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# House of Commons Debates

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Monday, January 30, 2023

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Speaker: The Honourable Anthony Rota



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# HOUSE OF COMMONS

Monday, January 30, 2023

The House met at 11 a.m.

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*Prayer*

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• (1100)

[*English*]

## VACANCIES

CALGARY HERITAGE, OXFORD

**The Speaker:** It is my duty to inform the House that vacancies have occurred in the representation, namely Mr. Bob Benzen, member for the electoral district of Calgary Heritage, by resignation effective Saturday, December 31, 2022; Mr. Dave MacKenzie, member for the electoral district of Oxford, by resignation effective Saturday, January 28, 2023.

Pursuant to subsection 25(1)(b) of the Parliament of Canada Act, I have addressed warrants to the Chief Electoral Officer for the issue of writs for the election of members to fill these vacancies.

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[*Translation*]

## MESSAGE FROM THE SENATE

**The Speaker:** I have the honour to inform the House that a message has been received from the Senate informing this House that the Senate has passed the following bill, to which the concurrence of the House is desired: Bill S-11, A fourth Act to harmonize federal law with the civil law of Quebec and to amend certain Acts in order to ensure that each language version takes into account the common law and the civil law.

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## ACTING CLERK OF THE HOUSE OF COMMONS

**Hon. Mark Holland (Leader of the Government in the House of Commons, Lib.):** Mr. Speaker, I would like to inform the House that consultations have taken place with the House leaders of the recognized parties and that, pending the conclusion of the formal process, the government intends to appoint Mr. Eric Janse to the role of Acting Clerk of the House of Commons.

## PRIVATE MEMBERS' BUSINESS

[*Translation*]

## UIGHURS AND OTHER TURKIC MUSLIMS

The House resumed from October 26, 2022, consideration of the motion.

**Mr. Denis Trudel (Longueuil—Saint-Hubert, BQ):** Mr. Speaker, it is an honour to be the first member of the House to rise and speak in 2023. I would like to wish all my colleagues from all parties a happy new year.

We hope that we all have a prosperous year, working together productively and introducing bills that will make a difference. We hope to see strong, decisive action, especially when it comes to language, but also in the fight against climate change. That is very important to me. We also want decisive action for our seniors, meaningful action for housing, and action that will really improve people's lives. I think we also want to hear the expression "triple, triple, triple" less often in the House. I think everyone would like that.

I am very pleased to speak to Motion No. 62. I want to thank my colleague from Pierrefonds—Dollard, with whom I was lucky to work at the Subcommittee on International Human Rights of the Standing Committee on Foreign Affairs and International Development. He is doing remarkable work. I think this motion is very important. There are all kinds of humanitarian and human rights crises going on in the world right now. I became aware of that, and it is something that matters very much to my colleague as well.

I think it is especially important to talk about the motion before us this morning, which is about what is happening to the Uighurs. I would note that here in Ottawa today, on Parliament Hill, we have Dolkun Isa, president of the World Uyghur Congress; Omer Kanat, executive vice-president of the World Uyghur Congress; Mehmet Tohti, executive director of the Uyghur Rights Advocacy Project; and many members of the Uighur diaspora. I thank them for being here on Parliament Hill, and I hope their presence here will help put some pressure on this government. I really think that is what we need.

*Private Members' Business*

First, I would warn my colleagues who are sensitive and have a tender heart. I am about to tell members a really horrific story, one that will make our hearts pound, give us the chills and absolutely stun us. My colleagues should do what I did before becoming a politician. They should put themselves in the other person's shoes. They should try to see things from the perspective of the person I am going to talk about.

This is the story of a Uighur woman who immigrated to Canada several years ago. Her father became very sick and this woman decided to return to her country. When she arrived in her home city, she was welcomed at the airport by her sisters. Her heart filled with joy as she was so happy to see them. It was a meaningful moment. However, a sense of unease came over her. She did not know why, but she sensed that she was not welcome. In the taxi, they asked her to remain silent and not to talk. She thought that things would be all right when she arrived at her home, but her sister asked everyone to turn off their cell phones. She whispered to her that something had been installed on their roof the previous evening and that she had to be careful about what she said.

One night, at a restaurant, she noticed three men seated at the table next to her. She realized they were government agents. She was scared and did not finish her meal. These men watched her suspiciously. She slipped out into the market, which used to be quite vibrant, only to realize that no one was there. Her sister told her that most of the people had practically disappeared overnight, including her best friend. The situation was untenable and was jeopardizing her family. She had no choice but to leave. She left behind her dying father and her sisters, never to see them again. It was a heart-rending farewell. She returned to the comfort of her home in Quebec, while her family lives in fear in China.

This is a very real story. The actions of this government have been very tentative and weak. The government has reluctantly acknowledged that China's treatment of the Uighurs constitutes genocide. While an entire people is being persecuted and employed in so-called vocational training schools, surrounded by walls and barbed wire, watched by guards equipped with batons and shields, the government across the way seems just a tad hesitant.

• (1105)

It is also important to remember that many women are being raped. Some women told the committee about the sexual and psychological abuse they have suffered. Children are being taken away from their families and placed in orphanages or state-run schools. Good people are being forced into factories as slaves, primarily outside the Xinjiang region, further contributing to the shrinking Muslim population.

This is the same government that decided to boycott the Olympic Games, but to no effect. That is what it decided to do rather than demand that the games be moved so that the event could not be used for Chinese propaganda. It was as though the human rights violations and attacks on human dignity that we are talking about were somewhat or partially acceptable. The government will not go all the way with sanctions, because it thinks it can negotiate with people's suffering.

This morning, it is very important to point out how ironic it is that Motion No. 62 states that the government determined that Chi-

na's treatment of Uighurs is genocide, when, in reality, the executive, the council of ministers, cravenly abstained during the vote on the previous motion in February 2021. We sincerely hope that such will not be the case this time, that the government will take the bull by the horns, show some backbone and truly acknowledge that what is happening in China right now is a genocide against the Uighur people.

We are talking about a regime that spies on and tracks Uighurs even beyond its own borders. Cameras and facial recognition technologies are used to track down deserters. Just like in bad sci-fi movies, this government introduces new family members through sponsorship programs. For example, one day I could end up with a new brother named George who would live with me and who my children would call their uncle. He would have me sent to a prison camp, beat my children and rape my wife. Meanwhile, my colleagues would turn a blind eye and wonder whether boycotting an event would have any kind of political impact.

The government is talking about bringing 10,000 Uighurs to Canada, which is approximately 0.08%. Those are the lucky ones who will be able to enjoy our openness while hopefully avoiding the Chinese service stations set up in our country. They will avoid forced sterilizations and no longer be assimilated. That said, what about the 99.92% of Uighurs who will continue to be raped, assaulted and abused and who may end up with a new brother? Are we going to be complicit in the abuse that these people are going to suffer or will we finally take action to support and help these people, these humans?

There is also talk of foreign interference, given that many of the bordering countries are participating in this genocide, some without the option of refusing. Canada is not immune to these pressures. While the House of Commons passed a motion in 2020 calling on the federal government to have a plan to counter foreign interference, nothing has been done so far. Even in Quebec, we now have Chinese police stations that are calling the shots.

Are we going to do like we did with Yemen? Are we going to keep pretending we are not to blame by consenting to play a political game and by denying our responsibility when we sell arms to Saudi Arabia that are then used to kill Yemenites? Even as we give, we participate in torture. Is that who we are? Can we look forward to this government tabling a refugee resettlement plan quickly so that this does not fall off the radar while people are left to suffer?

These people are enduring slavery, torture, rape, sterilization, abuse, persecution, suffering and death. I admire these deeply resilient human beings who are risking their lives to fight for their freedom and who are not giving up on that dream.

• (1110)

[English]

**Ms. Jenny Kwan (Vancouver East, NDP):** Madam Speaker, today we are debating Motion No. 62, a motion that focuses on the human rights abuses and genocide being carried out against Uighurs and other Turkic Muslims by the government of the People's Republic of China.

*Private Members' Business*

I would first like to thank my colleague, the member for Pierrefonds—Dollard, for his important motion. All parliamentarians must stand firm in defence of fundamental human rights and condemn such gross violations, wherever they occur around the globe.

Canada has an obligation to uphold and defend human rights in the international community and support Uighurs and other Turkic Muslims, who are facing horrific persecution. I want to send a clear message that New Democrats support the motion, and we stand in solidarity with them in their fight for human rights.

The Subcommittee on International Human Rights of the Standing Committee on Foreign Affairs and International Development has studied the human rights situation of the Uighurs. The subcommittee heard witness testimony documenting the mounting evidence of human rights abuses, including mass arbitrary detention, separation of children from their parents, forced sterilization, forced labour, torture and other atrocities.

It was the subcommittee's conclusion that this organized and systematic persecution, which includes the largest mass detention of a minority since the Holocaust, constitutes a genocide, as per the genocide convention.

Back in 2018, the subcommittee on international human rights stated:

if the international community does not condemn the human rights abuses in Xinjiang province by the Government of China, a precedent will be set and these methods will be adopted by other regimes. Complacency is entrenched by a lack of access to Xinjiang; by the lack of free press; and through the silencing and harassment of Uyghurs living abroad.

Sadly, since then, human rights abuses have only intensified, and the situation has become even more urgent, demanding greater action. New Democrats have pushed the Canadian Parliament to recognize the treatment of Uighurs as genocide and have called on the government to use every tool at its disposal to help end these abuses. On February 22, 2021, the House unanimously recognized the actions of the Chinese government against Uighurs and other Turkic Muslims as genocide, despite the Prime Minister and members of cabinet abstaining from the vote.

Recognizing and fully condemning this genocide was a critical first step, but Canada can and must do more to take a stand against the horrific human rights abuses. Motion No. 62 recognizes that Uighurs and other Turkic Muslims who have fled to third countries face intimidation to return to China, where they face serious risks of detention and other atrocities. The motion also recognizes that many third countries face continued diplomatic and economic pressure from China to detain and deport Uighurs and other Turkic Muslims, meaning that even in other countries, they are not safe.

Importantly, in light of this grave situation, the motion calls on the Canadian government to urgently leverage IRCC's refugee and humanitarian resettlement program to expedite the entry of 10,000 Uighurs and other Turkic Muslims in need of protection. Urgent action is needed.

The NDP fully supports Motion No. 62. However, I will be introducing an amendment to ensure that Uighurs are admitted to Canada via a special immigration measure. New Democrats believe Canada should increase the total numbers of vulnerable people we

welcome to our country, including those from East Turkestan, Ukraine, Afghanistan and other places where people are subject to the worst violations of their human rights.

This is consistent with the subcommittee's recommendations, which call for the creation of "an exceptional refugee stream" to expedite entry for Uighurs and other Turkic Muslims. The creation of an emergency refugee program was also among the key recommendations advocated by the World Uyghur Congress. We should not be pitting communities against each other by robbing Peter to pay Paul.

Further, while the NDP supports this important motion, there is much more work that needs to be done to put an end to the persecution of Uighurs and other Turkic Muslims.

● (1115)

Human rights advocacy organizations have been tireless in their work calling for greater action and highlighting the need for the Government of Canada to take a stronger stance for human rights. Some of them are here today.

Groups such as the National Council of Canadian Muslims and the Uyghur Rights Advocacy Project have called on the government to implement the recommendations of the subcommittee report. One of these recommendations is that the Department of Justice develop a comprehensive human rights due diligence law that would compel businesses to respect the most current international human rights standards across their global operations and supply chains, and be held accountable for harms caused in relation to their operations.

Alarming, global supply chains are tainted with forced labour. Consequently, advocates have called on the government to strengthen trade restrictions to prohibit the importation of goods manufactured in the Uighur region. Products sold in Canadian supermarkets and stores are being made by Uighur forced labour. This includes products such as bath towels, quilts and clothes, which are made with cotton from the Uighur region. Corporations such as Nestlé, Del Monte and Unilever have also purchased tomatoes from Chinese companies in the Uighur region.

China is one of only eight states that has not yet ratified the International Labour Organization's convention on ending forced labour. Between 2017 and 2019, it is estimated that more than 80,000 Uighurs were forcibly transferred out of the Uighur region to work in factories across China. In 2020 alone, reports revealed that 83 global companies were indirectly or directly involved in employing Uighur workers under forced labour.

*Private Members' Business*

A recently released report on the automotive sector has revealed the use of Uighur forced labour throughout the supply chains of major auto manufacturers. The report found that more than 100 international automotive parts or car manufacturers have some exposure to goods made with forced Uighur labour.

It is completely unacceptable that companies are allowed to profit off of persecution, that supply chains involve forced labour, and that the products we purchase are manufactured using forced labour.

Advocates are also calling on Canada to push for an end to the arbitrary detention of Uighur human rights defenders in China. Canada should be working with civil society organizations to advocate for the release of those human rights defenders who have been imprisoned.

New Democrats have also called for sanctions to be imposed on government of China officials responsible for the perpetration of grave human rights abuses. This is also consistent with the recommendations of the subcommittee on international human rights.

The creation of a special immigration measure to expeditiously bring Uighurs and Turkic Muslims to safety is an essential part of Canada's role in defending human rights and taking a firm stand to denounce this ongoing genocide.

I move:

That the motion be amended:

- a) in paragraph (c), by adding after the words "into Canada" the following: "and ensure corresponding additional immigration levels in the refugee streams so that other persecuted members in the global community seeking safety in Canada are not impacted"; and
- b) in paragraph (d), by replacing the word "120" with the word "100".

I think that this is essential, if we are going to move forward, as a first step toward supporting Uighurs. It is essential for Canada to take this action to show leadership in the international community.

• (1120)

**The Assistant Deputy Speaker (Mrs. Carol Hughes):** It is my duty to inform hon. members that pursuant to Standing Order 93(3), no amendments may be proposed to a private member's motion or to the motion for second reading for a private member's bill unless the sponsor of the item indicates his or her consent.

• (1125)

[*Translation*]

Therefore, I ask the hon. member for Pierrefonds—Dollard if he consents to this amendment being moved.

[*English*]

**Mr. Sameer Zuberi:** Madam Speaker, yes, I consent.

**The Assistant Deputy Speaker (Mrs. Carol Hughes):** The amendment is in order.

Resuming debate, we have the hon. member for Scarborough Centre.

**Mrs. Salma Zahid (Scarborough Centre, Lib.):** Madam Speaker, I appreciate the opportunity to speak to Motion No. 62 by my friend, the MP for Pierrefonds—Dollard, regarding Uighurs and other Turkic Muslims.

I want to thank him for his leadership on this and many other issues of human rights around the world in his role as the chair of the Subcommittee on International Human Rights of the Standing Committee on Foreign Affairs and International Development. The bipartisan support we have seen for this motion is a testament to his hard work across party lines, and I am pleased to add my voice and my vote in support of this important motion.

What does this motion seek to do? It consists of four primary components.

The first clause asks us to recognize that Uighurs and other Turkic Muslims who have fled to third countries face pressure and intimidation by the Chinese state to return to China. The evidence makes this an undeniable truth.

In the second clause, we are asked to recognize that many of the third countries these refugees fleeing persecution and genocide are residing in are facing strong diplomatic and economic pressure from the Chinese government to deport these refugees. Again, there is ample evidence to support this undeniable truth.

The heart of Motion No. 62 comes in the third clause, which calls for Immigration, Refugees and Citizenship Canada, and the government, to undertake steps to expedite the entry into Canada of 10,000 Uighurs and other Turkic Muslims in need of protection over two years starting in 2024. This is such an important measure.

I have served on the immigration committee since I was first elected in 2015, and I know that we cannot solve the global immigration crisis through resettlement alone. We need a multi-faceted approach that includes humanitarian aid and diplomatic pressure to improve conditions on the ground. Many refugees want to stay near their country of origin, as they are hopeful conditions will improve to allow a safe return.

We need to support those refugee host countries that often lack the resources to care for large refugee populations, but the Uighur community is facing an ongoing genocide. I was proud to stand with the yes votes in 2021 when the House of Commons voted to recognize this sad fact. Canada has agreed to accept 10,000 Uighur refugees fleeing genocide who are most in need of protection.

It is our responsibility as a free and prosperous nation. It is our duty as a democratic nation to tell the world we are a voice for human rights. It will signal to China and the world who Canada is and where we stand. Hopefully, it will also encourage like-minded countries to step up to do the same.

Canada has always done our share in times of crisis. In the late 1960s, we welcomed 1,100 Czech refugees fleeing from the Soviet invasion. In the 1970s, 7,000 Chilean and other Latin American refugees found safety in Canada after political upheaval. We welcomed Iranian refugees after the overthrow of the Shah, Bosnian Muslims escaping ethnic cleansing in the Yugoslav civil war, and more than 60,000 so-called boat people following the war in Vietnam. More recently, we resettled more than 25,000 Syrian refugees, provided a safe haven for thousands of Ukrainians, and we are well on our way to resettling at least 40,000 Afghan refugees.

Canada punches above its weight, but this is not simple altruism. Refugees make Canada better. They enrich our nation, our economy and, of course, our lives. People whose families came to Canada through previous waves of immigration are today members of the House of Commons. They are giving back to this country with their service.

In my community, the first waves of Syrian refugees found jobs in grocery stores, restaurants and landscaping companies. Now, more than five years later, they are opening their own businesses, running their own restaurants, hiring people and providing employment to others. They are also becoming Canadian citizens.

● (1130)

I have spoken here before about two Syrian success stories in Scarborough Centre. Aleppo Kebab serves delicious Syrian food, while Crown Pastries has the best sweets in Scarborough, especially at Eid. I cannot help but imagine what great things these 10,000 Uighur refugees will achieve in Canada. One of them may even be the next chocolate king, like Tareq Hadhad.

What is clear, though, is that too many Uighur people will never have the opportunity to achieve their full potential, to realize their ambitions and their dreams. That is why Canada must act.

Lastly, the final clause of Motion No. 62 calls for the government to table a report on how the refugee resettlement plan will be implemented within 120 days of the passage of this motion.

I welcome this motion and its call for the urgent resettlement of 10,000 vulnerable Uighur refugees in Canada. It builds on our recognition of the genocide occurring in Xinjiang and sends a message to China and its Communist government that Canada and the world are still watching. I hope Parliament will ensure that the hard-working team at IRCC, whom we have asked to do so much in recent years, have the resources they need to do all we ask of them.

As I said earlier, resettlement alone is not an option. Canada must go further to keep the plight of the Uighur people in the public eye, to keep up pressure on China and to rally our allies and the international world with all diplomatic means in defence of the Uighur people. When the government released its new Indo-Pacific strategy, some pundits complained there was not enough attention paid to China. Indeed, the goal is to diversify our commercial and diplomatic interests in the region.

I recognize this may not be helpful to some of those with vested business interests, but I ask them, how can Canada have business as usual with a regime that is perpetrating genocide against an entire community, that puts a minority in re-education camps and then de-

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nies their very existence? How can Canada have business as usual with a regime that kidnaps our citizens to be held and used as pawns in business disputes? The answer is clear: We cannot.

China must uphold its international human rights obligations. Human rights are universal. National sovereignty can never be used as a pretext or an excuse for the violation of human rights. We cannot let the world forget that an estimated one million Uighurs and other Turkic groups are in concentration camps in Xinjiang, where they are subjected to forced labour, gender-based violence and torture. Uighurs who have fled their homes to third countries are still at risk of deportation.

I have always been a voice for human rights around the world, for the Afghans fleeing the Taliban, for the Rohingya fleeing Myanmar, for Coptic Christians in northern Iraq and for the Palestinian people denied their basic rights, and I will always raise my voice for those in need.

With my vote on this motion, we send a message: We will not look away.

● (1135)

**Mr. Ziad Aboultaif (Edmonton Manning, CPC):** Madam Speaker, I wish a happy new year to all.

The word “genocide” is not one to be used lightly. According to the United Nations Convention on the Prevention and Punishment of the Crime of Genocide:

genocide means any of the following acts committed with intent to destroy, in whole or in part, a national, ethnical, racial or religious group, as such:

- (a) Killing members of the group;
- (b) Causing serious bodily or mental harm to members of the group;
- (c) Deliberately inflicting on the group conditions of life calculated to bring about its physical destruction in whole or in part;
- (d) Imposing measures intended to prevent births within the group;
- (e) Forcibly transferring children of the group to another group.

It was with that definition in mind that this House, on February 22, 2021, recognized that genocide is indeed taking place, being carried out by the People's Republic of China against Uighurs and other Turkic Muslims.

Since that motion passed in the House, the government has not addressed the concerns it raised. The UN human rights commissioner recently released a report again highlighting the atrocities being committed against Uighurs and other Turkic Muslims by the Chinese regime. If we do not act now, when will we?

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The Standing Committee on Citizenship and Immigration unanimously passed a motion calling on the government to extend existing special immigration measures to Uighurs and other Turkic Muslims, allow Uighurs and other Turkic Muslims in third countries who are at risk of being deported back to China to seek refuge in Canada, and waive the UNHCR determination for Uighurs and other Turkic Muslims. This motion is in the same spirit as that one.

It is no surprise that the Chinese government, even in the face of overwhelming evidence, denies what is taking place. In doing this, it is following the pattern set by other autocratic regimes.

The government of modern Russia continues to deny the death of millions of innocent Ukrainians in the Holodomor, even as once again it is assaulting the Ukrainian people. Like the Chinese, it denies the history. The world knows better.

Germany at least has accepted that the Holocaust not only happened but is a national shame. The German people have worked hard to be able to say “never again”.

Standing against genocide is very personal to many people, but there are times when we must do more than just take a stand. This motion is a call for action.

Given the situation Uighurs face, this motion calls on the government to:

urgently leverage Immigration, Refugees and Citizenship Canada's Refugee and Humanitarian Resettlement Program to expedite the entry of 10,000 Uyghurs and other Turkic Muslims in need of protection, over two years starting in 2024 into Canada;

This House has already stated that the crimes against the Uighur people are a genocide. The time has come to do more than just offer words of support, unless all we want is for the world to see how virtuous we are, how we are on the right side. We must do more, but what should that “more” look like?

It seems simple to say that we must open our borders, that in a country with as much geography as Canada, 10,000 or more people are easily accommodated. Perhaps there are logistical questions in moving thousands of people from the other side of the world to Canada, but if there is a will, logistics can be overcome.

However, we need to remember there is more to this equation than geography and seeing how many people can fit into a particular space. We are not talking about numbers here. We are talking about people, people who have been driven from their homes in fear of their lives and who have been persecuted in ways many of us cannot imagine.

• (1140)

It is not that they want to leave China, but faced with a choice of life or death, they have chosen life. A new life in Canada can offer hope, hope for a new life in a peaceful land where they will not suffer for their ethnicity or their religion.

I know, first-hand, that it is possible, for I have experienced Canada as a welcoming place, but should it be the first choice? Has anyone thought to ask those fleeing the genocide if coming to Canada is their first choice or their second or their third? Maybe starting fresh in Canada seems more appealing than life in refugee camps, but do they know the reality of what life looks like in

Canada? I applaud the spirit of this motion, but I wonder if we have explored all options.

Would these refugees be happier if a way could be found for them to be integrated into community life in the countries where they have taken refuge, rather than travelling across the world to a place with an unfamiliar language and culture? Could Canada help with that?

The government is not very good at hands-on compassion. Ask any recently arrived immigrant. Many who come here find that Canada is not that promised land after all. The truth is that people fleeing conflict zones and attempted genocide need more than just a roof over their heads and a few language lessons. They need to know that they are safe and accepted, that there are people in this new land who are very happy to see them, who want to be their friends and who value them for who they are.

Government programs, no matter how well-meaning, cannot replace the personal touch. Those fleeing genocide, and indeed all newcomers to Canada, need someone who can help with the basics. For some, that would be a family member who has come here before them, but for most of those fleeing conflict, such as the Uighurs, it would be a Canadian reaching out in friendship to a newcomer.

That is what we did with the boat people coming from Vietnam in the early 1980s. That is what we have been doing with those refugees who came from Syria seven years ago, and those who continue to arrive on our shores today. We, here, can say, “Let us bring in these people who need our help”, but it is the Canadian people who will make these newcomers feel welcome.

Conservatives believe that Canada's immigration system should uphold Canada's humanitarian tradition of providing safe haven for refugees. I think that may be something that all political parties can agree on.

There may be some who are concerned about the reaction from the government of the People's Republic of China, which has been trying to have the countries where the Uighurs have taken refuge return the refugees, in violation of international law.

I would not be surprised if the Chinese ambassador to Canada calls me to complain about the words I have chosen to use today. His government insists that there is no genocide and feels insulted when people talk about it. I would invite the ambassador to take a trip with me to the border areas of the neighbouring countries where the Uighurs have fled. I would invite him to talk with the refugees, to hear their stories, and then I would ask him again if there is no genocide.



I doubt I will have that opportunity, but we in this House do have the opportunity to show our support for the Uighur people. I urge all hon. members to do so.

[*Translation*]

**Mr. Yves Perron (Berthier—Maskinongé, BQ):** Madam Speaker, I am very pleased to rise to speak to Motion No. 62. Doing so is a big and serious responsibility. When I talk about important subjects like this one, I feel responsible for bringing people together.

I want to take this opportunity to wish all of my colleagues in the House of Commons and the people of Berthier—Maskinongé a very happy new year. My wish for us here in Parliament is that we will be able to work together across party lines with no regard for the interests of individual political parties. I dream of a world where an election campaign lasts only for the time allotted for that campaign and then, afterward, people work together for the common good. That is what we should always be trying to do. That is what I always try to do. I may not always be perfect at it, but I am definitely trying. I urge everyone to do the same.

I would like to remind the House that members of the Uighurs' rights movement are on Parliament Hill today, including Dolkun Isa, president of the World Uyghur Congress, Omer Kanat, chairman of the congress executive committee, Mehmet Tohti, executive director of the Uyghur Rights Advocacy Project, and many members of the Uighur diaspora in Quebec and Canada.

I would like them to know that we truly respect them. We respect them and we are here to try to help them. I invite every member of Parliament here today to try to put themselves in their shoes for a moment. They are here in Canada's Parliament, in a free world where people have the right to live according to their values and beliefs. They are thinking about their families and their nation, which do not have such opportunities.

Let us truly think about it. Let us put ourselves in their place. Let us imagine that our brother, uncle, grandfather, daughter, wife are left all alone while we are forced to go to a re-education and training centre, which is actually a concentration camp. These are serious issues.

We do not say this lightly. We have evidence. We have heard testimony, horror stories. Earlier, my colleague from Longueuil—Saint-Hubert eloquently shared the testimony of people who visited their family and cut their trip short to avoid hurting the people they love.

I find it difficult to imagine how a member of the House of Commons could sleep peacefully after voting against a motion like this one. That is how I feel.

Clearly, the Bloc Québécois will vote in favour of the motion. The Bloc Québécois rejects any partisanship and wishes to protect the oppressed. Of course, we cannot do it all. My Conservative colleague raised a good question earlier, wondering whether these people really want to come to Canada. Of course not.

Anyone proud of their country would want to stay there and take part in its collective social, economic and cultural development, helping it thrive on the world stage. They would want to promote

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their nation throughout the world so that all could benefit from their values, progress and achievements in their own quest for improvement. Everyone wants that.

However, this is a situation where people fled to avoid being imprisoned. They fled to avoid torture. They fled to save their wives from rape. They fled to save their daughters from forced sterilization.

● (1145)

Let us think about it for a minute. These women are being forcefully sterilized. It is all well and good to say that China is an important economic partner, but at some point we have to take a stand. We need to do more than take a stand: we need to do what we can. I think that welcoming people who are facing these risks into Canada is the least we can do. Let us do it and not be afraid to do it with our head held high.

I hope that all the members in the House, including the cabinet, will support this motion. In 2022, we adopted a motion to recognize the genocide of the Uighur people and the members of the cabinet abstained. That sends a very sad message.

We need to get as close as possible to a unanimous vote in the House. I would ask members of the government to have the courage to recognize and assert that there is a genocide in progress and to commit to welcoming these people into Canada and doing what it takes to help the Uighur nation.

There are formalities in the motion. It mentions taking in 10,000 people. Of course, the Bloc Québécois will vote in favour. In any case, the Bloc Québécois usually votes "yes". However, we might have been able to do more. Why not take in 15,000 people?

The motion mentions 120 days to implement the plan. The hon. member for Pierrefonds—Dollard, who is a member of the government, sponsored the motion. I congratulate him for it and give him a tip of my hat. As a member of the government, he is aware that the government moves slowly and that it set a 120-day time frame. The NDP has just proposed an amendment to change the time frame to 100 days, and this makes us very happy. However, we might have done better there as well.

We are faced with a world power that is extending its tentacles on all sides thanks to its economy, which is based on miserable working conditions. Let us bear that in mind. I would also like us to take a moment to think about what we have here and everything we have consumed in our lifetime that was made in China.

With this motion and the committee's work, we have learned that factories in the region where the Uighur people live run on forced labour. This is either slavery pure and simple, or horrific exploitation at starvation wages and in appalling conditions.

● (1150)

Let us be vigilant when we order things. I would very much like us to focus on the supply chains in these sectors. We have a duty to not encourage these systems.

*Private Members' Business*

China also has the nerve to set up police stations abroad, including three in Canada. It is setting up police stations in Canada to harass, threaten and intimidate Chinese nationals who are allegedly dissidents, whether or not they are Uighurs.

China is also threatening neighbouring countries. I am thinking about countries such as Mongolia. The geopolitical situation in Mongolia is not simple with Russia on one side and China on the other side. It is a landlocked country. It is easy to put pressure on a country like that.

We must stand proud, straight and strong and say no. In fact, why have these police stations not been shut down? Let us shut them down as soon as possible. I am asking everyone to adopt this motion.

• (1155)

**The Assistant Deputy Speaker (Mrs. Carol Hughes):** The hon. member for Pierrefonds—Dollard has a five-minute right of reply.

**Mr. Sameer Zuberi (Pierrefonds—Dollard, Lib.):** Madam Speaker, I thank everyone who spoke to this motion.

[English]

It is a beautiful thing to hear voices united together, echoing as one, for this particular motion, a motion to help our human family and address a pressing issue. Whether one views it as genocide or grave and serious crimes against humanity, it is an issue that must be addressed with clarity.

This motion will be looked at not only by Canadians, but also by the international community. It is critical that we are clear on this issue and show leadership. I hope and expect each and every member of this chamber, regardless of position or party, will vote for this motion.

Why do I say that? We need to lead. Canada is a middle power. We have the ability to concretely move the needle on things in this world. I ask those who are making a decision right now on how to vote to take a deep and hard look at the information they have access to. Some have information that is only public and others have information that is confidential and classified. I ask individuals who are reflecting on this decision right now to take a look at that information to see what is actually happening.

We know that at least one million Uighurs and other Turkic minorities are in concentration camps and have been forced into labour. Their identities are being erased and they are being forced to become people they are not. This is abhorrent.

We have seen this happen in history to different people. We have seen communities wiped off the face of the earth, and the Uighur people are suffering that today. The one million of them who have been forced into concentration camps and forced to produce products that we unwittingly wear and consume are not only forced to work, but are also separated from their children. Hundreds of thousands of children are being made wards of the state permanently. They do not return home during the summer and remain permanent wards of the state.

Women are being forcibly sterilized with IUDs that are so horrible and terrible that when physicians remove them, the whole

womb has to be removed. The IUDs are so crude that they are fused to the womb, meaning these women can no longer have children. As a result, eminent jurists have said that, legally, the issue of sterilization and what is happening to the Uighur people meet the level of genocide.

However, let us not debate too much on terms. Let us recognize that there is a minimal floor. The UN High Commissioner for Human Rights, Michelle Bachelet, recently came out with a report stating that what is happening likely amounts to crimes against humanity. Once that level is engaged, there is a responsibility for states to protect. That includes Canada.

Former prime minister Brian Mulroney took leadership on the issue of apartheid and Canada went down in the history books. We speak about that moment in time as leadership. Today, we need leadership on this issue. That is why I implore each and every member of the House, regardless of position, to make their intent clear and vote for this motion when it comes up. Canadians and the international community will be watching. We need to take leadership.

[Translation]

**The Assistant Deputy Speaker (Mrs. Carol Hughes):** The question is on the amendment.

• (1200)

[English]

If a member of a recognized party present in the House wishes that the amendment be carried, carried on division or wishes to request a recorded division, I would invite them to rise and indicate it to the Chair.

The hon. member for Pierrefonds—Dollard.

**Mr. Sameer Zuberi:** Madam Speaker, I would request a recorded division.

[Translation]

**The Assistant Deputy Speaker (Mrs. Carol Hughes):** Pursuant to order made on Thursday, June 23, 2022, the division stands deferred until Wednesday, February 1, at the expiry of the time provided for Oral Questions.

\* \* \*

[English]

**ONLINE NEWS ACT**

**The Speaker:** The Chair wishes to inform the House of an administrative error that occurred with regard to Bill C-18, an act respecting online communications platforms that make news content available to persons in Canada.

[Translation]

Members may recall that the Standing Committee on Canadian Heritage made a series of amendments to the bill, which were presented to the House in the committee's fourth report on December 9, 2022. The committee also ordered that the bill, as amended, be reprinted for the use of the House at report stage.

The House concurred in the bill, as amended, at report stage on December 13, 2022, and adopted the bill at third reading the following day.

[*English*]

Following passage at third reading, as per the usual practice, House officials prepared a parchment version of the bill, which was transmitted to the Senate. Due to an administrative error in the committee's report, which was also reflected in the version of the bill that was reprinted for the use of the House at report stage, the report and the bill both included a subamendment, adding a new clause 27(1.1) to the bill, which had been negated by the committee and should not have appeared in the bill.

Given the tight timelines between the presentation of the report and consideration of the bill at third reading, the error went unnoticed before the bill was passed. Nonetheless, the decision taken by the committee was clear, as recorded in the minutes of the meeting. The Chair has no reason to believe that members were misinformed when they adopted the bill.

[*Translation*]

This error was nothing more than administrative in nature. The proceedings which took place in this House and the decisions made by the House with respect to Bill C-18 remain entirely valid. The records of the House relating to this bill are complete and accurate. However, the documents relating to Bill C-18 that were sent to the Senate included an error and were not an accurate reflection of the House's intentions.

Similar situations have been addressed by my predecessors, such as in a ruling on April 12, 2017, found at page 10486 of Debates. Guided by this precedent and others, similar steps have been taken to address the current case.

• (1205)

[*English*]

Once the error was detected, House officials immediately communicated with their counterparts in the Senate to inform them of the situation. The Chair then instructed House officials to take all the necessary steps to correct the error in both the committee's report and the bill itself, and to ensure that the other place has a corrected copy of Bill C-18. A revised version of the bill will be transmitted to the Senate as per the usual administrative process.

Furthermore, the Chair has asked that a rectified "as passed by the House of Commons" version of the bill be printed and that the fourth report of the committee be corrected accordingly.

[*Translation*]

In light of this situation, the Senate will be in a position to make its own determination as to how it will proceed with Bill C-18.

I thank all members for their attention.

The hon. member for Calgary Shepard on a point of order.

[*English*]

**Mr. Tom Kmiec:** Mr. Speaker, I rise on a point of order. Thank you for making that clarification on Bill C-18.

### *Government Orders*

There is a defect in the design of the House. While making your statement, there was much noise outside, quite disrespectfully, when you were trying to inform us of the corrections that are being made to this bill.

I have raised this multiple times, but since this is the first day of the return of our session, I wonder if you, Mr. Speaker, would be able to ensure that, in the future, people who are walking in the courtyard around this chamber would reduce the amount of noise they are making. I am sure that when the minister rises to make her inaugural speech on the bill she will be moving she would like silence in the chamber, and I would like it as well.

There is too much noise in this chamber that is interfering with the work of members on the floor of this House.

**The Speaker:** I want to thank the hon. member for his interjection. I will be honest, while I was reading I heard the noise as well, and I was thinking, "What the heck is going on here?" It is a problem with the design. Aesthetically, it is a beautiful place, but when it was put together they did not count on the people.

What I did notice is that it lasted for a short time and then somebody hushed them. I know we have signs out there. However, I will talk with the Sergeant-at-Arms, and we will see about getting that noise reduced to the best of our abilities. I do not want to make any promises I cannot keep. I thank the hon. member for bringing that up.

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## GOVERNMENT ORDERS

[*English*]

### CANADA EARLY LEARNING AND CHILD CARE ACT

**Hon. Karina Gould (Minister of Families, Children and Social Development, Lib.)** moved that Bill C-35, An Act respecting early learning and child care in Canada, be read the second time and referred to a committee.

She said: Mr. Speaker, it gives me tremendous pleasure, and it is an honour to rise in the House today to kick off the debate on Bill C-35, an act respecting early learning and child care in Canada.

I want to start with a few thanks. I first of all want to thank the thousands of advocates across this country who have been waiting and fighting for this day for just over 52 years. It was 52 years ago in December that the Royal Commission on the Status of Women came out with its landmark report that asked the Government of Canada and suggested that it put in place an affordable, high-quality, inclusive and accessible child care system across this country.

*Government Orders*

Fifty-two years is a long time to wait, and there are lots of families who went through child care during that period of time. However, what I have heard from stakeholders and advocates across this country is that now is a good time to start. It is never too late to do the right thing, and here we are.

Today, we have agreements signed with 13 provinces and territories. As of December, almost all of them have reduced fees by 50%, and we have one more that is going to be making a good announcement very soon. More of those fee reductions are on their way.

What excites me about this system and about this bill is the impact it is having on families. I have had occasion to travel to almost every province and territory across the country over the past year, to engage with families and to hear from them the stories about how this system is making a difference in their lives. I have yet to speak to a child care centre representative or a family who has not talked about the very real and tangible impact that this reduction in fees is having on their families' bottom line.

I will start by talking about one of the things that we have been doing as a federal government for a while, and that is the RESP, the registered education savings plan. For decades, we have been encouraging families to save for post-secondary education. We understand that this is a huge expense, but that it is important for all of our children across this country, for the future of our country, to make sure that they have the opportunity to attend post-secondary education.

Child care fees can range between \$12,000 and \$24,000 or even more per year. Multiply that by three or four or five, depending on the province they are in, and it could be two or three times the cost that the average student would spend on post-secondary education, yet we did not have any mechanism, until recently, to support families for this major expense.

It is an expense that starts right at the beginning of their family's journey, often when they have recently purchased a home or when they are just getting started in their careers. We are talking about tens of thousands of dollars. That is a huge impact and, not always but often, it results in the lower-income parent deciding to take a step outside of the workforce, because it just does not make financial sense for them to carry on.

The stories I have heard over the past year are changing that. I have been to every province and almost every territory. I meet parents. It is often a mom, I have not heard from a dad yet, but I am looking forward to that as well. However, I hear from so many moms who talk about the fact that it is because of these lower child care fees that they are returning to work.

There was the mom in Ottawa a couple of months ago who said that because of the 50% fee reduction she enrolled her daughter in day care, and she is returning to work full time as a real estate agent. She spoke of the impact that it had not only for her family's finances but also for her career development.

In Richmond, B.C. in December, in talking to a mom of three, she said that it is because of these reductions that she is able to go from part-time to full-time work, because she can now afford to have two of her children in full-time day care, with one of her children in school.

In Nova Scotia, a mom whom I was talking to said that because of these fee reductions, she is not only returning to full-time work, but she breathes a sigh of relief when she goes to the grocery store. She is not as worried about making sure that she can afford to buy healthy, nutritious food for her family because of the significant fee reductions.

● (1210)

Most recently I was talking to a mom in my community of Burlington, Ontario. She explained that when she and her husband saw the 50% reduction in child care fees, they decided they would not have to give up their house. Financially it made sense to keep her child enrolled in day care. They would be able to afford their mortgage and both of them could keep working.

This initiative is having a real tangible impact on families across the country, and I could not be prouder to be part of a government that is delivering this important policy.

That brings me to today and the introduction of this legislation at second reading. I hope all members in the House are going to support it and get it through committee quickly, so we can cement this important legacy for Canadian families, children and women right across the country.

Let me talk a bit about what Bill C-35 would accomplish. It would provide support for the continued implementation of an affordable Canada-wide system by enshrining the vision, guiding principles and a commitment to long-term funding. It would enhance transparency and accountability by requiring the minister responsible to report annually to the public on progress being made on the system. It would establish in law the national advisory council, which, by the way, is having its first official meeting today in Ottawa. This legislation would also build on the early successes of the Canada-wide agreements.

We are enshrining into law the federal government's commitment to strengthening and protecting this Canada-wide system.

[*Translation*]

We are enshrining into law the federal government's commitment to strengthening and protecting these Canada-wide systems while respecting provincial and territorial jurisdiction.

● (1215)

[*English*]

Bill C-35 would build on the collaborative work we have undertaken with PTs and with indigenous peoples from coast to coast to coast, and it is driven by a shared interest, and close partnerships and collaboration. It respects provincial and territorial jurisdiction and the co-developed indigenous early learning and child care framework that was jointly released and endorsed in 2018 with the Assembly of First Nations, Inuit Tapiriit Kanatami and the Métis National Council.

By enshrining these principles and vision into federal law, we are building stability into the child care system, and not just stability but also predictability and commitment.

*Government Orders*

We want provinces, territories and indigenous peoples to know that the federal government is in there for the long term. Importantly, we want parents, families, child care providers and early childhood educators to know that the federal government is also there for the long term. That is so important with Bill C-35, because we have seen in the past, unfortunately, when in 2006 then-prime minister Stephen Harper ripped up the child care agreements with the provinces and territories. It was one of the first acts the Conservatives did when they came into government. We need to ensure we are doing everything we can to make it harder for any future government, like a future Conservative government, to take that away from families, to take that away from our children and to take that away from the Canadian economy.

Let me talk a bit about the Canadian economy, because child care is one of those amazing policies that is not just good, smart, feminist, social policy, but it is good, smart, feminist economic policy. For every one dollar invested in child care, the economy sees a broader return of \$1.50 to \$1.80.

It is estimated that the Canada-wide system could raise real GDP in our country by as much as 1.2% over the next two decades. An OECD report shows that improvement in gender equality and family friendly policies has boosted growth in per-capita GDP by between 10% and 20%.

In Sweden, for example, when it brought in universal affordable child care, female employment rates increased by almost 30%. The IMF estimated that closing the participation gap between Canadian men and women in the workforce could raise Canada's GDP levels by 4% in the medium term. That is \$92 billion.

Gender equality, ensuring women have access to economic opportunities, ensuring our children get the best possible start in life, is not just good for us as a society; that is excellent for our economy.

Let us talk a bit about what that means in real terms. We talk about the macro picture, but when we look at what that means, we have an example in Canada.

Quebec is celebrating 25 years of universal day care. Quebec went from having the lowest female workforce participation in the country in 1998 to now having the highest. In fact, some of the highest rates of women with children under the age of four are working in the entire OECD. If Canadian women join the workforce at the same rates that Quebec women have over the last 25 years, that is an additional 240,000 workers entering our workforce today. That is an impressive number. Those are workers in Canada, people who want to be part of the workforce, but for economic reasons have not been able to justify it or make it work.

As I said, I have talked to moms all across the country for whom this is making the difference. This is really exciting. As to where this is going to set us up as Canada in our future, for our economy and, most important, for Canadians, the potential is unmatched.

I want to spend a bit of time talking about the workforce. We know there is no child care system in Canada without the talented, qualified, well-trained, caring early learning and child care workforce. I want to give a big thanks to each and every one of them. During the pandemic, they went to work so that Canada could keep

working. We saw what happened when child care centres were closed. It meant parents were staying home with their children.

It is pretty hard. I do not know about other members, but I was home during the pandemic for the first six months and my two and a half year old was home with me. It is pretty tricky to get work done when parents have a two year old or a two and a half year old with them. Anyone who is a parent or has been a parent of a young child can attest to that.

Those child care workers went to work during the pandemic. They went when we needed them most. We need to recognize that, we need to say thanks and we need to ensure that we have the system in place to support them with good wages and that they have an environment in which they can thrive, grow and develop their careers as well.

When we talk about child care, we talk about the economic impact and the social impact, but we also need to talk about the impact that it has on our children. Being in a safe, secure place is important, one where they feel loved, where they feel cared for, where they are well taken care of, but also where learning is part and parcel of the framework.

The Minister of Finance likes to talk about setting up a generation of super kids in the country, and I could not agree with her more. As a mom who is so grateful to the child care workers who made it possible for me to do my job while my son was little, the absolute illumination that he had when he went to day care and the explosion in learning that I saw from him is one of those things for which I will be eternally grateful.

When we talk about child care, there are so many spinoffs that are important for our society and our economy. I like to describe it as a home run, because it is good for our children, it is good for our families and it is good for the economy.

Bill C-35 is going to help us cement the role of the federal government. It is going to ensure that we are there in the long run for Canadian women, families, children and Canadians in general. It is going to ensure we are setting the country up for the 21st century to take hold of those opportunities and ensure that every child in our country has the best possible start in life.

I hope that my colleagues from all parties in this place will support Bill C-35 and move it forward so we can provide that commitment and assurance to Canadians and their families that the federal government is there in the long term, that we support our children and women, that we are setting Canada up for success.

• (1220)

**Ms. Michelle Ferreri (Peterborough—Kawartha, CPC):** Madam Speaker, I wish everyone a happy new year. It is nice to be back.

It was wonderful to hear so many positive stories, and that is great, but it is not the reality of all the other parents who cannot access child care. How many of those families has the minister spoken to? What are the answers she is giving those families that have been on wait-lists for years, those who cannot go back to work because they cannot access affordable, quality child care?

*Government Orders*

**Hon. Karina Gould:** Madam Speaker, I hope my hon. colleague will be supporting this bill on the advancement of child care in Canada. It is an extremely important question and it forms part and parcel of the agreements that we signed with provinces and territories across the country.

I was one of those parents who was on a wait list and was nervous about whether I would get a space for my son, so I understand what that is like. It is why we have committed, with our provincial and territorial counterparts, to increase the number of child care spaces by 250,000 over the course of these first five-year agreements that we have signed. In fact, I have been in many provinces and territories over the past year announcing thousands of new additional spaces that have been created, thanks to the \$30 billion of federal investments that we have put in place. Access to these spaces is a key pillar and it forms part of our initiative.

[*Translation*]

**Mr. Xavier Barsalou-Duval (Pierre-Boucher—Les Patriotes—Verchères, BQ):** Madam Speaker, I would like to congratulate the minister for her advocacy on behalf of families and child care services.

I believe it is important to support them. We are pleased to see that the government is of the same mind and has the will to take action. However, I will nonetheless point out that, in theory, social matters such as the management of day care is a provincial and not a federal jurisdiction. That is very clear.

Quebec already has a day care system and we are happy to have it. We are pleased that the government has decided to exempt Quebec from the federal government's centralizing policy on day care. I also want to point out that the government's approach is patterned after the Quebec model. That is an acknowledgment of the work Quebec has done and how advanced we are compared to the rest of Canada.

More specifically, I would like to know why, in her bill, the minister has exempted Quebec for only five years. In five years' time, Quebec's day care program will still be in place. It is already in place. This is a provincial matter, and I assume that she would like her bill to be in effect for more than five years.

Why is there only a five-year exemption for Quebec?

• (1225)

**Hon. Karina Gould:** Madam Speaker, we have an excellent relationship with Quebec when it comes to early childhood education and child care. I have worked extensively with my Quebec counterparts on this issue.

As my colleague mentioned, Quebec's child care system has been a source of inspiration for us. We want the rest of Canada to catch up with Quebec and its system. We negotiated an asymmetrical agreement with Quebec for exactly that reason.

Bill C-35 fully respects provincial and territorial jurisdictions. It is based on the principles and objectives we have set out in the agreements with the provinces and territories.

What I understand from the Government of Quebec is that they are happy with this bill precisely because it respects provincial and

territorial jurisdictions. It also demonstrates that the Government of Canada will be there for the long term and will ensure that it is not just five years' worth of payments—

**The Assistant Deputy Speaker (Mrs. Carol Hughes):** I must leave time for other questions.

The hon. member for Winnipeg Centre.

[*English*]

**Ms. Leah Gazan (Winnipeg Centre, NDP):** Madam Speaker, I will start by saying how nice it was working alongside the minister in the drafting of this legislation.

This is good legislation, but not perfect. One concern I have brought up many times in the House is how early childhood educators historically, and I would say even now, have been underpaid and undervalued. Noting that this is critical work, noting that this is work that is vital for women across the country, does the member support adding in Bill C-35 an explicit commitment to fair wages and working conditions for staff in this sector?

**Hon. Karina Gould:** Madam Speaker, it is a pleasure working with my hon. colleague. I would note that she started her career as an early childhood educator, so her input has been invaluable in this regard.

It is important to reiterate that the legislation is complementary to the agreements we have signed with provinces and territories. Each one of those agreements does have a commitment to a wage grid, to benefits, to ensuring we are supporting the early childhood workforce. Of course, that is very much within the provincial and territorial jurisdictions, and provinces and territories decide what those wages are.

However, we are in constant dialogue with them and based on the last FPT meeting we had, there is a concerted interest from all my counterparts at the provincial and territorial level to ensure there are fair wages, that the workforce is included and supported, because they all understand that will be key to having a successful child care system.

**Mr. Mike Morrice (Kitchener Centre, GP):** Madam Speaker, I want to start by saying I agree with and appreciate the minister for bringing forward this legislation so early in this session, as well as how important this legislation is. I also appreciate her comments about the importance of investing in the workforce. As we have heard from our colleague from Winnipeg Centre, this is an ongoing concern.

I will speak to the specifics in Ontario. The estimates are that we will need an additional 14,700 early childhood educators in Ontario by 2025-26. In the current agreement that the federal government signed with the Province of Ontario, the wage floor is \$18 an hour, rising by one dollar per year until 2025.

*Government Orders*

Recognizing the talented folks in this workforce and the need to not only retain but also to recruit at these numbers, and since it is not just the Province of Ontario but also the federal government that has a responsibility, can the minister comment on what more needs to be done to ensure we are investing in the workforce and getting wages lifted higher?

• (1230)

**Hon. Karina Gould:** Madam Speaker, I could not agree with my hon. colleague more. We need to make sure we have a well-compensated and well-trained workforce.

In the \$30 billion the federal government is transferring to provinces, territories and indigenous organizations, there is room for provinces and territories to ensure wages are keeping up and in some cases exceeding what expectations are to maintain that workforce. I will give you a couple of examples. Yukon has set a minimum wage for ECEs at \$30 an hour. In New Brunswick it has been set at \$23.40. B.C. has given a four-dollar-an-hour top-up to ECEs. Alberta has done two dollars an hour. Manitoba has come up with a provincial benefit plan.

There are many examples around the country of provinces and territories not only working with federal funds but also adding their own dollars to make sure that—

**The Assistant Deputy Speaker (Mrs. Carol Hughes):** I am going to allow for one more question.

I want to remind the hon. minister that she is to address questions and comments through the Chair and not directly to the members.

The hon. member for Fredericton has the floor. We have time for a brief question.

**Mrs. Jenica Atwin (Fredericton, Lib.):** Madam Speaker, the legislation sets out a vision for a Canada-wide system in which all families have access to high quality, affordable and inclusive early learning and child care, or ELCC, no matter where they live in Canada. Are there any challenges to meeting this goal, and if so, how is our government meeting that challenge?

**Hon. Karina Gould:** Madam Speaker, yes, of course there are challenges to meeting this goal, but we have made sure within the pillar on inclusivity that we are working with provinces and territories to reach those places where child care is harder to access, whether that is in rural communities, remote communities or even in urban centres where there are child care deserts.

There are some really terrific examples, like in Manitoba and Saskatchewan, where they are doing really innovative things in rural and remote areas. I was just in Nunavut, which is doing really interesting things to make sure there are enough child care spaces in all 25 of its communities. This is an important pillar to make sure we are reaching all Canadian families where they are, with affordable, high-quality and accessible child care.

**Ms. Michelle Ferreri (Peterborough—Kawartha, CPC):** Madam Speaker, as always, it is in an honour and privilege to speak on behalf of Canadians and the people of my community, Peterborough—Kawartha.

Before I begin, I would like to take a moment to recognize the life and service of Hazel “Hurricane” McCallion. She was what all

of us inside of the House should aspire to be, which is fierce, fair and for the people.

“Rest in peace, Ms. McCallion. You made Canada better.”

Today, we are debating Bill C-35, an act respecting early learning and child care in Canada. As a mom and as the shadow minister for families, children and social development, I cannot understate the importance and value of affordable, quality child care. However, affordable, quality child care does not exist if one cannot access it.

As a shadow minister and critic, it is my job to speak up for all Canadians and point out what is wrong with the bill. It is my job to listen to the frontline staff and parents who are directly impacted by the bill and speak on their behalf.

I do not think we will find a Canadian who does not want what is best for their children. However, we must acknowledge that it is not the government’s job to decide what is best for one’s child. Rather, it is the parent, the caregiver.

Every Canadian deserves to choose what works best for their family when it comes to child care. Every family dynamic is different, and our diversity and our culture are what make Canada Canada. What works for one family may not work for another. We all have different situations, circumstances and needs.

Bill C-35 would not offer choice for families. In fact, it would exclude many Canadians from accessing quality, affordable child care. This bill speaks exclusively to those who already have a child care space with a public or not-for-profit child care operator. It does not offer anything to families who have been on wait-lists for years. It does not offer anything for families who choose to raise their children at home, use a grandparent or access a private or home-run day care.

There is no freedom to choose in this bill, and there is absolutely no mention of how to manage the frontline burnout and labour shortage of child care providers.

Bill C-35 would not solve the problem of the staff shortages and the out-of-control wait-lists to access child care across this country. In fact, the bill would do exactly the opposite. It would increase the demand for affordable child care and leave parents with no access. This bill would subsidize the wealthy instead of prioritizing our most vulnerable families who need child care.

### *Government Orders*

The bill specifically says, “enable families of varying incomes to benefit from affordable early learning and child care programs and services”. In a cost-of-living crisis, why is the Liberal government subsidizing the most wealthy?

This message is from Morgan, who sent it to me. She says, “I think my story is pretty common among new parents right now. I have three children, one in school and I have to go back to work in February from my latest maternity leave. I’ve been on the waitlist since I was 8 weeks pregnant and still won’t have any care for at least another year likely.” She asks whether she is just supposed to give up her career, her income, her pension and her benefits. She continues, saying, “I’m not sure how I am supposed to provide for my family with no income. Many daycares I have reached out to say they have had to shut down some of their rooms, meaning even less child care spots.”

Here is another story from an operator in Peterborough, Ontario. She says that they have a child in their preschool program who is eligible for the Canada-wide early learning and child care program, or, as many call it, the CWELCC, and who has a sibling in the senior before and after school program who is not eligible for CWELCC because of their age. Program eligibility, for those who do not know, is only for children under six.

The day care operator says that the parent fee for the preschool child is \$19.85 a day, for up to 10 hours of care. The day care is open 7:30 to 5:30. This fee includes a hot lunch prepared by their cook, as well as two snacks each day, also prepared by the cook. For the senior before and after school child, the fee is \$24 a day for a maximum of three hours and 45 minutes. This includes one snack per day.

• (1235)

She asks where the equity is in this. Families who have children over six are not entitled to CWELCC program fee reductions and therefore are paying more for under four hours of care than families who are entitled to a full day of care with a hot lunch and two snacks.

This example points out many of the flaws in the bill. What about parents who work shift work, are entrepreneurs or who work weekends? Where can they take their kids for child care?

Second, how would the bill create more spaces when the child care operator who has written this letter is located in a school, and there are physically no more spaces to put in the school?

Furthermore, how would this bill help with the labour shortage? There is no labour strategy in this bill.

Matthew Lau’s synopsis of this bill and the Liberals’ failed attempt at child care is spot-on. He writes that the challenges are the same across the board and there are not enough qualified staff to keep all existing child care centres running at full capacity, let alone staff new spaces.

Bill C-35 has nothing in it to fix these problems.

Andrea Hannen, the Executive Director of the Association of Day Care Operators of Ontario, or ADCO, gives many examples of what we can expect with this Liberal flawed bill. She says, for ex-

ample, that taxpayers and the families who use the program will wind up paying more and more for it, while all children will wind up getting less and less.

This bill, like most Liberal policy, says a lot of really nice things but gives zero details on how any of these nice things will be delivered or how they will be achieved. The Liberals love to promise unrealistic expectations, and then act shocked when they cannot achieve them. They also love to tell taxpayers to just trust them.

After eight years of this Prime Minister and seeing how badly Canadians are suffering, we do not trust them. The Financial Accountability Office of Ontario says there is a committed shortfall of \$1.2 billion in 2026-27 based on the minimum federal and provincial commitment. We have barely started, and we can already see there is no sustainability plan here.

Susan Cake, chair of Child Care Now Alberta, an advocacy organization, says that there has been a giant frustration in Alberta about the lack of communication, that everybody does not know what is going on, does not know where funding is coming from and does not know where they are going to get money.

I want to take a minute right now. This is very important to listen to, because as members may have heard earlier, the minister talked about how this is such an advancement for feminism. This bill would do exactly the opposite.

Feedback from the Association of Alberta Childcare Entrepreneurs said that the majority of private child care in Alberta is operated by women, with a large number being immigrant women, and that the impact of this agreement and the intention of the federal government to prioritize the business model of child care rather than the affordability, accessibility or quality of care is having the opposite effect on women. It notes that we are seeing a women-led industry targeted and pushed out of business, and that women across our province are facing bankruptcy and losing their homes because they signed on to this agreement because they wanted and advocated for affordable child care.

The association also notes the creation of a two-tiered child care system. For example, one of its directors has a centre in Grand Prairie. She had a wait-list of over 400 families, so she decided to expand even though she understood the new spaces would not have access to the affordability program. Now in her centre she has her original 120 spaces with families paying an average of \$13 a day, and 86 new spaces with families paying an average of \$65 a day for the same care in the same centre. This is an unintended consequence of this child care program.



*Government Orders*

The written feedback also says that there are new centres sitting empty. They are fully operational and licensed, but because of their choice to be private operators, they cannot access subsidies for families. There are centres with wait-lists of 100 families but only four children attending, because the other families need the subsidy and cannot access it in that centre. These women who have invested their savings and taken the initiative to open centres and meet the needs of their communities are going bankrupt. They likely have signed 10- to 20-year leases with personal guarantees of their families' homes and assets, but the federal government is restricting them from having access to a fair market to operate their businesses. The message this sends is that the choice of these parents does not matter and that these women are collateral damage to meeting this Liberal campaign promise in an NDP coalition.

● (1240)

As the Association of Alberta Childcare Entrepreneurs has pointed out, we must have private child care along with public and not-for-profit centres to meet the demand and to offer the choice to fit what is best for families. However, the language and intention of this bill clearly leave private child care operators in the cold. The exact language from the bill reads that it is to “facilitate access to early learning and child care programs and services — in particular those that are provided by public and not for profit child care providers”.

How can we expect to meet the demand without private operators? We cannot. We need them, yet this bill clearly leaves out any representation from private operators on the national council. What does that say? It says the same thing the Liberals always say, namely that they will decide what is best. They will decide how to spend our money. They will decide who the representatives are at the table. They do not believe in the fair market or having freedom of choice. It is not right. It is not good leadership, and it is not a good long-term strategy for our country.

Ontario's Financial Accountability Office projects that by 2026, there will be 602,000 children under the age of six whose families will want \$10-a-day day care, but the province will only be able to accommodate 37,000 of them. That will leave 38% of children without access. Government estimates also suggest that by 2026, there could be a shortage of 8,500 early childhood workers.

In British Columbia, 27% of child care centres turn away children because of a lack of staff. One director, who oversees 13 child care programs that comprise 350 spaces, said that in the past two years, they have had to close programs temporarily, whether by closing for a day or two or shortening hours for the week.

In Peterborough, we have 4,200 licensed child care spaces in our city and county. There are 3,500 children on the wait-list. Frontline burnout is hurting our entire economy and contributing to our mental health crisis, as is not being able to access quality child care.

When the minister says that more women will be able to go to work, she is misleading Canadians. One cannot go to work if one lacks access to child care. One cannot help address our labour shortage without available day care spots. They will say they are going to create more spaces but give zero details of a plan for achieving that.

Bill C-35 does not solve these problems. It is not a child care strategy. It is a headline marketing plan.

Women are rethinking having children because of the cost-of-living crisis and because there is just no access to child care. I know many women who put their name on a wait-list before they were pregnant; now they have toddlers but no indication if they will ever get a child care spot. Accessing quality child care is one of life's greatest stressors. Any mom or parent watching this knows that leaving their child with somebody is the ultimate stressor in life. Parents need choice about who to leave their children with. It is an indescribable stress.

Parents deserve access to quality child care; more importantly, our children deserve access to quality care. If we are not invested in our children's welfare, then what is our future? Children are our future. They are our most precious resource, and this bill does not put children first. It is a marketing plan.

● (1245)

The following is Meredith's story:

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“I have been on a wait list for my 21 month old son since the day he was born, I have never come off of it nor have I received notice that I am coming to the top of any list, let alone some of the choices I feel would best suit our families needs. I’m now pregnant with my second and have already registered this baby on the list in hopes of having more success next time. I have spent countless hours on Facebook groups, asking friends, on paid service websites trying to find adequate care. It’s sad to me because I thought I would be choosing the center/provider that best suited our needs as a family, but it would appear that we are being forced to just accept whatever we get. I have also heard from friends who applied strictly for part time care who gave gotten calls from centres that only accept full time spots. This makes me question how many people are taking up spots on a list for full time when in reality they only require part time care? This seems like a simple issue to fix in the application process. In Facebook groups I see posts every single day of mothers and fathers desperately seeking care as their time on leave has run out and they still don’t have a reliable option. I consider myself lucky, I decided to leave my job after maternity leave and start my own business because I don’t feel I will ever be comfortable leaving my children wherever I get to the top of the list first. This has presented its own challenges as a full time parent & a full time entrepreneur, but at least I am not desperately seeking care left between feeding my family & staying home to care for my children”.

She goes on to state, “This entire thing breaks my heart as I also think that while there are certainly many dads highly involved in the search for care, it ultimately seems to fall on women who are now being forced to leave their careers and remain home with their children despite wanting to return to the workplace”.

It is really unfortunate that someone cannot be present with their children because they are so stressed out about whether they will be able to find child care and go back to work. They do not have a choice; they have to go back to work to pay for food because of inflation and the cost-of-living crisis.

In terms of poor planning, alongside not providing clear communication or details on this ideologically driven bill, we have reports coming from child care centres explaining that parents are being charged an extra fee because, as everyone watching knows, the cost of food has skyrocketed after eight years under the current Prime Minister.

As reported by The Globe and Mail, “Governments' daycare budgets didn't account for inflation, and it's affecting how kids are fed”.

Ashley Collins is co-chief executive officer of Compass Early Learning and Care, which operates 40 child care programs across Canada. She estimates that Compass has had to increase its food budget by up to 10%. She said, “There's so many multifaceted things like we need to do from an operational level – make sure that food can continue, but also our staff, being able to make sure we're still putting money into increasing wages”.

According to The Globe and Mail, “Compass programs will continue to look for sales on food and adjust menus accordingly rather than cut food offerings or add them as an extra fee”.

“How unfortunate would it be that centres are feeling like they have to add that extra fee at a time when fees are supposed to be going down,” Ashley Collins said.

There is so much wrong with this bill, and I cannot stress enough that Conservatives believe in freedom of choice for quality, affordable child care. Everybody wants that. However, this bill is flawed, and simply listening to parents, child care operators and frontline workers should have given the knowledge needed to fix it.

We just need to listen to the people who are impacted by this to know what not to do. Clearly, the Liberals believe that Ottawa knows best. Conservatives know that Canadians know best, not Ottawa bureaucrats. We are elected to serve the people, and service means listening and doing something that is better, not worse.

There are concrete policy decisions that can help families. Affordable and quality child care is critical, but if it cannot be accessed, it does not exist. It is great that we are having this conversation. It is great that we are recognizing how important affordable and quality child care is, but this bill falls very short on achieving results and details, as well as providing equal opportunities for families to access quality, affordable child care.

It is because we have listened to parents, frontline staff and operators across this country that Conservatives believe we can fix this. We do not want to leave Canadians without hope. We know how important hope is. We can offer the freedom for families to choose what is best for them.

● (1250)

The Conservatives will put forth strong amendments to address these glaring shortcomings in the legislation and ensure all Canadians can access affordable quality child care. Their children are important—

**The Assistant Deputy Speaker (Mrs. Carol Hughes):** I am sorry. The time is up.

Questions and comments, the hon. Minister of Families, Children and Social Development.

*Government Orders*

**Hon. Karina Gould (Minister of Families, Children and Social Development, Lib.):** Madam Speaker, I want to thank my hon. colleague for her speech because she has pointed out exactly why this bill is important. All of the issues she raised are issues that have arisen because we did not have national leadership on child care. There was no system before. The system that was there was a patchwork, and it did not provide for the needs of families across this country. Wait-lists existed before and exist today. That is why we are committed to creating 250,000 new spaces. There was no affordability. If the Conservatives truly care about these issues, this is an opportunity for them to join us in supporting this bill.

Can we count on the hon. minister's support to improve this for families across Canada?

**Ms. Michelle Ferreri:** Madam Speaker, I just got called an hon. minister, so I thank the minister for that.

The reality is there is nothing in the bill that shows any solutions. Yes, we are addressing the problems; that is what my whole speech was dedicated to doing. However, how is the government going to create 250,000 spaces when many of these day care locations physically do not have the space? How is it going to increase the labour force? There is no national strategy in this bill. Why is private day care not represented? Why is there no private representation on the national council? Yes, affordable quality child care is critical, but if it cannot be accessed, it does not exist. This bill does not cover it.

• (1255)

[*Translation*]

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

It is clear to me that western Canada's vision is not the same as Quebec's. The member talked about parents who have to make a decision. They still have to make decisions. Let us look at what Quebec does for child care. It is really quite extraordinary, and we have been doing it for years. The impact on child development is clear both in terms of sociology and education.

You talked about private child care. How much do you think that will cost, and who in your region will have access?

**The Assistant Deputy Speaker (Mrs. Carol Hughes):** I would remind the hon. member that she must address the Chair, not speak to members directly.

The hon. member for Peterborough—Kawartha.

[*English*]

**Ms. Michelle Ferreri:** Madam Speaker, it is wonderful to be able to examine Quebec. I think that is really beneficial for many of us.

Sometimes we need to have really hard conversations. The reality is this. What we all want in utopia is lovely, but we have to figure out the cost analysis of everything. It must have a fair market value. Absolutely, publicly licensed child care would change the lives of some children, especially those who do not have an option for anything else or something at home. This is absolutely critical. However, the bill does not meet that demand; it would increase the demand for wait-lists, and it would not close the gap. Therefore, we need that private representation.

**Ms. Leah Gazan (Winnipeg Centre, NDP):** Madam Speaker, it is always a pleasure to work with my colleague on the status of women committee. She spoke a lot about the need for for-profit care. That was a bit concerning for me because research has shown that for-profit care is not good for workers and is paid for on the backs of parents and families. I know that in Ontario, the PC government has quietly removed some of the profit caps, allowing for the expansion of for-profit care. We know this is problematic, and it is not supported by main national child care organizations, such as Child Care Now and the Childcare Resource and Research Unit, or unions, such as NUPGE, CUPE and Unifor. We see unions backing workers. The NDP has always been the party of workers, and unions are saying the workers need public, not-for-profit care.

Does the member believe that federal funds should be used to expand, as she indicated clearly, for-profit care at the expense of public non-profit care, something that has been supported by unions and national child care organizations across the country?

**Ms. Michelle Ferreri:** Madam Speaker, I thank my colleague, and it is a pleasure to work with her on the status of women committee.

We cannot meet the demand without both sectors, and every stakeholder will tell us that. We cannot access quality, affordable child care if it does not exist.

What I would pull out of the member's comment, which is concerning, is that many of these private day cares are run by women. Some say that is hurting the workforce, but these women are trying to make a living and trying to provide for their family by offering day care. They are opening access to their communities.

We need to come to the table and find a solution, because cutting them out is not fair; it is not equal access.

**Ms. Lianne Rood (Lambton—Kent—Middlesex, CPC):** Madam Speaker, the member really hit the nail on the head when she asked how we can create more spaces if we do not have the labour force to back that up. I hear that in rural Canada in my riding, where mothers and parents are waiting on lists for years to find child care. However, the bill does not address the shortage of child care in rural Canada.

I wonder if my colleague could comment on what kind of strategy the Conservatives would have to help families that are in need of child care across this country, especially in the rural areas of Canada.

*Government Orders*

• (1300)

**Ms. Michelle Ferreri:** Madam Speaker, the member is absolutely right. There is a wild promise of 250,000 child care spaces, but I have not heard one detail on how that is going to be achieved. It is certainly not in the bill. Let us sit down and listen, especially to these places that have no more space.

What are we going to do? Well, the private sector is critical. We cannot meet the demand without both. We need equal access. We need fair access. Parents need to be able to choose, and then we need to figure out the labour strategy. There is no mention of a national labour strategy in the bill, and until that is addressed, this problem is not going to go away; it is going to get worse.

**Mr. Kevin Lamoureux (Parliamentary Secretary to the Leader of the Government in the House of Commons, Lib.):** Madam Speaker, I am disappointed in the Conservative Party. Here we have a very progressive policy for the children of our country and an opportunity for the Conservatives to reverse the position they took in the last election, when they said they would get rid of the child care program, a program that has been signed off on by provinces and territories. It is an opportunity for Canadians to have affordable child care.

The legislation we are voting on today is not meant to provide the details the member is looking for. Look at the agreements. It is in the agreements. This is the framework.

Why is the Conservative Party sticking to its election platform and throwing out a national child care program when, in fact, this is the type of program we should all be supporting? It is the only party in the chamber voting against this legislation.

**Ms. Michelle Ferreri:** Madam Speaker, I think the member was listening to a different speech, because nowhere did we say that we were throwing it out and nowhere did we say that we were voting against it.

[Translation]

**Mr. Yves Perron (Berthier—Maskinongé, BQ):** Madam Speaker, as I listened to my Conservative colleague's remarks, I heard a lot of objections, a lot of—

[English]

**The Assistant Deputy Speaker (Mrs. Carol Hughes):** I do not think the hon. member will be able to hear the question if there are conversations going on with members of the government at the same time. I would ask the member to listen to the question so she will be able to answer it.

[Translation]

The hon. member for Berthier—Maskinongé may ask a brief question.

**Mr. Yves Perron:** Madam Speaker, obviously I have gotten pretty good at speaking while other people are talking. This is the result of three years of training as a member of Parliament.

I listened to my colleague's speech, which raised many doubts and questions. Has she seen the progress made in Quebec since our child care programs were implemented? This goes for both private and public programs. Private day care facilities still exist in Que-

bec, and there are still tax credits, but in the early childhood education centres, there are also educational programs.

I had the great privilege of contributing to the creation of the early childhood education network with my own children. I invite my colleague to consider that aspect. We must not throw the baby out with the bathwater, as they say. We must vote in favour of this bill and work to improve it.

[English]

**Ms. Michelle Ferreri:** Madam Speaker, I guess I need to be clear. We would not be throwing out the baby with the bathwater, but it is also really important to see the shortcomings that have happened in Quebec and how many people are still on a wait-list. How do we improve? How do we do better? That is what we need to focus on for solutions, because quality, affordable child care is critical for our country, and we need to recognize that we need solutions.

[Translation]

**Ms. Sylvie Bérubé (Abitibi—Baie-James—Nunavik—Eeyou, BQ):** Madam Speaker, I will be sharing my time with my colleague, the member for Laurentides—Labelle.

**The Assistant Deputy Speaker (Mrs. Carol Hughes):** The hon. member needs the unanimous consent of the House to share her time.

[English]

Is there unanimous consent for the hon. member to share her time?

**Some hon. members:** Agreed.

• (1305)

[Translation]

**Ms. Sylvie Bérubé:** Madam Speaker, I am pleased to be back here in the House. I would like to thank my team in Val-d'Or, Lebel-sur-Quévillon and Chibougamau for the work they are doing for my constituents. I also want to say hello to the people of Abitibi—James Bay—Nunavik—Eeyou.

I rise today to speak to Bill C-35, an act respecting early learning and child care in Canada, which was tabled by the Minister of Families, Children and Social Development on December 8.

If passed, Bill C-35 will enshrine in law the Liberal government's commitment to maintaining long-term program funding for the provinces and indigenous peoples, as well as guiding principles for that federal funding. The bill contains no specific financial promises for the national program, but enshrining it in law could make it more difficult for a future government to dismantle.

*Government Orders*

As we know, for many years now, many Canadian families have been envious of Quebec's child care system, because child care often eats up a large portion of their household income. These families have long dreamed of being able to benefit from the same service that families in Quebec have been receiving for decades. It is therefore high time that all Canadian families were able to access child care without breaking the bank.

In 2022, Quebec celebrated the 25th anniversary of its family policy. On January 23, 1997, the Parti Québécois government's Minister of Education, Pauline Marois, unveiled the Quebec family policy, which was based on five main pillars: child care services and parental leave; the family allowance; the work premium; the solidarity tax credit; and the refundable tax credit for child care expenses.

The family policy was developed as a result of changes in Quebec's population, including an increase in the number of single-parent and blended families, greater numbers of women in the workforce, and the troubling rise of precarious employment. This groundbreaking policy allowed Quebecers to improve their work-life or school-life balance and benefit from more generous maternity and parental leave, and it extended family assistance programs to self-employed workers and workers with atypical work schedules. This model is a valuable program that the entire Quebec nation is proud of.

Providing early childhood educational services was also a giant step forward for education in Quebec. These services increase students' chances of academic success and prevent them from dropping out, positively impact early childhood development, allow for the early detection of learning disabilities and adjustment difficulties, and ensure that all young Quebecers start off on the same footing, regardless of their sex, ethnic origin or social class.

Considering the popular support they enjoy, the new child care centres rank among one of the greatest successes of the new social economy, being democratically managed using an approach that involves both parents and educators.

The mission of Quebec's early childhood education services is threefold: one, to ensure the well-being, health and safety of the children receiving care; two, to provide an environment that stimulates their development in every way, from birth to school age; and three, to prevent learning, behavioural and social integration problems from appearing later on. Child care services provide a conduit for instilling values, culture and language. This system helps children grow and develop more healthily from an early age. This is an important principle of childhood socialization and sharing.

In my opinion, a real family policy like the one in Quebec, which includes components such as family leave, income support and an accessible child care network, must be integrated into a coherent whole in order to be effective, so it should be overseen by just one level of government.

I myself took advantage of our child care services, and my children received an education that contributed to their success in life. It is truly a pleasure to bring a child to the centre in the morning, knowing that they are safe, that they will learn something and dis-

cover their creativity, and that they are picking up life skills by making friends they can play with.

I have to say that the Bloc Québécois supports Bill C-35 in principle, but we think it is somewhat ambiguous. On the one hand, it does not comply with the distribution of powers set out in the Constitution, but on the other, it excludes Quebec from the federal family policy for the next five years.

● (1310)

Let me explain. The Constitution clearly states that education and family policy are not under federal jurisdiction. Moreover, although the bill states that the provinces will be able to certify child care services and determine the applicable criteria, it also states that every government in Canada will have to comply with the principles set out in the multilateral early learning and child care framework.

This framework is full of good intentions and fine principles, but it is based on the federal government's supposed spending power, which Quebec does not consider legitimate or legal. One thing is clear: This bill was not tabled in the right parliament.

On the other hand, the bill excludes Quebec from the federal family policy for the next five years. The Quebec government will receive \$6 billion in compensation for opting out of the centralizing policy. This demonstrates respect for Quebec's aversion to federal meddling in its jurisdictions, especially since Quebec is not only a pioneer in child care services, but is hailed as a model for success.

Nonetheless, unlike Bill C-303, Bill C-35's predecessor, there is no indication of any exemption for Quebec in the current wording of the bill. This is how clause 4 of Bill C-303 was worded:

Recognizing the unique nature of the jurisdiction of the Government of Quebec with regard to the education and development of children in Quebec society, and notwithstanding any other provision of this Act, the Government of Quebec may choose to be exempted from the application of this Act and, notwithstanding any such decision, shall receive the full transfer payment that would otherwise be paid under section 5.

The agreement signed with the Quebec government is valid for five years. However, giving Quebec the full right to opt out of this program would help avoid another dispute between Ottawa and Quebec City when the federal government inevitably interferes in Quebec's jurisdiction, as it is wont to do.

During the joint announcement by the federal government and the Legault government, the Premier of Quebec indicated that the federal government would continue to help Quebec and that the agreement would respect Quebec's jurisdictions. The Premier of Quebec, Mr. Legault, said that after 2026, he will expect help from the federal government.

*Government Orders*

The passage of Bill C-35 would make it possible for Quebec to recover significant sums that it could use to complete its network and enhance working conditions for workers in the sector. By allowing Quebec to opt out and be fully compensated, Bill C-35 takes into consideration these two opposing tendencies in federal-provincial relations, which is rare on the part of the federal government. Outside Quebec, Ottawa is seen as a force for social progress, which results in a strong tendency towards centralization. In Quebec, we reject this interference.

However, as I just mentioned, unlike its predecessor, Bill C-303, specifically clause 4, this bill does not provide for the right to unconditionally opt out. It is essential that this be included in order to reflect this opposing view of Canada, that is centralization outside Quebec and respect for jurisdictions within Quebec.

Finally, it would be a good idea for Bill C-35 to emulate its predecessor by recognizing the Quebec government's unique expertise on day care services in North America, as the international community did in 2003. In its study of day care in Canada, the OECD stated that it is "important to underline...the extraordinary advance made by Quebec, which has launched one of the most ambitious and interesting early education and care policies in North America...none of [the Canadian provinces] showed the same clarity of vision as Quebec in addressing the needs of young children and families".

In closing, it is my hope that all Canadian families will one day be able to enjoy the same child care benefits as Quebec families. We know that, in addition to giving a financial boost to Canadian families, this would enable more mothers to enter the job market. It is an investment in a better future for our children, and our children are the future.

**Mrs. Élisabeth Brière (Parliamentary Secretary to the Minister of Mental Health and Addictions and Associate Minister of Health, Lib.):** Madam Speaker, I thank my colleague for her speech.

Like her, I have been able to benefit from child care for my three boys. In fact, I would like to take this opportunity to thank the excellent educators at the Carrosse-Citrouille early childhood centre for taking such good care of my children.

As my colleague pointed out, Quebec has had a universal low-fee child care program since 1997. Econometric studies have shown a positive correlation between this program and women's participation in the workforce.

I would like to know whether my colleague agrees that this enables women to go back to work or to school. We need to invest in women. It can improve their financial situation and perhaps even get them out of an abusive environment.

• (1315)

**Ms. Sylvie Bérubé:** Madam Speaker, this will indeed help women return to the workforce, and it will help families support them. We know that child care is very expensive. This service will be a huge help to families, and it will also support early childhood education.

[English]

**Mr. Garnett Genuis (Sherwood Park—Fort Saskatchewan, CPC):** Madam Speaker, one of the trends we are seeing, which has really been accelerated by the pandemic, is flexible work. People are working from home and looking to be able to combine family life with work in different ways. Therefore, they are still very much needing child care, but they are looking for more creative options, which may be in their neighbourhood, may be at odd hours and may reflect the particulars of their work situation.

One of the concerns I have with the government's one-size-fits-all approach to child care is that it would fund a particular kind of child care model that is not consistent with the way many families live. As technology changes, the government's program is not keeping up with this evolution and how people are trying to combine work with family life. I wonder if the member could talk about whether she agrees that the government's approach is failing to be flexible to accommodate all families with the way the program is structured.

[Translation]

**Ms. Sylvie Bérubé:** Madam Speaker, all we have to do is look at child care in Quebec. That model gives women access to better benefits and enables them to stay home. That also means better outcomes for children, so I do not agree with my colleague's point of view. I actually agree with the government's point of view because it looked at how things are done in Quebec, which sets the bar.

[English]

**Ms. Lori Idlout (Nunavut, NDP): Uqaqtittiji,** I hope the member joins me in congratulating all the athletes who are going to the Arctic Winter Games. I am sure she has constituents in her riding who are attending that great event as well.

I have read the bill, and it is great to see there are specific provisions not only for indigenous peoples and indigenous governance but also for implementing the United Nations Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples. I know that the member has huge indigenous communities, including I believe nine Cree communities and 14 Inuit communities. I wonder what the member has heard from those constituents regarding this bill.

[Translation]

**Ms. Sylvie Bérubé:** Madam Speaker, I congratulate all the students heading off to the athletic event in western Canada.

This bill will really help indigenous communities. We were waiting to see the document to make sure. I am sure it will help all communities in northern Quebec and in Abitibi—Baie-James—Nunavik—Eeyou.

**The Assistant Deputy Speaker (Mrs. Carol Hughes):** The hon. member for Longueuil—Saint-Hubert may ask a brief question.

*Government Orders*

**Mr. Denis Trudel (Longueuil—Saint-Hubert, BQ):** Madam Speaker, I do not know if I can be brief.

My colleague did a great job explaining how progressive Quebec is. It is surprising and always a pleasure to see how the federal government can follow Quebec's example, instead of lecturing Quebec as it does most of the time. Every once in a while it looks at Quebec and decides to implement the Quebec model from coast to coast to coast.

There are even more areas where it could follow Quebec's example but, unfortunately, does not. This bill respects provincial jurisdictions, which has never been the case with the health transfers we have been asking for for years.

Does my colleague not think the federal government could use Bill C-35 as an opportunity to really respond to the provinces' requests, specifically by putting more money into the system—

**The Assistant Deputy Speaker (Mrs. Carol Hughes):** I have already allowed more than enough time for a short question. I would ask for a short answer, please.

**Ms. Sylvie Bérubé:** Madam Speaker, yes, the government must provide the transfers that Quebec needs. This is very important. We must not forget this.

• (1320)

**Ms. Marie-Hélène Gaudreau (Laurentides—Labelle, BQ):** Madam Speaker, my wish for my colleagues is that 2023 is a bit different than these past few years.

A few minutes ago, I heard my colleague ask if we could encourage people to get into politics and set aside partisan rhetoric on the thousands of files before us.

Today I have the great pleasure of speaking to Bill C-35. I say bravo because we are entirely in favour in principle. I am very proud of that. I must also say that my colleague did a fine job explaining the ins and outs of everything that might be missing from this bill.

I will talk more about the pride of Quebec for more than 25 years now. Having heard the speech by my Conservative colleague, I hope to give the others a bit more of an understanding of the purpose of this bill and the need to see it through.

I want to look back because I want to talk about how proud I am. Just before being appointed, the first female premier of Quebec introduced a forward-thinking family policy that changed the lives of countless families and boosted the economy. It levelled the playing field for everyone and put children on the path to educational success, and I am very proud of that. What is more, the policy was implemented in a reasonable way that did not break parents' budgets. That is why, at the time, it was known as the groundbreaking \$5 day care. Today, it does not even cost \$9 a day. For us, it is still a good program with benefits that I will talk about in the next few minutes.

As the minister said earlier, in 1997, this program made it possible for children from all walks of life and all social classes to attend day care and for all parents, both men and women, who had never even considered doing so, to go back to work and become independent, to prepare to take the path I talked about earlier.

Madam Speaker, my colleagues are really bothering me. I thought we had set the stage for a minimum level of respect. They need to go talk somewhere else besides right in front of me because I am finding it difficult to keep speaking. I want to point that out.

**The Assistant Deputy Speaker (Mrs. Carol Hughes):** I would ask anyone who wants to have a conversation when someone is giving a speech in the House to do so in the lobby. All members should be shown that respect.

The hon. member for Laurentides—Labelle.

**Ms. Marie-Hélène Gaudreau:** Madam Speaker, in Quebec, we call them *centres de la petite enfance*, or CPEs.

This has allowed parents, like me for that matter, to not have to make the agonizing choice of deciding which parent should stay home to educate and prepare children for school based on family income.

Twenty-five years ago, many women often earned less than their spouses. The child care system has not only provided equal opportunity for children, but also equality and prosperity for women. If we look at the numbers, we can see there has been an increase in women in business and in the workforce. As we know, the numbers are incredible. A quarter of a century later, and the numbers do not lie. We cannot ignore them.

Quebeckers are very proud of this model. Obviously, I am, too.

Earlier, my colleague mentioned that Quebec has been cited as an example, particularly at the Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development. In 2003, it was noted that Quebec had implemented one of the most ambitious education and child care policies. It was very ambitious when you look at North America as a whole.

Here is what I want to tell my Conservative colleagues. Studies have shown that every dollar invested in child care returns almost \$2—\$1.75, actually—in tax revenue. An extra dollar invested in health and early learning saves our health, social and judicial systems \$9. As I said at the start, the child care system makes a huge contribution to economic development, equal opportunity and the prosperity of women who want to be in the workforce.

We also have numbers that show lower drop-out rates, and I am very proud of that.

We agree with the principle of the bill. Who would oppose giving our kids the best possible opportunity? If that is where we start from, I think we have a proposal that we can re-evaluate in five years. Quebec's child care model is not new; it has been around for over 25 years. We have numbers to prove all this. I think we might even see the Conservatives admit that helping the community as a whole has an enormous impact.

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As a brief aside, I can say that one plus one equals two. If we take the necessary steps to educate people in their workplace and improve their working conditions, we could see a significant reduction in the labour shortage that exists across Quebec and Canada. The labour shortage is therefore not a good argument.

Since I have barely three minutes left, I would like to talk about what I experienced more than 15 years ago and why I am proud to have been so heavily involved. I was the president of La Fourmilière early child care centre. This was at a time when program coordinators had to be deployed to ensure that spaces were maximized and that the programs could be managed in both institutional and home-based settings. In fact, there are still home-based child care centres operating today.

This is very important to me. I want to take 20 seconds to recognize a woman who dedicated her life to early childhood education. Thirty years ago, it was called kindergarten. Then there was a program called Passe-Partout. Today, it is called the CPE La Fourmilière.

• (1325)

Her name is Suzie Leblanc. I offer my condolences to her family. Suzie passed away over the holidays. My sympathies go out to Véro and her entire family. This does have an impact. We cannot forget that.

Obviously, jurisdictions need to be respected. We in the Bloc Québécois keep saying that. Who could be against that? Just five minutes ago, we heard a member mention that, for once, jurisdictions were respected when it comes to the right to full compensation. I look forward to getting this bill passed. I hope things will turn around. Maybe the same will happen with health transfers. That is my biggest wish for 2023.

On behalf of our children, the next generation, the economy and women's empowerment in the workforce, I want to congratulate the minister for taking action and standing her ground. The Bloc will be there.

• (1330)

**Hon. Karina Gould (Minister of Families, Children and Social Development, Lib.):** Madam Speaker, I would like to thank my colleague and all my Bloc Québécois colleagues for supporting this bill.

Quebec is most definitely a leader in this area. We have learned so much from Quebec's experience over the past 25 years. I would also like to thank my colleague for speaking about her pride in Quebec's early childhood and day care centres.

I would like to ask her the following question. Could she tell us a bit more about why a lack of access to child care is not a choice for women? Could she explain to the Conservatives what choice means?

**Ms. Marie-Hélène Gaudreau:** Madam Speaker, that is a good question. I thank the minister for asking it.

Here is my answer. How do we judge whether parents, who are acting out of love for their children, have everything they need based on their situation?

It seems to me that we should give everyone the opportunity to get an education in a safe setting in order to prepare children for the future. It is odd to be talking about this here, because education matters are usually discussed at the National Assembly. How can we say that the labour shortage and the lack of attention paid to the private sector mean that we are not going to go ahead and not even try it? The bill provides for a five-year timeline. Could we just try it, please?

[*English*]

**Mr. Colin Carrie (Oshawa, CPC):** Madam Speaker, I am from Oshawa, and in Oshawa we do factory work. Conservatives believe in equal support and accessibility. I am wondering what my colleague's comments would be for people who are working shift work, whether that is overnight or in the afternoon, or people who are rural who would like to have equal access and support.

It is very important for me. My wife has her ECE. It is very important for all Canadians, but on this idea of accessibility and equality, I was wondering if she maybe has some input and advice for the government.

[*Translation*]

**Ms. Marie-Hélène Gaudreau:** Madam Speaker, anything is possible after 25 years. As I said, I worked in the forestry industry for seven years. For 44 hours a week, there were three shifts, including a night shift, so day care centres that are open non-standard hours do exist.

I would ask members not to get hung up on the wording, but instead to look at how we can seize this moment to create opportunities for those who work nights and weekends. Anything is possible. We are doing this out of love for our children and their future.

[*English*]

**Ms. Rachel Blaney (North Island—Powell River, NDP):** Madam Speaker, in my riding we are really struggling to find health care providers. One of the things that we have heard loud and clear as the biggest challenge is child care, and a lot of people in the health care industry are women.

I am wondering if the member could speak a little about the impact this could have on women to open doors for them to enter the workforce and the very clear example we have seen in Quebec.

[*Translation*]

**Ms. Marie-Hélène Gaudreau:** That is a very good question, Madam Speaker.

Studies have indeed shown that, when education is at the heart of a community, then health care prevention is possible. When individuals are fortunate enough to be informed, to feel safe and to be educated, it has a direct impact on health care.

As I said at the outset, for every dollar we invest in health and social services, we save nine dollars. Often, a government will invest all of its pennies in prevention, but then it still has to take a curative approach.



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This bill will have positive effects, but we will not see the results right away. We need to give the children time to reach age three, four or five and start school. I can guarantee that this will bring about change, and there are statistics to prove it. That is what I wish for all of Canada, because we Quebeckers are very proud of the family policy we have had for the past 25 years.

● (1335)

[*English*]

**Ms. Leah Gazan (Winnipeg Centre, NDP):** Madam Speaker, it is an honour to rise today as the NDP's critic for children, families and social development to address this historic legislation, Bill C-35.

Finally, after so many years of struggle, we have a national child care legislation that accompanies a system of national child care.

Let me begin by acknowledging the people who made this system and the bill we are debating today possible. There are too many names to mention, but let me say this. Generations of feminists, trade unionists, child care workers and advocates made this victory possible. They never, ever gave up the fight. They did not give up after the 1970 Royal Commission on the Status of Women's recommendation for a national child care program was ignored by the government of the day. They did not give up after the 1993 Liberal red book promised national child care, only for that government to pursue deep cuts to social programs instead. They did not give up during the 10 years of a Harper government that viewed child care as a dirty word. It has been 30 years since the Liberals promised a national child care program and, as a result of their relentless advocacy, we finally find ourselves here today.

I, a proud New Democrat, along with my colleagues, am proud to stand here today in support of Bill C-35 on behalf of our party, which has always prided itself on being a feminist movement and a vocal advocate for an affordable, accessible, universal child care program.

Our party prides itself on standing alongside organizations, advocates and unions in their demonstration of courage and commitment even when the possibility of national child care seemed so unlikely. It is because of their tenacity and their refusal to quit even when the odds were against them that we are here today.

I stand on their shoulders; we stand on their shoulders.

I also want to acknowledge the role that our party and particularly women in the NDP have played in getting us to this point. Olivia Chow, the former MP for Trinity—Spadina is a child care champion. Her private member's bill, Bill C-373, laid out a foundation for an affordable, accessible and high-quality national child care system. More recently, my colleague, the member of Parliament for London—Fanshawe, built on these efforts with her Bill C-311.

I am grateful to them both for their work in moving this issue forward and demonstrating what a positive role for the federal government in ensuring that families can have access to child care they need when they need it looks like.

Finally, I wish to thank the Minister of Families, Children and Social Development, the member of Parliament for Burlington, and her team for the collaborative approach they have taken with this

legislation. The minister sought out our feedback and was receptive to many of our suggestions about what should be included in this legislation.

Although there are still areas where the bill can and should be strengthened, I am delighted that several of our key recommendations did find their way into the current version of the bill. I will address some of these key recommendations in more detail later, but I wanted to take this opportunity to acknowledge how I appreciated, very much, the minister's openness to our feedback.

By establishing a long-term commitment for federal funding to provinces and indigenous peoples and enshrining the principles of a national system of early learning and child care, Bill C-35 would help ensure that parents across Canada can access affordable, accessible and high-quality child care now and into the future.

In the midst of a cost-of-living crisis, where the price of almost everything has increased, child care is a rare exception. Parents in many cities across the country are seeing child care savings as significant as 50%, providing real relief to thousands of families. It is vital that the target of \$10-a-day child care by 2026 is not only achieved, but sustained for the long term.

● (1340)

I will note, however, that not all cities and provinces have met their fee reduction targets. One province in particular is Manitoba, which has conspicuously lagged behind. This is a topic I will return to later.

Nevertheless, the child care agreements are delivering significant fee reductions for parents from coast to coast. It is important this continues indefinitely, not just for five years until the agreements need to be renewed. Much like our system of universal health care, child care must be a permanent feature of our social safety net.

The commitment to long-term funding is also crucial for advancing gender equality in our country. Child care is a feminist issue. It gives working women the ability to choose when and how they wish to re-enter the workforce after having a child. The Quebec model of low-cost child care offers a powerful example of this. Indeed, Quebec's investment in a universal child care have resulted in women's participation in the workforce increasing by between 8% and 12%.

Not only has this boosted Quebec's economy, it has improved the financial security of women. It means a greater portion of household income is now under the control of women, which gives them more security in the case of separation, including in cases where they need to leave an abusive relationship. This is what feminist public policy looks like.

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I often hear members of Parliament sharing stories about the struggling single parent mother trying to make ends meet. In fact, the member for Carleton, now the Leader of the Conservative Party of Canada, often invokes the experiences of single moms in Parliament.

I can be certain that he has never been a single mother. If he had been, maybe he would not be so quick to oppose a national health care program, which will help thousands of single moms and children across the country have a better life.

I, in fact, was a single mom. I was very fortunate at the time to have stable employment teaching in post-secondary education. However, even on an academic salary, I often had difficulty making ends meet, paying up to \$650 a month in child care expenses. This resulted in me having to take on more employment, which resulted in my having less time with my precious son. I have lasting mother's guilt about having to leave him so I could provide for him.

I am lucky to have such a wonderful son, whom I adore. Looking back, maybe if there had been a national child care program at the time, our life might have looked much different. I was exhausted, and my son missed his mother.

More affordable child care, let alone \$10-a-day child care, would have changed my life and my son's life. Therefore, for any member of the House who uses the story of struggling single mothers for political gain without having been one themselves, they should vote in favour of the bill and support a system of national child care now.

Returning to the bill, beyond the long-term funding commitment, Bill C-35 contains other important provisions we pushed for and managed to have incorporated into the bill.

First is the inclusion of international human rights conventions and declarations that enshrine access to child care as a human right.

Preambular paragraph 3 affirms a commitment to further realization of the right to child care as recognized in the UN Convention on the Rights of the Child. This is something for which child care advocates have long demanded and for which the NDP have fought. Preambular paragraph 3 also affirms the commitment to furthering the implementation of the United Nations Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples and contains important references to other international conventions, including the UN Convention on the Right of Persons with Disabilities and the elimination of all forms of discrimination against women.

• (1345)

An other inclusion for which the NDP fought for was that rights-based language be included in the bill. I am pleased that this has been included.

Second and highly significant is that Bill C-35 would explicit priority to child care programs and services offered by public and not-for-profit providers as one of the principles guiding federal funding. This is a provision fought for and won by the NDP. It is a win for parents because public and non-profit child care means affordable, quality and accessible day care for families that need it rather than day cares that make a profit off of the backs of parents.

We also know that an emphasis on public and non-profit child care means better wages and working conditions for staff in the system. Study after study, union after union have heeded these calls for a public not-for-profit child care system.

Those in the House who say they stand with workers then they need to stand with a public, non-profit child care system. Taking care of our kids should not be on the backs of parents. Kids are not a business. The focus should be on providing the best possible care at a price that parents can afford, not delivering a profit for shareholders.

While all of what I describe represents an important step forward, as I mentioned previously, there are areas where this bill can and should be improved. One of the improvements required is adding an explicit commitment to decent work for child care staff.

At this point, I will digress briefly to say that I was once, as many people know in the House, an early childhood educator. If someone had told me all those years ago that I would be in this place debating national child care legislation, I would not have believed that person.

Workers are at the heart and soul of a national child care system. For far too long, child care workers have been grossly underpaid and undervalued in spite of the fact that they perform some of society's most critical work. That is why I left the profession even though I loved the kids who I was teaching everyday. I loved the work but I could not afford to continue in a profession that did not pay a living wage or provide good benefits.

A national child care program will only be successful and sustainable if the workers who make it possible are treated with dignity and paid fairly for their labour. That is why I support the Canadian Labour Congress' call for the legislation to include a clear commitment to decent work for child care staff. All child care workers deserve to earn a living wage with benefits with which they can support their families.

As an aside, it is also vital for the federal government to develop a workforce strategy to address staffing shortages in the sector. When we talk about creating new spaces, the building is not the most important element. It is having trained staff to look after the kids in these new child care spaces, a workforce strategy that can help ensure we are continuously expanding child care options where the demand is greatest.

The bill can also be strengthened with respect to the accountability and transparency it provides. While the creation of a national advisory council is welcome in terms of the expert advice that it will provide, it does not have the enforcement power to ensure that the provisions set out in Bill C-35 are followed. It is important for the bill to include strong accountability mechanisms so that the commitments it contains are upheld.

The reporting requirements on the progress being made in establishing national child care and federal investments in this sector lack detail, stating only that the minister is required to make an annual report. This is too vague and the bill should specify the specific metrics, including new spaces being built, new child care workers being hired and other quantitative details. It is vital that members of the public and Parliament have access to this crucial information.

● (1350)

It should also establish conditions on federal child care funding, real accountability for when provinces fail to deliver on fee reductions or expanding public, not-for-profit care.

I am deeply concerned that Manitoba is the only province where we have not seen an average reduction in fees. Instead, the government has made changes to who is eligible for the subsidy. This is unacceptable. Also concerning is the Ontario government's decision to remove profit caps, paving the way for an expansion of for-profit care.

I know the government has said there are accountability mechanisms built into the bilateral agreements, but they are either inadequate, not being properly enforced, or both.

I am also aware that Bill C-35 does not supersede the bilateral agreements, which are legally binding, so we cannot impose new terms on top of these existing agreements. However, I am hoping the bill could be amended to provide stronger conditions that would apply on an ongoing basis, or on a going forward basis, to future agreements after the current ones expire, five years from when they are concluded. Right now, the bill says nothing about how future agreements would be enforced to ensure accountability for the funding. This is a notable gap that we should address.

While there are more opportunities to weigh in on the bill at committee and in the chamber, I want to conclude by again acknowledging the gravity of what we are discussing today. We have progressed from being a country where child care was seen as the sole responsibility of mothers, unpaid labour with which our society could not function, to a country where child care is not just an individual responsibility but a collective one. We have progressed to being a country where we will finally have national legislation underpinning a national system of child care in every province and territory.

After years of false starts and broken promises, that is something we can all take pride in. To the women, the workers and the advocates who have helped make this dream a reality, I say their tenacious efforts have made our country fairer, more just and more inclusive.

**Hon. Karina Gould (Minister of Families, Children and Social Development, Lib.):** Madam Speaker, I want to begin by

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thanking my hon. colleague from Winnipeg Centre for the really positive and constructive working relationship we have developed over the past year. I also want to thank her colleagues in the NDP for their support of this legislation. I have great confidence in what we are going to be able to achieve with this for Canadians right across the country.

I also want to thank her for recognizing the advocates and those who have worked for generations to get us to where we are today. I am hoping she can take a couple of minutes to explain to our Conservative colleagues why a national child care initiative supports women and children, and why this is really important progressive feminist policy.

**Ms. Leah Gazan:** Madam Speaker, certainly I am willing to work with any party in the House that is willing to advance the human rights of children and women. Human rights should never be made a partisan issue. This has certainly been recognized by child care advocates who support feminist policy in advancing the rights of women.

One cannot support women without a robust public and not-for-profit child care system. This has been recognized by unions and lead child advocacy groups in the country, who know that for-profit care hurts families, is paid for on the backs of families and mothers, and is not to the benefit of workers. I look forward to advancing this bill, putting forward some amendments to make it stronger and supporting more feminist policy in Canada with a national child care program.

● (1355)

**Ms. Michelle Ferreri (Peterborough—Kawartha, CPC):** Madam Speaker, as I said earlier, I really enjoy working with the member on FEWO.

Does the member believe that, regardless of the model of operation, if a child care facility meets or exceeds the provincial, territorial and indigenous standards of quality of care, that it should have access to the national child care framework? If not, what data suggests otherwise?

**Ms. Leah Gazan:** Madam Speaker, I do not think that public money should ever be used for profit. Public monies need to be used for not-for-profit, public child care spaces.

We know the research shows that in early childhood education for-profit care often makes profit on the backs of children. We have certainly seen this in elder care, in private seniors' homes. We have also seen this in for-profit child care.

*Statements by Members*

We need a national child care strategy that supports the training of workers; supports without question a living wage of workers, with benefits; supports families; and expands our current system so we end up with a national child care system that has enough spaces to support the families needing it.

[Translation]

**Mr. Yves Perron (Berthier—Maskinongé, BQ):** Madam Speaker, I want to thank my colleague for her excellent speech. For once, I am very pleased to be able to utterly and completely support a speech by one of my colleagues from the NDP.

I would like to offer a solution to allow us to work together better in future.

The bill before us includes an exemption for Quebec, which already has its own system. Over the past three years, there has been more than one occasion when I have shared essentially the same ideologies as my NDP colleagues, but ultimately had to vote the other way because there is always this centralizing tendency in national programs.

I would like my colleague to respond sincerely, from the heart. Does she not believe that we have found a model that could be used more often? We could work like this more often to advance the causes of Quebec and Canada.

[English]

**Ms. Leah Gazan:** Madam Speaker, the member has a good question. I want to reiterate that the federal government has made bilateral agreements with provinces.

We are pushing for bilateral agreements with provinces that prioritize not-for-profit public spaces. This is something that Quebec is actually already doing. Quebec has been doing this for a million years. We know that it helps women. We know that it has improved the ability of women to participate in the workforce, should they choose. I think that is already in the bill. Again, there are areas where it could be improved.

However, I think we are on the same page in saying to let us keep child care public so we can support accessible, affordable child care for all.

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## STATEMENTS BY MEMBERS

[English]

### HEALTH CARE

**Ms. Elizabeth May (Saanich—Gulf Islands, GP):** Madam Speaker, we all know we are in a fight to save our health care system. Public health care, our single payer, universal health care, is at risk, and I think it is important that we revisit our history. I know this history first-hand, not from books, but because a dear friend of mine, the late Jim MacNeill, was part of the Saskatchewan CCF government that brought in our health care.

We forget that the profiteering doctors of Saskatchewan went out on strike to block health care. We forget that foreign doctors came in so the people of Saskatchewan would have medical care, mostly doctors from the U.K. I do not know how many Canadians know

this, but Jim told me that when the foreign doctors got to Saskatchewan, the Saskatchewan doctors blocked their access to hospitals, and U.K. doctors were operating on kitchen tables.

Members of the Saskatchewan cabinet had family members who needed medical care. They were up against it, and they were brave. They held the line. We owe it to them to do the same to protect our public health care system from profiteering privatization.

\* \* \*

• (1400)

### SHOOTING IN VAUGHAN

**Mr. Francesco Sorbara (Vaughan—Woodbridge, Lib.):** Madam Speaker, this Christmas season, when families were preparing to gather, celebrate and catch up with loved ones, our community was shaken to its core upon learning of a devastating mass shooting. One gun led to the loss of six lives and carved an unforgettable scar in the city of Vaughan. Our community, known for its generosity and can-do spirit, was shaken by this horrific act of violence.

Like all Vaughan residents, I have kept the victims, Rita Camilleri, Vittorio Panza, Russell Manock, Lorraine Manock and Naveed Dada, and survivor, Doreen Di Nino, as well as their families, in my thoughts since that dark December 18.

We know there is no place for gun violence in Canada, not in Saskatchewan, Nova Scotia, Toronto, Quebec City or the city of Vaughan. Our country will never forget the innocent lives lost and the bright futures that have been taken way too soon.

To our first responders, I thank them for their response, their professionalism and their commitment to keeping our communities safe and secure.

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### DAIRY FARMING

**Mr. Dan Muys (Flamborough—Glanbrook, CPC):** Madam Speaker, one of my favourite local events was back this year for the first time since the pandemic. Joe Loewith and Sons dairy farm in Copetown held its annual open house on December 27, so people from the city could learn more about where their food comes from.

Other Hamilton-area dairy producers pitched in to help with the crowd of nearly a thousand people. Robotic milking, feeding and calving were all on full display. What is more exciting is that they were already showcasing a bright new building just steps from the dairy barns. This summer, it will open as a thriving new farm-to-table business and the latest agri-tourism attraction. Not only will Summit Station Dairy and Creamery be a landmark that celebrates local heritage, it is entrepreneurialism at its best.

I send my congratulations to Ben, Jennifer, Carl, David and the entire Loewith family for their contribution to the local economy and their generations of innovation in the dairy industry.

\* \* \*

### HOCKEY EXCELLENCE

**Ms. Lena Metlege Diab (Halifax West, Lib.):** Madam Speaker, two weeks ago, Gerard and Jenny Barron, neighbours and Halifax West residents, were the proudest parents in Montreal's Bell Centre. If members are asking why, it is because, for the first time ever, they got to watch their boys go head-to-head as the only siblings from Nova Scotia to ever play in the NHL. Morgan plays for the Winnipeg Jets, while Justin plays for the Montreal Canadiens.

The story of their success is incredible. At 16, Morgan left home to play two seasons at St. Andrew's College, earning himself a scholarship to Cornell. He was later drafted by the New York Rangers and was later traded to Winnipeg. Justin spent his entire junior career with the Halifax Mooseheads. He was selected by the Colorado Avalanche in the first round of the 2020 NHL draft and was then traded to the Habs.

Please join me in congratulating both Barrons on their tremendous success on the ice.

\* \* \*

[Translation]

### VIOLA LÉGER

**Mr. Martin Champoux (Drummond, BQ):** Mr. Speaker, few performers have been able to embody a people quite the way Viola Léger did in the role of La Sagouine.

Viola Léger was La Sagouine, and, for many of us, La Sagouine was Acadia.

Thousands of times over more than 50 years, Ms. Léger transformed into this wise and insightful woman, deeply marked by a hard life and by the injustices and suffering perpetrated upon the Acadian people. The character may have been created by her friend Antonine Maillet, but Viola Léger was the one who brought it to life.

Viola Léger was a proud Acadian. She was an outstanding ambassador for Acadia and spent her entire life contributing to its cultural development, including through her foundation to promote Acadian theatre.

On behalf of the Bloc Québécois and all Quebeckers, I want to offer her family, everyone who loved her and all Acadians our most sincere condolences.

### Statements by Members

I thank Ms. Léger for being the face, the voice and the soul of the Acadian nation for so long.

\* \* \*

● (1405)

### WORLD JUNIOR HOCKEY CHAMPIONSHIP

**Mrs. Élisabeth Brière (Sherbrooke, Lib.):** Mr. Speaker, five members of the Sherbrooke Phoenix made their mark at the World Junior Hockey Championship.

Two Canadians, forward Joshua Roy and defenceman Tyson Hinds, along with their coach, Stéphane Julien, proudly represented Sherbrooke at this major hockey tournament, winning the gold medal with Team Canada.

Two other Phoenix players, David Spacek and Jakub Brabenc, also stood out, winning the silver medal with the Czech team.

Congratulations to all the medal winners and all tournament participants.

Sherbrooke hockey fans are lucky to have the Phoenix, because they can gather every week to watch some of the world's best players in the electrifying atmosphere of the Palais des Sports. Together, let's continue to support and improve our national sport.

\* \* \*

[English]

### ORDER OF CANADA

**Mr. John Nater (Perth—Wellington, CPC):** Mr. Speaker, the motto of the Order of Canada is "They desire a better country." I can think of few people who more truly embody that motto than the newly appointed member of the Order of Canada, Jean Aitcheson of Stratford.

A nurse by career, Jean has dedicated her time and energy to the service to others. On countless medical mission trips, Jean has provided care to so many in need around the globe. She also founded the Stratford Mission Depot to help coordinate the donation and delivery of medical supplies and equipment. Just this past year, Jean and her team of volunteers saw the need for medical supplies for Ukrainian refugees and sprang into action, quickly amassing 14 cubic metres of medical supplies.

Jean is quick to deflect praise away from herself and toward her team of volunteers, and it is that modesty that underscores why she is so deserving of this special recognition. I congratulate Jean Aitcheson.

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### STILECROFT PUBLIC SCHOOL

**Ms. Ya'ara Saks (York Centre, Lib.):** Mr. Speaker, as we start the winter session of Parliament, I want to recognize an amazing achievement from students in York Centre over the holidays.

*Statements by Members*

Our community rests on the values of kindness and compassion, giving back and showing up for one another. I am overwhelmed by the generosity that students, families and staff from Stilecroft Public School showed in December, collecting 200 pounds of food for the North York Harvest Food Bank. This amazing act of kindness allowed North York Harvest to provide hundreds of meals to the most vulnerable members of our community.

A special thanks goes to principal Karen Barnes and the wonderful staff at Stilecroft P.S. who organized the campaign and did not hesitate for one moment when asked and jumped at the opportunity to help. I want to especially thank the generous students and families at Stilecroft. I also want to thank the staff at North York Harvest Food Bank, who provide such an important service every day to those who are facing food insecurity in our communities, with integrity and compassion.

When we give at home, we grow a community that is strong and supportive.

\* \* \*

**DWIGHT PETTEN**

**Mr. Ken McDonald (Avalon, Lib.):** Mr. Speaker, I rise today to pay tribute to the life of Mr. Dwight Petten, who passed away earlier this month after a short but valiant battle with cancer at the young age of 56.

Dwight was a very successful and respected fisherman from my riding, who had an enthusiasm for the industry that was surpassed only by the love for his family and passion for his faith. Far away from his home and family in Port de Grave, he joined several missionaries throughout his lifetime around the world, including one in Africa and Thailand. Dwight was a successful fisherman and a proud owner of his family business, DMC Enterprises, which he operated side by side with his son Matthew. He took great pride in his fishing vessels and was respected as a leader in the industry. For 25 years, he served in the Canadian Coast Guard Auxiliary.

Dwight will be remembered as a loving husband to his wife Cynthia and a wonderful father to his children Melanie, Matthew and Melissa and his grandchildren, who were his pride and joy and who knew him simply as Pop.

Dwight was taken from us way too soon. His legacy will live on. Rest easy, my friend.

\* \* \*

**PUBLIC SAFETY**

**Mr. Blaine Calkins (Red Deer—Lacombe, CPC):** Mr. Speaker, it has been eight years since the Prime Minister took office, and his soft-on-crime policies have unleashed a crime wave in Canada. The government has made life easier for violent criminals by providing easy access to bail and repealing mandatory minimum sentences for serious crimes. As a result, violent crime has gone up 32% in the past year, and gang-related killings have gone up by 92% since 2015.

Furthermore, Liberals have failed to stop the flow of illegal firearms across the border. As a consequence, five police officers have tragically lost their lives this past fall in the line of duty. Our

communities feel less safe, and the government is making it worse. Despite their dismal record, Liberals recently initiated a ban on hunting rifles and shotguns, making thousands of these firearms illegal. Hunters, farmers and target shooters are not the problem; Liberals are the problem. This Liberal made-in-Canada crime wave must stop.

Only a Conservative government will do what is necessary to keep violent criminals off our streets.

\* \* \*

• (1410)

**IRANIAN WOMEN ACTIVISTS**

**Mr. Majid Jowhari (Richmond Hill, Lib.):** Mr. Speaker, anger, pain, misery and violence, these are the words that have shaped the experience of Iranians, especially the brave women of Iran, as they are fuelled by their hope and courage in the face of the regime's tyranny and oppression for the past four decades.

While no words are powerful enough to describe the atrocities, we can respond with powerful actions. I, alongside my colleagues in the York Region Liberal caucus, have sponsored seven environmental activists. Going beyond our borders, I have joined members of the Italian and German Parliaments, Laura Boldrini and Carmen Wegge, to sponsor Armita Abbasi.

Niloufar Bayani is a courageous environmentalist who has been in prison for caring for her motherland, its wildlife and the environment. Armita Abbasi has been calling for equality for women. Instead of applauding these women, the Iranian regime responded with unlawful imprisonment, abduction, severe torture and brutal sexual assault.

The women of Iran are the embodiment of bravery.

*[Member spoke in Farsi]*

*[English]*

\* \* \*

**GOVERNMENT CONTRACTS**

**Mrs. Kelly Block (Carlton Trail—Eagle Creek, CPC):** Mr. Speaker, over the last eight years under the Prime Minister, Canadians have been struggling. They are struggling under his wasteful, inflationary spending. Mortgage payments are taking a bigger bite out of paycheques. Food banks have seen a massive increase in families needing their services.

Meanwhile, over the last eight years, Liberals and their well-connected friends have never had it so good. McKinsey & Company, a consulting firm surrounded by controversy and formerly run by the Prime Minister's friend, Dominic Barton, has received over \$100 million in government contracts since 2015. Canadians deserve to know why the Liberals gave this consulting firm millions of dollars and what kind of influence McKinsey has over the government. The Liberals have created an unaccountable shadow government with their consultant friends, and Canadians are paying the price.

The Prime Minister needs to come clean with Canadians, end his binge spending and—

**The Speaker:** The hon. member for Louis-Saint-Laurent.

\* \* \*

[Translation]

### FREEDOM OF RELIGION

**Mr. Gérard Deltell (Louis-Saint-Laurent, CPC):** Mr. Speaker, six years ago, one hundred or so people were gathered at the Quebec City mosque. Suddenly tragedy struck. Six men died and about twenty others were seriously injured. These people died for one reason and one reason only: They were Muslims united by faith. This horror showed the dark side of humanity. Racism is born of ignorance. That is why we have a duty to support dialogue no matter who we are. We must unite, not divide. We must unite with our words, with our actions and with our humanity.

[English]

Six years ago, at a Quebec mosque, six Canadians died because of their faith. This tragedy reminds us that we always have to be cautious and we shall condemn any violence based on faith and ethnicity. It is our duty to be careful of any sign of racism, because there is no small racism. We shall unite, not divide: unite by words, by action, by humanity.

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[Translation]

### VIOLA LÉGER

**Mr. Serge Cormier (Acadie—Bathurst, Lib.):** Mr. Speaker, on January 28, the great Viola Léger passed away at the age of 92.

She was originally a nun and a teacher, but it was her dramatic role as La Sagouine in the work of Antonine Maillet that endeared her to Acadia and the world. During her career as an actress, Ms. Léger would portray this legendary character more than 3,000 times, in addition to playing many other roles in theatre, film and television.

Ms. Léger went on to serve in the Senate of Canada, where she helped support causes such as the plight of minorities, the survival of the French language and the importance of arts and culture.

She will be remembered for her incredible ability to showcase Acadia, as she was a formidable ambassador for our culture and language throughout her life. Today, all of Acadia mourns the loss of this great lady. I thank Ms. Léger for her invaluable contribution to Acadian culture and for the monumental legacy she leaves behind. I offer my deepest condolences to her family and friends.

\* \* \*

• (1415)

### FREEDOM OF RELIGION

**Mr. Alexandre Boulerice (Rosemont—La Petite-Patrie, NDP):** Mr. Speaker, six years ago, a radicalized young man committed an act of hatred in an act of violence seldom seen in our history. He entered the Quebec City mosque and opened fire on everyone inside with a semi-automatic weapon and then a handgun.

### Statements by Members

Six men lost their lives and 19 others were injured, leaving behind broken families and grieving loved ones. We said, “never again”, but are we really any further ahead six years later?

Dangerous weapons that are used only to kill other human beings are still in circulation. Online hate, racism and Islamophobia still exist. Extreme right-wing rhetoric has become normalized, which only fuels this radicalization and hatred targeting minorities. The killer fed on such rhetoric, which pushed him to attack. He killed Muslims.

We still have a lot of work to do through dialogue and a better understanding among cultures, but we also need to take an uncompromising stance on racism, discrimination and supremacy. That is an imposing but necessary task. It is our collective duty.

\* \* \*

### FREEDOM OF RELIGION

**Mrs. Julie Vignola (Beauport—Limoilou, BQ):** Mr. Speaker, there are defining moments in the history of a society, a community and a family. Sadly, January 17, 2017 was one such moment. Families and friends lost their loved ones when they were gunned down at the Quebec City mosque just for being Muslim.

Yesterday marked the sixth commemoration for these men who were felled by hatred. It was a moment of reflection and sharing, but also a moment of hope: the hope of living and growing on a path to understanding and mutual respect.

Ibrahima Barry, Mamadou Tanou Barry, Khaled Belkacemi, Abdelkrim Hassane, Azzeddine Soufiane and Aboubaker Thabti wanted to live in peace, happy and without fear for their future.

Let us make sure that everyone can achieve these aspirations, which were stolen from them. Let us stand up for the right of every Quebecker to practice the religion of their choice freely, safely and with dignity.

Let us stand up every day to fight hate in all its forms.

\* \* \*

[English]

### THE ECONOMY

**Mr. John Brassard (Barrie—Innisfil, CPC):** Mr. Speaker, after eight years of this Prime Minister's high taxes and inflationary deficits, 22% of Canadians, 28% of them women, say they are completely broke. After eight years, 32% say they will be in the same boat if prices continue rising. After eight years, 52% are concerned they do not have enough money to feed their families. After eight years, 1.5 million Canadians are using food banks every month. After eight years, young people feel lied to and let down by this Prime Minister. After eight years, seniors can barely afford groceries and many are living in the cold, unable to heat their homes. After eight years, Canadians are anxious, angry and worried about their future.

### Oral Questions

After eight years, this Prime Minister is completely out of touch and has no solutions to the problems that he has created. After eight years of dividing Canadians, this is a Prime Minister who cannot be redeemed; he can only be replaced. After eight years, Canada's Conservatives, led by the member for Carleton, are focused and ready to lead and as Parliament returns, we will show Canadians why.

\* \* \*

#### HAZEL MCCALLION

**Mr. Peter Fonseca (Mississauga East—Cooksville, Lib.):** Mr. Speaker, I sat with a force of nature two weeks ago: “Hurricane Hazel” McCallion, a dear friend, a mentor, a leader, someone who devoted her life to serving the people of Mississauga, Ontario and Canada. We are all overcome with sadness by her passing. Our hearts go out to her family.

She was always there to lead and to help: helping with the biggest mass evacuation in Canadian history, helping people through the pandemic at 101 years of age young, and helping to build Mississauga to the successful city it is today.

Hazel had great insight and vision, but her greatest strength was her connection with people. Loved by all who met her, with a big heart and a deep caring for community, she will always be remembered as the people's mayor. She was so proud of our country. The last thing she said to me was, “Peter, we live in the best place in the world, Canada.”

On behalf of the Parliament of Canada, we thank Hazel. May she rest in peace.

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## ROUTINE PROCEEDINGS

• (1420)

[English]

#### NEW MEMBER

**The Speaker:** I have the honour to inform the House that the Clerk of the House has received from the Chief Electoral Officer a certificate of the election and return of Mr. Charles Sousa, member for the electoral district of Mississauga—Lakeshore.

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#### NEW MEMBER INTRODUCED

Charles Sousa, member for the electoral district of Mississauga—Lakeshore, introduced by the Right Hon. Justin Trudeau.

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## ORAL QUESTIONS

[Translation]

#### PUBLIC SERVICES AND PROCUREMENT

**Hon. Pierre Poilievre (Leader of the Opposition, CPC):** Mr. Speaker, in eight years, this Prime Minister has doubled our national debt, adding \$500 billion in inflationary deficit. What did we get for spending what Bill Morneau called too much money? More

inflation, more poverty, more people having to rely on food banks. Where did the money go? Now we know: \$15 billion worth of contracts were given to the Prime Minister's friends.

How much of that money went to McKinsey?

**Right Hon. Justin Trudeau (Prime Minister, Lib.):** Mr. Speaker, seven years ago, when we were elected to lead the government, we made a promise to invest in the middle class and all those working hard to be part of it. That is exactly what we did with the Canada child benefit, assistance for seniors and help for students. We were able to create millions of jobs, while lifting millions of people out of poverty.

Unfortunately, the Conservative Party opposed us at every step. Today, the Conservatives continue to oppose our investments in dental care, our investments to help renters and our investments in child care. We will continue to invest—

• (1425)

**The Speaker:** Order.

The hon. Leader of the Opposition.

[English]

**Hon. Pierre Poilievre (Leader of the Opposition, CPC):** Mr. Speaker, I asked the Prime Minister how much McKinsey got. He said that it was all for the middle class. He has always had difficulty defining what the middle class is, and now we know his definition. It is his friends who make \$1,500 an hour as high-priced consultants for his government over at McKinsey, where his personal friend Dominic Barton was the boss.

We now know that he spent \$15 billion-plus per year on high-priced consultants while Canadians are eating at food banks and living in homeless shelters and while house prices have more than doubled. Again, how much did the Prime Minister's government give McKinsey?

**Right Hon. Justin Trudeau (Prime Minister, Lib.):** Mr. Speaker, while the Leader of the Opposition snickers at the middle class, we will stay focused on supporting it.

That is exactly what we did by bringing forward supports for low-income renters and supports for families to send their kids to the dentist. These are things that the Conservative Party voted against, just as they stood against the Canada child benefit, just as they stood against help for seniors and just as they have continued to stand against investments that have had Canadians backs before the pandemic, through the pandemic and since the pandemic. We will continue to be there for Canadians.



*Oral Questions*

**Hon. Pierre Poilievre (Leader of the Opposition, CPC):** Mr. Speaker, after eight years of the Prime Minister, mortgage payments have doubled, up to \$7,000 per month for an average house in Toronto, and rent prices have doubled, up to \$2,500 per month for an average place in Toronto. The number of people eating at food banks has gone up to 1.5 million, and crime is up 32%. We wonder where all this half a trillion dollars of inflationary debt actually went. Now we know: Liberal friends got the money.

I am going to ask a third time about the well-connected insiders at McKinsey. How much did the Prime Minister give them?

**Right Hon. Justin Trudeau (Prime Minister, Lib.):** Mr. Speaker, over the past number of years, we have invested in supporting Canadians from coast to coast to coast to lift families out of poverty, to help seniors make ends meet, to invest in low-income renters, to help people access dental care for their kids and to deliver the kinds of things that have made not just Canadians better off but our whole economy work better.

We are going to continue to step up by investing in Canadians while the Conservatives continue to push cuts and austerity and to not be there for Canadians. We know that investing in Canadians is the best way to build a better future.

**Hon. Pierre Poilievre (Leader of the Opposition, CPC):** Mr. Speaker, the Prime Minister says that Canadians have never had it so good as they face 40-year highs in inflation, as food prices are up 12% year over year after he brought in a carbon tax on our farmers, as the cost of housing has more than doubled and as students are living in homeless shelters.

We know why, though, he is so out of touch with these people after eight years. It is because the people he surrounds himself with, like the high-priced consultants at McKinsey, are doing better than ever.

I would like to ask him this again. This company did work of little or no value according to his own public servants. How much did Canadians have to pay for that?

**Right Hon. Justin Trudeau (Prime Minister, Lib.):** Mr. Speaker, on the contrary, Canadians are struggling right now with high inflation caused by global crises, with interest rates and with disruptions in global supply chains. That is why we have stepped up to support Canadians, despite Conservative politicians voting against it.

We have been able to keep investing in Canadians while maintaining the best balance sheet in the G7. We have the lowest debt-to-GDP ratio and the lowest deficit of all our G7 partners. We have put that to work to support the Canadians who need it most. We will continue to be there for the middle class and people working hard to join it.

**Hon. Pierre Poilievre (Leader of the Opposition, CPC):** Mr. Speaker, we finally got the Prime Minister to admit that Canadians are suffering, and it is after eight years of the Prime Minister. After eight years of the Prime Minister, we have 40-year highs in inflation, we have a 32% increase in crime and we have the TTC transit system in downtown Toronto overtaken by crime. We have more people eating at food banks and living in homeless shelters after

eight years of the Prime Minister, but not everybody is doing badly. His friends at McKinsey are rolling in cash.

First, the Liberals said it was \$50 million, and now the government says it is over \$100 million. We want to know the real number. Will the Prime Minister finally answer the question? How much did he give McKinsey?

• (1430)

**Right Hon. Justin Trudeau (Prime Minister, Lib.):** Mr. Speaker, everyone in the House, from conversations with constituents and conversations with people right across the country, knows well that Canadians are facing tough times. What the difference is between the Conservative leader and me is that instead of proposing real solutions and instead of telling Canadians how he is going to help them and invest in them, the Conservative leader stands up, crosses his arms, throws his hands up and says, “everything is broken”.

That is not what Canadians are living through. Canadians stick up for each other. We are there for each other. We support each other through the tough times. That is exactly what we have been doing through this pandemic through these past years. That is what we will continue to do, no matter how much—

**The Speaker:** The hon. member for Beloeil—Chambly.

\* \* \*

[*Translation*]

**GOVERNMENT APPOINTMENTS**

**Mr. Yves-François Blanchet (Beloeil—Chambly, BQ):** Mr. Speaker, I am happy to be back here with you and all my colleagues.

As my colleagues know, the Prime Minister made an appointment of his own, choosing Amira Elghawaby. He surely looked into her statements and positions prior to her appointment, which many perceive as very insulting to Quebec. Nevertheless, he went ahead with the appointment.

Here is my question for the Prime Minister: Does he really think this appointment will bring people together and build bridges rather than be divisive?

**Right Hon. Justin Trudeau (Prime Minister, Lib.):** Mr. Speaker, yesterday evening, I was honoured to be at the Quebec City mosque with the community that was the target of a dreadful terrorist attack committed six years ago by a person motivated by hate, intolerance and ignorance regarding the Muslim community in Quebec and across the country.

We must all stand up every single day to recognize and fight Islamophobia. We must see it as our duty to be there for our fellow Muslim citizens, and we will always be there for them.

*Oral Questions*

**Mr. Yves-François Blanchet (Beloeil—Chambly, BQ):** Mr. Speaker, Ms. Elghawaby, who has described Bill 21 as Islamophobic, was unfortunately there, too. Her presence was commendable; her remarks, not so much.

Rather than simply condemn her remarks out of hand, I asked to meet with Ms. Elghawaby so that we could try to understand, as parliamentarians, as elected officials, as those responsible for passing the budget that will fund her position.

Can the Prime Minister tell me whether he supports such a meeting, whether he wants to see it happen and maybe could even facilitate it?

**Right Hon. Justin Trudeau (Prime Minister, Lib.):** Mr. Speaker, I would truly love to see this meeting happen. It would be a great conversation. I think Ms. Elghawaby would be able to explain how systemic racism and Islamophobia are a reality for people across the country.

We all have a duty to listen to one another and understand how hurtful bills and words can be, even if that is not our intention. We have a duty to understand the impact of what we are doing on vulnerable communities in our country.

Yes, I will certainly facilitate that meeting, and I know that Ms. Elghawaby would be delighted to meet the Bloc Québécois leader.

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**HEALTH**

**Mr. Jagmeet Singh (Burnaby South, NDP):** Mr. Speaker, in the last election, the Prime Minister criticized the Conservatives for proposing to increase for-profit private health care in our system.

Now, Doug Ford is doing the exact same thing and the Prime Minister is calling it innovation. Why this big flip-flop?

**Right Hon. Justin Trudeau (Prime Minister, Lib.):** Mr. Speaker, the Liberal Party has always been very clear: We will stand up for our public health care system.

We will continue to defend the principles of the Canada Health Act. This is non-negotiable and over the past few years we have taken back money several times from provinces that did not abide by the Canada Health Act. We will continue to stand up for our public system.

In the current negotiations to improve health care for Canadians across the country, we will continue to be there to stand up for the public system.

[English]

**Mr. Jagmeet Singh (Burnaby South, NDP):** Mr. Speaker, the problem is that the Prime Minister says one thing and does another. In the last election, the Prime Minister made a really big deal of calling out the Conservatives for proposing the idea of bringing in more for-profit private health care, but now when Doug Ford is doing exactly that, he is calling it “innovation”.

I am not surprised the Conservatives support this approach as they believe in for-profit private health care, but I am surprised at the Prime Minister. Why the flip-flop?

**Right Hon. Justin Trudeau (Prime Minister, Lib.):** Mr. Speaker, I and the Liberal government have always been very, very clear that we stand for a public health system that fully abides by the Canada Health Act. This is something that matters to most Canadians, that certainly matters to us, and that we will continue to defend.

We know that even as we negotiate with the provinces to ensure we are delivering more family doctors, better mental health supports, moving forward on backlogs and supporting Canadians who need emergency care, we will ensure that the Canada Health Act is fully respected. In the past, this government has pulled back money from provinces that have not respected it. We will continue to do that.

\* \* \*

● (1435)

**THE ECONOMY**

**Mr. Jasraj Singh Hallan (Calgary Forest Lawn, CPC):** Mr. Speaker, after eight years of Liberal mismanagement, one in five Canadians is saying they are completely out of money, skipping meals and accessing charity services just to meet their basic needs. The Governor of the Bank of Canada said that the interest rate hikes were because of out-of-control wasteful Liberal spending. Even former Liberal finance minister Bill Morneau had it right when he admitted that the Liberals overspent in the last eight years.

When will the Prime Minister and Canada's worst money manager in Canadian history stop breaking Canada, rein in his spending and stop making the price of everything go up?

**Hon. Chrystia Freeland (Deputy Prime Minister and Minister of Finance, Lib.):** Mr. Speaker, we know that many Canadians are facing real challenges, and that is why our government is there to help with a plan that is compassionate and fiscally responsible. Here is what we are doing: doubling the GST, providing \$500 to people who are facing challenges paying their rent, providing dental care to Canadian kids, eliminating the interest on Canada student loans and improving the Canada workers benefit. The Conservatives voted against all of those essential measures.

*Oral Questions*

**Mr. Jasraj Singh Hallan (Calgary Forest Lawn, CPC):** Mr. Speaker, after eight years of Liberal mismanagement, the only people getting help and ahead are the Prime Minister who gets lavish \$6,000-a-night hotel rooms, his buddies over at McKinsey and the WE Charity who get hundreds of millions of dollars' worth of contracts, racists like Laith Marouf who gets hundreds of thousands of dollars' worth of contracts, and prisoners and dead people who get free CERB cheques. It has never been so good for those people, but Canadians have never had it so bad. Recently, Canadians were just uppercut with another interest rate hike because of out-of-control Liberal spending.

When will the Prime Minister stop rewarding his Liberal cronies and actually start helping struggling Canadians?

**Hon. Chrystia Freeland (Deputy Prime Minister and Minister of Finance, Lib.):** Mr. Speaker, let us talk for a minute about what the Conservatives would do to Canadians and the Canadian economy. The Conservatives are proposing to eviscerate our essential EI system. The Conservatives would endanger seniors' pensions and the CPP. The Conservatives would make pollution free again. The Conservatives would deny Canadian families climate incentive cheques. Those are all Conservative policies, and they would all hurt Canadians in their pocketbooks.

**Mrs. Tracy Gray (Kelowna—Lake Country, CPC):** Mr. Speaker, after eight years of the Prime Minister, Canadians have never found it so hard just to keep a roof over their heads. Rent increases have gone up at a record pace and the national average is now over \$2,000 a month. Young adults are finding it virtually impossible to pay these rents and families are being squeezed.

When will the Liberals reverse their inflationary policies that are driving up inflation and making it harder for everyday people to even just stay in their homes?

**Hon. Chrystia Freeland (Deputy Prime Minister and Minister of Finance, Lib.):** Mr. Speaker, if the Conservatives really believed in supporting those Canadians who are having the hardest time paying their rent, they should have supported our plan to give those people \$500 to help. The best way to pay one's rent and to pay one's mortgage is to have a job, and that is why our government has been relentlessly focused on job creation. There were 100,000 jobs created in December alone. Today we have recovered 121% of the jobs lost to COVID compared to just 106% in the United States.

**Mrs. Tracy Gray (Kelowna—Lake Country, CPC):** Mr. Speaker, rental inflation is up 12%. Food inflation is up more than 11%. Any of these government programs will just get evaporated. We know that the former governor of the Bank of Canada said that Canada's inflation was "homegrown", and the current governor said that inflation is as high as it is because of all of the extra spending that these Liberals have done.

After eight years, when will the Liberals finally get their inflationary spending under control?

**Hon. Chrystia Freeland (Deputy Prime Minister and Minister of Finance, Lib.):** Mr. Speaker, the Conservatives continue to talk down the Canadian economy. That is reckless and that is irresponsible. We know Canadians need support. That is why we have a plan that is compassionate, but it is also fiscally responsible. That

is why just hours after we tabled the fall economic statement, Moody's reaffirmed our AAA credit rating.

Canada has the lowest deficit in the G7, the lowest debt-to-GDP ratio and, in 2022, Canada had the strongest economic growth.

• (1440)

[*Translation*]

**Mr. Luc Berthold (Mégantic—L'Érable, CPC):** Mr. Speaker, after eight years of this Prime Minister, the reality is that Canadians are suffering more and more, despite the fine words and promises made to the middle class.

I visited the food banks in Thetford Mines, Lac-Mégantic, Plessisville, Princeville and Disraeli. What I heard broke my heart. Demand for food bank services skyrocketed by over 30% in December. That is the result of eight years under a Liberal government.

Will the Prime Minister finally realize that these measures have led more and more people to use food banks? When will he put an end to this?

**Hon. Karina Gould (Minister of Families, Children and Social Development, Lib.):** Mr. Speaker, this government has an impressive record when it comes to eliminating poverty in Canada. Over one million Canadians have been lifted out of poverty thanks to the measures that we put in place, including the Canada child benefit and the increase in benefits for seniors. The Conservatives voted against those measures.

In fact, the Conservatives wanted to raise the retirement age for seniors. We did not let that happen. We will be there for Canadians at every stage of their lives, and I hope the Conservatives will support us.

**Mr. Luc Berthold (Mégantic—L'Érable, CPC):** Mr. Speaker, the cost of food has increased by nearly 12%. I am very concerned that this Prime Minister, after eight years of promising sunny ways, has completely lost touch with reality.

Day care centres are no longer offering meat on their menus because it costs too much. Food banks do not have enough fresh food because grocery stores no longer have any, since the middle class cannot afford to buy it.

How could the Prime Minister allow things to get to this point?

**Hon. Karina Gould (Minister of Families, Children and Social Development, Lib.):** Mr. Speaker, right after we formed the government, 450,000 fewer children were in poverty than when the Conservatives were in power. It is because of our programs, such as the Canada child benefit or the child care and early childhood program, that fees have dropped by 50% across the country.

*Oral Questions*

Families across Canada tell me how much these programs have helped them reduce the cost of living and how this is changing their lives. It is a shame that the Conservatives do not support these measures.

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**JUSTICE**

**Mr. Alain Therrien (La Prairie, BQ):** Mr. Speaker, Quebec has the legitimacy required to democratically make its own societal choices.

That is why it is unacceptable for the federal government to threaten to attack the notwithstanding clause. The notwithstanding clause is the only provision that guarantees to Quebec and the provinces that the federal government and the judges it appoints will not be the only ones to decide what we have the right to do in our province.

The Quebec premier stated that it was a direct attack on the ability of our nation to protect its collective rights.

Will Ottawa back off?

**Hon. David Lametti (Minister of Justice and Attorney General of Canada, Lib.):** Mr. Speaker, our government has always been very clear with respect to concerns about the pre-emptive use of the notwithstanding clause by the provinces, and we are considering all our options.

We are strongly committed to defending the rights and freedoms protected by the charter, a charter that was created to protect minorities across Canada.

We have been clear and we will continue to be clear in the future.

**Mr. Alain Therrien (La Prairie, BQ):** Mr. Speaker, I would like to read a passage about the notwithstanding clause: "It is a way that the legislatures, federal and provincial, have of ensuring that the last word is held by the elected representatives of the people rather than by the courts." Those are the words of Pierre Elliott Trudeau.

Even Pierre Elliott Trudeau recognized the importance of the notwithstanding clause in a healthy democracy. Now his son is doing the opposite. He wants the courts to take the last word away from elected officials.

Will the government back down?

**Hon. David Lametti (Minister of Justice and Attorney General of Canada, Lib.):** Mr. Speaker, Pierre Elliott Trudeau was right. It was intended to give the last word, but when it is used pre-emptively, it becomes the first word and it cuts off debate in legislatures like ours and in the courts. We have expressed our concerns and we will continue to do so.

• (1445)

**Mr. Alain Therrien (La Prairie, BQ):** Mr. Speaker, we know the Liberals want to challenge Bill 21 on secularism, but Bill 96 is about the French language. Attacking the notwithstanding clause is to be expected. They want to make absolutely sure Quebec will never be able to introduce bills like 21 and 96, never be able to stand up for its collective rights, never have the right to its own dis-

ting values. Basically, the problem is that Quebeckers are different and they cannot accept that.

**Hon. Dominic LeBlanc (Minister of Intergovernmental Affairs, Infrastructure and Communities, Lib.):** Mr. Speaker, my hon. colleague has a lot of parliamentary experience. He knows that the Government of Canada's position has not changed. We have always expressed concerns about the pre-emptive use of the notwithstanding clause. My hon. colleague mentioned the last word. This should not be the first word. It should be the last resort.

We accept and understand the purpose of the notwithstanding clause, but we will never agree to it being used pre-emptively. That should come as no surprise to my colleague.

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[English]

**PUBLIC SERVICES AND PROCUREMENT**

**Mrs. Stephanie Kusie (Calgary Midnapore, CPC):** Mr. Speaker, after eight years of the Liberal government, inflation is at a 40-year high as a result of its inflationary spending but it has managed to spend over \$100 million, actually we do not know how much because the Prime Minister will not tell us, on a single consulting firm, McKinsey & Company.

While Canadians have never had it so bad, Liberal insiders and consulting firms have never had it so good. Therefore, why does the Prime Minister not just admit that he and his good buddy Dominic Barton are running Canada and disappointing Canadians?

**Hon. Helena Jaczek (Minister of Public Services and Procurement, Lib.):** Mr. Speaker, the procurement of professional services is used to complement the work of Canada's professional public service by meeting unexpected fluctuations in workload and to acquire special expertise. We are committed to ensuring that government contracts stand up to the highest standards.

The Prime Minister has asked the President of the Treasury Board and me to conduct a review, take a close look at the numbers and look into the circumstances, and we are doing just that.

**Mr. Garnett Genuis (Sherwood Park—Fort Saskatchewan, CPC):** Mr. Speaker, after eight years of the Prime Minister, Canadians have never had it so bad while Liberal insiders like Dominic Barton have never had it so good.

Dominic Barton was running a government advisory body while at the same time his company was collecting over \$100 million in contracts on the side. Barton and his cronies at McKinsey had privileged access to the Prime Minister and were using that access to make money. The government has done so much for Dominic Barton and McKinsey and so little for struggling Canadians.

Once again, will the government answer how much money in total it has given to McKinsey?

*Oral Questions*

**Hon. Helena Jaczek (Minister of Public Services and Procurement, Lib.):** Mr. Speaker, I want to assure the House that Public Services and Procurement Canada takes its role as the central purchasing department very seriously. We ensure value for money and quality of services for Canadians.

Minister Fortier's focus will rest on the policy, while I focus on the circumstances of the contracts. I will be testifying, alongside my officials, at the government operations committee to give more thorough and complete answers.

**The Speaker:** I know we are all excited to be back, but I want to remind hon. members that when they are referring to someone else in the chamber they are to refer to them by their riding or the position they hold and not their name. I know we have been away for a bit so I just want to remind everyone.

The hon. member for Sherwood Park—Fort Saskatchewan.

**Mr. Garnett Genuis (Sherwood Park—Fort Saskatchewan, CPC):** Mr. Speaker, perhaps I can assist the minister in getting to the bottom of the circumstances around these contracts.

The Prime Minister is a very close personal friend of Dominic Barton, who is the managing partner of McKinsey. Under Dominic Barton, McKinsey monitored dissident social media accounts for the Saudi government, had a corporate retreat down the road from a concentration camp in China and advised a pharmaceutical company to reward pharmacists for causing overdose deaths.

We are the company we keep and the company the Prime Minister keeps is called McKinsey. Once again, how much money did the Prime Minister funnel to his friends at McKinsey?

**Hon. Helena Jaczek (Minister of Public Services and Procurement, Lib.):** Mr. Speaker, I want to assure the House yet again that procurement contracts must adhere to Treasury Board policies and directives, which are intended to ensure that contracts are awarded in a fair, open and transparent manner.

Given the volume of government procurement, controls are in place at various levels based on contract value, risk and complexity.

Following recent concerns about contracts provided to McKinsey, we are undertaking a full review of all procurements with this company.

Details are still being finalized but the intent will be to verify if these procurements were conducted in accordance with Treasury Board policies and directives.

\* \* \*

● (1450)

**AIR TRANSPORTATION**

**Mr. Taylor Bachrach (Skeena—Bulkley Valley, NDP):** Mr. Speaker, two seasons of travel chaos left Canadians sleeping on airport floors, stranded in countries around the world and out thousands of dollars. The government has over 33,000 air passenger complaints before it and the folks who do manage to jump through all of the Liberals' hoops are having to wait over a year and a half to have their complaints reviewed. Despite all of this the government has not fined the airlines a single dollar for failing to compensate passengers.

Why is it that Canada seems to have a minister for airlines but no minister for air passengers?

**Hon. Omar Alghabra (Minister of Transport, Lib.):** Mr. Speaker, our government is committed to protecting passengers' rights. In fact, our government was the first government in Canada's history to pass a bill in this chamber to support passengers' rights.

Of course, the last couple of years have been very difficult on the aviation sector because of the pandemic and because of the public health situation. We are working with the Canadian Transportation Agency to provide the resources they need. The chair of the Canadian Transportation Agency was at committee, where the hon. member got the chance to ask his questions.

\* \* \*

**TAXATION**

**Ms. Laurel Collins (Victoria, NDP):** Mr. Speaker, Canadians are dealing with the costs of the climate crisis while everyday costs are soaring. People are having to cut back on their already tight budgets, while huge grocery chains and oil and gas companies make billions.

A windfall tax would force those rich CEOs to finally pay what they owe. With this, the government could put money back into the pockets of Canadians and invest in clean energy.

Will the Prime Minister implement a windfall profits tax to make Canada more affordable for people instead of more profitable for billionaires?

**Hon. Chrystia Freeland (Deputy Prime Minister and Minister of Finance, Lib.):** Mr. Speaker, our government is absolutely committed to ensuring that everyone pays his or her fair share in Canada. That is why our government implemented a 15% COVID recovery dividend levied on our largest banks and insurance companies. That is why our government has introduced a permanent 1.5% tax on the largest banks and insurance companies in Canada. That is why we are implementing a 2% tax on share buybacks. That is why we have put in place a luxury tax on planes, yachts and cars.

*Oral Questions***CHILD CARE**

**Mr. Charles Sousa (Mississauga—Lakeshore, Lib.):** Mr. Speaker, it is an honour and a privilege to stand before the House for the first time. Earlier today, the Minister of Families, Children and Social Development led off a debate on Bill C-35 to enshrine the Canada-wide early learning and child care system into law.

My constituents all know so well how important access to affordable and inclusive child care is for our economy and women's empowerment.

Could the minister please update the House on how Bill C-35 will ensure that affordable and accessible quality child care is here to stay?

**Hon. Karina Gould (Minister of Families, Children and Social Development, Lib.):** Mr. Speaker, let me begin by congratulating and welcoming my newest colleague from Mississauga—Lakeshore to the House.

I am thrilled to talk about Bill C-35 and the important work that it is going to do to ensure to Canadians, to families, to children, to women, to day care providers that the federal government is there for the long term. I have no doubt that his constituents in Mississauga—Lakeshore voted for him because they know that he is a hard worker and that the Liberal government is going to be there in tough times.

I am glad for the support of the NDP and the Bloc Québécois. I hope the Conservatives will reverse their position—

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

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**ETHICS**

**Mr. Michael Barrett (Leeds—Grenville—Thousand Islands and Rideau Lakes, CPC):** Mr. Speaker, after eight years, breaking ethics laws has become as synonymous with those Liberals as higher taxes. Now, for a record fifth time, a Liberal minister has been caught breaking ethics laws.

At a time when Canadians are struggling to afford to heat their homes and put food on their table for their families, the trade minister was finding the time and taxpayer money to line the pockets of her insider friend: another day, another lawless Liberal under the lawless Prime Minister.

Will the minister do the right thing and cut a cheque to make restitution for her corruption?

• (1455)

**Hon. Mary Ng (Minister of International Trade, Export Promotion, Small Business and Economic Development, Lib.):** Mr. Speaker, the commissioner has reviewed this issue and has reached his conclusion. To the House, I apologize. I regret that I made a mistake. I should have recused myself. At the time, it was quite urgent that we communicated with Canadians, particularly with small businesses, about those urgent supports that were needed, but I do regret that I did not recuse myself, and for that I apologize to the House.

**Mr. Michael Barrett (Leeds—Grenville—Thousand Islands and Rideau Lakes, CPC):** Mr. Speaker, it is unfortunate but not surprising that the minister will not make it right after serving under the Prime Minister who has twice himself been found guilty of breaking Canada's ethics laws. Those Liberals exist solely for the purpose to hold on to power. They divide Canadians, pit neighbour against neighbour and line the pockets of Liberal insiders while they are at it.

Therefore, will the Prime Minister today ask for the minister's resignation?

**Hon. Mark Holland (Leader of the Government in the House of Commons, Lib.):** Mr. Speaker, no.

**Mrs. Shelby Kramp-Neuman (Hastings—Lennox and Addington, CPC):** Mr. Speaker, after eight years, yet again another Liberal patronage scandal. Not content with gifting lucrative government contracts to hateful anti-Semites, now the Minister of Diversity and Inclusion, the member for York South—Weston, handed \$93,000 to a staffer's sister for public relations advice.

It is not difficult to realize that handing over taxpayer dollars to a staff's family is a bad idea, yet here we are again. Will the minister do the only responsible and dignified action and pay back the money?

**Hon. Ahmed Hussen (Minister of Housing and Diversity and Inclusion, Lib.):** Mr. Speaker, one of the most important duties of any member of Parliament is to communicate with their riding. That is why members of Parliament are permitted to use their operating budgets to hire service providers to help them communicate with their constituents. In this case, a small business in Toronto was hired by my constituency office to offer assistance in providing communication services to my constituents.

Let me be clear: The rules were followed. The contract with this organization was publicly disclosed and the Office of the Conflict of Interest and Ethics Commissioner has advised that there is no conflict of interest.

\* \* \*

[*Translation*]

**OFFICIAL LANGUAGES**

**Mr. Bernard Généreux (Montmagny—L'Islet—Kamouraska—Rivière-du-Loup, CPC):** Mr. Speaker, even after \$50 million was spent on the ArriveCAN app, the Commissioner of Official Languages has reprimanded the government over the app's language issues.

A Canadian travelling in the United States was unable to get the French version of the app, even though it is one of this country's two official languages. The government spent a fortune on a service that violated the rights of francophones.

After eight years in power, will the government finally admit that it is incompetent, very incompetent?

*Oral Questions***GOVERNMENT APPOINTMENTS**

**Hon. Marco Mendicino (Minister of Public Safety, Lib.):** Mr. Speaker, I could not agree more with my colleague. When we launch services, it is essential that they be available in both official languages. That is exactly what we did with ArriveCAN. When the public raised some concerns, the Canada Border Services Agency made improvements to the service. We will continue to invest in providing service in both official languages, everywhere.

\* \* \*

**HEALTH**

**Mrs. Claude DeBellefeuille (Salaberry—Suroît, BQ):** Mr. Speaker, after years of pressure from Quebec, the provinces and the Bloc Québécois, the first ministers will finally meet on February 7 to talk health transfers. However, the federal government is trying to manage expectations by calling it a working meeting to discuss demands. We all know what those demands are. Ottawa needs to cover 35% of health care costs. That is what the premiers have been saying for the past 28 months, and they said it yet again in this morning's press release.

The federal government knows what they need. Is it going to bring its chequebook to the February 7 meeting?

**Hon. Jean-Yves Duclos (Minister of Health, Lib.):** Mr. Speaker, we are very happy to be asked that question, because we are all looking forward to the next steps, which include the February 7 meeting. The first ministers will meet to build on the major progress that the health ministers have made in recent months, not only in the fight against COVID-19, thereby saving tens of thousands of lives and tens of billions in economic costs, but also to ensure that people in Canada continue to receive the health care they need.

• (1500)

**Mrs. Claude DeBellefeuille (Salaberry—Suroît, BQ):** Mr. Speaker, meanwhile, the crisis is worsening in our hospitals.

The situation is so untenable that exhausted nurses at Maison-neuve-Rosemont hospital refused to go back to work two weeks ago. They even threatened to quit. At this point, working meetings are not enough; they need results.

Quebec and the provinces have been voicing their needs. They have been doing so for the past 28 months, and they did so again this morning.

On February 7, will Ottawa at least put some money on the table, to prove that it is negotiating in good faith?

**Hon. Jean-Yves Duclos (Minister of Health, Lib.):** Mr. Speaker, putting money on the table is exactly what we have been doing for several years now, with an additional investment of \$72 billion in the Canada health transfer and by covering 80% of the costs associated with fighting COVID-19. Last March, we increased the Canada health transfer by 5%, and we will increase it by another 10% in the next few weeks, in March. We also invested \$2 billion just a few weeks ago to combat emergencies and problems facing hospitals.

That is a lot of money, but more importantly, it is about outcomes that need to be achieved for patients and workers.

**Mr. Pierre Paul-Hus (Charlebourg—Haute-Saint-Charles, CPC):** Mr. Speaker, the Minister of Canadian Heritage, the Prime Minister's right-hand man in Quebec, had a strong reaction to the appointment of Amira Elghawaby, the federal representative to combat Islamophobia, who once made disparaging comments about the Quebec nation.

He said, "As a Quebecker, I am deeply hurt by these comments, I am deeply insulted".

Given that he is hurt and insulted, will his words be backed up with action? Will the minister press for this irresponsible political appointment to be revoked?

**Hon. Ahmed Hussen (Minister of Housing and Diversity and Inclusion, Lib.):** Mr. Speaker, our position is clear. We know that Quebeckers oppose any form of racism and hate.

The special representative has already clarified her remarks, and I would refer the member to her statement on this matter.

\* \* \*

[*English*]

**JUSTICE**

**Ms. Raquel Dancho (Kildonan—St. Paul, CPC):** Mr. Speaker, last month, the OPP's Constable Greg Pierzchala was murdered by a violent criminal out on bail. Chief Myron Demkiw of the Toronto police said that this murder was senseless and preventable and that Canada needs bail reform. Unfortunately, access to bail for violent criminals was made easier by the Liberal government's Bill C-75. Countless Canadians have been harmed by the Liberal bail system; it must be reformed.

Will the Liberal government make that commitment today?

**Hon. David Lametti (Minister of Justice and Attorney General of Canada, Lib.):** Mr. Speaker, Canadians deserve to be and feel safe, and we all have a role in protecting our communities. The laws on bail are clear: Detaining an accused person is justified if it is necessary to protect the safety of the public. As my colleague knows, provinces and territories, as well as police forces, are responsible the enforcement of bail conditions. We all have a role to play. We at the federal level are providing resources to support them. We will continue to do so in order to ensure that laws are applied appropriately.

We remain open to good ideas and proposals from the opposition, and from provinces and territories, to reform our criminal justice system, including the bail system.

*Oral Questions*

**Ms. Raquel Dancho (Kildonan—St. Paul, CPC):** Mr. Speaker, the Liberals have had eight years to make our streets safer, and they have only made things worse. Last year in Toronto, of the 44 homicides by shooting, 24 of the criminals responsible were out on bail when they committed the murders. All 13 premiers in Canada signed a historic letter to the Prime Minister demanding bail reform. The Toronto police are demanding bail reform.

What is it going to take for the Liberal government to reform the broken Liberal bail system?

**Hon. David Lametti (Minister of Justice and Attorney General of Canada, Lib.):** Mr. Speaker, in a number of important cases, the bail reform that we undertook in Bill C-75 made it harder to get bail. As I have said, we are open to any good proposal from the opposition, as well as from provinces and territories.

At a conference of federal, provincial and territorial justice ministers in the fall, I committed to that long before this became a hot issue in the House of Commons. We are working with the provinces and territories to look at legitimate suggestions for bail reform.

\* \* \*

[Translation]

## THE ENVIRONMENT

**Mr. Patrick Weiler (West Vancouver—Sunshine Coast—Sea to Sky Country, Lib.):** Mr. Speaker, the rapid decline of biodiversity is threatening the foundation of our economy, our food security, our health and our quality of life and poses serious and irreversible risks to our communities.

Can the Minister of Environment and Climate Change tell the House about the agreement on an historic global framework that was signed after 13 days of negotiations at COP15 in Montreal?

● (1505)

**Hon. Steven Guilbeault (Minister of Environment and Climate Change, Lib.):** Mr. Speaker, I want to thank my colleague for the question, his involvement and his advocacy on this important issue.

In December, countries from around the world met in Montreal to address biodiversity loss. More than one million species are at risk globally, including 640 species here in Canada. Representatives from more than 160 countries set their differences aside, and we committed to protecting 30% of our land and oceans by 2030.

It is a landmark agreement that Canadians should be proud of, since we were at the centre of this agreement.

\* \* \*

## JUSTICE

**Mr. Pierre Paul-Hus (Charlesbourg—Haute-Saint-Charles, CPC):** Mr. Speaker, under Bill C-21 on firearms, law-abiding citizens will no longer be able to hunt, but criminals will be able to continue terrorizing our streets.

Meanwhile, the provincial premiers are unanimously calling on this Liberal government to take immediate action to strengthen Canada's bail system.

In December, a police officer was killed by a criminal who had been granted bail even though he posed a real threat to society.

Will this Prime Minister stop playing politics with the safety of Canadians and do what needs to be done?

**Hon. David Lametti (Minister of Justice and Attorney General of Canada, Lib.):** Mr. Speaker, as I just said, the laws on bail are clear. We all have a role to play. Provinces, territories and police forces must enforce federal laws.

At a ministers' conference in November, my colleague, the Minister of Public Safety, and I committed to working with the provinces to look at suggestions for bail reform.

We are doing the work. We are open to legitimate suggestions for bail reform.

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[English]

## PUBLIC SAFETY

**Ms. Melissa Lantsman (Thornhill, CPC):** Mr. Speaker, commuters in Toronto have been set on fire, stabbed and swarmed in a growing wave of violence. Our transit operators are scared to go to work. In the first three weeks of this year, Toronto police said that crimes were up more than 37%. We have repeat violent offenders out on our streets because of the government's weak bail system. The Minister of Public Safety says he is concerned, but he is not concerned enough to do anything about it.

Canadians are a little more than just concerned. When are we going to see the bail reform that every premier, police union and police chief has called for in this country?

**Hon. Marco Mendicino (Minister of Public Safety, Lib.):** Mr. Speaker, I am deeply concerned with the recent spike of violence on the TTC. I have spoken directly with Mayor Tory to express our unwavering support for him and the city.

Our government, in fact, has doubled down on support for law enforcement, violence prevention, mental health supports, and supports to address homelessness and poverty. Most recently, along with the mayor, I announced \$12 million in funding to address many of the social determinants that can lead to violence through the building safer communities fund, a fund that the Conservatives voted against.

We will continue to work with the City of Toronto and all communities to keep our public transit safe.



*Oral Questions*

**Ms. Melissa Lantsman (Thornhill, CPC):** Mr. Speaker, after eight years of the current Prime Minister, violent crime is up 32%. That is a record. The record is the weak bail system, and it keeps serious, violent criminals out of jail and on our streets. There is a former Toronto police chief sitting on that side of the House who has made more comments about crime in the U.S. than in his own city this week. Enough with the thoughts and prayers and the concern. People do not feel safe in their communities, and they fear riding public transit.

What is it going to take to get the minister to pay attention to the random attacks happening on public transit and reform the bail system?

**Hon. Marco Mendicino (Minister of Public Safety, Lib.):** Mr. Speaker, I assure my colleague and all members in this House that this government is paying attention to the situation in Toronto. This is why, without any hesitation or haste, I contacted the mayor to make sure that he knew that this government would be there to support the City of Toronto as we have done in the past with regard to law enforcement, as we have done in the past with regard to preventing crime, as in the \$12-million announcement that we made last spring with the mayor, as we have done in the past with regard to our investments in Canada's summer jobs to support those young people who were at most risk.

That is the record of this government, and we will continue to build on it to protect all residents and all communities to keep them safe.

\* \* \*

• (1510)

**HOUSING**

**Ms. Julie Dzerowicz (Davenport, Lib.):** Mr. Speaker, every Canadian deserves a safe and affordable place to call home. By continuing to make substantial investments in affordable housing, we are creating new jobs, building an inclusive economy and strengthening our economies. We also know many employers need access to a pool of workers as labour shortages are felt across Canada.

Could the Minister of Immigration, Refugees and Citizenship tell us how working migrant workers could be a part of the solution to address Canada's critical housing needs?

**Hon. Sean Fraser (Minister of Immigration, Refugees and Citizenship, Lib.):** Mr. Speaker, there are many thousands of people in this country who do not currently have immigration status but have been contributing to our communities for years. Many have families living in these communities. I am thrilled to share with this House that we have worked very closely with the organized labour movement in this country to launch the out-of-status construction workers pilot to bring those people out of the shadows, allow them to contribute and help build more homes for our communities.

I thank the hon. member for Davenport for attending on my behalf to make an important announcement that we will be doubling the scale of this program to bring more people into the light, build more homes for Canadians and serve everyone's interest at the same time.

**Ms. Leah Gazan (Winnipeg Centre, NDP):** Mr. Speaker, the suspected for-profit buyer of Lions Place, a 287-unit, non-profit seniors' housing building in Winnipeg Centre, is a company with a history of hiking rents. The province recently announced rental support for current tenants, but this is a band-aid solution that protects residents only for two years while subsidizing rent increases.

The Minister of Northern Affairs said he wants to see Lions Place remain in non-profit hands. What are he and the Liberal government going to do to ensure this affordable seniors' housing does so?

**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.):** Mr. Speaker, our government and I have made it very clear that we are here to build more non-profit affordable housing. I have stated on the record that I feel Lions Club should provide non-profit affordable housing for generations in downtown Winnipeg. I have written to the chair of the board of directors asking for a meeting. I have not had a response to my letter, but I am here to work with Lions Club and the Province of Manitoba to make sure it remains affordable housing.

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**INFRASTRUCTURE**

**Mr. Kevin Vuong (Spadina—Fort York, Ind.):** Mr. Speaker, in August 2021 the government invested \$20 million for urgent work at Toronto's Harbourfront Centre. The rationale was that improving cultural and community infrastructure builds strong, prosperous and dynamic communities. Those objectives have fallen short of reality. Harbourfront Centre has ignored input from residents and local organizations. The centre claims that Canadian Heritage was informed of and approved the new plans, which included the elimination of a beloved and popular permanent skating rink. York Quay Neighbourhood Association and Waterfront for All were denied a meeting to discuss the rink's closure and the area's way forward.

Is the minister okay with giving away \$20 million with little public consultation?

**Hon. Dominic LeBlanc (Minister of Intergovernmental Affairs, Infrastructure and Communities, Lib.):** Mr. Speaker, I think my hon. colleague understands the importance our government places on the appropriate investments in the Toronto waterfront. We have a history of collaborating with both the Province of Ontario and the City of Toronto. I am happy to tell my colleague that I had a chance to meet with senior executives and board members of Waterfront Toronto in December. I have had conversations with both Mayor Tory and the provincial infrastructure minister in Ontario.

We will continue to support the good work done by Waterfront Toronto.

*Routine Proceedings***HUMAN RIGHTS**

**Ms. Heather McPherson (Edmonton Strathcona, NDP):** Mr. Speaker, I rise on a point of order.

I believe, if you seek it, you will find unanimous consent for the following motion:

That, given reports of human rights abuses and attacks on civilians in Ukraine and other parts of the world by the Russian-supported Wagner Group, the House call upon the government to immediately designate the Wagner Group as a terrorist entity.

**The Speaker:** All those opposed to the hon. member's moving the motion will please say nay.

It is agreed.

The House has heard the terms of the motion. All those opposed to the motion will please say nay.

(Motion agreed to)

**ROUTINE PROCEEDINGS**

[*English*]

**GOVERNMENT RESPONSE TO PETITIONS**

**Mr. Kevin Lamoureux (Parliamentary Secretary to the Leader of the Government in the House of Commons, Lib.):** Mr. Speaker, pursuant to Standing Order 36(8)(a) I have the honour to table, in both official languages, the government's response to 199 petitions.

These returns will be tabled in an electronic format.

\* \* \*

● (1515)

**COMMITTEES OF THE HOUSE**

## PROCEDURE AND HOUSE AFFAIRS

**Hon. Bardish Chagger (Waterloo, Lib.):** Mr. Speaker, I have the honour to present, in both official languages, the 20th report of the Standing Committee on Procedure and House Affairs, entitled "Future of Hybrid Proceedings in the House of Commons".

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

I thank all of the people who were involved in making this possible. It was a fruitful conversation that brought our Parliament into the 21st century. I give a special shout-out to Justin, who served as our clerk. I know he will be going on to other adventures. All committee members thank him for his service.

With that, I hope that all members take the time to read this very invigorating report.

**Mr. John Nater (Perth—Wellington, CPC):** Mr. Speaker, I am very pleased to table the Conservative Party's dissenting report.

While there have been some benefits from some aspects of hybrid Parliament, we have undoubtedly witnessed first-hand a lot of shortcomings with it: ministers having an easier job deflecting ac-

countability and an unacceptable burden being place on our interpreters, to name two.

It is important to bear in mind that our experience with hybrid Parliament was forged as a pandemic necessity, and we have only now started to experience it in the postpandemic context. That is why Conservatives believe the majority's report goes too far and too fast in recommending a permanent extension of a hybrid Parliament practically as it exists today. Conservatives have long believed that permanent changes to procedural arrangements ought to be the result of multi-party consensus.

In the interests of a consensus, Conservatives recommend that the renewal of hybrid proceedings be sunset one year into the next Parliament to allow us time to assess the ongoing implications. We also recommend other changes in the meantime to improve accountability and to reduce the burden on interpreters, such as reverting to entirely in-person chamber proceedings while maintaining the remote voting app and requiring ministers and senior officials to be physically present at committees.

The committee's majority chose not to lay out any details to its vision or to suggest how the new standing orders would read. That has placed the ball in the government House leader's court to craft the way forward. A consensus is within reach. We challenge the government House leader to accept it and to turn his back on the divisive and confrontational approach he has preferred to take on the House's hybrid arrangements.

[*Translation*]

**Hon. Bardish Chagger:** Mr. Speaker, pursuant to Standing Orders 104 and 114, I have the honour to present, in both official languages, the 21st report of the Standing Committee on Procedure and House Affairs regarding the membership of committees of the House.

[*English*]

If the House gives its consent, I intend to move concurrence in the 21st report.

Mr. Speaker, since it is the first time I am standing in this House and it is the first day in 2023, I wish you and all loved ones a happy new year, especially the good people of the riding of Waterloo.

If the House gives its consent, I move that the 21st report of the Standing Committee on Procedure and House Affairs, presented to the House earlier this day, be concurred in.

● (1520)

**The Speaker:** All those opposed to the hon. member's moving the motion will please say nay.

The House has heard the terms of the motion. All those opposed to the motion will please say nay.

(Motion agreed to)

## PETITIONS

## TAXATION

**Mr. Tom Kmiec (Calgary Shepard, CPC):** Mr. Speaker, happy new year.

I am tabling a petition on behalf of my constituents who are calling on the Minister of Finance to suspend the federal excise tax and carbon tax for Canadians until the cost-of-living crisis has been resolved. The petitioners are reminding this Parliament and the government as well, in their petition, that the price of gasoline is intended to go up much more and the clean-fuel standard will add onto the cost. The petitioners also refer to the fact that the carbon tax will add even more onto the cost of gasoline and of diesel as well, for those who use diesel for work vehicles. Therefore, they are calling on the Minister of Finance to eliminate the excise tax.

## IMMIGRATION

**Mr. John Aldag (Cloverdale—Langley City, Lib.):** Mr. Speaker, I am pleased to present a petition from people within my riding and beyond. In Cloverdale—Langley City, immigration is very important, and there have been some concerns raised about how the interest to sponsor form was handled coming out of the pandemic. That is the intention of the petition.

## MEDICAL ASSISTANCE IN DYING

**Mr. Damien Kurek (Battle River—Crowfoot, CPC):** Mr. Speaker, as always, it is an honour to stand in this place to be able to share the concerns that are petitioned by so many Canadians, and today I would like to present two.

The first petition is that many Canadians would like to draw the attention of the House of Commons to some recent comments that had been made at the joint committee studying medical assistance in dying. I quote Louis Roy from the Quebec college of physicians who said, “babies from birth to one year of age who come into the world with severe deformities and very serious syndromes”.

The undersigned citizens on this petition call on the Government of Canada to block any attempt to allow the killing of children. It is shameful that it even has to be said in this place.

## CHARITABLE ORGANIZATIONS

**Mr. Damien Kurek (Battle River—Crowfoot, CPC):** Mr. Speaker, the second petition is signed by a host of Canadians. They draw attention to the fact that the Liberal Party, in its 2021 platform, promised to deny the charitable status of organizations that have certain convictions. It reeks of a values test 2.0 where the government politicized charitable status in this country.

Therefore, the undersigned citizens of Canada call upon the House of Commons to protect and preserve the application of charitable status rules on a politically and ideologically neutral basis, without discrimination on the basis of political or religious values and without the imposition of another values test.

The petitioners affirm the right of Canadians to freedom of expression.

It is a pleasure to table these two petitions here today.

## Routine Proceedings

## RUSSIA

**Mr. Larry Brock (Brantford—Brant, CPC):** Mr. Speaker, almost a year ago, Russia launched an unprovoked war against the people of Ukraine. Every day, the world was shocked by numerous war crimes. Russian armed forces have repeatedly engaged in violent, indiscriminate attacks on civilian targets, including hospitals, schools, residential buildings and shelters. Starting in October, Russia intensified its strikes on Ukraine's energy system to shut down the power grid and to cause a humanitarian disaster during the winter. In fact, it has launched more than 5,000 missiles at Ukraine since the beginning of this war.

The PACE and NATO Parliamentary Assemblies have labelled Russia a terrorist regime. More so, the European Parliament has similarly declared Russia a state sponsor of terrorism. All members of the House unanimously recognized Russian aggression in Ukraine as an act of genocide. Now Canadians who have signed this petition are calling on the government to immediately designate the Russian Federation as a state sponsor of terrorism.

## ELECTORAL REFORM

**Mr. Mike Morrice (Kitchener Centre, GP):** Mr. Speaker, it is an honour to rise this afternoon to present a petition on behalf of petitioners who note that Canada has had an electoral system since its inception called “first past the post” that allows a political party to win a majority of seats and all of the power while having less than half the popular vote.

They point out that proportional representation is a really critical principle that calls for the percentage of seats in the House to equate to the percentage of votes received by that political party. If a party gets 40% of the popular vote, they say that it should get 40% of the seats.

They also point out that countries around the world such as Germany, Italy, Ireland, New Zealand and many others have progressed from a first-past-the-post system to a proportional representation system already. The petitioners move for the Government of Canada to push toward a PR electoral system to bring credible representation to all Canadians.

• (1525)

## FOREIGN AFFAIRS

**Mr. Garnett Genuis (Sherwood Park—Fort Saskatchewan, CPC):** Mr. Speaker, the Standing Committee on Foreign Affairs and International Development is currently undertaking an important study on the situation in Nagorno-Karabakh, or Artsakh, and the blockade of the Lachin corridor. I am tabling a petition about the situation in that region.

It was a petition signed prior to the start of the blockade, but it does have a number of asks that are relevant to that ongoing situation, including a call on the Government of Canada to provide the necessary humanitarian assistance to ensure the safety and viability of the population of Artsakh and facilitate the exchange of the remains of fatalities.

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It also calls on the Government of Canada to denounce aggressive rhetoric from Turkey and Azerbaijan against Armenia and Artsakh and to condemn state-sponsored hatred. Furthermore, it notes the illegal detention of prisoners of war and calls on the Government of Canada to use the tools available to it to advocate for the release of captives. I hope I join certainly all members of the House in calling for an end to the blockade of the Lachin corridor and efforts to pursue peace in the region.

## HUMAN RIGHTS

**Mr. Garnett Genuis (Sherwood Park—Fort Saskatchewan, CPC):** Mr. Speaker, the second petition I am tabling highlights the ongoing detention of Huseyin Celil, a Canadian citizen detained in China for over a decade and a half. The Chinese government has refused to accept Mr. Celil's Canadian citizenship and continues to deny access to lawyers, family members and Canadian officials. We must continue to be persistent in highlighting this case and calling for his release.

Petitioners want to see the Government of Canada demand the recognition of Huseyin Celil's Canadian citizenship and provide him with consular and legal services in accordance with international law, to formally state that the release of Huseyin Celil is a priority of the Canadian government of equal concern to the unjust detention of Michael Kovrig and Michael Spavor, to appoint a special envoy to work on securing Mr. Celil's release and to seek the assistance of the Biden administration and other allies around the world in obtaining Mr. Celil's release.

## AQUACULTURE

**Ms. Elizabeth May (Saenich—Gulf Islands, GP):** Mr. Speaker, as it is my first chance to address you in the year 2023 and if there is no statute of limitations on it, happy new year.

I am honoured to present a petition from my constituents. As many petitions before this one have attested, residents of British Columbia are deeply concerned that the populations of Pacific salmon are in free fall. One of the proximate reasons for that is the presence of what are referred to in some context as fish farms. My constituents prefer to call them toxic fish factories.

There has been guidance from the Cohen commission and others that these operations should be removed from the migratory routes of Pacific salmon, but these petitioners point to a specific problem, and that is that the mandate for the Department of Fisheries and Oceans includes both regulating aquaculture and promoting aquaculture.

The petitioners call for this conflict of interest to be removed such that the Department of Fisheries and Oceans protects the marine ecosystem particularly for the sustainability of the Fraser River sockeye.

## COVID-19 MANDATES

**Mr. Arnold Viersen (Peace River—Westlock, CPC):** Mr. Speaker, it is my honour and privilege to rise today to present a number of petitions.

The first one is from Canadians from across the country who are still concerned around the implementation of vaccine passports on Canadian citizens. They note the Government of Canada has suspended these things for the time being and they are asking for the

Government of Canada to abolish these things. They are calling for an end to all federally regulated COVID-19 vaccine mandates and restrictions.

● (1530)

## CHARITABLE ORGANIZATIONS

**Mr. Arnold Viersen (Peace River—Westlock, CPC):** Mr. Speaker, my next petition is from Canadians across the country who are concerned about the Liberal Party's campaign platform to revoke charitable status from pro-life organizations such as crisis pregnancy care centres, which counsel young women and save countless lives every day. Revoking charitable status would politicize charitable status and would be the first step to even more measures to eradicate the values and principles of Christian Canadians.

Revoking the charitable status of pro-life organizations would result in an explosion in the number of folks who are unable to get help in a time of crisis. Therefore, the folks who have signed this petition are calling on members of Parliament to do everything they can to prevent the revocation of charitable status from pro-life organizations.

## MEDICAL ASSISTANCE IN DYING

**Mr. Arnold Viersen (Peace River—Westlock, CPC):** Mr. Speaker, the next petition is from Canadians across Canada who are appalled by the statements of Louis Roy of the Collège des médecins du Québec, who recommended that we legalize the killing of babies from birth to one year of age who have severe deformities and syndromes. The killing of infants is deeply disturbing to these Canadians and they state that infanticide is always wrong. Therefore, they call on the Government of Canada and this Parliament to block any attempt to legalize infanticide.

**Mr. Charlie Angus:** Mr. Speaker, I rise on a point of order. It is not up to me to tell the Speaker about the rules of House, which you have such great respect for, but I have heard one editorializing comment after another, and that is not what petitions are for. Members are supposed to simply stick to the petition. Throwing in all of these extra attacks on people who believe in women's reproductive rights is not fair game.

**The Speaker:** I am not here to bring judgment down on what is said and what is not said. The Speaker's role is to remind members of what the rules are.

I was going to remind members before the next presentation that they should present a very short synopsis of every petition and not go on for a while. I am going to leave it at that. I will remind hon. members the next time I ask for petitions what petitions are for. I have let them run on a bit, and I will admit to that.

I thank the member for bringing that up.

I will let the hon. member for Peace River—Westlock continue.

## FALUN GONG

**Mr. Arnold Viersen (Peace River—Westlock, CPC):** Mr. Speaker, my final petition comes from Canadians across Canada who are concerned about the treatment of Falun Gong by the Chinese Communist Party. Millions of Falun Gong practitioners have been arbitrarily detained. Family members of Canadians have gone missing. Extrajudicial imprisonment, forced labour, torture, rape, killing, forced abortion and these kinds of things have happened to Falun Gong practitioners in Canada.

The petitioners note the 2016 report by the late David Kilgour. They also note that the U.S. House of Representatives and the European Parliament have passed resolutions recognizing the terrible treatment of Falun Gong practitioners by the Chinese Communist Party. Therefore, they call on Canada to take every opportunity to call for the end of the persecution of Falun Gong and to ensure that the Chinese Communist Party's mass murder of innocent people for their organs is not allowed here in Canada.

\* \* \*

## QUESTIONS ON THE ORDER PAPER

**Mr. Kevin Lamoureux (Parliamentary Secretary to the Leader of the Government in the House of Commons, Lib.):** Mr. Speaker, the following questions will be answered today: Nos. 967, 969, 974, 979, 980, 983, 986, 987, 1000, 1001, 1008, 1009, 1013, 1015, 1019, 1021, 1022, 1026, 1034, 1038, 1040, 1048 to 1050, 1053, 1059, 1060, 1064, 1065, 1067, 1068, 1070, 1074 to 1076, 1078, 1079, 1082, 1087, 1091, 1095, 1097, 1098, 1100, 1109, 1110, 1112, 1118, 1123, 1131, 1133, 1136, 1137, 1141 and 1143.

[Text]

Question No. 967—**Ms. Melissa Lantsman:**

With regard to the government's response to recent media reports that the registered not-for-profit entity Samidoun has ties to entities that the government has listed as terrorist entities, including the Popular Front for the Liberation of Palestine (PFLP): (a) when did Public Safety Canada (PS) first become aware of Samidoun's ties to the PFLP, and what specific actions, if any, did PS take after they became aware; (b) when did PS first become aware that events hosted by Samidoun glorified terrorist and armed militants from the PFLP and other designated terrorist entities, and what specific actions, if any, did PS take after they became aware; (c) when did PS first become aware that Samidoun was raising money for (i) the Union of Health Work Committees, (ii) other entities tied to the PFLP, broken down by each entity; (d) when did PS and the Canada Border Services Agency become aware that the Samidoun organizers, who currently reside in the Vancouver area, have been (i) denied entry to the European Union, (ii) deported from the United States; and (e) what actions, if any, is the government taking to ensure that Canadians are safe from the threat posed by Samidoun, including whether or not the government will be listing Samidoun as a terrorist entity?

**Ms. Pam Damoff (Parliamentary Secretary to the Minister of Public Safety, Lib.):** Mr. Speaker, the Government of Canada takes terrorist threats against Canada and its citizens seriously. Security and intelligence agencies are continuously monitoring entities that could pose such a threat and are taking appropriate action. The government cannot comment specifically on the activities of individual groups or what groups are being assessed or considered for listing.

One of the underlying objectives of the Criminal Code list of terrorist entities is to ensure terrorist entities do not use Canada as a base from which to conduct terrorist activities, including fundraising, and to prohibit individuals from supporting terrorist entities. Assessing entities for possible listing under the Criminal Code is continuous. The process is rigorous, thorough and involves interde-

## Routine Proceedings

partmental consultations. Pursuant to subsection 83.05(1) of the Criminal Code, if there are reasonable grounds to believe that an entity “has knowingly carried out, attempted to carry out, participated in or facilitated a terrorist activity” or “has knowingly acted on behalf of, at the direction of or in association with an entity” involved in a terrorist activity, then the Minister of Public Safety may recommend to the Governor in Council that it be added to the list.

With regard to part (d)(i), the CBSA does not track individuals who have been denied entry to the European Union.

With regard to part (d)(ii), the CBSA does not have any involvement with deportations from the United States.

Question No. 969—**Ms. Niki Ashton:**

With regard to Indigenous Services Canada and programs and services offered to promote mental health and wellness in First Nations and Inuit communities, broken down by community and fiscal year since 2015-16: (a) what was the total amount of funding requested for recreational activities, programs, and activities; and (b) how much funding was delivered for the requests in (a)?

**Mr. Vance Badawey (Parliamentary Secretary to the Minister of Indigenous Services, Lib.):** Mr. Speaker, insofar as Indigenous Services Canada, or ISC, is concerned, the response is as follows.

With regard to part (a), the mental wellness program of ISC does not have targeted funding specific to recreational activities. As such, recreational activities are not part of the reporting requirement for mental wellness program funding recipients.

ISC's mental wellness program provides annual funding to support first nations and Inuit access to mental wellness services to reduce risk factors, promote protective factors and improve associated health outcomes. This includes mental wellness promotion; substance use prevention and treatment; life promotion and suicide prevention; crisis response services; harm reduction; and emotional and cultural support services.

ISC funds mental wellness services that include the following.

A network of 45 treatment centres, as well as drug and alcohol prevention services, in the majority of indigenous communities across Canada began in 1975-76. Many treatment centres have reopened with reduced occupancy due to local public health measures. However, many centres are finding alternate ways of delivering services, including virtual approaches.

A network of 71 mental wellness teams, which began in 2013-14, serves 359 first nations and Inuit communities in Alberta, Saskatchewan, Manitoba, Ontario, Québec, the Atlantic region, Northwest Territories, Nunavut and the Yukon.

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Access to mental health counselling and emotional and cultural support services has been provided to former students of Indian residential schools, beginning in 2007-08, and federal Indian day schools, beginning in 2020-21, and their families, and those affected by the issue of missing and murdered indigenous women and girls, beginning in 2018-19. Services include access to cultural and emotional supports, professional counselling services for individuals and families, and assistance with the cost of transportation services to access counselling services and/or cultural supports.

The Hope for Wellness helpline began in 2016-17 and offers immediate help to all indigenous peoples across Canada. It is available 24 hours a day, seven days a week, and offers counselling and crisis intervention.

Access to harm reduction measures, including naloxone, and funding for wraparound services at 72 opioid agonist therapy sites began in 2017-18. Opioid agonist therapy involves taking opioid agonists such as methadone or buprenorphine-naloxone to prevent withdrawal and reduce cravings for opioids. Wraparound services work to address underlying or associated issues through counselling and traditional practices.

With regard to part (b), funding for the mental wellness program has increased from an approximate annual amount of \$325 million in 2015-16 to \$580 million in 2021-22. An off-cycle amount of \$107 million in 2021-22 to expand trauma-informed supports to all forms of trauma increased this investment to approximately \$687 million in 2021-22. Funding is allocated to communities based on priorities and needs established through regional partnership structures and decision-making processes.

**Question No. 974—Ms. Michelle Rempel Garner:**

With regard to the list of 70 mining projects provided to U.S. counterparts that Canadian officials believe could warrant U.S. funding that was mentioned in the Canadian Broadcasting Company (CBC) article entitled "U.S. military weighs funding mining projects in Canada amid rivalry with China": (a) what criteria was used to determine which projects were selected for the list; (b) what are the details of each project included on the list, including (i) the name and location of the project, (ii) the scope of the project, including the type of natural resource development proposed to be undertaken (e.g. gold mining, lithium, oilsands, etc.), (iii) the name of the parties involved in the project development (government, corporations, etc.), (iv) the location of the parties involved in the project development; (c) what U.S. funding programs or mechanisms does the Canadian government believe these projects should be selected for; (d) what is the breakdown of (c) by specific project; (e) what is the current state of approvals within the Canadian regulatory system for each project; (f) what is the amount of funding that is being sought for each project from the U.S. government; (g) which government official (i) decided to develop and send the list to the U.S. government, (ii) decided which projects would be included in the list, (iii) gave the interview to the CBC; and (h) which of the projects that the government assessed (i) require U.S. government funding to be completed, (ii) can be completed without U.S. government funding?

**Hon. Jonathan Wilkinson (Minister of Natural Resources, Lib.):** Mr. Speaker, Canada is working with allies around the world to develop secure critical minerals value chains. Collaboration with the United States on critical minerals has been driven by the Canada-U.S. joint action plan on critical minerals, finalized in January 2020 and renewed in 2021. Collaboration between Canada and the United States on mineral and metal supply chains extends beyond this given integrated supply chains. For example, in 2021 alone, there was over \$94 billion U.S. in two-way minerals and metals trade between the two countries. It is in this context that the government shares information on Canada's mining sector with allies.

Canada has long been a trusted defence and security partner of the United States. Since its reactivation in 1985, the Defence Production Act, or DPA, Title III program recognizes this partnership, enables investments in Canadian projects and includes Canada as a domestic source for the purposes of the DPA Title III program. Information on company meetings that are being held with the DPA Title III program may involve sensitive commercial, scientific or technical information and represent potential contractual negotiations between third parties.

The development of critical mineral projects and supply chains is a key priority for Canada. This is reflected through the announcement of \$3.8 billion in budget 2022 to implement Canada's first critical minerals strategy. For more information on Canada's critical minerals projects, visit the interactive map on NRCan's website at <https://atlas.gc.ca/critical-minerals/en/>. Released on December 9, Canada's critical minerals strategy, which can be found at <https://www.canada.ca/en/campaign/critical-minerals-in-canada/canadian-critical-minerals-strategy.html>, will advance the development of critical minerals value chains at home and abroad.

**Question No. 979—Mr. Alexis Brunelle-Duceppe:**

With regard to the impact of the immigration levels established by the federal government on the French presence in Canada: (a) what studies have been commissioned or conducted by the government to determine what impact the immigration levels will have on the vitality of French in Canada; (b) what studies or proposals for studies have been commissioned or conducted by the government on francophone immigration targets in Canada; (c) what studies or proposals for studies have been commissioned or conducted by the government on the refusal rates of francophone immigrants to Canada; (d) what studies or proposals for studies have been commissioned or conducted by the government to assess what levels of francophone immigration were necessary to maintain the demographic weight of francophone official language minority communities; (e) what were the conclusions of these studies; (f) what is the correspondence between Immigration, Refugees and Citizenship Canada (IRCC) and the IRCC Research Evaluation Office, Francophone Immigration Policy Division, on the impact of immigration on French; and (g) can the government release the correspondence between IRCC and the IRCC Research Evaluation Office, Francophone Immigration Policy Division, regarding its francophone immigration target strategy?

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**Mrs. Marie-France Lalonde (Parliamentary Secretary to the Minister of Immigration, Refugees and Citizenship, Lib.):** Mr. Speaker, with respect to parts (a), (b), (c), (d) and (e), as well as to the establishment of immigration levels in Canada and their effect on the francophone presence in Canada, IRCC has not conducted the type of impact studies referenced in the inquiry. The immigration levels plan is developed following extensive consultations with the provinces and territories, stakeholders and the general public. The French-speaking admission target included in the immigration levels plan highlights the number of francophone admissions required, relative to the overall annual targets and ranges of the levels plan, to meet the target of 4.4% French-speaking admissions outside of Quebec. Studies, reports and analyses suggest various courses of action and recognize the need to support the prosperity of French in Canada and the need to act to strengthen linguistic duality in Canada.

IRCC regularly monitors all of its operations and pays particular attention to francophone immigration, which the department strives to promote. In addition, the department regularly monitors the approval rate of temporary and permanent resident applications around the world, with a constant focus on providing fair treatment to all its clients based on established selection criteria.

With respect to part (f), the research and evaluation branch of IRCC corresponds with other teams across the department as required to support many aspects of the departmental mandate. It provides relevant, timely, rigorous evidence and strategic decision-making support to advance IRCC policies and programs. The policy research team of the research and evaluation branch develops and conducts research designed to deepen the understanding of immigration policies, including outcomes and impacts, in order to support policy development in the department.

Finally, with respect to part (g), openness, transparency and accountability are guiding principles of the Government of Canada. The Government of Canada would provide correspondence based on the Access to Information Act and Privacy Act.

**Question No. 980—Mr. Eric Melillo:**

With regard to the 2022-23 departmental plan for the Federal Economic Development Agency for Northern Ontario: (a) what is the government's target for the percentage of companies engaged in collaborations with higher education institutions in Northern Ontario; and (b) what is the government's target in terms of the dollar value of exports of clean technologies from Northern Ontario?

**Hon. Patty Hajdu (Minister of Indigenous Services and Minister responsible for the Federal Economic Development Agency for Northern Ontario, Lib.):** Mr. Speaker, with regard to the 2022-23 departmental plan for the Federal Economic Development Agency for Northern Ontario, or FedNor, the response is as follows.

With respect to part (a), FedNor has not set a target for the indicator “percentage of companies engaged in collaborations with higher education institutions in Northern Ontario”. The regional development agencies, or RDAs, adopted a common departmental results framework, or DRF, in 2018-19, and as part of Innovation Science and Economic Development’s portfolio at the time, they were directed to select indicators that aligned with the innovation and skills plan. The RDAs continue to work with Statistics Canada to obtain the percentage of companies engaged in collaborations with

higher education institutions in each RDA’s region. Statistics Canada has informed the RDAs that distribution by RDA is not available for this indicator and has provided the outcomes for the following geographies: Canada, the Atlantic region, Quebec, Ontario and the rest of Canada.

For 2017-19, the most recent years for which data is available, 14% of companies in Ontario engaged in collaborations with higher education institutions. FedNor has not set a target for this indicator, as the agency has not been able to obtain historical data for the region. FedNor does not report on or use the result for all of Ontario given that the majority of companies and higher education institutions are located in southern Ontario, and it is not known if the data for northern Ontario is in line with the province’s result.

With respect to part (b), FedNor has not set a target for the indicator “dollar value of exports of clean technologies from Northern Ontario” because baseline data from Statistics Canada is not currently available. This indicator is part of the common RDA DRF structure implemented in 2018-19. The RDAs, particularly FedNor and the Federal Economic Development Agency for Southern Ontario, or FedDev, continue to work with Statistics Canada to obtain this data at the sub-provincial level. This indicator tracks the innovation and skills plan charter commitment to double Canada’s exports of clean tech by 2025, and supports commitments to the growth of clean tech market share as a percentage of global exports in the clean growth and climate change charter.

Clean technology export value is based on customs data using specific Harmonized Commodity Description and Coding System, or HS, codes and weights associated with clean tech. This value will be provided directly from Statistics Canada through its clean technology satellite account when it is released publicly. Clean tech is understood as any process, product or service that reduces environmental impacts through environmental protection activities; the sustainable use of natural resources; and the use of goods that have been specifically modified or adapted to be significantly less energy- or resource-intensive than the industry standard.

In the future, data will be developed and provided through Statistics Canada’s clean technology satellite account through customs data requests. Data is not currently available for northern Ontario. FedNor will work with Statistics Canada to obtain the necessary data.

**Question No. 983—Mr. Damien C. Kurek:**

With regard to the Twitter account of the Parliamentary Secretary to the Leader of the Government in the House of Commons (Senate): (a) do the views expressed by the parliamentary secretary through that account represent the views or positions of the (i) Leader of the Government in the House of Commons, (ii) Office of the Leader of the Government in the House of Commons, (iii) government, in any way; and (b) what resources, including any assistance with content, has the government provided to the parliamentary secretary?

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**Mr. Kevin Lamoureux (Parliamentary Secretary to the Leader of the Government in the House of Commons, Lib.):** Mr. Speaker, with respect to part (a), the views expressed by the Parliamentary Secretary to the Leader of the Government in the House of Commons (Senate) on his Twitter account are his own.

With respect to part (b), the work of the parliamentary secretary is supported by the office of the Leader of the Government in the House of Commons.

**Question No. 986—Mr. Randall Garrison:**

With regard to the Mutual Benefit Agreements (MBA) between First Nations and the Trans Mountain Expansion Project: (a) what is the legal obligation for the Government of Canada to fulfill the MBAs between First Nations and the Trans Mountain Expansion Project; (b) when will funding or resources contained within those MBAs be available to the T'souke, Sc'ianew, and Esquimalt First Nations; (c) what work has been done to fulfill the MBAs of the T'souke, Sc'ianew, and Esquimalt First Nations; and (d) how can funding or resources within these MBAs be accessed by the T'souke, Sc'ianew, and Esquimalt First Nations?

**Hon. Chrystia Freeland (Deputy Prime Minister and Minister of Finance, Lib.):** Mr. Speaker, the government remains committed to ensuring that first nation, Métis and Inuit communities directly benefit from major resource projects. With regard to the mutual benefit agreements, or MBAs, between Trans Mountain and the relevant first nations, the response is as follows.

With respect to part (a), the legal obligation in the MBAs is between the signatories, which are Trans Mountain and the relevant first nation. Trans Mountain is a separate legal entity from the Government of Canada and is governed by an independent board of directors.

With respect to part (b), as is customary for agreements of this type, both Trans Mountain and the relevant first nation are contractually committed to the commercial obligations, including when and how funding is provided under the terms of the agreement. The commercial obligations are subject to confidentiality as per the terms of the agreement.

With respect to part (c), the response is the same as the one for part (b).

With respect to part (d), the response is the same as the one for part (b).

**Question No. 987—Mr. Alexis Brunelle-Duceppe:**

With regard to the new immigration targets revealed by the Minister of Immigration, Refugees and Citizenship in the 2022 Annual Report to Parliament on Immigration: (a) how many pieces of correspondence did the government exchange with the Government of Quebec to establish the immigration levels; and (b) what were the contents of these pieces of correspondence?

**Ms. Marie-France Lalonde (Parliamentary Secretary to the Minister of Immigration, Refugees and Citizenship, Lib.):** Mr. Speaker, insofar as Immigration, Refugees and Citizenship Canada, or IRCC, is concerned, the answer is as follows.

With respect to part (a), bilateral engagement with Quebec on immigration matters is governed by the Canada-Quebec Accord relating to Immigration and Temporary Admission of Aliens, or the Canada-Quebec Accord. IRCC exchanged two formal pieces of correspondence with the Government of Quebec to establish the 2023-25 immigration levels at the assistant deputy minister level in July 2022 and September 2022. This exchange of letters is an established process that IRCC follows to conduct annual bilateral con-

sultations on immigration levels with the Government of Quebec, in conjunction with the accord.

With respect to part (b) and the contents of the exchange, IRCC reiterated the importance of continued collaboration between Canada and Quebec in setting immigration levels targets and acknowledged the efforts taken to align the targets in the 2022-24 federal levels plan and Quebec's 2022 immigration plan. In addition, IRCC shared proposed scenarios for the federal 2023-25 immigration levels plan to solicit feedback from Quebec, and sought information from Quebec on its 2023 immigration plan.

**Question No. 1000—Mr. Doug Shipley:**

With regard to the statement in the 2022 Fall Economic Statement that "Enterprise Crown corporation revenues are projected to decline by \$6 billion in 2022-23, largely reflecting Bank of Canada income losses": (a) how much was the Bank of Canada's income losses in fiscal year 2021-22; and (b) what are the projected Bank of Canada income losses for fiscal years (i) 2022-23, (ii) 2023-24, (iii) 2024-25, (iv) 2025-26?

**Hon. Chrystia Freeland (Deputy Prime Minister and Minister of Finance, Lib.):** Mr. Speaker, the 2021-22 public accounts include a net profit of \$2.8 billion for the Bank of Canada. This amount is reflected in the line "Other Revenues—Enterprise Crown corporations and other government business enterprises" on the consolidated statement of operations and accumulated deficit on page 57 of volume I of the Public Accounts of Canada 2022, and includes the \$1-billion constructive loss on the bank's 2021-22 purchases of Government of Canada bonds discussed on page 16 of volume I.

Bank of Canada Governor Tiff Macklem stated at the House of Commons Standing Committee on Finance on November 23, 2022, "After a period of above-average income, our net interest income is now turning negative. Following a period of losses, the Bank of Canada will return to positive net earnings. The size and duration of the losses will ultimately depend on a number of factors, which include, in particular, the path for interest rates, the evolution of the economy and the balance sheet. The losses do not affect our ability to conduct monetary policy. I would also stress that our policy decisions are driven by our price and financial stability mandates. We don't make policy to maximize our income.... I want to stress that whatever solution is chosen, it's not going to affect how we run monetary policy. As a central bank, we are a going concern. We have liquidity. We will continue to run monetary policy guided by our mandate. We do not run monetary policy to maximize our income. Low inflation is a public good. We run monetary policy to deliver low, stable inflation."

The senior deputy governor of the bank, Carolyn Rogers, stated the following during the same hearing: "Yes, as the governor said, we actually expect that the bank will show negative equity in the coming months. This isn't a problem that's unique to the Bank of Canada. All of our peer central banks in G7 countries are experiencing the same thing."



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The Bank of Canada's most recent financial report was published on November 29, 2022, and can be found at <https://www.bankofcanada.ca/2022/11/quarterly-financial-report-third-quarter-2022/>. The bank's 2022 annual report is expected to be published in spring 2023.

**Question No. 1001—Mr. Doug Shipley:**

With regard to foreign corporations claiming the Scientific Research and Experimental Development (SR&ED) tax credits, broken down by year for the last three years: (a) what is the total number of foreign companies which have claimed SR&ED tax credits; (b) what is the total value of the credits claimed; and (c) what is the breakdown of (a) and (b) by country where the company was headquartered?

**Hon. Diane Lebouthillier (Minister of National Revenue, Lib.):** Mr. Speaker, with respect to the question above, what follows is the response from the CRA as of November 21, 2022, which is the date of the question.

In order for an entity to qualify for scientific research and experimental development, or SR and ED, investment tax credits, it must file a T2 corporation income tax return with the CRA, and the SR and ED work being claimed must be undertaken in Canada by or on behalf of the entity. Please note that a Canadian subsidiary of a foreign parent entity, or a foreign entity with a Canadian branch, performing eligible SR and ED work in Canada can deduct eligible expenditures and claim the SR and ED tax credits on them to reduce taxes payable.

With respect to parts (a), (b) and (c), the SR and ED program does not isolate the requested information for foreign-controlled corporations filing SR and ED investment tax credit claims. Therefore, the requested information cannot be provided in the manner requested.

**Question No. 1008—Mr. John Brassard:**

With regard to COVID-19 vaccines, including boosters, purchased by the government for delivery in 2023: (a) how many doses did the government procure for an expected delivery in 2023; and (b) of the doses in (a), how many does the government project will be (i) administered to Canadians, (ii) donated to foreign countries, (iii) discarded?

**Mr. Adam van Koevorden (Parliamentary Secretary to the Minister of Health and to the Minister of Sport, Lib.):** Mr. Speaker, with respect to part (a), through its existing COVID-19 advance purchase agreements, or APAs, Canada has access to up to 93.5 million mRNA doses in 2023. This includes 30 million doses of Pfizer-BioNTech's Comirnaty vaccine and 18.5 million doses of Moderna's Spikevax vaccine, with options to access up to an additional 45 million mRNA doses should urgent or emergent needs arise. Canada's APAs provide flexibility to obtain the latest formulations from suppliers, including bivalent, infant and pediatric vaccines. In addition, Canada has access to a number of non-mRNA doses. Together, these doses will ensure the COVID-19 vaccine needs of all Canadians will continue to be met.

As the COVID-19 pandemic continues to evolve, the Government of Canada is working in close collaboration with provinces and territories to better understand their 2023 vaccine supply needs. The government is also actively working with suppliers to manage supply and schedule deliveries to ensure the most optimal product availability.

With respect to part (b)(i), immunization is a shared responsibility among federal, provincial and territorial governments. The

provinces and territories administer vaccines within their jurisdictions, which includes all policy and program decision-making, design and implementation required to determine which public programs to offer, which vaccines to buy, where to administer vaccines, and priority populations and eligibility criteria for vaccination.

The Public Health Agency of Canada supports provinces and territories in delivering their immunization programs in many ways, including by bulk purchasing vaccines for all jurisdictions; conducting vaccine confidence research, policy and programming; managing vaccine coverage, effectiveness and safety surveillance; facilitating immunization research; enhancing domestic manufacturing capacity; and supporting the delivery of the vaccine injury support program.

As of December 8, 2022, 94,981,582 doses of COVID-19 vaccines have been administered in Canada since December 14, 2020.

With respect to part (b)(ii), the Government of Canada recognizes the importance of a global response to the COVID-19 pandemic and supports efforts to promote global access to vaccines. In 2023, Canada will continue to work closely with its key partners to identify doses surplus to Canada's domestic needs and ensure these doses are made available for donation. This involves actively coordinating with provinces and territories to manage domestic vaccine supply, forecast demand and track product shelf life. This also includes working closely with Global Affairs Canada and Public Services and Procurement Canada, or PSPC, to ensure that surplus doses held in federal, provincial and manufacturer inventories can be offered for international donation in a timely manner.

Lastly, with respect to part (b)(iii), as vaccination campaigns are ongoing, Canada is unable to determine at this time how many vaccines will be disposed of in 2023 due to expiration. We continue to work with provinces, territories and federal partners on demand planning and forecasting based on evolving scientific evidence and the National Advisory Committee on Immunization's recommendations to determine supply requirements for future campaigns. Additionally, we are working closely with PSPC and vaccine suppliers to ensure that delivery schedules meet the needs of Canadians and to monitor vaccine shelf life and expiry date extensions to maximize the use of doses delivered in Canada. The Government of Canada continues to urge Canadians to stay up to date on their COVID-19 vaccines.

**Question No. 1009—Mr. Jasraj Singh Hallan:**

With regard to the economic modelling conducted by the Department of Finance for proposed government programs, since January 1, 2021: (a) for which government programs did the department conduct an economic modelling; (b) what are the details of how each economic modelling was done; and (c) what were the results or the findings of the economic modelling, broken down by program?

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**Hon. Chrystia Freeland (Deputy Prime Minister and Minister of Finance, Lib.):** Mr. Speaker, the Department of Finance regularly undertakes economic modelling and analysis of policy and program proposals in order to support its advice to the Minister of Finance and cabinet. The department conducts this analysis using a wide variety of analytical modelling techniques reflecting international best practices and current academic standards. However, all economic models are subject to uncertainty, and generating precise estimates of the effects of specific policies poses considerable challenges.

In processing parliamentary returns, the Department of Finance applies the Privacy Act and the principles set out in the Access to Information Act. As a result, the Department of Finance does not regularly publish internally modelled economic impact assessments for specific program proposals. However, in budget 2021, the department released estimates of short-term impacts on gross domestic product and employment from the combined investments made in the 2020 fall economic statement, the enhanced climate plan and budget 2021. For examples of broader economic research and modelling performed by the Department of Finance, please consult the annual “Report on Federal Tax Expenditures—Concepts, Estimates and Evaluations”, which can be found at the following website: [https://publications.gc.ca/collections/collection\\_2022/fin/F1-47-2022-eng.pdf](https://publications.gc.ca/collections/collection_2022/fin/F1-47-2022-eng.pdf).

**Question No. 1013—Mr. Dan Mazier:**

With regard to the government’s spectrum licensing, broken down by designated tier: (a) how many spectrum licenses are currently unused; (b) how many license holders have (i) failed to meet the deployment requirement, (ii) deployed less than 50 percent of their spectrum license; (iii) deployed less than 75 percent of their spectrum license, (iv) deployed less than 100 percent of their spectrum license; (c) what is the breakdown of each response in (a) and (b), by spectrum license (i) for mobile broadband services in the 700 MHz band, (ii) in the millimetre wave bands 26, 28 and 38 GHz, (iii) in the 3800 MHz band, (iv) in the 3500 MHz band, (v) in the 600 MHz band, (vi) for residual spectrum licences in the 700 MHz, (vii) 2500 MHz, 2300 MHz and PCS-G Block, (viii) for residual spectrum licences in the 700 MHz and AWS-3 bands, (ix) for broadband radio services in the 2500-2690 MHz band, (x) for advanced wireless services in the bands 1755-1780 MHz and 2155-2180 MHz (AWS-3); and (d) for each instance in (a) through (c), what is the name of the company that holds the license?

**Hon. François-Philippe Champagne (Minister of Innovation, Science and Industry, Lib.):** Mr. Speaker, the spectrum licence deployment requirements of Innovation, Science and Economic Development Canada, or ISED, are based on the provision of wireless services to a percentage of the population in a given service area, known as tiers, at specific times throughout the term of the licence. These graduated deployment requirements facilitate timely deployment of services across the country and include a number of milestones that must be reached during the licence term to remain compliant with the licence conditions.

Deployment requirements are established by ISED following public consultation and take input from stakeholders into account as the department pursues its objective of maximizing the economic and social benefits of this valuable and finite public resource. Deployment milestones are set up to allow licensees the opportunity to plan and deploy their networks. Licensees may put the spectrum to use as the primary licensee or through alternative arrangements, such as subordinate licensing and the transferring or subdivision of licences to secondary providers. This use by secondary providers is

encouraged by ISED as it promotes the deployment of services to rural areas.

When a milestone is reached, ISED verifies that the deployment requirement has been met according to the deployment schedule. ISED’s approximately 15,000 spectrum licences are currently 100% compliant with their respective deployment conditions. If a licensee is not compliant with its deployment conditions, ISED may invoke various compliance and enforcement measures. These measures may include warnings, administrative monetary penalties, legal action, licence amendments, suspensions or other measures. However, in non-compliance cases, ISED first works with licensees to attain compliance to ensure that Canadians do not lose access to existing services that the licensee may have deployed. In the very rare instance that a licensee cannot be brought into compliance, ISED may determine that the most appropriate course of action is to not renew or even revoke the licence. Since 2015, ISED has not renewed 69 licences and has revoked three others for non-compliance.

**Question No. 1015—Ms. Michelle Ferreri:**

With regard to the \$938 million cost to deliver the interim dental benefits: what is the amount that will be spent on the administration of the program versus the actual payments for dental services?

**Mr. Adam van Koevorden (Parliamentary Secretary to the Minister of Health and to the Minister of Sport, Lib.):** Mr. Speaker, budget 2022 proposed funding of \$5.3 billion over five years, starting in 2022-23, and \$1.7 billion ongoing for a national dental care program for Canadians who earn under \$90,000. The interim Canada dental benefit is the first stage of the government’s plan to improve dental care for Canadians in families with an adjusted net income of under \$90,000. It is estimated that over 500,000 Canadian children could benefit from the targeted investment of \$938 million. While this temporary program is in place, work is under way in parallel to develop a planned national dental care program.

While Health Canada has estimated the number of children who will benefit at 500,000, this is an estimate, and the costing includes a buffer in case the actual number of eligible parents applying is higher than anticipated.

**Question No. 1019—Ms. Lianne Rood:**

With regard to the Canada Growth Fund: (a) how much funding has been released since the program’s implementation; (b) which businesses and organizations will be the recipients of this funding; (c) are the recipients based in Canada; and (d) are the recipients wholly Canadian-owned and operated?

**Hon. Chrystia Freeland (Deputy Prime Minister and Minister of Finance, Lib.):** Mr. Speaker, with respect to part (a), no funding has been provided by the Canada growth fund, the CGF. Implementation of the first phase of the CGF is currently under way. Initial capitalization for the CGF was provided in Bill C-32.

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With respect to part (b), the CGF will make investments that catalyze substantial private sector investment in Canadian businesses and projects to help transform and grow Canada's economy at speed and scale on the path to net zero. The CGF will determine which businesses and organizations will be the recipients of this financing, and it will apply rigorous criteria to each investment it makes.

Finally, with respect to parts (c) and (d), the CGF will make investments that catalyze substantial private sector investment in Canadian businesses and projects. Among the CGF's investment selection criteria will be long term benefits for Canada. Investments must have a reasonable chance to strengthen the development of Canadian human capital and knowledge and generate follow-on, long-term benefits for Canada beyond those realized by the specific investment. Potential long-term benefits could include activities done in Canada, the development or use of Canadian intellectual property and the creation or strengthening of Canadian value chains.

**Question No. 1021—Ms. Lianne Rood:**

With regard to the Federal Economic Development Agency for Southern Ontario: (a) what stakeholders have government representatives met with since January 12, 2016; (b) on what dates were the meetings in (a) held; and (c) what was discussed at each meeting?

**Hon. Filomena Tassi (Minister Responsible for the Federal Economic Development Agency for Southern Ontario, Lib.):** Mr. Speaker, the Federal Economic Development Agency for Southern Ontario, or FedDev Ontario, plays numerous roles in southern Ontario, including that of coinvestor, champion, convenor, collaborator, pathfinder and intelligence source. This requires officials at every level of the agency to regularly engage with numerous stakeholders through various channels. For example, representatives from FedDev Ontario engage with prospective clients and funding recipients as part of standard program delivery practices. Funding recipients for all agency programs are also reported quarterly through proactive disclosure on grants and contributions, which is published on the Open Government website. Additionally, all lobbying activity is accessible via the registry of lobbyists.

The agency is also able to share higher-level information on its multi-faceted approach to engaging with stakeholders. This includes regional, municipal and provincial governments; economic development organizations; industry associations; business accelerators and incubators; private sector firms; indigenous communities; post-secondary institutions; not-for-profit organizations that represent different communities; and under-represented groups.

The multi-faceted engagement approach includes a variety of outreach activities that are undertaken at the ministerial, executive, management and staff levels. For example, the minister leads round tables and bilateral meetings with community and industry representatives, and there are funding announcements and site visits to businesses and organizations that are leading FedDev Ontario-funded projects. These engagements provide deeper insight into regional priorities and community-driven initiatives, allow for the development and strengthening of partnerships at the local level and enhance awareness of and access to agency programs and services.

There are executive- and staff-led bilateral engagements with clients and prospective clients to promote agency programs and ser-

VICES to identify and catalyze opportunities for investment; provide feedback on proposals; notify applicants of funding decisions; monitor funded projects and conduct site visits; and serve as a single point of contact for clients, allowing for consistent support across projects.

Businesses and organizations that are interested in learning more about agency and federal programs also have access to executive- and staff-led technical briefings to promote FedDev Ontario programming and to help ensure all eligible organizations are aware of program parameters and how to apply. For example, the agency provided five technical briefings over the month of November 2022 to walk over 400 participants through the tourism relief fund and answer questions they had.

There is also FedDev Ontario's contact centre and small business services team. These engagements by phone, by email or in person help entrepreneurs to better understand and improve access to the agency's programming and government programming more broadly.

Additional pathfinding and convening services to a wide range of federal and provincial resources and partnerships are provided across the region. This includes referrals under Canada's accelerated growth strategy, global skills strategy and industrial and technological benefits, or ITB, policy, among other programs and initiatives. With respect to the ITB, agency officials engage with defence contractors at conferences, bilateral meetings and site visits, with the ultimate goal of showcasing the industrial, innovative and research capabilities of southern Ontario and facilitating connections with local small and medium-sized enterprises, or SMEs.

There are executive- and staff-led bilateral engagements with community and industry leaders, including those with whom the agency does not have a funding relationship, to gather intelligence on economic growth opportunities and challenges across the region, as well as insight into the strategies and initiatives of different communities and industries. These engagements provide valuable feedback and insights that can inform agency and federal policies and programs.

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There are executive- and staff-led bilateral engagements with provincial and municipal officials to foster a culture of continued information sharing and collaboration on economic growth in southern Ontario. These engagements support alignment on strategic policy and program files, inform project development, identify areas for coinvestments, and enhance services to businesses and entrepreneurs through more coordinated, informed pathfinding services.

There are executive-led round tables to gather on-the-ground intelligence from a broad cross-section of stakeholders on the challenges and opportunities facing a particular industry or community. These round tables can provide direct feedback on program efficacy, as well as facilitate information sharing and collaboration among participants. For example, in spring 2019, FedDev Ontario executives led a series of 20 round table events in urban and rural communities across southern Ontario.

Executives and staff attend events to help promote the work of the agency by participating on panels, delivering remarks and networking at conferences. These engagements provide opportunities to develop new partnerships and to gather intelligence on issues, trends and promising initiatives across the region that can inform policy and program development.

Beyond publicly available information and the high-level information provided, FedDev Ontario concluded that producing and validating a comprehensive response to this question would require a manual collection of information that is not possible in the time allotted and could lead to the disclosure of incomplete and misleading information, particularly given the high volume and complexity of engagement by the agency, as described above.

**Question No. 1022—Ms. Lianne Rood:**

With regard to funding provided by the Federal Economic Development Agency for Southern Ontario to the Community Futures Development Corporations: (a) what metrics are being used to determine the funding amounts; (b) how is funding distributed amongst the 36 development corporations; and (c) what directions on the use of funds have been given to these development corporations?

**Hon. Filomena Tassi (Minister Responsible for the Federal Economic Development Agency for Southern Ontario, Lib.):** Mr. Speaker, with regard to part (a), operational funding provided by the Federal Economic Development Agency for Southern Ontario to the community futures development corporations, or CFDCs, is allocated based on a model utilizing metrics that include those attributed to the size of the service area, investment fund activity and the provision of business services, and includes specific allocations for CFDCs designated as operating in an official language minority community.

With regard to part (b), operational funding is distributed through a contribution agreement with each of the 36 CFDCs in southern Ontario, as well as two regional associations and one provincial association.

Finally, with regard to part (c), under the program, operational funding is provided to deliver a range of small business services, to provide for the administration of repayable financing to new and existing enterprises and to support the development of strategic plans and community economic development projects to address community needs.

**Question No. 1026—Mr. Larry Maguire:**

With regard to the government's announcement on November 14, 2022, about securing a foreign supply of children's acetaminophen for sale at retail and in community pharmacies: (a) are there any measures in place to ensure that some of the supply will be sold in pharmacies located in small towns and other rural areas, and, if so, (i) what are those measures, (ii) how many doses are the measures expected to make available for small town and rural pharmacies; and (b) what is the breakdown of the doses expected to be available in each province or territory?

**Mr. Adam van Koevorden (Parliamentary Secretary to the Minister of Health and to the Minister of Sport, Lib.):** Mr. Speaker, Health Canada is working closely with industry and key stakeholders to mitigate the shortage of pediatric analgesics. A primary focus of this work has been to increase the supply of these products. Over 1.9 million units of ibuprofen and record levels of acetaminophen have been released into the market by domestic suppliers in November and December. To date, nearly 1.9 million units of foreign-labelled product have also been imported to supply hospitals, community pharmacies and retailers.

Health Canada is actively working with distributors and retailers to promote fair distribution of supply across Canada and to verify that product is in fact being dispensed and sold across all communities in Canada where there is a shortage. Through engagement with key stakeholders, Health Canada has confirmed that products have now reached hospitals and retail stores in urban, rural and remote communities.

**Question No. 1034—Mrs. Tracy Gray:**

With regard to the government's commitments on the completion of the Okanagan Rail Trail project and the federal Addition to Reserve (ATR) process for the Duck Lake Indian Reserve No. 7 (IR#7): (a) what is the status of the ATR to Duck Lake IR#7 of former CN Rail land; (b) what are the exact areas of negotiation which have (i) been resolved, (ii) not yet been resolved, to complete the ATR; (c) how many meetings or briefings have the Minister of Crown-Indigenous Relations or the Minister of Indigenous Services had regarding the Okanagan Rail Trail project or the ATR to Duck Lake IR#7 since November 1, 2021, and what are the details of each meeting or briefing, including the dates and names or titles of participants; (d) when was the last communication sent by the government to the Duck Lake IR#7 or the Okanagan Indian Band regarding the ATR and what is the summary of contents or other details about the last communication; and (e) what is the estimated timeline for the completion of the ATR?

**Mr. Vance Badawey (Parliamentary Secretary to the Minister of Indigenous Services, Lib.):** Mr. Speaker, insofar as Indigenous Services Canada, or ISC, is concerned, the response is as follows.

With respect to part (a), ISC continues to support the Okanagan Indian Band with the addition to reserve of the former Canadian National Railway corridor lands bisecting Duck Lake Indian Reserve No. 7. Canadian National Railway is currently the registered owner of the lands in fee simple, and Canada has previously provided Canadian National Railway with a draft agreement of purchase and sale to support the transfer of lands to Canada for the use and benefit of the band. Negotiations around the purchase and sale agreement are ongoing between Canadian National Railway, the Okanagan Indian Band and Canada.

With respect to part (b)(i), since the parties are in confidential negotiations on terms of land instruments such as permits under the Indian Act, it is not appropriate for the department to comment.

With respect to part (b)(ii), the Okanagan Indian Band continues to work to resolve third party interests, including property rights required by telecommunications providers, electrical transmission and distribution services, sewer utility interests and access agreements for on-reserve developments. The Okanagan Indian Band has taken the lead on these negotiations and has the support of legal and technical experts working to satisfy additions to reserve requirements. Canada has offered to support the band with its negotiations and has assisted with providing template documents.

With respect to part (c), there have been no meetings or briefings on this project with the Minister of Crown-Indigenous Relations or the Minister of Indigenous Services Canada since November 1, 2021.

With respect to part (d), the last communication between ISC and the Okanagan Indian Band regarding the addition to reserve was sent on November 15, 2022. The email communication was regarding the City of Kelowna replacement sewer permit that is currently being reviewed by the respective legal counsel of the City of Kelowna, Canada and the Okanagan Indian Band as a requirement of the additions to reserve process.

With respect to part (e), it is difficult to estimate timelines for completion, as completion of the addition to reserve is subject to the readiness and willingness of third party interest holders to terminate or negotiate and execute federal replacement interests with the Okanagan Indian Band. This is an ISC British Columbia region priority file, and the department continues to work in collaboration with the Okanagan Indian Band to complete the addition to reserve.

**Question No. 1038—Mr. Dean Allison:**

With regard to the statement on Twitter by the Minister of Foreign Affairs on November 28, 2022, that “Grand corruption is a threat to democracy and security”: (a) what specific actions, if any, has the (i) current Minister of Foreign Affairs, (ii) government, as a whole, taken since January 1, 2020, in order to combat corruption within the government; and (b) what assessments has the government made of the threat that corruption within the government poses to Canada’s democracy and security, and what were the dates and results of each assessment conducted since January 1, 2020?

**Hon. Robert Oliphant (Parliamentary Secretary to the Minister of Foreign Affairs, Lib.):** Mr. Speaker, in response to parts (a) and (b), while in The Hague, Netherlands, the Minister of Foreign Affairs co-chaired the high-level round table on anti-corruption with her counterparts from Ecuador and the Netherlands. The ministers discussed efforts to advance global anti-corruption commitments, including the potential establishment of an international anti-corruption court, and committed to working together on fighting corruption to strengthen resilient democracies and promote human rights. These efforts correspond with the Minister of Foreign Affairs’ mandate commitment to work with international partners to help establish an international anti-corruption court to prevent corrupt officials and authoritarian governments from impeding development that should benefit their citizens.

Global Affairs Canada, through its network of missions, along with Canada’s security and intelligence agencies, regularly assesses the threats posed to Canada’s democracy and security. Global Af-

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fairs Canada continues to support an integrated government response by monitoring and reporting on threats and wrongdoings, and provides advice to protect our democracy.

The government tables a report to Parliament on an annual basis regarding Canada’s implementation of the Convention on Combating Bribery of Foreign Public Officials in International Business Transactions and the enforcement of Canada’s Corruption of Foreign Public Officials Act, or CFPOA, prepared jointly by the three ministers responsible: the Minister of Foreign Affairs, the Minister of International Trade and the Minister of Justice and Attorney General of Canada.

**Question No. 1040—Mrs. Kelly Block:**

With regard to the government’s plan to provide automatic advance payments on the Canada workers benefit: (a) does the government have any projections on the number of overpayments and payments made to ineligible recipients that are expected to occur following the move to the automatic advance payment system, and, if so, what are the projections, in terms of (i) dollar value, (ii) number of recipients; (b) what mechanisms, if any, are in place for those who might not qualify for future payments to opt-out of the automatic advance payments; and (c) what are the details about how the government will be recovering the overpayments or payments made to ineligible recipients?

**Hon. Chrystia Freeland (Deputy Prime Minister and Minister of Finance, Lib.):** Mr. Speaker, the 2022 fall economic statement proposes to automatically issue advance payments of the Canada workers benefit, or CWB, to people who qualified for the benefit in the previous year, starting in July 2023 for the 2023 taxation year. These advance payments would represent a new minimum entitlement to the program for a year based on their income in the previous year. Changes to individuals’ incomes in the year relative to the previous year would not affect their entitlement to advance payments.

Some individuals would be entitled to more support with the implementation of this minimum entitlement than they would without it. This could include cases that are due to couple formation, such as marrying someone with a higher income, for example. This may also include individuals who received minor pay increases during the year, potentially from moving into a marginally more senior role in their workplace.

Eligibility to receive advance payments during the course of a year would cease in cases where an individual is incarcerated for a period of 90 days or more; moves out of the country; or dies before the start of the benefit year. Individuals are encouraged to notify the Canada Revenue Agency promptly when any of these changes in circumstance occurs to ensure that payments cease. It is anticipated that overpayments due to payments made after one of these changes in circumstance would be rare.

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If an individual were to receive advance payments that exceed the advance payments to which they are legally entitled, either due to one of the changes in circumstance noted above not being reported on a timely basis or due to a reassessment of their tax return for the previous year, any resulting overpayment would be recovered in the same manner as for other benefits based on prior-year income, such as the GST credit. In particular, the Canada Revenue Agency may keep all or a portion of any future payments due to the individual until the amount is repaid.

Overall disbursements of the Canada workers benefit to low- and middle-income Canadians will exceed \$4 billion in 2023-24. These incremental entitlements are estimated to cost \$750 million for the 2023-24 fiscal year. In a typical year, the Canada workers benefit supports over three million Canadians. Given the changes in employment that Canadians face, whether they are changes in the number of hours worked or in the role in which they are working, the advance payments would support up to 1.2 million additional individuals in a year.

**Question No. 1048—Mr. Richard Bragdon:**

With regard to the Digital Citizen Contribution Program: (a) how much funding has been delivered to date; and (b) what are the details of all projects funded through the program, including, for each, the (i) recipient, (ii) amount of funding, (iii) project description or purpose of the funding, (iv) date on which the funding was allocated?

**Mr. Chris Bittle (Parliamentary Secretary to the Minister of Canadian Heritage, Lib.):** Mr. Speaker, with regard to part (a), the digital citizen contribution program, or DCCP, supports the priorities of the digital citizen initiative by providing time-limited financial assistance for research and citizen-focused activities. To date, the DCCP has provided approximately \$13.7 million in funding to recipients for approved projects.

With regard to part (b), details of all projects funded by the DCCP are publicly available through proactive disclosure on this web page: [https://search.open.canada.ca/grants/?sort=score%20desc&page=1&search\\_text=%22digital%20citizen%20contribution%20program%22](https://search.open.canada.ca/grants/?sort=score%20desc&page=1&search_text=%22digital%20citizen%20contribution%20program%22).

**Question No. 1049—Mr. Richard Bragdon:**

With regard to funding provided by the government through the Digital Citizen Initiative: (a) what are the details of all projects funded through the initiative where the government provided more than \$10,000 in funding, including, for each project, the (i) recipient, (ii) amount, (iii) date, (iv) project description, (v) component or specific program under which funding was provided; and (b) of the projects in (a), are there any currently conducting research on disinformation or misinformation disseminated by the prime minister, ministers or government departments, and, if so, which ones and on what government disinformation or misinformation are they conducting research?

**Mr. Chris Bittle (Parliamentary Secretary to the Minister of Canadian Heritage, Lib.):** Mr. Speaker, with regard to part (a), the digital citizen initiative funds projects through the digital citizen contribution program, or DCCP, and a joint initiative with the Social Sciences and Humanities Research Council, or SSHRC, called the joint initiative for digital citizen research.

Details of all projects funded through the DCCP are publicly available through proactive disclosure on this web page: [https://search.open.canada.ca/grants/?sort=score%20desc&page=1&search\\_text=%22digital%20citizen%20contribution%20program%22](https://search.open.canada.ca/grants/?sort=score%20desc&page=1&search_text=%22digital%20citizen%20contribution%20program%22). Details of all projects funded through the joint initiative with SSHRC are publicly available through proactive

disclosure on this web page: [https://search.open.canada.ca/grants/?sort=score%20desc&page=1&search\\_text=%22initiative%20for%20digital%20citizen%20research%22](https://search.open.canada.ca/grants/?sort=score%20desc&page=1&search_text=%22initiative%20for%20digital%20citizen%20research%22).

With regard to part (b), the digital citizen initiative is not currently funding research on information disseminated by the Prime Minister, ministers or government departments.

**Question No. 1050—Mrs. Shannon Stubbs:**

With regard to the statement on Twitter by the Minister of Natural Resources on November 28, 2022, that “Climate change will cost Canadians \$100 billion a year by 2050 - unless we hit our climate targets”: (a) what methodology was used by the minister to come up with that figure; and (b) what are the government’s projections on how much climate change will cost Canadians each year, by 2050, if the government does hit its climate targets?

**Hon. Jonathan Wilkinson (Minister of Natural Resources, Lib.):** Mr. Speaker, the Government of Canada has committed over \$100 billion to climate action. The Government of Canada’s “Budget 2021—A Healthy Environment for a Healthy Economy” provides a breakdown of this commitment and is available at <https://www.canada.ca/en/departement-finance/news/2021/04/budget-2021-a-healthy-environment-for-a-healthy-economy.html>.

The Canadian Climate Institute’s report on the costs of climate change, which is available at <https://climateinstitute.ca/reports/the-costs-of-climate-change/>, provides reports that explore the costs, impacts and consequences of accelerating climate change.

**Question No. 1053—Ms. Leah Gazan:**

With regard to the Liidlii Kue First Nation’s efforts to open a women’s shelter in Fort Simpson: (a) which federal buildings has the government identified as available to the Liidlii Kue First Nation; (b) for each building in (a), what is the approximate cost to sell it to the Liidlii Kue First Nation; (c) for each building in (a), what are the reasons identified by the government as to why the transfer of ownership has not been completed; and (d) by what dates are the buildings in (a) expected to be available to the Liidlii Kue First Nation?

**Mr. Anthony Housefather (Parliamentary Secretary to the Minister of Public Services and Procurement, Lib.):** Mr. Speaker, Public Services and Procurement Canada, or PSPC, has identified the following properties for disposal in Fort Simpson: 9829-102 Street, 10110-99 Avenue and 9817-101 Street.

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As per the Treasury Board directive on the management of real property, a property identified for disposal is circulated through a formal process, granting priority to stakeholders to determine if they have an interest in acquisition. During the circulation process, Crown-Indigenous Relations and Northern Affairs Canada, or CIRNAC, expressed interest in these units on behalf of local indigenous groups, including the Liidlii Kue First Nation. PSPC is continuing to provide support to CIRNAC as it determines next steps for the release of the properties. Planning for the future of these assets, in collaboration with stakeholders, is ongoing. Public Services and Procurement Canada is therefore unable to respond to parts (b), (c) and (d) of the question.

Question No. 1059—**Mr. Michael Barrett:**

With regard to funding and expenditures for ministerial offices, including the Office of the Prime Minister, broken down by fiscal year, for the last three years since 2019-20: (a) what was the total amount of funding provided to (i) all ministerial offices, (ii) each minister's office, including the Office of the Prime Minister; and (b) what is the breakdown of the spending of each minister's office by type of expense (salaries, travel, stationary etc.)?

**Hon. Greg Fergus (Parliamentary Secretary to the Prime Minister and to the President of the Treasury Board, Lib.):** Mr. Speaker, a breakdown of expenses for ministers' offices, including the Office of the Prime Minister, is published each year in the Public Accounts of Canada at the following links. For 2019-20, go to [https://epe.lac-bac.gc.ca/100/201/301/public\\_accounts\\_can/html/2020/recgen/cpc-pac/2020/vol3/s10/dcm-emo-eng.html](https://epe.lac-bac.gc.ca/100/201/301/public_accounts_can/html/2020/recgen/cpc-pac/2020/vol3/s10/dcm-emo-eng.html); for 2020-21, go to <https://www.tpsgc-pwgsc.gc.ca/recgen/cpc-pac/2021/vol3/s10/dcm-emo-eng.html>; and for 2021-22, go to <https://www.tpsgc-pwgsc.gc.ca/recgen/cpc-pac/2022/vol3/s10/dcm-emo-eng.html>.

Question No. 1060—**Mrs. Karen Vecchio:**

With regard to the government's claim that it has lifted two million people out of poverty: how many of those two million people have since needed to use food banks or other charitable services due to high inflation?

**Mr. Irek Kusmierczyk (Parliamentary Secretary to the Minister of Employment, Workforce Development and Disability Inclusion, Lib.):** Mr. Speaker, the Canadian income survey, or CIS, is the official data source for estimating annual poverty statistics based on Canada's official poverty line. Results from the 2020 CIS, released on March 23, 2022, show that there were 2.7 million fewer people living in poverty in 2020 compared to 2015. As a cross-sectional survey, the CIS does not collect information on the past poverty status of surveyed individuals and families, nor does it collect information on current or prior utilization of food banks or services from charitable organizations. In addition, the latest available data on poverty is for the 2020 calendar year. Poverty statistics reflecting the higher inflation observed in 2021 and 2022 will be released by the CIS in 2023 and 2024, respectively.

Question No. 1064—**Mr. Bob Zimmer:**

With regard to the \$150 million announced in budget 2022 to support affordable housing and related infrastructure in the North, as of December 1, 2022, broken down by territory: (a) how much of this funding has been allocated; (b) how many housing units have been built; (c) how many of the units in (b) are currently occupied by residents; and (d) what is the breakdown of (a) though (c) by territory?

**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.):** Mr. Speaker, insofar as Crown-Indige-

nous Relations and Northern Affairs Canada is concerned, the response is as follows.

Canada's northern, remote and isolated communities face unique housing needs because of the challenges presented by geography, climate change, infrastructure and remoteness. Partners of the Arctic and northern policy framework identified the need to address housing in the north as part of the goal of supporting resilient and healthy northern and indigenous people.

In response to these challenges, the Government of Canada, through budget 2022, is providing \$150 million over two years, starting in 2022-23, to support affordable housing and related infrastructure in the north, of which \$60 million will be provided to the Government of Nunavut; \$60 million to the Government of the Northwest Territories; and \$30 million to the Government of Yukon. Of this funding, recipients must use a minimum of 60% for housing, and the remaining amount for housing-related infrastructure.

The first \$75 million of budget 2022 funding, with \$30 million for Nunavut, \$30 million for the Northwest Territories and \$15 million for the Yukon government, has been allocated to recipients, and the remaining \$75 million in funding is to be allocated in fiscal year 2023-24. The funding provided through budget 2022 to territorial governments is through a flexible grant, allowing for the territorial governments to advance their most pressing housing and infrastructure needs immediately. Through this budget 2022 investment and ongoing partnerships with Canada's territorial governments, the Government of Canada is empowering its territorial partners to ensure that all northerners, both indigenous and non-indigenous, have access to sustainable and safe housing and is supporting the health and welfare of northerners using made-in-the-north solutions.

A large percentage of northerners live in social public housing, and it is the territorial governments, through their respective housing corporations, that are responsible for overseeing and maintaining the social housing stock. This budget 2022 funding allows for Canada's territorial governments to continue to support housing and infrastructure projects in their respective territories.

The funding allocated to these territorial initiatives is determined on a priority basis based on need, as determined by the territorial governments' housing corporations. This budget 2022 funding is provided via grant, and as such, there are no reporting mechanisms associated with the granting mechanism. This approach of using grant funding is consistent with the principles of self-determination, where it is the recipients of this funding who are best positioned to determine how it should be used.

*Routine Proceedings*

As a result, the department is unable to provide numbers in relation to the number of housing units that have been built or constructed or the number of housing units that are occupied, given this responsibility resides with the territorial government.

Question No. 1065—**Mr. Bob Zimmer:**

With regard to the \$25 million announced in budget 2021 to support short-term housing and infrastructure needs in Nunavut, as of December 1, 2022: (a) how much of this funding has been allocated; (b) how many housing units have been built; (c) of the units in (b), how many are occupied by residents; and (d) what is the breakdown of units (i) built, (ii) occupied, by community?

**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.):** Mr. Speaker, insofar as Crown-Indigenous Relations and Northern Affairs Canada is concerned, the response is as follows.

Canada's northern, remote and isolated communities face unique housing needs because of the challenges presented by geography, climate change, infrastructure and remoteness. Partners of the Arctic and northern policy framework identified the need to address housing in the north as part of the goal of supporting resilient and healthy northern and indigenous people. In response to these challenges, the Government of Canada, through budget 2021, provided the Government of Nunavut with \$25 million to support its immediate housing and infrastructure needs.

The majority of Nunavummiut live in social public housing, and it is the territorial government, through its housing corporation, that is responsible for overseeing and maintaining the social housing stock. In the case of Nunavut, 14% of its operating budget is allocated specifically to support social housing.

The entire budget 2021 funding amount of \$25 million has been allocated to the Government of Nunavut during the fiscal year 2021-22, and project-specific allocations are determined on a priority basis based on need, as determined by the housing corporation. This budget 2021 funding was provided to the recipient via a grant. This approach of using grant funding is consistent with the principles of self-determination, whereby it is the recipients of this funding who are best positioned to determine how it should be used. As a result, the department is unable to provide numbers in relation to the number of housing units that have been built or constructed or the number of housing units that are occupied, given that this responsibility resides with the territorial government.

Question No. 1067—**Mr. Jeremy Patzer:**

With regard to government funding for safer supply programs: (a) what quantity of substances have been distributed through safer supply programs, broken down by year, type of substance, and province or territory, since 2016; (b) who are the recognized manufacturers for the substances provided through safer supply programs, broken down by type of substance; (c) what are the total yearly government expenditures related to safer supply programs; and (d) how much was each manufacturer in (b) paid each year for substances provided by safer supply programs?

**Mrs. Élisabeth Brière (Parliamentary Secretary to the Minister of Mental Health and Addictions and Associate Minister of Health, Lib.):** Mr. Speaker, with regard to question (a), while recipients of Health Canada's substance use and addictions program, or SUAP, funding are required to report back to Health Canada using standard performance metrics, this level of detail falls outside of what is collected by the department.

With regard to question (b), there are a number of prescription drugs approved by Health Canada that provinces, territories and authorized health practitioners can access for both medication-assisted drug treatment programs and safer supply pilot projects. Information on the specific brands of medications dispensed to safer supply clients is often recorded at the pharmacy level only, not by the programs themselves. Health Canada does not formally collect information on the manufacturers for the medications provided through funded safer supply pilot projects.

With regard to question (c), as of December 2022, the expenditures are as follows: \$593,109 in 2018-19; \$1,484,049 in 2019-20; \$11,906,315 in 2020-21; \$20,219,932 in 2021-22; \$34,400,062 in 2022-23; and \$9,282,388 in 2023-24.

With regard to question (d), as previously mentioned, information regarding how much each manufacturer is paid each year for the range of substances prescribed falls outside of what is collected by the department.

Question No. 1068—**Mr. Jeremy Patzer:**

With regard to the government's announcement on August 12, 2021, to invest \$1.44 billion into Telesat's advanced low Earth orbit satellite constellation, Telesat Lightspeed: (a) how much funding did the government invest in Telesat following this announcement, broken down by type of investment (grant, loan, purchase of equity, etc.); and (b) what are the details of all such investments, including, for each, the (i) date, (ii) type of investment, (iii) amount, (iv) program under which the investment was made?

**Hon. François-Philippe Champagne (Minister of Innovation, Science and Industry, Lib.):** Mr. Speaker, the government remains in discussion with Telesat on a potential investment in the Lightspeed project. Completion of the government's investment is dependent on Telesat satisfying a number of conditions, including Telesat successfully concluding agreements with other parties to fully finance the project. Accordingly, none of the government funds referenced in the agreement in principle that was announced on August 12, 2021, have been disbursed.

Question No. 1070—**Mr. John Nater:**

With regard to the government's announcement on August 12, 2021, to invest \$1.44 billion into Telesat's advanced low Earth orbit satellite constellation, Telesat Lightspeed: (a) what are the details of government purchases or sales of Telesat equity or shares since the announcement, including, for each, the (i) date, (ii) total price or amount, (iii) type of transaction (bought or sold), (iv) number of shares or percentage of equity, (v) share price, if applicable; and (b) what is the government's current equity stake in Telesat in terms of value, percentage of equity, and number of shares?



*Routine Proceedings*

**Hon. François-Philippe Champagne (Minister of Innovation, Science and Industry, Lib.):** Mr. Speaker, the government remains in discussion with Telesat on a potential investment in the Light-speed project. Completion of the government's investment is dependent on Telesat satisfying a number of conditions, including Telesat successfully concluding agreements with other parties to fully finance the project. Accordingly, none of the government funds referenced in the agreement in principle that was announced on August 12, 2021, have been disbursed.

Question No. 1074—**Mr. Garnett Genuis:**

With regard to the report in the Public Accounts of Canada 2022 that Global Affairs Canada lost \$82,902 due to a single instance of fraudulent activity: (a) what was the nature of the fraudulent activity; (b) were the individuals involved in this fraudulent activity identified, and, if so, (i) what were their names, (ii) what organizations or businesses were they affiliated with, (iii) were they prosecuted, (iv) what were the outcomes of any court proceeding involving this fraud; (c) were efforts made to recover the lost funds, and, if so, why weren't those efforts successful; and (d) did this incident lead to any policy changes, and, if so, what were those policy changes?

**Ms. Anita Vandenbeld (Parliamentary Secretary to the Minister of International Development, Lib.):** Mr. Speaker, the following reflects a consolidated response approved on behalf of Global Affairs Canada's ministers.

With regard to parts (a) and (b), in processing parliamentary returns, the government applies the principles set out in the Access to Information Act. Information has been withheld on the grounds that the disclosure of certain information is subject to solicitor-client privilege.

With regard to part (c), all efforts were made to recover the lost funds. In December 2021, Global Affairs Canada's legal team came to the conclusion that the department had pursued all necessary options and that the funds would not be returned.

With regard to part (d), this incident did not lead to a policy change.

Question No. 1075—**Mr. Colin Carrie:**

With regard to subsidies for news outlets which the government has classified as a Qualified Canadian Journalism Organization (QCJO) and the call with stakeholders on July 20, 2020, involving the Canada Revenue Agency and the Department of Finance: (a) which QCJOs and other media organizations (i) were invited, (ii) attended the call with stakeholders; and (b) how did the government choose which organizations would be invited to participate in the event?

**Hon. Diane Lebouthillier (Minister of National Revenue, Lib.):** Mr. Speaker, with respect to the above noted question, what follows is the response from the CRA.

The CRA facilitated a public stakeholder engagement session in English on July 20, 2020, and in French on July 21, 2020, to discuss the qualified Canadian journalism organization, or QCJO, designation process, as well as proposed changes to legislation. The sessions were open to the general public, such as representatives from news media organizations, journalists and individuals interested in attending this type of event.

With regard to part (a), the sessions on July 20 and 21, 2020, were not by invitation only; they were open to the general public. The CRA promoted the open sessions and the links to register on Twitter and LinkedIn in both official languages. In addition to social media promotion, the CRA sent the registration link via email distribution.

The confidentiality provisions under section 241 of the Income Tax Act prevent the CRA from releasing taxpayer information, including identifying organizations that have been designated as QCJOs. With respect to the stakeholder engagement sessions on QCJO designation held on July 20 and 21, 2020, for reasons related to the Privacy Act, we are unable to release the list of contacts who received the email to register for the sessions. Furthermore, as per standard practice with teleconferences, a list of those who attended the July 20 and 21 sessions was not kept.

With regard to part (b), as noted above, the stakeholder engagement sessions were open to the general public. The CRA promoted the sessions through social media and by email to an evergreen list of contacts. For reasons related to the Privacy Act, we are unable to release the list of contacts who received the email to register for the sessions.

Question No. 1076—**Mr. Michael Kram:**

With regard to box 9954 "Proceeds of disposition" on the Canada Revenue Agency (CRA) form T2091IND Designation of a Property as a Principal Residence by an Individual (Other Than a Personal Trust): (a) why does the CRA or the government need to know the sale price of the person's primary residence; and (b) what is this information used for?

**Hon. Diane Lebouthillier (Minister of National Revenue, Lib.):** Mr. Speaker, with regard to the above question, what follows is the response from the CRA as of December 5, 2022, the date of the question.

With regard to part (a), in October 2016, the Government of Canada announced an administrative change to the CRA's reporting requirements for the sale of a principal residence. Relevant links are noted below. This administrative change was made to improve compliance and the administration of the tax system.

The October 2016 announcement can be found here: <https://www.canada.ca/en/department-finance/news/2016/10/technical-backgrounder-mortgage-insurance-rules-income-proposals-revised-october-14-2016.html>.

Information on principal residences can be found here: <https://www.canada.ca/en/revenue-agency/services/tax/individuals/topics/about-your-tax-return/tax-return/completing-a-tax-return/personal-income/line-12700-capital-gains/principal-residence-other-real-estate/what-a-principal-residence.html>.

With regard to part (b), the new reporting requirements help the CRA to identify, risk-assess and audit real estate transactions where the criteria for benefiting from the principal residence exemption may not be met or where other tax non-compliance may exist.

*Routine Proceedings***Question No. 1078—Mr. Rob Morrison:**

With regard to the findings by the Auditor General that the government paid \$6.1 million in Canada Emergency Response Benefit payments to 1,522 recipients that were incarcerated for the entire benefit period: (a) how much of the \$6.1 million has been recovered as of December 6, 2022; (b) how many of the 1,522 recipients have yet to repay the government; and (c) to date, why has the government not recovered the entire \$6.1 million?

**Hon. Diane Lebouthillier (Minister of National Revenue, Lib.):** Mr. Speaker, with respect to the question above, what follows is the response from the CRA as of December 6, 2022. Regarding Canada emergency response benefit payments, please note the following.

The CRA blocked any federally incarcerated individuals from applying at the time of launch, which was April 6, 2020. The CRA is notified of federal incarcerations by Correctional Service Canada. Since this information is only provided on a periodic basis, timing can be a factor with respect to when the block is placed.

With respect to provincial incarceration, this segment of the population may have been eligible due to various provincial programs that allow for weekend-only incarceration, in order to allow for continued participation in the workplace, and day programs for inmates. The CRA is not notified of these incarcerations. However, individuals who had a mailing address located at a provincial institution were blocked beginning on May 11, 2020.

With regard to parts (a), (b) and (c), the CRA has identified recipients whose federal incarceration dates cover the entire benefit periods. As part of the CRA's ongoing post-payment verifications, which began in January 2022 and are ongoing, these individuals will be contacted to validate their eligibility.

Following a CRA manual review to verify an application for COVID-19 individual benefits, if an applicant is determined to be ineligible, they will receive a decision letter informing them that they were not eligible for benefit payments received, with the reason for the ineligibility, and that they will need to repay ineligible amounts. The decision letter also provides recourse options if the individual disagrees with the CRA's decision.

Following a decision letter, the applicant will receive a notice of redetermination. Notices of redetermination inform applicants of debts or credits that have been established on their CRA accounts related to COVID-19 individual benefits. Once these debts have been established, only then may collection activities begin.

For these reasons, the CRA is unable to respond in the manner requested.

**Question No. 1079—Mrs. Claude DeBellefeuille:**

With regard to temporary reductions in service hours at certain Canadian border crossings due to the COVID-19 pandemic: (a) which Quebec border crossings (i) temporarily reduced their service hours, (ii) have returned to their pre-pandemic service hours; and (b) what is the justification for the current service hours posted for each of the border crossings in (a)?

**Ms. Pam Damoff (Parliamentary Secretary to the Minister of Public Safety, Lib.):** Mr. Speaker, with regard to part (a)(i), border crossings in the Quebec region that reduced their operating hours due to the pandemic are Chartierville, Frelighsburg, Hemmingford, Highwater, Lacolle Route 221, Lacolle Route 223, Stanstead Route 143, Clarenceville, Morses Line and Trout River.

With regard to part (a)(ii), Lacolle Route 223 has returned to its pre-pandemic operating hours. Pre-pandemic, Clarenceville border crossing operated from 8:00 a.m. to 12:00 a.m. This port of entry has since returned to operating from 8:00 a.m. to 8:00 p.m.

With regard to part (b), in response to the COVID-19 pandemic, the CBSA temporarily reduced service hours at certain Canadian border crossings, including the ports of entry at Chartierville, Frelighsburg, Hemmingford, Highwater, Lacolle Route 221, Lacolle Route 223, Stanstead Route 143, Morses Line and Trout River.

The CBSA is taking a phased and measured approach to restoring border operations. The key consideration was to ensure the CBSA was positioned to deal with a return of volumes at major ports of entry as COVID measures were incrementally lifted, including in the land environment. The CBSA has restored services to pre-COVID levels in the air and maritime environments and is currently preparing for the highway land environment as the final area to adjust.

**Question No. 1082—Mr. Richard Cannings:**

With regard to the government's commitment in the Fall Economic Statement 2022 to lower credit card transaction fees for small businesses: (a) when does the government intend to begin negotiations with payment card networks, financial institutions, acquirers, payment processors, and businesses; (b) with whom does the government plan to negotiate; (c) if known, on which dates will the negotiations in (b) occur; and (d) has the government set a deadline after which it will introduce amendments to the Payment Cards Network Act if an agreed upon solution is not arrived at, and, if so, what is the date?

**Hon. Chrystia Freeland (Deputy Prime Minister and Minister of Finance, Lib.):** Mr. Speaker, as announced in the 2022 fall economic statement, the government is working with the payment card industry and businesses to lower credit card transaction fees for small businesses in a manner that does not adversely affect other businesses and protects existing reward points for consumers. The government is moving quickly and has initiated discussions with payment card networks, financial institutions, acquirers, payment processors and business associations.

Concurrent with the fall economic statement announcement, the government released draft legislative amendments to the Payment Card Networks Act and indicated that should the industry not come to an agreement in the coming months, it would introduce legislation at the earliest possible opportunity in the new year and move forward with regulating credit card transaction fees.

*Routine Proceedings***Question No. 1087—Mr. Luc Berthold:**

With regard to the Lac-Mégantic rail bypass project: (a) what is the latest detailed timeline for the project between now and the projected completion date; (b) what is the latest estimate on the total cost of the project; (c) what is the current breakdown of how much funding, in percentage and total dollar amount values, will come from (i) the government, (ii) the Province of Quebec, (iii) other sources, broken down by source; and (d) what are the details of all communication between the Canadian Pacific Railway and the government about the project since 2018, including, for each, the (i) date, (ii) sender, (iii) recipient, (iv) type of communication, (v) title, (vi) summary of contents, (vii) summary of the response, if applicable?

**Hon. Omar Alhabra (Minister of Transport, Lib.):** Mr. Speaker, in response to part (a), Transport Canada will continue to work with all stakeholders involved, including the Government of Quebec, the municipalities, and the Canadian Pacific Railway, toward the rapid completion of the Lac-Mégantic bypass. The project is being undertaken with consideration of the community and seeks to maintain broad social acceptability.

Canadian Pacific, with the support of Transport Canada, is currently completing the application to the Canadian Transportation Agency to secure regulatory approval. Concurrently, Transport Canada is working with Public Services and Procurement Canada to complete the land acquisition required for the project. Finally, Transport Canada and Canadian Pacific are currently negotiating the construction contribution agreement for the project. These steps must be completed before construction of the rail bypass can commence.

Prior to construction, Canadian Pacific will launch a request for proposals, which will be undertaken for four months.

Once regulatory approvals have been secured and all necessary lands acquired and transferred to Canadian Pacific, construction will begin and is anticipated to take approximately 36 months to complete.

Following the commissioning of the bypass, the existing track will be dismantled, which is expected to take 12-18 months.

These times were publicly shared with the community during the June 2022 information session and the November 2022 public consultation.

In response to part (b), on May 11, 2018, the Government of Canada announced that the construction costs of the Lac-Mégantic rail bypass were estimated at \$133 million.

As part of the 2022 federal budget, \$237.2 million was allocated to Transport Canada over five years for the construction of the Lac-Mégantic rail bypass, the dismantling of the existing track and the implementation of environmental measures.

On December 20, 2022, the Prime Minister and the Quebec premier agreed that, in the context of high inflation and other factors, both governments would increase their funding for infrastructure projects, including the Lac-Mégantic rail bypass, all in the same ratios as initially announced.

Total project costs are not available at this time. Transport Canada is currently negotiating the construction contribution agreement with Canadian Pacific, which will include an updated project budget.

In response to part (c), the Government of Canada confirmed on May 11, 2018, that it would fund 60% of the construction costs of the Lac-Mégantic bypass, estimated at \$133 million at the time. The Government of Quebec has confirmed that it will fund 40% of this amount.

As part of the 2022 federal budget, \$237.2 million was allocated to Transport Canada over five years, starting in 2022–23, for the construction of the Lac-Mégantic bypass, the dismantling of the existing track and the implementation of environmental measures.

The Prime Minister and the Premier of Quebec met on December 20, 2022, and agreed that both governments would increase their funding for the construction of the Lac-Mégantic rail bypass, all in the same ratios as initially announced. The funding agreement will need to be finalized with the Government of Quebec. There are no other sources of funding for this project.

In response to part (d), Transport Canada undertook an extensive preliminary search in order to determine the amount of information that would fall within the scope of the question and the amount of time that would be required to prepare a comprehensive response. Transport Canada concluded that producing and validating a comprehensive response to this question is not possible in the time allotted and could lead to the disclosure of incomplete and misleading information.

**Question No. 1091—Mrs. Cheryl Gallant:**

With regard to Veterans Affairs Canada (VAC): (a) is VAC aware of any veterans having died as a result of assisted suicide or euthanasia since the practice became legal, and, if so, how many; (b) if the answer to (a) is affirmative, what efforts were made by VAC to investigate whether any veterans who died as a result of assisted suicide or euthanasia did so after receiving end-of-life advice from VAC; and (c) of any investigation made in (b), what were the findings?

**Hon. Lawrence MacAulay (Minister of Veterans Affairs and Associate Minister of National Defence, Lib.):** Mr. Speaker, in response to (a), veterans are not required to inform Veterans Affairs Canada, VAC, of their intentions to use medical assistance in dying, MAID, in advance, and their spouses, families and legal representatives are under no obligation to inform VAC of a veteran's decision following their passing. However, VAC is aware that some veterans have died as a result of using the legislated process for MAID since the practice became legal on June 17, 2016. This remains a conversation between a veteran and their primary care provider. VAC cannot determine, definitively, how many veterans have used MAID. VAC does not specifically track cause of death; however, families can occasionally make VAC aware of cause of death.

*Routine Proceedings*

In response to (b), there is no evidence that MAID was ever discussed inappropriately with these veterans or the families by any VAC employee. A thorough and manual deep-dive review was conducted on each instance, including references to medical assistance in dying, file reviews and discussions with VAC employees who potentially had interactions with the veterans. As part of the investigation ordered by the Minister of Veterans Affairs, VAC has also reviewed and analyzed 402,000 unique client files dating back to 2016 across its systems: client service delivery network, GC Case and My VAC Account, as well as correspondence and case notes.

In response to (c), there is no evidence that MAID was ever discussed inappropriately with these veterans or the families by any VAC employee. A thorough and manual deep-dive review was conducted on each instance, including references to medical assistance in dying, file reviews and discussions with VAC employees who potentially had interactions with the veterans. As part of the investigation ordered by the Minister of Veterans Affairs, VAC has also reviewed and analyzed 402,000 unique client files dating back to 2016 across its systems: client service delivery network, GC Case and My VAC Account, as well as correspondence and case notes.

**Question No. 1095—Mr. Rick Perkins:**

With regard to grants provided by the Natural Sciences and Engineering Research Council of Canada, the Social Sciences and Humanities Research Council, or the National Research Council Canada, broken down by year, since January 1, 2016: (a) what are the details of each grant awarded, including, for each (i) the date, (ii) the amount, (iii) the recipient, (iv) the project description, (v) the start and end date of the project, (vi) whether the grant was co-financed by a third party or commercial partner, and, if so, what is the financing arrangement; (vii) whether the project has resulted in patents, and, if so, who owns them?

**Hon. François-Philippe Champagne (Minister of Innovation, Science and Industry, Lib.):** Mr. Speaker, the National Research Council Canada, NRC, the Natural Sciences and Engineering Research Council of Canada, NSERC, and the Social Sciences and Humanities Research Council of Canada's, SSHRC, funding is proactively disclosed and published in the Open Government portal at <https://search.open.canada.ca/en/gc/>, one month after the end of each quarter of a fiscal year for data from 2017 to the present.

The next proactive disclosure report covering grants paid from October 1, 2022 to December 31, 2022 will be uploaded to Open Government in January 2023.

The NRC did not have grant programs prior to 2017. The collaborative science, technology, and innovation programs, CSTIP, program was established in 2018 and therefore there is no data to report.

For NSERC grants prior to 2017, the data is also available at <https://open.canada.ca/data/en/dataset/c1b0f627-8c29-427c-ab73-33968ad9176e>.

Prior to April 1, 2017, SSHRC's funding was proactively disclosed on its website: <https://www.sshrc-crsh.gc.ca/transparence-transparence/disclosure-divulgarion/grants-subventions/grants-subventions-eng.aspx>.

NSERC collaborates with national or international agencies, government departments and organizations across the public, private and not-for-profit sectors to deliver joint funding initiatives. Partner organizations on joint initiatives must comply with the following policies as applicable: guidelines for organizations participating in

research partnerships, available at <https://www.nserc-crsh.gc.ca/NSERC-CRSNG/policies-politiques/orgpartners-orgpartenaires-eng.aspx>; college and community innovation program partnership guidelines, available at [https://www.nserc-crsh.gc.ca/NSERC-CRSNG/policies-politiques/cci\\_partners-icc\\_partenaires-eng.aspx](https://www.nserc-crsh.gc.ca/NSERC-CRSNG/policies-politiques/cci_partners-icc_partenaires-eng.aspx); alliance grants, role of partner organizations, available at [https://www.nserc-crsh.gc.ca/Innovate-Innover/alliance-alliance/role\\_of\\_partner\\_organizations-role\\_des\\_organismes\\_partenaires-eng.aspx#roleofpartner](https://www.nserc-crsh.gc.ca/Innovate-Innover/alliance-alliance/role_of_partner_organizations-role_des_organismes_partenaires-eng.aspx#roleofpartner); and alliance grants, terms and conditions of applying for partner organizations, available at [https://www.nserc-crsh.gc.ca/\\_doc/alliance/TC-Partners\\_e.pdf](https://www.nserc-crsh.gc.ca/_doc/alliance/TC-Partners_e.pdf).

NSERC's policy on intellectual property for grants is available at <https://www.nserc-crsh.gc.ca/NSERC-CRSNG/Policies-Politiques/ip-pi-eng.aspx>. Each post-secondary institution has its own policy related to intellectual property that dictates who owns the rights.

SSHRC collaborates with national or international agencies, government departments and organizations across the public, private and not-for-profit sectors to deliver joint funding initiatives: [https://www.sshrc-crsh.gc.ca/funding-financement/joint\\_initiatives-initiatives\\_conjointes-eng.aspx](https://www.sshrc-crsh.gc.ca/funding-financement/joint_initiatives-initiatives_conjointes-eng.aspx). Partner organizations on joint initiatives must agree to comply with SSHRC's regulations governing grant applications, available at [https://www.sshrc-crsh.gc.ca/funding-financement/policies-politiques/grant\\_regulations-reglements\\_subventionnaires-eng.aspx](https://www.sshrc-crsh.gc.ca/funding-financement/policies-politiques/grant_regulations-reglements_subventionnaires-eng.aspx), and the joint initiative must meet conditions set out in the guidelines for setting up joint initiatives with SSHRC, available at [https://www.sshrc-crsh.gc.ca/about-au\\_sujet/partnerships-partenariats/joint\\_initiatives-initiatives\\_conjointes-eng.aspx](https://www.sshrc-crsh.gc.ca/about-au_sujet/partnerships-partenariats/joint_initiatives-initiatives_conjointes-eng.aspx). Joint initiatives funded by SSHRC are proactively disclosed and published by SSHRC on Open Government with the name of the joint initiative included in the publication.

SSHRC's policy on intellectual property and copyright for grants is available at the following links: [https://www.sshrc-crsh.gc.ca/funding-financement/policies-politiques/g\\_copyright-s\\_droits\\_auteur-eng.aspx](https://www.sshrc-crsh.gc.ca/funding-financement/policies-politiques/g_copyright-s_droits_auteur-eng.aspx) and [https://www.sshrc-crsh.gc.ca/funding-financement/policies-politiques/f\\_copyright-b\\_droits\\_auteur-eng.aspx](https://www.sshrc-crsh.gc.ca/funding-financement/policies-politiques/f_copyright-b_droits_auteur-eng.aspx).

Though NSERC and SSHRC fund research that may result in patents, the patents are owned by academic institutions or third parties/companies, not NSERC and SSHRC.

At this time, there are no issued patents that resulted from CSTIP grants. Information regarding terms applicable to intellectual property funded by NRC grants and contributions can be found on the NRC's website: <https://nrc.canada.ca/en/research-development/research-collaboration/grant-contribution-funding-collaborators>.

*Routine Proceedings***Question No. 1097—Mr. Marty Morantz:**

With regard to the government's response to findings from the Parliamentary Budget Officer that the 2022 Fall Economic Statement included \$14.2 billion in new measures without providing specific details on this spending: what is the itemized breakdown of how the \$14.2 billion will be spent, by year?

**Hon. Chrystia Freeland (Deputy Prime Minister and Minister of Finance, Lib.):** Mr. Speaker, in an effort to be transparent, the 2022 fall economic statement, FES, included provisions for anticipated funding pressures of a sensitive, pending, or uncertain nature. This includes but is not limited to amounts subject to negotiation, like contracts or litigation, as well as anticipated pressures that were expected to materialize in the near term, when developing the fall economic statement 2022, such as funding for the Indo-Pacific strategy and the national adaptation strategy, and biodiversity funding announced during COP15.

The \$14.2-billion figure that the Parliamentary Budget Officer is referring to is the sum of two items in the 2022 fall economic statement, which can be found at <https://www.budget.canada.ca/fes-eea/2022/report-rapport/FES-EEA-2022-en.pdf>. An \$8.5-billion provision, over six years, for anticipated near-term pressures is shown on page 17 of the statement, and the total net fiscal impact of non-announced measures, which is \$5.7 billion over six years, is reported on page 66 of the statement.

The \$8.5-billion provision for anticipated near-term pressures is a provision for possible decisions the government would take in the near term following the fall economic statement. For further clarity, it is not a prudence provision for economic risk. The government reports on the creation or use of provisions in budgets and updates.

For non-announced measures, the \$5.7-billion total reflects the aggregate fiscal impact of items that were deemed confidential at the time of print and could not be publicly disclosed. These may include, for example, funding decisions associated with national security, commercial sensitivity, contract negotiations and litigation issues.

**Question No. 1098—Mr. Richard Lehoux:**

With regard to the tariff on fertilizer originating from Russia: how much revenue has been collected as a result of the tariff on purchase orders which were made (i) prior to March 2, 2022, (ii) on or since March 2, 2022, (iii) in total?

**Hon. Chrystia Freeland (Deputy Prime Minister and Minister of Finance, Lib.):** Mr. Speaker, customs duties and taxes are assessed based on the time of importation of goods, as opposed to the date of when they are purchased. The government does not have information on when purchase orders were made.

Since the general tariff of 35% took effect on virtually all goods imported from Russia on March 2, 2022, fertilizer importations with a value for duty of \$95.8 million resulted in a total value of customs duties collected of \$33.5 million. There have been no commercial importations of fertilizer from Russia into Canada since May 2022.

On June 27, at the G7 Leaders' Summit in Elmau, Germany, Canada and other G7 members committed to explore possible pathways to use tariff revenues on imports from Russia and Belarus to assist Ukraine. Further to this commitment, on December 13, 2022, the Deputy Prime Minister and Minister of Finance announced that

Canada will provide these funds to Ukraine to help repair Kyiv's power grid.

Effective June 20, 2022, the Government of Canada also provided additional interest-free relief under the advance payment program. This change is forecasted to save producers \$75.7 million, over two program years, to offset the rising costs of inputs, including fertilizers.

The government is working with representatives from the sector to determine the best mechanisms to reinvest the equivalent of the amount on fertilizer imports into the sector.

**Question No. 1100—Mr. Earl Dreeshen:**

With regard to exemptions from Treasury Board guidelines in relation to the ArriveCAN application: (a) which exemptions did the Canada Border Services Agency or any other entity apply for; and (b) for each application in (a), was the exemption granted or denied?

**Ms. Pam Damoff (Parliamentary Secretary to the Minister of Public Safety, Lib.):** Mr. Speaker, the CBSA did not apply for any exemptions from the Treasury Board Secretariat in regard to the ArriveCAN application.

**Question No. 1109—Mr. Daniel Blaikie:**

With regard to the government's procurement of children's acetaminophen and ibuprofen in November 2022: did the government purchase any bottles of acetaminophen or ibuprofen directly, with the intention to resell and give those units to retailers, and, if so, what are the details of all contracts, including the (i) total amount paid, (ii) number of units procured, (iii) price per unit, (iv) signatories to the contract?

**Mr. Adam van Koeverden (Parliamentary Secretary to the Minister of Health and to the Minister of Sport, Lib.):** Mr. Speaker, the November announcement related to the additional supply of acetaminophen and ibuprofen being available in Canada refers to the private sector-led importation of foreign-labelled product. No federal procurement took place in this regard.

**Question No. 1110—Mr. Daniel Blaikie:**

With regard to the government's procurement of children's acetaminophen and ibuprofen in November 2022: (a) of the units procured by the government, how many are being distributed to (i) for-profit retailers, (ii) non-profits or charitable institutions, (iii) medical clinics and hospitals; (b) what were the total costs incurred by Health Canada to approve the import of foreign supplies of acetaminophen and ibuprofen; and (c) does the government expect reimbursements from for-profit retailers for any costs incurred by the government for acquiring these emergency supplies?

**Mr. Adam van Koeverden (Parliamentary Secretary to the Minister of Health and to the Minister of Sport, Lib.):** Mr. Speaker, the November announcement related to the additional supply of acetaminophen and ibuprofen being available in Canada refers to the private sector-led importation of foreign-labelled product. No federal procurement took place in this regard, nor were there incremental costs incurred by the Government of Canada.

*Routine Proceedings*

Addressing the complex issue of drug shortages requires collaborative action from provinces and territories, manufacturers, distributors, health care professionals, and the federal government. Health Canada has been working closely with manufacturers, provinces and territories, and stakeholders across the health care system on mitigation strategies to limit the impact of this shortage. This includes actively working to identify options to increase supply. Domestic manufacturing is now at record levels, and nearly 1.9 million units of foreign-labelled product have been authorized for importation to Canada. To date, the department has approved eight proposals to import foreign products. For updates, please visit “Infant and children's acetaminophen and ibuprofen shortage” at <https://www.canada.ca/en/health-canada/services/drugs-medical-devices/safe-use-medication-for-children/infant-childrens-acetaminophen-ibuprofen-shortage.html>. This web page is updated as information on more products becomes available.

To help mitigate and prevent drug shortage, our government continues to support domestic manufacturing. Health Canada is actively working with distributors and retailers to promote fair distribution of supply across Canada. A particular focus of this effort has been to ensure that rural, remote, and indigenous populations have access to these needed medicines.

**Question No. 1112—Mr. Kyle Seeback:**

With regard to government measures to stop the importation of goods made using forced Uyghur labour in China, since 2016: (a) how many times have such goods been intercepted or seized at points of entry by the Canada Border Services Agency or the RCMP; and (b) what are the details of each instance in (a), including (i) the date, (ii) the description of goods, including quantity, (iii) the estimated value of the goods, (iv) the point of entry or location, (v) what happened to the interception or seized goods, (vi) the charges laid related to the interception or seizure?

**Ms. Pam Damoff (Parliamentary Secretary to the Minister of Public Safety, Lib.):** Mr. Speaker, from January 1, 2016 to December 12, 2022, the CBSA has not intercepted or seized any goods made using forced Uyghur labour in China.

The RCMP does not have a mandate to seize items at ports of entry. This authority resides with the CBSA.

**Question No. 1118—Mr. Gord Johns:**

With regard to expanding access to safer alternatives to illegal substances: (a) is the government actively developing a national safer supply program; (b) if the answer to (a) is affirmative, (i) what steps have been completed or initiated to date, (ii) what, if any, timelines have been established in relation to this goal; and (c) if the answer to (a) is affirmative, has the mandate of the Expert Advisory Group on Safer Supply been amended to include leading the design of a national safer supply program?

**Mrs. Élisabeth Brière (Parliamentary Secretary to the Minister of Mental Health and Addictions and Associate Minister of Health, Lib.):** Mr. Speaker, with regard to question (a) above, provincial, territorial and indigenous governments are primarily responsible for management, organization, and delivery of health care services to their populations. This includes drug treatment and harm reduction services, procurement of prescription drugs, and drug plan formularies. Provinces and territories are best placed to plan and deliver safer supply services that are responsive to the needs of their populations. As of December 2022, Health Canada has supported 28 safer supply pilot projects across Canada through the substance use and addictions program, SUAP, representing total funding commitments of over \$77 million. Our government is supporting them as a partner in the delivery of such services and is con-

stantly engaging with them to see how it can better assist them. That is why a national safer supply program led by the federal government is not being developed.

**Question No. 1123—Mr. Ryan Williams:**

With regard to Innovation, Science and Economic Development Canada and the \$8,831,029,798 raised by the June 2021 3,500Mhz Wireless Spectrum Auction: (a) where are these revenues projected to be spent, broken down by (i) program, (ii) amount; (b) are any of these funds projected to be spent on programs related to expanding internet or wireless connectivity for Canadians; and (c) if the answer to (b) is affirmative, what are the details, broken down by (i) program, (ii) amount, (iii) province, (iv) number of Canadians affected?

**Hon. François-Philippe Champagne (Minister of Innovation, Science and Industry, Lib.):** Mr. Speaker, the Radiocommunication Act does not give the Minister of Innovation, Science and Industry the power to allocate auction payments for a particular purpose. As such, Innovation, Science and Economic Development Canada does not keep auction revenues. They are remitted to the consolidated revenue fund, where they are used to support government priorities and initiatives that benefit Canadians.

**Question No. 1131—Mr. Kelly McCauley:**

With regard to the Canada Revenue Agency and linkage studies that link citizens who complete the census with tax data: what are the details of all such studies which have taken place since January 1, 2018, including, for each, (i) the date, (ii) the methodology, (iii) the scope, including the number of individuals whose data was linked, (iv) the topics studied, (v) the findings, (vi) who conducted the study?

**Hon. Diane Lebouthillier (Minister of National Revenue, Lib.):** Mr. Speaker, with respect to the question, here is the response from the CRA for the time period of January 1, 2018, to December 12, 2022, which is the date of the question.

With regard to part (i), since January 1, 2018, only one linkage rate study has been undertaken in 2022 by Statistics Canada since there was only one census during this period, the 2021 census. This study linked individual tax data for the 2020 tax year to 2021 census data. The first results of this study were provided to the CRA by Statistics Canada in October 2022. The initial review is focused on indigenous peoples' participation in Canada's tax and benefit system. The focus of the linkage rate study is being expanded to include linked data from other population segments that comprise vulnerable or hard-to-reach populations.

With regard to part (ii), the methodology is as follows. Statistics Canada links census data to individual tax data for the population aged 15 and over, using social insurance number and census subdivision to determine participation in the tax and benefit system.

Only people in both databases are linked. The Canadian population who participated in the tax system are those who were enumerated in the 2021 census and completed the T1 income tax form in 2020, and non-filers are identified as those who received a T4 form or other tax slips but did not complete their T1 income tax form in 2020.

*Routine Proceedings*

The results for participation in benefits are expected by spring 2023. This methodology for participation in the Canada child benefit, or the CCB, is based on the percentage of families who received CCB benefits out of the total number of families with children under the age of 18 and who meet the other eligibility requirements.

With regard to part (iii), for the participation in the tax system, the population linked who participated in the tax system is defined as persons aged 15 and over in the 2021 census and who filed a T1 form in 2020. The total population of T1 filers was 25,776,480 people. Of them, 869,755 people were indigenous, with 179,970 people from the indigenous population living on reserves.

The total population linked is persons aged 15 and over in the 2021 census linked to CRA datasets, for example, T4, T5007 or T2202. The total population of linked individuals was 28,877,725 people. Of them, 1,055,695 people were indigenous, with 235,280 people from that indigenous population living on reserves.

With regard to part (iv), the study will provide the participation rate in the tax system for indigenous peoples at the national, provincial, city and reserve level compared to non-indigenous; the CCB take-up rate for indigenous peoples at the national, provincial, city and reserve level compared to non-indigenous peoples; and the participation rate by indigenous group, that is, first nations, Métis and Inuit, and other important demographic variables such as age and income group.

With regard to part (v), the findings are as follows. First results show a participation gap in the tax system between the non-indigenous and indigenous population at the national and provincial level. The participation rate at the national level in the tax system was estimated at 89.3% for all Canadians, 82.4% for indigenous peoples and 76.5% on reserves. The first results for CCB benefit take-up are expected in spring 2023.

With regard to part (vi), the study was conducted by Statistics Canada on behalf of the CRA.

**Question No. 1133—Mrs. Shannon Stubbs:**

With regard to statistics held by the government related to entities engaging in blending operations of renewable fuel and petroleum fuel in Canada: (a) what are the details of all known blending operations in Canada, including locations; (b) for each blending location, what are the countries of origin of the renewable feedstock; and (c) what percentage of renewable fuel used in Canadian blending operations originated from each country, broken down by year since 2015?

**Hon. François-Philippe Champagne (Minister of Innovation, Science and Industry, Lib.):** Mr. Speaker, Statistics Canada does not publish location, facility or establishment-level information for the details of all known blending operations in Canada, nor the countries of origin of the renewable feedstock, nor information on the percentage of renewable fuel used in Canadian blending operations originated from each country.

Statistics Canada publishes monthly aggregated statistics for Canada, province or territory on the supply and disposition of petroleum and other liquids in Canada in table 25-10-0081 of “Petroleum and other liquids, supply and disposition, monthly” on [statcan.gc.ca](http://statcan.gc.ca). Data are available for net production, imports, stock change, net inputs, exports, products supplied and ending stocks of petroleum products, hydrocarbon gas liquids and other liquids, including renewable biofuels. This table includes data on blender in-

puts of fuel ethanol and renewable fuels except ethanol, for example, biodiesel.

Statistics Canada publishes monthly aggregated statistics for Canada on the activities of all establishments engaged in the production of renewable biofuel liquids in table 25-10-0082 of “Renewable fuel plant statistics, supply and disposition, monthly” on [statcan.gc.ca](http://statcan.gc.ca). Data are available for stocks, receipts and inputs of feedstocks, including cereal grains, vegetable oils and other feedstocks. Data are also available for the production and shipments of fuel ethanol and renewable fuels except ethanol, for example, biodiesel.

In addition, the “Report on Energy Supply and Disposition” includes annual aggregated statistics for renewable fuels for Canada, geographical region of Canada or province or territory starting in reference year 2020. This total includes only ethanol, biodiesel and renewable diesel fuel, and can be found in table 25-10-0030 of “Supply and demand of primary and secondary energy in natural units” on [statcan.gc.ca](http://statcan.gc.ca); and table 25-10-0029 of “Supply and demand of primary and secondary energy in terajoules, annual” on [statcan.gc.ca](http://statcan.gc.ca).

Finally, for information on the origin of Canadian imports, including renewable fuels, please see “Canadian International Merchandise Trade Web Application – Imports” on [statcan.gc.ca](http://statcan.gc.ca).

This application allows users to select reference periods, provinces and commodities of interest. For ethanol, select harmonized system, HS, codes 2207.20.12.10 and 2207.10.00.10. For biodiesel, select 3826.00.00.00, and for renewable diesel, select 2710.19.99.93.

Environment and Climate Change Canada, ECCC, may publish related information in “Renewable Fuels Regulations report: En11-16E-PDF” on Government of Canada Publications, [Canada.ca](http://Canada.ca).

All cited data and information are publicly available.

**Question No. 1136—Ms. Leslyn Lewis:**

With regard to the Canada Infrastructure Bank (CIB), since January 1, 2021: (a) what were the costs incurred during the due diligence period for the Lake Erie Connector Project, broken down by category and type of expenditure; (b) what is the summary of the terms of the project agreement with ITC Holdings Corporation; (c) what were the justifications provided to the CIB for the suspension of the Lake Erie Connector Project; (d) on what date was the CIB informed of the Lake Erie Connector Project’s suspension; and (e) on what date was the Minister of Infrastructure or his staff informed of the Lake Erie Connector Project’s suspension?

*Routine Proceedings*

**Ms. Jennifer O'Connell (Parliamentary Secretary to the Minister of Intergovernmental Affairs, Infrastructure and Communities, Lib.):** Mr. Speaker, with regard to the Canada Infrastructure Bank, or CIB, and part (a) of the question, the CIB incurred costs in the amount of \$875,332.62 in professional fees to conduct due diligence on the Lake Erie connector project. These costs are comprised of legal expenses and technical advisory expenses. Total due diligence costs incurred represent less than 0.1% of the CIB's previously announced investment commitment in the Lake Erie connector project and are aligned with reasonable costs and expenses incurred by other private sector and institutional investors to support technical and legal due diligence activities related to financial transactions in infrastructure projects.

With respect to part (b), commercial negotiations relating to the Lake Erie connector project have been suspended at this time. The CIB did not conclude a definitive project agreement with ITC Holding Corporation, the project proponent of the Lake Erie connector project, for the project to reach the financial close milestone, and no CIB financing has been provided in respect of the project. The CIB had previously announced an investment commitment in the amount of up to \$650 million to the Lake Erie connector project. The CIB makes investment commitments to support proponents advancing their projects toward a final investment decision and to secure additional financing to enable the project to achieve financial close.

With respect to part (c), as reported in Fortis Inc.'s press release regarding its second-quarter earnings dated July 28, 2022, ITC Holding Corporation suspended development activities and commercial negotiations due to recent macroeconomic conditions that have impacted the proponent's ability to secure a viable transmission service agreement within the required timeline. As such, the CIB has removed this project from its total of CIB investment commitments, given that the conditions that are required for an investment commitment are not presently being met. The CIB remains committed to the project's positive outcomes in reducing greenhouse gas emissions and improving the reliability and security of Ontario's electricity grid. The CIB remains available to the project proponent as necessary to continue discussions should project development activities resume.

With respect to part (d), representatives from ITC Holding Corporation notified the CIB after the close of business on Wednesday, July 27, 2022, that a press release would be issued the next day to provide an update on the Lake Erie connector project and inform market participants that ITC Holding Corporation suspended all project development activities and commercial negotiations on the project due to recent macroeconomic conditions.

With respect to part (e), a press release announcing the Lake Erie connector project's suspension was issued on July 28, 2022. The CIB communicated this information to Infrastructure Canada officials in August as part of the CIB's regular engagement with Infrastructure Canada officials to provide an update on the CIB's results and information included in the CIB's quarterly financial reporting. The CIB's quarterly financial report for Q1 fiscal 2022-23, which was published on the CIB's website on August 29, 2022, includes subsequent events note disclosure regarding the announcement of the suspension of the Lake Erie connector project in late July 2022.

Question No. 1137—**Ms. Leslyn Lewis:**

With regard to the Canada Infrastructure Bank (CIB) and the five-year review of the Canada Infrastructure Bank Act: (a) what is the status of the government's five-year review; (b) what are the details of the review plan, including the (i) plan summary, (ii) stakeholders consulted to date and to be consulted, (iii) consultants or experts engaged and to be engaged, (iv) metrics by which the government is assessing the CIB's performance, (v) formal meetings or initiatives taken place to date, (vi) formal meetings or initiatives scheduled to take place; (c) what plans does the government have to (i) consult the public, (ii) provide the public with details of the review; and (d) to what extent is the government considering the single recommendation of the third report of the Standing Committee on Transport, Infrastructure and Communities in its assessment of the CIB under the Act?

**Ms. Jennifer O'Connell (Parliamentary Secretary to the Minister of Intergovernmental Affairs, Infrastructure and Communities, Lib.):** Mr. Speaker, the following is with regard to the Canada Infrastructure Bank, or CIB, and the five-year review of the Canada Infrastructure Bank Act.

With respect to part (a), the first legislative review of the Canada Infrastructure Bank Act, or CIB Act, was started in June 2022 and is being led by Infrastructure Canada. The review will culminate in a report tabled in Parliament by the designated minister in June 2023.

With respect to part (b), as per the legislation, the legislative review will examine the provisions and operations of the CIB Act and is an opportunity to recognize the progress made to date and the evolution of the bank over the last five years. The review will look to assess whether the policy premises and context that underpinned the creation of the CIB are still sound and pertinent, whether the CIB's legislated mandate and authorities to support its operations remain relevant in the context of the evolving policy and infrastructure landscape and whether any changes or clarifications are warranted to position the CIB for the future.

Additional records requested would be subject to the provisions of the Access to Information Act, namely subsection 21(1) on advice, recommendations, deliberations and/or plans; subsection 20(1) on third party information; and potentially section 69 on cabinet confidences. This is because the legislative review is in process and includes developing advice and recommendations for the designated minister and could contain confidences of the King's Privy Council for Canada that are not releasable at this time.

With respect to part (c), Infrastructure Canada officials are conducting targeted engagement with key stakeholders to inform the review. These include provincial, territorial, municipal and indigenous partners; key market participants; and other relevant organizations. As per the act, a report on the findings of the review must be tabled by the designated minister before each House of Parliament in June 2023.



*Routine Proceedings*

With respect to part (d), the government's response to the third report of the Standing Committee on Transport, Infrastructure and Communities was tabled on September 15, 2022. The government disagreed with the committee's recommendation to abolish the CIB. The response can be found on the House of Commons website. The government response highlights the progress made by the Canada Infrastructure Bank to date in getting more infrastructure financed and built for Canadians, and notes its importance as a key tool in the government's tool kit to close Canada's infrastructure gap and support the transition to a low-carbon economy.

Question No. 1141—**Ms. Heather McPherson:**

With regard to the number of funding applications through international development projects processed by Global Affairs Canada: what percentage of successful and complete applications received by the department were processed within the department's stated delivery standards?

**Ms. Anita Vandenberg (Parliamentary Secretary to the Minister of International Development, Lib.):** Mr. Speaker, the following reflects a consolidated response approved on behalf of Global Affairs Canada ministers.

Global Affairs Canada tracks and publishes predefined service standards annually for the delivery of grants and contributions, precisely for funding under the international development assistance program. This can be found at [https://www.international.gc.ca/world-monde/funding-financement/service\\_standards\\_pilot\\_project-projet\\_pilote\\_normes\\_service.aspx?lang=eng](https://www.international.gc.ca/world-monde/funding-financement/service_standards_pilot_project-projet_pilote_normes_service.aspx?lang=eng). The service standard is to inform applicants of funding decisions within 10 business days. This service standard represents the time the department takes to communicate a funding decision to successful applicants following an approval. For fiscal year 2021-22, the department reached an 87% compliance rate.

Question No. 1143—**Mr. Matthew Green:**

With regard to the government's remote work policy, broken down by department and agency: (a) what is the total number of employees who are currently working (i) entirely from home, (ii) in a hybrid format; (b) what is the total number of employees under a formal remote work arrangement; (c) what is the total number of remote work arrangements (i) requested, (ii) approved, (iii) denied; (d) what is the total number of employees fully working in their regular workplace, broken down by classification and level; (e) what is the total number of employees using formal flexible work arrangements, such as flexible hours, compressed hours, or variable hours; and (f) what is the total number of flexible work arrangements (i) requested, (ii) approved, (iii) declined?

**Mr. Greg Fergus (Parliamentary Secretary to the Prime Minister and to the President of the Treasury Board), Lib.):** Mr. Speaker, with regard to the government's remote work policy, as it relates to the data requested, the information is not systematically tracked in a centralized database.

It should be noted that the federal public service is adopting a common hybrid work model that will see employees work on site at least two to three days each week, or 40% to 60% of their regular schedule. This new model will apply to all of the core public administration, and it is strongly recommended that separate agencies adopt a similar strategy.

While many public servants are already working on site at least two to three days a week, this new approach will represent a change for others. To allow departments and employees to smoothly transition to a common hybrid model, a phased introduction will begin on January 16, 2023, with full implementation by March 31, 2023.

Deputy heads assume responsibility for implementing verification regimes and maintaining human resources data for their department or agency.

• (1535)

[English]

**Mr. Charlie Angus:** Mr. Speaker, on a point of order, I missed the part before Question No. 1100. Could the parliamentary secretary just repeat the first section? I have been trying to—

**The Speaker:** I want to thank the hon. member for pointing out that he missed it.

The hon. parliamentary secretary, please continue.

\* \* \*

#### QUESTIONS PASSED AS ORDERS FOR RETURNS

**Mr. Kevin Lamoureux (Parliamentary Secretary to the Leader of the Government in the House of Commons, Lib.):** Mr. Speaker, if the member would like a copy, I would be pleased to provide him with a full list of the numbers.

If a revised response to Question No. 881, originally tabled on December 2, 2022, and the government's responses to Questions Nos. 956, 966, 968, 970 to 973, 975 to 978, 981, 982, 984, 985, 988 to 999, 1002 to 1007, 1010 to 1012, 1014, 1016 to 1018, 1020, 1023 to 1025, 1027 to 1033, 1035 to 1037, 1039, 1041 to 1044, 1046, 1047, 1051, 1052, 1054 to 1058, 1061 to 1063, 1066, 1069, 1071 to 1073, 1077, 1080, 1081, 1083 to 1086, 1088 to 1090, 1092 to 1094, 1096, 1099, 1101 to 1108, 1111, 1113 to 1117, 1119 to 1122, 1124 to 1130, 1132, 1134, 1135, 1138 to 1140, 1142, 1144 and 1145 could be made orders for return, these returns would be tabled immediately.

**The Speaker:** Is that agreed?

**Some hon. members:** Agreed.

[Text]

Question No. 881—**Mrs. Cheryl Gallant:**

With regard to the ArriveCAN application: (a) what are the details of all contracts the government awarded in relation to the development or operation of ArriveCAN, including, for each, the (i) date, (ii) vendor, (iii) amount, (iv) description of goods and services provided; (b) for each contract in (a), was it sole-sourced or awarded through a competitive bidding process; (c) for each contract awarded through a competitive bidding process, how many qualifying bids were received; (d) for each sole-sourced contract, why was it sole-sourced and who made the final decision about which vendor would receive the contract; (e) what measures, if any, were in place to ensure that the government was being charged a fair market value; and (f) does the government plan on recovering any of the amounts that it paid which were higher than fair market value in relation to any of the ArriveCAN contracts, and, if so, what are the details, including which contracts and what amounts it expects to recover?

(Return tabled)

*Routine Proceedings***Question No. 965—Mr. Dan Mazier:**

With regard to the government's \$2.75 billion Universal Broadband Fund: (a) how much of the \$2.75 billion has actually been delivered to date; (b) what is the breakdown of (a) by Rapid Response Stream fundings versus core fund; (c) of the Rapid Response Stream funding delivered to date, what is the breakdown by province or territory; (d) of the core funding delivered to date, what is the breakdown by province or territory; (e) which organizations or other entities have received Rapid Response Stream funding to date, and how much did each receive; and (f) which organizations or other entities have received core funding to date, and how much did each receive?

(Return tabled)

**Question No. 966—Mr. Glen Motz:**

With regard to the reforms to the superior courts judicial appointments process announced by the government in 2016: what are the details of all memoranda and documents sent from or received by the Office of the Prime Minister, the Privy Council Office or the Department of Justice, including the minister's office, about the judicial appointments process between January 1, 2016, and October 31, 2016, including, for each, the (i) date, (ii) sender, (iii) recipient, (iv) title, (v) type of document, (vi) summary of contents?

(Return tabled)

**Question No. 968—Mr. Brad Redekopp:**

With regard to the temporary resident programs of the Department of Immigration, Refugees and Citizenship (IRCC) for the calendar years 2019-2021, broken down by month: (a) what is the number of Temporary Resident Visa (TRV) applications received, broken down by international student study permit holders, temporary foreign workers, International Mobility Program, and visitor visas; (b) what is the number of TRV applications received, broken down by channel, including, but not limited to, telephone, in person, mail, online, other; (c) what is the number of TRVs issued, broken down by international student study permit holders, temporary foreign workers, International Mobility Program, and visitor visas; (d) what is the number of Electronic Travel Authorization (eTA) applications received broken down by channel, including, but not limited to, telephone, in person, mail, online, other; (e) what is the number of eTAs issued; (f) what is the number of backlogged TRV applications, broken down by international student study permit holders, temporary foreign workers, International Mobility Program, and visitor visas; (g) what is the number of backlogged eTA applications; (h) at the most detailed level possible, what is the number of IRCC full time equivalent employees working in the temporary resident programs, broken down by the various program streams, including, but not limited to, study permit holders, temporary foreign workers, International Mobility Program, visitor visas, and general administration; and (i) at the most detailed level possible, what is the IRCC's total budget and spending for the temporary resident programs, broken down by the various program streams (study permit holders, temporary foreign workers, International Mobility Program, visitor visas, and general administration)?

(Return tabled)

**Question No. 970—Ms. Niki Ashton:**

With regard to the First Nations On-Reserve Housing Program, broken down by reserve and fiscal year since 2015-16: (a) how much funding was (i) requested, (ii) delivered, through the program; and (b) what is the total number of new homes built with contributions from the program?

(Return tabled)

**Question No. 971—Ms. Niki Ashton:**

With regard to ministerial loan guarantees used to secure loans to build, purchase or renovate on-reserve housing, broken down by fiscal year since 2015-16: (a) what is the total number and dollar value of loans requested; (b) what is the total number and dollar value of loans in (a) that have been (i) committed, (ii) disbursed; and (c) how many total borrowers in (a) defaulted on loans, and what was the total loan amount that was defaulted on?

(Return tabled)

**Question No. 972—Ms. Niki Ashton:**

With regard to the Canada Revenue Agency's investigations into overseas tax evasion and the Panama Papers, Paradise Papers and Pandora Papers, broken down by paper and fiscal year since 2015-16: (a) how many audits were initiated into Canadian companies; (b) how many of the audits in (a) are (i) currently under review, (ii) closed; (c) what was the average processing time for audits in (a); (d)

what is the total cost of the audits in (a); (e) how many of the audits in (a) led to criminal investigations; and (f) what is the dollar value of sums recovered from each audit in (a)?

(Return tabled)

**Question No. 973—Mr. Michael Kram:**

With regard to the RCMP's delay in provision of pay stubs or tax notices: (a) why did the RCMP or the government not provide pay stubs or tax notices to members of the RCMP from the suspension of delivery of pay stubs or tax notices by epost to the delivery of pay stubs or tax notices by Gilmore Docuscan; (b) how long was or will be the time period between the end of delivery of pay stubs or tax notices by epost and delivery of pay stubs or tax notices by Gilmore Docuscan; (c) how many members of the RCMP did not or will not receive their pay stubs or tax notices during this period; (d) what are the details of discussions or meetings about this delay, including (i) violation of employment standards legislation, (ii) condition of employment, (iii) tax implications for members; (e) what departments, agencies, offices and individuals were involved in this issue; and (f) what supporting documents exist regarding this issue, including, but not limited to emails, texts, briefing notes, memos and reports, and what are the details of such documents?

(Return tabled)

**Question No. 975—Mrs. Tracy Gray:**

With regard to the Sectoral Workforce Solutions Program: (a) what is the number of organizations that have applied to the program prior to the closing date; (b) what was the total value of funding requests received; (c) what is the breakdown of (a) and (b) by province or territory; (d) what was the number of organizations which have been approved for the program; (e) what was the dollar value of the funding (i) approved, (ii) transferred to the recipient, as of November 11, 2022; (f) what is the breakdown of (d) and (e) by province or territory; (g) what is the number of approved organizations which have already received funding through the program; (h) what is the eligibility of charitable or non-profit organizations for this program; (i) what are the details of all projects and entities funded through the program, including, for each, the (i) recipient name, (ii) location, (iii) amount of funding approved, (iv) amount of funding delivered, (v) project description, (vi) start date of the project; and (j) have any third parties outside of Employment and Social Development Canada been given any responsibilities related to the application process or administration of the program, and, if so, what are the details, including for each, the (i) name of the entity, (ii) summary of the mandate or work assigned, (iii) amount of financial compensation provided by the government?

(Return tabled)

**Question No. 976—Mr. Alex Ruff:**

With regard to all restrictions imposed related to the Minimizing the Risk of Exposure to COVID-19 in Canada Order (Quarantine, Isolation and Other Obligations) applied to Canadian travellers re-entering Canada from March 2020 until June 2022: (a) how were these changes communicated to Canadians that do not have access to electronic forms of communication, including the Amish and similar communities with dual Canadian-USA citizenship who travel regularly between Canada and the United States; (b) what are the details of all such communication in (a), including, for each, the (i) date issued, (ii) medium (e.g. flyer, newspaper advertisement, direct mail, etc.), (iii) summary of content, (iv) name of the publication if applicable, (v) number of printed communications or circulation level of the publication; (c) what specific measures, if any, were made to ensure that these restrictions were communicated to the Amish and other similar communities in the riding of Bruce—Grey—Owen Sound; and (d) what are the details of all such communications in (c), including, for each, the (i) date issued, (ii) medium, (iii) summary of the communication, (iv) name of the publication (if applicable), (v) number of printed communications or circulation level of the publication?

(Return tabled)

*Routine Proceedings***Question No. 977—Mr. Jasraj Singh Hallan:**

With regard to government expenditures made to the big three credit rating agencies (S&P Global Ratings, Moody's and Fitch Group) since January 1, 2016: what are the details of any such expenditures, including, for each, the (i) vendor, (ii) date, (iii) amount, (iv) reason for the expenditure, (v) goods or services provided?

(Return tabled)

**Question No. 978—Mr. Alexis Brunelle-Duceppe:**

With regard to the awarding of contracts by the government to the private firm McKinsey: (a) how many contracts were awarded by the government to the private firm McKinsey; and (b) what is the value and nature of each of these contracts?

(Return tabled)

**Question No. 981—Mr. Eric Melillo:**

With regard to applications received under the Northern Ontario Development Program, since 2018, broken down by year the applications were received: (a) how many applicants and what percentage did not receive a decision within 80 days of the government receiving the application; (b) of the applicants in (a), how many organizations were (i) Indigenous-owned or were from Indigenous communities, (ii) non-Indigenous owned or were from non-Indigenous communities; (c) what is the breakdown of (a) by federal riding in Northern Ontario; and (d) for each instance where the application did not receive a decision within 80 days, what was the reason for the delay?

(Return tabled)

**Question No. 982—Mr. Eric Melillo:**

With regard to applications received for funding under the Economic Development Initiative in Northern Ontario, since 2018, broken down by the year the applications were received: (a) how many applicants and what percentage did not receive a decision within 80 days of government receiving the application; (b) of the applicants in (a), how many organizations were (i) Indigenous-owned or were from Indigenous communities, (ii) non-Indigenous owned or were from non-Indigenous communities; (c) what is the breakdown of (a) by federal riding in Northern Ontario; and (d) for each instance where the application did not receive a decision within 80 days, what was the reason for the delay?

(Return tabled)

**Question No. 984—Mrs. Shannon Stubbs:**

With regard to proposals in Canada related to liquefied natural gas active since November 4, 2015, which were received or known by the government: (a) what are the details of all the proposals received or known by Natural Resources Canada (NRCAN), including, for each, (i) the date the proposal was received by NRCAN, (ii) the date NRCAN was made aware of the proposal, (iii) the summary of the proposal, (iv) who made the proposal, (v) the decisions made by the government related to the proposal, including the date of each, (vi) the current status of the proposal, (vii) the expected date for a decision to be made, if applicable; and (b) what are the details of all proposals received or known by Environment and Climate Change Canada (ECCC), including, for each, (i) the date the proposal was received by ECCC, (ii) the date ECCC was made aware of the proposal, (iii) the summary of the proposal, (iv) who made the proposal, (v) the decisions made by the government related to the proposal, including the date of each, (vi) the current status of the proposal, (vii) the date by which a decision is expected to be made, if applicable?

(Return tabled)

**Question No. 985—Mr. Randall Garrison:**

With regard to the civilian firefighters working for the Department of National Defence (DND) and the Phoenix pay system issues: (a) what is the current annual cost to manually administer payments for DND firefighters; (b) what is the annual cost to manually administer payments for the DND firefighters since the implementation of the Phoenix Pay System; and (c) what is the average number of (i) overtime hours, (ii) paternity and maternity leave days, (iii) acting pay hours, (iv) long-service pay hours and statutory holiday pay hours, claimed per full-time civilian firefighter every year from 2015 to 2021?

(Return tabled)

**Question No. 988—Ms. Jenny Kwan:**

With regard to the Housing Support Program in British Columbia, formerly known as the New Approach for Housing Support program, broken down by community and fiscal year since 2015-16: (a) how much funding was requested through

the program; (b) how much funding was delivered through the program; and (c) what is the total number of new homes built with contributions from the program?

(Return tabled)

**Question No. 989—Ms. Jenny Kwan:**

With regard to Indigenous housing: (a) what is the total amount of the \$4.3 billion for the Indigenous Community Infrastructure Fund announced in budget 2022 that has been committed to support housing (i) in First Nations on reserves, (ii) in Self-Governing and Modern Treaty Holder First Nations communities, (iii) in Inuit communities, (iv) in Métis communities, (v) as part of an urban, rural and northern Indigenous housing strategy; (b) what is the total amount of funding in (a) that has been disbursed; and (c) broken down by program and year since 2017, how much funding for housing has been (i) committed, (ii) disbursed, towards supporting the 87 percent of Indigenous households in Canada who live in urban, rural and northern regions outside of their traditional territories, as identified by the Canada Mortgage and Housing Corporation?

(Return tabled)

**Question No. 990—Mr. Stephen Ellis:**

With regard to the government and the commitment in the Liberal Party election platform to provide \$3.2 billion to the provinces and territories for the hiring of new family doctors, nurses and nurse practitioners: (a) how much of the \$3.2 billion has been provided to date for this purpose; (b) how many (i) family doctors, (ii) nurses, (iii) nurse practitioners, have been hired to date, as a result of this funding; and (c) what is the breakdown of each point in (b) by province or territory?

(Return tabled)

**Question No. 991—Mr. Michael Cooper:**

With regard to the promotion or advertising expenditures related to the ArriveCAN application: (a) what are the total expenditures paid by the government related to advertising, public relations or other types of promotion for the ArriveCAN application; (b) what are the details of all contracts for such services, including, for each, the (i) date, (ii) vendor, (iii) amount, (iv) description of goods and services provided; (c) for each contract in (b), was it sole-sourced or awarded through a competitive bidding process; (d) what is the breakdown of ArriveCAN advertising expenses by type of media (television, print, social media, etc.); and (e) what is the breakdown of ArriveCAN social media advertising expenditures by site (Twitter, YouTube, Facebook, etc.)?

(Return tabled)

**Question No. 992—Mr. Michael Cooper:**

With regard to advertising on social media by the government since 2016, broken down by year: what was the total amount spent by the government for advertisements on (i) Twitter, (ii) Facebook, (iii) TikTok, (iv) Instagram, (v) Snapchat, (vi) WhatsApp, (vii) LinkedIn, (viii) other social media platforms, broken down by platform?

(Return tabled)

**Question No. 993—Ms. Lori Idlout:**

With regard to all federal funding committed to the creation and maintenance of housing stock in Nunavut, broken down by fiscal year since 2015-16: (a) what was the total amount committed; (b) what was the total amount spent; (c) how much new housing stock was created in Nunavut; and (d) what are the government projections on the number of housing units that will be built in Nunavut by 2030?

(Return tabled)

**Question No. 994—Ms. Lori Idlout:**

With regard to the Nutrition North program, broken down by fiscal year since 2015-16: (a) what is the total budget for this program; (b) what portion of the budget in (a) was delivered to (i) for-profit retailers and suppliers, (ii) social institutions, such as schools or daycares, (iii) country food processors or distributors, (iv) food banks and charitable organizations, (v) local food growers; and (c) what actions has the government taken to ensure that funding for this program keeps up with inflation?

(Return tabled)

*Routine Proceedings***Question No. 995—Ms. Lori Idlout:**

With regard to the Harvesters Support Grant and the Community Food Programs Fund, broken down by program and fiscal year since 2015-16: (a) how much funding has been allocated to each program to support Northerners' food priorities and improve conditions for food sovereignty in northern communities; (b) of the funding in (a), how much has been spent; and (c) what actions has the government taken to ensure that funding for these programs keeps pace with inflation?

(Return tabled)

**Question No. 996—Mr. James Bezan:**

With regard to the annual \$250 million sole-sourced security contract extended to the Canadian Corps of Commissionaires by Public Services and Procurement Canada: (a) how much of the \$250 million contract was sole sourced to the Ottawa Division of the Commissionaires in 2021; (b) does Commissionaires Ottawa remain exempt from paying income taxes under the Income Tax Act; (c) when was the last time the government confirmed that the Ottawa Division of the Commissionaires maintained the 60 percent veteran ratio required to maintain their status as a sole source provider to the government for security services?

(Return tabled)

**Question No. 997—Mr. James Bezan:**

With regard to funds and military material sent by the government to Ukraine since February 4, 2022: (a) what is the complete list of individually itemized goods already received by Ukraine corresponding to each of the announcements made on (i) February 4, 2022, regarding the donation of protective and load carriage equipment and surveillance and detection equipment, (ii) February 14, 2022, regarding the donation of defensive military equipment, (iii) February 27, 2022, regarding a donation of defensive military aid, (iv) February 28, 2022, regarding the donation of anti-armour weapons systems, (v) March 1, 2022, regarding the donation of meal packs and fragmentation vests, (vi) March 3, 2022, regarding the government's contribution towards the purchase of rocket launchers, hand grenades and high-resolution and modern imagery satellite, (vii) March 9, 2022, regarding the purchase of highly specialized equipment, including cameras for surveillance drones, (viii) April 22, 2022, regarding the delivery of M777 howitzers and associated ammunition, and anti-armour ammunition, (ix) April 26, 2022, regarding a service contract for the maintenance and repair of specialized drone cameras that Canada has already supplied to Ukraine, (x) April 28, 2022, regarding the training of Ukrainian forces on the use of M777 by the Canadian Armed Forces, (xi) May 8, 2022, regarding additional military aid, (xii) May 24, 2022, regarding the donation of artillery rounds and NATO standard ammunition, (xiii) June 15, 2022, regarding replacement barrels, (xiv) June 30, 2022, regarding the donation of additional Wescam drone cameras and armoured combat support vehicles, (xv) November 14, 2022, regarding the \$500 million in additional military assistance to Ukraine; (b) what is the date on which each of these items or groups of items were received by Ukraine; (c) what are the quantities of each item received by Ukraine; (d) of the goods received by Ukraine, how many individual pieces of winter kit were sent; and (e) what is the total dollar value of all funds and material received by Ukraine?

(Return tabled)

**Question No. 998—Ms. Michelle Rempel Garner:**

With regard to government contracts with the Westin Calgary Airport hotel and the Acclaim Calgary airport hotel for the provision of quarantine facilities and accommodations during the COVID-19 pandemic, broken down by location: (a) on what dates were the contracts for each site signed; (b) what was the end date for each contract; (c) how much has the federal government paid to date for all services provided by these sites, broken down by site, type of cost (meals, security, etc.) and total cost per year; (d) what are the details of any other costs associated with the provision of these quarantine facilities and accommodations at these sites, including, for each, the (i) vendor, (ii) amount paid by the government, (iii) description of goods or services; (e) how many people elected to use these facilities as a designated quarantine facility, broken down by total users per month and year; (f) is the government contractually required to continue paying for any services at these sites following the end of pandemic restrictions, and, if so, what are the details, including amounts of any such required payment; and (g) has the government had to pay either site for any other cost related to the contract, such as damages, upkeep, or renovations, and, if so, what are the details, including dates and amounts of all such costs?

(Return tabled)

**Question No. 999—Mr. Rick Perkins:**

With regard to the funding provided to companies for projects through the Strategic Innovation Fund: (a) which companies have received funding; (b) how much funding did each company receive; and (c) what is the location or address of the headquarters of each company in (a)?

(Return tabled)

**Question No. 1002—Mr. Doug Shipley:**

With regard to meetings and other communications between the Prime Minister, the Minister of Public Safety or their exempt staff, and the RCMP commissioner, Brenda Lucki, since January 1, 2020: what are the details of all such meetings or other communications, including, for each, the (i) date, (ii) type of communication (text message, group chat, in-person meeting, etc.), (iii) participants, (iv) subject matter, (v) agenda items or summary of discussion, (vi) decisions made, if any?

(Return tabled)

**Question No. 1003—Mr. John Williamson:**

With regard to the relocation of the Department of National Defense's (DND) headquarters from the Major-General George R. Pearkes Building, in downtown Ottawa, to the former Nortel campus site, on Carling Avenue: (a) how many DND employees are still working in the downtown location; (b) what is the date by which all of the DND employees in (a) will be moved to the Carling location; (c) what are the ongoing costs associated with keeping the downtown building operational and functional for the DND employees who remain there; and (d) what are the government's plans for the downtown location, including the (i) description of any planned renovations, including timelines, (ii) costs associated or projected with the renovations, (iii) details of the number of employees, including from which department, expected to work in the building following the completion of the renovations?

(Return tabled)

**Question No. 1004—Mr. Scot Davidson:**

With regard to government expenditures related to the renovation, rehabilitation, or construction of government buildings or properties in the National Capital Region, including within the Parliamentary Precinct, since January 1, 2016: (a) what are the total expenditures to date related to the purchase or rental of scaffolding, broken down by year; and (b) what is the breakdown of (a) by building or location, including the name and address of each?

(Return tabled)

**Question No. 1005—Ms. Laurel Collins:**

With regard to the Canadian delegation at the 2022 United Nations Climate Change Conference: (a) who were the members of the delegation, including, for each, the name of the organization they represented; (b) what are the total costs incurred to date by the government related to the delegation; (c) what are the total costs incurred by the government to date related to the delegation for (i) air transportation, (ii) land transportation, (iii) hotels or other accommodations, (iv) meals, (v) hospitality, (vi) room rentals, (vii) other costs; and (d) of the costs incurred by the government in (c), what was the total amount attributable to delegation members from the oil and gas industry?

(Return tabled)

**Question No. 1006—Ms. Laurel Collins:**

With regard to cleantech transactions signed by Export Development Canada (EDC), broken down by fiscal year since 2018-19: (a) what are the details of each transaction, including the (i) date of signing, (ii) country of transaction, (iii) principal counterpart, (iv) EDC product, (v) industry sector, (vi) financial range; and (b) of the transactions in (a), which transactions were intended to support (i) carbon capture, utilization and storage technologies, (ii) blue hydrogen, (iii) grey hydrogen?

(Return tabled)

*Routine Proceedings***Question No. 1007—Mrs. Stephanie Kusie:**

With regard to relocation applications from Afghan nationals who assisted the Canadian government, as of June 20, 2022: (a) how many applications has the government (i) received, (ii) approved, (iii) rejected; (b) what is the reason for any rejections in (a)(iii); (c) of the applicants in (a), how many (i) remain in Afghanistan, (ii) are waiting in a third country, (iii) are in Canada; and (d) how many relocation applicants is the government aware of who were (i) killed, or presumed killed, (ii) incarcerated, or otherwise punished by the Taliban?

(Return tabled)

**Question No. 1010—Mr. John Nater:**

With regard to the government's promise to plant one billion trees: how many trees were planted to date, broken down by province or territory?

(Return tabled)

**Question No. 1011—Mr. Arnold Viersen:**

With regard to the claim by the Prime Minister on November 22, 2022, that "there has never been any information given to me on the funding of federal candidates by China": has anyone in the Office of the Prime Minister or the Privy Council Office received such information, and, if so, (i) who received the information, (ii) on what date was the information received, (iii) why did that person not inform the Prime Minister?

(Return tabled)

**Question No. 1012—Mr. Adam Chambers:**

With regard to the Canada Border Services Agency (CBSA), broken down by year since 2018: (a) how many commercial (i) trains, (ii) train cars, crossed into Canada, in total, broken down by point of entry for each year since 2018; (b) how many of the (i) trains, (ii) train cars, in (a) were physically inspected by the CBSA; (c) how many of the inspected (i) trains, (ii) train cars, contained illegal items; and (d) what is the breakdown of illegal items seized from train cars, including the description and the volume of each item seized?

(Return tabled)

**Question No. 1014—Mr. Scot Davidson:**

With regard to government expenditures related to the cleanup of land or ground contamination at airports and aerodromes, broken down by year since 2015: (a) what is the total amount spent on such expenditures; (b) what is the breakdown of (a) by airport; and (c) what are the details of each airport cleanup which has been completed since January 1, 2016, or is still ongoing, including, for each, (i) the name and location of the airport or aerodrome, (ii) the start date of the cleanup, (iii) the projected completion date, (iv) the description of the work conducted, (v) whether or not the removal of polyfluoroalkylated substances is part of the cleanup agreement, (vi) the name of the vendor contracted, (vii) the projected cost of the cleanup?

(Return tabled)

**Question No. 1016—Mr. Mike Lake:**

With regard to government procurement and contracts for the provision of research or speechwriting services to ministers, since January 1, 2020: (a) what are the details of the contracts, including the (i) start and end dates, (ii) contracting parties, (iii) file number, (iv) nature or description of the work, (v) value of contract; and (b) for speechwriting contracts, what are the details, including the (i) date, (ii) location, (iii) audience or event at which the speech was, or was intended to be, delivered, (iv) number of speeches to be written, (v) cost charged per speech?

(Return tabled)

**Question No. 1017—Mr. Mike Lake:**

With regard to spending by the government on private investigators, since January 1, 2018, broken down by department, agency, Crown corporation, or other government entity: what are the details of each expenditure, including, for each, the (i) vendor, (ii) amount of the contract, (iii) date, (iv) file number, (v) situation overview or the reason for the investigation, (vi) findings of the investigation, if completed?

(Return tabled)

**Question No. 1018—Mr. Mike Lake:**

With regard to guest speakers or other cases where individuals were contracted by the government to give speeches, either in person, virtually, or both, since January 1, 2019: what are the details of all such contracts, including the (i) vendor, (ii) date of the contract (iii) amount of the contract, (iv) number of speeches to be provided per contract, (v) date of the speeches, (vi) topic or purpose of the speech, (vii) location of the speech, (viii) audience, (ix) format (in person, Zoom, etc.)?

(Return tabled)

**Question No. 1020—Ms. Lianne Rood:**

With regard to the Federal Economic Development Agency for Southern Ontario: what was the amount and percentage of all lapsed departmental spending, broken down by fiscal year from 2016-17 to present?

(Return tabled)

**Question No. 1023—Ms. Jenny Kwan:**

With regard to the National Housing Co-Investment fund (NHCF), for projects with conditional commitments and finalized agreements, broken down by province, stream (new construction, revitalization) and stage (conditional commitment, finalized agreement and finalized agreement with construction completed): (a) what is the number of units that (i) do not charge rent, (ii) charge rent up to 80 percent of the average market rent affordability threshold, (iii) charge rent above the 80 percent average market rent affordability threshold; (b) what is the average rent of the units, excluding units that do not charge rent; (c) what is the number of units whose rent is above 30 percent of the maximum annual before-tax income for low-income households that rent of that province; and (d) how many households living in NHCF units are spending over 30 percent of their household income on rent?

(Return tabled)

**Question No. 1024—Ms. Lisa Marie Barron:**

With regard to the consultations undertaken as part of the government's intention to transition away from open-net pen aquaculture in British Columbia, since November 1, 2021: what are the details of all consultations undertaken, including the (i) date of the meeting, (ii) list of the attendees, (iii) components of the framework for sustainable aquaculture discussed, (iv) length of the meeting?

(Return tabled)

**Question No. 1025—Mr. Robert Kitchen:**

With regard to grants allocated by the Canada Greener Homes Initiative: (a) of the \$69 million paid out between May 2021 and September 6, 2022, how much went to (i) appraisers, (ii) homeowners; (b) what is the breakdown of the funds paid out to date under the program, by province or territory; and (c) what is the breakdown of the number of recipients, by province or territory?

(Return tabled)

**Question No. 1027—Mr. John Brassard:**

With regard to expenditures with the Internet media company BuzzFeed, since January 1, 2019, broken down by department, agency, Crown corporation, or other government entity: what are the details of each expenditure, including the (i) date of the expenditure, (ii) amount, (iii) description of the expenditure or the advertisement campaign, (iv) description and the title for each quiz or story purchased, (v) date the quiz or the story was published?

(Return tabled)

**Question No. 1028—Mr. Marty Morantz:**

With regard to written or electronic correspondence received by the Office of the Prime Minister from the general public since January 1, 2020: (a) what were the top 10 topics or subject matters, in terms of volume of correspondence; and (b) for each of the top 10 topics in (a), how many pieces of correspondence were received?

(Return tabled)

**Question No. 1029—Mr. Kevin Waugh:**

With regard to the online application system run by Immigration, Refugees and Citizenship Canada, since January 1, 2019: how many hours has the online system been down (i) in total, (ii) broken down by week?

(Return tabled)

*Routine Proceedings***Question No. 1030—Mrs. Rachael Thomas:**

With regard to repayable grants and contributions provided by the government where the recipient of the grant failed to repay the government as per the terms of the agreement, since 2017, broken down by year and by funding program: (a) for how many grant and contribution agreements has there been a failure to repay; (b) what is the total value of such grants and contributions; and (c) what are the details of the top 10 highest valued grant and contribution agreements for each program where the recipient failed to repay the government, broken down by year, including, for each, the (i) recipient, (ii) amount of grant or contribution, (iii) reason why the recipient did not live up to the terms of the agreement, if known?

(Return tabled)

**Question No. 1031—Mrs. Rachael Thomas:**

With regard to the usage of artificial intelligence (AI) by the government: (a) which departments, agencies, Crown corporations, or other government entities currently use AI; (b) what specific tasks is AI used for; (c) what are the details of all expenditures on commercial AI technology and related products since January 1, 2019, including, for each, the (i) vendor, (ii) amount, (iii) description of products or services, including the quantity, if applicable, (iv) date of the purchase, (v) file number; and (d) what is the government's policy regarding the use of AI?

(Return tabled)

**Question No. 1032—Mrs. Rachael Thomas:**

With regard to expenditures by the government on subscriptions and data access services in the 2021-22 fiscal year, broken down by department, agency, Crown corporation or other government entity: (a) what is the total amount spent; and (b) what are the details of each expenditure, including the (i) vendor, (ii) amount, (iii) date, (iv) description of goods or services, (v) titles of publications or data for each subscription, (vi) file number?

(Return tabled)

**Question No. 1033—Mr. Chris Warkentin:**

With regard to the Canada Revenue Agency (CRA): (a) for each of the last five taxation years for which statistics are available, what is the percentage of taxpayers reassessed by the CRA who (i) received a northern living allowance, (ii) did not receive a northern living allowance; and (b) what is the percentage of taxpayers who were reassessed, broken down by province or territory of residence?

(Return tabled)

**Question No. 1035—Mr. Michael Kram:**

With regard to the \$1.5 billion funding announcement on April 14, 2021, under the Green and Inclusive Community Buildings program: what are the details of the projects approved to date, broken down by project, including the (i) name, (ii) dollar amount of funds distributed, (iii) name of each recipient of the funding, (iv) location by city and province or territory?

(Return tabled)

**Question No. 1036—Mrs. Rosemarie Falk:**

With regard to the RCMP: (a) what is the current vacancy rate, in terms of percentage and the number of open positions, nationally, and broken down by province or territory; and (b) what is the breakdown of (a) by (i) officers, (ii) civilian employees?

(Return tabled)

**Question No. 1037—Mr. Dean Allison:**

With regard to government expenditures on membership fees, broken down by department, agency, Crown corporation, or other government entity, since October 1, 2020: (a) how much money has been spent; and (b) what are the details of each expenditure, including the (i) name of the organization or the vendor, (ii) date of the purchase, (iii) amount, (iv) number of memberships purchased?

(Return tabled)

**Question No. 1039—Mr. Gérard Deltell:**

With regard to the government's participation in the UN Climate Change Conference, the 27th Conference of the Parties (COP27), in Egypt, in November 2022: (a) how many individuals were part of the Canadian delegation; (b) what were the titles of all individuals in (a); (c) what are the titles of all other individuals who attended the COP27 for whom the government paid expenses; (d) what are the total

expenditures incurred by the government to date related to the conference, broken down by type; and (e) what is the government's estimate of the carbon footprint resulting from the Canadian delegation's travel to and from the conference?

(Return tabled)

**Question No. 1041—Ms. Michelle Rempel Garner:**

With regard to federal officials publicly communicating on the COVID-19 pandemic since March 2020: (a) broken down by year, how much money was spent on external media training, image consulting, public relations support services, communications professional services, or similar types of service for (i) the Prime Minister, (ii) the Deputy Prime Minister, (iii) the Parliamentary Secretary to the Minister of Health, (iv) the Minister of Health, (v) the Minister of Public Services and Procurement of Canada, (vi) the Chief Public Health Officer, (vii) the President of the Public Health Agency of Canada, (viii) the Deputy Chief Public Health Officer, (ix) the representatives from the National Advisory Committee on Immunization; and (b) what are the details of all contracts related to (a), including, for each, (i) the vendor, (ii) the date, (iii) the amount, (iv) the description of goods or services provided, (v) who was given the training or consulting, (vi) who provided the training or consulting?

(Return tabled)

**Question No. 1042—Ms. Michelle Rempel Garner:**

With regard to hotels contracted to house asylum seekers or refugees in Canada since November 4, 2015: (a) how many hotels has the government contracted for housing asylum seekers or refugees; (b) what is the breakdown of (a) by city or municipality; (c) what are the details of all contracts, including, for each, the (i) hotel name, (ii) vendor, if different than hotel name, (iii) amount, (iv) start and end date of the contract, (v) location of the hotel, (vi) number of rooms; (d) how many asylum seekers or refugees have stayed in each of the hotels, broken down by year and by location; (e) how many of those staying in hotels made an asylum claim after entering Canada irregularly through Roxham Road; and (f) what are the total costs incurred to date by the federal government for all relevant hotels, broken down by year and by hotel?

(Return tabled)

**Question No. 1043—Mr. Warren Steinley:**

With regard to the \$135,891,951 in the Supplementary Estimates (B), 2022-23 under Public Works and Government Services for "funding to provide supplies for the health system": (a) what is the itemized breakdown of how that money is being spent; (b) what are the details of all contracts funded with that amount which was related to the storing of field hospitals, including, for each contract, the (i) vendor, (ii) amount, (iii) start and end dates of the storage, (iv) location of the storage, (v) inventory of what is being stored, (vi) details of whether the contract was sole-sourced or awarded through a competitive bidding process; (c) what are the details of all contracts funded with that amount for items other than field hospitals, including, for each contract, the (i) vendor, (ii) amount, (iii) description of goods or services, including the quantity, (iv) details of whether the contract was sole-sourced or awarded through a competitive bidding process; (d) what specific supplies were provided to the health care system as a result of the funding; and (e) on what dates was each supply in (d) provided to the health care system, and which provincial health care system was each supply provided to?

(Return tabled)

**Question No. 1044—Mr. Warren Steinley:**

With regard to the government's plan to increase electric vehicle (EV) usage and the impacts of this plan: (a) what are the government's projections related to the increased amount of electricity that will be needed to power the EV charging stations in (i) 2025, (ii) 2030, (iii) 2035; (b) has the government developed a detailed plan on how to increase the capacity of Canada's electricity grid, and, if so, what is the plan; (c) what are the projected costs of the investments needed to enhance Canada's electricity grid to meet the increased demand for electricity over the next 15 years; and (d) what are the government's plans related to how the costs in (c) will be funded?

(Return tabled)

*Routine Proceedings***Question No. 1046—Mrs. Karen Vecchio:**

With regard to government advertising, since January 1, 2020: (a) how much has been spent on billboards; and (b) for each expenditure in (a), what are the details, including the (i) start and end dates, (ii) cost, (iii) topic, (iv) number of billboards, (v) locations of billboards, (vi) vendor, (vii) types of billboards, such as electronic or traditional?

(Return tabled)

**Question No. 1047—Mr. Ron Liepert:**

With regard to fraudulent payments made under the Canada Emergency Response Benefit (CERB) that involved identity theft, or suspected identity theft: (a) how many such payments occurred; (b) how many different individuals received such payments; (c) what was the total value of such payments; and (d) to date, how many individuals have been criminally charged as a result of CERB-related identity theft?

(Return tabled)

**Question No. 1051—Mr. Fraser Tolmie:**

With regard to government funding for third parties, including foreign nations, related to information promotion or advertising campaigns abroad, since January 1, 2019: what are the details of all campaigns launched or that are still ongoing, including, for each, the (i) countries, (ii) start and end dates, (iii) key messages promoted, (iv) purpose, (v) amount of funding, (vi) type of media, platforms, and other communication methods used, (vii) name of the third party, (viii) type of third party (e.g., sovereign nation or non-governmental organization)?

(Return tabled)

**Question No. 1052—Mr. Fraser Tolmie:**

With regard to government information promotion or advertising campaigns abroad, since January 1, 2019: what are the details of all campaigns launched or that are still ongoing, including, for each, the (i) countries, (ii) start and end dates, (iii) key messages promoted, (iv) purpose, (v) estimated cost, (vi) type of media, platforms, and other communication methods used?

(Return tabled)

**Question No. 1054—Mr. Michael Barrett:**

With regard to tweets made by the government that were later deleted, broken down by each instance, since January 1, 2019: what are the details of each instance, including the (i) Twitter handle and username, (ii) date the tweet was posted, (iii) date the tweet was deleted, (iv) summary of its contents, (v) reason the tweet was deleted, (vi) titles of who approved the initial tweet, (vii) titles of who ordered the tweet's removal?

(Return tabled)

**Question No. 1055—Mr. Michael Barrett:**

With regard to government expenditures on headhunters, executive search agencies, and similar types of firms, broken down by year, since January 1, 2019: (a) what is the total amount spent on such services, broken down by vendor; and (b) what are the details of all executive positions that were filled using the services of such firms, including, for each, (i) the title of the position, (ii) the vendor, (iii) the date the position was filled, (iv) the salary range of the position, (v) the amount paid to the firm to fill the position, (vi) whether the individual hired was already working in the public service?

(Return tabled)

**Question No. 1056—Mr. Tony Baldinelli:**

With regard to Parks Canada and the financial management of national parks, since 2015: (a) what are the names of each national park, broken down by province or territory; (b) what is the annual amount of funding received by Parks Canada from the federal government, broken down by year; (c) how much annual funding does each national park receive from Parks Canada, broken down by year; (d) what is the annual breakdown of fund allocation per national park, broken down by year; (e) what is the total annual visitation at each national park, broken down by (i) year, (ii) month; (f) how much total annual revenue does each national park generate for Parks Canada, broken down by year; (g) how much of the revenue generated by each national park is (i) allowed to be kept by the individual national park for local reinvestment, (ii) returned to the Parks Canada National Office, (iii) returned to the general revenue fund; (h) what are the different revenue streams for each national

park; and (i) how much total annual revenue does each revenue stream generate for each national park, broken down by year?

(Return tabled)

**Question No. 1057—Mrs. Laila Goodridge:**

With regard to Health Canada and medication shortages: (a) what are the details of all medications for which there is currently a shortage, including, for each, (i) the name of the medication, (ii) the purpose of the medication, (iii) who the medication is intended for (children, adults, etc.), (iv) the reason for the shortage, if known, (v) when the shortage is expected to end; and (b) what are the details of all medications for which Health Canada expects to see a shortage in 2023, including, for each, (i) the name of the medication, (ii) the purpose of the medication, (iii) who the medication is intended for, (iv) the reason for the shortage, if known, (v) the expected shortage period?

(Return tabled)

**Question No. 1058—Mr. Ziad Aboultaif:**

With regard to the government's hydrogen strategy, since January 1, 2020: (a) what is the total amount spent related to the Hydrogen Strategy for Canada or hydrogen development by (i) Natural Resources Canada, (ii) Environment and Climate Change Canada, (iii) Innovation, Science and Economic Development Canada; (b) what is the breakdown of (a) by program or initiative; and (c) what are the details of all grants, contributions, or loans provided by the government related to hydrogen development, including, for each, the (i) recipient, (ii) location, (iii) date, (iv) amount, (v) type (grant, repayable loan, etc.), (vi) project summary?

(Return tabled)

**Question No. 1061—Mr. Clifford Small:**

With regard to the prime minister's claim that there has never been a strong business case to export liquefied natural gas from Canada to Europe: on what specific evidence or analysis, if any, did the prime minister base such claim?

(Return tabled)

**Question No. 1062—Mr. Brad Redekopp:**

With regard to senior managers (EX employees, contractors and GIC appointees) and Treasury Board guidelines for Government of Canada performance pay for senior managers, broken down by department, agency, Crown corporation and all other government entities and by fiscal year from 2015-16 to 2021-22: (a) how many senior managers were there in total; (b) how many senior managers received (i) full performance pay, (ii) partial performance pay, (iii) no performance pay; (c) how many senior managers had their performance pay (i) adjusted downwards, (ii) revoked completely as a result of harassment complaints or other misconduct, broken down by type of misconduct; (d) of those who received full performance pay, did any of them have (i) formal, (ii) informal, harassment complaints against them at the time their performance pay was awarded; and (e) how many senior managers had their performance pay (i) adjusted downwards, (ii) revoked completely, as a result of fault being deemed from a harassment complaint?

(Return tabled)

**Question No. 1063—Mr. Bob Zimmer:**

With regard to the Rapid Housing Initiative launched in 2020, as of December 1, 2022: (a) how much has been spent on (i) administering the program, (ii) promoting the program, (iii) investments in individual projects; (b) how many new housing units have been built, in total, broken down by province or territory and by federal electoral district; (c) what is the occupation rate of the new housing units; (d) how many buildings (i) have been acquired, (ii) have had their renovations completed, (iii) are currently occupied, in total, broken down by province or territory and by federal electoral district; and (e) what metrics are being used to measure the success of the program and to what extent have these metrics been achieved?

(Return tabled)

**Question No. 1066—Ms. Michelle Ferreri:**

With regard to Passport Canada: how many passport applications are currently being processed that were received more than (i) 20 business days, (ii) eight weeks, (iii) three months, (iv) 17 weeks, (v) six months, ago?

(Return tabled)

*Routine Proceedings***Question No. 1069—Mrs. Cheryl Gallant:**

With regard to vaccine injuries in the Canadian Armed Forces (CAF), since December 1, 2020: (a) how many vaccine-related injuries have occurred to CAF members; (b) what is the breakdown of (a) by type of injury; (c) how many CAF members were placed on leave in relation to vaccine injuries, broken down by type of leave; and (d) how many CAF members are still on leave in relation to vaccine injuries?

(Return tabled)

**Question No. 1071—Mr. Garnett Genuis:**

With regard to the government's efforts to measure and reduce greenhouse gas emissions: (a) what levels of greenhouse gas emissions were produced as a result of (i) the Prime Minister's travel and work, (ii) publicly funded travel or official engagements by members of the Prime Minister's family, (iii) the travel and work of staff in the Office of the Prime Minister, to date this year and in each preceding year, since 2015, broken down by individual and by year; and (b) what levels of greenhouse gas emissions were produced as a result of ministers' travel and work to date this year and in each of the preceding years since 2015, broken out by Minister and by year.

(Return tabled)

**Question No. 1072—Mr. Garnett Genuis:**

With regard to a list submitted to the government in September 2021, containing 650 names of Afghan Ahmadi Muslims on the Taliban's hit list: (a) has the government allowed any of these people on the list to come to Canada under special immigration measures implemented for Afghanistan, and, if so, how many; (b) does the government intend to allow all or some of these people to come to Canada under special immigration measures implemented for Afghanistan; and (c) are any of the 650 names also on the list of 40,000 Afghans that the government has committed to resettling in Canada, and, if so, how many?

(Return tabled)

**Question No. 1073—Mr. Garnett Genuis:**

With regard to Export Development Canada's (EDC) forgiveness of loans worth \$822,161,848 in the 2021-22 fiscal year: (a) how many businesses received loan forgiveness; (b) what is the breakdown of (a) by province or territory; (c) what were the names of the businesses that received loan forgiveness; (d) what was the total value of loan forgiveness that each business received; (e) which of these businesses had previously received loan forgiveness from EDC; (f) which of these businesses lobbied the government for loan forgiveness; and (g) which of these businesses have received procurement contracts with the government in the last five years?

(Return tabled)

**Question No. 1077—Mr. Dane Lloyd:**

With regard to the statement from the then Minister of Public Services and Procurement, Filomena Tassi, on April 7, 2022, that "With respect to Supermax, following allegations of forced labour from the supplier, we terminated all contracts with the supplier. In fact, as soon as we heard these allegations, we stopped shipments from entering Canada": (a) what specific shipments were stopped from entering Canada and on what dates were they stopped; (b) what action, if any, did the Canada Border Services Agency (CBSA) take under the authority found in the Canada—United States—Mexico Agreement Implementation Act to ban or stop the import of Supermax gloves into Canada; (c) if no action was taken in relation to (b), why not; (d) has the labour program at Employment and Social Development Canada assisted the CBSA in making an assessment on whether Supermax gloves are produced with forced labour, and, if so, what was the assessment; (e) has the government consulted allies and treaty partners who have already banned Supermax, in order to make an informed determination on Supermax's goods within Canada, and, if so, which countries has the government consulted; and (f) why are Supermax products still being sold in Canada by numerous medical supply distributors and what measures, if any, is the government taking to close the loopholes being used by these distributors?

(Return tabled)

**Question No. 1080—Mr. Frank Caputo:**

With regard to the government's requirement that assistant deputy ministers confirm and sign off on the integrity of their department's greenhouse gas emissions data, broken down by year and reporting cycle, since the requirement came into effect in 2019: (a) which department's data was signed off on by the assistant deputy min-

ister; and (b) for each instance where the assistant deputy minister signed off of the data, what was the date, broken down by department?

(Return tabled)

**Question No. 1081—Mr. Richard Cannings:**

With regard to efforts that focus on education, training and economic opportunities for Indigenous women, girls, and 2SLGBTQIA+ people, broken down by fiscal year since 2014-15: (a) how much funding has been dedicated through the (i) First Nations and Inuit Youth Employment Strategy, (ii) Indigenous Skills and Employment Training Program, (iii) Women's Employment Readiness pilot program, (iv) Women Entrepreneurship Strategy; and (b) how much of the funding in (a) has been committed?

(Return tabled)

**Question No. 1083—Ms. Raquel Dancho:**

With regard to the government's response to Order Paper question Q-896 regarding Bill C-21, An Act to amend certain Acts and to make certain consequential amendments (firearms): (a) what are the names, titles, and organizations representing each of the 77 stakeholders who attended the roundtables and who are mentioned in the response; (b) what are the names, titles, and organizations representing each of the 36 entities who submitted written responses; and (c) what is the detailed breakdown of the replies to the 134,917 completed questionnaires received by the government, including the number of each possible response received to each question, broken down by question?

(Return tabled)

**Question No. 1084—Mr. Dane Lloyd:**

With regard to gloves in the National Emergency Strategic Stockpile which are manufactured by Supermax Corporation Berhad and its subsidiaries, including Supermax Healthcare Canada, since November 2019: (a) how many units of these gloves did the National Emergency Strategic Stockpile, or its parent organization and procuring body, acquire, broken down by month; (b) how many units of these gloves did the National Emergency Strategic Stockpile contain each month; and (c) how many units of these gloves were shipped to each provincial and territorial government, broken down by month, quarter and year?

(Return tabled)

**Question No. 1085—Mrs. Kelly Block:**

With regard to government purchases of personal protective equipment (PPE) that was made with forced or child labour, since January 1, 2020: (a) what safeguards, if any, were in place to ensure that the government was not purchasing PPE that was made with forced or child labour; (b) has the government received any reports of PPE it procured that was made with forced or child labour, and, if so, what are the details, including (i) the manufacturer, (ii) the value of the purchase, (iii) the description of PPE purchased, including the volume, (iv) the date on which the government became aware, (v) whether the report was investigated, and, if so, what was the outcome, (vi) the date on which the investigation into a report was completed; (c) for each situation in (b) where the government was found to have procured PPE made with forced or child labour, what corrective action, if any, was taken by the government; and (d) has the Canada Border Services Agency seized or intercepted any PPE entering Canada, and, if so, what are the details of each instance, including, for each, the (i) date, (ii) manufacturer, (iii) description of goods seized, including the volume?

(Return tabled)



*Routine Proceedings***Question No. 1086—Mrs. Kelly Block:**

With regard to the decision made by Public Services and Procurement Canada on November 10, 2021, to hold deliveries from Supermax Healthcare Canada to the government: (a) what are the details of the allegations that were shared with the government, including the (i) specific claims of forced labour, (ii) steps taken to authenticate those claims, (iii) details of any consultations with the Government of Malaysia to investigate the claims, (iv) details of any engagement or consultations with the United States and other trading partners to validate the claims, (v) description, including dates of all actions taken in response to the allegations; (b) what is the government's rationale for not cancelling the existing contract; (c) was there an analysis conducted as to whether this was in violation of tariff #9897 which prohibits goods mined, manufactured or produced wholly or in part by forced labour; (d) if the answer to (c) is affirmative, was this shared with a minister's office and, if so, which minister's office; (e) how many of these goods allegedly made with forced labour entered Canada and were sold by Canadian or international distributors; (f) what are the names of the other six suppliers that had allegations made against them; (g) what are the details of the investigations into such suppliers, including who was consulted, and how the investigations were conducted; (h) why was the decision made to maintain the two existing contracts with Supermax; (i) what are the details of the contracts in (h) including, (i) the value of the contract, (ii) whether it was signed, (iii) whether there was an open procurement process, (iv) the volume of goods, (v) steps taken to ensure that the goods were not manufactured with unethical labour at any point in the Supermax supply chain; (j) did the government hire any third parties or consult with any other government or non-governmental organization to validate the letter that was received by Supermax which defined their policies, audit and investigation strategies, and, if so, what are the details, including which parties were consulted; and (k) what are the government's estimates of the total volume of Supermax Healthcare Canada products that have entered the Canadian market through contracts between the government of Canada and Supermax Healthcare Canada, since March 17, 2020?

(Return tabled)

**Question No. 1088—Mr. Tom Kmiec:**

With regard to Immigration, Refugees and Citizenship Canada (IRCC): (a) what is the breakdown of the 6,800 health care sector workers who were granted permanent residency under the Guardian Angels initiative, between December 2020 and August 2021, by specific health care related job; (b) of the workers in (a), how many are (i) medical doctors, (ii) nurses, (iii) personal support workers, (iv) others, broken down by occupation; and (c) what definitions and job descriptions does IRCC use for each occupation in (b)?

(Return tabled)

**Question No. 1089—Ms. Michelle Ferreri:**

With regard to Passport Canada, as of December 8, 2022: (a) how many passport applications are currently in the queue, waiting to be processed; and (b) of the applications in (a), how many were received more than 17 weeks ago?

(Return tabled)

**Question No. 1090—Mrs. Kelly Block:**

With regard to Public Services and Procurement Canada (PSPC) and the awarding of a contract to Sinclair Technologies Inc. in the amount of \$549,637.00 for a radio frequency filtering system for the RCMP: (a) is PSPC aware that Sinclair Technologies Inc. has been controlled by Hytera Communications since Hytera's acquisition of Norsat International in 2017, and, if so, on what date did PSPC become aware; (b) which federal departments or agencies, if any, conducted a national security review of this contract; (c) did PSPC seek the advice of the Minister of Public Safety before awarding this contract, and, if so, did the Minister or his office approve this contract; (d) what changes, if any, did PSPC make with respect to the awarding of contracts with national security implications, following the tabling of the report from the Standing Committee on Government Operations entitled "Ensuring Robust Security in Federal Purchasing" in June, 2021; (e) how is the awarding of contracts to companies controlled by Chinese state-owned enterprises consistent with Canada's Indo-Pacific Strategy; (f) how is the awarding of contracts to companies controlled by Chinese state-owned enterprises consistent with the Communiqué from the Five Country Ministerial held on September 12 and 13, 2022; and (g) what was the government's rationale for awarding this contract to Sinclair Technologies Inc. rather than to a Canadian-owned firm?

(Return tabled)

**Question No. 1092—Mr. Adam Chambers:**

With regard to the Canada Emergency Wage Subsidy: (a) how many complaints did the Canada Revenue Agency (CRA) receive concerning recipients misusing the subsidy; (b) of the complaints in (a), how many did CRA investigate; (c) what were the findings of the investigations in (b); and (d) how many fines have been issued to recipients who misused the subsidy?

(Return tabled)

**Question No. 1093—Mr. Eric Melillo:**

With regard to the Canada Revenue Agency: what is the total number of employees or full-time equivalents in each division and section of the agency (human resources, administration, corporate tax processing, etc.), broken down by year, since 2016?

(Return tabled)

**Question No. 1094—Mr. Rick Perkins:**

With regard to the Ship Source Oil Pollution Fund (SSOPF): what are the details of all claims that were made through the fund since November 4, 2015, including, for each, (i) the amount, (ii) the date, (iii) the vessel impacted, (iv) the amount recovered to date, (v) the type of vessel, (vi) the location of the incident, (vii) the nation where the vessel was registered, (viii) whether it was a ministerial or departmental order?

(Return tabled)

**Question No. 1096—Mr. Rick Perkins:**

With regard to Innovation, Science and Economic Development Canada: what was the total number of employees or full-time equivalents at the department, broken down by sector and agency, branch within the department, position level, type of job, for each fiscal year, since 2015-16?

(Return tabled)

**Question No. 1099—Mr. Rob Morrison:**

With regard to Arctic and offshore patrol ships (AOPS): (a) what were the total expenditures related to non-warranty repair work for AOPS, broken down by ship and by year since they were launched; and (b) what are the details of the non-warranty repair work, including, for each, the (i) date, (ii) ship, (iii) cost, (iv) description of the repair work?

(Return tabled)

**Question No. 1101—Mr. Earl Dreeshen:**

With regard to government purchases of personal protective equipment (PPE) abroad using cash, including those made through a third party or intermediary, since January 1, 2020: what are the details of all cash purchases, including, for each, the (i) date, (ii) currency used, (iii) amount, in Canadian dollars and cash currency used to make the purchase, (iv) reason cash was used, (v) vendor, (vi) description of PPE purchased, including volume, (vii) name of third party of intermediary used, if applicable?

(Return tabled)

**Question No. 1102—Mr. Earl Dreeshen:**

With regard to Governor in Council (GIC) appointments: (a) what is the total number of existing positions, including those filled and unfilled, broken down by year, since 2015; (b) what is the breakdown of (a) by portfolio; (c) what specific GIC positions have been added since November 4, 2015, and how many of each position have been added, broken down by year; and (d) what GIC positions have been eliminated since November 4, 2015, broken down by year?

(Return tabled)

*Routine Proceedings***Question No. 1103—Mr. Scott Reid:**

With regard to Automated External Defibrillators (AEDs): (a) since June 20, 2022, have any meetings, communications, briefings, or other informational materials pertaining to AEDs been requested, formally or informally, by the Minister of Public Safety, the office of the Minister of Public Safety, the office of the Deputy Minister of Public Safety, or the office of the Commissioner of the RCMP; (b) for each instance in (a), what was the (i) date the request was made, (ii) recipient or office to which the request was made, (iii) nature and details of the request, (iv) result of the request; (c) since June 20, 2022, have any briefing or informational materials pertaining to AEDs been provided to the Minister of Public Safety, the office of the Minister of Public Safety, the office of the Deputy Minister of Public Safety, or the office of the Commissioner of the RCMP; (d) for each instance in (c), what was the (i) date the material was provided, (ii) recipient or office to which the material was provided, (iii) topic of material provided; (e) since June 20, 2022, has the Minister of Public Safety issued any ministerial instructions, directives, or analogous decisions with regard to AEDs?

(Return tabled)

**Question No. 1104—Mr. Scott Reid:**

With regard to the report entitled "Minister of National Defence Advisory Panel on Systemic Racism and Discrimination with a focus on Anti-Indigenous and Anti-Black Racism, LGBTQ2+ Prejudice, Gender Bias, and White Supremacy Final Report": (a) have any meetings, communications, briefings, or other informational materials with regard to chaplaincy, or section 6 of Part III entitled "Re-Defining Chaplaincy" been requested, formally or informally, by the Minister of National Defence, the office of the Minister of National Defence, the office of the Deputy Minister of National Defence, or the office of the Chief of the Defence Staff; (b) for each instance in (a), what was the (i) date the request was made, (ii) recipient or office to which the request was made, (iii) nature and details of the request, (iv) result of the request; (c) have any briefing or informational materials with regard to chaplaincy, or section 6 of Part III entitled "Re-Defining Chaplaincy" been provided to the Minister of National Defence, the office of the Minister of National Defence, the office of the Deputy Minister of National Defence, or the office of the Chief of the Defence Staff; (d) for each instance in (c), what was the (i) date the material was provided, (ii) recipient or office to which the material was provided, (iii) topic of the material provided; (e) since January 2022, has the Minister of National Defence issued any ministerial instructions, directives, or analogous decisions with regard to chaplaincy, or section 6 of Part III entitled "Re-Defining Chaplaincy"; and (f) have any actions been taken with regard to the recommendations on page 43 of the report, and, if so, what are the details of those actions?

(Return tabled)

**Question No. 1105—Mr. Scott Reid:**

With regard to Correctional Service Canada's (CSC) Chaplaincy Program: (a) since November 2015, have any meetings, communications, briefings, or other informational materials been requested, formally or informally by the Minister of Public Safety, the office of the Minister of Public Safety, the office of the Deputy Minister of Public Safety, or the office of the Commissioner of the Correctional Service of Canada; (b) for each instance in (a), what was the (i) date the request was made, (ii) recipient or office to which the request was made, (iii) nature and details of the request, (iv) result of the request; (c) since November 2015, have any briefing or informational materials been provided to the Minister of Public Safety, the office of the Minister of Public Safety, the office of the Deputy Minister of Public Safety, or the office of the Commissioner of the Correctional Service of Canada; (d) for each instance in (c), what was the (i) date the material was provided, (ii) recipient or office to which the material was provided, (iii) topic of the material provided; (e) since November 2015, has the Minister of Public Safety issued any ministerial instructions, directives, or analogous decisions with regard to CSC's Chaplaincy Program; (f) how many chaplains are presently members of CSC's Chaplaincy Program, broken down by faith, spiritual, or philosophical tradition; (g) how many members of CSC's Chaplaincy Program are assigned to or responsible for each of CSC's institutions or custodial facilities, broken down by faith, spiritual, or philosophical tradition; and (h) since November 2015, what actions have been taken to address the proportionate shortage of non-Christian members of CSC's Chaplaincy Program and, if any, what are the details of those actions?

(Return tabled)

**Question No. 1106—Mr. Colin Carrie:**

With regard to the clinical trials conducted on COVID-19 vaccine safety, specifically those pertaining to the widely distributed vaccines by Pfizer/BioNTech and Moderna that Health Canada reviewed: (a) were objections raised by the govern-

ment when these vaccines were allowed to be given to the relatively healthy, unvaccinated trial participants mid-way into Phase 3 of the placebo-controlled clinical trials; (b) if no action was taken in relation to (a), why not; (c) of the safety data that could be analyzed, showing level-1 evidence of vaccine-induced harm (e.g. a risk increase in severe adverse events, more death, and after dissolution of the control group, more deaths in the experimental group), how were they used, if at all, when performing risk-benefit analyses; and (d) what specific information was used by the government to arrive at their position that there was more benefit to administering the COVID-19 vaccines to relatively healthy Canadians than risk?

(Return tabled)

**Question No. 1107—Mr. Colin Carrie:**

With regard to the clinical trials conducted on COVID-19 vaccine effectiveness, specifically those pertaining to the widely distributed vaccines by Pfizer/BioNTech and Moderna that Health Canada reviewed, vaccine mandates, and vaccination campaigns: (a) how many trial participants contracted COVID-19, broken down by participants in the experimental and control groups, versus the total number of participants; (b) why was the information in (a), necessary for ascertaining the absolute risk reduction of acquiring COVID-19 following vaccination, not communicated to the general public to enable a more realistic assessment of health risks in support of informed consent; (c) did any trial protocol deviations occur in trial participants who contracted COVID-19; (d) was the government aware that the clinical trials did not test the ability of the vaccines to stop viral transmission before implementing the federal vaccination policy for government employees, whose stated objectives include the protection of these employees as well as their colleagues and clients from COVID-19; (e) if the answer to (d) is affirmative, what was the justification to mandate relatively healthy government employees to get vaccinated against SARS-CoV-2; (f) who made the decision to implement the policy in (d); and (g) how does the government justify its continued campaigns to encourage vaccination in relatively healthy Canadians, starting as young as 6 months?

(Return tabled)

*Routine Proceedings***Question No. 1108—Mr. Colin Carrie:**

With regard to Health Canada's (HC) approval of the Pfizer COVID-19 mRNA vaccine (BNT162b2): (a) was HC aware that the World Health Organization's internationally accepted guidelines for vaccine evaluation, published in 2005 and 2014, are only applicable to traditional vaccines that contain immunogenic substances and adjuvants, and, if not, why not; (b) if the answer to (a) is affirmative, why did HC not require the use of a guidance document applicable to non-traditional COVID-19 mRNA vaccines that are based instead on gene therapy, such as BNT162b2; (c) did the non-clinical pharmacokinetic studies, which also evaluated the biodistribution of the BNT162b2 (V9) lipid nano-particle (LNP) formulation, reported by Pfizer, show extensive off-target biodistribution to major organs in rodents; (d) if the answer to (c) is affirmative, did HC consider the non-clinical biodistribution data to be a major safety concern, and, if not, why not; (e) were clinical pharmacokinetic studies on the biodistribution of the vaccine-encoded spike protein included in the regulatory submission, and, if not, why not; (f) were clinical studies on appropriate biomarkers (e.g. troponin-1 as an indicator for heart damage, C-reactive protein for inflammation) associated with possible vaccine adverse effects related to spike protein in the blood circulation, included in the regulatory submission, and, if not, why not; (g) were clinical studies on the variability of vaccine-generated spike protein concentration between different vaccine recipients for different lots of the COVID-19 mRNA vaccines administered included in the regulatory submission, and, if not, why not; (h) did HC request that relevant genotoxicity and carcinogenicity studies on the vaccine-generated spike protein, as the active component, be included in the regulatory submission, and, if not, why not; (i) why did HC find as acceptable non-clinical studies of vaccine safety using Wistar Han rats; (j) why did HC find as acceptable toxicology studies on the vaccine-generated spike protein that did not also use a non-rodent species; (k) why did HC find as acceptable toxicology studies that did not use a relevant rodent species, such as the Chinese golden hamster, to examine toxic effects of the vaccine-generated spike protein; (l) why did HC not request toxicology studies using Chinese golden hamsters to examine the distribution of vaccine-generated spike protein in the specific tissues of both the mother and the pups to gather information as to whether BNT162b2 is suitable to administer to pregnant women and mothers who are breastfeeding, for more trustworthy clinical data; (m) was HC aware that Table 1 in the Module 5.3.6 Cumulative Analysis of Post-authorization Adverse Event Reports, submitted by Pfizer, states that there were 1,223 deaths over a 3-month period, from December 1, 2020 to February 28, 2021; (n) if the answer to (m) is affirmative, why did HC not recommend that COVID-19 mRNA vaccines be immediately taken off the market on the basis of the high mortality rate following drug administration; (o) has HC investigated the flaws in the documentation of Pfizer's regulated study, as shown in Table 1 of the aforementioned report, which classified the case outcomes of 9,400 people as "unknown," and which indicated that the age of 6,876 cases could not be determined, and, if not, why not; (p) how does HC justify its position that there is no special COVID-19 vaccine hazard for humans based on conventional studies of repeat dose toxicity, when not even immune-histochemistry staining for the vaccine-encoded spike protein was performed with any relevant species; and (q) how does HC view the real-world effectiveness of the COVID-19 mRNA vaccines in reducing viral transmission, when considering peer-reviewed studies that document similar peak loads of viable SARS-CoV-2 virus in the upper airway of fully vaccinated infected individuals and unvaccinated infected individuals, as well as reports of vaccine-induced immune suppression, indicated by reduced production of viral N-protein antibodies following breakthrough infection?

(Return tabled)

**Question No. 1111—Mr. Daniel Blaikie:**

With regard to Mortgage Loan Insurance for homeowner, small rental, and multi-unit loans offered by the Canada Mortgage and Housing Corporation (CMHC): (a) broken down by type (homeowner, small rental, and multi-unit), mortgage loan insurance product (e.g. CMHC Income Property, Student Housing, etc.), province and territory, and year since 2010, how many mortgage loan insurance policies have been approved for borrowers (i) that own a single property at the time of approval, (ii) that own two properties at the time of approval, (iii) that own three properties at the time of approval, (iv) that own four or more properties at the time of approval, (v) in total; (b) what is the dollar amount of the insured lending for the mortgages in (a); and (c) broken down by year since 2010 and by province and territory, how many homeowner mortgage insurance loans were approved for mortgages on units (i) that are owner occupied without rental income, (ii) that are owner occupied with rental income, (iii) that are non-owner occupied, (iv) in total?

(Return tabled)

**Question No. 1113—Mr. Dan Albas:**

With regard to contracts that were cancelled by the government since January 1, 2019, broken down by department, agency, Crown corporation or other government entity: (a) how many contracts have been cancelled; (b) what is the total amount paid out in cancellation fees or penalties; and (c) what are the details of all such cancellations, including, for each, the (i) date the contract was signed, (ii) date the contract was cancelled, (iii) vendor, (iv) value, (v) description of goods or services, (vi) reason for the cancellation, (vii) cancellation fee or other similar type of cost to the government?

(Return tabled)

**Question No. 1114—Mrs. Cheryl Gallant:**

With regard to Veterans Affairs Canada (VAC): (a) what specific criteria, metrics, and formulas are used when determining if a VAC employee (i) below the executive level, (ii) at the executive level or higher, receives a performance bonus; (b) what are the details of the scoring or grading system used in relation to determining performance bonuses; (c) what are the various bonus levels and what score or grade is required to obtain each bonus level; (d) for each of the past five fiscal years, what was the number of VAC employees (i) below the executive level, (ii) at the executive level or higher, that received a performance bonus; (e) what dollar amounts are represented by the bonuses in each of the parts in (d); (f) what percentage of VAC employees (i) below the executive level, (ii) at the executive level or higher, received a performance bonus; and (g) how is saving VAC money factored or taken into consideration when determining performance bonuses?

(Return tabled)

**Question No. 1115—Mr. Ted Falk:**

With regard to government statistics on the causes of death in Canada: (a) broken down by year, between 2019 and 2022 to date, what are the leading causes for the total population and by age group; and (b) for deaths listed under "other causes of death" by Statistics Canada, what is the breakdown of each cause included as part of that category that was responsible for more than 100 deaths since 2019?

(Return tabled)

**Question No. 1116—Mrs. Laila Goodridge:**

With regard to drug shortages in Canada: (a) what drugs are currently considered in short supply in Canada; (b) for each drug in (a), (i) what is it used for, (ii) when did it become in short supply, (iii) what is the estimate on how long the shortage of the drug will continue, (iv) what is reason for the supply shortage, if known; and (c) of the drugs in (a), which ones are deemed essential?

(Return tabled)

**Question No. 1117—Ms. Lisa Marie Barron:**

With regard to harmful waste dumping in Marine Protected Areas (MPAs), broken down by MPA and fiscal year since 2015-16: (a) how much harmful waste has been dumped in MPAs, broken down by (i) sewage, (ii) grey water, (iii) bilge water, (iv) scrubber washwater; (b) how many incidents of dumping are known to have taken place within MPAs; (c) for each incident in (b), what types of ships were the discharges from; and (d) for existing MPAs, does the government intend to strengthen the definition of dumping in order to prevent further harmful substances being introduced into Canada's oceans?

(Return tabled)

*Routine Proceedings***Question No. 1119—Mr. Gord Johns:**

With regard to the development of national standards on mental health and substance use services: (a) what steps were taken between the tabling of budget 2021 and March 14, 2022, in relation to this work; (b) what are the deliverables of the Standards Council of Canada (SCC) in relation to this work; (c) what specific standards are being developed by the SCC; (d) what was the planned timeline for the development of these standards and is it anticipated that the timeline will be met; (e) what, if any, public consultations regarding these standards have taken place or been initiated to date; and (f) does the government intend to delay the establishment of the Canada Mental Health Transfer until the development of such standards are complete?

(Return tabled)

**Question No. 1120—Mr. Glen Motz:**

With regard to the Order in Council SOR/2020-96, published on May 1, 2020, which states that “the newly prescribed firearms are primarily designed for military or paramilitary purposes”: (a) which specific models that were prohibited on May 1, 2020, and thereafter, have been or are still in use by the Canadian Armed Forces; and (b) for all the specific models prohibited on May 1, 2020 or since then, what were the permitted legal uses of these firearms in Canada prior to their prohibition (i.e. hunting, sport-shooting, collecting), broken down by make and model?

(Return tabled)

**Question No. 1121—Mr. Gord Johns:**

With regard to the PocketWell application: (a) has the application been clinically validated, and, if so, how; (b) what were the estimated costs of developing, maintaining, updating, and promoting the application; (c) how much has been spent to date in relation to the application; (d) what is the itemized breakdown of spending to date on developing, maintaining, updating, and promoting the application; (e) what are the details of all contracts signed by the government related to the application, including, for each, (i) the vendor, (ii) the date, (iii) the value, (iv) the start and end dates, if applicable, (v) the description of goods or services provided, (vi) whether the contract was sole-sourced or awarded through a competitive bidding process; (f) how many times has the application been downloaded; (g) what metrics are being tracked regarding usage and performance of the application; (h) since the launch of the application, what were the average daily and monthly users; (i) what measures are in place to protect the personal information and privacy of users; and (j) who owns the intellectual property related to the application?

(Return tabled)

**Question No. 1122—Mr. Gord Johns:**

With regard to any polling data obtained by the Privy Council Office or the Treasury Board of Canada Secretariat since March 1, 2020, related to remote or hybrid work by public service workers: what are the details of all such polling, including, for each poll, (i) who conducted the poll, (ii) the start and end dates of when the poll was conducted, (iii) the number of participants, (iv) the complete results of the poll, including the questions asked and the responses received, (v) the value of the contract related to the poll?

(Return tabled)

**Question No. 1124—Mr. Ryan Williams:**

With regard to Innovation, Science and Economic Development Canada, since March 2021: (a) have any briefing notes been prepared for the minister or ministerial staff relating to the proposed merger of Rogers Communications and Shaw Communications, and, if so, what are the details, including, for each, the (i) subject, (ii) author, (iii) date prepared, (iv) date delivered, (v) internal department tracking number, (vi) title; and (b) have any briefing notes been prepared for the minister or ministerial staff relating to the proposed sale of Freedom Mobile by Shaw Communications, and, if so, what are the details of each, including, the (i) subject, (ii) author, (iii) date prepared, (iv) date delivered, (v) internal department tracking number, (vi) title?

(Return tabled)

**Question No. 1125—Mr. Jasraj Singh Hallan:**

With regard to the financing of Canada’s federal government debt: (a) how many government bonds matured in fiscal years 2020-21 and 2021-22, broken down by fiscal year; (b) what is the dollar amount of the maturing bonds in (a), broken down by fiscal year; (c) what is the breakdown by maturity date of the bonds in (a), broken down by fiscal year; (d) how many of the bonds in (a) were repurchased in fiscal year 2020-21; (e) what is the dollar amount of repurchased bonds in (d); (f)

what was the interest rate of the bonds in (d); (g) how many of the bonds in (a) were repurchased in fiscal year 2021-22; (h) what is the dollar amount of repurchased bonds in (g); (i) what was the interest rate of the bonds in (g); (j) how many government bonds are maturing in fiscal year 2022-23; (k) what is the breakdown of bonds in (j) by maturity date; (l) how many bonds in (j) are going to be repurchased; (m) what are the maturity dates of the repurchased bonds in fiscal year 2022-23; (n) what is the dollar amount of bonds in (j); (o) what is the estimated dollar amount for repurchasing bonds in (l); (p) what is the interest rate for the bonds that have already been purchased in fiscal year 2022-23; (q) how many government bonds will be maturing in fiscal year 2023-24; (r) what is the breakdown of (p) by maturity date; (s) what is the dollar amount of bonds in (p); and (t) what is the dollar amount of bonds in (q)?

(Return tabled)

**Question No. 1126—Mr. Blake Desjarlais:**

With regard to federal government investments in housing, for each fiscal year since 2015-16: (a) what was the total amount of federal funding spent on housing in the city of Edmonton; (b) what was the total amount of federal funding spent on housing in the federal riding of Edmonton Griesbach; (c) how much funding was allocated to each of the following programs and initiatives in the city of Edmonton (i) the Rental Construction Financing initiative, (ii) Proposal Development Funding, (iii) Investment in Affordable Housing, (iv) Affordable Housing Innovation Fund, (v) nonprofit on-reserve funding, (vi) prepayment, (vii) Reno & Retrofit CMHC, (viii) renovation programs on reserve, (ix) retrofit on-reserve and seed funding; (d) how much funding was allocated to each of the following programs and initiatives in the federal riding of Edmonton Griesbach (i) the Rental Construction Financing initiative, (ii) Proposal Development Funding, (iii) Investment in Affordable Housing, (iv) Affordable Housing Innovation Fund, (v) nonprofit on-reserve funding, (vi) prepayment, (vii) Reno & Retrofit CMHC, (viii) renovation programs on-reserve, (ix) retrofit on-reserve and seed funding; (e) how much federal funding was allocated to housing subsidies in the city of Edmonton for (i) nonprofit on-reserve housing, (ii) co-operative housing, (iii) Urban Native Housing, (iv) non-profit housing, (v) index linked, (vi) mortgage co-operatives, (vii) rent geared to income, (viii) and Federal Community Housing Initiative; (f) how much federal funding was allocated to housing subsidies in the federal riding of Edmonton Griesbach for (i) nonprofit on-reserve housing, (ii) co-operative housing, (iii) Urban Native Housing, (iv) nonprofit housing, (v) index linked, (vi) mortgage co-operatives, (vii) rent geared to income, (viii) Federal Community Housing Initiative; (g) what was the total amount of federal housing funding distributed as grants in the city of Edmonton; (h) what was the total amount of federal housing funding distributed as grants in the federal riding of Edmonton Griesbach; (i) what was the total amount of federal housing funding distributed as loans in the city of Edmonton; and (j) what was the total amount of federal housing funding distributed as loans in the federal riding of Edmonton Griesbach?

(Return tabled)

**Question No. 1127—Mr. Blake Desjarlais:**

With regard to federal spending in the constituency of Edmonton Griesbach, broken down by fiscal year and department or agency: what are the details of all grants, contributions and all loans to any organization, group, business or municipality, broken down by the (i) name of the recipient, (ii) date the funding was received, (iii) amount received, (iv) program under which the grant, contribution or loan was made?

(Return tabled)

*Routine Proceedings***Question No. 1128—Ms. Rachel Blaney:**

With regard to meteorological stations in British Columbia under the responsibility of Environment and Climate Change Canada: (a) what are the details of all stations, including the (i) location, (ii) number of staff employed, (iii) operational status; (b) for each station in (a), what (i) was the last date the station was reviewed for operational maintenance, (ii) plans are underway or scheduled to ensure the station is fully operational?

(Return tabled)

**Question No. 1129—Ms. Rachel Blaney:**

With regard to Veterans Affairs Canada service providers, broken down by province or territory: (a) what is the total number of service providers available to veterans that offer services in (i) English only, (ii) French only, (iii) both official languages, (iv) Indigenous languages; and (b) what is the total number of service providers who offer services in languages not listed in (a), broken down by language?

(Return tabled)

**Question No. 1130—Ms. Rachel Blaney:**

With regard to Rural and Suburban Mail Carriers (RSMCs), broken down by province or territory and fiscal year since 2015-16: (a) what is the total number of RSMCs required to use their own vehicles to deliver mail; (b) how many employees were remunerated at (i) the maximum tax-exempt-per allowance rate, (ii) under the maximum tax-exempt-per allowance rate; (c) what was the maximum tax-exempt-per allowance limit and rate for each fiscal year; (d) what was the total amount remunerated to RSMCs under (i) the maximum tax-exempt-per allowance rate, (ii) under the maximum tax-exempt-per allowance rate; and (e) what is the total amount of actual automobile expenses covered for RSMCs?

(Return tabled)

**Question No. 1132—Mrs. Shannon Stubbs:**

With regard to the Trans Mountain Expansion Project of the Trans Mountain Corporation, a subsidiary of the Canada Development Investment Corporation, broken down by year from 2018 to present: what is the total amount spent, or allocated to be spent, on persons not employed by the Trans Mountain Corporation or the government engaging in (i) external communications, (ii) internal communications, (iii) liaison activities between any department or ministry of the government and Trans Mountain Corporation, (iv) image consulting or similar type of consulting?

(Return tabled)

**Question No. 1134—Mr. Blake Desjarlais:**

With regard to government policies on funding directed towards First Nations, Inuit and Métis people, broken down by department since fiscal year 2015-16: (a) what policies, processes, and protocols exist to validate claims of Indigenous ancestry or Indigenous community; (b) what reviews or audits have been conducted to ensure that government funding has not been delivered to individuals, organizations, or companies that falsely claim an Indigenous identity; (c) is the government aware of any funding that has been allocated to individuals, organizations, or companies that falsely claimed an Indigenous identity; and (d) for each funding allocation in (c), how much funding has been recalled on the basis of false claims of Indigenous identity?

(Return tabled)

**Question No. 1135—Ms. Leslyn Lewis:**

With regard to the Canada Infrastructure Bank (CIB), since December 1, 2021: (a) what is the total amount of federal funding given to the CIB; (b) what are the details of all infrastructure commitments and investments made by the bank, including, for each project, the (i) name, (ii) location, (iii) description, (iv) date the agreement was signed, (v) total agreed expenditure by the CIB, (vi) total expenditures to date by the CIB, (vii) agreed completion date, (viii) current expected completion date, (ix) the loan's risk allocation, term and pricing, (x) evaluation results from the Investment Framework process; and (c) what is the amount spent by the CIB on (i) salaries, (ii) bonuses, (iii) consulting fees, (iv) rent or lease payments, (v) travel, (vi) hospitality, (vii) infrastructure programs, (viii) other expenses?

(Return tabled)

**Question No. 1138—Ms. Leslyn Lewis:**

With regard to the Public Accounts of Canada for 2021 and 2022: (a) what are the details and identified program objectives of the transfer payments made to the

World Economic Forum (WEF) by (i) Environment and Climate Change Canada, (ii) Fisheries and Oceans Canada, (iii) Global Affairs Canada; (b) for each transfer payment to the WEF, what (i) is the summary of the terms of the agreement in place, (ii) are the categories and type of cost allocations associated with each transfer payment; (c) what accounting does the government have of how the transfer payments to the WEF are being spent; and (d) if the answer to (c) is none, why is there no accounting?

(Return tabled)

**Question No. 1139—Ms. Heather McPherson:**

With regard to the number of Albertans, residing in Alberta, and Canadian or Permanent Residents from other provinces and territories living temporarily in Alberta, who received COVID-related financial support, specifically the Canada Emergency Response Benefit (CERB) and the Employment Insurance Emergency Response Benefit (ERB) (payments issued by both the Canada Revenue Agency (CRA) and by Service Canada), broken down by fiscal year, between April 1, 2020, and May 7, 2022: (a) of the total recipients who did receive CERB/ERB, how many were found by the government to be ineligible for the benefit and were notified that they must repay those funds, broken down by number and percentage of total successful applicants; (b) of the recipients in (a), how many were (i) 25 years or less, (ii) 65 years or above; (c) of the total recipients who received CERB/ERB, how many were found by the government to be ineligible to receive the benefit, but whose debt was waived or forgiven; (d) of the recipients in (c), how many were (i) 25 years or less, (ii) 65 years or above; (e) of the total recipients who did receive CERB/ERB (i) how many had other CRA or Service Canada issued federal benefits such as the Guaranteed Income Supplement (GIS), the Canada Child Benefit, or the Goods and Services Tax credit, negatively impacted or reduced, in part or in full, (ii) of those CERB recipients 65 years or over whose GIS benefit was negatively impacted (or reduced entirely) due to a higher household income resulting from their application for and acceptance of CERB in the preceding calendar year, how many Albertans had their GIS restored in either April 2022 (special measures) or in July 2022 (the start of the 2022-23 benefits calendar), broken down by partial restoration or full restoration?

(Return tabled)

**Question No. 1140—Ms. Heather McPherson:**

With regard to funding for Official Development Assistance, since 2019: (a) what is the total amount going to Canadian civil society partners, broken down within Canada by organization and by their province of registry; (b) what is the total amount going to U.S. partners; (c) what is the overall total amount, broken down by organizational size; and (d) what category does the recipient organization in (c) fall into, broken down by (i) civil society, (ii) multi-lateral, (iii) private sector?

(Return tabled)

**Question No. 1142—Ms. Heather McPherson:**

With regard to sanctions imposed by Canada under the United Nations Act, the Special Economic Measures Act and the Justice for Victims of Corrupt Foreign Officials Act, broken down by dollar value: (a) how many individuals have had their assets seized who are associated with sanctions targeting (i) Russia, (ii) Belarus, (iii) Russian-influenced Ukrainians; (b) how many more assets are there in Canada that have been identified; (c) since June 23, 2022, how many orders have been issued under (i) section (4)(1)(b) of the Special Economic Measures Act (ii) section (4)(1)(b) of the Justice for Victims of Corrupt Foreign Officials Act; (d) since June 23, 2022, how many forfeiture orders have been issued under (i) section 5.4(1) of the Special Economic Measures Act, (ii) section 4.2(1) of the Justice for Victims of Corrupt Foreign Officials Act?

(Return tabled)

**Question No. 1144—Mr. Matthew Green:**

With regard to hiring decisions in departments, broken down by department and month that the policy came into effect: (a) how many departments have put in place a policy to freeze or limit staffing actions since January 2022; (b) what is the department's current policy on staff actions for the departments in (a); and (c) how many departments in (a) were the result of directives or orders issued by a minister or deputy minister?

(Return tabled)

*Speaker's Ruling*Question No. 1145—**Ms. Jenny Kwan:**

With regard to the special immigration measures for Afghan nationals: (a) broken down by current country of residence and stream (people who assisted the government of Canada, humanitarian, extended family of former interpreters, and the special program to sponsor Afghan refugees without UNHCR status) and the year of the application, (i) how many applicants have been assigned a unique client identifier number, (ii) how many applicants have been assigned an application number starting with the letter G and are awaiting to come to Canada, (iii) how many applications are awaiting to have their biometrics completed, (iv) how many applications have biometrics completed for all applicants and are awaiting a flight to Canada, (v) how many applicants have satisfied all the requirements such as medical, biometrics, security checks, etc.; (b) what are the average processing times for a successful application; (c) what is the average waiting time for successful applicants to be assigned a flight destined for Canada; (d) how many applicants are still awaiting departure to come to Canada; (e) how many applications have been rejected under the special measures because they do not have a valid visa or expired visa in the third country; (f) how much funding has the government allocated to the International Organization for Migration (IOM); (g) how many IOM housing units are funded by the government of Canada; (h) how many Afghan nationals under the special measures have (i) been assigned to an IOM housing unit, (ii) are waiting for a unit, (iii) are being asked to pay back housing costs; and (i) for Afghan nationals under the special measures being asked to pay back housing costs, (i) how much are they being asked to pay on average, (ii) what is the timeline for repayment?

(Return tabled)

*[English]*

**Mr. Kevin Lamoureux:** Mr. Speaker, I ask that the remaining questions be allowed to stand.

**The Speaker:** Is that agreed?

**Some hon. members:** Agreed.

\* \* \*

**REQUEST FOR EMERGENCY DEBATE**

## PUBLIC HEALTH CARE IN CANADA

**Mr. Jagmeet Singh (Burnaby South, NDP):** Mr. Speaker, today I am requesting an emergency debate concerning the state of public health care in Canada.

In the coming days, the Prime Minister will be meeting with premiers from provinces across the country to discuss health care and to finalize an agreement for long-term funding of our health care system. However, this comes at a time when a number of Conservative premiers are putting forward plans to privatize our health care system with for-profit private health care investments, which is deeply troubling given that the outcome would be less care, higher costs and a worsening of the current crisis. If we do not make decisions this year, the current crisis will determine not just the following years but the following decade of care that Canadians receive.

Given how important it is that we make the right choices now to invest in a public health care system that all Canadians can access and that we take a strong stance against the American-style for-profit private delivery of care, I am requesting an emergency debate on this matter in the House today.

• (1540)

## SPEAKER'S RULING

**The Speaker:** I want to thank the hon. member for Burnaby South for this intervention. However, I am not satisfied that this request meets the requirements of the Standing Orders at this time.

## PUBLIC SAFETY

**Ms. Melissa Lantsman (Thornhill, CPC):** Mr. Speaker, I am requesting an emergency debate in this House on the unprecedented levels of and sharp rise in violent crime across Canada, especially in light of the recent violent attacks plaguing the Toronto Transit Commission in our nation's largest city.

Since the government took office, we know that violent crime has increased by 32%. In the last 10 days, there have been reports daily of violence on the TTC, including random stabbings and shootings. Premiers, police unions and chiefs across the country have called for bail reform to put an end to repeat offenders who threaten the public safety of our country's largest city with impunity. That is a direct result of the federal government's catch-and-release version of public safety.

Millions of people use transit daily in Toronto, and over 10,000 people are employed by the TTC. All of them have no choice but to use public transit, and it is at their own risk. Every Canadian has the right to safe streets, safe neighbourhoods and safe communities, and it is our job as leaders and parliamentarians to provide them with that.

With that, I believe an emergency debate is necessary to provide justice to the victims of these attacks and to ensure that every Canadian feels safe to go out in public and ride public transit. Thoughts and prayers are not enough. We have to act now.

## SPEAKER'S RULING

**The Speaker:** I thank the hon. member for Thornhill for her intervention. However, I am not satisfied that her request meets the requirements of the Standing Orders at this time.

We have a point of order from the hon. member for New Westminster—Burnaby.

*[Translation]*

**Mr. Peter Julian:** Happy new year, Mr. Speaker.

Today, I would like to raise a point of order regarding an amendment to Bill C-21, an act to amend certain acts and to make certain consequential amendments (firearms). As stated on page 770 of *House of Commons Procedure and Practice*, third edition, "An amendment to a bill that was referred to a committee after second reading is out of order if it is beyond the scope and principle of the bill."

[English]

The amendment in question, G-4, would amend clause 1 of Bill C-21, and the New Democrats have been clear in expressing our opposition to this amendment. The amendment seems to target those who use guns for hunting, for protecting farm animals from predators and for supporting safety in the backcountry. What is more, we have all heard from indigenous people that the amendments would not respect treaty rights nor the duty to consult.

Bill C-21 was originally intended to limit the number of handguns on our streets. Before the amendment was introduced, there was every reason to believe that Bill C-21 was on track to passing through this House before Christmas, but instead, the amendment was introduced at the eleventh hour with no ability to question witnesses about its impacts. It is a more than 200-page amendment to what was originally a 44-page bill. In our view, that constitutes an abuse of process. We are not asking the Speaker to judge the merits of the amendment. Instead, we are bringing forward a very important procedural point.

[Translation]

We believe, contrary to the committee's findings, that this amendment seeks to expand the scope of the bill as established at second reading since it addresses a new idea that was not considered at second reading.

[English]

The amendment is out of scope because the original Bill C-21 was meant to implement a handgun freeze. This amendment would drastically expand the definition of “prohibited firearm” in the Criminal Code to cover all sorts of long guns, including those commonly used for hunting and farming and by indigenous communities. This House never had a chance to debate this measure at second reading.

• (1545)

[Translation]

When the amendment was moved on November 22, 2022, the committee chair deemed that it was not beyond the scope of the bill. This decision was appealed, and the committee voted in favour of the committee chair's decision.

[English]

However, as we saw in the very clear Speaker's ruling on November 16, 2022, regarding amendments to Bill C-228, the ultimate decision on the scope of a bill rests with the House itself: “The Chair would like to remind members that the scope of a bill is not determined by its sponsor, by the government or even by the committee considering it, but by the House itself when it adopts the bill at second reading.”

[Translation]

In this situation, the committee adopted amendments that the Chair ultimately struck from the bill during consideration at report stage, because you, Mr. Speaker, ruled that the amendments were beyond the scope of Bill C-228 as passed by the House at second reading. Although we realize that the Speaker usually does not rule

### *Speaker's Ruling*

on a matter that is still being debated in committee, we believe that in this particular situation your opinion is necessary and important.

[English]

The committee has been stuck for weeks debating this amendment, which is, in our opinion, out of the scope of the bill. It is possible that you would rule the amendment out of order at report stage, which would make the hours of debate at committee completely unnecessary. It would be in the interest of all parliamentarians to avoid the waste of time and energy spent debating an amendment that would ultimately be removed from the bill.

**The Speaker:** I would like to thank the hon. member.

The hon. member for Saanich—Gulf Islands is rising on a point of order.

**Ms. Elizabeth May:** Mr. Speaker, I rise on the same point of order. I also have pending amendments with respect to Bill C-21 before the House. We know that the events, as described by the hon. member for New Westminster—Burnaby, are absolutely what occurred, and I would support the request.

I know it is unusual for the Speaker to have anything to do with procedure at the point of clause-by-clause consideration in a House committee, but in this instance, I think what is happening is almost unprecedented.

**Hon. Andrew Scheer:** Mr. Speaker, on the same point of order, I appreciate my hon. colleague raising this matter. Of course, the official opposition has many concerns with the bill, both with respect to its substance and its procedural aspects.

My understanding is that this point was raised at committee. The Liberal chair of the committee ruled the point of order out of order and allowed the committee to continue to proceed with the setting of the bill. I understand there was a vote to challenge the chair's ruling on that. I was wondering if the hon. House leader for the NDP could tell me how the NDP members voted on that question when the chair's ruling was challenged, a vote which would have done exactly what he is now asking the Speaker to do.

**The Speaker:** I think we are starting to get into debate. The hon. member made his point. I think we will just leave it at that.

This is an interesting one. The bill is still at committee. It is not the practice that the Speaker rule on what is going on at committee until it comes to the House. Then, when it is something we can deal with here in the House, we will take care of it.

At this point, I will not be interfering with the committee's work. We will leave it where it is and see what comes out of it. I trust the committee members will work together to bring us something that is acceptable to the House, and this is something the House will decide upon when it gets here.

I thank the hon. member for bringing that up.

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● (1550)

*[English]***CANADA EARLY LEARNING AND CHILD CARE ACT**

The House resumed consideration of the motion that Bill C-35, An Act respecting early learning and child care in Canada, be read the second time and referred to a committee.

**Ms. Elizabeth May (Saanich—Gulf Islands, GP):** Mr. Speaker, I am pleased to have a chance to compliment the hon. member for Winnipeg Centre on her speech. Something I did not know we had in common is that we are both single mothers, and we had to manage that challenge without affordable child care. I was very blessed to be able to manage it well, and I have a fantastic 31-year-old daughter. The member and I share that.

I want to ask the hon. member this, and I promise, from my heart, that this is not intended to be partisan.

If it were not for the perverse first-past-the-post system, I do not believe for a minute that, in the fall of 2005, we would have had the Conservatives, backed by the Bloc and the NDP, bring down the minority government of Paul Martin. It had a Kyoto plan that would have worked, child care agreements signed by every single province, and the Kelowna accord, which are things we all care about. Only because of the use of the strategy that the first-past-the-post system would eventually deliver a majority government with a minority of votes, did we see the loss of those things that could have provided child care back in 2005.

**Ms. Leah Gazan (Winnipeg Centre, NDP):** Madam Speaker, with all due respect to the member for Saanich—Gulf Islands and her compliments to the former finance minister, I want to let her know that indigenous people are still reeling from his cuts to indigenous programs, and when she is talking about Kelowna, with a 2% cap, would have only amounted to a few hundred dollars per nation.

We are here now. We have a national child care strategy, an initiative that has always been led by the NDP. I was very happy to work with the minister in a non-partisan way to advance these human rights and, like I said, I will work with any party in the House, and any member of Parliament in the House, to advance human rights.

**Ms. Ruby Sahota (Brampton North, Lib.):** Madam Speaker, I would like to start off by thanking the NDP and the member for all of their work on this issue. I know that it is a bill that is important to many on the benches in her party.

I did not get a chance to hear all of her speech prior to question period, and I wanted to know a little about how she feels this would benefit women in her riding and across Canada.

**Ms. Leah Gazan:** Madam Speaker, I think it goes beyond me. National child care advocates, unions and families have pushed for a not-for-profit public child care system, something that the NDP fought for and managed to get in the bill.

We know that the government cannot be a feminist government, and one cannot support feminist policy, without supporting a robust national child care program that is not-for-profit and public.

I am very happy. I know that the bill is not perfect. I look forward to working with the members across the way and all members of the House to strengthen the bill, so that we can truly lift families up and provide children with the care that they so deserve.

**Mr. Charlie Angus (Timmins—James Bay, NDP):** Madam Speaker, I have been here many years. We have gone through many debates on this, and I thank my colleague for her leadership on this.

I remember Conservatives standing in the House and saying that this was some kind of a city issue. I represent people in rural country where a husband may have to be on the road, travelling, trucking, working the drills, and the mother is working. The idea that this is somehow some kind of rural-urban divide is a falsehood.

The impact on rural women who have to work, who have to raise their families, often without support, is a serious issue.

I want to ask my colleague her sense of what we need to do to make sure that this plan represents women across the country, and that they are not being marginalized because they are from rural areas or urban areas, the way that the Conservatives like to do to try to divide people.

● (1555)

**Ms. Leah Gazan:** Madam Speaker, I am very thankful that the legislation being put forward is rooted in human rights, including advancing the United Nations Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples, which includes the right for children to access accessible and affordable child care grounded in culture, tradition and language.

That is absolutely a rural issue. I know many indigenous communities do not even have early child care services. The bill certainly focuses on that, and I look forward to working with the minister to improve that.

**Ms. Ya'ara Saks (Parliamentary Secretary to the Minister of Families, Children and Social Development, Lib.):** Madam Speaker, before I begin, I would like to note that I will be sharing my time with the member for Oakville North—Burlington.

I am so excited to be talking about child care and Bill C-35 today. As the Parliamentary Secretary to the Minister of Families, Children and Social Development, it gives me great pleasure to rise to speak in support of this proposed legislation.



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Simply put, affordable and inclusive child care is good for parents, good for children, good for women, good for families and good for the economy. It would reinforce the federal government's long-term commitment to families from coast to coast to coast. We are working to build a system that will remain in place long into the future, so generations of children in Canada can get the best possible start in life.

Affordable child care is yet another way our government is demonstrating that we are here to support Canadians. We understand how hard life is for Canadians now and has been through the pandemic. That is why we have put forward significant benefits to help Canadians beyond affordable child care. Whether it is through the Canada child benefit, the Canada dental benefit, the doubling of the GST tax credit, the Canada housing benefit or an increase to the Canada workers benefit, we are there for Canadians.

The purpose of Bill C-35 is to enshrine the principles of a Canada-wide child care system into law. It is a system that will ensure families in Canada have access to high-quality, affordable and inclusive early learning and child care, and it is critical in supporting the goals of the early learning and child care agreements between the Government of Canada and provincial and territorial Governments that have been signed from coast to coast to coast.

It also supports the vision, principles and goals of the indigenous early learning and child care framework, which was co-developed with indigenous peoples and jointly released by the Government of Canada and the Assembly of First Nations, Inuit Tapiriit Kanatami and the Métis National Council in 2018. In addition to the principles set out in the co-developed indigenous early learning and child care framework, it would continue to guide federal action with respect to early learning and child care programs and services for indigenous children, regardless of where they live.

I would like to focus for a moment on the development of the indigenous early learning and child care framework, which was first introduced in 2018, after being co-developed through an extensive nationwide engagement.

We know that culturally appropriate early learning and child care, designed by and with indigenous peoples, gives indigenous children the best start in life. The member for Winnipeg Centre has worked closely with us to ensure that those principles remain in place.

The indigenous early learning and child care framework, and the collaborative work to implement it over time, responds to the Truth and Reconciliation Commission of Canada's call to action number 12, which calls for all levels of government to work together "to develop culturally appropriate early childhood education programs for [indigenous] families."

Guided by the indigenous early learning and child care framework, we made it clear that this legislation will respect and uphold indigenous rights, including treaty rights and the right to self-determination, as well as the Government of Canada's commitment to reconciliation. The goal is to support indigenous nations, communities, organizations and governments in meeting the unique needs of their communities, families and children now, and seven generations forward.

We are investing an additional \$2.5 billion over five years and \$542 million annually ongoing in federal funding to get this work done. This funding will increase access to high-quality, culturally appropriate ELCC programs and services for indigenous children through indigenous-led governance. Indigenous governments are also working alongside provinces and territories to ensure ELCC is comprehensive and coordinated so all children are benefiting, regardless of where they live.

Since 2019, a total of 32 quality-improvement projects have been funded. These will continue to advance the implementation of the indigenous ELCC framework through best practices and innovation. These improvements will strengthen indigenous-centred knowledge and expertise to support all partners working toward a strong, culturally appropriate system of early learning and child care.

We have said many times that high-quality, affordable, and inclusive child care is not a luxury for families. It is a necessity. All caregivers should have the opportunity to build both a family and a career, and all children should have the best possible start in life.

As I mentioned previously, this legislation would not impose any conditions or requirements on provincial and territorial governments, or indigenous peoples.

● (1600)

It respects first nations, Inuit and Métis rights, and supports control of the design, delivery and administration of early learning and child care programs and services that reflect their needs, priorities and aspirations. However, the federal government has a role to play in setting federal principles and supporting provinces, territories and indigenous peoples in their efforts to establish and maintain a Canada-wide system. Indigenous peoples will benefit from a federal commitment to sustained and ongoing funding.

As a government, we will invest up to \$30 billion over five years to make early learning and child care affordable, accessible and nationwide. Combined with previous investments announced since 2015, a minimum of \$9.2 billion per year ongoing will be invested in child care, including indigenous early learning and child care, starting in 2025-26.

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Thanks to these investment, fees for regulated child care have been reduced in every jurisdiction in Canada. Quebec and Yukon were already providing regulated child care for \$10 a day or less before our Canada-wide investments. In December 2022, Nunavut joined them by being the first jurisdiction to lower fees for regulated child care to \$10 a day under the Canada-wide system.

By 2025-26, the average fee for all regulated spaces across Canada will be \$10 a day, and that is great news for families. Child care fees in Newfoundland and Labrador have already been reduced to \$15 a day, down from \$25 a day in 2021. These are not just numbers. These are families saving hundreds of dollars each month across the country.

Regardless of political stripe, governments across Canada believe in giving all children in Canada the best possible start in life, and that we can agree on. The relief this offers parents and caregivers of young children cannot be overstated.

I will conclude by offering some outside assessments of nationwide ELCC.

Charles St-Arnaud, chief economist at Alberta Central, said, “Women feel more confident going back into the workforce because they won’t be spending their whole paycheque on child care”.

Martha Friendly, a board member at Child Care Now, said, “Some women had to stay home because either they couldn’t find a space or they couldn’t afford it. Now, people are getting child care at 50 per cent reduced fees on average and that means [they] can go back to work.”

The Financial Post, on December 5, noted that our child care policy has been a success. It said, “government policy has played a role in getting women back in the workforce...especially when it comes to child care.” Again, St-Arnaud said, “Women feel more confident going back into the workforce because they won’t be spending their whole paycheque on child care”.

Families are benefiting, children are benefiting, and I encourage every member of this House to support child care across this country through Bill C-35 and its swift passage.

**Mrs. Karen Vecchio (Elgin—Middlesex—London, CPC):** Madam Speaker, I have been listening to the previous speaker and I thank her very much for bringing forward and talking about the importance of child care. As a mother, I know how important it was when I had my five children and needed that care. The biggest challenge I had was finding child care. We have talked about these proposals, but just last week, I spoke to a young woman who was coming back to work after maternity leave. She cannot find child care.

What is the government going to do about the lack of spaces? As the population increases, it is even more important to be building more spaces. I do not see the commitment to the number of spaces that are actually needed to make sure that children do have this care the Liberals are referring to.

**Ms. Ya'ara Saks:** Madam Speaker, as a single mom who arrived back in Canada in the early 2000s with an infant child, I know the fear of not having a space. I was that mom who did not know about wait-lists when I arrived from overseas. I had to actually put my career off for close to a year until there was a space available.

That is why, through each of our agreements, the total number of spaces that we have committed to creating with provinces is over 253,000. Already, as of January 30, 2023, 50,633 of those spaces have been committed to being built. I was in Manitoba a couple of months ago, where there was a joint commitment of 1,200 rural spaces in a joint planned agreement between Peguis and other rural communities to create spaces. We are getting there.

• (1605)

[*Translation*]

**Mr. Maxime Blanchette-Joncas (Rimouski-Neigette—Témiscouata—Les Basques, BQ):** Madam Speaker, I listened closely to my colleague from York Centre's speech. I am glad the federal government recognizes the importance of the child care system. We all know Quebec pioneered it over 25 years ago—not 5, 10, 15 or 20 years ago, but 25.

It is a good thing the federal government is now recognizing, in 2023, the importance of having a child care system. What I am wondering, however, is how the federal government can do better than Quebec has been doing, given that Quebec created its child care system 25 years ago and has been running it ever since?

My colleague from York Centre said there are no obligations in this bill. That is not true. There are obligations for the next five years only. Plus, there is no way for the Government of Quebec to opt out with full compensation.

I have two questions for my colleague. First, does she think Quebec should have the right to opt out with full compensation because it has its own child care system already? Second, can the federal government do better than Quebec, which has been operating its own child care system for 25 years now?

[*English*]

**Ms. Ya'ara Saks:** Madam Speaker, we have been very clear throughout this process, with each of the agreements we have signed with the provinces and territories, that we are not here to overstep on jurisdiction and that we are not here to intervene. We are here to support existing systems that are in play.

The member across the way is correct that Quebec is the model. I know stories of families that moved to Montreal, to Quebec, when child care became available. Finally, we have a nationwide system, the aspiration and the desire. This is what this legislation is about. It is about really ensuring, for the next generations to come, that the model, and Quebec led the way in this model, stays in place.

We have also committed to continue that funding for Quebec for the spaces and the system it has created. I enjoyed being in Sainte-Justine not that long ago to speak to the experts who built out this system and the benefits of it. The member can be assured that it will continue.

**Ms. Lisa Marie Barron (Nanaimo—Ladysmith, NDP):** Madam Speaker, I am happy we are talking about this today. My own experience as a single parent is that I was working at a minimum wage trying to make ends meet and still, despite provincial subsidies, was unable to afford child care. My daughter is turning 20 on February 2 and my son is 15. This has been going on for generations and so many families are impacted by unaffordable and inaccessible child care.

We can celebrate that this is moving in the right direction, but we also need to look at why it has taken so many generations for us to get to where we are today and to finally be implementing child care.

**Ms. Ya'ara Saks:** Madam Speaker, the simple answer to my colleague is political will. That was the question I asked my colleagues in Quebec when I went to see 25 years of care. I asked, "How did you get it?" They said it was the political will and women. Women had been demanding this for over 50 years. We are here to tell them and to tell educators, families and children that it has arrived and it will continue.

**Ms. Pam Damoff (Parliamentary Secretary to the Minister of Public Safety, Lib.):** Madam Speaker, it truly is my pleasure to be speaking today about this transformative legislation. A year and a half ago, the first Canada-wide early learning and child care agreement was signed with the province of B.C., and today the federal government has signed agreements with all provinces and territories.

Making the Canada-wide early learning and child care system a reality is a momentous accomplishment. Too many families, for too long, have lacked access to affordable, high-quality and inclusive early learning and child care. Child care is a necessity and there is no question that it helps children in the long term. Early childhood educators set children up for success. They educate and build confidence in children, setting them on a path to success in school and life. This helps families thrive. That is why building a Canada-wide system matters. Most of us know that child care is expensive. Child care fees have placed a massive strain on the budgets of many families.

More than half a century ago, the Royal Commission on the Status of Women in Canada called on the federal government to immediately begin working with provinces and territories to establish a national day care plan. We came close to achieving a national plan under former prime minister Martin, but it was dismantled by the Conservative government of Stephen Harper when it took office in 2006.

When I was vice-chair of the status of women committee in our study on the economic security of women, the number one issue we heard that was holding women back economically was access to affordable, quality child care. I'll quote from our report:

The lack of access to high-quality affordable childcare was identified as a significant barrier to women's economic security because women bear a disproportionate responsibility, compared to men, for the unpaid care of children. Witnesses spoke of

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societal expectations and workplace culture that assumes women are the primary caregivers for their children at home and that women be responsible for arranging childcare if they want to work.

The Committee heard that the provision of accessible, affordable childcare is a key element in promoting women's labour force attachment. Lack of access to childcare limits women's ability to seek education and training, limits women's opportunities to re-enter the workforce, hurts their ability to achieve professional goals, and leads many women to seek part-time and precarious employment.

Generations of Canadians have waited for their government to answer the call. Making the Canada-wide system a reality means we can now relieve some of the stress felt by families from coast to coast to coast.

When my son was born, it was tough financially. Back then, I got only three months' maternity leave, and when it was time to go back to work it was a tough decision. I almost did not go back, but thanks to a very generous boss I was able to. My son, Fraser, went to a terrific day care run by the Canadian Mothercraft society in downtown Toronto, in the newly opened BCE Place. It was an awesome day care, but no doubt about it, it was expensive. I do not know how families made it work financially with more than one child.

With the introduction of Bill C-35, families in Canada do not have to endure the hardship of finding affordable and inclusive high-quality child care. This is our government's commitment to maintain long-term federal funding for provinces and territories. All provinces and territories have already seen child care fees significantly reduced, and we are on track to achieve our goal of an average \$10-a-day regulated early learning and child care by March 2026.

The Canada-wide early learning and child care system and this bill are the result of significant collaboration with provinces, territories and indigenous peoples. Since 2017, we have worked with our provincial and territorial partners to establish the multilateral early learning and child care, or ELCC, framework that sets out the long-term vision for child care in Canada. We negotiated bilateral agreements with the provinces and territories to increase access to child care across the country. We co-developed an indigenous ELCC framework that reflects the unique cultures, aspirations and needs of first nations, Inuit and Métis children and families across Canada, which was endorsed by and jointly released with the Assembly of First Nations, ITK, and the Métis National Council in 2018.

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This proposed bill respects provincial and territorial jurisdiction, and respects and upholds indigenous rights, including the right to self-determination. We are not imposing any conditions or requirements on provincial and territorial governments, nor on indigenous peoples.

• (1610)

With this legislation, we would enshrine into law the federal government's continued commitment to working collaboratively with and supporting provincial, territorial and indigenous partners in their efforts to establish and maintain a Canada-wide system of early learning and child care. The national advisory council, which would be enshrined in the legislation, would provide advice to the Minister of Families, Children and Social Development on this important work.

Combined with other commitments, we are investing up to \$30 billion over five years to make first-class early learning and child care affordable and accessible, and we are committed to continuing to work with our partners as the system matures and evolves. Our goal is simple and clear: We want to give children across the country, wherever they live, the best possible start in life.

From the beginning of the process, the Government of Canada has maintained that early childhood educators are key to the success of a high-quality early learning and child care system and deserve to have their work valued. We know our early childhood educators are dedicated and professional people. It is in all our best interest that we give early childhood educators and those contemplating a career in early childhood education the necessary incentives to support their growth and professional development. Early childhood educators are a pivotal part of the Canada-wide system. They deserve more for the critical work that they do with our children.

This legislation is not just about making life more affordable. All parents should have the opportunity to build both a family and a career. Parents, and especially mothers, have too often been denied the support they need to finish their education, participate in training, open businesses and maintain good jobs to provide for their families. Now parents would not have to choose between raising a family and having a career.

It is not simply a matter of being able to go out to work. It is also about the impact it has on women's careers and their ability to be entrepreneurs, as well as on their long-term earning capability. The longer that parents, especially moms, are out of the workforce, the harder it is for them to get back in and advance in a career with all the social and economic benefits that that brings.

Affordable high-quality child care is a feminist economic policy and a smart economic policy that would increase Canada's GDP by 1.2%, allowing for more women to return to the workforce. McKinsey Global Institute estimates that boosting women's participation in the workforce could add \$150 billion to Canada's economy by 2026.

I remember crying tears of joy when the Minister of Finance announced a national child care plan in budget 2021 because I knew how transformational it would be. I remembered the financial challenges of child care 33 years ago and the challenging decision of whether to return to work being based solely on finances. As I

knocked on doors in the 2021 election, I was concerned that the Conservative Party members had said that, if they were elected, they would scrap universal child care, which would have been absolutely devastating for families in Canada.

I am now a proud grandmother of the most perfect little boy. He started day care in November and is thriving there. His parents waited anxiously for a deal with the Province of Ontario to ensure their child care costs would be affordable for them. Needless to say, our family was overjoyed when the deal was signed and their child care costs have already been reduced by 50%, which means that wee Cameron is able to grow and learn at his day care, and his mom and dad can both work in meaningful employment.

With this bill, all of us in the House have the chance to do something that is going to make a difference for generations to come. It is my hope that we can swiftly pass this bill to ensure the longevity of the Canada-wide system, which would help all of Canada access high-quality, affordable and inclusive early learning and child care.

• (1615)

**Mrs. Anna Roberts (King—Vaughan, CPC):** Madam Speaker, my concern with this bill is this: As a young widow, I had two young children, and I had no choice but to work to ensure they had a home to live in and food on the table. However, unfortunately I did not have the type of job that was nine to five, so I had difficulties finding a day care that was open as early as six o'clock in the morning, and some nights as late as 10 o'clock at night.

How does this bill address the needs of women in my previous profession to accommodate the opportunity for them to have \$10-a-day child care?

**Ms. Pam Damoff:** Madam Speaker, the member's question is a very good one. Depending on what career women have, it may be difficult to access child care. That is why we are making investments and working with the provinces and territories to find ways that we can expand child care to make it affordable and accessible for people, regardless of the career that they have.

Certainly, for those who are working in a lot of emergency services where there is a lack of child care options for women, or in careers that require people to work late into the night or to travel, it can be a challenge. It is something we are cognizant of, and we are working with our partners to ensure that our child care program would meet the needs of all women.

• (1620)

[*Translation*]

**Ms. Andr anne Larouche (Shefford, BQ):** Madam Speaker, it is always interesting to hear about this child care model, which originated in Quebec. The early childhood centre model, or CPE, was created by Pauline Marois.

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Quebec is a trailblazer. Members spoke about atypical working hours and that CPEs in Quebec already offer services outside of the usual hours of day care centres. These centres offer services to women who do not necessarily work during the day. Quebec is already providing these services. This is a system proper to Quebec and it is unique.

My fear is that in five years we will find ourselves in negotiations between Quebec and Ottawa and that this will delay money being sent to Quebec with no conditions. There is a five-year timeline, but what will happen in five years so that Quebec can continue to receive the money, so that we can continue to develop the system that we have created?

[*English*]

**Ms. Pam Damoff:** Madam Speaker, I will give a shout-out to the Quebec model, which was a model we referred to when we were doing our study at the status of women committee.

I do not have a crystal ball to see five years into the future, but I would say that this legislation is so important because it would put into law the federal government's commitment to continue to support all provinces and territories, and indigenous partners. I would add that Quebec was one of the early signatories to an agreement with the federal government on the program we have implemented.

I cannot see into the future, but I would say that this legislation is an important piece of ensuring there will be funding moving forward in five years' time.

**Ms. Lindsay Mathyssen (London—Fanshawe, NDP):** Madam Speaker, I am very excited today to rise in the House to discuss the bill. I had put forward Bill C-311, which is a lot of the base, I would like to think, of the present bill. I worked off of the work of many other members of Parliament, such as New Democrat women like Denise Savoie and Olivia Chow, to name a couple.

However, part of my bill, I would like to specify here, is about the workers within the child care system, these incredible people, who are often women. Some strengthening needs to happen within the bill for training and professional development, and to ensure their hours of work are protected. A lot of the unions within this field have called for that, so I would like to hear the hon. member talk about that.

**Ms. Pam Damoff:** Madam Speaker, I think the hon. member makes a very valid point, and I hope she will bring it up when the bill goes to committee. It is certainly something that is valid to be speaking about at committee and as the bill makes its way through the legislative process.

**Mrs. Karen Vecchio (Elgin—Middlesex—London, CPC):** Madam Speaker, I am thankful for the opportunity to speak on the bill before us, and I will be sharing my time with the member for Mégantic—L'Érable.

I recall when the national child care strategy was first discussed in 1993 because at that time I was pregnant with my first child. He is now the father of four children, so obviously we are still having this discussion. I recall back in 1994 putting my child on a wait-list.

Back in 1994 was the first time that I put my child on a wait-list for a child care space, which was not necessarily publicly funded,

in the city of London. I was a brand new mother, 23 years old, with a job, and I was probably making between eight and nine dollars an hour working as a dental assistant. I knew that child care was going to be very critical for me to go back to work because my spouse and I were not making a lot of money and we did want to get ahead. We had student loans. We had bills we wanted to pay, and we did have a car. Therefore, it was very important, even back then, that we were both working at that, although not necessarily full time.

Now, in 2023, we are continuing to have the conversation on child care and what it looks like. As the government is putting forward this piece of legislation, I will reflect on the work I have done in Parliament as we have discussed child care and the discussions I have had with parents.

During my role from 2015 to 2019, I had the honour to work with families, children and social development, and look at the different things that we are discussing, especially child care. I recall, I believe it was in the 2016 budget, when the Canada child benefit was increased quite a bit so that it could include child care. However, we all know that today, with the exorbitant cost for families, the new child benefit does not even touch what this country is going through with inflationary costs. Although it was a program that was very important to do, I do not think the government was actually going in the right direction when it comes to the fact that it cannot keep its spending under control.

When we get to where we are today, we are talking about child care, and we need to talk about those spaces. I just had a young woman call me last week who could not return to work because she could not find a child care space. Her question to me was, "Can I get my employment insurance expanded?" She said that she needed to go to back to work. She cannot afford what is going on right now. She cannot afford her home. She cannot afford the price of groceries. She cannot afford life at this time, and she needs to go back to work because her EI maternity and parental benefits have run out.

I could not believe that I had to say to her, "I am really sorry." I know that she has been trying for the last year to find a child care space as her child was just born, but there is not a space for that child. This is where we talk about looking at these programs and making sure that we have enough spaces.

I also recall back in 2018 one of the greatest challenges they were having in Langley, B.C. I was doing a tour there and I was at the YMCA, which was paying its child care providers \$22 an hour. Now, I see in this piece of legislation talk about averages that people must make, but we have to also understand that \$22 an hour in Langley, B.C. cannot keep a child care provider because of the cost of living is so outrageous. This is where we really need to focus on the labour market. We really need to focus on the cost of living. We really need to ask what is going on here.

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This occupation is heavily oriented towards women. Many women choose to be child care providers. Many women also choose to educate small children, those in kindergarten through to grade eight, because of their love of children and wanting to be part of that. However, we are not getting to where we need to be because these child care spaces are not available.

In Langley, B.C. when a person making \$22 an hour cannot afford to work in that profession, they are going to find another profession, which is what we have seen. We have seen an exodus from professions that may be lower paying. It is good that we are seeing a bit of an increase, but at the same time I am wondering what we are going to do to sustain this type of program, because the business model does not work when we look at this.

● (1625)

That is why I want to bring in the discussion of entrepreneurs, women entrepreneurs.

I like to have kids, it seems. Between my second and third child, I decided to stay home and bring in three other children. I did my very best because I am the type of person who wants to make sure that we are having the right food, that we are having the right play-times and that we are doing some educational pieces. That was very important to me. I was able to offer child care to mothers who did not have regular work schedules, people who were working in restaurants, people who were not working a regular nine-to-five job. That is why I believe it is so important that we not only look at the public and not-for-profit but that we look at these women-led businesses that are providing child care.

The whole idea of not-for-profit seems to be the problem here. It is a business, and we should be supporting this, because even CUPE has come out and said that there will not be enough spaces if we are putting all of our eggs into one basket and expecting it to be not-for-profit or publicly funded. There needs to be space for this private care.

I also bring this up because I am a girl from Sparta, population 300. If my parents, or any family in Sparta, needed to take their child to child care, it would be a 25-minute drive. That is why we need flexibility for families.

For instance, a young woman, or a new mom, which was my case, may choose to become a child care provider within her own home. That would be seen, perhaps, as private. That is a job. The way I look at it is that it is a job and it is a way for the woman and the family to have more flexibility. She is helping out other women and helping out herself in the meantime.

When we are looking at a program that is really focused at a national scale, we need to recognize that we live in Canada. We live in a country where it is hard for us to get to Ottawa some days. It is hard for us to get to the grocery store on certain days.

When we are talking about that, I live in a very populated place, St. Thomas. I live with about 45,000 other people in my community. If we are talking about smaller populations, how are we going to ensure that they are having the same accessible, quality child care that people in urban centres are going to have? How are we ensur-

ing that this is going to happen? How are we ensuring that every family has access to \$10-a-day child care?

Let us be real and say that this is not the way it is going to work out perfectly. Yes, we need to ensure that there is child care, because child care helps our economy. It puts families and women back to work and it gives them that opportunity. For me, child care was very important, but I did not do it with public child care. It was not an option. There were no spaces. I did it through not-for-profit and through women entrepreneur-based businesses, where women were able to do this.

I am really hoping that when the government looks at this legislation, it is very focused on these types of businesses. I really hope that it recognizes that we need to be looking at all types of child care when we are looking at this. There are approximately five different types of child care that we have here in Ontario. We need to make sure that all of those are on the plate and that all of those are part of that basket, if we really want to have something available for families and children.

Before I finish, I want to switch to labour, because, as we have said, labour is an issue. I have talked about the cost of living. I have talked about how it was \$22 an hour, in 2018, to be a child care provider out in Langley, B.C.

We are at a critical issue. Just as we are seeing in our health care professions and just as we are seeing with many of our frontline workers, we are seeing burnout. I must say that the people who are working in child care are doing an exceptional job, but there is burnout as well. We need to ensure that there are supports for them and that there is education for them.

However, there is a labour market issue here right now that is not going to help fulfill what the government is putting forward, and that is why we need to look at everything else. We need to look at things. PSWs, labour force issues, this is what we are seeing from the government, because people cannot afford to have certain types of jobs so people are leaving those types of jobs, which are really important. They are leaving those jobs to try to find higher-earning jobs because the government does not really have that love for jobs. Many people who are working in ECE are doing it because they love children.

I do not think the government recognizes that it should not just be one way. We should make sure that child care is accessible for all.

● (1630)

**Ms. Laurel Collins (Victoria, NDP):** Madam Speaker, I want to thank the member for her speech and for her advocacy with respect to child care in general. However, I do have some concerns with some of the comments, especially when she said that the focus on non-profit child care is the problem here.

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My deep concern is this. What I have heard from the Conservatives, both the Doug Ford provincial Conservatives and those here in this chamber, is that they want to put public funds into what should be non-profit supports. When it comes to child care, we know that the Ontario Conservative government has quietly removed profit caps and is expanding for-profit child care. This is very concerning to me. We also know that Doug Ford is putting our public health care funding into privatized systems.

I am curious if the member believes that we should be prioritizing for-profit instead of non-profit care?

**Mrs. Karen Vecchio:** Madam Speaker, perhaps the member did not listen to me, because I said we need the entire bouquet, the entire plate of different options, because not-for-profit and public just do not meet the need. Rather than making this political, rather than calling Conservatives out, rather than talking about what we have done, let us talk about the children first here, because it is the children who are missing out in all of this political crap that people are talking about. That is where we are going here.

I listened to the question. It was a political attack. It was not about children. If we are talking about for-profit versus this, what we need is a system that works for parents. It is not just one type; it needs to be all of these different systems working together to ensure that we have child care across this nation.

• (1635)

**Ms. Ya'ara Saks (Parliamentary Secretary to the Minister of Families, Children and Social Development, Lib.):** Madam Speaker, my colleague across the way knows well that I am happy to talk about child care all day long.

Bill C-35 is really legislation that encompasses the agreements that have already been put in place. If we look province by province, much work was done to identify and register a wide array of child care. While, yes, there are caps on private, there is private child care that has been grandfathered in Ontario, but the idea is to create more spaces, because the market demand for spaces is there. Each province gave us a list of how many spaces it needs, and the partnership with the federal government is to commit the funds to build those spaces. I was just in Manitoba announcing \$70 million for rural spaces.

I would ask the member this. Does she not understand that this is really a set of agreements under this legislation so that we continue to work together with provinces and families?

**Mrs. Karen Vecchio:** Madam Speaker, I think the member hit the nail on the head when talking about needing agreements with the provinces, because at the end of the day the people who are providing child care are the provinces. The federal government is supposed to be there trying to create a strategy, an approach to this. I think as we are talking about this we are so keyed in on "This is what we are trying to do." It does not work. One type of thing just does not work for everybody. We need to make these agreements, but 67% of child care in the province of Alberta is done by entrepreneurs. It is not public and it is not not-for-profit, because that is what works in that area. Therefore, when we are talking about this, I am really hoping the government understands that spaces and private can still work together very well.

**Ms. Michelle Ferreri (Peterborough—Kawartha, CPC):** Madam Speaker, I want to thank my colleague so much for her passion and work on this file. She understands it so well and the choice that needs to be offered.

My question for her is this. Does she feel that this legislation should be eligible for the most vulnerable? Right now it is subsidizing wealthy families instead of those that are most vulnerable.

**Mrs. Karen Vecchio:** Madam Speaker, I forgot about that part of my speech. Absolutely, for me it has to be for those people who really need a hand up. That is what the government should be doing, giving a hand up. Making it so that millionaires can take the spaces of the people who are trying to get into the workforce should not be happening. Absolutely, it should be income-tested for sure.

[*Translation*]

**Mr. Luc Berthold (Mégantic—L'Érable, CPC):** Madam Speaker, I want to begin by thanking and congratulating my colleague from Elgin—Middlesex—London on her speech. I also want to thank our shadow minister for families, children and social development, the member for Peterborough—Kawartha, for the excellent and extremely important work she has done on this file.

Over the next few minutes, I will have the chance to talk about the reality facing Canadian families. I wanted to speak to Bill C-35 because my wife has been working in child care centres in Quebec for many years now, so she is very familiar with the system. She witnessed its creation. Unfortunately, she has also witnessed the deterioration in services over the last few years. I think it is important to share her experience of this public system, which has existed in Quebec for over 20 years.

It is important to identify the flaws in the system, to recognize that there are still problems and look at how this Parliament can work to improve the child care situation across the country and in every province. It is also important not to put all our eggs in one basket, as Quebec has done in recent years. This would allow more families, more single mothers and fathers, more people to have access to appropriate child care across Canada.

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Let us talk about the current reality for Canadian families. The cost of living has skyrocketed. We are facing interest rates that are making it harder and harder for young families to access home ownership. Food prices went up nearly 12% in just a year. That far outstrips the rise in inflation. We hear that many women would like to go back to work, especially young women who just had their first child. Young women who still do not have access to a child care system could be on a waiting list for several months, even a year.

In Quebec, in particular, when a person no longer has access to parental benefits, they may have to wait another year before they get a child care spot. It is unacceptable. This prevents many women from going back to work and thriving. More importantly, it also denies children the opportunity to access a public system that could help in their development.

At first, I was against a public child care system like the one that was implemented in Quebec in recent years. However, I must now admit that such a system improves the living conditions of many children. An educational child care system helps children be better prepared for school. Sometimes, these children come from disadvantaged backgrounds and their families do not necessarily have all the tools to help them develop before they go to preschool and kindergarten.

These services are good for children who manage to get into the system. Unfortunately, there are still many children who are unable to do so. Eight years after the Liberals made their promises, they are now introducing a bill that proposes access to that kind of system in the future. Unfortunately, based on what we have seen from the Liberals over the past eight years, we are worried that this bill is all about good intentions and that the results may not be up to par.

The Liberals want to move too quickly. They are grandstanding and trying to win political points. They are implementing a fine program to help families, but once again, they are realizing a little too late that they may not have done their homework properly and that, unfortunately, thousands of children will not have access to child care.

Why will they not have access to child care spaces? First, there is already a shortage of spaces in the system, especially in Quebec, and second, there is a dire shortage of specialized educators, so the centres cannot provide services to these children.

Day cares lack money for food. I was surprised to learn that in some day cares in Quebec, they no longer give meat to young children under the age of five because they cannot afford it. Non-profit centres can no longer afford to buy meat to feed the children. Instead, they serve plant-based proteins in the morning.

• (1640)

All sorts of other products are being used to try to adequately meet people's needs, but meat has been banned in the day care centres because there is not enough money, because everything costs more. There is also a glaring lack of choice. Families would have had the opportunity to access child care services, but unfortunately, Quebec has favoured subsidized non-profit day cares as currently proposed by the federal program. As a result, we find ourselves in a situation where, 25 years later, needs are still not being met.

I have some stats here about children on the waiting list. These numbers are from the Government of Quebec's ministry of families. There are 286,817 spaces in the system according to data from May 31, 2022. Quebec currently has 101,244 children in early learning centres, or facilities. There are 50,444 children in subsidized child care. There are 68,431 children in non-subsidized care, the so-called private day cares. Lastly, there are 66,698 children in home-based child care.

These child care services are offered by women, entrepreneurs who decide to open their own home-based child care service but are part of the network subsidized by the Government of Quebec. These female entrepreneurs are subsidized by Quebec to provide services to children. Unfortunately, this approach will not be allowed in all provinces, which do not all have the same agreement. This means more choice.

The big problem, despite all this and after 25 years, is that there are still 33,829 children waiting for a child care space. Some 30,295 spaces are being created, so there is already a shortfall. There are 2,500 subsidized spaces to be allocated. The facilities have not yet been developed to ensure that young people can access these child care centres or spaces. The number of children with "pending" status is 50,000. After more than 20 years of the public subsidized system, there are still 50,000 children who do not have a child care space. If you multiply that number by one for the number of mothers and by two for the number of parents, it is quite clear that there is a problem with putting all your eggs in one basket and taking just one path forward.

Fortunately, the Quebec government is providing subsidies to stay-at-home mothers who decide to open their own home-based child care. This is a way out. However, we deplore certain aspects of this bill, which is why we have some requests. We will be proposing amendments in committee to allow for more choice and to achieve the ultimate goal of accessible child care for children, and particularly for mothers who need access to a child care system.

We also have concerns about cost. If we cannot even create the number of spaces promised, will the government be able to keep its promise of creating \$10-a-day spaces? That is the second big question. Based on past experience and different programs presented and adopted by the Liberal government in the last eight years, there is reason to have doubts and to ask questions.



The government does have an area of expertise that could help Quebec. Quebec is currently trying to fill 18,000 educator positions and the Quebec government would like to recruit abroad to fill these 18,000 positions. I believe that the federal government has a very specific role to play to help address the shortage of child care staff. It must work with the Quebec government and the governments of all the other provinces to expedite the arrival of these educators so that an increasing number of children, families and single parents can access quality child care services.

• (1645)

[English]

**Ms. Ya'ara Saks (Parliamentary Secretary to the Minister of Families, Children and Social Development, Lib.):** Madam Speaker, in 1997, Quebec's female labour force was four points behind the national average. However, when we look at 2021, with 25 years of good work on a model that is growing and changing, just as the Quebec population is, the women's workforce in Quebec is four points higher than the rest of Canada.

Do you not want to see other provinces and women across this country benefit from a workforce that also works for them?

**The Assistant Deputy Speaker (Mrs. Carol Hughes):** I will remind the hon. parliamentary secretary to address her questions through the Chair and not use the word "you". Maybe "he" or "she" would be better.

The hon. member for Mégantic—L'Érable.

**Mr. Luc Berthold:** Madam Speaker, for sure I hope that everyone in this country has access to affordable child care services, but I want to give people the choice of which service they prefer and which service they need. In the end, it is better to have spaces for everyone than choosing one system that will not allow everyone to have access to the system.

• (1650)

[Translation]

**Mr. Maxime Blanchette-Joncas (Rimouski-Neigette—Témiscouata—Les Basques, BQ):** Madam Speaker, it is always a pleasure to listen to my colleague from Mégantic—L'Érable. I very much appreciated some of what he had to say.

Under the Canadian Constitution, family policies fall under the jurisdiction of Quebec and the provinces. The Bloc Québécois did not make that up. The federal government knows nothing about any of that, but as my colleague mentioned, Quebec has 25 years of experience with its own child care network.

We know that the federal government would like to help with immigration, but, again, the Government of Quebec is petitioning to fully and completely manage its immigration system. Again, we see that the Conservatives' vision and the vision of the Government of Quebec are in opposition. Even my colleague said that he did not really support the creation of our child care services, even though they are internationally renowned.

My colleague forgot to mention the agreement that the former leader of the Conservative Party, the member for Durham, was proposing during the last election campaign. He wanted to cancel the \$6-billion agreement that the Government of Quebec had

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reached with Ottawa on transfers for the child care network. In total, the Government of Quebec would have lost \$6 billion.

I would like my colleague to explain that today. He says he is in favour of child care networks, but his party wants to cancel the transfers to the Government of Quebec. What is the real vision of the Conservative Party?

**Mr. Luc Berthold:** Madam Speaker, he said so many things in such a short amount of time that it will be difficult to answer all of his questions. More importantly, my colleague just said some things that are far from true.

It is true that when the child care system was put in place, I was against it. At the time, I was working as a young politician and I had some serious questions. I would like to remind my colleague that my wife works in the child care system, so I have learned to appreciate its merits since then. I have learned how useful a child care system can be for children and how it can help them as they move into the school system.

I think that children deserve access to child care, and my colleagues agree. Women and families deserve to have access to quality child care that will help them move forward and put them on the right path for the rest of their lives.

However, people need to be able to access the system if they so choose. That is the main problem in Canada right now. This has even been a problem in Quebec over the past 25 years.

[English]

**Ms. Lisa Marie Barron (Nanaimo—Ladysmith, NDP):** Madam Speaker, I always like hearing more about what is happening with child care in Quebec because we know, when we look across Canada, that families in Quebec have been provided accessible child care, and the positives have been evident for many years. Unfortunately, that has not been the experience in many other provinces and territories.

We know that this is a step in the right direction. We know that there are gaps in moving forward, and that is why the New Democrats are pushing for solutions, such as fighting for child care and having explicit commitments for fair wages and working conditions for staff. Those are things we are pushing for.

I am wondering if the member could speak to whether he feels that having this explicitly listed in the bill would help move us in the right direction and address some of the gaps he was identifying.

**Mr. Luc Berthold:** Madam Speaker, there are a lot of gaps that we have to fix in this bill. One is wages and the availability of personnel.

Let us work together to improve the bill. This is not a communication exercise. This is a bill for the future of families and women in this country, so let us work together. We are open to it.

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[*Translation*]

**The Assistant Deputy Speaker (Mrs. Carol Hughes):** Order. It is my duty pursuant to Standing Order 38 to inform the House that the questions to be raised tonight at the time of adjournment are as follows: the hon. member for Saanich—Gulf Islands, The Environment; the hon. member for Sherwood Park—Fort Saskatchewan, Government Priorities; the hon. member for Courtenay—Alberni, Health.

[*English*]

**Mr. Kevin Lamoureux (Parliamentary Secretary to the Leader of the Government in the House of Commons, Lib.):** Madam Speaker, it is such a pleasure to rise and speak to legislation that is very historic in nature. It is not too often that we see a national government taking an initiative as significant as the one we see today. What we are talking about are the core principles of what a national child care program will look like. It is the type of thing that I hope all members of this House will get behind.

Over the summer, I had a wonderful opportunity to visit Stanley Knowles School in the north end of Winnipeg. It has been providing child care and day care for the past 30 years, since its creation. What was special about this particular visit was that the Prime Minister was with me. We had the opportunity first-hand to engage with child care workers and parents, and I think he personally enjoyed being with the children.

We saw creativity around the tables as children would come up and start playing. We saw the interaction taking place between the children and staff. When we are in a child care facility and see it at work, we see a very caring attitude, one that is nurtured by love. They are not the biological parents; they are workers, but we can tell that their heart is in what they are doing.

I could also see that the Prime Minister was thoroughly enjoying the visit. I say that because I know, as we all should, that shortly after the Prime Minister was elected, he made a strong indication as a feminist that he wanted to move forward on important issues for women and others, and child care is an important issue. It does so much to ensure that we get fuller participation in every aspect of our lives.

When we think about what kind of principles there are in child care, we are talking about access, affordability and inclusivity. We are talking about high-quality child care, and that is within this legislation. It is a framework of principles. I believe it does not matter where we go in Canada; we will find support for those principles, and for the first time, we have legislation that is putting them in place. It is setting out that framework.

We have seen the degree to which Canadians have fallen in love with the Canada Health Act and the many benefits that this legislation has brought to every citizen from coast to coast to coast. It was a true, national program, and we can look at the results it has delivered to people today. We love our health care system.

Let me suggest that the principles we are talking about today, even though we are debating them, have been talked about a great deal over the last number of years, virtually from day one when the leader of the Liberal Party became the Prime Minister. We have had a number of ministers raise the issues and have dialogue with

provinces, territories, indigenous leaders, child care workers and all forms of stakeholders. They have a vested interest in a topic that all of us should be concerned about.

• (1655)

It is the future. It is for our young ones, the children, that we are enabling, as much as possible, that quality, accessibility, affordability and inclusivity for everyone. It is interesting. When I hear comments coming from across the way, they like to plant the seeds the doubt or to be critical. Let us think in terms of the volume of dollars that are being contributed to this program. It is \$30 billion over five years. That is a serious commitment to ensure that not only are we bringing in legislation, but we are also supporting that legislation with tangible dollars.

The legislation we have before us today is not the starting point. Ministers and civil servants have had what I suspect are hundreds of collective meetings in every region of our country, and working with indigenous leaders, to ensure that we are able to accomplish something that has never been done before, and that is an agreement on the principles we are talking about.

It does not matter what province or territory or community Canadians live in, those principles of child care and early learning are going to be there. That is something I know and am absolutely confident of, because I have had discussions with colleagues in our Liberal caucus who are very passionate about this, and for good reason. We understand and appreciate the true value of the legislation.

There is a place we could go to see the degree to which it has been successful, and that is the province of Quebec. For over two decades, Quebec has been dealing with early learning and child care in a far more progressive fashion or manner than any other jurisdiction in Canada. I have even heard some members say in North America, and I suspect that could be the case.

The national Liberal Party and the government of the day has said that this is something we believe in, and it is not our first attempt. We attempted to do this prior to Stephen Harper's government. We came very close. This time we believe we can cross the finish line. Once again, we have achieved something that no other government has done. We have the agreement in writing from the provinces, territories and indigenous leaders who have signed off, saying that they support the principles I am talking about. They support what the national government is doing on the issue of early learning and child care.

Even though we have accumulated a great deal of support, there is a number of us who have some concerns, if I could put it that way, in terms of where the Conservative Party of Canada really is on the issue. They are fair concerns. Let us think about the last federal election. In the last federal election, the former leader of the Conservative Party, the member for Durham, made it very clear that he would scrap the Liberal plan. That was the past leader. The current leader boasted about how his former government cancelled Liberal child care plans.

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• (1700)

People need to realize that 338 Conservative candidates in the last election knocked on doors, handed out materials, were all over social media and had press conferences and so forth on their election platform, a platform that was not positive toward what we are doing regarding early learning and child care.

I posed a question earlier today to the critic. It would be nice to believe the Conservatives will change their opinions or flip-flop. Some of my colleagues say, no, that will not happen, but I am an optimistic person. A glass half full of water means there is water in the glass to drink. At the end of the day, I am hopeful the Conservatives will see the light on this issue and change their position.

• (1705)

**Mr. Frank Caputo:** Do you even know what our position is?

**Mr. Kevin Lamoureux:** Madam Speaker, the Conservative member asked me—

**The Assistant Deputy Speaker (Mrs. Carol Hughes):** There are some side conversations or questions being asked, but it is not time yet. I want to remind members there will be 10 minutes for questions and comments, so there will be an opportunity to ask a lot of questions then.

The hon. parliamentary secretary has the floor.

**Mr. Kevin Lamoureux:** Madam Speaker, I think that was a legitimate question. The member from across the floor asked if I know the Conservatives' position. I actually have a sense of what they oppose because they have said that publicly, and I have made reference to that.

The member's former leader, just so he knows, told him that, when he knocks on the door, he should tell his constituents that he does not like the Liberal plan. That was the former leader of the Conservative Party. The current leader has gone around boasting, as I indicated, that the former Harper government cancelled Liberal child care plans in the past. Do I know what the Conservative Party's position is on this, on child care? No, but in fairness, I do not think anyone knows what its policy is on child care. I suspect it has something to do with the trickle-down private sector. I do not know that, but it is my suspicion as they are quick to criticize.

The implementation of what we saw in Quebec has achieved wonders. Think of it in terms of single parents, 90% of whom are women. That is why this is a very strong feminist policy. Think about a single mom who is not able to get into the workforce because of her inability to afford child care. That is a reality. No matter what the Conservative Party may want us to believe, that is an actual reality. There are people who have a difficult time being able to afford child care. With the Province of Quebec coming in with a program that made it affordable, at the end of the day thousands, not hundreds, of women were able to get into the workforce. That is because they were prepared to take a chance in that province.

When I say thousands of women in Quebec, that is a very low estimate on my part. It could go into the tens of thousands, especially when factoring in the number of years. One could ultimately ask what the benefit to the mother or, on the odd occasion, the father, has been of being able to get out of the house, whether to volunteer, work or get additional educational opportunities, all of

which could, in all likelihood, create better outcomes in terms of household income. There are tremendous opportunities created for the individual.

Collectively, I would suggest, it is even greater for society. The benefits to the individual are many, but the benefits to society are even greater. With more people participating in the workforce, especially one that continues to grow, that helps all of us in society. There are more resources generating GDP. In other words, the economy benefits. There are literally tens of thousands of jobs out there. We are very dependent on, for example, immigration policies and international workers, because there are so many jobs out there. In many ways there are people in Canada who would like to be able to work, but for a number of reasons, and the financial affordability of child care is one of the primary ones, they are not able to do that.

• (1710)

Let us imagine other families that have one parent working during the day and one working at night because they cannot afford child care. They are losing out on the opportunity of having more quality family time, if I can put it that way.

There are many things in society that would benefit from recognizing the principles we are trying to put in place through this legislation. Having a Canada-wide system with a federal vision would benefit all Canadians. We need to recognize that there is a long-term funding component to the legislation. There is a national advisory council on early learning and child care that would be created. We need to recognize that we would have reporting from the minister to the public with regard to ongoing progress in this area. That shows an ongoing commitment to financing.

Putting this into legislation would make taking it apart even more difficult, in particular for the Conservative Party. At the end of the day, we believe, as the New Democrats, the Bloc members and I believe the Greens do, that providing access, affordability, inclusivity and high-quality child care is in the nation's best interest, the parents' best interest and the child's best interest.

By having this legislation, taking up the framework and continuing to work with provinces, territories and indigenous communities, we would ensure that child care and early learning become a reality for more people. To me, that is what this is all about. We want to ensure accessibility and that we have these opportunities, because by doing that, whether it is the child, the parent or society as a whole, we all collectively and individually benefit.

I hope the Conservative Party will not try to give mixed messages, like saying they kind of like the legislation but will have 150 amendments during committee work.

**An hon. member:** That is what this place is for.

**Mr. Kevin Lamoureux:** Madam Speaker, it is about the principles. Do the Conservatives not support the principles? Hopefully we will find out.

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**The Assistant Deputy Speaker (Mrs. Carol Hughes):** I want to remind members to wait until the hon. member is finished or until I indicate that he is done before they try to ask questions and make comments.

Questions and comments, the hon. member for Kamloops—Thompson—Cariboo.

**Mr. Frank Caputo (Kamloops—Thompson—Cariboo, CPC):** Madam Speaker, it is always a pleasure to rise on behalf of the people of Kamloops—Thompson—Cariboo. Before I begin, I want to recognize a constituent who recently passed away, Mrs. Kathie Lock. She was the secretary at my elementary school, and I graduated elementary school with her daughter. I wish her family all the best and want to express my condolences in this difficult time. May perpetual light shine upon her.

The parliamentary secretary just spoke about the feminist Prime Minister. We only need to consult people like Jody Wilson-Raybould, Jane Philpott and others who have spoken out to find out whether that is actually the case.

Does the parliamentary secretary support the fact that we should be supporting all parents, like my parents? My father was a shift worker and my mom was a homemaker. Will the parliamentary secretary commit here and now to supporting those people, not just people who work nine to five?

• (1715)

**Mr. Kevin Lamoureux:** Madam Speaker, I thought I was being very clear about the legislation and what it would do. It would put into law principles to ensure accessibility, affordability, inclusivity and high-quality child care and early learning. I truly believe that through the financial commitments this government has put in place and through working with provinces, territories and indigenous communities, we will make child care and early learning available for all.

[*Translation*]

**Ms. Monique Pauzé (Repentigny, BQ):** Madam Speaker, there was a joint meeting between the Prime Minister of Canada and Premier of Quebec on the issue of compensation. That is great, and we are happy, but why was this not included in the bill? The Prime Minister of Canada said that the federal government would continue to help Quebec, but what will actually happen in five years? Why can it not be written directly into the bill?

[*English*]

**Mr. Kevin Lamoureux:** Madam Speaker, as we try to figure out where the different political parties are on the principles of the legislation, hopefully it will pass sooner as opposed to later. I think a lot will depend on the Conservative Party's positioning on the legislation, but it will go to committee.

The member might want to take up her question with the minister responsible for the legislation. I am sure that at the committee stage she will be able to get a more detailed answer than I would be able to provide her at this time.

**Ms. Laurel Collins (Victoria, NDP):** Madam Speaker, every parent should have access to quality, affordable child care when they need it.

The Liberals promised national child care almost 30 years ago, and for decades families have been struggling to afford child care, struggling to find child care and sometimes paying more than their rent or mortgage to ensure their kids are taken care of. I am so glad to see both the current funding commitments and this legislation for the future.

With the federal financial commitments, B.C. has been investing in reducing costs, creating more spaces and recruiting more early childhood educators. That is my home province. The member is from Manitoba, and Manitoba is the only province that has not seen an average reduction in child care fees.

I am curious if the member agrees that we need to see stronger accountability measures so that we actually guarantee that families are going to see a reduction in costs.

**Mr. Kevin Lamoureux:** Madam Speaker, the short answer is that I am absolutely confident there will be a reduction in fees in the province of Manitoba. I could not say right offhand, but I would be very surprised if that was not the case. With regard to the Liberal Party and its history, unfortunately the first time we had agreements that were signed off for child care was back in Paul Martin—

**Ms. Laurel Collins:** The first time you promised it was 1993. I was nine.

**The Assistant Deputy Speaker (Mrs. Carol Hughes):** Order. I want to remind the hon. member for Victoria that she had an opportunity to ask a question. If she has another one, she needs to wait for an opportunity to ask it.

The hon. parliamentary secretary can finish off before I go to the next question.

**Mr. Kevin Lamoureux:** Madam Speaker, not only do we have agreements once again with all the provinces, territories and indigenous leaders, but now today we are debating principles and putting them into legislation to ensure we are going to have them for future generations.

**Ms. Elizabeth May (Saanich—Gulf Islands, GP):** Madam Speaker, I hear calls around me of revisionist history. This is the history; I remember it like it was yesterday.

On November 28, 2005, we had signed child care agreements from every province with the federal government, stickhandled, which is a good use of the term, by Ken Dryden, who was the minister at the time and a former hockey great. That was part of a package of things that had been accomplished, including a plan for Kyoto that would have gotten us very near our Kyoto targets. We could have avoided Fiona if November 28, 2005, had not happened. There was also the Kelowna Accord. This was all agreed to, and tragically my friend Jack Layton, whom I loved, decided it was better to bring down Paul Martin's minority government and turn the country over to Stephen Harper, and we lost child care.

Martha Friendly, child care advocate, will back up every word I just said. We had been working together on it.

*Government Orders*

• (1720)

**Mr. Kevin Lamoureux:** Madam Speaker, I would like to extend my answer a bit beyond that to the current leader of the Conservative Party. I made reference to the fact that he boasted about the cancellation of child care programs, and I suspect those are some of the child care programs he was referring to when boasting. That is why we should all be concerned with regard to what I would suggest is a hidden agenda within the Conservative Party, which does not support the type of child care that I believe, and we in the Liberal caucus believe, Canadians want to see.

**Ms. Sonia Sidhu (Brampton South, Lib.):** Madam Speaker, when I met with residents, I met with women and heard positive feedback. They love the child care idea. We saw that, and there are stats out there. When women get into a second career and go back to the workforce—

**The Assistant Deputy Speaker (Mrs. Carol Hughes):** I want to ask the hon. member for Saanich—Gulf Islands and I believe the hon. member for Victoria or the hon. member for London—Fanshawe, as there are some side conversations happening, to take them outside so that the hon. member for Brampton South can be heard.

The hon. member for Brampton South.

**Ms. Sonia Sidhu:** Madam Speaker, more women are getting back into the workforce and starting their second career. I am wondering if the hon. member can expand on how this bill supports economic growth and women who are going back to a second career. Can the member explain that?

**Mr. Kevin Lamoureux:** Madam Speaker, as I indicated earlier, within the Liberal caucus there is a great sense of accomplishment on this particular file. We understand that there is a lot more to do, but I can tell the member that when we reach out to our constituents and talk to some of the child care workers and some of the parents, there is a high sense of excitement. That is why I believe this is sound legislation that should be supported by all parties of the House.

If we believe in the importance of accessibility, affordability, inclusivity and high-quality child care, then this is good legislation that will enshrine the principles of those things into law. We can then continue to work with our constituents to ensure that more jobs are created. Also, there is going to be more opportunity and more free time for people to get involved in the workforce, in volunteer work and in many other activities.

**Mrs. Cheryl Gallant (Renfrew—Nipissing—Pembroke, CPC):** Madam Speaker, our colleague across the way made reference to a situation where one parent was working during the day and one at night, and somehow their plan made for a better quality of life. Does this \$10-a-day day care apply when somebody is in the home, because people who work during the day have to sleep during the night and vice versa when we have a family with parents on double shifts?

**Mr. Kevin Lamoureux:** Madam Speaker, I am trying to be a little sympathetic to constituents of mine who have children and are not able to afford child care. For the first time, they can now look at maybe not having as much work, where one parent has to work in the evening and the other in the daytime and they are not necessari-

ly able to make the connection they would like with their family unit.

I am suggesting that at the end of the day, this particular program, which has been achieved through a great deal of effort with different levels of government, is ultimately going to provide more opportunities that will be for the betterment of the child, the individual parent or guardian, the child care worker and Canadian society as a whole. That is the point that needs to be emphasized.

• (1725)

**Mrs. Anna Roberts (King—Vaughan, CPC):** Madam Speaker, I rise today on behalf of my constituents of King—Vaughan.

Bill C-35, an act respecting early learning and child care in Canada, sets a vision for a Canada-wide early learning and child care system committed to ongoing collaboration with provinces and indigenous people to support efforts to “establish and maintain”. Just over 52% of Canadian children younger than six years were in licensed or unlicensed child care in 2022. This bill proposes to cut day care fees by an average of 50% by the end of 2022 and down to an average of \$10 per day by 2026.

Bill C-35 is a step in the right direction. However, it is too generic and does not consider or address many obstacles that parents face when accessing child care. Affordable, quality child care is critical, but if it cannot be accessed, it does not help families. Bill C-35 is beneficial for families that already have a child care space, but it does not help the thousands of families on child care wait-lists or the operators who do not have the staff or infrastructure to offer more spaces.

I forgot to mention that I will be sharing my time with the member of Parliament for Battlefords—Lloydminster.

In Ontario alone, the Financial Accountability Office says that demand for the program will exceed the number of available spaces. The FAO estimates that by 2026, approximately 600,000 children under the age of six will have potential access to \$10-a-day child care, but only 375,000 licensed child care spaces will be available. Therefore, approximately 227,000 children under the age of six will be left behind, not able to access the \$10-a-day child care.

Canada needs far more child care spaces than it has, and Bill C-35 would not address the need for increased child care infrastructure. The Liberal government simply offering up grants and subsidies through Bill C-35 does neither initiate nor promote operators to step up and start up centres where they are needed.

*Government Orders*

Bill C-35 also fails to address the child care labour shortage. There is currently not enough qualified staff to keep all existing child care centres running at full capacity. Child care workers in Canada continue to leave the sector due to the low pay and poor working conditions. The majority of child care professionals are overworked and suffer burnout. The shortage of workers means that in many communities there is only one child care space available for every three children who need it and wait-lists are long.

According to the Canadian Union of Public Employees, Bill C-35 fails to address the shortage of early childhood educators and child care workers. Until the child care staffing crisis is resolved, the promise of affordable and high-quality child care for every family in Canada that needs it will remain unfulfilled.

One of Bill C-35's commitments is to provide more accessible child care to indigenous people and contribute to the implementation of the United Nations Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples. Indigenous early learning and child care programs that focus on the languages and culture identities of first nations, Métis and Inuit communities have been found to contribute to better educational outcomes for indigenous children and help to build their language ability and sense of cultural pride. However, there is a shortage of indigenous workers trained in early childhood education in Canada, particularly because of challenges they face in acquiring training, such as cost, entrance requirements and residence in remote areas with restricted technology.

According to Statistics Canada, indigenous childhood educators and assistants and child care providers are less likely to have post-secondary education compared to their non-indigenous counterparts. Although claiming to support indigenous child care, Bill C-35 would do nothing to address the shortage in indigenous child care workers or the disparity of education between indigenous and non-indigenous child care workers.

• (1730)

The guiding principle of the framework for Bill C-35 heavily gives preferential treatment to public and non-for-profit day cares over small business models. This piece of the bill opens the door to a two-tier framework of child care across Canada.

Quality child care comes in all shapes and sizes. In Canada, options for child care range from nannies and home day care to day care centres, preschool programs, and before- and after-school programs. By giving preferential treatment to public and not-for-profit child care, Bill C-35 discriminates against women. The majority of child care operators are women, and the language and intent of this bill prevent any growth and opportunities for private female operators.

How would Bill C-35 assist single parents who do not have regularly scheduled nine-to-five jobs? This issue is not addressed in the bill. How does Bill C-35 address child care for children with disabilities? In British Columbia, children with disabilities are continuously left behind when it comes to child care. There is no official count on how many child care sites are accessible for kids with disabilities, because there is no provincial definition of what makes a child care site inclusive. How about grandparents who have stepped up and put their retirement on hold for their grandchildren?

The 2021 federal budget pledges \$30 million in new spending on the national child care system over five years, with another \$9.2 billion annually. These stats are coming from the Liberals' numbers.

Morna Ballantyne, executive director of Child Care Now, told CBC News, on the implementation of Bill C-35:

...we'd like to see...a full report on what progress has been made with respect to the system building in each jurisdiction. How many spaces have been created, where have they been created? Who's operating the spaces that have been created, what are the ages of the children being served by the new spaces?

We really think there needs to be a proper and full public accounting of how the money, the public money, has been spent.

The minister is on record saying that providing the federal government with details of the provinces' child care plans is a condition of their deals with Ottawa, but how can we trust that? This is coming from a government that has eight years of failed Liberal policy and does not hold itself accountable for it.

This is coming from the same government that spent \$54 million on an ineffective ArriveCAN app and refuses to supply Canadians with a full list of all the contractors who got the money. This is coming from the same government that has \$28 billion of suspicious spending and another \$4.6 billion of outright waste. This is coming from the same government that failed to keep children's medication on the shelves.

Can Canada really trust the government to implement a quality child care system and ensure this federal funding is properly used? From the lack of detail in Bill C-35, I am not so trusting. Amendments need to be made to ensure all Canadians have access to quality child care.

**Ms. Ya'ara Saks (Parliamentary Secretary to the Minister of Families, Children and Social Development, Lib.):** Mr. Speaker, my colleague across the way is very fixated on details and numbers and spending. The government is supporting Ontario's efforts to grow its child care system by providing \$10.2 billion over five years as part of our agreement with the Province of Ontario. In turn, Ontario has promised to create 86,000 spaces. Premier Doug Ford called it "a great deal for Ontario". That is exactly what he said on March 31 when we announced that deal. I would like to ask if the member opposite agrees with the Premier of Ontario.

*Government Orders*

• (1735)

**Mrs. Anna Roberts:** Mr. Speaker, I am not doubting that we need to take care of our children. Our children are our future. I have no doubt of that. My question is, do we have enough staff to support these child care centres and do we have enough spaces? I have not personally seen any evidence of that. We need to ensure that all this documentation is provided to all members of this House so that we can also ensure that our children are taken care of moving forward.

[*Translation*]

**Ms. Andr anne Larouche (Shefford, BQ):** Mr. Speaker, I thank my colleague from King—Vaughan, who serves alongside me on the Standing Committee on the Status of Women.

In several studies that the committee has conducted since I joined it, we have observed that Quebec has a really wonderful model that was put in place by a feminist. Pauline Marois created a unique model. The economic impact of early childhood centres in Quebec was clear in the study on the impacts of COVID-19 during the pandemic and how women were disproportionately affected, as well as in the study on invisible work, where this issue of child care also came up. Many economists will say it: This has allowed thousands of women to return to the labour market. This is crucial.

It was interesting to hear the member talk about jurisdiction. In my view, this falls under Quebec's jurisdiction. It is a model. If the rest of Canada wants to emulate it, that is fine, but Quebec has jurisdiction over this issue. Furthermore, any tax credit that might be put in place, as some Conservatives want, will never happen.

Let us remember why early childhood centres were created. It was to provide equal opportunities for young children and all women. Quebec's child care system is perfect. The rest of Canada should use it as a model, but the government needs to sign an agreement giving us the right to opt out with full compensation and giving us the money to manage the system we have in place.

[*English*]

**Mrs. Anna Roberts:** Mr. Speaker, I enjoy working with my hon. colleague on the status of women committee. We should learn from what Quebec is doing. I have no issues with that at all.

However, we also need to ensure that, province by province, we are all different. Each province has different needs, and we need to ensure that each province will at least adhere to the principles that we know will protect our children and provide women the opportunity to make that choice, whether or not they choose to go back to work.

**Ms. Lisa Marie Barron (Nanaimo—Ladysmith, NDP):** Mr. Speaker, the member was talking about discrimination against women, and I found myself reflecting on what really does discriminate against women.

We know that what discriminates against women is not having access to public and non-profit child care that provides affordable, high-quality and accessible day care for families who need it, not day care that makes profit off the backs of parents. We also know that public and non-profit child care provides better wages and working conditions for staff, who are predominantly women.

The member is clearly very much in support of child care. How can the member justify throwing away a bill that would provide national, accessible, affordable child care for families as being in the best of interests of anybody?

**Mrs. Anna Roberts:** Mr. Speaker, I do not think the member understood what I was saying.

I am not against child care. The Conservatives are not against child care. However, what about the individuals like our grandparents who have to give up their opportunity for retirement to help raise their grandchildren? What about myself, when I was left as a young widow and did not have the choice of \$10 day care? My hours were so irregular, the cost to me was out of this world. This bill does not help women who work shift work.

**Mrs. Rosemarie Falk (Battlefords—Lloydminster, CPC):** Mr. Speaker, for young families across this country, child care is a principle concern. When a child is in their care or with another, parents want to feel confident that their child is being well cared for, and that they are safe and in a healthy environment that supports their development.

Canadian families across the country should have access to affordable and quality child care. Parents should also be able to choose a child care solution that best suits them and works with their family's own unique needs. The reality is there is no one-size-fits-all child care solution.

Not only is the issue of child care important for families, but it is also a significant consideration in workforce participation. Access to child care continues to be a large barrier to workforce participation, and it cannot be overlooked as we look into addressing the labour shortages we are experiencing across industries in this country.

While there is presumably a consensus on the viewpoint that there should be accessible, affordable and flexible child care for parents throughout our country, this legislation offers no real assurances to Canadian families that there will be. The families that will benefit from this legislation are those families who have already secured a child care space in a public or not-for-profit program.

However, this legislation does nothing to help the thousands of families on child care wait-lists and those whose child care needs require more flexibility. It does nothing to help those families whose child care needs fall outside the standard hours of operation. In fact, the primary problem with this legislation is that it fails to ensure that demand can be met and that supports are flexible enough to meet the needs of all Canadian families.

### *Government Orders*

Affordable, quality child care is a great concept. It is a wonderful concept, but if a parent cannot access it, then it is ultimately worthless. In laying out a vision for a Canada-wide, early learning and child care system, Bill C-35 offers Canadian families a single, just one, child care solution, and by its own design, the access is limited.

This legislation intentionally ignores an entire section of the child care landscape, which is critical to meeting demand. The Liberal-NDP government is shutting private operators, who tend to be women-owned small businesses, out of its plan. It fails to even ensure them a seat at the table.

There is no representation for these women-owned small businesses in the makeup of the proposed national advisory council on early learning and child care. In addition to public child care programs, these women-owned small business operators are critical to meeting the growing demand for child care spaces, not to mention that, by limiting supports to public and not-for-profit child care programs, this will drive up the demand for child care spaces in these programs where the wait-lists already exist.

We know that wait-lists already exist because there is not necessarily the staff or infrastructure put in place to offer more child care spaces. This legislation does not solve the issue of recruitment or that of retention in the early learning and child care sector. It does not answer the pressing question of who will staff these programs.

Report after report indicates that early childhood educators are overwhelmed and burnt out, and that there is a steady stream of early childhood educators leaving the profession. There have been operators who have had to close their doors at times because there was not necessarily enough staff to operate.

● (1740)

To ensure that the government is delivering more than just announcements to Canadians, the government needs to deliver a tangible plan, in partnership with our provinces, to recruit and retain labour. That plan should engage all child care providers.

With limited resources, it does not make sense to shut out these women-owned small businesses from this solution, nor should the government be putting these entrepreneurs at a disadvantage. These child care providers should be able to operate in a fair market.

Without a real plan to address the existing challenges in child care, access to child care will never really be achieved. If the goal is truly to deliver universal access to child care, child care policy also needs to be comprehensive.

However, the government's vision for child care policy is limited. For one, it fails to acknowledge that not all parents have a standard work schedule. The reality is that standard child care operating hours do not meet the needs of most shift workers. Parents who work early mornings, evenings, nights, weekends, statutory holidays, casual shifts or any other irregular shifts are largely being left behind. By focusing child care supports on programs that do not offer any real kind of child care solution to families with non-standard work schedules, there is a massive gap in the NDP-Liberal government's child care policy. It is not a universal solution.

The NDP-Liberal government also purports to be addressing affordability through the creation of a \$10-a-day child care program, but that is not entirely accurate either. As I have mentioned, the only families who are benefiting from the cuts to child care costs are those who already have child care spaces in eligible public and not-for-profit programs.

We are now hearing reports of operators who are struggling with the skyrocketing cost of living in the country. These operators, like all Canadians, are seeing the cost of everything climb. Many who offer food programs are now having to consider whether they are going to cut these programs entirely or charge parents additional costs to keep them running.

Either these parents are getting fewer services from their child care providers or some of those savings will ultimately be lost. Of course, for those parents who cannot access a child care space, they are not benefiting from these savings, but are still struggling under the pressures of the rising costs.

In fact, I was listening to the Minister of Families, Children and Social Development's speech earlier in the debate today. She highlighted that she had heard from parents who could now afford their mortgage payment because their child care fees were reduced and other parents who could afford groceries for their family because of the reduction in child care fees. Well, she was quite proud of that achievement, and it really points to a bigger problem, a problem that is her own government's doing. Canadians are paying the price for this costly coalition's tax-and-spend agenda. The NDP-Liberal government needs to take affordability seriously.

Canada's food price report has reported that the average family of four is expected to spend \$1000 more than it did last year on groceries. Meanwhile, surveys are already reporting that 52% of Canadian families are concerned that they do not have enough money to feed their families. We are now seeing record usage of food banks across the country.

The cost of basic necessities is becoming out of reach for more and more Canadians, and the Liberal government's addition of half a trillion dollars in federal debt has led to the 40-year-high inflation rates that we are seeing now. Its continued deficit spending is fuelling inflation and Canadians are paying more in taxes than ever before.

We know that parents are stretching their dollars as far as they can go, but that is becoming less and less fruitful. Those parents who are shut out of the child care program because they cannot access it or because it does not meet their needs do not share the minister's elation.



The driving force behind the skyrocketing cost of living crisis needs to be addressed to really help Canadian families who are struggling to make ends meet and, ultimately, if we want to help Canadian families with the cost of child care, we need to ensure that child care is first available. Child care is unique to each family, and a federal child care policy should reflect that.

• (1745)

Bill C-35 is a flawed piece of legislation. Its approach to child care is narrow and it does not provide Canadian families the assurances that their child care needs would be met. I hope that the NDP-Liberal government is prepared to make some amendments and listen to this—

• (1750)

**The Deputy Speaker:** It is time for questions and comments.

The hon. parliamentary secretary to the government House leader.

**Mr. Mark Gerretsen (Parliamentary Secretary to the Leader of the Government in the House of Commons (Senate), Lib.):** Mr. Speaker, there has been a lot of discussion today. We have been anxiously trying to get a position from the Conservative Party on whether it supports this or not. When we imply that it does not, the Conservatives heckle from across the way, saying, “How do you know what our position is?” If the Conservatives do end up supporting this, it will be a complete about-face.

Let us listen to how the Leader of the Opposition responded when he was asked, “when you say about cutting the supplementary spending, in your view does that include the newly signed child care agreements with most of the provinces?” The Leader of the Opposition said, “We’ve said we do not believe in a \$100-billion slush fund”. He literally referred to the child care money as a slush fund.

He further went on to tweet on November 30, 2020, “Why should Justin Trudeau”, sorry, the Prime Minister, “get to force parents to pay through taxes for his government daycare scheme, instead of letting them choose what’s best for their own kids?”

Therefore, if the Conservatives do support this, it will be a complete about-face. I wonder if the member could enlighten the House on what the Conservative Party’s position is.

**The Deputy Speaker:** Before we go to the answer, I just need to remind members not to use member’s proper names in the chamber. I know the member corrected himself, so I want to thank him for that.

**Mrs. Tracy Gray:** Mr. Speaker, I rise on a point of order. The member opposite was using a tone that was unparliamentary. We can hear him quite fine. He does not need to yell. Therefore, I would like to make sure that he carries on with the decorum of this place.

**Mr. Mark Gerretsen:** Mr. Speaker, on the same point of order, I did not realize that this was in our procedural requirements, and that a tone would be considered something that could be taken offence to. I sincerely apologize if the tone I have is coming across as offensive, so—

### *Government Orders*

**The Deputy Speaker:** I thank the member. I do not know what happened toward the end there, but everybody seemed to get a little off their game, so I am going to make sure the temperature goes down a bit and offer the opportunity for the hon. member for Battlefords—Lloydminster to answer the question.

**Mrs. Rosemarie Falk:** Mr. Speaker, I do not think my colleague across the way listened to anything I said. There is a portion of families who are being left out of this, and a lot of those families carried us through the pandemic: our doctors, our nurses, our front-line care workers. They work erratic hours. Our shift workers would not be able to access this.

It is typical of the government to put its fingers in the provincial jurisdiction and tell provinces what to do, and if they do not get in line, too bad so sad.

**The Deputy Speaker:** I am also going to remind everyone that I want to make sure everyone has opportunity to ask questions.

[*Translation*]

I also want to ensure that everyone gets a chance to answer.

[*English*]

Therefore, members should keep their questions and answers as short as they possibly can.

The hon. member for Repentigny.

[*Translation*]

**Ms. Monique Pauzé (Repentigny, BQ):** Mr. Speaker, the member began her speech by saying that early childhood educators are burnt out. We could say the same about teachers. She then said that there are staffing shortages. In Canada, there is a lot of competition for nurses because there are staffing shortages everywhere, so this is not just an issue affecting early childhood educators.

Here are some statistics. Between 1997 and 2016 in Quebec, the number of single-parent families receiving social assistance dropped by 64%. That did not happen right away in 1997. It takes time to build a system, but we have to start somewhere. No, the system is not perfect, far from it. We want the areas of jurisdiction to be very clear. I think that if we do not take the first step, then we will never get anywhere.

[*English*]

**Mrs. Rosemarie Falk:** Mr. Speaker, I did mention in my remarks that there are labour shortages across all industries in this country. We know our birth rate is declining. We do not have the population to replace the aging population. We know that immigration is backlogged by millions of cases. We know it takes, on average, 166 days for a temporary foreign worker to get a work permit.

I just think it is ridiculous that the government is throwing flowers and perfume at this, making it look all good, when we do not have the infrastructure. Provinces do not have the infrastructure. Provinces do not have the labour to do this, and it is unfair to give false hope to parents in this country.

*Government Orders*

• (1755)

**Mr. Taylor Bachrach (Skeena—Bulkley Valley, NDP):** Mr. Speaker, the member for Battlefords—Lloydminster implied in her comments that these national child care agreements are not going to meet the needs of parents with certain work schedules. I believe that is indeed a good concern to have. However, I want to bring her attention to a great project in northwest B.C. in the District of Kitimat, where Tamitik Status of Women is working on 60 child care spaces that are going to be offered 24 hours a day. It is the first 24-hour child care available in British Columbia.

Could my colleague share with me and with this place whether the provincial government in her home province is working on similar partnerships?

**Mrs. Rosemarie Falk:** Mr. Speaker, it is very interesting to hear of that project going on. My question would be: Is that project public or not-for-profit? If it is entrepreneurial, it actually does not fall under this framework.

**Mr. Tony Van Bynen (Newmarket—Aurora, Lib.):** Mr. Speaker, I would like to advise that I am sharing my time with the member for Parkdale—High Park.

I am very pleased to have the opportunity to address this House on Bill C-35, what we hope will become the act respecting early learning and child care in Canada.

As the Minister of Families, Children and Social Development indicated in her remarks earlier, we now have in place a Canada-wide early learning and child care system that aims to ensure access to affordable, high-quality and inclusive child care for families across the country. The purpose of Bill C-35 is to strengthen and protect that system by enshrining its principles into law. This is a commitment from the Government of Canada to support access to affordable child care for families in Canada, no matter where in Canada they live. In fact, the new Canada-wide system is already benefiting tens of thousands of people from coast to coast with fees for regulated child care having been reduced in all jurisdictions across Canada, outside of Quebec and Yukon, which already had affordable child care systems, and we are just getting started.

Bill C-35 is the result of engagement between the Government of Canada, provinces, territories, indigenous governments, and organizations and stakeholders. It builds on our collaborative work with provinces, territories and indigenous peoples. It also builds on the agreements negotiated with every province and territory to establish a Canada-wide system. The collaboration that delivered this remarkable system was detailed, and sometimes challenging, but held in an atmosphere of respect, commitment and a willingness to succeed. For sure there are similarities in the agreements, but we never expected a one-size-fits-all model that conveniently served all of our partners. We succeeded because we agreed on one fundamental principle, the thing all Canadians care about most deeply, giving children in Canada the best possible start in life.

This legislation respects provincial and territorial jurisdiction and upholds indigenous rights. All our partners in this Canada-wide effort can look forward to benefiting from the long-term federal financial commitment.

Let us talk about funding. In budget 2021, the Government of Canada made a transformative investment of more than \$27 billion over five years. If we include related investments, including in indigenous early learning and child care, we have committed nearly \$30 billion over five years to make quality early learning and child care affordable and accessible. Combined with previous investments announced since 2015, a minimum of \$9.2 billion a year ongoing will be invested in child care, including indigenous early learning and child care, starting in 2025 to 2026. These investments are already having an impact. To date, fees have been reduced in every jurisdiction across Canada. Further, Quebec, Yukon and Nunavut are providing regulated child care for \$10 a day or less.

Let us take our agreement with Saskatchewan. The province has been one of the early leaders in fee reductions. Over a year ago, Saskatchewan announced a 50% reduction that it made retroactive to July 2021. That was a year and a half in advance of our December 2022 target. Saskatchewan followed with another fee reduction, effective September 1 of last year, where fees were lowered by a total of 70% compared to March 2021 levels. This is a huge saving for families across the province.

While the province is lowering fees, it is continuing to ensure that early childhood educators are kept at the heart of the system. Last September, Saskatchewan announced that federal funding from its Canada-wide agreement is being used to establish an ECE wage enhancement grant, which will result in increased wages for the workforce that is critical to the success of the Canada-wide system, and there is more.

• (1800)

In early 2022, Saskatchewan announced the creation of over 1,200 new licensed child care spaces on top of the over 600 spaces the province announced in December 2021. That is more than 1,800 new child care spaces providing more children with a better start in life.

This is the Canada-wide early learning and child care system in action: lowered fees, a supported ECE workforce, more child care spaces and real results for making life more affordable. For all these families across Saskatchewan, and the thousands of others like them across Canada, this system means hundreds of dollars more each month to put healthy food on the table and to sign up kids for music, sports or after-school activities.

*Government Orders*

The federal investment not only benefits families and young children, it also benefits the economy as a whole, which means it benefits all Canadians, and here is how: It will grow Canada's economy. Economic studies show that, with each dollar invested in early childhood education, the broader economy receives between \$1.50 and \$2.80 in return. The federal government's estimates predict that the Canada-wide early learning and child care system could raise the GDP by as much as 1.2% over the next two decades. It will grow Canada's labour force. As we have seen in Quebec, at the time the Quebec Educational Childcare Act was instituted in 1997, the women's labour force participation rate in Quebec was four percentage points lower than the rest of Canada. In 2021, it is four points higher.

The figures are telling us that investing in increased access to high-quality, affordable and inclusive early learning and child care is not only the right thing to do for families, but it is also the smart thing to do for Canada and our economy. It is a win for all of us.

Our colleague, the Minister of Families, Children and Social Development, has many times said, "access to high-quality, affordable, flexible and inclusive [learning and] child care is not a luxury—it is a necessity." As the Deputy Prime Minister and Minister of Finance put it, "child care...is as much a piece of critical infrastructure...as a bridge or a road".

It boils down to this: All parents and caregivers have an opportunity to build both a family and a career, and all children should have the best possible start in life.

This legislation comes with the twin federal commitments of respect of jurisdiction and a reliable funding partner. We are creating a great system together, a system we can all be justifiably proud of, and I respectfully ask that my colleagues give rapid passage to Bill C-35 so we can put this last piece in place.

• (1805)

**Ms. Michelle Ferreri (Peterborough—Kawartha, CPC):** Mr. Speaker, does the member opposite believe there should be preference given to low or middle-income Canadians over those who can afford it? The way the bill is currently written, it would subsidize wealthy families and push those most vulnerable to the back of these long wait-lists.

Where does he sit? Does he not think that we should be prioritizing child care for our most vulnerable Canadian families?

**Mr. Tony Van Bynen:** Mr. Speaker, I can say with great confidence that our focus has always been on prioritizing the needs of people who need it the most. The process for this system is focused so that everybody can participate in it equally and fairly, and that we give children a great start on life. That is the focus of this exercise.

We will always be able to find something to criticize, but let us address the fact that we are moving forward in a very positive way. We are doing good things for kids in Canada, and that is what we should focus on.

**Mr. Sukh Dhaliwal (Surrey—Newton, Lib.):** Mr. Speaker, I want to congratulate the hon. member for not only his speech but, in fact, his support for early learning and child care. That is very important.

I remember when the first agreement was signed with British Columbia when the minister was out in B.C. It included not only organizations that believed in social justice. In fact, business organizations did support that \$10-a-day day care initiative so that women could go back to work and further their career plans.

Why does the hon. member think it is so important to enshrine early learning and child care in legislation?

**Mr. Tony Van Bynen:** Mr. Speaker, the principles of this House are that the values we hold high are inculcated into our legislation. An important program like this should be inculcated into the principles and fundamental values of our country and of this government.

**Mr. Kevin Lamoureux (Parliamentary Secretary to the Leader of the Government in the House of Commons, Lib.):** Mr. Speaker, I appreciate the comments.

As my colleague knows, there will be so many benefits from the passage of this legislation, but I would ask him to provide his thoughts in terms of the historical meaning of passing Bill C-35 and putting into place a truly nationwide program that is going to benefit children from coast to coast to coast.

**Mr. Tony Van Bynen:** Mr. Speaker, we can be part of a substantial change in the values of Canada, how we stand for the values of education of children and the values of enabling women to become more active in our economy. It is an opportunity that many of us will look back on with a tremendous amount of pride.

This is a pivotal change in very important values and it is reinforcing things that are important.

**Ms. Elizabeth May (Saanich—Gulf Islands, GP):** Mr. Speaker, it seems to me that a number of the Conservative members have made good points about the need to adapt to people who have shift work or do not work nine to five. Mostly, it is moms who look after kids but it could be either parent.

I wonder if, as this legislation proceeds, we have any sense whether the government will be prepared to accept amendments at committee.

I strongly support this legislation, just to be clear, but we do have to make sure that the \$10-a-day day care reaches the people who need it most, who are often those in insecure jobs in the gig economy.

**Mr. Tony Van Bynen:** Mr. Speaker, it is important that we allow programs like this to mature and as opportunities or challenges face us, let us not underestimate the ability of the Canadian people to find solutions. Let us allow the program to mature. There will be solutions. We just heard about a previous program in 24-7. Let us not underestimate the ability and innovation that people present.

*Government Orders*

• (1810)

**Mr. Arif Virani (Parliamentary Secretary to the Minister of International Trade, Export Promotion, Small Business and Economic Development, Lib.):** Mr. Speaker, as I rise today, one day after the sixth anniversary of the terrorist attack at the Quebec City mosque, I just want to acknowledge the loss that occurred on that day six years ago, the other five lives that have been taken by Islamophobic attacks in this country and the work that we all need to do as parliamentarians and as Canadians to fight against hatred and intolerance, in particular Islamophobia.

I rise today to participate in today's debate, not just because it is the first day of the session, not just because I am glad to be back in the chamber and glad to be back surrounded by parliamentarians seeking to advance the interests of our country and of our individual ridings, but because it actually reminded me of a conversation I had in 2019. That conversation was on a street in my riding in Roncesvalles Village and I remember encountering a family.

It was election time. It was the 2019 election. I was going door to door, as so many of us do every election period. I was confronted with a family. I had a very blunt conversation with the female lead of that family, the mother of that family.

She said to me that we have done so much work and that we continue to do so much work putting women at the forefront of things like international development assistance, women's reproductive rights and so many different initiatives, including a gender-equal cabinet. She said to me, quite candidly, that if we were really sincere about women and women's empowerment, we need to resolve child care.

I said to her that this was fair. I appreciated that criticism.

She elaborated. She said that we cannot really empower women's full participation in the workforce, whether as an entrepreneur, as a salaried employee in a public or private sector setting, unless we alleviate the disproportionate burden on women that relates to raising children.

My riding has a lot of families, a lot of young families and a lot of young kids, and there is a lot of financial burden that goes along with raising those kids. When I was raising my kids, who are now eight-and-a-half and 12, the fees ranged, per child, between \$1,500 and \$1,800. It is quite common in Toronto to hear of fees that are \$2,000 a month.

What I am pleased about today's debate and the subject of what we are discussing is that, yes, after many decades of discussions, thoughts about it, and hearing about agreements that were scuttled at the last minute, etc., finally, this nation and this Parliament are moving past the obstacles in implementing positive change. I think that is critical.

I also want to acknowledge that it was not just individual constituents like mine who had spoken to me in 2019 that provided an impetus, but there was another impetus, an impetus that has become all too familiar to all of us and that is the COVID-19 pandemic. Let me remind us, there were literally families around the country who were dealing with the difficulties of, all of a sudden, shifting their workplace and their educational place for their children and, effec-

tively, substitute day care, all within the confines of their own home, in a matter of weeks, in March and April of 2020.

That is what faced Canadians. I am being very candid here. I think, all of a sudden, it penetrated the brains, particularly, of men in the country, in terms of what a challenge it is to try to have any sort of career or profession, in a virtual setting or otherwise, and have kids running around at all hours of the day, asking about their math homework, where their history homework was, a geography lesson, name it. It was a struggle. That struggle became manifest, I think, for men like me in this country. All of a sudden, the level of people's awareness, including my gender's awareness, about the pressing need for a national child care program became that much more acute.

What I like about what we are doing is that we are creating a system where one does not have to choose between building a career and raising a family. That is a false choice. No one should ever be confronted with that. Thankfully, we are now moving toward a stage where one is not. I think that is really important.

It comes with a large price tag. A massive social change and a massive social program are not inexpensive. We readily acknowledge that. When we prioritize families, children and the women who disproportionately share the burden of raising those children, we need to invest. I think that is exactly what we did when we announced this program in our 2021 budget and the \$30-billion price tag that would go along with it over the course of the next five years.

What it is going to achieve is to basically take child care that used to cost hundreds of dollars a day and project it to cost \$10 a day, on average, across the country by 2026.

• (1815)

Some provinces were very early adopters of this program. It is staggering in terms of its magnitude, in terms of what it could achieve. Some were a bit late to the game and maybe manipulated the electoral cycle for their own purposes, but I do not want to wade into that. We are now at a stage where, of 13 provinces and territories in this country, literally every square kilometre of this country is covered by a child care agreement.

In my own province of Ontario, which I am proud to call home, fees have been reduced, on average, by 50%. Something that might have cost people, doing simple math, if they had their child in child care for 10 months of the year, \$17,000 to \$20,000 has been cut in half. Thousands of dollars are being saved by Ontarian families in my own riding of Parkdale—High Park. That is staggering, given the number one issue that we all hear when we go door to door now, which is about the cost of living and the crisis of affordability.

*Government Orders*

If we could return thousands of dollars to families in this country in one single fell swoop, that is reason enough on its own to get behind this kind of legislative initiative. What we are doing is reducing fees in every province and territory. British Columbia, Alberta, Newfoundland and Labrador, P.E.I., New Brunswick, Nova Scotia, and NWT have all reduced their fees by an average of 50%.

Saskatchewan, and there were some speakers from Saskatchewan earlier in today's debate, has gone beyond that target, and it has already reached, on average, a 70% reduction of the fees. I was chatting earlier with the member from Winnipeg, the parliamentary secretary to the government House leader. In his province of Manitoba, the fees are currently reduced by 30%, and they are on track to achieve a \$10-a-day child care early in the new year. This year, Manitobans will reach \$10 a day on average for their child care.

In Yukon and in the province of Quebec, which is really at the forefront of all this in terms of an initiative, regionally, many decades ago, they have had \$10-a-day child care. Nunavut joined them in November 2022, three years ahead of schedule.

These are truly incredible results, and they point to what we are doing. I will give one statistic that I am perhaps most proud of. In the speech by the member for Newmarket—Aurora, he talked about labour force participation. He talked about what Quebec had done, where they were about three decades ago, about 4% below the national average for women's participation in the workforce, and that now they are 4% above the Canadian average.

What we know as of right now, in the nascent days of this fledgling program, for women aged 25 to 54, is that 85% of those women are in the workforce right now, and that is 9% ahead of our southern counterparts in the United States of America. That number is only going to grow, which puts proof to the point that was made by my constituent in Parkdale—High Park, when she said to me that if we want to fully believe and allow for women's participation and their economic potential to be increased, we need to implement this kind of program. That is what we are working towards.

It is not just about the women. It is about the children who are going to benefit from earlier formative education. Again, when I struggled with that grade 4 math class, such as it was, I realized my own limitations as an instructor. As great as parents are in this country, we do not have that formalized training and certification that early childhood educators have.

What are we doing to remedy this? As part of that funding that I articulated, nearly half a billion dollars is dedicated to the training of early childhood educators, to their certification so they are providing more, better, higher-qualified training to our young people. That is a win-win. It is great for the children's development, and it is great for the early childhood instructors, who have a better certification and higher wages as a result. Most importantly, it is better for the women, who can now make not a false choice but a real choice. Some may choose to stay at home, and that is their choice. Some may choose to start that business. Some may choose to return to work. Some may choose to stay at work.

What we are doing in this one fell swoop is empowering and unlocking incredible economic potential on the part of literally half of our country. That is to the benefit of this country. That is to the ben-

efit of our economic output. That is to the benefit of Canadians. That is why I hope that, by legislating this initiative, we concretize it, we solidify it and, I dare say, we make it permanent in this country on a go-forward basis.

That is what Bill C-35 is about. That is why I am happy to stand in support of it.

• (1820)

**Mr. Frank Caputo (Kamloops—Thompson—Cariboo, CPC):** Mr. Speaker, it is always a pleasure to rise on behalf of the people of Kamloops—Thompson—Cariboo.

Before I begin asking my question, I want to recognize Kendra Woodland and the whole women's hockey team that won the winter FISU World University Games. We are obviously very proud of what our women's team accomplished. I congratulate Kendra and the team.

The question for my hon. colleague is this. My father worked shift work, and my mom was largely a homemaker and then did some night courses later to go back to work. My understanding of this bill is that it would not help people who work shift work or people who work in the evenings.

While the Liberals says this would be the cure-all, the panacea, what about people who work shift work? What is going to be done for them? Should we not be crafting a bill that benefits all, rather than just benefiting some?

**Mr. Arif Virani:** Mr. Speaker, I welcome the member opposite back to the House and wish him a happy new year.

In response to his question, I would say the details with respect to the bilateral agreements are actually quite critical in this conversation. This point was made earlier by one of his colleagues. In each province, the provincial government has the ability to dictate the terms of how the money will be spent in that given province. In my province of Ontario, it can make a determination that a certain portion of the billions of dollars we have put on the table should be made available for off hours or irregular hours for the child care that might be made available.

What we want is for people to be joining the workforce or rejoining the workforce. If that work takes them to different hours, including night shifts, day care and child care should be made available to them. The response to that type of question really rests with the particular nature of the arrangement between the B.C. provincial government and Canada in terms of signing its bilateral agreement.

*Government Orders*

[*Translation*]

**Mr. Simon-Pierre Savard-Tremblay (Saint-Hyacinthe—Bagot, BQ):** Mr. Speaker, I thank my colleague for his speech. He and I are both members of Standing Committee on International Trade. This morning we had a rather turbulent meeting, but all the same, it is always a pleasure to work with him. That is my way of saying that we missed each other over the break.

I think this is a good program, but we have every reason to be wary, because centralist Ottawa has a long-standing habit of encroaching on provincial jurisdictions.

From what we have read, money will be paid, jurisdictions will be respected and so on. However, we know that the devil is often in the details or even in the lack of details. Five years from now, if we want to renew the arrangement, a single missing sentence, poorly worded sentence or misplaced comma could have adverse consequences for the future.

Would the government be open to clearly stating, in writing, that there is a right to opt out with full compensation and with no strings attached?

**Mr. Arif Virani:** Mr. Speaker, I appreciate the question from my Bloc Québécois colleague, and his work on the Standing Committee on International Trade.

With respect to Quebec, I want to first point out that it has been a leader on this issue for decades. Second, the purpose of this bill is to formalize an agreement that we have already signed with all the provinces and territories.

[*English*]

It is not to invade or formally conflict with the jurisdiction of those various territories or localities or provinces; rather, it is a step taken to ensure that going forward, the necessity of having such a program is emphasized for all Canadians and all parliamentarians. Should a different government of a different political stripe dare to intervene to retract such a program, it would need to take the formal step of changing the legislation. That is a step we desperately hope no future government would ever take, but that is the reason why we are concretizing it as a bill.

**Mr. Taylor Bachrach (Skeena—Bulkley Valley, NDP):** Mr. Speaker, I think my colleague across the way will agree that early childhood educators and other child care workers have been undervalued and underpaid for years and years. This is something in British Columbia that the provincial government has taken some steps to rectify. There is a lot of work left to do, but really what we need is a national approach to ensuring fair working conditions and fair compensation for these educators.

Could my colleague inform the House whether he would support adding an explicit commitment to Bill C-35 to ensure that right across Canada early childhood educators earn the kinds of wages that they deserve for the role that they play in our children's upbringing and development?

• (1825)

**Mr. Arif Virani:** Mr. Speaker, I appreciate the member's concern about conditions. I share that concern. It is a bit of a delicate situation when we are talking about the specific wages provided to edu-

cators in a specific domain. The delivery of education is something that is traditionally under the purview of the provinces, but with the bilateral agreements that we are signing, we should be emphasizing that very point.

**Mrs. Tracy Gray (Kelowna—Lake Country, CPC):** Mr. Speaker, I will be splitting my time with the member for Carlton Trail—Eagle Creek.

I want to start today by thanking child care workers for the important work they do.

In reading the government's new legislation, Bill C-35, I have to say that I am disappointed. Once again, we are seeing the Liberal government choosing to put forward buzzwords and campaign slogans rather than crafting the substantive solutions parents in my community of Kelowna—Lake Country are asking for when it comes to serving their child care needs.

To be clear, this is not a national child care strategy and not a national child care program. It is strictly to subsidize, through the provinces, some families already in the child care system using certain types of child care deemed a priority by the Liberals. It is not universal. This bill in its current form is another missed opportunity for Parliament to work toward creating and staffing actual child care spaces where families could place their children. This bill does not seek to shorten long waiting lists.

What is particularly disappointing is that it is hand-picking the types of child care that are acceptable to the government. While I am disappointed, unfortunately I cannot say that I am surprised. The promise of universal child care has long been an over-promised and never-delivered commitment of the Liberal Party. How do we know? It is because it has promised it since most members of this House were children themselves.

In 1984, the former Liberal prime minister John Turner ordered a national task force to study and implement a federal child care program. It was never created. In 1993, the then future Liberal prime minister Jean Chrétien promised in the Liberal red book a national child care program, and no program was ever delivered.

In 2004, after 10 years of doing nothing on child care, the then new Liberal prime minister Paul Martin promised to spend \$5 billion on a national child care program in a last-ditch effort to save his government. Despite winning the 2004 election, no program was ever created.

Canadians are not fooled by the Liberals' over-promised yet under-delivered way they manage. We will continue to hear from the government that it has lowered the cost of child care in Canada, and it has for some, but there needs to be a number of updates made to this legislation to make child care accessible and inclusive, allow parents the freedom to do what works for their family, and to actually make a difference for many. The Conservatives will be working on these.

Just as the Liberals have allowed Canada's once ample supply of children's cold and cough medicine to dwindle to levels so low that parents must now make supply runs to American pharmacies, so too have they allowed a chronic shortage of child care spaces across Canada over the past eight years of their time in government.

The Canadian Union of Public Employees studied the shortage and found that, "in many communities there is only one child care space available for every three children who need it, and waitlists are long."

The Quebec child care system, the model from their provincial cousins that the federal Liberals have long said they wish to copy, at last count had a wait-list of 51,000 spaces. We know, listening to those operating private child care centres, that many have the resources and space to take more children, but they are continually hampered by the same labour shortage issues repeatedly ignored by the current government in many sectors of our economy and social support networks. Looking again at British Columbia, we see stories of day cares of all structures reducing their hours and turning away new children because of staff shortages.

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## ADJOURNMENT PROCEEDINGS

A motion to adjourn the House under Standing Order 38 deemed to have been moved.

• (1830)

[English]

### THE ENVIRONMENT

**Ms. Elizabeth May (Saanich—Gulf Islands, GP):** Mr. Speaker, it is an honour to rise today on our first day back in calendar 2023. I am returning to a question that I put to the hon. Minister of Environment on October 20, 2022. It is important to note the date because of the minister's response.

My question cited the Liberal platform in the election of 2021, in which they promised to, "Establish and fully fund a Canada Water Agency in 2022". It was also promised that they would, "Modernize the 50-year-old Canada Water Act".

The Minister of Environment responded with, "we are, in fact, working to create an independent water agency for Canada." He said we needed to pursue this and then at the end of his response, he said, "we will have good news to announce to this House in the coming weeks."

That was October 20, 2022, and of course, it is true that the last week of January 2023 does fall within weeks after the answer that we received in October, but the nature of the minister's answer, I think it is fair to say, suggested something a bit sooner than some time next year and we are still waiting.

We are now in a period of pre-budget work, and I think it is important to focus now on what the government must include in the budget if it is at all serious about creating a Canada water agency. I note particularly, and it was encouraging to me at the time, that the hon. Minister of Environment and Climate Change used the word "independent" to refer to this agency.

### Adjournment Proceedings

I want to cite that we have quite a lot of good, solid work being done in the NGO community by groups like Flow and others across Canada that work on water policy. There is a strong consensus that the Canada water agency must be independent of the Department of Environment and Climate Change, the Department of Agriculture and Agri-Food, as well as the Department of Natural Resources.

There is a strong call to have an officer of chief water security to work through interjurisdictional blockages and ensure that this country has strong water policy. We know we need to ensure that we have what we used to have in Canada, which was co-operation and shared work between provinces and the federal government, with the federal government in the lead, on programs to avoid flooding.

Flood plain work was shared, anticipating the vulnerabilities of our water system to floods and making sure that we pay attention to water policy, particularly around our freshwater systems, like the Great Lakes or Lake Winnipeg.

It is extraordinarily important that we rebuild the scientific capacity we once had in this country, which is now down to precious little compared to what was there when I worked in the Minister of Environment's office back in the eighties. We had a robust program, an inland waters directorate, near Hamilton. We had a very strong department with hundreds of people working. It has virtually disappeared.

What happened to the "coming weeks"? What happened to the "good news"? When are we going to see an independent Canada water agency that is fully funded to at least \$1 billion a year as promised in the platform?

**Mr. Terry Duguid (Parliamentary Secretary to the Minister of Environment and Climate Change, Lib.):** Mr. Speaker, I appreciate the hon. member's question and I appreciated as well the question she put to the minister on October 20 and I appreciated his response. I think the hon. member will agree that a clean and safe freshwater supply in Canada and freshwater systems from coast to coast are essential to the well-being of Canadians and to the health and sustainability of the environment and the economy.

Fresh water sustains life on earth. It supplies drinking water, grows food and supports ecosystems. From droughts to floods to deteriorating water quality, freshwater challenges are intensifying in this country due, in large part, to climate change. There are serious and costly impacts for Canadians and the environment.

As part of the Government of Canada's commitment to protecting fresh water, budget 2022 provided \$88.1 million over five years in new funding for Environment and Climate Change Canada, which includes \$19.6 million in the 2022-23 budget to sustain the freshwater action plan and this is up for renewal.

*Adjournment Proceedings*

However, our funding efforts will now include cleanup efforts in the Great Lakes, the St. Lawrence River, Lake Winnipeg, Lake of the Woods, the Fraser River in my colleague's home province, the Saint John River, the Mackenzie River and Lake Simcoe; \$43.5 million, starting in 2022-23, to create the new Canada water agency, which I will advise the hon. member, will be stood up soon, in the coming weeks; and \$25 million over five years starting in 2022-23 for the Experimental Lakes Area in northern Ontario, to support freshwater science and research. Members will recall the Harper government tried to shutter that incredible global water resource, but our government is now funding it.

Also, to the hon. member's point, we will be modernizing the Canada Water Act. As she mentioned, for 51 years it has been in place, almost unchanged, and indigenous communities and climate change will be front and centre in our considerations.

In June 2021, Environment and Climate Change Canada published a "what we heard" report. We consulted from coast to coast to coast, we received some 2,700 submissions. We heard strong support for the enhanced availability of data to support decision-making at all levels and cutting-edge science to tackle freshwater challenges, including climate change impacts. In addition to public engagement, the Government of Canada has also engaged with the provinces, territories and indigenous peoples.

The Canada water agency is an institution for our time. It will bring people together on the watershed and the landscapes of this country to better protect and manage our fresh water, which we are so blessed to have. Twenty per cent of the world's fresh water is in this beautiful country of ours.

• (1835)

**Ms. Elizabeth May:** Mr. Speaker, I know my hon. colleague the parliamentary secretary has a very strong affinity for these issues, from working with him when we were both involved with the International Institute for Sustainable Development. I want to correct the record when I said "near Hamilton". I cannot believe I forgot that the Inland Waters Directorate, when it was strong, was in Burlington, Ontario and did wonderful work.

I am not comforted by what I have heard so far. Yes, we have the Experimental Lakes Area and it does great work and, yes, I am glad we stopped the Harper government from destroying it. However, the Canada water agency needs to be independent of other departments of government. It needs to be properly funded. We need to understand what is happening to our water. Even if we were not looking at a climate crisis, our approach to fresh water in this country has been pathetic for decades. We now are in a climate crisis, which is a water crisis, and the Canada water agency is urgently needed and must be properly funded.

**Mr. Terry Duguid:** Mr. Speaker, I would agree with many of the hon. member's points. The hon. member and I go back a long way, as she has alluded to. Again, I take many of her points and ultimately we will see much of that reflected when the Canada water agency is established.

Just in closing, creating the Canada water agency presents a unique opportunity for Canada to work with provinces, territories, indigenous peoples, local authorities, scientists and others to strengthen collaboration and find the best ways to keep our water

safe, clean and well managed. As I have said already, in my intervention today, we will be seeing some good news in the coming weeks.

• (1840)

## GOVERNMENT PRIORITIES

**Mr. Garnett Genuis (Sherwood Park—Fort Saskatchewan, CPC):** Mr. Speaker, over the course of the parliamentary break, we have all had an opportunity to talk to people in our communities and across the country, and it is clear that, after eight years of the Prime Minister's economic and social policies, many people are hurting. There are many people who are struggling in various ways, especially under the profound weight of inflation, and they are asking for all of us to look for solutions that empower them to have jobs and opportunity, and to see their tax dollars respected.

At the same time, we are seeing continuing outrageous extravagance in spending from this government. While Canadians are struggling, the government has been spending so much more, not on helping Canadians, but on things that serve the government's interest, and enrich and empower its friends.

I am asking a follow-up tonight on a question I asked earlier about spending \$6,000 a night for a single hotel room. The government spent \$6,000 a night on a single hotel room. We asked who stayed in that hotel room. There was some implication that it was the Prime Minister, but we do not know that for sure.

I also mentioned in my question the \$54 million spent on the development of an app, the ArriveCAN app, which did not work very well and did more to impede Canadians in their travel than actually facilitate the effective prevention of the transmission of COVID. In any event, if that was the piece of technology the situation called for, which I do not think it was, but if it was, it could have been developed much more quickly at a much lower price and probably be much more effective.

However, we are seeing this trend in outrageous government spending on friends of the government, on external contractors, at a time when Canadians are suffering, which was the question I had asked earlier.

Today, of course, what is big in the news is the fact that the government spent over \$100 million in outsourced contracts to McKinsey & Company. I would remind members that McKinsey is managed by Dominic Barton, a close friend of the Prime Minister, and someone who is simultaneously chairing the Prime Minister's economic growth council.



*Adjournment Proceedings*

Effectively, Dominic Barton, as the head of McKinsey, is both an adviser to the government and a vendor for the government. With great fanfare, the Prime Minister said that he was only paid a dollar a year for his position leading the economic growth council. Only a dollar a year, but meanwhile we have over \$100 million in outsourced contracts over the life of this government so far to McKinsey. We asked today what the exact amount of it was. The government would not provide that number, and it keeps going up every time.

After eight years of this Prime Minister, Canadians are struggling economically. They are struggling under the weight of inflation, which the Governor of the Bank of Canada and the former Governor of the Bank of Canada all say is domestically caused. They are struggling under the weight of those policies. Meanwhile, we are seeing outrageous profligate spending on contracts to friends of the government going out to the McKinsey, \$54 million for the Arrive-CAN app and \$6,000 a night for a hotel room.

Therefore, I want to ask the parliamentary secretary this: How does he and other members of the government face their constituents, who are facing these challenges, and justify this kind of outrageous, unaccountable, nonsensical spending?

**Mr. Terry Beech (Parliamentary Secretary to the Deputy Prime Minister and Minister of Finance, Lib.):** Mr. Speaker, happy new year to you and to my friend from Sherwood Park—Fort Saskatchewan.

As was stated by the Parliamentary Secretary to the Minister of Foreign Affairs, our government makes every effort to ensure that spending on official trips is both responsible and transparent. The official Canadian delegation included former prime ministers and the Governor General. All members of this delegation stayed at the same hotel, which was uniquely able to accommodate the size of the delegation during levels of extremely high demand, as members can imagine. Literally the entire world was heading to England for the Queen's funeral at the time.

I have not prepared exactitudes on any McKinsey things today, but I do know that there was at least one contract that was issued where McKinsey was tasked to find some savings in a government program and it found \$350 million in savings and \$178 million of that has been implemented to date. I can get more details. I was not prepared to discuss McKinsey tonight.

I personally had the opportunity as well to connect with my own constituents over the holidays and know that household budgets are being stretched by increases in interest rates, higher rents and higher food prices. Many of these challenges are global challenges created by external stressors, which include lingering effects of the COVID pandemic and, of course, Putin's illegal war in Ukraine. Impacts on the cost of food and energy have been especially significant.

We do have some good news, however. While inflation is high, it has started to go down in Canada. Inflation was 8.1% in June and now is 6.3%. It is still high but it is heading in the right direction and it is lower than what we see in many of our peer economies. The United States still has inflation of 6.5%, the euro area of 9.2%, the United Kingdom of 10.5% and the OECD is also above 10% on average. While increased interest rates present their own burden,

especially after rising from historic lows, private sector economists expect inflation to ease toward the 2% inflation target over the next two years.

Canada's underlying economy is still very strong and that gives us the ability to help those who were most impacted by these challenges. In fact, Canada has created more than 659,000 jobs since the start of the pandemic and we have retained our AAA credit rating. We also have the lowest deficit and the lowest net debt-to-GDP ratio in the G7. However, inflation in Canada is still too high and Canadians need help to make ends meet. This is why we have provided targeted relief while ensuring that our measures do not further increase inflation.

For example, we doubled the GST credit for 11 million Canadians who need it the most. This is a great example to start with, of course, because my friend opposite also voted and supported that particular measure.

In addition, we launched the Canada dental benefit for children under 12 with family incomes below \$90,000. This will allow up to 500,000 kids to get their teeth fixed. I am pleased to report tonight that 153,000 families have already utilized the program. This is in addition to our child care investments that were just being debated in this House. I am happy to report that just today it was announced that 12,700 \$10-a-day child care spaces are now available in British Columbia with more spaces opening up every day across Canada.

Despite these supports, our government is continuing to run a tight fiscal ship. As I stated previously, we are able to make these investments because we have the lowest net debt-to-GDP ratios in the G7. At the same time, we have committed to saving \$9 billion from government spending through budget 2022. As Canadians are cutting back in their costs, it is prudent that our government do the same. We will do that. We will make life more affordable for all Canadians right across the country.

● (1845)

**Mr. Garnett Genuis:** Mr. Speaker, here are the facts. The Prime Minister has more than doubled the national debt in his eight years in office. The Prime Minister has run up more debt in these eight years than all of the previous prime ministers had up until that point. That is the reality of the legacy of the Prime Minister. That is causing inflation. It is causing Canadians to suffer. Of course, some other countries have pursued similar kinds of policies and they are experiencing the same challenges as a result. However, there is a better way. That is to control spending and focus on what is truly important to Canadians.

*Adjournment Proceedings*

Much of the growth in spending we have seen, as I talked about, has been to outside consultants. We have dramatic growth in the core public service but, at the same time, we have a government contracting out to consulting firms like McKinsey that it is personally close with for services that are supposed to be done in the core public service. That is driving inflation and driving paying Canadians' experience.

**Mr. Terry Beech:** Mr. Speaker, Canadians can count on us to continue supporting them while proceeding in a way that is fiscally responsible.

In the months ahead as we prepare for the 2023 budget, Canadians can count on this government to continue to work hard to build an economy that works for everyone, to create good jobs and to make life more affordable both for Canadian workers but also for Canadian families.

## HEALTH

**Mr. Gord Johns (Courtenay—Alberni, NDP):** Mr. Speaker, I know Groundhog Day is not until Thursday, but it sure feels like it, because I keep having to drag the government in here at the end of the day to answer to Canadians on why it has not delivered on its mental health transfer.

We have a system that is overburdened and stretched to the max. I just had the leader of the NDP in my riding. We went to a round table on seniors' health. We listened to the stresses on the system in long-term care, in the health care system, but we also heard from physicians, and members know that in their ridings physicians are saying that they do not have the supports when it comes to mental health and when it comes to social workers and psychotherapy, and this is causing a huge unnecessary burden on the health care system. It is backing up our ERs. We heard that directly from physicians.

I met with the Nuu-Chah-Nulth Tribal Council, with the Huu-ay-aht First Nation, the Hupacasath and the Tseshaht. At Tseshaht they hosted a meeting, and they said their top priority is ensuring there are mental health supports.

The New Democrats will kick and scream and drag the government back here every night, if we have to, until the transfer is delivered. We will use every tool in the tool box. The Liberals promised \$4.5 billion of new money over five years to help support those with mental health issues.

I not only heard from first nations, but I actually went into my own doctor's office and asked my doctor how it is impacting him in serving his clients and the overall community. He said that over 50% of the people who were coming to his office were having a health-related issue related to either mental health or substance use. He said that he cannot be a social worker. He said that people are leaving the field. He said nurses are leaving the field.

Right now, in a health crisis, we need to do everything we can to take the pressure off those who need supports that are physical-related and ensure those who have mental health issues are getting supports that are mental health-related. Meanwhile, people are dying. I got a message from a good friend of mine who lost her son this week. She said we need treatment centres, not more police. We

need investments in mental health supports. The government keeps promising it is going to deliver that.

There was a joint report by the Mental Health Commission of Canada and the Canadian Centre on Substance Use and Addiction. They found that almost 35% of residents reported moderate to severe mental health concerns. Fewer than one in three people experiencing mental health issues were accessing services, and they said that financial constraints were a big part of that. As we know, we are potentially heading into a recession. People are struggling. Mental health issues are getting worse.

Establishing the Canada mental health transfer was a key election promise. It was the second thing on the list in the mandate letter for the Minister of Mental Health and Addictions. The government promised that \$875 million would be transferred by 2023. There has not been a dollar of new money.

What are we going to hear from the government members? They are going to pat themselves on the back from old money. They are not going to have delivered on the new money they promised. It has not happened. It is costing lives. People are dying, and it is unnecessary. The government needs to do the right thing. The Liberals are wastefully spending money instead of prioritizing the health of Canadians, taking pressure off our health care system and investing in mental health when Canadians need it the most.

● (1850)

[*Translation*]

**Mrs. Élisabeth Brière (Parliamentary Secretary to the Minister of Mental Health and Addictions and Associate Minister of Health, Lib.):** Mr. Speaker, even though it is late, I want to thank the member for Courtenay—Alberni for giving me the opportunity to speak to this important matter and explain to the House what we are doing to support mental health and health care services for people who use substances.

[*English*]

Mental health is health. This is why we have made historic investments to support mental health care and substance use care needs, including \$5 billion over 10 years, to improve Canadians' access to mental health and substance use services, directly to provinces and territories through bilateral agreements.

[*Translation*]

These agreements currently provide the provinces and territories with \$600 million per year until 2027. That money helps expand access to mental health care, addiction services for youth, and integrated services for people with complex needs. It helps improve access to proven community mental health care models and culturally appropriate interventions linked to primary care services.

• (1855)

[*English*]

Federal, provincial and territorial health and mental health ministers agree on the importance of promoting mental wellness and addressing gaps in mental health and addiction services and recovery.

In November, the minister met her counterparts across the country to discuss these key points. Through these bilateral agreements, the FPT health and mental health ministers are working together to improve access to evidence-supported mental health and addiction services and supports for Canadians and their families.

We also acted quickly to respond to the increased demand for mental health services and supports arising from the pandemic.

[*Translation*]

Early on in the pandemic, we launched Wellness Together Canada to provide free, confidential mental health support online 24/7 to people across Canada in both official languages.

Over 3.1 million people have accessed Wellness Together online, and the app has been downloaded over 35,000 times.

[*English*]

Budget 2022 will provide \$140 million for the Wellness Together Canada portal so it can continue to provide Canadians with tools and services to support their mental health and well-being.

[*Translation*]

We recognize that some communities experienced a disproportionate impact on their mental health because of the pandemic. We are providing \$100 million over three years to support projects that promote mental health and an additional \$50 million over two years for mental health programs that support populations at high risk of experiencing pandemic-related trauma.

[*English*]

In addition, budget 2022 will provide \$227.6 million over two years to maintain trauma-informed, indigenous-led, culturally appropriate services to improve mental wellness and continue to implement distinctions-based mental health and wellness strategies.

However, we know more needs to be done to ensure Canadians can access the high quality mental health care and substance use services they need and deserve, both now and in the future.

The Prime Minister will be meeting with premiers next week to ensure the sustainability of our health care system for years to come and that further investments deliver tangible, positive outcomes.

### *Adjournment Proceedings*

**Mr. Gord Johns:** Mr. Speaker, like I said, we know Thursday is Groundhog Day, but the government decided today is Groundhog Day. We heard the same response and the same old thing. Liberals are patting themselves on the backs about money they promised from before and are spending, but look at the results. The results speak for themselves with overcrowded ERs and doctors having to do social work who need help.

People are dying as a result of the government's inaction. It failed to deliver a dollar of the promised new money. I actually do not believe it is going to do it. The Prime Minister has directed his ministers to spend less money, and I think he is going to cut. The government has no intention of delivering on this transfer. It has been over a year and a half.

The U.K. and France spend about 12% on mental health. We spend between 5% and 7%. It is time for the government to respond. It needs to answer to Canadians on why it has not delivered on this promise.

I will be back. I will be back at every opportunity to hold them to account until they deliver the mental health supports people desperately need.

**Mrs. Élisabeth Brière:** Mr. Speaker, we remain committed to continuing to do everything we can to support the mental health of Canadians. As I noted earlier, in addition to a range of existing federal supports, provinces and territories are now receiving \$600 million from the federal government to support mental health and substance use services on an annual basis, which will continue until 2027.

[*Translation*]

We also know that much more needs to be done to ensure that Canadians have access to the mental health supports they need, and we are committed to providing additional federal funding to support these essential services.

That is why the Prime Minister will be meeting with the premiers next week to work collaboratively with the provinces to ensure that the additional investments produce tangible, positive outcomes.

**The Deputy Speaker:** The motion that the House do now adjourn is deemed to have been adopted. Accordingly, the House stands adjourned until tomorrow at 10 a.m., pursuant to Standing Order 24(1).

(The House adjourned at 6:59 p.m.)





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