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Thursday, October 5, 2023

The Honourable RAYMONDE GAGNÉ,  
Speaker

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## THE SENATE

Thursday, October 5, 2023

The Senate met at 2 p.m., the Speaker in the chair.

Prayers.

### BUSINESS OF THE SENATE

**The Hon. the Speaker:** Honourable senators, I received a notice from the Leader of the Opposition who requests, pursuant to rule 4-3(1), that the time provided for the consideration of Senators' Statements be extended today for the purpose of paying tribute to the Honourable Pat Carney who passed away on July 25, 2023.

I remind senators that pursuant to our Rules each senator will be allowed only 3 minutes and they may speak only once and the time for Tributes shall not exceed 15 minutes.

### SENATORS' STATEMENTS

#### THE LATE HONOURABLE PATRICIA CARNEY, C.M.

**Hon. Yonah Martin (Deputy Leader of the Opposition):** Honourable senators, I rise today to pay tribute to the late Honourable Senator Patricia Carney, former senator for British Columbia and trailblazer in many ways.

The Honourable Patricia Carney began her professional career first as a journalist in the 1960s. She was the first female business columnist for major papers in our home province of B.C., including the *Vancouver Sun* and what was then known as the *Vancouver Province*.

She was also an educator and a Canadian pioneer in the development of distance learning systems. She understood the profound impact that education plays in the lives of our children and youth and the important role that educators have in helping shape their future careers and education.

Former Senator Carney was awarded the British Columbia Institute of Technology award for Innovation in Education for work on the Satellite Tele-Education Program Hermes project — a true testament to her vision, dedication and knowledge.

She was also an avid volunteer, advocate and member of many organizations and boards. She was a published author and held Honorary Doctor of Laws degrees from both the University of British Columbia and Simon Fraser University.

In the 1980s, she changed careers and began her life in politics. She was the first female Conservative member of Parliament ever elected in B.C., and on August 30, 1990, became the first female Conservative appointed from B.C. to the Senate.

Former Senator Carney retired in March of 2008, just before I began my work in the Senate as a senator for B.C. Although we never crossed paths during our political careers, as a proud B.C. senator and a woman, it is truly an honour to follow in her footsteps and continue to represent the good people of our province.

She led a life dedicated to service, from mentoring her students to serving her community, constituents and Canadians from coast to coast to coast.

Above all, she was a devoted daughter, wife and mother of two wonderful children. On behalf of our Conservative caucus in the Senate, I would like to express my deepest condolences to her family and loved ones. I hope that you can find peace in the memories you shared with her and be assured that her memory lives on in the lives of all those she has touched.

Honourable senators, please join me in saying a final farewell to an esteemed former colleague, the late Honourable Patricia Carney. May she forever rest in peace.

**Hon. Senators:** Hear, hear.

**Hon. Scott Tannas:** Honourable senators, former Senator Carney was a journalist, an author, an economic consultant, a member of Parliament and a senator. She was a parliamentarian for over 25 years, here and in the House of Commons.

With the passing of the Honourable Patricia Carney, as Senator Martin said, Canada has lost a trailblazer and an agent for change. To describe her as a trailblazer is not hyperbole but a statement that speaks to her abilities and all of her firsts. She is famous for a lot of firsts. Let me list them, some of which have been listed previously.

She was the first female business columnist to write for a major daily newspaper in Canada. She was the first female Conservative politician elected to Parliament from British Columbia. She was the first woman to serve as Minister of Energy, Mines and Resources, as Minister of International Trade and later as president of the Treasury Board. She was the first woman to be appointed from B.C. to the Senate.

As an Alberta senator, I honour her as the chief architect of the dismantling of the National Energy Program. She provided leadership for the development of a new approach to energy development and production during the Mulroney government, which ended the regressive policy affecting Western Canada. The National Energy Program was replaced by the Western Accord, which was supported by the energy-producing provinces and fostered new cooperation in the industry between the federal and provincial governments and industry.

Pat Carney later used her talents and in-depth policy knowledge to find common ground in Eastern Canada with the Atlantic Accord, which put in place a market-governed system for offshore energy resources for the benefit of Newfoundland and Labrador.

Her next challenge was trade. As Minister of International Trade, she took on the challenge of free trade negotiations with the United States. She steered the good ship Canada during these difficult trade talks. Her role was described by our former colleague the late Hugh Segal as “. . . seminal, clear cut and demanding.” Her efforts, despite her herculean task, were — as we know — greatly successful.

Another of Pat Carney’s important achievements was her support for the protection of our maritime heritage, especially lighthouses. She introduced a bill in this place to protect heritage lighthouses seven times, but her tenacity finally paid off with the adoption of Bill S-215 in 2008.

To my colleagues who have introduced bills during the session, you can take heart from former Senator Carney’s example that, while it may take time, you can eventually cross the finish line.

Honourable senators, all Canadians owe a great debt of gratitude to our former colleague Senator Carney.

We offer our sincere sympathies to her family and we honour and celebrate her accomplishments.

**Hon. Senators:** Hear, hear.

**Hon. Jane Cordy:** Honourable senators, I rise today to pay tribute to former senator Pat Carney, who passed away on July 25 at the age of 88. Senator Carney served in the Senate from her appointment in 1990 until her retirement in 2008. A remarkable public servant, her journey to politics began in her early working years with a deep-seated sense of duty.

Before making a foray into politics, Pat had a background in journalism, municipal planning and economic consulting — skills she took with her into her political career. As a journalist, she was the first woman business columnist writing for a major daily newspaper in Canada.

• (1410)

As Senator Martin and Senator Tannas stated, Pat Carney was a trailblazer. She first ran for a seat in the House of Commons as a Progressive Conservative candidate in 1979. Defeated in that election, she ran again in 1980 and was elected the Member of Parliament for Vancouver Centre. After the 1984 election, she was appointed to the cabinet of then-prime minister Brian Mulroney as the Minister of Energy, Mines and Resources. In 1986, she was named the Minister of International Trade, and she was at the forefront of the negotiation of the Canada-U.S. free trade agreement for which she received an award for outstanding achievement in the field of international law and affairs from the New York Bar Association. She retired from the other place in 1988, after having served for two terms. Senator Carney blazed a trail for women in Canadian politics. She was the first woman Conservative member of parliament elected in British Columbia, and was the first woman from British Columbia to be appointed to the Senate.

Senator Carney’s impact extends beyond the legislative sphere. She has been a mentor and role model for aspiring politicians, particularly women, inspiring them to break barriers and pursue

careers in public service. Her dedication to mentoring the next generation of leaders is a testament to her belief in the importance of nurturing talent and ensuring a diverse and vibrant political landscape.

Honourable senators, on behalf of the Progressive Senate Group, I wish to extend my condolences to the family of the late Pat Carney.

Thank you.

**Hon. Senators:** Hear, hear.

**Hon. Mobina S. B. Jaffer:** Honourable senators, I rise today to pay tribute to the late Honourable Senator Pat Carney from my province of British Columbia.

[*Translation*]

I’d like to take a moment to express my respect for an exceptional woman who, by her courage, determination and vision, made her mark on Canada’s history. I’d also like to share some thoughts about her.

[*English*]

Senator Pat Carney was a pioneer for women in journalism and politics. She was the first Conservative woman elected to Parliament from British Columbia and the first woman to hold a number of government portfolios, including energy, international trade and the Treasury Board. During her term as the Minister of International Trade, she played a critical role in negotiating the free trade agreement with the United States. She then became the first woman from British Columbia to be appointed to the Senate.

Beyond her impressive professional achievements, Senator Carney was a woman of conviction. She did not hesitate to stand up for her principles, even at the risk of opposing her own Conservative Party. She demonstrated this in 1991 when she voted against Bill C-43, which aimed to reintroduce abortion into the Criminal Code. Her decisive vote helped preserve the right to choose for Canadian women. This vote was not only a reflection of her personal beliefs, but also a courageous act — as she was the only Conservative senator who voted against the bill, which failed in the Senate in a tied vote.

She was, as you have heard, also a hard-working woman who was involved in her community and who supported many causes. She was particularly passionate about preserving the coastline of British Columbia and the historical lighthouses in British Columbia. She was also dedicated to promoting cultural relations between Canada and China. She helped finance the Dr. Sun Yat-Sen Classical Chinese Garden in Vancouver — the only garden of its kind outside of China.

Senators, today we salute the memory of a great Canadian who inspired generations of women and men throughout her remarkable career and her unwavering commitment to our country. We offer our sincere condolences to her family. Senator Carney was a mentor to me, a great feminist and a great Canadian. There’s one thing she taught me — she said, “Stand up for your convictions, even if you are alone.”

Rest in peace, my friend.

Thank you, senators.

**Hon. Senators:** Hear, hear.

**Hon. Denise Batters:** Honourable senators, I rise today to pay tribute to the late senator Pat Carney. Senator Carney was a fierce female trailblazer who built a remarkable career of firsts in politics. In 1980, Pat Carney was the first female Conservative member of parliament ever elected from B.C. With her appointment to the Senate in 1990, she became the first female Conservative senator from British Columbia. In fact, Pat Carney was the first woman in every post she held, including that of the first female finance critic. As a minister in former prime minister Brian Mulroney's cabinet, she was the first woman appointed to senior economic cabinet posts as the Minister of Energy, Mines and Resources; the Minister of International Trade; and the President of the Treasury Board. This carried on a Conservative tradition of elevating strong women to prominent roles. It began with Ellen Fairclough, the first female cabinet minister, and then included Pat Carney, Barbara McDougall, Flora MacDonald and — Canada's first and only female prime minister — Kim Campbell.

In her role as Prime Minister Mulroney's international trade minister, Pat Carney helped negotiate the groundbreaking and highly contentious Canada-U.S. free trade agreement. I remember seeing her on a panel discussion at my very first Progressive Conservative Party national convention in 1989, and I was in awe. This was Pat Carney who negotiated the free trade agreement — wow.

In her role as the Minister of Energy, Mines and Resources, Minister Carney oversaw the dismantling of Pierre Trudeau's National Energy Program — a program much loathed in Western Canada, including in my province of Saskatchewan. In her role as minister, Pat Carney negotiated the Western Accord and the Atlantic Accord, creating a market-oriented system for oil and natural gas, and developing the resource industries on the East Coast.

Senator Pat Carney served honourably in this chamber from 1990 until her retirement in 2008. She was the Chair of the Standing Senate Committee on Energy, the Environment and Natural Resources, and the Deputy Chair of the Senate Foreign Affairs Committee. As well, she served as a member of both the Standing Senate Committee on Aboriginal Peoples and the Senate Fisheries Committee. Senator Carney championed several causes during her time in the Senate, including the rights of Aboriginal women, women's equality and the preservation of Canada's heritage lighthouses — an issue she pursued for more than 10 years.

Senator Pat Carney was a fearless, tenacious and passionate Canadian. She loved Canada and served it honourably during her long career as a member of parliament, cabinet minister and senator. Pat Carney passed away in July — on her beloved Saturna Island in B.C. — at the age of 88. I extend my condolences to her family, friends and all those whose lives she touched. The Honourable Pat Carney will be greatly missed, but her legacy and contributions to Canada — as a proud female Conservative parliamentarian — will live on always.

[ Senator Jaffer ]

Thank you.

**Hon. Senators:** Hear, hear.

[*Translation*]

**The Hon. the Speaker:** Honourable senators, please rise and join me in a moment of silence in memory of our late colleague.

(*Honourable senators then stood in silent tribute.*)

#### UNITED NATIONS SECURITY COUNCIL RESOLUTION 2699

**Hon. Marie-Françoise Mégie:** Honourable colleagues, I rise today to speak to the UN Security Council's Monday, October 2, adoption of a resolution authorizing the deployment of an international security mission to help the Haitian police fight street gangs.

According to a Canadian Press article by Émilie Bergeron, the Minister of Foreign Affairs said that Canada wants "to do more."

I applaud Canada's desire to do more, considering it has repeatedly cut aid to Haiti.

According to the public dashboard DevData, Canada's international assistance to Haiti shrank by more than 25% between 2017 and 2022.

This morning, I had the opportunity to talk to Global Affairs Canada officials at the Standing Senate Committee on Foreign Affairs and International Trade meeting, which was about the situation in Haiti.

Today, I'm glad the international community has turned its attention to Haiti, my country of birth.

As the old saying goes, let's hope the government will walk the talk. Thank you.

• (1420)

[*English*]

#### VISITORS IN THE GALLERY

**The Hon. the Speaker:** Honourable senators, I wish to draw your attention to the presence in the gallery of Nadine and Tody Frisk, who are members of Senator Klyne's family.

On behalf of all honourable senators, I welcome you to the Senate of Canada.

**Hon. Senators:** Hear, hear!

## SASKATCHEWAN POLYTECHNIC SASKATOON CAMPUS

**Hon. Marty Klyne:** Honourable senators, I rise to speak about an important project in my province of Saskatchewan.

On September 20, the Government of Saskatchewan announced they are committing up to \$200 million towards Saskatchewan Polytechnic's new centralized campus at Innovation Place in Saskatoon. I was delighted to see this announcement; an investment in post-secondary infrastructure is an investment in the future of our students and our country.

Saskatchewan Polytechnic President and CEO Larry Rosia said:

A new Saskatchewan Polytechnic campus in Saskatoon is a once-in-a-generation opportunity to create a 21st century, modern learning environment that supplies the expert workforce for existing and emerging industries. . . .

That includes net-zero opportunities. Mr. Rosia added that:

It will increase program capacity and create a skilled talent pipeline to help grow the economy and increase our competitiveness in attracting investment to Saskatchewan and Canada.

Honourable senators, polytechnic schools are vital to Canada's success. They help make our country more innovative, train workers for our growing economy and provide Canadians with the skills necessary to succeed in a changing economy.

Currently, 1 out of every 19 jobs in Saskatchewan is supported by the activities of Saskatchewan Polytechnic and its students, contributing approximately \$2.6 billion in income to the provincial economy.

The Saskatchewan Polytechnic project, also known as Sask Polytech, will unlock significant economic and social benefits, including those for many Indigenous students and their communities. This is a key strategic infrastructure project that generates the skilled workforce needed for reaching net zero, building housing, maintaining our health care system and furthering economic reconciliation.

The new Sask Polytech campus will attract more students and more investment to Saskatchewan and foster greater research opportunities. It will help prepare job-ready graduates who can support vital public services and contribute to our strong and growing economy.

Sask Polytech's overall graduate employment rate stands at 95%, with 91% of graduates remaining in the province. The new campus will support and strengthen the innovation corridor in Saskatchewan that brings together businesses, entrepreneurs, students and other learning institutions to create a centre of excellence in applied learning and research.

Honourable senators, I congratulate Sask Polytechnic on all of their success and the hard work that they've done to date to move this project forward. I extend that congratulations to the Government of Saskatchewan as well. I trust other stakeholders will rally behind this and share in the imminent success. Thank you, *hiy kitatamihin*.

**Hon. Senators:** Hear, hear.

## ORDER OF SPORT AWARDS

**Hon. Marty Deacon:** Honourable senators, I received notice of a statement vacancy just a few moments ago, so this might be a shorter statement than you are accustomed to from me, and I am so sorry to disappoint you in that regard. You are going to be okay, but sometimes opportunities come to us in our busy schedules, and we just need to make room for them. I would like to make all of you aware of an opportunity to which each of you will be invited early next week.

Right across the bridge, at the Canadian Museum of History, for the first time ever, a very special event is taking place on October 19 from 10:00 a.m. until 11:30 a.m. It is the sixty-seventh annual Order of Sport Awards. It is a spectacular facility, a place where all of Canada's Sports Hall of Fame archives will now be digitally housed. This is Canada's premier collection of sport. It will spotlight the values, the positive impacts and the role that sport plays throughout our country. Many have highlighted the importance of sport and activity in the Senate.

On October 19, in person, we can celebrate this Class of 2023, which will consist of five athletes, two builders of sport and some exceptional Canadians who represent women, Indigenous athletes, para-athletes and Olympians. These recipients are Danielle Peers, athlete in wheelchair basketball; Georges St-Pierre for mixed martial arts; Hiroshi Nakamura, a very colourful builder of judo; Oren Lyons, a builder in lacrosse; Phyllis Bomberry for softball; Tessa Virtue and Scott Moir — you may have heard of them once or twice — and the "Ferbey Four," team athletes in curling.

Finally, colleagues, in addition to attending this new museum location that will house these digital archives, to being witness to incredible and diverse inductees, this Order of Sport Awards presentation will be co-hosted by none other than the Honourable Chantal Petitclerc, alongside Scott Russell from CBC Sports.

Senators, watch for the invite, and please join us to celebrate the achievements and the impact of outstanding Canadians. I encourage you all to find time in your schedules to join us at this great event. Thank you.

**Hon. Senators:** Hear, hear.

### VISITOR IN THE GALLERY

**The Hon. the Speaker:** Honourable senators, I wish to draw your attention to the presence in the gallery of Peter Ittinuar, who was the first Inuk to be elected as a Member of Parliament. He is the guest of the Honourable Senator Patterson (*Nunavut*).

On behalf of all honourable senators, I welcome you to the Senate of Canada.

**Hon. Senators:** Hear, hear!

### PETER ITTINUAR

**Hon. Dennis Glen Patterson:** Honourable senators, *unusakut*. In a week where we celebrate the first Black Speaker of the House of Commons and first Indigenous premier of a Canadian province, I rise to note another historic first: the election of Peter Freuchen Ittinuar, the first Inuk Member of Parliament and the first MP to speak Inuktitut in the House of Commons — yet another historic first which happened in October 1979. Peter was elected in 1979 to represent the then-constituency of Nunatsiag until 1984.

Peter was born in the small Hudson Bay community of Chesterfield Inlet. He is the grandson of the renowned Danish Arctic explorer Peter Freuchen, who lived for many years in Thule, Greenland.

I vividly remember travelling to Nuuk, Greenland, with Mr. Ittinuar and an official delegation from the Northwest Territories in 1981. Mr. Ittinuar was warmly welcomed there as the returning prodigal son.

Peter's early life was not without turmoil. He was wrenched, as a young boy, from his family to be educated in Ottawa with two childhood friends, Zebedee Nungak and Eric Tagoona, who also became important advocates for the rights of the Inuit. Unbeknownst to them, they'd all been relocated to Ottawa by federal authorities as an experiment in cultural assimilation — a story told in the compelling documentary *The Experimental Eskimos*.

Peter Ittinuar was elected as a New Democratic Party MP, and, yes, I was one of three members of his campaign committee and his official agent. He became disillusioned with the party's lack of support for our vision for the creation of Nunavut, so in November of 1982, he crossed the floor to sit with Pierre Trudeau's Liberals. A plebiscite earlier that year had resulted in a majority of residents supporting division of the N.W.T. It was in that same month of November 1982 that Minister John Munro announced federal support for the creation of Nunavut with conditions, which included the parallel settling of the Nunavut land claim.

Mr. Ittinuar's crossing of the floor was not popular in some quarters, but that crossing and the concessions he extracted from the government of the Right Honourable Pierre Trudeau was a pivotal moment in the long journey to the creation of Nunavut.

Thank you for your service, Peter Ittinuar.

*Qujannamiik. Taima.*

**Hon. Senators:** Hear, hear.

[*Translation*]

### VISITOR IN THE GALLERY

**The Hon. the Speaker:** Honourable senators, I wish to draw your attention to the presence in the gallery of Tricia Murray, a survivor, on the occasion of International Day of No Prostitution. She is the guest of the Honourable Senator Miville-Dechéne.

On behalf of all honourable senators, I welcome you to the Senate of Canada.

**Hon. Senators:** Hear, hear!

### INTERNATIONAL DAY OF NO PROSTITUTION

**Hon. Julie Miville-Dechéne:** Honourable senators, today, October 5, is the International Day of No Prostitution, which is observed by people around the world who believe that, in most cases, sex workers are victims of sexual exploitation.

• (1430)

On September 18, the Ontario Superior Court tacitly supported this view by upholding the constitutionality of the federal law on prostitution, which criminalizes clients but not sex workers. In its ruling, the court stated that the federal law is, and I quote:

. . . a carefully crafted legislative scheme that prohibits the most exploitive aspects of the sex trade while immunizing sex workers from prosecution.

The judge went on to say, and I quote:

Even where a sex worker has entered the sex trade by choice, there is a significant possibility that she has become subject to the control of an exploiter or a trafficker.

I know that this ruling won't put an end to the debate between advocates of decriminalization, who believe that prostitution is a job like any other, and those who believe that, on the contrary, we can reduce demand and thus the exploitation of women by criminalizing clients.

Moving beyond this ideological dispute, the voices of survivors are those we hear the least. I want to pay tribute to one of them here, a woman named Tricia Murray, who shared her harrowing tale with MPs today at noon on the Hill at the invitation of the Coalition for Women's Equality, which includes the Concertation des luttes contre l'exploitation sexuelle and the London Abused Women's Centre. Ms. Murray describes the hell she endured as follows, and I quote:

I still remember, as if it were yesterday, that long night in February 2020 when I thought I was going to die at the hands of my abuser, after multiple assaults. At the time, dying would have been a relief. Still, the fear of dying alone in a condo leaves deep marks.



I averaged 10 clients a day for several months. That works out to hundreds of abusive customers who took advantage of a young woman's vulnerability. Men with power, fathers, married men, some on vacation and some in town for work.

They were paying me, so these abusers did whatever they wanted with me. They felt they had the right.

My mind and my body remember them all. I'm scarred for life by all the violence I experienced during these long nights that went on for many long months.

I was exploited right here, not far away, in hotels and Airbnbs in Gatineau and Ottawa, just a few blocks away from this Parliament where I'm speaking today. We all have a role to play in ensuring that no one has to relive the atrocities I experienced.

Tricia Murray got out. Generous women supported her. She turned her life around. Her pimp was convicted. She even ran in an election. I truly admire you, Ms. Murray.

Thank you.

[English]

#### VISITORS IN THE GALLERY

**The Hon. the Speaker:** Honourable senators, I wish to draw your attention to the presence in the gallery of officials from the Lao People's Democratic Republic Department of Intellectual Property. They are the guests of the Honourable Senator Housakos.

On behalf of all honourable senators, I welcome you to the Senate of Canada.

**Hon. Senators:** Hear, hear!

### ROUTINE PROCEEDINGS

#### NATIONAL SECURITY, DEFENCE AND VETERANS AFFAIRS

##### NOTICE OF MOTION TO AUTHORIZE COMMITTEE TO MEET DURING SITTINGS AND ADJOURNMENT OF THE SENATE

**Hon. Patti LaBoucane-Benson (Legislative Deputy to the Government Representative in the Senate):** Honourable senators, I give notice that, at the next sitting of the Senate, I will move:

That, for the purposes of its consideration of Bill C-21, An Act to amend certain Acts and to make certain consequential amendments (firearms), the Standing Senate Committee on National Security, Defence and Veterans

Affairs have the power to meet, even though the Senate may then be sitting or adjourned, and that rules 12-18(1) and 12-18(2) be suspended in relation thereto.

### QUESTION PERIOD

#### FINANCE

##### COST OF FOOD

**Hon. Donald Neil Plett (Leader of the Opposition):** Senator Gold, although Canadians have much to be grateful for, this Thanksgiving, there are too many people in our country struggling to survive. We should never forget that.

On Tuesday, a food bank in Montreal said they're unable to keep up with demand. For the first time in 37 years, they have had to turn people away. Their executive director calls this a disaster, Senator Gold, saying:

We see more people who have jobs, we see more students who can't make ends meet, families, everyone is knocking on our door.

The Prime Minister is a Montreal member of Parliament, Senator Gold. It's hard for him to relate to suffering in his own backyard when his Easter vacation cost taxpayers \$230,000. Isn't that right, leader?

**Hon. Marc Gold (Government Representative in the Senate):** Thank you for your question. The problems of food insecurity facing Canadians are very serious, and that's why the government has put in place many measures in order to address this, such as an initial commitment from Canada's five top grocers to take concrete action to stabilize prices. The government is taking measures to strengthen the Office of Consumer Affairs. The government is also calling on all grocers to adopt a grocery code of conduct to improve transparency in the industry, and it will also improve the availability and accessibility of data on food prices and a cost breakdown throughout the food chain.

Indeed, as I think I've mentioned before and I will mention again, we will be studying Bill C-56 in due course, where important improvements to the competition law are being introduced. All of these measures will be important steps towards helping Canadians deal with this crisis.

**Senator Plett:** The Prime Minister continues to live far outside of the real world. A record number of Canadians cannot feed themselves, yet his government continues to implement policies that make groceries more expensive. Three weeks ago, the Prime Minister promised food prices would be stabilized — and ideally lowered — by Thanksgiving.

Senator Gold, does your government honestly believe that telling Canadians more coupons and flyers are coming fulfills that promise?

**Senator Gold:** As the minister announced today, we are expecting concrete action from the five major chains with proposals to lower the cost of groceries for Canadians. The minister has also been in touch, as he was encouraged to do so by business groups, with other important players in the chain. This is about concrete action with those responsible for food prices, and that's what the government is doing.

## PUBLIC SAFETY

### CANADA BORDER SERVICES AGENCY

**Hon. Leo Housakos:** My question is for the government leader in the Senate.

Senator Gold, yesterday we learned that the Royal Canadian Mounted Police is investigating the outsourcing of a Canada Border Services Agency contract involving the same companies at the centre of the \$54 million ArriveCAN boondoggle. This is the same boondoggle that saw Canadians, who were exercising their right to return home, slapped with fines as high as \$8,500. Then they were threatened with more fines if they were caught breaking the quarantine — as high as \$750,000.

It was bad enough when we thought these fees were being levied to pay for your government's complete failure in awarding this outrageous contract in the first place, but now it's looking less like a failure and more like a deliberate get-rich-quick scheme for those with connections to the Trudeau government.

Senator Gold, what assurances can you give me and Canadians that Canadians weren't unlawfully detained just so your government's friends could line their pockets with taxpayers' cash?

• (1440)

**Hon. Marc Gold (Government Representative in the Senate):** The assurance I can give you, Senator Housakos, is that all measures the government has in place were designed to protect Canadians, to facilitate entry into Canada and provide security for both those who enter and those who receive them. It is inappropriate and unseemly to allege or insinuate that this was about lining pockets. This was about protecting Canadians and doing the responsible thing in times of great crisis.

**Senator Housakos:** The only assurance that this chamber and taxpayers have is that the RCMP is looking into it. Hopefully, they'll get to the bottom of which pockets got lined.

Senator Gold, given the latest news regarding it, will your government finally do the right thing and cancel the outstanding fines that were issued as a result of this deeply flawed and — as we now know — fraudulent app? Will you apologize to Canadians who were unlawfully ordered into quarantine despite having done nothing wrong — Canadians such as Joe Walsh and thousands of others who have been fined?

**Senator Gold:** Thank you for your question. I cannot, of course, comment on specific cases, but I will certainly take your concerns and legitimate questions to the attention of the minister.

## TRANSPORT

### RAIL INTERSWITCHING

**Hon. Tony Loffreda:** My question is for the Government Representative in the Senate.

Senator Gold, as you know, last spring, Parliament adopted Bill C-47, a budget implementation act. As you might recall, our National Finance Committee made an observation at the time about Division 22 of Part 4, which dealt with the temporary extension of rail interswitching in the Prairie provinces. I continue to believe that this pilot project is a good idea, but we know that the Railway Association of Canada and its members continue to advocate for this measure to be repealed. They argue that this policy incentivizes congestion, not competition.

As I understand it, the pilot project has already started. Can you confirm that the interswitching extension has, indeed, already begun, and can you provide us with an update on how many times the option was used by shippers?

**Hon. Marc Gold (Government Representative in the Senate):** Thank you for your question, senator, and thank you for continuing to raise this issue, having sponsored Bill C-47 — which you did in exemplary fashion.

I understand the pilot project was based upon the report of the Supply Chain Task Force from late 2022 that was aimed at supporting shippers in the Prairie provinces. My understanding is also that the pilot was expected to begin in September 2023, but I don't have more details on it at this juncture. When the results of the pilot project are known, I'm sure that the results will inform the next steps taken nationally.

**Senator Loffreda:** Thank you for that answer.

In order to properly evaluate the success or failure of this pilot project, it is critical for Transport Canada to collect high-quality data. We need to know how often the measure is being used, who is using it, what savings are being generated for shippers and growers and what additional costs have been absorbed by some of the stakeholders along the supply chain, including railways.

Can you assure us that such data is being collected so the government can make an informed decision when this temporary measure expires?

**Senator Gold:** Thank you for your supplementary question. I'm not in a position to answer the specific question, but I can assure you and those in this chamber that the government knows how fundamentally important it is that data be collected and analyzed in order to inform the next steps going forward.

**EMPLOYMENT, WORKFORCE DEVELOPMENT  
AND LABOUR**

CANADA DISABILITY BENEFIT

**Hon. Ratna Omidvar:** My question is for Senator Gold. I wish to follow up on the question from a few days ago from Senator Cotter on the implementation of Bill C-22.

When we studied the bill at the Standing Senate Committee on Social Affairs, Science and Technology, we took the promise of then-Minister of Employment, Workforce Development and Disability Inclusion, Carla Qualtrough, for the co-creation of regulations as a promise that would be fulfilled. More disturbingly, the disabled community is telling us that — instead of a co-creation model — they are seeing standard round tables and online surveys, which are in no way “inclusionary” in the way they understood it.

Will the government change course and create a truly collaborative co-creation process for the implementation of Bill C-22?

**Hon. Marc Gold (Government Representative in the Senate):** Thank you, senator, for raising this question.

I’m advised that the ongoing consultations that the government is and continues to do build upon the government’s work over the past several years. This work included — and continues to include — collaboration with the provinces and territories, as well as extensive, high-quality engagement with organizations and persons with disabilities from a wide variety of backgrounds and circumstances.

In the spirit of Nothing Without Us, the government is committed to meaningful engagement that allows all offices to be heard.

So, with regard to your question, I will raise that particular concern with the minister and am sure it will be well received.

**Senator Omidvar:** Senator Gold, would you also convey to the minister that one of the largest stakeholders, the March of Dimes, has raised this question with us? They have also raised the issue that there will be no money flowing to the disability community without an allocation somewhere.

Will the government table their financial allocation soon to assure the disability community that benefits will be flowing sooner rather than later? They really are concerned.

**Senator Gold:** Thank you.

I understand the concern. It’s an important program and important that the money be flowing. I will communicate the specifics of your request.

I don’t have information on the timeline, but the government shares the common goal of having the Canada disability benefit running as soon as possible. The government knows that the disability community is counting on it to deliver.

**JUSTICE**

STATUTES REPEAL ACT

**Hon. Scott Tannas:** My question is for Senator Gold.

The annual report on the Statutes Repeal Act was tabled in this chamber earlier this year. It lists sections in 21 different laws passed by Parliament that the government has not yet brought into effect.

The government typically waits until the last sitting weeks in December to move a motion to defer the repeal of these uncommenced laws for another year, and we’ve developed a bit of a bad habit in this chamber of just agreeing to it and waving it through.

Senator Gold, would you consider bringing such a motion earlier this time, to allow it to be referred to a committee where senators can get some more information from officials about why these sections — some of which have been on the books for three decades — have not yet been brought into effect?

**Hon. Marc Gold (Government Representative in the Senate):** Thank you, Senator Tannas, for the question and for the very interesting suggestion.

I will certainly discuss it, not only with my team but with other leaders — you, of course, being one of them. We will see where we land on that. Thank you for that. I appreciate it.

**Senator Tannas:** Thank you for that answer. I appreciate it.

I’m not suggesting a large study, but I think if the Senate needs to agree to these things, if we have a role in the process, perhaps every once in a while for things like this, we should step back, take a look and call officials in. We ought to understand why this keeps happening.

**Senator Gold:** I take your suggestion seriously, and we will discuss it quickly.

**ENVIRONMENT AND CLIMATE CHANGE**

NET-ZERO EMISSIONS FUTURE

**Hon. Marty Klyne:** Senator Gold, the 2023 federal budget allocated \$80 billion to support clean electricity and green infrastructure to help achieve a net-zero electricity grid by 2035 and net-zero emissions by 2050. However, while 80% of Canada’s population is served by clean hydro power, Saskatchewan has no access to large-scale hydro power to support intermittent renewables like wind and solar. Three coal plants and two natural gas power stations provide 80% of Saskatchewan’s electricity. Of the 10 natural gas power plants in Saskatchewan, half are less than 15 years old and the newest one cost \$605 million to build in 2019.

Saskatchewan faces a dilemma through our lack of hydro power and the risk of stranding billions in power-generation assets. Senator Gold, how will the federal government address our province's unique challenge in considering an equitable path to net zero for all Canadians?

**Hon. Marc Gold (Government Representative in the Senate):** Thank you for your question.

Every province has unique challenges, as we all know, in terms of contributing to our transition to a cleaner economy. Thank you for underlining the commitment the federal government has made — \$80 billion — to support this.

What the Government of Canada has been and will continue doing is work with its partners — the provinces. It is not the intention of this government to unilaterally assume it knows best, whether for the government or people of Saskatchewan or those of any other province.

• (1450)

The Government of Canada looks forward to working collaboratively with the Province of Saskatchewan and the sectors within the province who have the expertise close to the ground in order to deliver on the promise, premise and importance of cleaner, more sustainable energy for the people of Saskatchewan.

**Senator Klyne:** Senator Gold, one of Saskatchewan's three coal plants was equipped with a carbon capture system in 2014 at a cost of \$1.35 billion, and I note it's the first of its kind in the world. By the end of 2029, Saskatchewan's two other coal plants must be closed or converted to natural gas or equipped with carbon capture systems. Will the government step up in a substantial and meaningful way to resolve the unique challenges and dilemmas Saskatchewan faces?

**Senator Gold:** Again, the government will work in partnership with Saskatchewan to address this. It is in the interest of all Canadians regardless of where we all live. Indeed, the Government of Canada knows that carbon management technologies — and there are a range of such approaches — are important tools in the broader toolbox that we all need to work with to reduce or remove emissions. Canada's Carbon Management Strategy, released just last month, aims to support the deployment of such strategies, and the government will work with the province to that effect.

## FINANCE

### CANADA'S INFLATION RATE

**Hon. Yonah Martin (Deputy Leader of the Opposition):** My question is for the Leader of the Government. Food Banks Canada released its poverty report last week. It shows a dismal picture of Canada after eight years of Justin Trudeau. More than 42% of the population feels financially worse off compared with last year. The report found 7 million Canadians are struggling to put food on the table, and at least 2.8 million Canadians are living in poverty.

[ Senator Klyne ]

This is your government's legacy, senator.

Saying more coupons are coming is not a plan to fix this crisis. When will the government take this fight against inflation seriously, axe the carbon tax and stop inflationary deficits?

**Some Hon. Senators:** Hear, hear.

**Hon. Marc Gold (Government Representative in the Senate):** Thank you for your question. Clearly, my answers so far have failed to persuade you of a number of factors. The rise in food costs is a worldwide problem. This government is addressing them in a serious, sustained way and will continue to do so.

The cost of living and inflation are also not problems unique to Canada, and Canada is doing its part as well to manage our transition from the spending levels necessary to sustain our people and our industries through the pandemic, transition to a sustainable economy and deal with things as I've mentioned in regard to defence spending in a prudent and responsible way. I will continue to provide you the facts in response to your questions. Canadians are suffering, and this government knows it. That's why it's doing things to help them, and it's going to continue to do so in a responsible and prudent way.

**Senator Martin:** In the previous economic downturn, Canada fared better than the G7 nations, and that's because of how the government managed its affairs. After eight years of Justin Trudeau, more and more Canadians are struggling to make ends meet. Food banks are sounding alarm bells that their shelves are empty, especially ahead of Thanksgiving weekend where many Canadians will gather with family and friends to share meals and traditions.

Senator Gold, when will the Trudeau government stop the deficits that fuel inflation, as Minister Freeland herself has said?

**Senator Gold:** Again, I'll simply repeat. The government is taking its management of the economy — to the extent that it has a role, which it does — seriously and responsibly, and that's why Canada continues to perform well in these very tumultuous times. Importantly, the government is doing its part to help Canadians who — despite macroeconomic indicators and all the responses — are suffering, the government knows Canadians are suffering and the government is there to assist in the best way it can.

## ENVIRONMENT AND CLIMATE CHANGE

### CARBON TAX

**Hon. Donald Neil Plett (Leader of the Opposition):** Senator Gold, three New Brunswick Liberal members of Parliament, or MPs, are calling on their own Trudeau government to axe the tax on home heating fuel. These three MPs also want their Trudeau government to undertake a study to measure the impact of carbon taxes in New Brunswick and in rural Canada.

Minister Guilbeault promised to give this very information to the four Atlantic premiers back in May. He failed to do so, Senator Gold, and the premiers have been asking for it ever since. Leader, now that their backbench MPs are asking for this information, will the Trudeau government finally relent and hand it over or will they continue to hide it even from their own MPs?

**Hon. Marc Gold (Government Representative in the Senate):** The Government of Canada continues to believe that the price on pollution is a necessary and important component in its overall strategy to address climate change. It has put into place measures that provide returns to individuals, depending on their province and their circumstances, that offset the impact of the price on pollution. In this regard, the Government of Canada remains committed to doing everything that it can do in partnership with the provinces, the territories and with industry to address the existential crisis that carbon-driven emissions pose to our well-being and, indeed, to our planet.

**Senator Plett:** These three MPs from New Brunswick yesterday had a chance to show some backbone and vote against the Prime Minister's carbon tax in the other place, but they failed to do so. Were they whipped, leader? Is this typical of Liberal behaviour, say one thing and vote another way?

**Senator Gold:** I am not a part of the government, though I represent them here in the Senate. I really have no comments to make as to what is done in the other place vis-à-vis controlling members of any caucus, Liberal or otherwise.

The fact remains, as I said, that the policy of the government remains and it's one that the government will continue to pursue.

[Translation]

## IMMIGRATION, REFUGEES AND CITIZENSHIP

### LGBTQI+ REFUGEES

**Hon. René Cormier:** My question is for the Government Representative in the Senate.

Senator Gold, in May, Amnesty International reported that LGBTQI+ asylum seekers and refugees living in the Kakuma refugee camp in Kenya routinely suffer hate crimes, violence, including rape, and other serious human rights abuses.

The Kakuma camp is home to more than 200,000 asylum seekers and refugees, including hundreds of LGBTQI+ people. Activists living in the camp have been calling me personally to ask for Canada's help.

This being LGBT History Month, here is my question for you: If Canada presents itself to the international community as a leader on 2SLGBTQI+ rights, how can it act in keeping with that reputation and fast-track the 2SLGBTQI+ refugee approval process?

**Hon. Marc Gold (Government Representative in the Senate):** Thank you for the question, senator.

Canada is concerned about the treatment of people who identify as 2SLGBTQI+ and who are fleeing violence in their country or living in unacceptable conditions. That is why the Government of Canada is working closely with organizations such as Rainbow Refugee, the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees and other organizations to help sponsor 2SLGBTQI+ refugees from abroad.

I'm told that Canada supports at least 55 service providers that help refugees feel at home in Canada. Canada will continue to ensure that 2SLGBTQI+ refugees are safe and supported.

**Senator Cormier:** Thank you for the answer, Senator Gold.

I applaud the partnership announced by the Government of Canada last June with the Rainbow Railroad organization to protect LGBTQI+ refugees and welcome them to Canada.

What observable results has this partnership achieved to date? Is the government consulting this organization to improve the LGBTQI+ refugee intake process in Canada?

**Senator Gold:** Thank you, senator, for the question.

I was informed that this program provides refugees with income support and settlement assistance for 12 months through the Resettlement Assistance Program, and that the Rainbow Railroad is one of the organizations involved in this effort.

The government is open to improving its intake process, and I will be happy to pass along your comments to the government.

### PROCESSING OF WORK PERMIT

**Hon. Éric Forest:** My question is for the Government Representative, Senator Gold.

For months, eastern Quebec has been rallying around Simon Croz, a Frenchman who has lived in Quebec since 2016 and runs the Paralœil production company and movie theatre. I can testify to Mr. Croz's exceptional work at this place, which is the backbone of Rimouski's cultural universe.

He has been subject to a removal order since May 4 because Immigration, Refugees and Citizenship Canada has not renewed his work permit. Allegedly, some minor errors were made. Since then, Mr. Croz has had difficulty meeting with an immigration officer in person and reaching anyone at the call centres, which are completely clogged.

The department is so bogged down that a border services officer apparently suggested he file a pre-removal risk assessment to help save time. It is totally ridiculous, since the risk of torture is non-existent in France. Can the government find a way to help Mr. Croz clear up his situation?

• (1500)

**Hon. Marc Gold (Government Representative in the Senate):** Thank you for the question.

The government is well aware that the decisions made in immigration cases like the one you raised have a major impact on the lives of those involved. I believe that Mr. Croz's case has been made public and that people are calling for Minister Miller to intervene. I'll be happy to follow up with the minister on this.

**Senator Forest:** Indeed, the immigration process is difficult for the individuals involved, and it is especially difficult emotionally. It seems cruel to make things even harder by increasing the amount of red tape and reducing the support services offered to applicants.

Will the government recognize that immigrants aren't being offered adequate support and welcome services and that a drastic overhaul is needed? After all, we're talking about human beings here, not objects. What happened to our Canadian values of solidarity and respect?

**Senator Gold:** The government is well aware of the challenges facing applicants in the immigration process. Minister Miller is known for his frankness and for not mincing his words, if I can put it that way. I will speak with him about Mr. Croz's case.

## ENVIRONMENT AND CLIMATE CHANGE

### CARBON TAX

**Hon. Leo Housakos:** My question is for the Leader of the Government in the Senate.

There are three things that are very important in Canadians' everyday lives: mortgages, groceries and gas. Clearly, all three are essential to their survival.

Over the past year, and especially over the past few months, the Trudeau government's lack of leadership has resulted in mortgage payments jumping by 30% to 40%, groceries going up by 50% on average, and gas prices skyrocketing.

Justin Trudeau's team is raising taxes on gas and groceries, and that is making everything more expensive. Senator Gold, will your government axe the carbon tax once and for all and give Canadians some breathing room?

**Hon. Marc Gold (Government Representative in the Senate):** Thank you for your question, which you prefaced with a list of many of the issues Canadians are facing.

As I said earlier, the government believes that the carbon tax is a tool that is consistent with traditional economic models — conservative ones, I might add. The carbon tax is one of several other tools, such as support to help Canadians cope with the housing crisis and the cost of living.

At this point, the government has no intention whatsoever of getting rid of this important tool.

[English]

**Senator Housakos:** Senator Gold, I am pleading with this government. Canadians are having a hard time heating their homes and putting food on the table for their children. They're having a hard time getting from their homes to work, very often costing them more to get there than what the work actually pays.

When will this government lift its boot off the throat of working-class Canadians and allow them to breathe during these terribly difficult times which your government has created and contributed to in creating this inflation?

**Senator Gold:** Thank you for your question. The government is pursuing policies, programs and investments to help Canadians through these difficult times. I have outlined them on many occasions in this chamber, and, with the time allocated to me, I will not repeat myself. I will leave it for you to repeat the same question over and over again. I'm afraid that the facts and my answers will speak for themselves.

## PRIVY COUNCIL OFFICE

### DELAYED ANSWERS

**Hon. Donald Neil Plett (Leader of the Opposition):** CBC has 144 corporate directors, paid six-figure salaries and their average is over \$135,000. I find it interesting. There are 144 well-paid directors at CBC, including ten who work in legal services. Yet none of them have found the time to answer a question I have had on the Order Paper for two-and-a-half years. The Trudeau government will not say how much the CBC spent on its failed lawsuit against the Conservative Party of Canada, which it launched during the 2019 election, Senator Gold.

Leader, in February, you said the delay in answering my question is not contempt.

If it's not contempt, what is it? When can we get an answer to a question that's been there for two-and-a-half years?

**Hon. Marc Gold (Government Representative in the Senate):** The delay in my answer to your question is very regrettable, and I have expressed on many occasions my unhappiness that answers are so delayed or, in some cases, not forthcoming.

What I undertake to do again, as I have done in the past — and others will judge with what success — is to bring this to the attention of the government and underline the impatience of senators in this chamber with having to wait for so long for their answers.

**Senator Plett:** Today is the Senate's ninth sitting day this fall. As of this moment, not a single delayed answer has been tabled in this chamber from the Trudeau government — not yet, Senator LaBoucane-Benson — not just for any of my questions, but for any other senator's questions either. Why is that, leader? Why are we getting only a handful of written answers today? We're getting them today. I have 128 questions on the Order Paper.

How many more years will I have to wait to have them answered? I'm retiring in 2025.

**Senator Gold:** Well, I certainly hope, Senator Plett, before you and I both have to leave this august chamber that more of your questions will be answered. I am doing what I can do to bring this issue to the attention of the government. It does not serve any of us well for the Senate to be frustrated in that regard. As a representative of the Senate to the government, I will continue to pass that message on.

#### ANSWERS TO ORDER PAPER QUESTIONS TABLED

##### NATIONAL REVENUE—CANADA CHILD BENEFIT

**Hon. Patti LaBoucane-Benson (Legislative Deputy to the Government Representative in the Senate)** tabled the reply to Question No. 19, dated November 23, 2021, appearing on the *Order Paper and Notice Paper* in the name of the Honourable Senator Plett, regarding the Canada Child Benefit — Auditor General.

##### VETERANS AFFAIRS—PROCESSING OF DISABILITY BENEFITS

**Hon. Patti LaBoucane-Benson (Legislative Deputy to the Government Representative in the Senate)** tabled the reply to Question No. 196, dated January 31, 2023, appearing on the *Order Paper and Notice Paper* in the name of the Honourable Senator Plett, regarding the processing of disability benefits at Veterans Affairs Canada.

##### VETERANS AFFAIRS—MEDICAL CANNABIS PROGRAM

**Hon. Patti LaBoucane-Benson (Legislative Deputy to the Government Representative in the Senate)** tabled the reply to Question No. 197, dated January 31, 2023, appearing on the *Order Paper and Notice Paper* in the name of the Honourable Senator Plett, regarding Veterans Affairs Canada.

##### VETERANS AFFAIRS—AGILEC FOR CAREER TRANSITION SERVICES

**Hon. Patti LaBoucane-Benson (Legislative Deputy to the Government Representative in the Senate)** tabled the reply to Question No. 213, dated March 8, 2023, appearing on the *Order Paper and Notice Paper* in the name of the Honourable Senator Plett, regarding Veteran Affairs Canada.

##### ENVIRONMENT AND CLIMATE CHANGE—ILLEGAL TRANSPORTATION OF WASTE OVERSEAS

**Hon. Patti LaBoucane-Benson (Legislative Deputy to the Government Representative in the Senate)** tabled the reply to Question No. 235, dated June 8, 2023, appearing on the *Order Paper and Notice Paper* in the name of the Honourable Senator Carignan, P.C., regarding illegal transportation of waste overseas.

#### DELAYED ANSWERS TO ORAL QUESTIONS

**Hon. Patti LaBoucane-Benson (Legislative Deputy to the Government Representative in the Senate):** Honourable senators, I have the honour to table the answers to the following oral questions:

Response to the oral question asked in the Senate on November 15, 2022, by the Honourable Senator Gignac, concerning real return bonds.

Response to the oral question asked in the Senate on March 21, 2023, by the Honourable Senator Deacon (*Nova Scotia*), concerning the Competition Policy.

Response to the oral question asked in the Senate on May 2, 2023, by the Honourable Senator Dagenais, concerning contract negotiations.

Response to the oral question asked in the Senate on May 4, 2023, by the Honourable Senator Boisvenu, concerning the prevention of violence against women.

Response to the oral question asked in the Senate on May 17, 2023, by the Honourable Senator Simons, concerning the Canadian Wildland Fire Strategy — Natural Resources Canada.

Response to the oral question asked in the Senate on May 17, 2023, by the Honourable Senator Simons, concerning the Canadian Wildland Fire Strategy — Environment and Climate Change Canada.

Response to the oral question asked in the Senate on June 21, 2023, by the Honourable Senator Boisvenu, concerning Arctic sovereignty.

#### FINANCE

##### REAL RETURN BONDS

*(Response to question raised by the Honourable Clément Gignac on November 15, 2022)*

##### Department of Finance Canada

The government and the Bank of Canada, in its role as fiscal agent, undertook extensive consultations in 2019, which showed poor demand for Real Return Bonds (RRB). The summary of these consultations is available on the Bank of Canada website: <https://www.bankofcanada.ca/wp-content/uploads/2020/03/gouvernement-canada-rrb-consultations-summary.pdf>. The government is committed to achieving its debt management objectives of stable, low-cost funding and well-functioning Government of Canada securities markets.

The government and the Bank of Canada perform annual debt management strategy consultations. The summary of September and October of 2022 consultations are posted on

the Bank of Canada website. The RRBs are discussed as part of these consultations and the low level of demand for RRBs was once again reinforced by market participants. The decision to cease issuance of RRBs reflects the continued trend of low demand for this product and will allow the government to promote liquidity by consolidating funding within its core funding sectors.

## INNOVATION, SCIENCE AND ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT

### COMPETITION POLICY

*(Response to question raised by the Honourable Colin Deacon on March 21, 2023)*

The Competition Bureau serves as the central hub of competition expertise. The Bureau enforces the *Competition Act* and provides expert advice to other departments to support pro-competitive policies.

Although the number of employees engaged isn't tracked, other federal regulators consider competition within their spheres of responsibility. For example, public procurement officials design and oversee competitive tendering processes and are trained to recognize and report suspected bid rigging. Likewise, certain sector regulators, including the Canadian Radio-Telecommunications Commission, Finance Canada, and Transport Canada, consider competition in aspects of their mandates.

One of the guiding principles of federal regulatory policy set out in the Cabinet Directive on Regulation is that regulations should "support a fair and competitive economy." In 2020, the Bureau published a Competition Assessment toolkit to help regulators apply this principle when designing and evaluating regulations. The number of departments using the toolkit, or in what ways, is still unknown at this point given its newness and voluntary nature; however, the Bureau continues to promote its use at all levels of government.

## TREASURY BOARD SECRETARIAT

### CONTRACT NEGOTIATIONS

*(Response to question raised by the Honourable Jean-Guy Dagenais on May 2, 2023)*

#### **Treasury Board of Canada Secretariat (TBS):**

The federal public service implemented a common hybrid model in March 2023. The Letter of Agreement on Telework does not change that approach and, therefore, it requires no new funding.

## JUSTICE

### PREVENTION OF VIOLENCE AGAINST WOMEN

*(Response to question raised by the Honourable Pierre-Hugues Boisvenu on May 4, 2023)*

The pandemic created unprecedented challenges for those experiencing gender-based violence (GBV) and the organizations providing supports and services to them. While preventing and addressing GBV is a shared responsibility between the federal, provincial, and territorial governments, the Government of Canada acted swiftly in 2020 to provide an initial \$90 million in COVID-19 emergency funding, through Women and Gender Equality Canada, to organizations across Canada serving those experiencing GBV. A year into the pandemic, the government responded to high demand and pressing needs by more than tripling the funding support and extending the timeframe for this emergency measure through Budget 2021. Since April 2020, approximately \$300 million in total funding has been committed to organizations.

Like other COVID-19 emergency measures introduced by the federal government since 2020, this temporary measure for GBV organizations is coming to an end. However, the government remains committed to addressing GBV:

- Budget 2021 invests \$601.3 million over five years in initiatives to advance towards the National Action Plan to End Gender-Based Violence. This included \$200 million (of the \$300 million) specifically for COVID-19 emergency funding.
- Budget 2022 invests a further \$539.3 million over five years to support provinces and territories with the implementation of the National Action Plan to End Gender-Based Violence.

## NATURAL RESOURCES

### CANADIAN WILDLAND FIRE STRATEGY

*(Response to question raised by the Honourable Paula Simons on May 17, 2023)*

#### **Natural Resources Canada**

The Canadian Wildland Fire Strategy (CWFS) was released by the Canadian Council of Forest Ministers (CCFM) in 2005. It remains the foundational document that drives national wildland fire management in Canada. The CCFM renewed its commitment to the CWFS in 2016, noting that great gains had been made in fire suppression capacity, but more work was needed to strengthen the shared responsibility of wildfire prevention and mitigation (P&M).



Federal, Provincial and Territorial partners are working collaboratively on several strategic initiatives to advance the CWFS and to enhance P&M in Canada. This includes broadening the mandate of the Canadian Interagency Forest Fire Centre (CIFFC) beyond traditional support activities for wildfire response to include wildfire P&M (CIFFC is now home to the FireSmart Canada program). In September 2022, the CCFM released a 2021-2026 Wildland Fire Action Plan. The plan includes targets and activities that will mobilize the CWFS and help transform wildfire management (including whole-of-society participation). CCFM partners are also developing the *Canadian Wildland Fire Prevention and Mitigation Strategy*, a document that will augment the goals of the CWFS.

Environment and Climate Change Canada will provide a response regarding fire management in national parks.

*(Response to question raised by the Honourable Paula Simons on May 17, 2023)*

#### ENVIRONMENT AND CLIMATE CHANGE CANADA

All national parks with fire-prone vegetation are required to have a fire management plan in place, information can be found on <https://parks.canada.ca/nature/science/conservation/feu-fire>. Parks Canada's framework for wildfire risk reduction is based on the FireSmart Canada program, a national program that helps Canadians increase community resilience to wildfire and aims to minimize its negative impacts. FireSmart Canada operates under a mandate from the Canadian Interagency Forest Fire Centre (CIFFC), supported by federal, provincial, and territorial wildland fire management agencies and partners with municipal governments and the private sector.

National parks, including those in Western Canada, have dedicated and highly trained wildland firefighting crews ready to respond to wildfires during the fire season. Preparedness measures include on call firefighting personnel, communication of fire danger ratings, contracted helicopters, aerial smoke patrols, regional weather briefings, lightning monitoring, and extended work hours. In addition, Parks Canada uses contracts, supply arrangements and standing offers for additional wildfire resources such as contract fire crews, structure protection specialists, aircraft, wildfire equipment such as pumps and hoses, and aircraft fuel. Parks Canada has many wildfire mutual aid resource sharing agreements in place at local, provincial and territorial levels, and nationally and internationally, to assist with suppression where needed.

#### NATIONAL DEFENCE

##### ARCTIC SOVEREIGNTY

*(Response to question raised by the Honourable Pierre-Hugues Boisvenu on June 21, 2023)*

A full cost estimate for the procurement of the future Polar class icebreakers continues to be developed. While the Government of Canada announced on April 04, 2023, that Chantier Davie has joined the National Shipbuilding Strategy as the third shipyard constructing large Government vessels, contract negotiations have yet to take place. Further, while engineering work continues with Vancouver Shipyards, Canada is yet to negotiate a construction contract with that yard. To ensure that we don't put Canada in an adverse negotiating position, Coast Guard is not currently in a position to comment on, or disclose, the budget of the Polar Icebreaker project.

• (1510)

#### ORDERS OF THE DAY

##### THE SENATE

##### MOTION TO AUTHORIZE JOINT COMMITTEE TO HOLD HYBRID MEETINGS—VOTE DEFERRED

On the Order:

Resuming debate on the motion of the Honourable Senator LaBoucane-Benson, seconded by the Honourable Senator Duncan:

That, notwithstanding any provision of the Rules, previous order, or usual practice, until the end of the day on June 30, 2024, any joint committee be authorized to hold hybrid meetings, with the provisions of the order of February 10, 2022, concerning such meetings, having effect; and

That a message be sent to the House of Commons to acquaint that house accordingly.

**Hon. Yuen Pau Woo:** Honourable senators, in my capacity as Joint Chair of the Standing Joint Committee for the Scrutiny of Regulations, I have a direct interest in this motion being passed as soon as possible. Together with the Joint Committee on the Library of Parliament, we are the two joint committees. Scrutiny of Regulations, while relatively not well known by colleagues, is

one of the most important committees in our Parliament. It happens to be co-chaired by a member of Parliament — in the particular, current case, a Conservative member of Parliament — with whom I have an excellent working relationship.

What we do, colleagues, in short, is look at the regulations that have been put in place pursuant to laws that we have passed in this chamber. We ensure that those regulations are consistent with the laws that we agreed to. This is laborious, time-consuming, sometimes tedious work, but extremely important.

From time to time, we find discrepancies in the regulations that officials have come up with and we are then in a position to question officials, question the minister, and if the answers are not satisfactory, we have the power to disallow those regulations. In fact, in our current set of investigations, there is an issue which could lead to a disallowance which has already required a request for the minister to appear before our committee.

The purpose of the motion before us is to allow senators to take part in committee meetings through a hybrid format, in the same way that members of the House of Commons are allowed to do.

You may not know that this committee typically meets on a Monday morning, which makes the motion and the hybrid option all the more important. This motion has been on the Order Paper pretty much since we returned from our break. It has been postponed. It has been adjourned. We have not been allowed to get to a vote on it for many days.

In fact, we witnessed the spectacle yesterday, when Senator LaBoucane-Benson tried to ask for the question to be called that led to the Conservatives, the opposition in this chamber, to not allow that to happen.

We heard Senator Plett say, after rejecting permission to get to the question, that somebody — in words to this effect — tried to “sneak one past us.” Colleagues, what is it that we were trying to sneak past the Conservative Party? A motion to allow a committee of Parliament to meet to do the work of parliamentarians; that is what we were trying to “sneak” past the Conservative Party.

This is yet another example of the obstructionist tactics that undermine the work of the Senate and of the Parliament of Canada. All of this is being done in the name of the so-called official opposition in the Senate. It exposes, yet again, the fallacy that a partisan opposition can be held up as some kind of special case of an opposition that deserves special rights and privileges that other parliamentary groups do not have.

Honourable senators, this is, in some senses, a timely but also sad example of the point I was trying to make just two days ago in my speech on the fifth report of the Rules Committee that the claim which is made by the opposition that what they do is

somehow a better form of opposition than the rest of us and that, in turn, is the reason why they should have rights and privileges that the rest of us don't have is pure bunk. It underscores the need more than ever for us to change the Rules.

Colleagues, I will shortly close my speech by calling the question. I hope the Conservatives will not stand in the way of the joint committee doing its work by allowing the question to be called.

They have already made the point that they have the power to obstruct and they will do so, even if it is detrimental to the work of Parliament. Point taken. But the point that the rest of us should take is a different one. It is that there is nothing to admire. There is nothing to protect in this kind of opposition. There is no reason to preserve the special privileges of the Senate opposition in the *Rules of the Senate*.

With that, Your Honour, unless there is someone else who wants to speak, I ask that we now call the question of Motion No. 126.

**The Hon. the Speaker pro tempore:** Are senators ready for the question?

**Hon. Senators:** Question.

**Hon. Yonah Martin (Deputy Leader of the Opposition):** I move the adjournment of the debate.

**The Hon. the Speaker pro tempore:** It is moved by the Honourable Senator Martin, seconded by the Honourable Senator Plett, that further debate be adjourned until the next sitting of the Senate. Is it your pleasure, honourable senators, to adopt the motion?

**Some Hon. Senators:** Yes.

**An Hon. Senator:** No.

**The Hon. the Speaker pro tempore:** All those in favour of the motion, please say “yea.”

**Some Hon. Senators:** Yea.

**The Hon. the Speaker pro tempore:** All those opposed, please say “nay.”

**Some Hon. Senators:** Nay.

**The Hon. the Speaker pro tempore:** I believe the “nays” have it.

*And two honourable senators having risen:*

**The Hon. the Speaker pro tempore:** I see two senators rising. Do we have an agreement on a bell? One-hour bell. Call in the senators for a vote at 4:17.

• (1610)

Motion negatived on the following division:

YEAS  
THE HONOURABLE SENATORS

Batters	Oh
Housakos	Seidman
MacDonald	Wells—7
Martin	

NAYS  
THE HONOURABLE SENATORS

Anderson	Kutcher
Arnot	LaBoucane-Benson
Bellemare	Loffreda
Black	MacAdam
Boehm	McCallum
Boniface	McPhedran
Burey	Mégie
Busson	Miville-Dechéne
Clement	Moncion
Cormier	Omidvar
Dagenais	Pate
Deacon ( <i>Nova Scotia</i> )	Patterson ( <i>Nunavut</i> )
Deacon ( <i>Ontario</i> )	Petten
Dean	Prosper
Forest	Ravalia
Francis	Saint-Germain
Galvez	Simons
Gerba	Sorensen
Gold	Verner
Greene	White
Harder	Woo
Hartling	Yussuff—45
Klyne	

ABSTENTIONS  
THE HONOURABLE SENATORS  
NIL.

• (1620)

**An Hon. Senator:** Question.

**The Hon. the Speaker pro tempore:** Are senators ready for the question?

**The Hon. the Speaker pro tempore:** All those in favour please say, “Yea.”

**Some Hon. Senators:** Yea.

**The Hon. the Speaker pro tempore:** All those against, please say, “Nay.”

**Some Hon. Senators:** Nay.

*And two honourable senators having risen:*

**The Hon. the Speaker pro tempore:** I see two senators rising.

Do we have an agreement on a bell?

**Hon. Donald Neil Plett (Leader of the Opposition):** Deferred vote.

**The Hon. the Speaker pro tempore:** The vote will take place at 5:30 p.m. on the next day the Senate sits. The bells then shall ring at 5:15 p.m. for the 5:30 vote.

ADJOURNMENT

MOTION ADOPTED

**Hon. Patti LaBoucane-Benson (Legislative Deputy to the Government Representative in the Senate),** pursuant to notice of October 4, 2023, moved:

That, when the Senate next adjourns after the adoption of this motion, it do stand adjourned until Tuesday, October 17, 2023, at 2 p.m.

**The Hon. the Speaker pro tempore:** Is it your pleasure, honourable senators, to adopt the motion?

**Hon. Senators:** Agreed.

(Motion agreed to.)

[*Translation*]

CONSTITUTION ACT, 1867  
PARLIAMENT OF CANADA ACT

BILL TO AMEND—SECOND READING—DEBATE ADJOURNED

On Other Business, Senate Public Bills, Second Reading, Order No. 6:

Second reading of Bill S-226, An Act to amend the Constitution Act, 1867 and the Parliament of Canada Act (Speaker of the Senate).

**Hon. Pierre J. Dalfond:** Honourable senators, I note that this item is at day 15. Accordingly, with leave of the Senate, I propose that consideration of this item be postponed until the next sitting of the Senate.

**The Hon. the Speaker pro tempore:** Is leave granted, honourable senators?

**Hon Senators:** Agreed.

(Debate postponed until the next sitting of the Senate.)

[*English*]

### CANADIAN HUMAN RIGHTS ACT

BILL TO AMEND—SECOND READING—DEBATE ADJOURNED

On Other Business, Senate Public Bills, Second Reading, Order No. 14:

Second reading of Bill S-257, An Act to amend the Canadian Human Rights Act (protecting against discrimination based on political belief).

**Hon. Yonah Martin (Deputy Leader of the Opposition):** Honourable senators, I note that this item is at Day 15. Therefore, with leave of the Senate, I ask that consideration of this item be postponed until the next sitting of the Senate.

**The Hon. the Speaker pro tempore:** Is leave granted, honourable senators?

**Hon Senators:** Agreed.

(Debate postponed until the next sitting of the Senate.)

### CAN'T BUY SILENCE BILL

SECOND READING—DEBATE ADJOURNED

**Hon. Marilou McPhedran** moved second reading of Bill S-261, An Act respecting non-disclosure agreements.

(On motion of Senator McPhedran, debate adjourned.)

### CITIZENSHIP ACT

BILL TO AMEND—SECOND READING—DEBATE ADJOURNED

**Hon. Ratna Omidvar** moved second reading of Bill S-262, An Act to amend the Citizenship Act (Oath of Citizenship).

(On motion of Senator Omidvar, debate adjourned.)

### NATIONAL STRATEGY TO COMBAT HUMAN TRAFFICKING BILL

SECOND READING—DEBATE ADJOURNED

On Other Business, Senate Public Bills, Second Reading, Order No. 19:

Second reading of Bill S-263, An Act respecting the National Strategy to Combat Human Trafficking.

**Hon. Yonah Martin (Deputy Leader of the Opposition):** Honourable senators, I note that this item is also at Day 15. Therefore, with leave of the Senate, I ask that consideration of this item be postponed until the next sitting of the Senate.

**The Hon. the Speaker pro tempore:** Is leave granted, honourable senators?

**Hon Senators:** Agreed.

(Debate postponed until the next sitting of the Senate.)

• (1630)

### NATIONAL SECURITY, DEFENCE AND VETERANS AFFAIRS

MOTION TO AUTHORIZE COMMITTEE TO STUDY THE OPERATION, APPLICABILITY AND FUNCTIONALITY OF THE EMERGENCIES ACT—DEBATE CONTINUED

On the Order:

Resuming debate on the motion of the Honourable Senator Tannas, seconded by the Honourable Senator Osler:

That the Standing Senate Committee on National Security, Defence and Veterans Affairs be authorized to examine and report on the operation, applicability, and functionality of the *Emergencies Act* in a modern context, as well as the robustness of parliamentary supervision it provides for and its interaction with the rules and procedures of the Senate; and

That the committee submit its final report no later than September 28, 2023.

(On motion of Senator Patterson (*Nunavut*), for Senator Tannas, debate adjourned.)

### FOREIGN AFFAIRS AND INTERNATIONAL TRADE

MOTION TO AUTHORIZE COMMITTEE TO STUDY INTERESTS AND ENGAGEMENT IN AFRICA—DEBATE CONTINUED

On the Order:

Resuming debate on the motion of the Honourable Senator Boehm, seconded by the Honourable Senator Arnot:

That the Standing Senate Committee on Foreign Affairs and International Trade be authorized to examine and report on Canada's interests and engagement in Africa, and other related matters;

That the committee submit its final report no later than December 31, 2024;

That the committee have permission, notwithstanding usual practices, to deposit reports on this study with the Clerk of the Senate if the Senate is not then sitting, and that the reports be deemed to have been tabled in the Senate; and

That the committee retain all powers necessary to publicize its findings for 180 days after the tabling of the final report.

(On motion of Senator Martin, debate adjourned.)

## BUSINESS AND ECONOMIC CONTRIBUTIONS MADE BY INDIGENOUS BUSINESSES TO CANADA'S ECONOMY

### INQUIRY—DEBATE CONTINUED

On the Order:

Resuming debate on the inquiry of the Honourable Senator Klyne, calling the attention of the Senate to the ongoing business and economic contributions made by Indigenous businesses to Canada's economy.

**Hon. Dennis Glen Patterson:** Honourable senators, I have the pleasure to rise today on Senator Klyne's inquiry, which calls the attention of the Senate to the ongoing business and economic contributions made by Indigenous businesses to Canada's economy.

I would like to begin by thanking Senator Klyne for the work he is doing to highlight the progress Indigenous people have made — and continue to make — across the country.

From coast to coast to coast, I have had the distinct pleasure of meeting many successful and pioneering Indigenous entrepreneurs. There is not enough time for me to highlight everyone, so I'd like to focus instead on Inuit firms and Inuit leaders who are blazing a trail in Nunavut.

We are lucky in our territory that the Nunavut Land Claims Agreement, under Article 24, has clear requirements for the federal and territorial governments to "... provide reasonable support and assistance to Inuit firms ..."

On December 20, 2019, the Treasury Board issued a directive that ensures all government contracts, including real property leases, meet the government's obligations under this article. The practical upshot of all of this has been the growth and development of Inuit firms that now have the resources and capacity to diversify their portfolios and ventures.

In each of the three regions, there is a regional Inuit association, or RIA, and each RIA has a development corporation. Each corporation serves as a conglomerate with a variety of subsidiaries that offer a variety of services from training and professional development to development of the fisheries. They offer services in support of mining and construction. All of these corporations also focus on renewable energy projects and telecommunications, and that is by no means an exhaustive list.

In the Baffin region — where I live — Qikiqtaaluk Corporation, or QC, is the development corporation. Under the visionary leadership of Mr. Harry Flaherty, QC is currently commissioning a new fishing vessel to add to their fleet — worth well over \$100 million — from a shipbuilding contractor in Spain. They will continue to expand their fisheries and bring quality products, such as shrimp, char and turbot, to domestic and international markets.

The Inuit also own the Aqsarniit Hotel in Iqaluit, a striking hotel and conference centre that features large, well-appointed rooms and state-of-the-art conference delivery capacity in the territory's capital. Those of you who have recently travelled to Nunavut may be aware of how difficult it is to book a room there, as it is always sold out.

With regard to energy, QC continues to pursue renewable energy solutions, such as the Nunavut Nukkiqsautiit Corporation's current project to install 10 100-kilowatt wind turbines — which is anticipated to displace half the diesel fuel used annually for power in that windswept community in lower Hudson Bay — while also managing the Nunavut Petroleum Corporation in cooperation with another Inuit-owned firm, Nunasi Corporation.

In the central region, Sakku Investments Corporation is the development corporation for the Kivalliq Inuit Association. They have been focusing on major endeavours, such as pursuing the development of the Kivalliq Hydro-Fibre Link to Manitoba through their subsidiary, Nukik Corporation.

In 2022, Northern Affairs Minister Dan Vandal stated:

The Kivalliq Hydro-Fibre Link is always top-of-mind as a key northern infrastructure priority. . . . The Government is well-positioned to deliver on its ambitious climate agenda and to build on the momentum that the Kivalliq Hydro-Fibre Link project has made to date. . . .

This is a 100% Inuit-owned project that is projected to support the region by creating 13,650 person-years of employment during the construction phase. It will unlock the vast mineral potential of the region, including critical minerals, as reliable and cost-effective energy infrastructure is key to making these types of projects more economical.

Currently, the mining sector in this region alone generates more than \$100 million in tax revenue annually, creating an added incentive to further projects that would grow that sector significantly. In 2019, Agnico Eagle, the major mining company in that region, spent \$630 million on Inuit-owned businesses. According to Nukik Corporation, the Kivalliq Hydro-Fibre Link project is estimated to generate revenues upward of \$8 billion over 50 years, and would contribute \$3 billion to the GDP during construction alone.

• (1640)

Headed by President and CEO David Kakuktinniq, Sakku bought and refurbished the Clarion, a former hotel in Winnipeg, and repurposed it as a medical boarding home. This 139-room building also boasts 40,000 feet of commercial space, event areas, a pool, spa and more. The amenities do much to support Kivalliq Inuit who must travel to Winnipeg for specialist appointments, surgeries, births, testing and other medical needs. It's a major improvement over the former 44-room facility that hosted 120 beds.

The discomfort and displacement of Inuit who must travel for medical care is a tragic reality that all three regions face. This innovative solution is one that other regions are closely watching with the hopes of replicating it.

Here in Ottawa, another Inuit-owned facility, Larga Baffin, will soon begin construction on Hunt Club Road. The six-storey medical boarding home will have 220 rooms and 350 beds.

Last, but definitely not least, we come to the western region of Kitikmeot. I've always looked at this region as one with innovative leaders who have shown great vision through the years.

Last October, I had the pleasure of working alongside Inuit partners to host the Arctic Security and Sovereignty Summit in Iqaluit, which was attended by many of my Senate colleagues. Every speaker — from academics, to representatives of Inuit-owned Nasittuq and Nunavut Tunngavik, to Natan Obed, President of Inuit Tapiriit Kanatami, or ITK — noted the same thing: that we need to make bold investments in support of the territory and Inuit.

More than once, we heard about the importance of multi-purpose, multi-user legacy infrastructure that would not only lead to better defence capabilities in the Arctic but support local entities and build strong, healthy communities throughout the North.

In the Kitikmeot region, the long-talked-about Grays Bay Road and Port Project is one such example. It is the continuation of a decades-long trend of visionary advocacy for the Bathurst Inlet Port and Road Project and now its new route to Grays Bay.

Colleagues, you have heard me waxing poetic about this project. I'm excited about it because of what it means to community resupply. An all-weather road that, once connected to its sister project in the Northwest Territories, would be Nunavut's first connection to Canada's highway system, making this a truly nation-building project. It would be the first deepwater port on Canada's western Arctic coast, meaning better year-round access to essential goods, breaking the reliance of Kitikmeot communities on cargo planes — which can become unreliable due to weather — and barges that must be booked far in advance and increasingly have trouble navigating the Mackenzie River, which is drying up due to climate change.

Most important, it will provide a deepwater port for our navy and allied navies on the Arctic coast, and a road to tidewater through the resource-rich Slave Geological Province will make numerous base metal and critical mineral projects at known deposits viable.

Inuit partners are currently working with a new proponent to bring this project to life, and I look forward to sharing more news about this nation-building project in the near future.

The RIA's development corporation, Kitikmeot Corporation, or KC, is ably led by Mr. David Omilgoitok; he has helped KC develop an impressive and diverse portfolio. They are currently exploring potential wind energy in the territory and have built strategic partnerships to advance these initiatives. They have also partnered with southern firms to proactively train Inuit youth so they can take on jobs that will become available in the next few years, once both of the mines being developed become operational.

Honourable senators, one of the things I greatly admire about Inuit is the way they work collaboratively toward a shared goal or vision. The Nunavut Construction Corporation, or NCC, is 100% Inuit owned, and its shareholders include Nunasi Corporation, Qikiqtaaluk Corporation, Sakku Investments Corporation and Kitikmeot Corporation. NCC works on development projects across the territory and has recently partnered with the Government of Nunavut on its ambitious and laudable Nunavut 3000 initiative. The Government of Nunavut has contracted NCC to build 150 public housing units for \$600 per square foot — for a total of \$105 million — in the coming year. Over the years, via Nunavut 3000, NCC will build 2,000 of the 3,000 much-needed new housing units planned for Nunavut. This will cover everything from transitional and supportive housing to elder care facilities to affordable and market housing.

We are all keenly aware of the housing crisis facing all Canadians. It is more acute and pronounced in Indigenous communities that already struggle with overcrowding.

Inuit-owned businesses are also servicing Nunavut's rapidly growing mining sector, a main driver of Nunavut's economy, and GDP growth is forecast to increase by over 13% in the coming year.

Since its start, Baffinland's Mary River Mine on north Baffin Island has provided over \$1 billion worth of business to Inuit-owned businesses and joint ventures in the region of Qikiqtaaluk, Baffin.

Colleagues, I've outlined a massive contribution of Nunavut Inuit to the Canadian economy, and it's only the tip of the iceberg. There is no way I could highlight all the deserving and noteworthy accomplishments of Inuit businesspeople in only 15 minutes, so I will end there but invite you to keep your eyes on Nunavut and, whenever you have a chance, speak to Nunavummiut if you are interested in learning more about their amazing accomplishments and the exciting new initiatives they are leading.

Thank you. *Qujannamiik*.

(On motion of Senator Clement, debate adjourned.)

### ONGOING CONCERNS WITH RESPECT TO CANADIAN AGRICULTURAL, WETLAND, AND FOREST LAND REALLOTMENTS

#### INQUIRY—DEBATE ADJOURNED

**Hon. Robert Black** rose pursuant to notice of September 26, 2023:

That he will call the attention of the Senate to the ongoing concerns with respect to Canadian agricultural, wetland, and forest land reallocations, as well as potential food, economic, and social insecurities as a result of reduced capacity for farming, pasture, forestry, and food production both domestically and internationally.

He said: Honourable senators, I rise today to speak to my Inquiry No. 16, calling the attention of the Senate to ongoing concerns regarding Canadian agricultural, wetland and forest land reallocations, as well as potential food, economic and social insecurities as a result of reduced capacity for farming, pasture, forestry and food production — both domestically and internationally.

Colleagues, this is a critical issue that affects people all over the world: land-use management for food security and agricultural use.

In a world grappling with the challenges of feeding a growing population, Canada has the unique opportunity and responsibility to not only sustainably feed its own people but contribute to the global effort to eradicate hunger.

As we navigate the complexities of supply chains, the rising cost of food and the pressing need for housing, it is crucial that we take decisive action to ensure the optimal use of our land resources.

Canada continues to be an agricultural production powerhouse, with vast stretches of fertile land capable of producing abundant crops and sustaining livestock. In recent years, however, we have witnessed significant changes in our agricultural landscape. Urbanization, industrialization and changing climate patterns have impacted our traditional agricultural regions, highlighting the need to lay the groundwork for a thoughtful and strategic pan-Canadian approach to land-use management.

First of all, fellow senators, let us consider the issue of food security. While Canada has enjoyed a relatively stable food supply, we must not become complacent. Food costs are rising. Population numbers are increasing, placing demand on our agricultural industry. This increasing global population combined with unpredictable weather patterns and the degradation of arable land post significant challenges to food production worldwide. As a nation, we must seize the opportunity to ensure and enhance our food security and become a global leader in sustainable agriculture. Removing land from agriculture will only decrease food security.

• (1650)

To achieve this, we must prioritize the protection of agricultural land and promote its efficient use. Preserving our prime agricultural areas from growing urban development is essential. We need to implement strong land-use policies and zoning regulations to ensure the protection of our agricultural heritage while providing the necessary framework for sustainable growth and fulfilling the needs of our own increasing population.

Honourable colleagues, I am not the only one concerned about the removal of prime agricultural lands, wetlands and forest lands for development. In a May 30 viewpoint, Ontario Federation of Agriculture President Peggy Brekveld says:

We understand — and support — the need to increase the housing supply in Ontario, but we also want to ensure that housing is developed without encroaching on Ontario's farmland, which is our most precious natural resource.

Across Canada, colleagues, we are losing our arable, fruitful agricultural land due to a variety of factors, but urban development has been a serious concern for the industry for many years. In fact, in our Senate Standing Committee on Agriculture and Forestry soil study, we've heard time and again that when topsoil is destroyed, it's basically gone forever because it can take thousands and thousands of years to build back up. With a growing population and growing economy, removing arable farmland for development is a cost we just cannot afford.

I want to acknowledge that land-use planning falls under the provincial jurisdiction in Canada. However, from an agricultural perspective, it is imperative that we protect our farmlands and production capabilities. We need to cohesively collaborate among federal, provincial, territorial and municipal governments to address the challenges we face in securing our food supply both domestically and globally. This cross-jurisdictional collaboration will also help with future land-use planning, development and urban sprawl.

As we acknowledge the importance of respecting our various jurisdictions, we must also recognize the interdependence of our provinces and territories in ensuring a robust and sustainable agricultural sector. We must foster cooperation, share best practices and implement cohesive policies that address the varying agricultural needs and challenges across this nation. This collaborative approach will ensure that our collective efforts are aligned, reinforcing the protection of our farmlands, wetlands and forest lands while securing our food production capacities for future generations and still ensuring growth and development for a rising population.

Furthermore, we need a comprehensive agricultural policy that takes into account the diverse agricultural landscapes and production capacities across Canada. Our nation encompasses a range of climatic conditions, soil types and farming practices, from the orchards of British Columbia to the fertile plains of the Prairies to the dairy farms of Quebec and the potato farms in P.E.I. Recognizing these unique regional characteristics, the federal government can play a pivotal role in coordinating efforts to maximize the potential of our agricultural sector, while at the same time preserving our natural resources and meeting the needs of our growing and increasing population.

Moreover, the adoption of innovative farming practices that maximize yields while minimizing environmental impact would aid in food security, and the increase in yields equals more productive land. Embracing technological advancements such as precision agriculture, hydroponics and vertical farming can significantly increase productivity while reducing resource consumption. By investing in research development and implementation, we can ensure our farmers will adopt these practices and thus empower them to produce more food with fewer resources.

However, sustainable agricultural practices alone are not enough to ensure food security. We must also address the challenges presented by the intricate web of supply chains. Canada is a vast country, and the efficient movement of goods from farm to table is crucial. We must invest in infrastructure and transportation networks that facilitate the timely and cost-effective delivery of agricultural products to consumers. By bolstering our supply chains, we can reduce waste, minimize spoilage and ensure that fresh and nutritious food reaches every corner of our nation. Additionally, we need to consider the rising cost of food, which has become a significant concern for many Canadians.

A combination of factors, including inflation, transportation costs and global market forces, among other factors, have contributed to the escalating prices of essential food items. As legislators, it is our duty to address this issue and alleviate the burden on Canadian households. One way of addressing the rising cost of food is by enhancing local food production. By supporting small-scale and urban farming initiatives, we can reduce our reliance on imported goods and services and create a more resilient food system. Encouraging community gardens and rooftop farms and promoting farmers' markets can help strengthen local economies, foster social cooperation and provide affordable fresh produce for all Canadians.

Furthermore, we must work towards eliminating barriers in the supply chain that contribute to higher food prices. By reducing unnecessary regulations, promoting fair competition and encouraging cooperation among stakeholders, we can create a more efficient and transparent system that benefits both producers and consumers.

While prioritizing food security, I understand that we must also recognize and act upon the need for housing in our rapidly growing urban centres. As our population expands, and cities become denser, we face the challenge of balancing the demand for housing with the need to preserve agricultural land. We must adopt innovative land-use strategies that promote densification,

mixed-use development and sustainable urban planning. Vertical housing is feasible as opposed to creating more urban sprawl that affects farmland across the country. By creating vibrant and livable communities, we can strike a balance between housing needs and the preservation of agricultural land. However, this can only be done when land-use planning takes into account food security, land fertility and other things — and only when all levels of government are involved in decisions and discussions.

In conclusion, colleagues, Canada has a pivotal role to play in securing global food supplies while meeting the needs of its own citizens. By effectively managing our land resources, protecting prime agricultural areas and embracing sustainable farming practices, we can enhance our food security and contribute to the feeding of the world. Simultaneously, we must address the challenges posed by complex supply chains, rising food costs and the need for housing. Through collaborative efforts, innovation and strategic policy interventions, I am confident we can forge a path towards a prosperous, sustainable and food-secure future in Canada and around the world.

We must do all we can to stop the removal of farmable, arable land for urban development, and I hope this inquiry will spark further discussion here in the chamber, among my honourable colleagues, in the other place and among all levels of government. After all, as described by the Honourable Senator Gold in a response to my question on May 9, 2023, on urban land sprawl:

. . . the government recognizes the vital importance of a resilient agricultural and agri-food sector, including the need to preserve and protect farmland.

It's time, colleagues, for the government to put up and start recognizing this need indeed.

Thank you, honourable colleagues, for your attention and dedication to this vital matter that will affect you and me, our families, our children, our grandchildren and our great-grandchildren if we don't do something now. Together, let us rise to the occasion and shape a brighter future for our nation and the world before we lose more agricultural land to ill-conceived plans regarding land-use planning across this country.

Thank you. *Meegwetch.*

(On motion of Senator Burey, debate adjourned.)

*(At 4:59 p.m., the Senate was continued until Tuesday, October 17, 2023, at 2 p.m.)*



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