And the count having been taken:

The Deputy Speaker: There are 13 here, and we have a number of members online. Online does count on this list. We do have quorum.

The hon. member for Winnipeg North.

Mr. Kevin Lamoureux: Mr. Speaker, I know there is a lunch going on. There are members on all sides of the House. There are members who are having lunch—

The Deputy Speaker: The hon. member for New Westminster—Burnaby is rising on a point of order.

Mr. Peter Julian: Mr. Speaker, I did not want to interrupt my friend from Winnipeg North, but you should be aware that there are literally dozens of members of Parliament participating online. I do not understand the repeated calls for quorum when members of the Conservative Party should be aware that dozens of members are participating actively through Zoom in this hybrid Parliament.

The Deputy Speaker: That is what I referred to.

The hon. member for Leeds—Grenville—Thousand Islands and Rideau Lakes.

Mr. Michael Barrett: Mr. Speaker, it is not a lack of understanding. Members in the chamber are able to see the other members who are physically in the chamber. Not to discount the number of members who are online, but that number is in fact seven, not “dozens” as my hon. colleague said.

There is no way for members in the House to verify that. That is why I respectfully requested that the Chair verify quorum.

Mr. Kevin Lamoureux: Mr. Speaker, on the same point of order, at the end of—

An hon. member: Point of order.

The Deputy Speaker: We are already on a point of order with the hon. member for Winnipeg North. I will go back to whoever was yelling that.

Routine Proceedings

Mr. Kevin Lamoureux: Mr. Speaker, I think it is important for members, before they stand up to try to be funny and call quorum, to ask a member in their caucus. For example, there are 33 members online right now. Members should be courteous, as opposed to interrupting a speech knowing full well there is quorum. The Conservative and Bloc members who have now done this should be a little more courteous to me, who happen to be speaking, and to members who might be having a meal.

The Deputy Speaker: Order. We had another point of order or a continuation of the same point of order.

The hon. member for New Westminster—Burnaby.

Mr. Peter Julian: Mr. Speaker, I would like to make the same point. The member for Leeds—Grenville—Thousand Islands and Rideau Lakes just misinformed the House. There are three dozen members participating online, including myself. I do not understand why he would try to lead the House in error—

The Deputy Speaker: I am going to stop things right now. We are doing a count. We will find out exactly how many people we have participating.

When we go back, the member for Winnipeg North will have two minutes and 10 seconds left in his time. Let us take a couple of seconds to get the count done correctly.

And the count having been taken:

• (1235)

The Deputy Speaker: There are 25 members here in the chamber at this moment. There are nine with their cameras on. Members can be online, but if they do not have their cameras on, they are not counted in the quorum. The camera needs to be on.

The hon. member for Leeds—Grenville—Thousand Islands and Rideau Lakes.

Mr. Michael Barrett: Mr. Speaker, the member who just spoke, the hon. gentleman from New Westminster—Burnaby, did say that I misinformed the House, and I would respectfully ask, in light of the verification offered by the table officers and by the Chair, that an apology be offered for having alleged that I misled the House.

The Deputy Speaker: Would the hon. member for New Westminster—Burnaby like to make a comment? I will afford him a minute.

Mr. Peter Julian: Mr. Speaker, the numbers stand. There are three dozen people online. I understand your interpretation of having the cameras on or off, but I can see a number of Conservative members who have turned their cameras off. I just wish we would stop the game playing and get on with the debate.

The Deputy Speaker: I am done with that for now, so let us put that one to bed. Having the cameras on is the rule there.

The hon. member for Winnipeg North has two minutes and 10 seconds left.

Mr. Kevin Lamoureux: Mr. Speaker, having gone through that, I should be given a bonus five minutes, I would suggest.

At the end of the day, the Conservatives like to play their games, and we saw that just now. They do whatever they can to play a game, cause distractions and lose the focus on what I believe and

the government believes is important to Canadians, such as the budget and the budget implementation bill. We do not get very many bills that are more important than the budget implementation bill, something that invests billions and billions of dollars into supporting Canadians in all sorts of different ways. That is what we were supposed to be debating today. On a Friday afternoon, the Conservative Party, Canada's official opposition party, wants to play games.

As much as the Conservatives want to focus on their games and their character assassinations, I can say that all members of the Liberal caucus will continue to have their focus on Canadians and the people of Canada first. That is the reason why we are very excited about Bill C-19, no matter what sorts of games might be played by the Conservative opposition. We understand how this budget is going to have a profoundly positive impact on building a stronger, healthier Canada. We will continue to support the middle class and those aspiring to be a part of it, and push aside the games. That is the assurance that I would give members.

I do not support this motion. Bill C-5 should stay as one bill, as was the intent.

Mr. John Brassard (Barrie—Innisfil, CPC): Mr. Speaker, I am sure the Prime Minister would be proud of this member for his intervention today. The Prime Minister refers to spreading disinformation quite a bit.

Let us go back to what actually happened here. The member for St. Albert—Edmonton, who is a member of the justice committee, proposed the motion during Routine Proceedings to split Bill C-5 at committee to allow the committee to effectively do its work. I then stood up and said that we want to put the question, which means we want to put it to a vote. That vote would have happened on Monday. There would have been no need for debate. There would have been no need for the parliamentary secretary to the government House leader to stand up and do this filibuster, and I suspect there are going to be others as well. They could have easily gone to Bill C-19 to debate it. I am guessing that maybe either the whip of the Liberal Party or the House leader has called the House leader of the NDP to prepare him to speak to this just to filibuster this.

Let us be very clear about what happened. We put the question. We could have voted on this on Monday and we could have gone to Bill C-19.

This is not a question, but more of a comment. I am curious as to why the parliamentary secretary to the government House leader has decided to filibuster his own piece of legislation to delay time so that we cannot get to Bill C-19. It just does not make any sense.

• (1240)

Mr. Kevin Lamoureux: Mr. Speaker, I am sure members recall Bill C-8, the fall economic statement. We just passed that piece of legislation, even though it was introduced in 2021. The reason why we just passed it is the Conservative games. The Conservatives did not want to pass the legislation. That legislation was there to support small businesses and to support people directly in response to the pandemic, in a very real and tangible way. That is what Bill C-8 was all about.

Routine Proceedings

What we are seeing now is that the Conservatives want to continue to play that game, but on the budget implementation bill. This whole week, the Conservative Party has been attempting to stop debate on legislation. This is not the first time during motions that the Conservatives have stood up to try to prevent a debate from occurring. We can just look at what has happened this week. There are many examples of it.

As the member tries to suggest that he is being generous, he might fool some within his Conservative caucus or some members, but he is not going to fool me or, I suspect, other government members.

[*Translation*]

Ms. Christine Normandin (Saint-Jean, BQ): Madam Speaker, to follow on the question from the member for Barrie—Innisfil, I wonder if we should not have just quickly put the question.

I hear the parliamentary secretary speaking not to the motion, but to Bill C-19, so he is preventing us from debating Bill C-19.

Does that not show that we should have simply gone directly to putting the question on the motion before the House?

[*English*]

Mr. Kevin Lamoureux: Madam Speaker, the Bloc member, like the Conservatives, is saying, “Trust us. This is what would have happened.”

I would suggest that members of the Bloc and the Conservative Party review the past week, and take a look at the games they have played in this last week. While they do that, they should reflect on Bill C-8: the fall economic statement that should have passed months ago. However, because of the Bloc and the Conservative Party, that legislation, which was debated 12, 13 or more times inside the chamber for many hours and more than the budget itself, did not pass.

Why should we believe those members on a Friday afternoon, when they have been causing nothing but filibusters throughout the week?

Mr. Peter Julian (New Westminster—Burnaby, NDP): Madam Speaker, I disagree often with my colleague for Winnipeg North, but I found many aspects of his speech today important. For a week and a half now, the Conservatives have blocked the ability of members of Parliament to present petitions every single day. For a week and a half, they have disrupted Routine Proceedings, and it is always for a different reason. Sometimes it is the same committee report they present for a second or third time, sometimes it is a different committee report, and sometimes it is a motion of instruction, but it all adds up to trying to block fundamental bills that would help people.

I think, particularly when we talk about the budget implementation act and the fact that the NDP pushed and forced the government to put in place the national dental care program for children at the same time as unprecedented investments in affordable housing, it is strange beyond belief that a Conservative member, who would be helping thousands of people in his or her own riding by supporting the BIA and allowing it to move forward, continues to try to block it.

My question to my colleague for Winnipeg North is very simple. What does he think the strategy of the Conservatives is, when they block Bill C-8 for months, block petitions for a week and half and now are blocking important legislation that would lead to dental care and affordable housing for Canadians?

• (1245)

Mr. Kevin Lamoureux: Madam Speaker, I believe if we listen to some of the comments, in particular outside the chamber but also to a certain degree inside the chamber, we will hear the Conservative Party being critical and saying the government does not know how to manage House business. It is almost as if someone was walking down the sidewalk, we tripped them and then said, “Let me give you a hand up.” Then we tripped them again and said, “Why can you not stay on your feet?”

The Conservative Party is playing games. That is the bottom line. They have their focus.

The member made reference to the dental plan. To the credit of my New Democratic friends, they made the determination that Canadians do not want an election, but Canadians want to see a progressive agenda, and the New Democrats are contributing to the debate in a very real and tangible way. That does not mean we are all cozy and buddies: we often get into serious arguments and discussion. On debates, we have differing opinions, but at least they are contributing to what is taking place.

Otherwise, if all opposition parties take the same approach as the Conservative Party is taking, it would be absolutely totally dysfunctional. We could not do anything inside the chamber. At least there is, at times, a sense of co-operation, which is absolutely necessary. That is what Canadians want: political parties working together.

Mr. Michael Cooper (St. Albert—Edmonton, CPC): Madam Speaker, I was a little surprised to hear the member for New Westminster—Burnaby talk about petitions. The reason petitions have not been presented is because, every day, the Liberals have moved a motion to move to orders of the day, backed up by the NDP.

With regard to the parliamentary secretary, it is quite ironic that he is the one who is holding up debate on the budget. He is the one who is debating the motion; no other hon. member. This was a very straightforward motion to allow the justice committee to do its work, having regard for the fact that the bill contains two substantive components: one with respect to the Criminal Code and the other with respect to the Controlled Drugs and Substances Act. It could have been moved forward with a vote on Monday.

That hon. member is holding up debate on the budget, so I ask him this, very respectfully: Why is he wasting the House's time?

Mr. Kevin Lamoureux: Madam Speaker, I would suggest that those who are following the debate take a look at the week in its entirety. They will see very clearly that what we have is the Conservative Party of Canada, Canada's official opposition, playing games.

At the end of the day, I went to move for the orders of the day because if I did not do that, we would continue debating on Conservative concurrence reports for hours. That is the reality that is preventing us from being able to do things such as passing—

Routine Proceedings

The Assistant Deputy Speaker (Mrs. Alexandra Mendès): The hon. Parliamentary Secretary to the Minister of Justice.

Mr. Gary Anandasangaree (Parliamentary Secretary to the Minister of Justice and Attorney General of Canada, Lib.): Madam Speaker, I am very perplexed as to what is happening today because this is a bill that has gone through a number of days of debate in the House as one single unit. As of today, we will have had our sixth meeting of witnesses. We have set clause-by-clause for about a week and a half from now. We have agreed, by consensus of all the parties, to have eight meetings to discuss the bill, and at this point the Conservative Party is coming forward and saying we need to split the bill. I think it is outrageous. They in fact should be ruled out of order.

I want to ask my friend this: Is it appropriate at this juncture to bring forward a motion to split the bill? So many witnesses have come forward and shared their experiences of systemic racism within the criminal justice system: their hurt, their anger and their lived experiences. Is it appropriate at this point in this debate to come forward and ask for—

The Assistant Deputy Speaker (Mrs. Alexandra Mendès): I have to give the parliamentary secretary 15 seconds for an answer.

Mr. Kevin Lamoureux: Madam Speaker, first of all, let me compliment all of the members of the committee and the fine work that they have done in being able to address this very important issue. The short answer is that it is not a reflection on the committee's work. It is more a reflection on the House leadership from the official opposition in working with the Bloc, unfortunately. That is the reason why I believe that this motion is here. It is about games.

• (1250)

Mr. Gary Anandasangaree (Parliamentary Secretary to the Minister of Justice and Attorney General of Canada, Lib.): Madam Speaker, let me say at the outset that I am very disappointed that we are at this juncture today. Bill C-5 is a very important piece of legislation, and I can walk the House through my perspective on this.

I want to confirm that I will be splitting my time with the member for Whitby.

When Bill C-5 was introduced back in December, we heard from a number of different organizations and people who had been directly impacted by systemic racism. I realize that not everybody in this House understands, and not every party in the House recognizes what systemic racism is, but it is a lived reality for many Canadians.

All I have to say is that if we look at what The Globe and Mail has reported over the last three days, we will find a very coherent set of news pieces that talk about systemic racism. For example, it included that 50% of women who are incarcerated within the criminal justice system are indigenous, whereas indigenous people only make up 4% of Canada's population. If we look at Black Canadians, we know they are disproportionately represented within the criminal justice system.

This is one of the reasons why we brought forward Bill C-5. It includes a number of mandatory minimum penalties that were struck down by the Supreme Court for their unconstitutionality. We

have also brought forward very important amendments to the Controlled Drugs and Substances Act.

After several days of debate, including at committee, we are at a stage now where Bill C-5 will be going through what is called clause-by-clause as of May 17 and May 20. We have three more meetings, the first of which is supposed to start in about 10 minutes, and we will have two subsequent meetings next Tuesday and Friday. As of two days ago, all parties represented, the Liberal Party, the NDP, the Bloc and the Conservatives, agreed that we would have two more meetings as of this week to conclude the study on Bill C-8, so as of next Friday we will conclude the study.

We have had so many witnesses come and speak about the impacts of the criminal justice system, especially with respect to mandatory minimum penalties, on racialized and indigenous people. We had the president of the Canadian Association of Black Lawyers speak about his personal experience: It was very powerful testimony of how he felt he was impacted by the criminal justice system.

At this stage of the game, to have the bill split into two parts is completely unacceptable. It is not a routine motion on a Friday afternoon. This warrants debate. This is a bill that is fundamental to who we are, as Canadians.

We may reject the notion of systemic racism, and I respect that because I am not here to educate people on what systemic racism is: It is a lived experience for many people in this country. Our legacy of colonialism, and what has happened with indigenous and many racialized people in Canada, will speak to systemic racism. It is a lived experience. It is not up for debate. I am not here to educate, but the reality is that people came to committee, they shared their lived experiences, they showed us and demonstrated why this has had a harmful impact on particular groups of people.

That is why it is so disingenuous for the Conservative Party to bring this forward today. This is after we had consensus. We were very particular not to have a vote on this, because the bill is so important and so fundamental. We did not vote on it, but we compromised. In fact, the Conservatives wanted eight meetings, we wanted six, so we compromised and said seven in the interest of getting consensus. That is how we are here today.

After today, we have two more meetings to conclude the study. We have very important witnesses who are going to speak about the bill in its totality. If we split the bill, we will essentially lose what we are trying to achieve here. It is not a frivolous PMB or a frivolous issue for us to dispose of on a Friday afternoon without any debate.

• (1255)

For us to be here at this juncture on a Friday is completely disappointing. We do have a budget implementation act, and I spoke to it just before we broke about an hour ago for question period, and I, in fact, have several minutes more to speak to C-19.

Routine Proceedings

With respect to Bill C-5, the way that this has transpired, I believe, just speaks to the fact that the Conservative Party is absolutely not ready to deal with systemic racism. It is not ready to deal with smart criminal justice policies. If we look at places where they have implemented mandatory minimum penalties, such as the United States, which had, at the height of it, the largest number of mandatory minimum penalties, they are now rejecting this notion because it is something that impacts racialized people. It particularly affects Black communities in the United States.

Today, we have an opportunity in Canada to address this issue in a very meaningful way and in a balanced way. While I know that Bill C-5 may not have gone far enough for many, it is one that fundamentally will change the criminal justice system and make sure that we have smart policies, one that ensures that people are able, if they do not pose a danger to the public, to continue their sentence in a community with supervision. It also ensures that they are able to get the right supports in order to continue with their lives, so that their lives are not disrupted, and they are not in a maze of criminality among those who are in prison.

This is very smart and balanced criminal justice policy, one that I believe Canadians want us to embrace, and one that has, for far too long, impacted vulnerable communities.

I believe that the splitting of this bill will be fundamentally wrong, and it will be the wrong approach. I would say it would be a complete failure on the part of the House to address something that has been so pronounced in our country. All we have to do is look at the annualized reports from the office of the correctional investigator, who painstakingly, year after year, demonstrates that the numbers of those who are in penitentiaries in Canada are, increasingly, young Black men, indigenous men and indigenous women who, as of last December, surpassed 50% of the prison population.

What I ask today, and what I ask the House, is that we continue on pursuing Bill C-5 in its entirety as one bill, and that we continue to have our witnesses, who have been very thoughtful. While I may not agree with all of them, I think they have been very thoughtful in the way they presented this, and we look forward to ensuring that the matter comes back to the House. I welcome the opposition to have a robust debate on this and continue the debate on Bill C-5 that we had earlier this year and be able to come to, hopefully, a consensus, if not a vote, that can make sure the bill passes through the House and the Senate.

Mr. John Brassard (Barrie—Innisfil, CPC): Madam Speaker, I really respect and honour the hon. member's intervention on a debate that we, quite frankly, really should not be having. The hon. member for St. Albert—Edmonton, as is his right as a member of Parliament, proposed in routine proceedings, in a motion, to split the bill.

I asked that the question be put, which meant that we would have voted for it on Monday and, as is the hon. member's right, he could have simply stood up with the NDP and voted against it, if he chose to, or voted for it, depending on what his views are on splitting the bill and sending it back to committee to allow the committee to do the work.

What I do not understand is why the government is continuing to filibuster on this issue when the question could have been put. We

could have been avoiding all of this discussion. I do not understand. If one does not agree with it, vote against it on Monday. If one does agree with it, vote for it. That is the issue we are dealing with, not just standing up here and filibustering. We want to get to government business, and we could have gotten to government business.

• (1300)

Mr. Gary Anandasangaree: Madam Speaker, a one-hour debate on this is hardly filibustering. It is, in fact, to put on record what we are talking about, how important this bill is and why it needs to be debated in its entirety as one full unit. That is not filibustering. That is putting forward a coherent set of reasons as to why this bill should not be divided.

Mrs. Sherry Romanado (Longueuil—Charles-LeMoine, Lib.): Madam Speaker, my hon. colleague spoke a lot about the important work being done at the justice committee. We have already had many witnesses come forward to provide testimony, crucial information and feedback on Bill C-5.

Would the member care to elaborate on how splitting this bill would impact the committee's good work?

Mr. Gary Anandasangaree: Madam Speaker, we have completed five meetings with around six witnesses at each meeting, so we have heard from about 30 witnesses. Another meeting started a couple of minutes ago and there are two more scheduled meetings. In total, by the end of the study, we will have heard from roughly 45 witnesses who are experts in their fields, representatives of organizations that support those in the criminal justice system or people with lived experiences who have gone through the criminal justice system. In the following week, we will clause-by-clause.

By splitting the bill, we will be in danger of having to go back and do the study again, which would involve bringing back the same witnesses, who would then have to repeat their heart-wrenching testimony about their lived experiences. I do not think it is fair. We have a bill that is balanced and needs to be debated in its entirety. If opposition members do not like the bill, they are welcome to vote against it. In fact, I am not expecting the support of the Conservative Party on this bill.

Mr. Peter Julian (New Westminster—Burnaby, NDP): Madam Speaker, I am very confused now by the Conservatives, who, for a week and a half, have been blocking routine proceedings, blocking the ability of all members of Parliament to present petitions, often presenting the same thing two or three times in a row. Today they put forward a substantive motion, yet they refuse to want any debate. They just want parliamentarians to vote on it. It seems bizarre to me, to say the least, this erratic notion to put forward a substantive motion and, at the same time, not want parliamentarians to talk about it at all. It is very strange.

The House responded to the Conservatives saying they were not blocking legislation by introducing more debate with evening sessions, and they voted against that too. They did not want to work evenings. The Conservatives have taken a very strange approach to the work of the House of Commons and the importance of taking action to help Canadians.

Routine Proceedings

My colleague seems to be talking about a consensus at the justice committee. I am very happy about that. It appears that those on the committee are working well together. As the member knows, the member for Esquimalt—Saanich—Sooke has raised some legitimate concerns about ways that Bill C-5 could be improved. Has the member understood those concerns and is he supportive of the concerns that have been brought forward?

The Assistant Deputy Speaker (Mrs. Alexandra Mendès): The parliamentary secretary has 15 seconds.

Mr. Gary Anandasangaree: Madam Speaker, I have been working very closely with the member who represents the NDP at committee, as well as the member for the Bloc and, as much as I can, with those in the Conservative Party. I tend not to be very partisan, but it is abundantly clear that there are games taking place today. This matter does—

The Assistant Deputy Speaker (Mrs. Alexandra Mendès): Resuming debate, the hon. member for Whitby has the floor.

Mr. Ryan Turnbull (Whitby, Lib.): Madam Speaker, it gives me great pleasure to speak to this bill, although I am very displeased with the fact that we are doing this today. This strikes me as a form of obstruction in the House when we were set to debate the budget implementation act, which is a seriously important piece of legislation. One could argue that it is probably one of the most important agenda items for the House to be debating and moving forward on. However, here we are with a Conservative motion on a Friday afternoon that derails our progress on that important debate.

I am very disappointed by that, but at the same time I feel very passionate about the fact that Bill C-5 should not be divided. It certainly hangs together in my view, and I come from a crime-fighting family. My father was a homicide detective for most of my life, and he became an inspector for the Peel Regional Police. I, myself, worked with federal offenders for quite a number of years to reintegrate them back into society. I know full well that mandatory minimum penalties, based on the research and evidence, do not actually have a deterrent effect on crime.

This bill, in fact, focuses on non-violent crime, mostly small offences, that having mandatory minimums applied to, as we know from the evidence, certainly increases the number of incarcerations for individuals who come from diverse backgrounds. This is clearly systemic racism, which has been embedded in our justice for quite some time.

I am very pleased to speak to Bill C-5, an act to amend the Criminal Code and the Controlled Drugs and Substances Act, which seeks to address the detrimental impacts that certain mandatory sentencing provisions have had on marginalized populations. Specifically, I will focus my remarks on the firearms-related amendments proposed in Bill C-5, which I believe will address the negative impacts that a number of mandatory minimum penalties of imprisonment have had on marginalized populations, while in no way diminishing the ability of the courts to impose penalties for firearms offences that reflect their seriousness and keep Canadians safe.

Indeed, in our platform, the government made a number of significant firearms commitments in order to make Canada safer from gun violence. One of those commitments includes increasing the

penalties around firearms smuggling. The government has also committed to reintroduce legislation to enact red flag laws to allow for the immediate removal of firearms from a person if they pose a threat to themselves or another person, which is a significant measure that will help respond to gender-based violence. I am also pleased that the government will seek to work with the provinces and territories who implement handgun bans in their jurisdictions.

These changes build on important milestones, including the important May 1, 2020, changes to ban prohibited firearms, approximately 1,500 assault-style rifles. These are weapons that are designed to kill a maximum number of people in the shortest amount of time, and I think it is great that we are getting them off our streets and out of the hands of those who intend to use them.

While the opposition does not have a plan to tackle firearms violence at all, as was made clear during the campaign, we do. I have great confidence that the government will continue to move forward to address the harm posed by illegal gun activity in Canada.

In addition, the government has shown an ongoing commitment to addressing the overrepresentation of indigenous people, Black Canadians and marginalized populations in the criminal justice system and to enable courts to impose sentences appropriate to the circumstances of individual cases. Bill C-5 backs up that commitment and builds on financial investments to make our criminal justice system fairer for everyone.

Bill C-5 would repeal mandatory minimum penalties for 13 firearms offences, including possession of a loaded prohibited or restricted firearm, possession of a weapon obtained by the commission of an offence, possession of an unauthorized firearms and importing firearms knowing that it is not authorized, to name just a few.

Repealing some firearm mandatory minimum penalties would give sentencing courts discretion to impose a just and fit sentence, including a non-custodial sentence where appropriate, depending on the facts of each case.

● (1305)

Repealing these mandatory minimum penalties does not, however, mean that these offences do not address serious conduct. They do address serious conduct, and in those cases, I am confident the courts will impose the right sentence.

Points of Order

For example, we know that cross-border smuggling of firearms poses a serious threat to the safety and security of Canadians. The illicit firearms market in Canada is supplied primarily by smuggled firearms and firearms stolen from private residences or commercial venues. Smuggling and trafficking of firearms and other weapons are often closely tied to organized crime and are associated with various other types of criminal activities such as drug trafficking.

Former Toronto police chief Mark Saunders has publicly stated, “When it comes to the handguns, I believe, 82 per cent—give or take—of the ‘crime guns’ in the city are coming from the United States.” This conduct deserves strong condemnation.

At the same time, these reforms would mean that, for example, a martial arts enthusiast who brings a ninja star into Canada for a private collection without authority would be subject to a mandatory minimum penalty. I trust that a sentencing court would make the right decision on punishment in cases like this.

What is more, research shows that indigenous, Black and other racialized Canadians are more likely to become entangled in the criminal justice system as a result of pressure to join gangs and limited choices, for example, and this is often due to systemic racism and other socio-economic factors. Statistics also indicate that these groups are overrepresented in our correctional institutions, including for firearms offences punishable by a mandatory minimum penalty. For instance, between 2007-17, the Correctional Service of Canada data indicates that the proportion of indigenous offenders admitted for a firearm-related offence punishable by an MMP increased dramatically. In fact, it went from 17% in 2007 to 40% in 2017. At this time, the Harper government was adding mandatory minimum penalties, so even though they were found to be systemically racist, they continued to be added.

Black offenders also—

● (1310)

[*Translation*]

The Assistant Deputy Speaker (Mrs. Alexandra Mendès): The hon. member for Joliette is rising on a point of order.

Mr. Gabriel Ste-Marie: Madam Speaker, obviously, the members are so embarrassed by this filibuster that we do not have quorum in the House, even if we count the cameras that are on. Even the member for Winnipeg North is not in the chamber. I would ask you to call quorum.

The Assistant Deputy Speaker (Mrs. Alexandra Mendès): I would remind the hon. member that he is not to mention the absence or presence of other members in the chamber. Calling out a lack of quorum, however, is another matter.

And the count having been taken:

The Assistant Deputy Speaker (Mrs. Alexandra Mendès): Counting the six members participating virtually, we have 22 members and we therefore have quorum.

[*English*]

Mr. Kevin Lamoureux: Madam Speaker, members on all sides of the House are very much aware that when we think of quorum, we should think about the members here virtually and those here in the chamber. The member made reference to me specifically but I

never left the chamber. I ducked out to the corner to get a pedestal so that one of my colleagues would be able to speak, but that would have been for about three seconds.

The Assistant Deputy Speaker (Mrs. Alexandra Mendès): I did remind the hon. member that we do not reference the presence or absence of members in the House.

The hon. member for Joliette is rising on that point.

[*Translation*]

Mr. Gabriel Ste-Marie: Madam Speaker, I want to apologize to the member for Winnipeg North. The rule against mentioning the absence or presence of a member had slipped my mind. I offer my sincere apologies to him.

However, I would like to point out that when I mentioned the lack of quorum, only four members had their cameras on to participate in the debates virtually. We were therefore nowhere near the quorum of 20, which is why I raised a point of order.

[*English*]

Mr. Ziad Aboultaif: Madam Speaker, I support the hon. member from the Bloc Québécois on the same point. There were only four people online, plus only a few here.

* * *

POINTS OF ORDER

QUORUM

Mr. Kevin Lamoureux (Parliamentary Secretary to the Leader of the Government in the House of Commons, Lib.): Madam Speaker, I think this is an important aspect, and I would ask you as the Speaker to maybe have a discussion on it. I just brought it up with the Table. When we think of the members here virtually, to the best of my knowledge, there is no rule that says they have to have the camera on or off, nor was any formal thing written that says if a member's camera is off, they are not part of the quorum.

I am not looking for a response now, but I think the Speakers should have a discussion about this because there are arguments for and against having the camera on or off. I bring that up for what it is worth and would appreciate a ruling.

● (1315)

[*Translation*]

Ms. Christine Normandin (Saint-Jean, BQ): Madam Speaker, just to follow up, this has already been mentioned, but members in the chamber do not have the benefit of seeing who is online, whether members have their cameras on or not. That is one thing, which is why my colleague did not assume that there was no quorum. He asked that quorum be checked.

In addition, given our hybrid mode, we know that we can also rise to speak from a seat other than our own. However, for the purposes of calculating quorum, I understand that the member for Winnipeg North referred to members who were in the lobbies.

I would perhaps ask the Chair to clarify, in the hybrid context, what she considers as having quorum.

*Routine Proceedings**[English]*

Mr. Michael Barrett: Madam Speaker, to the request from the hon. parliamentary secretary, the previous chair occupant already ruled and spoke to this. As he said, the requirement is that the camera must be on for a member to be counted toward quorum. That was said, and I am sure that if you check with our good folks at Hansard, they will confirm that was the ruling of the chair occupant on a previous quorum call today.

I would also note that while the parliamentary secretary—

The Assistant Deputy Speaker (Mrs. Alexandra Mendès): We are getting into debate. We will definitely look into this. I am not going to make a ruling on it today, but I will certainly bring it to the attention of the Speaker, and we will come back to the House with a proper definition of quorum and what counts as quorum.

The hon. member is rising on the same point of order.

Mr. Ziad Aboultaif: Madam Speaker, I respectfully disagree with the member for Winnipeg North on his remarks regarding the rules. He should know the rules; he is in government. I think you should check those rules and clarify them.

The Assistant Deputy Speaker (Mrs. Alexandra Mendès): I have just given an answer to that. We will look into it and come back to the House with a definition of “quorum”.

The hon. member for Whitby may resume his debate.

Mr. Ryan Turnbull: Madam Speaker, that was riveting, but I am glad to get back to the matter at hand. Obviously, the Conservative Party has—

The Assistant Deputy Speaker (Mrs. Alexandra Mendès): The hon. Minister responsible for the Federal Economic Development Agency for Southern Ontario is rising on a point of order.

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BUDGET IMPLEMENTATION ACT, 2022, NO. 1

BILL C-19—NOTICE OF TIME ALLOCATION MOTION

Hon. Helena Jaczek (Minister responsible for the Federal Economic Development Agency for Southern Ontario, Lib.): Madam Speaker, an agreement could not be reached under the provisions of Standing Order 78(1) or 78(2) with respect to the second reading stage of Bill C-19, an act to implement certain provisions of the budget tabled in Parliament on April 7, 2022 and other measures.

Under the provisions of Standing Order 78(3), I give notice that a minister of the Crown will propose at the next sitting a motion to allot a specific number of days or hours for the consideration and disposal of proceedings at the said stage.

Furthermore, I am tabling the government's responses to Questions Nos. 409 to 417.

* * *

COMMITTEES OF THE HOUSE

JUSTICE

The House resumed consideration of the motion.

Mr. Ryan Turnbull (Whitby, Lib.): Madam Speaker, it is great to speak a bit further to the reason that Bill C-5 should not be hived off into two, contrary to the Conservative motion that we are debating on a Friday afternoon, which is unfortunate given the fact that there is important government business to finish, business of the nation, to implement Canada's budget for 2022.

To get back to the matter at hand, I was just talking about how the Harper government was adding mandatory minimum penalties, and all the while, the evidence was clear that they were ineffective and racist in their application. In fact, Black offenders comprised a disproportionately high percentage of offenders admitted for non-violent firearms offences. Twenty-five per cent of offenders admitted for weapons trafficking and 42% of offenders admitted for firearms trafficking were indeed Black.

MMPs limit the ability of sentencing courts to fully take into account the myriad of social, economic, cultural, institutional and historical factors that create the conditions for criminality. These factors are disproportionately experienced by Black, indigenous and other racialized Canadians. It is my belief that our government is addressing those underlying conditions. While the Conservatives purport to be tough on crime, we are following the evidence and implementing solutions that make sense. In this case, that means repealing mandatory minimum penalties. It is important to remind ourselves that the Supreme Court of Canada, in *R. v. Nur* in 2015 and *R. v. Lloyd* in 2016, found that the use of MMPs for offences that “can be committed in various ways, under a broad array of circumstances and by a wide range of people are constitutionally vulnerable”.

In addition, the proposed reforms would encourage a greater use of conditional sentences, which are currently unavailable in cases where they would otherwise be appropriate. This more tailored approach that encourages rehabilitation allows offenders who do not pose a public safety risk to serve short terms of imprisonment in the community under strict conditions, including abstaining from the consumption of drugs and alcohol and not owning, possessing or carrying a weapon, including a firearm.

The community corrections movement has proven to be very successful in this country and deserves our support.

● (1320)

Mr. Ziad Aboultaif (Edmonton Manning, CPC): Madam Speaker, Bill C-5 is Bill C-22 from a previous Parliament. It died on the Order Paper when the government went to an election. If the Liberals were so serious about passing such a bill, they could have done it.

Privilege

We believe in mandatory minimum sentences, strict monitoring for high-risk individuals, increased enforcement and prosecution of smuggling, safe storage provisions, firearms safety training, a certification system for all those wishing to acquire a firearm legally and putting more law-enforcement officers on our streets. Which one of these are the government and the hon. member against?

Mr. Ryan Turnbull: Madam Speaker, I believe the member across the way is forgetting the fact that the mandatory minimum penalties in this case are being repealed because they are being applied to non-violent offenders.

When we are considering smaller offences that do not pose a large community safety risk, we are talking about youth who have made a mistake early on in life or someone who possesses a firearm but has not used it and has been convicted. These individuals deserve the chance to reintegrate back into society, and mandatory minimum penalties incarcerate them for much longer than is necessary. The gradual release process has been proven to be far more successful at keeping our society safe, and mandatory minimum penalties have been proven to have no deterrent effect on criminal behaviour.

[*Translation*]

Ms. Christine Normandin (Saint-Jean, BQ): Madam Speaker, I thank the member from Whitby for his speech.

Just before him, the Parliamentary Secretary to the Minister of Justice made an interesting comment about the possible splitting of the bill. He said that if the bill were to be split in two, witnesses would probably have to be recalled to testify on the separate parts of the bill. What this comment implies is that the testimony cannot apply in the same way to the two parts of the bill that some want to split.

Are the Liberals not admitting that these two parts are different enough that we would want to vote on them separately?

[*English*]

Mr. Ryan Turnbull: Madam Speaker, I cannot speak to what my colleague, the parliamentary secretary, spoke to, because I do not necessarily understand the full implication of dividing the bill in that regard, in terms of when it goes to committee, but I do not think that provides a reasonable argument for why this bill should be divided. It is all relevant to mandatory minimum penalties that are being proposed to be repealed in this bill. They have been proven not to work, so why not debate them together and pass this bill together? I urge members of the House to support this bill.

Mr. John Brassard (Barrie—Innisfil, CPC): Madam Speaker, I noticed at the onset of his intervention that the hon. member spoke about coming from a policing family. Of course, he said his father was a homicide detective. One of the things in the bill that is disturbing, and should be disturbing for all Canadians, is the reduction of mandatory minimums for gun-related criminal offences, gang-related offences and the use of a firearm in the commission of an offence.

I am just wondering how he can reconcile that part of this piece of legislation with an understanding of that policing background he has. I know that most police officers I have spoken to feel reducing

those mandatory minimums would do nothing to deter gun crime in this country and, in fact, would embolden criminals.

• (1325)

Mr. Ryan Turnbull: Madam Speaker, I think we have to look at the underlying socio-economic, historical and institutional conditions that lead to criminality. I think we are not recognizing that this “lock them up and throw away the key” mentality the Conservatives have been peddling for generations does not work. The evidence suggests that it does not work: It does not keep our society safer, it does not deter crime and it does not recognize the material circumstances of Black and indigenous people that lead them to disproportionately end up in our criminal justice system. That is my response.

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POINTS OF ORDER

QUORUM—SPEAKER'S RULING

The Assistant Deputy Speaker (Mrs. Alexandra Mendès): Before we proceed, I would just like to return to the House. The Table has advised me that the quorum rules have been determined by the Speaker to be that, when people are in hybrid sittings, the cameras must be open to be considered part of the quorum.

* * *

PRIVILEGE

ALLEGED INTERFERENCE OF THE GOVERNMENT IN THE WORK OF THE
STANDING COMMITTEE ON CITIZENSHIP AND IMMIGRATION

Mr. Kevin Lamoureux (Parliamentary Secretary to the Leader of the Government in the House of Commons, Lib.): Madam Speaker, I am rising to respond to a question of privilege that was raised on May 5, earlier this week, concerning an allegation involving the work at the Standing Committee on Citizenship and Immigration.

The member opposite alleges that for ministerial staffers to provide advice to Liberal members on the committee on a report before the committee represents ministerial interference. That is simply not the case in this situation. Parliamentary secretaries represent ministers in the House and in committees. Parliamentary secretaries are supported by ministerial staffers, and this staff provides advice on ensuring that the government's position and approach is understood on matters of government policy. All members of the committee advance their views on the preparation of committee reports, as these reports must be adopted, ultimately, by the committee.

The member for Simcoe—Grey alleges that it is inappropriate for ministerial staffers to provide advice to Liberal members, including the parliamentary secretary on the Standing Committee on Citizenship and Immigration. The quote from the member from the email in question makes it clear that the advice from the minister's office was to suggest an approach to the drafting of the report to ensure that the government's position is understood by Liberal members.

The quote is clear that this was a suggestion and not, in fact, a direction. There was no attempt to coerce members of the committee in any way, or to dictate the work of the analysts from the Library of Parliament.

I submit that it is perfectly normal for ministerial staffers to provide advice and suggestions to Liberal members on the committees. This work does not in any way represent an interference in the work of members on any given committee in this situation. I would also state that Ms. Mantes is an exempt political staffer in the government House leader's office and not a non-partisan public servant in the Privy Council Office.

Lastly, since a report has not been tabled in the House, I would ultimately submit that raising a question of privilege on this matter is, at the very least, premature.

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COMMITTEES OF THE HOUSE

JUSTICE

Mr. John Brassard (Barrie—Innisfil, CPC): Madam Speaker, in the short time that I have, I will just remind the House that all of today could have been avoided had the question been put. We would have had a vote on Monday. We could have resumed the government legislation and debated Bill C-19, but instead, in a shockingly funny situation, the government moved time allocation on itself.

I know that the member for New Westminster—Burnaby showed his complete indignation to the fact that petitions have not been read. The member supported the government moving to orders of the day all week. That is why they were not.

I am seeking unanimous consent, and I hope that the others will agree, to move that the House proceed to presenting petitions today.

The Assistant Deputy Speaker (Mrs. Alexandra Mendès): All those opposed to the hon. member's moving the motion will please say nay.

Some hon. members: No.

PRIVATE MEMBERS' BUSINESS

• (1330)

[English]

CHILD HEALTH PROTECTION ACT

Ms. Patricia Lattanzio (Saint-Léonard—Saint-Michel, Lib.) moved that Bill C-252, An Act to amend the Food and Drugs Act (prohibition of food and beverage marketing directed at children), be read the second time and referred to a committee.

She said: Madam Speaker, I am pleased to rise in the House today to take part in the discussion on Bill C-252, which aims to support restrictions on commercial marketing and advertising on certain foods and beverages to children.

Today's food environment is diverse and includes access to fast foods and ultraprocessed foods, which makes it difficult for Cana-

Private Members' Business

dians to make healthy food choices. The issue has less to do with our individual will and more to do with what foods are available and aggressively marketed to us.

The advertising of these types of foods is all around us. As a result, Canadians are exposed to and consume too many foods that contribute to excess sugars, saturated fats and sodium in their diets. It is no wonder that Canadians continue to face challenges as they navigate through the food environment and strive to make healthy eating decisions.

There is no denying that we are facing a chronic disease crisis in Canada, and unhealthy diets are playing a key role. The scope of the crisis is staggering, and unhealthy diets with excess intakes of sugar, saturated fats and sodium are a key modifiable risk factor for obesity and chronic diseases. It has been reported that, for the first time in history, we have children who have spent their whole lives eating diets high in ultraprocessed foods and of low nutritional value. In fact, Canadians are the second-largest buyers of ultraprocessed foods and beverages in the world, second only to the Americans. Furthermore, studies have shown that one in three children in Canada is overweight or obese, and as a result is more likely to develop health problems such as high cholesterol, high blood pressure, joint problems, type 2 diabetes, cardiovascular disease and even some forms of cancer later in life.

In 2019, dietary risk factors contributed to an estimated 36,000 deaths, and the burden of chronic diseases impacted mainly by diet and other modifiable risk factors has been estimated to cost \$13.8 billion in Canada. With these alarming rates and statistics, it is undeniable that the issue of our food environment requires our attention as a growing matter of public health concern.

While a number of contributing factors influence our diet, food advertising is one of the more prevalent. Advertising has a considerable impact on children's preferences and consumption patterns. A report presented in 2016 by the World Health Organization's Commission on Ending Childhood Obesity concluded that there is unequivocal evidence that the marketing of food and beverages that contribute to excess sugar, saturated fats and sodium in children's diets has a negative impact on childhood obesity and other diseases. It recommended that any attempt to tackle this serious health issue should include restrictions on the advertising and marketing of certain foods and beverages to children.

Even before the pandemic of COVID-19, it had been reported that over 90% of food and beverage product advertisements viewed by children online, and/or on TV have been for products that are high in sugars, saturated fats and sodium content. Kids aged nine through 13 years of age get more calories, almost 60%, from ultraprocessed foods than any other age group.

Private Members' Business

The COVID-19 pandemic has further highlighted the urgency of tackling unhealthy eating habits as children who were confined in their homes through the lockdowns were subjected, through various media and settings, to unhealthy diets and food and beverage ads at an alarming rate. Statistics have shown that one-third of Canadians increased their consumption of junk food or sweets just three months into the pandemic as a way to deal with the stressful circumstances.

It is widely acknowledged that children are particularly vulnerable to advertising, and succumb to its persuasive influence over their food preferences, attitudes, purchase requests, consumption patterns and overall health. Children are highly exposed to food advertising through various forms of media, packaging or displays that promote foods that contribute disproportionately to excess consumption of sugar, saturated fats and sodium. The Canadian food and beverage industry spends approximately \$1.1 billion per year on marketing to children. It uses product designs, cartoons, identifiable characters, fantasy and adventure themes to market to kids.

● (1335)

The exposure, frequency and power of the ads can successfully reach a child as young as three years of age. Given this evidence, it is clear that the government needs to do more and take immediate action to protect children from unfair and deceptive marketing and advertising practices in order to protect their health. That is why part of the Minister of Health's mandate is to promote healthy eating by advancing the healthy eating strategy.

Evidence has shown that many factors in our food environment influence our ability to make healthy food choices, such as access to and availability of healthy food options, lower prices and the promotion of certain foods. The food we find in our grocery stores, on restaurant menus, on social media and in food advertising greatly impacts our choices. With widespread availability of foods high in sugar, saturated fats and sodium, we need to take action in order to restrict ads from targeting children.

Our government recognized these challenges in 2016 and subsequently launched the healthy eating strategy in order to make the healthier choice the easier choice for Canadians. The strategy aims to improve nutrition information and literacy, facilitate healthier food options, and protect and support marginalized and vulnerable populations.

The Government of Canada has made significant progress to date. In 2016, the government improved the nutrition facts table and list of ingredients, which helped Canadians make more informed food choices; in 2018, it prohibited industrially produced trans fats; in 2019, the revised Canada's food guide was launched, providing Canadians with relevant, consistent and credible dietary guidance; and in 2020, sodium reduction targets were published to encourage sodium reduction in food supply. However, more remains to be done.

The government is committed to advancing the outstanding initiatives of the healthy eating strategy and pursuing the implementation of preventive measures aimed at promoting healthy eating lifestyles. These include finalizing the front of package nutrition labelling to promote healthy food choices, and supporting restrictions on the commercial marketing and advertising of certain foods and

beverages to children. Having the right tools to access, understand and use nutrition information will support Canadians in making healthier choices.

However, other factors, particularly the constant stream of commercial messages and endorsements, also influence what we buy. These aggressive marketing techniques are used to promote foods with excess amounts of sugar, saturated fats and sodium. Children are particularly vulnerable to food advertising and, therefore, must be provided the necessary protection for their health and well-being; marketing directed at them must be regulated. Their parents should be provided with the support needed as they help their children develop healthy eating habits and food preferences.

Bill C-252 aims to protect children's health and well-being. Bill C-252 proposes to amend Canada's Food and Drugs Act in order to prohibit any marketing of food and beverages directed at persons under the age of 13. Clause 2 of Bill C-252 adds the definition of "children", stipulating that it means persons who are under the age of 13.

As per the FDA, "food" includes beverages, and "advertisement" is defined in broad terms, including representation by any means of promoting directly or indirectly the sale of products controlled by legislation. The notion of advertisement is media neutral, which encompasses the latest technologies and evolving marketing methods. Clause 4 of Bill C-252 adds a new paragraph to the FDA, entitled "Advertising directed at children" and—

● (1340)

The Assistant Deputy Speaker (Mrs. Alexandra Mendès): The hon. member for Fort McMurray—Cold Lake is rising on a point of order.

Mrs. Laila Goodridge: Madam Speaker, I was wondering if you could look at who is participating online. I believe that someone might be participating in a washroom, the member for Brampton Centre.

The Assistant Deputy Speaker (Mrs. Alexandra Mendès): I cannot see. I do not have access. The Table does not see anything either.

The hon. parliamentary secretary.

Mr. Kevin Lamoureux: Madam Speaker, we have to be very careful about the types of points of order. When people are in their offices, working virtually, sometimes it can be very easy to shy away from the camera to do something else, much like we might shift over a couple of seats. I believe the most important thing is that members have the camera on and are in the room. I would not want to embarrass members, no matter what political party they might belong to. I do not think it would be appropriate to use the virtual Parliament as a mechanism to embarrass people.

The Assistant Deputy Speaker (Mrs. Alexandra Mendès): I have confirmation from the Table that a page has confirmed that there was a member who appeared to be in the washroom. I would like to remind everyone that, especially online, we have to be very prudent with how we use our devices and be aware of the surroundings.

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

Ms. Patricia Lattanzio: Madam Speaker, I shall proceed. As per the FDA, “food” includes beverages, and “advertisement” is defined in broad terms, including any representation by any means by promoting directly or indirectly the sale of products controlled by legislation.

The notion of advertisement is media neutral, which encompasses the latest technologies and evolving methods.

Clause 4 of Bill C-252 adds a new section to the FDA, entitled “Advertising directed at children”, whereby provisions and regulations will define the marketing and advertising mechanisms that would be prohibited and would be part of the bill.

Clause 7.3 allows, after five years of the adoption of Bill C-252, a review mechanism, possible by a committee of the Senate, of the House of Commons or of both Houses of Parliament, in order to evaluate if there has been an increase in advertising of foods and beverages that contribute to excess sugar, saturated fats or sodium in children's diets in the next group of kids, that is persons who are between 13 and 16 years of age.

Lastly, clause 6 of the bill stipulates that the act would come into force one year after receiving royal assent.

By supporting Bill C-252, we are ensuring that marketing and advertising cannot bypass parents and target children directly.

To conclude, we all have an opportunity to advocate through meaningful changes to our food environment. The government has taken important steps to create conditions to make the healthier choice the easier choice for all Canadians, but still, more work remains to be done.

We are committed to advancing the remaining key healthy eating strategy initiatives to further improve the state of healthy eating in Canada and have a meaningful impact on the long-term health of Canadians. This includes taking actions to support children's healthy eating habits to mitigate risks of obesity and diet-related chronic diseases. A healthy population, including healthy children, is not only key to reducing the likelihood of serious health problems, thus requiring fewer health care services, but would also contribute to a healthy economy as well.

Some parliamentarians may recall that a similar bill, Bill S-228, was initially tabled in the Senate in 2016, spearheading the approach to introducing restrictions on advertising and marketing to children. It had passed in the Senate, was debated and amended in this chamber, and was subsequently returned to the Senate, but never reached the final vote before the dissolution of Parliament in 2019.

In the meantime, industry stakeholders have taken initiatives to tackle the issue of advertising to children, but their attempts at self-

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regulation have been on a voluntary basis only and lack proper monitoring. As a result, Canadian children continue to be exposed to these ads.

It is worth noting that restricting marketing to children has become mandatory in countries such as Portugal, Mexico and Chile, and Argentina and Spain are in the process of advancing new legislative regulatory initiatives. More importantly, the U.K. tabled legislation imposing restrictions on advertising of HFSS products, those that are high in fat, salt and sugar, in July 2021. It received royal assent just last Thursday, April 28, and will come into effect in less than a year, on January 1, 2023.

Dear colleagues, Canada must follow suit. The issue on hand is non-partisan, and I hope to count on the support of all parliamentarians in this House, as well as all senators, for the adoption of Bill C-252, which will benefit our children and future generations. I would like to thank the researchers, especially Dr. Monique Potvin Kent, la Coalition Poids, the Quebec coalition, the Stop Marketing to Kids Coalition, the allied health agencies, the Heart and Stroke Foundation of Canada and the Childhood Obesity Foundation, who have worked and supported the objectives of Bill C-252 and of its prior version.

I look forward to the final implementation of Bill C-252.

● (1345)

Mr. Ziad Aboultaif (Edmonton Manning, CPC): Madam Speaker, I congratulate the hon. member on her bill. I believe that the spirit of the bill is great, and I hope that she will be able to take it all the way through to royal assent.

The challenge for the bill is digital advertisement. In a digitized world, where social media plays a big and fundamental role, how does the bill ensure that it would work properly and provide the conditions to meet its objectives?

Ms. Patricia Lattanzio: Madam Speaker, I thank my colleague for his excellent question.

The bill encompasses all types of advertising, including digital advertising. I hope measures will be taken to tackle and stop big companies from being able to target our children via digital channels, whether it be through cell phones, computers or online media.

[*Translation*]

Ms. Christine Normandin (Saint-Jean, BQ): Madam Speaker, I thank the member for Saint-Léonard—Saint-Michel for her speech and her bill.

Problems with bills often arise in their application rather than their intent. Given the amount of advertising these days, I wonder if the member could explain how there would be follow up. In the past, Quebec's consumer protection bureau was inundated with complaints, and there were only enough resources to deal with the most visible cases and have them taken off the airwaves, in certain cases.

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I was wondering what kind of resources we can hope for from the bill.

Ms. Patricia Lattanzio: Madam Speaker, I want to thank my colleague for her very relevant question.

This bill was indeed inspired by Quebec's Consumer Protection Act, which I think has been very successful. In the past, we saw this kind of advertising at amusement parks, like La Ronde, and at water parks. We need to have a system in place to determine what kinds of advertising break the law, so that we can manage and regulate them.

With regard to resources, this was done in Quebec, and we already have the evidence. Notices are sent out immediately. Then, if the advertising agencies do not take prompt action, they are taken to court. We know that rather hefty fines have been imposed in the past.

• (1350)

[English]

Ms. Bonita Zarrillo (Port Moody—Coquitlam, NDP): Madam Speaker, I really thank the member for her speech today and for the comments that were made around the health of children and the impact of advertising.

Can the member comment on how gaming, which strategically places product within games, in the hands of characters, can be included in the bill?

Ms. Patricia Lattanzio: Madam Speaker, in essence, the bill looks to restrict all types of advertising, including characters or anything that would appeal to children to persuade them to pester their parents, if I can express myself that way, to buy these products. Using mascots, logos or fantasy characters would all be restricted.

Mr. Ryan Turnbull (Whitby, Lib.): Madam Speaker, I want to thank my hon. colleague for her incredibly hard work on this very important private member's bill, which I could not be more supportive of. I think many Canadians will be thanking her, hopefully for generations, because of her contributions to children's health.

What is interesting to me is to think about the cost avoidance of dietary-related disease, which we know is one of the largest costs to Canada's health care system. I wonder if the member could explain what she thinks the cost avoidance might be for Health Canada in the future.

Ms. Patricia Lattanzio: Madam Speaker, I thank my colleague for his excellent question.

As I mentioned in my speech, it has been estimated that it is costing Canadians \$13.8 billion annually to deal with diseases that are compounded and related to unhealthy eating habits. I think that in the long run, investing and putting forward these types of restrictions would contribute to reducing the health care that Canadians need and reducing the costs associated to—

The Assistant Deputy Speaker (Mrs. Alexandra Mendès): Resuming debate, the hon. member for Sarnia—Lambton.

Ms. Marilyn Gladu (Sarnia—Lambton, CPC): Madam Speaker, it is a pleasure to rise and speak to Bill C-252. This is a well-

intentioned bill that is trying to address a serious issue in Canada, obesity in children.

In one of the previous Parliaments, I was actually the health critic when the former version of this bill came forward from the Senate. We know that Senator Nancy Greene Raine had brought that bill forward. In fact, she received a bit of teasing about it. As many of us will know, she was quite a famous skier but did a lot of promotional work for Mars bars, so when she came with Bill S-228, there was some teasing going on.

However, this is truly a very serious issue, because almost a third of children in Canada are obese, and it is just getting worse. Certainly, the pandemic did not make things better. I think we would all agree, even for those of us who are not children anymore, that we probably spent too much time at home snacking and putting on weight.

The bill is trying to address reducing obesity in children by controlling marketing that is intended specifically for children. If we look at places that have put this in place, there are a lot of them. Quebec was mentioned. Chile has had this program in place for a long time. The problem is that it is not working. That is the biggest problem. What happens is that they are measuring success by the number of packages they are able to have altered so that they are not directing it toward children, when, really, the measure we are looking for here is a reduction in the obesity of children. This is important because obesity is not just a serious health issue, but a cause of death.

If we look at obesity, we know that some of the related health problems are high blood pressure or heart disease. This is the number one killer of Canadians, heart disease and stroke. Type 2 diabetes is another very serious impact. Right now, there are 11 million Canadians who have diabetes or prediabetes. It is very well known that, through a mixture of diet and exercise, many Canadians who develop type 2 diabetes could have been prevented from doing that. There are many other health conditions, such as liver disease, sleep apnea and joint problems, not to mention the emotional toll. In school, we can imagine the teasing and bullying that often accompany those who are obese. This can be permanently damaging as well.

I am definitely very supportive of addressing obesity in children. It has actually tripled in the last 30 years in Canada. It is truly at an epidemic stage. The problem is that, in 2012, Quebec put in similar legislation to this and it still had a 30% increase in obesity over this length of time.

I think that if we look at the root causes of obesity and what medical science is saying about it, it is really saying that there are four factors that we need to address, or four factors that are the most important.

One is genetics and, really, we cannot do much about that. We are sort of born into the family that we are born into. I know of families who are all skinny forever and they eat way more than I am able to eat. Certainly I am envious, but I can do nothing about my own genetics, so I think that is not something the government can control.

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Metabolism is another one, obviously, the metabolic rate. Generally, men have a higher metabolic rate than women, so that can be a factor. Of course, those with thyroid issues can also have metabolic impacts. Again, there is not much the government can do there.

Then there is lifestyle, such as diet and physical activity. This is a place where the government really can make some impacts. There have been studies around the world and if we look at places that have the best outcomes and the lowest obesity rates in the world, those are places like Denmark, France, Ireland, Latvia and Norway. If we take a look at what they are doing that is working, we see that there is more walking and cycling going on in many of these European countries than we have here. There is an effort in the schools to serve smaller portions of food, food that is not fried and has more vegetables. In France, they have three recesses to run around, as well as the weekly gym classes, so they are incorporating that into schools.

• (1355)

I certainly remember when I was in school. Keep in mind it was a different time back then, so I am more aged than many members here in the House, but in terms of diet, our household was not stellar. There were Frosted Flakes, Lucky Charms, Cocoa Puffs and Alphabits for breakfast. My mother used to let us dip our toast in maple syrup. We ate baloney sandwiches on white bread and Kraft Dinner, Beefaroni and things like that. Sprinkle sandwiches were a thing when I was growing up, so none of that diet would be considered a healthy diet today.

At the time, there were no obese kids anywhere to be found in our area because we were running around all day. We were running around at school playing soccer. After school we were playing hide-and-seek, running to the park and jumping off the monkey bars. It was all about activity. There was a specific effort called Participation at the time that was designed to get kids moving and to get kids active. I definitely think that is something worth focusing on, in addition to the move toward healthier foods.

Environment is the fourth factor that experts are saying is important. We have talked about the environment at school and the things that can be done there. Access to sports facilities, and getting people involved in sports, and access to nutritious food are important things. Right now, the affordability of life is impacting that. That is something that the government can have an impact on. If we think about it, the increases in the carbon tax have caused home heating prices to go up, gas prices to go up, and food prices, especially fresh produce, to go up beyond what those living on lower and maybe fixed incomes can actually afford. This is something that would translate into people not eating as nutritious a diet, so that is something that the government can impact by improving the affordability of life.

At the same time, because of the squeeze on everybody's pocketbooks, a lot of the money in the child tax benefit that we expect would be used to get kids into sports and help them to afford those things is actually being used to help pay the bills. The sports tax credit that we used to have was a specific thing that motivated people to get their kids involved in sports. Those are ideas that the government can implement that can have a really big impact.

In terms of the unintended negative consequences when the discussion came to committee in the last go-round on this bill, there were a lot of organizations like Tim Hortons and McDonald's and whatnot that sponsored children's sports efforts. There was a desire to have an exemption to make sure they would not be punished but could continue to market their products, which some would consider to be unhealthy. When the bill comes before committee, it would be worth looking at those exemptions.

The other discussion was about enforcement. All of the regimes that have put bills like this in place have had difficulty enforcing them, and it has become that much more difficult now that we are in a digital age. Kids have access to the Internet. It is very difficult to control what country they are viewing content from, so the enforcement part of this is a difficult one as well.

There are those who will point out that parental responsibility is important: that parents making healthy choices and helping their children learn to make healthy choices is what this ought to be about. There are those who will say that everybody needs to have their freedom. For me, if chips are in a dark bag with a skull and crossbones on it, I would probably still eat them, but people should have individual choice. There is something to that, and I think about everything in moderation. That said, I do not think that these measures have been effective, but we need to do everything possible to reduce obesity in our country and help our children.

• (1400)

[*Translation*]

Ms. Christine Normandin (Saint-Jean, BQ): Madam Speaker, I am very pleased to rise today to speak to Bill C-252, which was introduced by the member for Saint-Léonard—Saint-Michel.

Basically, this bill seeks to amend the Food and Drugs Act to specifically prohibit the marketing of “foods and beverages that contribute to excess sugar, saturated fats or sodium in children’s diets” to persons who are under 13 years of age. As a result, this bill specifically targets the marketing of sugary drinks, for the most part. The bill also provides for a review of the results of these measures by a House, Senate or joint committee in five years.

This bill seeks to address a rather serious problem. One need only consider the statistics. A 2016 report by the public health officer for Quebec indicated that 52% of the population, both adults and children, were overweight and that 18% were obese. According to the most optimistic projections, we can expect those numbers to increase to 54% and 21%, respectively, by 2030. That is a rather sharp rise.

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If we focus on the statistics for children across Canada, we can see some marked differences over the past decades. For example, between 1978-79 and 2004, the combined prevalence of overweight and obesity among children aged two to 17 increased from 15% to 26%. Increases were highest among youth aged 12 to 17 years, with overweight and obesity more than doubling for this age group, from 14% to 29%.

This is an urgent problem that must be addressed, in light of all of the comorbidities associated with being overweight or obese, such as cardiovascular diseases. These diseases are the first to come to mind, especially since they were the leading cause of death in 2012. Another example is diabetes, which can be connected fairly directly to sugary drinks. Other examples would be various musculoskeletal disorders, such as arthritis, and other degenerative diseases that are generally highly debilitating. I also want to point out the higher prevalence of certain cancers that are comorbid with overweight and obesity, such as endometrial, breast, ovary, prostate, liver, gallbladder, kidney and colon cancers. This is a global problem that will become worse if nothing is done.

The bill specifically addresses advertising aimed at children. It is interesting to look at the impact that advertising can have on children in general. We can see that, without realizing it, our little ones are increasingly being seen as prospective consumers. We tend to forget that. Here are some interesting facts.

As we know, children have both direct and indirect economic power. They influence nearly 40% of family purchases. Direct spending by children is also on a steady rise around the world. In Canada, in 2004, children aged four to 12 influenced \$20 billion in family purchases. This is indirect influence. In 2002, four million children aged two to 12 were estimated to have spent \$1.5 billion of their pocket money. In 2006, the figure was \$3 billion. The same thing is happening in the United States, where the amount doubles from one decade to the next.

We also know that there is a business strategy behind advertising aimed at children. The goal is to build customer loyalty at an early age. We know that, from the age of six months, babies have the ability to form mental images of corporate logos and mascots. By the age of three, one in five American children demand specific brands of products. Of the six brand names most recognized by toddlers, four are from the food industry.

• (1405)

In all, 93% of children aged three to five recognize the McDonald's logo. The fact that they recognize it is one thing, but does it work? Here is an interesting fact. When researchers present children aged three to five with fries in McDonald's packaging and the same fries in other packaging, they systematically prefer the fries in the McDonald's packaging. Clearly, it has an impact.

This takes me back 15 years to when I was starting my law studies. One of the first courses I took, and loved, was a consumer rights course taught by Pierre-Claude Lafond, who encouraged me to pursue my training. We were already seeing the impact of legislation on advertising, such as American drug ads, which are very long and state the name of the drug, what it is used for, its many side effects and more. In contrast, in Canada, companies cannot say

both the name of the drug and what it is used for. Ads here encourage people to talk to their doctor.

It is the same thing for children's toys. I remember that when I was very young, I would always change the channel to see American ads because they were so much more interesting to me. As children, we saw toys of all kinds, so it obviously had an impact.

The bill does have its limits. I therefore encourage the committee that will study it, and the committee responsible for the five-year review, to look closely at certain issues.

For this to be effective, for us to really combat obesity and overweight among children, we need to look at more than just advertising. This bill must be part of a broader movement. Take Quebec, for example, which in 2019 introduced an action plan to reduce the consumption of sugary drinks and to promote water. Quebec not only has its own legislation to prohibit advertising to kids under 13, it also has its own policy on the subject.

I would remind members that Quebec did not take part in developing any federal framework. If the goal is to create legislation to restrict advertising, it is important that this be done in conjunction with the provinces. The member for Sarnia—Lambton pointed out that kids are less active than they used to be. Everything related to health, in general, falls under provincial jurisdiction. We must therefore ensure co-operation between the federal government, in terms of the Food and Drugs Act, and the provincial jurisdictions. I therefore suggest that this be studied in committee.

As I mentioned to the member for Saint-Léonard—Saint-Michel, we also need to make sure that we are truly able to eliminate false advertising. That is something that Professor Lafond talked about in the course I took with him.

Quebec has an excellent law, but our consumer protection board, the OPC, which is responsible for monitoring compliance, was unable to keep up with demand. Professor Lafond explained to us that only the most blatant cases were taken off the air because the OPC did not have the necessary resources to deal with all of the requests and complaints. By the way, a complaint has to be filed in order for an ad to be taken off the air.

Since this is a private member's bill and these types of bills generally do not involve any expenditures, perhaps we should consider how the terms of this legislation can be implemented effectively.

It is important to remember that there can always be a sort of grey area between what is considered an ad directed specifically at children and what it not. The industry is quite creative on that score.

In 2019, Quebec produced a report on food advertising directed at children, and it listed several ways that companies get around the law. Think of food in the shape of a toy. To what extent is that an ad directed at children? Think of seasonal packaging and designs based on popular current movies. Are they directed more at children or adults, depending on the film? Think of the use of popular or trademark characters, funny wordplay, and products designed in a smaller size or with a toy included to appeal specifically to children.

What about ads posted in family areas? Are they directed specifically at children? We also have to look at how food is displayed on grocery store shelves. What about the font used in an ad, or references to magic or fantasy? I suggest that all these things be studied by the committee that will be reviewing the bill to make it as effective as possible, or so we hope.

• (1410)

[English]

Ms. Bonita Zarrillo (Port Moody—Coquitlam, NDP): Madam Speaker, young kids would rather eat rocks covered with stickers than a fresh banana. This is what research has proved. On an episode of *Dateline*, kids were given a rock covered in cartoon stickers and a banana, and then asked which one they would rather eat. They chose the rock because of its affiliation to a well-known cartoon character. Advertising to children works, and companies know this.

Children under eight are the most susceptible to food marketing, because they are unable to understand its selling or persuasive intent. There is strong agreement among leading Canadian pediatric and allied health organizations that the impact of food and beverage marketing is real, significant and harmful to children's development.

Quebec accepted this reality over 40 years ago, and has consumer protections prohibiting advertising that targets children under the age of 13. Quebec children, all the way back to 1980, have been protected from this harmful practice perpetuated by corporations. Other jurisdictions around the world have also adopted similar legislation, including Norway, the United Kingdom, Ireland, Sweden and Portugal.

Quebec's restrictions on advertising to children have been shown to have a positive impact on nutrition by reducing fast-food consumption by 13%. Quebec also has the lowest rates of obesity among children aged five to 17, and the highest rates of vegetable and fruit consumption in Canada. Quebec has proved that restricting marketing to children works.

Canadians are the second-largest buyers of ultraprocessed foods and drinks in the world, second only to the Americans. Nearly one in three Canadian children is overweight or obese. Research states that the relationship between obesity and exposure to food advertising meets all criteria commonly used to demonstrate the presence of a causal relationship in epidemiology. We know that overweight children are more likely to develop health problems later in life, including heart disease, type 2 diabetes and high blood pressure. With this proposed legislation, we have an opportunity to protect the health of the rest of Canada's children by reducing unhealthy food marketing.

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Good eating habits and avoidance of unhealthy foods are key preventative elements of health policy. Canada's New Democrats have advocated for a ban on unhealthy food and beverage marketing to children for years. In fact, my colleague for New Westminster—Burnaby introduced legislation to expressly prohibit advertising and promotion for commercial purposes of products, foods, drugs, cosmetics or devices directly to children under 13 years of age back in 2012. We understand the link between this advertising and long-term health. We also know from research that children from socio-economically disadvantaged and ethnic minority backgrounds are disproportionately exposed to unhealthy food advertisements. This is simply unacceptable.

New Democrats want every child in Canada to develop a healthy relationship to nutrition and the foods they consume. That is why we are also calling for the establishment of a national school nutrition program to give every student access to nutritious food, and to make healthy eating a daily lesson for our kids to develop lifelong good food habits.

I will take a moment to give a shout-out to the City of Port Moody. Its council recently sent me correspondence that the City is in full support of the B.C. Chapter of the Coalition for Healthy School Food. The coalition is a growing network of over 160 member organizations seeking public investment in a universal, cost-shared, healthy school food program for all children and youth in Canada. I raise my hands to this coalition, and I am fully supportive of its goal.

In Canada, 90% of the food marketed to children and youth on TV and online is unhealthy, and three-quarters of children in Canada are exposed to food marketing while using their favourite social media apps. Marketing to children has changed dramatically in the past 10 years. Today, it is seamless, sophisticated and often interactive. The line between ads and children's entertainment is blurred, with marketing messages being inserted into the places where children play and learn.

Online advertising, in particular, has become ever more prevalent. Marketers directly target children via websites, apps and other digital platforms. These ads are often presented as entertainment. They even have a name: "advergames". An advergame is an interactive online game that contains embedded media content with the purpose of promoting specific brands or products.

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● (1415)

According to scientific studies, advergames are widely used to market high salt, sugar and fat products, referred to as HSSF. A 2018 meta-analysis of 15 global studies focusing on children aged five to 17, found that 97% of all food and beverage advergames contain at least one food cue that is considered a brand identifier. These place a branded food item, such as cereal, a soft drinks or snack foods, in the mouth of a popular children's character. Children as old as 15 do not recognize these advergames as advertising.

Research shows that advergames persuade on a subconscious emotional level and can change children's behaviour without their conscious awareness. In a study presented in ScienceDirect, the authors even rose the fundamental ethical question about the use of this technique in children. In addition, as advergames do not typically include age restrictions, it is also likely that children are accessing advergames that are not age-appropriate. Parents and children are often unaware that advergames have a marketing element.

New ways of advertising do not leave traditional television off the hook. A 2019 study from 22 countries found Canadian children up to the age of 18 were exposed to 13 HSSF advertisements per hour during peak viewing times, while the global average was only three. The most frequently advertised food and beverage items globally were carbonated soft drinks, flavoured waters, chocolate and confectionery. Overall, the study found HSSF food items are promoted four times more than healthier food items, and the majority of these ads come from a small number of multinational corporations. These corporations are impacting the life-long health and eating habits of our children.

To add insult to injury, the correlation between unhealthy food advertisement and childhood obesity is being disputed by industry-sponsored reports that recommend promoting physical activity and weight loss campaigns rather than policies to limit exposure to their advertising. The reality is that we must do both. There are a number of peer-reviewed studies that support this dual approach. One study out of the U.K. went so far as to say governments should implement restrictions that would further limit exposure to TV and online ads of HSSF products, and Cancer Research UK has proposed introducing a total ban of advertising these products before 9 p.m. They further recommend a total ban on this type of food advertisement before 9 p.m. on all online streaming services, as well as a total ban placed on online advergames, which have been developed for the primary purpose of promoting unhealthy food. This highlights how serious this problem is.

Only legislation will work to stop these multinational corporations from trying to increase consumption of unhealthy food, especially to our kids. Study after study shows that voluntary bans are ineffective and there are data that prove that exposure to unhealthy food advertising is similar before and after any introduction of a voluntary ban.

In closing, New Democrats have been calling for a ban on unhealthy food advertising targeted at children for years. We believe that it is wrong to let wealthy corporations manipulate the near- and long-term eating habits of our children. We stand unambiguously on the side of children's health and welfare, and not on the side of corporate profits. It is time to do what we know works to protect

children and to help them develop a healthy relationship to nutrition and food.

● (1420)

[*Translation*]

Mrs. Sherry Romanado (Longueuil—Charles-LeMoine, Lib.): Madam Speaker, I first would like to thank my colleague, the member for Saint-Léonard—Saint-Michel, for her bill, which I fully support. I am really pleased that she has introduced it because, as we heard today, it is a very serious issue.

I also want to commend Quebec for taking the initiative to address this issue. As another member mentioned, this has resulted in a 13% reduction in obesity.

[*English*]

This is the first time I am getting up in the House to give a speech since Easter, when I became a grandmother for the very first time. I would be remiss if I did not specify that I am a “glamma”, a glamorous grandma. I just wanted to get that on the record and in the Hansard.

In all seriousness, when I was growing up in the late seventies and early eighties, I remember the Saturday morning cartoons. We would take our big bowl of Fruit Loops or Count Chocula and we would watch the cartoons. What is funny is that, in preparing for this debate, I actually recalled the song from Honeycomb, “Honeycomb's big. Yeah, yeah, yeah”. We are talking about it 30 years later, and I still remember the song. That is what this bill is about. I cannot remember last week because I am so busy, but I can remember the Honeycomb song, so obviously advertising toward children works. We need to stop it, because we know for a fact that children nowadays are watching a lot more TV. They are online. They are constantly plugged in. Let us be real.

When my children were growing up, I made a point of wanting to make homemade baby food to make sure they did not have a lot of sodium in their food. We have always had a little vegetable garden in our yard to grow cherry tomatoes, lettuce, peppers, and so on. I always wanted my kids to know that good, healthy food was available. They would want to go to McDonald's and have chicken nuggets, but it was very rare they were allowed to. As a new grandmother, I want that for my grandson, as well. I want him to grow up healthy, and I do not want him to be bombarded with advertising, whether it be online, in print or on TV, that is going to expose him to bad habits for the future.

As my colleagues have already said in the House, when we look at a lot of the diets now that children are exposed to, 49% of children between the ages of one and four, and 72% of children between the ages of four and 13, have diets that exceed the recommended limits of sodium. For sugar, which is probably the worst factor with respect to health, 78% of children aged one to eight and 86% of children aged nine to 13 exceed the WHO recommendations. When we look at the magnitude of unhealthy diets among children as a public health concern, the good news is that we are going to do something to address the issue. That is what this bill is about: making sure that this next generation of children is not exposed to all of this advertising to influence them into wanting sugary, high-calorie, high-fat and high-sodium treats.

To understand the magnitude of the problem, we can look at a study done in 2019. It found that children aged two to 11 were exposed to an average of 1,733 food advertisements per year on TV: the equivalent of 33 food ads per week, which is close to five food ads per day for the average child. What do we do about it?

When looking at this, we are very reactive. We have people who are being exposed to the sugar, high fat and high sodium that lead to disease. We have heard about it today in the debate, whether it be diabetes, obesity or eating disorders because children who are bullied in school because of their weight take extreme measures to try to lose weight. I know for a fact that when I was in high school, I would restrict eating because I wanted to lose those last pounds, not realizing it was the sugar or the soda I was drinking that was actually impacting that.

This is about prevention, and the billions of dollars that we spend every year in health care to treat diabetes, to treat cancers related to obesity and to treat heart disease. What if we were to flip it on its head? What if we were to prevent it?

• (1425)

[*Translation*]

Prevention is key. Good habits formed early in life tend to stick. If a five-year-old child watching YouTube, television or an online

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program sees a lot of ads featuring TV personalities, games and songs, they do not understand. They want the same things.

At school, when they see their friend's Twinkie at lunch and then they look at their apple, they want the Twinkie and the song they heard online.

[*English*]

This bill would, in the long term, actually reduce health care costs, because more and more people will be making wiser choices and being educated about the foods they are ingesting.

I remember the Kool-Aid Man. He would run through the wall and crash through. What is in Kool-Aid? It is basically water and sugar. It tastes great, but there is nothing in it other than water and sugar. However, I still remember the Kool-Aid Man running through that wall, and I wanted Kool-Aid. As a kid, I had a Kool-Aid stand and I was selling Kool-Aid, because that was what we drank. There were those little plastic drinks with the aluminum on top, and we would poke a hole and squirt, to see how far we could go with the squirting. That was basically sugar water.

The advertising to children sticks with us. We remember that.

The importance of this bill cannot be expressed enough. We need to prevent health care problems in children. We need to support children, and I fully support this bill.

• (1430)

[*Translation*]

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

The motion that the House do now adjourn is deemed to have been adopted. Accordingly, the House stands adjourned until Monday at 11 a.m., pursuant to Standing Order 24(1).

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

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