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The Honourable LEO HOUSAKOS,
Acting Speaker

This issue contains the latest listing of Senators,
Officers of the Senate and the Ministry.

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THE SENATE

Monday, July 27, 2020

(Pursuant to rule 3-6(1) the Senate was recalled to sit this date, rather than September 22, 2020, as previously ordered.)

The Senate met at 12 p.m., the Honourable Leo Housakos, Acting Speaker, in the chair.

Prayers.

SPEAKER'S STATEMENT

Hon. Leo Housakos (The Hon. the Acting Speaker): Honourable senators, pursuant to the orders adopted by the Senate on March 12, 2020, and May 1, 2020, concerning the *Senators Attendance Policy*, I wish to advise the Senate that the provisions of the orders have been extended by the Speaker and will remain in effect until the end of 2020.

BUSINESS OF THE SENATE

MOTION TO AUTHORIZE SENATORS TO SPEAK OR VOTE FROM A SEAT OTHER THAN THEIR ASSIGNED PLACES DURING TODAY'S SITTING ADOPTED

Hon. Raymonde Gagné (Legislative Deputy to the Government Representative in the Senate): Honourable senators, with leave of the Senate and notwithstanding rule 5-5(a), I move:

That rule 3-3(1) be suspended today; and

That, notwithstanding rules 6-1 and 9-8(1)(b), senators may speak or vote from a seat other than their assigned places during today's sitting.

The Hon. the Acting Speaker: Is leave granted, honourable senators?

Hon. Senators: Agreed.

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

Hon. Senators: Agreed.

(Motion agreed to.)

SENATORS' STATEMENTS

KOREAN WAR VETERANS DAY

Hon. Yonah Martin (Deputy Leader of the Opposition): Honourable Senators, Canada as a nation owes a lifetime of gratitude to our brave Canadians who have served and sacrificed their lives for the cause of peace in Korea and in other wars and conflicts around the world.

I am honoured to rise on this day, July 27, Korean War Veterans Day, to pay tribute to the more than 26,000 brave Canadians who served in Korea, the more than 7,000 who served in peacekeeping duties after the signing of the Armistice and the 514 who paid the ultimate sacrifice and never returned to Canada but are buried in Busan, Korea to this day.

In June 2013, Senate Public Bill S-213, Korean War Veterans Day Act, became an act of Parliament to enact this day annually as a day of remembrance. Since then, Canadians have gathered across Canada on July 27 at memorials and cenotaphs to honour and remember the heroes of the Korean War.

Today, we commemorate this important day for our Canadian heroes as we continue the three-year Korean War Forgotten No More commemorative campaign, which began on June 25, 2020, with the seventieth anniversary of the breakout of the war, and will conclude with the seventieth anniversary of the signing of the Armistice on this day three years from now.

As part of the three-year campaign, we also coordinated the launch of a student-led project called Intergenerational Integrities. Engagement of students through education and projects such as this one will ensure that the legacy of the Korean War and the stories of valour and sacrifice are shared with future generations and recorded in the annals of Canadian history.

Intergenerational Integrities was initiated and developed by a group of passionate and compassionate secondary students of British Columbia and Alberta who share a common love of people, history and writing. Their project aims to connect youth and seniors, especially during this challenging period due to COVID-19 where many have been physically and socially isolated. Each student has been paired with a veteran of the Korean War, and using the Zoom platform and/or their telephone, the students will interview their veteran buddies about their lives, including their memories of the Korean War. The students will then compose essays, short stories and/or poems based on their interviews as a tribute to the veterans' service and life well lived.

Honourable senators, I will now enter into the record the names of these thoughtful students, our future leaders of tomorrow, who co-initiated Intergenerational Integrities, and the names of the veterans paired with each student, who have been and continue to be our inspiration: Braidyn Chang with Claude Charland, Leonardo Curiel with Jai Boong Kim, Sonya Ferdowski with George Guertin, Galicia Gordon with Ron Foyle, Alexa

Hersch with Bob Orrick, Ruiyi Jia with Ralph DeCoste, Rasee Kachchakaduge with Bill Newton, Hazel Leung with Dennis Moore, Sam Michael Lloyd with Frank Smyth, Amanda Palmatary with Edward Graham, Kai Ramsay with Woo Seok Jason Lee, Melody Sameti with Bill Black, Charissee Wang with John Robertson, Olivia Wong with Don Sudden, Tiana Wong with Doug Finney, Quing Xu with Doug Germaine, and Amy Yin with Alphonse Martel.

[*Translation*]

COVID-19 PANDEMIC—IMPACT ON TOURISM

Hon. Julie Miville-Dechêne: Honourable senators, this summer is tough for Quebec, especially for its weakened tourism industry, which needs to figure out how to adapt its operations to the COVID-19 era.

One of the lessons we've learned from this pandemic is the importance of buying local, whether it's face masks or tourism. We're so quick to fly off to exotic destinations that we too often overlook the wonders in our own backyards. I journeyed 1,313 kilometres on a voyage of discovery along the legendary North Shore of the St. Lawrence River, all the way to Natashquan, birthplace of our national poet, Gilles Vigneault.

Today I want to pay tribute to the North Shore's tourism industry, which bent over backwards to welcome Montrealers, like myself, who were coming from the epicentre of the COVID-19 outbreak. Everywhere I went, I was met with kindness and all the necessary safety precautions, such as masks, Plexiglas and social distancing floor stickers. Still, reopening involves a mountain of work for outdoor guides, restaurants, hotels, and bed and breakfasts, which have to disinfect each room from top to bottom after every guest. As a result, occupancy is cut in half.

It's clear that these places won't make much money this summer. Of course, there are a few lineups, some museums are closed, and some national parks have reduced their hours, but the river and its shoreline are so majestic that it's easy to forget minor inconveniences.

I'm grateful for that welcome because the North Shore was largely untouched by COVID-19, with only 126 cases. While the massive influx of tourists obviously brings economic benefits, tourists are also potential vectors of the coronavirus. If residents of the North Shore were worried, they hid it well. There were problems in other places, like the Gaspé, where tourists didn't always behave respectfully and were illegally camping anywhere they could. That was most unfortunate.

Unlike what we're seeing in the regions, tourism in Montreal and Quebec City is hurting badly because Quebecers are fleeing the cities and international tourism has collapsed. Montreal usually welcomes about 11 million tourists in the summertime, but this year it expects to welcome only one million. Conventions, festivals and sporting events have been cancelled. The downtown is empty and businesses are devastated. How much longer will they be able to hold on? Over 60% of business owners think they will have to close their doors by Christmas if support measures and physical distancing rules remain the same.

[Senator Martin]

• (1210)

I'd like to close by talking about a step forward that I've been hoping for for a long time: It is now mandatory to wear a face mask in enclosed public spaces and on public transit across Quebec. It is high time that happened given our unfortunate record on COVID-19 victims. Another sign of hope is that three-quarters of Quebecers support wearing a mask. Let's hope for widespread compliance. Thank you.

[*English*]

INTEGRATED YOUTH SERVICES NETWORK

Hon. Robert Black: Honourable senators, I rise today to draw attention to a very important initiative for youth in Guelph and Wellington County.

The newly established Integrated Youth Services Network, or IYSN, is a hub where youth between the ages of 12 and 26 can go to seek support for mental health challenges, substance abuse, education, employment, training, housing and more.

The network is meant to act as a "one-stop shop" for any support youth might need. It's a collaborative project involving over 30 organizations that has been in the works for the past couple of years, under the leadership of the Rotary Club of Guelph.

Other organizations involved include Big Brothers Big Sisters of Centre Wellington, the University of Guelph, the YMCA — YWCA of Guelph, the Canadian Mental Health Association Waterloo Wellington, the Guelph Community Foundation, Minto Mental Health and East Wellington Community Services.

According to the IYSN:

This is a partnership of service organizations and volunteers united in a common goal to build a new standard of care, support and services for our youth.

The IYSN will feature seven youth centres across Guelph and Wellington County, where youth can go for support and guidance, or just for a safe space to hang out. At the centres, youth receive access to various programs and services, including education and career support, counselling and peer-to-peer programs. Virtual counselling will also be available.

Important to me, the centres are located not only in the City of Guelph but in rural areas as well. It's important that these resources be accessible and available to rural youth, for whom it is often harder to seek help and benefit from services and programs such as these due to unreliable internet connectivity and physical distance from urban centres.

One in five youth between 15 and 26 experience mental health and/or substance use disorders. Since 2007, hospitalizations in Guelph and Wellington County have increased 223% for mental health and behavioural disorders and 211% for self-harm.

This network was created in response to the lack of existing adequate and accessible services to respond to those challenges and to ensure that youth and families don't fall through the cracks.

I want to applaud this new initiative and say how happy I am that we have a network of this nature in our community. I also want to thank all of the organizations and individuals who have contributed to the creation of the Integrated Youth Services Network of Wellington County and Guelph.

I look forward to seeing this network in action. Thank you. *Meegwetch.*

EMANCIPATION DAY

Hon. Jim Munson: Honourable senators, I rise today in the name of my colleague in the Progressive Senate Group caucus Senator Wanda Bernard. These are the words of Senator Bernard:

Honourable senators, August 1st will mark 186 years since the emancipation of enslaved Africans! For several years I have visited various communities for celebrations, and this year I will miss being surrounded by people remembering, reflecting and celebrating the 'freedom' of our ancestors.

As organizations pivot their usual plans consisting of public education, community picnics, live music, dancing and gospel, they have also shown innovation and flexibility, shifting their celebrations to online events. An unanticipated benefit of COVID-19 is that these virtual events are accessible to more people.

Recognizing Black history year-round is vital in honouring the experience of Black Canadians. For Emancipation Day 2020 we have this incredible opportunity to embrace new traditions. The following 5 activities are suggestions from Team Preston:

1. Centre the principle of "Sankofa" in your activities. "Going forward guided by the past"

Research your local Black history, and as you learn, create a trivia game to engage your family!

2. Encourage local representatives and colleagues to publicly recognize Emancipation Day, emphasizing the importance of recognizing this part of Canadian history.

3. Hold a vigil and plan an action to help lead change at midnight on July 31st to honour the enslaved Africans who did not live to see emancipation. During this vigil, reflect on the current racial climate and plan an action that you will take to help lead change.

4. View online events, celebrations, and engage in conversation about Emancipation Day. Share why Emancipation Day is important to you as a Canadian with friends and family!

5. Share recipes online for "Soul Sustaining" foods that you are making for your loved ones.

Honourable colleagues, we have witnessed the pandemics of racism and COVID-19 collide. This is a reminder that although slavery was abolished, we are still fighting Anti-Black racism. Let us follow the principle of Sankofa and envisage a future justice for African Canadians guided by our history of emancipation and freedom. Freedom Delayed is Justice Denied!

Those were the words of Senator Wanda Bernard.

Briefly, I was curious about *Sankofa*. I looked it up. It comes from the Akan people of Ghana. It is an Akan term that literally means "go back and get it." It expresses the importance of reaching back to knowledge gained in the past and bringing it to the present in order to make positive progress.

One of the symbols depicts a mythical bird flying forward with his head turned backward. Honourable senators, there is always any day, someday and this day, to learn something new. This is that day. Learning the meaning of *Sankofa* is one of them. Thank you.

[*Translation*]

MAY BOUCHARD

RIGHT TO EDUCATION IN FRENCH

Hon. René Cormier: Colleagues, in Nova Scotia, on the shores of St. George's Bay in Antigonish County, there is a magnificent small Acadian village called Pomquet. It boasts a natural provincial park, a church, a school, but most importantly one of our national treasures: May Bouchard. This community builder, great feminist, long-time volunteer, and staunch defender of the French language and Acadian culture, celebrated her 100th birthday on July 19.

When she was quite young, May Bouchard had to leave her home village and raise her six children in Montreal. When she returned home several years later, she noticed with despair that her language and culture had practically disappeared from her village. She worked hard, determined to ensure that the children in her village could be taught in their language and their culture. After many years of lobbying, thanks to her commitment and that of her community, a new school was built in 2000 in Pomquet to serve the francophone population and rights holders, from K to 12. Without that school and without May Bouchard's efforts, that Acadian community would've likely disappeared.

[English]

Colleagues, this story highlights the importance of Statistics Canada's recent decision to include five new questions related to the right to minority language instruction in the 2021 census questionnaire. Without adequate data collection, it is impossible to ensure full compliance with section 23 of the Canadian Charter of Rights and Freedoms, which guarantees educational rights for official language minorities. And without full compliance with this provision, so many other minority language communities are in danger of disappearing.

[Translation]

I want to thank Statistics Canada and the many organizations that worked tirelessly to bring this important issue to the attention of all the institutions, and I especially want to thank May Bouchard.

[English]

Nova Scotia is home to a capable and committed Acadian community, made up of women and men like May Bouchard, whose expertise contributes greatly to the development of that province and to the vitality of our country.

Here in the Senate of Canada, home to minority and regional representation, there has always been a Nova Scotian Acadian representative since 1907, except for the last five years.

[Translation]

What's more, the Senate urgently needs to be enriched once again with the appointment of an Acadian senator from Nova Scotia. Let me say so loud and clear. I'm sure that our national treasure, May Bouchard, would agree.

Stay tuned. Thank you.

• (1220)

ROUTINE PROCEEDINGS

AUDITOR GENERAL

2020 SPRING REPORTS TABLED

The Hon. the Acting Speaker: Honourable senators, I have the honour to table, in both official languages, the 2020 Spring Reports of the Auditor General of Canada to the Parliament of Canada, pursuant to the *Auditor General Act*, R.S.C. 1985, c. A-17, sbs. 7(5).

JUSTICE

CHARTER STATEMENT IN RELATION TO BILL C-20— DOCUMENT TABLED

Hon. Marc Gold (Government Representative in the Senate): Honourable senators, I have the honour to table, in both official languages, a Charter Statement prepared by the Minister of Justice in relation to Bill C-20, An Act respecting further COVID-19 measures.

[English]

STUDY ON THE COVID-19 PANDEMIC

FOURTH REPORT OF NATIONAL FINANCE COMMITTEE DEPOSITED WITH CLERK DURING ADJOURNMENT OF THE SENATE

Hon. Peter Harder: Honourable senators, I have the honour to inform the Senate that pursuant to the orders adopted by the Senate on April 11, 2020, and June 16, 2020, the Standing Senate Committee on National Finance deposited with the Clerk of the Senate on July 14, 2020, its fourth report (Interim) entitled *COVID-19: Relief in Times of Crisis* and I move that the report be placed on the Orders of the Day for consideration at the next sitting of the Senate.

(On motion of Senator Harder, report placed on the Orders of the Day for consideration at the next sitting of the Senate.)

[Translation]

FIRST REPORT OF SOCIAL AFFAIRS, SCIENCE AND TECHNOLOGY COMMITTEE—GOVERNMENT RESPONSE DEPOSITED WITH CLERK DURING ADJOURNMENT OF THE SENATE

Hon. Chantal Petitclerc: Honourable senators, I have the honour to inform the Senate that pursuant to the order adopted by the Senate on April 11, 2020, the Standing Senate Committee on Social Affairs, Science and Technology deposited with the Clerk of the Senate on July 9, 2020, its first report (Interim) entitled *The Federal Response to COVID 19: Interim Observations* and I move that the report be placed on the Orders of the Day for consideration at the next sitting of the Senate.

(On motion of Senator Petitclerc, report placed on the Orders of the Day for consideration at the next sitting of the Senate.)

[English]

BILL RESPECTING FURTHER COVID-19 MEASURES

FIRST READING

The Hon. the Acting Speaker informed the Senate that a message had been received from the House of Commons with Bill C-20, An Act respecting further COVID-19 measures.

(Bill read first time.)

The Hon. the Acting Speaker: Honourable senators, when shall this bill be read the second time?

Hon. Marc Gold (Government Representative in the Senate): Honourable senators, with leave of the Senate and notwithstanding rule 5-6(1)(f), I move that the bill be placed on the Orders of the Day for second reading later this day.

The Hon. the Acting Speaker: Is leave granted, honourable senators?

Hon. Senators: Agreed.

(On motion of Senator Gold, bill placed on the Orders of the Day for second reading later this day.)

QUESTION PERIOD

FINANCE

SOLE-SOURCE SERVICE CONTRACT

Hon. Donald Neil Plett (Leader of the Opposition): Senator Gold, it probably does not come as a surprise to you that my question will be around the WE scandal.

Leader, on June 25, the Prime Minister announced that a \$912 million Canada Student Service Grant would be administered by the WE Charity, which has paid members of his own family over \$300,000. This organization was in breach of its bank covenants and had much of its board resign this spring, leader.

In fact, the Trudeau government signed the sole-source deal with WE Charity Foundation, a real estate holding company, which received charitable status last year, has a budget of just \$150,000 and zero experience delivering programs. This holding company would have had to mobilize 40,000 to 50,000 volunteers in short order. Even if it was successful, at \$5,000 per volunteer, that still would not have accounted for anywhere near the full amount of this billion-dollar deal.

Leader, did your government sign a billion-dollar agreement with a shell company? Where would the unused hundreds of millions of dollars have gone? Has the RCMP contacted any member of your government about WE?

Hon. Marc Gold (Government Representative in the Senate): Thank you for your questions. With regard to your last question, I am not aware of any contact from the RCMP to the government.

With regard to your first question, the public service worked diligently to find the best possible delivery method for this program in order to get students grants to do the volunteer work that we continue to hope they will do. This work and the negotiations were done at the level of departmental officials.

Regrettably, the program did not unfold as intended, but the government will continue to support students and, indeed, all Canadians throughout this difficult time.

Senator Plett: I think, in fact, the Canadian public is lucky it didn't unfold the way the government intended it to unfold.

On the very same day, the Minister of Finance testified before committee last week that he miraculously remembered, to his great surprise, that he and his family received over \$41,000 in travel and expenses from WE. Minister Morneau told the committee he had always meant to repay these expenses, but hours later, WE contradicted the minister and said the travel had, in fact, been complimentary. This is the second time the Minister of Finance has broken the ethics law after forgetting to disclose his French villa to the Ethics Commissioner in 2017.

Leader, given his numerous ongoing and serious ethical violations, why is Minister Morneau still the Minister of Finance? Why should Canadians have any confidence in him whatsoever? Can you tell us if the RCMP has been in contact with the minister or any members of his office or department regarding WE?

Senator Gold: Thank you for your question. With regard to the last part of your question, I'm not aware of any such contact.

The Minister of Finance, as we all know, testified before the committee. He was open. He was transparent about his family's engagement with WE and about his role in the development of the Canada Student Service Grant. Furthermore, the Finance Minister acknowledged that he should have recused himself from deliberations around the organization. Moreover, he was open and transparent and apologized for his mistakes in all matters, and has pledged to commit to work with the Ethics Commissioner on this issue.

With regard to your central question, the government continues to have full confidence in the Minister of Finance. He has steered us, along with the public service and his colleagues, through a most difficult time. He's ensured that Canadians were able to pay their rent, put bread on the table for the benefit of their families and to help the economy have sufficient support to weather this storm, in the hope that we can, and the expectation that the economy can return in strength as we transition out of this pandemic.

• (1230)

Hon. Yonah Martin (Deputy Leader of the Opposition): Leader, I guess I will respectfully disagree about the growing confidence in the Finance Minister. In fact, it's the opposite of that, especially when in this chamber, when he tweets the night before about helping small businesses, making them wait again when they had already been waiting for months for his support.

I'm not saying his department isn't working, but at the same time I'm just questioning the minister's priorities. In fact, when he appeared before the house committee that very day, he remembered the \$41,000 he had received from WE, just hours before the committee appearance.

These are all very clear examples of why we are losing trust in the Finance Minister. At a recent press conference the Prime Minister said:

We're still making determinations about what further openness we can show.

My question, leader, is every mandate letter from the Prime Minister to his cabinet says they're expected to raise the bar on openness, effectiveness and transparency in government. When it comes to the WE contract, why is your government choosing secrecy and stonewalling?

Senator Gold: Thank you for your question. I respectfully disagree with the premise of your question.

The Prime Minister and the Finance Minister quickly acknowledged the mistake that they made with regard to recusal and as this chamber knows, and as the government has stated on numerous occasions, in order to address the crisis that overtook us in this country, the government did everything it could to provide support to Canadians as quickly as possible. As the government acknowledged and as we have dealt with in this chamber on a number of occasions, that's required adjustments; that speed rather than perfection had to be the order of the day. I think Canadians have benefited from the speed with which this government addressed the crisis into which we plummeted.

So this government remains committed to transparency and openness. The Prime Minister and the Minister of Finance are cooperating fully with the Ethics Commissioner. The Ethics Commissioner has the tools and the credibility to look into this matter, and this chamber should remain confident that the proper procedures will be followed by the Ethics Commissioner and that the government will continue to cooperate in these matters.

Senator Martin: That's actually a perfect segue to my supplementary which relates to the report which found the Prime Minister had broken the Conflict of Interest Act in relation to SNC-Lavalin scandal. The Ethics Commissioner stated "witnesses were constrained in their ability to provide evidence" due to the government's decision to deny his office access to cabinet confidences.

Leader, for this year's investigation by the Ethics Commissioner into the Prime Minister's conduct — and you yourself just said that they are absolutely committed to openness and transparency — will your government provide true openness and transparency and commit to waiving all cabinet confidences in relation to the contribution agreement awarded to the WE Charity Foundation?

[Senator Martin]

Senator Gold: Thank you for your question. I'm not in a position to give that undertaking in response to your question. But I do repeat that the government is committed to working in an open and transparent fashion with the Ethics Commissioner, and indeed with the three committees in the House of Commons that are inquiring into this matter. Indeed, I was advised just today, as many of us assumed would be the case, that both the Prime Minister and his chief of staff have expressed their willingness to appear before the Finance Committee in the other place and to answer all questions.

[Translation]

Hon. Julie Miville-Dechêne: My question is for the Government Representative in the Senate, Senator Gold.

I too am deeply disturbed by the Prime Minister's and the Minister of Finance's ethical breaches. Now more than ever, Canadians need a government they can trust, but Justin Trudeau's and Bill Morneau's immediate family members have received money from or are employed by the WE organization. At the cabinet meeting they attended, a decision was made to give WE a sole-source contract that would have paid the organization \$43 million. That is a blatant conflict of interest.

Was the Trudeau government trying to use public money to bail out the troubled WE organization?

Senator Gold: I thank the senator for the question. The government's goal with this program was and still is to assist youth and students, to help them volunteer at a time when, unfortunately, not just young people but many Canadian workers as well are seeing that the jobs they hoped for and were expecting may have disappeared.

The government's goal was to put in place a program to help as many young people as possible, not to help the organization.

Senator Miville-Dechêne: My supplementary question, Senator Gold, is as follows. Could we know exactly who put forward this idea to begin with? Who came up with this rather ill-conceived, hastily announced program to pay Canadian youth for volunteer work when there is already a program in place to help students, the CESB? Was it the Prime Minister who first came up with it? Was it Bill Morneau or the WE organization? Who first came up with this idea?

Senator Gold: Thank you for the question. According to the information I have, which is already in the public domain, I was told that impartial public servants recommended a partnership agreement with WE. It is true that there are existing programs. However, the public service was overwhelmed because of the challenges of implementing and overseeing other programs that the government has put in place and which we, in the Senate, supported by passing several bills.

NATIONAL FINANCE

IMPACT OF COVID-19 PANDEMIC

Hon. René Cormier: Honourable senators, my question is for the Government Representative in the Senate.

Senator Gold, in its recent report entitled *COVID-19: Relief in times of crisis*, the Standing Senate Committee on National Finance made a recommendation that highlights the challenges associated with air transportation in Northern Canada. The people in my region of northern New Brunswick currently have absolutely no public transportation available to them. On June 30, Air Canada stopped offering its services at the Bathurst airport, even though it serves 150,000 residents and more than 5,500 businesses in New Brunswick and the Gaspé region. VIA Rail, meanwhile, has suspended all service on the Montreal-Halifax line until the end of November 2020.

Many workers in my region, who contribute to the country's economy, depend on those modes of transportation.

What does the federal government plan to do in the short term to help resolve this intolerable situation, which, once again, penalizes a segment of the Canadian population that lives primarily in rural areas?

Hon. Marc Gold (Government Representative in the Senate): I believe that access to public transport and transportation in general is vital to the economy and to the lives of Canadians, and that is certainly true in rural communities. Thank you for raising this important issue.

I don't have enough details to respond specifically to your question, but I will do some research and get back to you with an answer as soon as possible.

Senator Cormier: I very much look forward to that answer.

[English]

GUARANTEED LIVABLE INCOME

Hon. René Cormier: In the same report the committee recommended:

That the Government of Canada with provinces, territories and Indigenous governments give full, fair and priority consideration to a basic income guarantee.

How does the government plan to effectively and quickly respond to this recommendation, one that so many Canadians currently support?

• (1240)

Hon. Marc Gold (Government Representative in the Senate): Thank you again for the question. The government received with interest and gratitude the report of the Finance Committee to which you referred. This government remains committed to ensuring that all Canadians are able to keep food on their table and a roof over their heads during this difficult time. That's why the government, with regard to the various programs that came before us for our approval, prioritized getting money out the door as quickly as possible to support Canadians during an unprecedented crisis.

The government recognizes that people are in different situations, have different needs and require different levels of support. That's why the government introduced a suite of programs that include, of course, the CERB, but also the wage subsidy program, about which we'll hear more later today.

The question of a basic guaranteed income is one that is much discussed and much in the air these days. The recommendation of the Finance Committee is that the government give serious consideration to this. The government will give serious consideration to this, as are, I believe, other provinces, jurisdictions and think tanks. It is a complicated issue, and for the moment the government remains focused on ensuring that, in the very near term, Canadians get the support they need as quickly as possible.

[Translation]

FINANCE

SOLE-SOURCE SERVICE CONTRACT

Hon. Jean-Guy Dagenais: Honourable senators, my question is for the Government Representative in the Senate.

Leader, Prime Minister Trudeau just showed us once again that the Liberals have learned nothing from the sponsorship scandal. They are filled with an overweening sense of entitlement.

Since Justin Trudeau will shortly be explaining himself to a committee of the other place, as you mentioned earlier, I would like to know whether the Prime Minister is going to follow his Minister of Finance's example and personally reimburse WE Charity for the thousands of dollars in perks it paid out to his wife, his mother and his brother.

Hon. Marc Gold (Government Representative in the Senate): I thank the senator for his question. It's true that, in the past, the WE organization paid money to the individuals you mentioned, but it also paid money to many Canadians who had provided services not only to WE, but also to the causes supported by WE. None of this is remotely relevant to the importance of the issue we are seized with, nor to the government's commitment to working in an open and transparent fashion with the Office of the Conflict of Interest and Ethics Commissioner, as well as with the committees of the other place.

Senator Dagenais: Government Representative, both you and I have obviously heard Mr. Morneau's and Mr. Trudeau's apologies.

If you were to put on your lawyer's hat, what ethics rules would justify your defending him? I don't think an apology is sufficient under the circumstances.

Senator Gold: I may have a background in law, but in this chamber, I wear my Government Representative hat. These are matters for the commissioner's office. The government has full confidence that the commissioner will conduct a thorough investigation so that Canadians get answers to their questions at the earliest opportunity.

[English]

Hon. Salma Ataullahjan: Senator Gold, the Prime Minister has said it was the public service that initially proposed the WE Charity to organize and deliver the Canada Student Service Grant. According to Minister Morneau, it was Minister Chagger who brought the WE contract to cabinet, and did so without seeking approval from any ministers before signing off on the WE deal.

Senator Gold, I am at a loss for words. Are Canadians being asked to believe that it was either Minister Chagger, who has no known ties to the WE organization, and the public service that came up with the \$912-million contract for the WE Charity on their own accord? Why are the Prime Minister and Minister of Finance Morneau not accepting full responsibility for this debacle? Moreover, why are they deflecting blame by throwing Minister Chagger, a visible minority woman, under the bus?

Senator Gold: Thank you for your question, senator. Again, with respect, I cannot accept some of the premises or assumptions in your question.

There are three committees in the House that have a mandate and that are examining this matter. The Finance Minister has already testified before them. The Prime Minister and his chief of staff have expressed a willingness to testify before them. Furthermore, this whole issue is at the centre of the mandate of the commissioner of ethics, who is investigating it with the full cooperation of the Prime Minister.

Senator Ataullahjan: Senator, does it not strike you as odd that when things go wrong, it's always the women who are to blame? I see a pattern here.

Senator Gold: Again, respectfully, senator, I simply don't accept the premise of your question.

It is clearly the case that the Prime Minister and the Minister of Finance have acknowledged that they made a mistake in not recusing themselves. They have acknowledged as well the importance of the investigation by the Ethics Commissioner and by the three committees in the other place. Nobody is being thrown under the bus. The Prime Minister and the Minister of Finance have taken full responsibility for their decisions.

[Translation]

ENVIRONMENT

RECOVERY PLANNING

Hon. Rosa Galvez: My question is for the Government Representative in the Senate.

[English]

Senator Gold, when introducing federal support for cleaning up orphan oil and gas wells in Western Canada on April 17, the Prime Minister stated: "Just because we're in a health crisis doesn't mean we can neglect the environmental crisis."

At the same time, documents prepared for Natural Resources Canada ahead of Minister O'Regan's participation in the International Energy Agency's April 24 ministerial round table discussion on making clean energy a key part of the global economic recovery, and the IEA's *Global Energy Review*, signal that the federal government was already well aware that the global energy demand had collapsed, that the clean energy sector was "signalling a potential extinction-level event" due to the COVID-19 crisis, and that "This will challenge Canada's climate and energy transformation agendas."

Further, the document ignores that IEA had been publicly and strongly recommending the government to implement green recovery packages since at least mid-March. Indeed, on March 17, Fatih Birol, head of the IEA, was already saying:

This is a historic opportunity for the world to, on one hand, create packages to recover the economy, but on the other hand, to reduce dirty investments and accelerate the energy transition.

Senator Gold, there seems to be conflicting messages between what the government is saying publicly and internal communications. When will Canadians know whether the recovery will be clean, or polluting as usual?

Hon. Marc Gold (Government Representative in the Senate): Thank you for the question. It's an important issue, how we in Canada, under the best of circumstances, manage the exploitation of our resources and the stability of our economy, as well as moving toward a cleaner and more sustainable future. It is not to hide behind the crisis to say that the last few months have forced the government to focus with intensity on ensuring the economy does not collapse and that people's personal economies and lives don't collapse. The government remains committed to finding the right balance between economic stability and recovery, and a transition to a cleaner and greener environment.

There is no contradiction in the government's position. There is a challenge, which we all recognize, that all governments must and should face, as this one is.

Senator Galvez: The government's budgetary update published on July 8 included support for a clean recovery:

• (1250)

This is an opportunity for Canada to build back better through investments in a strong, inclusive and green recovery, which supports new opportunities for workers in every region of this country.

Five recent Canadian polls have now been conducted showing a majority of Canadians support a cleaner, fair and smart recovery, and almost all international organizations, from the World Bank to the IEA, and from the IMF to the World Health Organization, have also called for it, and countries are increasingly committing to a just, clean and resilient recovery.

When will the government provide details on its recovery planning and how it plans to address the health and economic crisis as well as the climate crisis, taking into account their electoral promises?

Senator Gold: Thank you for your question. Again, I repeat, the government remains committed to moving forward to help Canada transition to a greener, more sustainable economy. I'm not in a position to answer with regard to when the government will make its next announcements on that matter, but I will make inquiries and report back to the chamber.

AGRICULTURE AND AGRI-FOOD

TEMPORARY FOREIGN WORKERS

Hon. Robert Black: My question is for the Government Representative in the Senate. Senator Gold, as you know, we've heard a lot about temporary foreign workers in the agriculture sector in recent months. There have been questions about their work conditions and safety since the beginning of the pandemic, and there have been COVID-19 outbreaks at farms and tragic deaths of migrant workers.

We've heard that the Government of Ontario is investigating 17 temp agencies in relation to these outbreaks. The federal government said that they would take action to ensure the safety of our migrant workers, who are so important to the agricultural sector, and to improve the programs through which they are employed.

Since my last question on June 23, what concrete actions has the government taken?

Hon. Marc Gold (Government Representative in the Senate): Thank you for your question. It's an important one.

The government is very aware how important temporary workers are to meeting our labour market needs in key sectors, notably but not exclusively in the agricultural area. I am advised that the government's work in the intervening time to which you referred includes working closely with the provinces and the territories with a special focus on improving housing for foreign workers in Canada.

I'm also advised that the government is looking actively at additional steps to enhance worker safety, for example, by having Service Canada inspectors work closely with the Public Health

Agency of Canada as well as local health units to provide increasing outreach to temporary foreign workers and bolstering inspections in the event of a flare-up or an outbreak.

Through this, of course, the government continues to offer mandatory isolation support for temporary foreign workers. This is a program that offers farmers and food processors up to \$1,500 per worker to help pay for the costs related to meeting the mandatory 14-day quarantine period when the worker enters Canada.

Farms will continue to be monitored to ensure compliance with quarantine rules. If, in fact, an employer is found not to be compliant with the Quarantine Act or the Temporary Foreign Worker Program, they would no longer be eligible for that \$1,500 to which I referred and, indeed, could face significant fines and sanctions.

HEALTH

COVID-19 VACCINE

Hon. Robert Black: This question comes from my colleague, Senator Doug Black:

Many countries are participating in the international COVAX facility to secure a supply of COVID-19 vaccines. Alternatively, other countries have engaged in advance purchasing agreements.

Can you please advise on the status of securing a vaccine and a sufficient supply for Canadians?

Will the government participate in the COVAX facility?

Has the government approached any manufacturers about advance purchasing of vaccines for COVID-19?

Hon. Marc Gold (Government Representative in the Senate): Thank you for your question. The government, I'm advised, is moving ahead in a comprehensive plan to invest in the development and supply of an eventual vaccine as well as other promising treatments.

The government is investing \$600 million to support clinical trials to ensure Canada has the biomanufacturing capacity to supply a vaccine to the Canadian market. This will better position Canada to rapidly access a vaccine when one does become available, and the government will continue to work hard to develop other countermeasures to protect the health and safety of Canadians.

I'm not in a position to answer the specific questions that our colleague Senator Black (*Alberta*) posed. I'll make some inquiries in that regard.

THIRD READING

The Hon. the Acting Speaker: Honourable senators, when shall this bill be read the third time?

Hon. Lucie Moncion: Honourable senators, with leave of the Senate and notwithstanding rule 5-5(b), I move that the bill be read the third time now.

The Hon. the Acting Speaker: Is leave granted, honourable senators?

Hon. Senators: Agreed.

[*Translation*]

ORDERS OF THE DAY

ETHICS AND CONFLICT OF INTEREST FOR SENATORS

THIRD REPORT OF COMMITTEE—DEBATE CONTINUED

On the Order:

Resuming debate on the motion of the Honourable Senator Patterson, seconded by the Honourable Senator Seidman, for the adoption of the third report of the Standing Committee on Ethics and Conflict of Interest for Senators, entitled *Developments and actions in relation to the committee's fifth report regarding Senator Beyak*, presented in the Senate on June 22, 2020.

The Hon. the Acting Speaker: Honourable senators, pursuant to rule 12-30(2), a decision cannot be taken on this report, as yet. Debate on the report, unless some other senator wishes to adjourn the matter, will be deemed adjourned until the next sitting of the Senate.

Is that agreed, honourable senators?

Hon. Senators: Agreed.

(Pursuant to rule 12-30(2), further debate on the motion was adjourned until the next sitting.)

BILL RESPECTING FURTHER COVID-19 MEASURES

SECOND READING

Hon. Lucie Moncion moved second reading of Bill C-20, An Act respecting further COVID-19 measures.

She said: Honourable senators, I will comment on this bill at third reading. I therefore move adoption of the bill at second reading.

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

Some Hon. Senators: Agreed.

An Hon. Senator: On division.

(Motion agreed to and bill read second time, on division.)

[*English*]

Senator Moncion: Honourable senators, I rise today at third reading as sponsor of Bill C-20, An Act respecting further COVID-19 measures. Bill C-20 proposes enhancements to the Canada Emergency Wage Subsidy, provides for additional supports for Canadians living with disabilities and proposes to temporarily suspend some time limits and allow others to be suspended or extended under federal laws and regulations due to the volatility generated by this pandemic.

Through this legislation and subsequent regulations, it is the government's intention to provide employers more fiscal support during the safe restart of the economy. It also proposes support for Canadians living with disabilities through a one-time payment to help them better cope with the added challenges of COVID-19. Finally, part 3 of this act aims to ensure that individuals, businesses, governments and other parties do not miss numerous time limits set out in federal legislation that would significantly impact finances and the ability to exercise rights.

[*Translation*]

Honourable senators, the COVID-19 pandemic is one of the greatest challenges we will face in our lifetime. COVID-19 is projected to cause the largest and most sudden economic contraction since the Great Depression. Global supply chains have been disrupted, trade has slowed and a significant amount of economic activity has been halted. Millions of Canadians, like many others around the world, lost their jobs, as businesses faced a new and unprecedented level of uncertainty.

[*English*]

Since March, the Government of Canada as well as provincial, territorial and municipal governments have taken unprecedented steps to support Canadians and their families through this difficult time. Canada's COVID-19 Economic Response Plan has sought to stabilize the economy and provide rapid and broad-based emergency support measures. These measures are both important in the short term for preventing a larger drop in economic activity than would have otherwise been the case, as well as in the long term for avoiding prolonged social and economic costs from delayed rehiring and reduced consumption. Although there have been Canadians and businesses that have fallen through the cracks, the emergency response program has

[Senator Gold]

tried to support as many people as possible and continues to address those hit most harshly by the pandemic, as is proposed in Bill C-20.

• (1300)

The Canada Emergency Wage Subsidy has been one of the most important components of the COVID-19 Economic Response Plan. By protecting the connection between workers and their employers, the program is helping businesses, non-profit organizations and registered charities stay positioned to recover quickly as economic activity across the country safely restarts.

[*Translation*]

Employers of all sizes are eligible for this support. Since its creation, the Canada Emergency Wage Subsidy has supported some 3 million jobs and counting. This support has given thousands of Canadian families financial security. Business owners working hard to innovate and overcome the challenges of COVID-19 find it reassuring to know that they can access the wage subsidy.

Throughout the crisis, the government has been flexible, adjusting support programs as needed. In May, the government announced it was extending the wage subsidy by 12 weeks to August 29.

The government consulted Canadians, including business and union representatives, about how they thought the emergency wage subsidy could be improved to encourage economic growth and help as many Canadians as possible get back to work.

[*English*]

During the consultation process, non-profit organizations and registered charities weighed in and stated that the wage subsidy was invaluable in keeping workers on the payroll and helping to bring workers back.

The Standing Senate Committee on National Finance heard similar concerns during their study of the government's response to COVID-19, which can be found in their recently released interim report, *COVID-19: Relief in times of crisis*. In the committee's report, one of the concerns expressed by companies about the wage subsidy in its current form was that the program's eligibility requires a 30% drop in income, which is a barrier for many companies, particularly those whose activities are seasonal or whose turnover is mainly made during the summer period.

The government's planned consultations also revealed that the current eligibility criteria are hampering the growth of the Canadian economy, in addition to raising equity issues. In fact, the Senate National Finance Committee recommended in the report that the government consider the adoption of a progressive or scalable eligibility threshold for the wage subsidy and that the duration of the subsidy be extended for particularly hard-hit sectors.

The legislation before you includes these provisions, which I am confident will help provide stronger support for businesses and other employers.

I would like to take this opportunity to thank Senator Mockler and members of the committee for their diligent work on the report.

Consultations revealed that the current 30% revenue decline test was too stringent. They argued that many businesses were still struggling in the pandemic, despite experiencing revenue drops of less than this amount. It is clear that the recovery will be a gradual process. Employers also expressed concerns that the 12-week extension, until the end of August, may not be long enough to help businesses as we all take precautions to open in the safest and most responsible way possible.

[*Translation*]

For the most part, stakeholders proposed modifications aimed at ensuring that all businesses are treated equally so that certain sectors of the Canadian economy are not disproportionately and unjustly affected because of their specific and unique circumstances.

The bill before us today takes into consideration the important feedback gathered during recent consultations the government held with business and labour representatives. The consultations focused on how this program can best meet the needs of employers and employees as our economic activity rebounds. By supporting the economic recovery post-crisis, the bill will help support more employers and employees get back on their feet.

Bill C-20 includes the following amendments. First of all, the bill extends the Canada Emergency Wage Subsidy to December 19, 2020, including a revision of program details in effect until November 21, 2020. Second, effective July 5, 2020, the bill provides two different subsidies: a basic subsidy for eligible employers who see their revenues decline and a top-up subsidy for employers that have been most adversely affected by the COVID-19 crisis.

The maximum base subsidy rate would be provided to employers experiencing a revenue drop of 50% or more, with the rate gradually declining for employers experiencing a revenue drop between 49% and zero. As a result, the emergency wage subsidy would no longer be limited only to eligible employers who experienced a revenue drop of 30% or more.

For the first time, any eligible employer who experienced a drop in revenue would be able to get support. Access to the wage subsidy would be extended to a broader range of employers, which would protect more workers and jobs.

[*English*]

And for the most adversely impacted employers, the new top-up subsidy would provide additional support proportional to their needs. This top-up would be available to employers that have experienced an average revenue drop of more than 50% over the preceding three months. This will be particularly helpful to employers and workers in industries that are recovering more slowly, such as restaurants and the hospitality sector. The rate of the additional subsidy could reach 25%. The rate of the additional subsidy of an eligible employer would be determined based on the average drop in income observed by the employer over the previous three months.

Both the basic subsidy rate and the top-up subsidy rate would apply to \$1,129 per week per employee. This new, more flexible and more proportionate design would mean that Canadian employers get the support they need. The most impacted businesses would get the most significant support — up to 85% of eligible remuneration in July and August. For businesses that are recovering, the gradual decrease in the subsidy rate will provide a predictable rate of support as business picks up.

In addition, a rule would ensure that until August 29, employers would be entitled to a wage subsidy rate that is equal to or more generous than what they would have been eligible for under the original wage subsidy structure. This means that in the months of July and August, an eligible employer who experienced a drop in income of 30% or more would benefit from a wage subsidy rate of at least 75%.

In order to help businesses navigate these fairly complex changes, particularly small businesses with limited resources and capacities, the Canada Revenue Agency will publish all relevant information online to help employers understand how they may benefit from these changes. In addition, the call centre that currently operates to help businesses navigate the wage subsidy will continue its work and serve businesses in light of these proposed changes. The Canada Revenue Agency is also working on an online calculator to simplify calculations for SMEs.

This wage subsidy overhaul proposal ensures that the program continues to meet the immediate needs of employers and workers, while putting them in a good position to experience a vigorous recovery as economic activity gradually picks up.

[*Translation*]

I would now like to talk about Part 2 of this bill, which provides for additional support measures for Canadians living with disabilities.

According to the Canadian Survey on Disability, 2017, 22% of Canadians over the age of 15 report having a disability. This rate increases with age to 37.8% for Canadians over the age of 65 and to 47.4% for those over the age of 75.

We know that, of the over 1.5 million working-aged Canadians with disabilities, 41% are unemployed or completely excluded from the labour market. This rate increases to over 60% for people with severe disabilities.

• (1310)

The government is determined to support people with disabilities in accordance with the principles and objectives of the United Nations Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities and the Accessible Canada Act, which received Royal Assent on June 21, 2019, and took effect on July 11 of that same year.

[Senator Moncion]

[*English*]

The COVID-19 Disability Advisory Group advised the Minister of Employment, Workforce Development and Disability Inclusion on issues pertaining to the impact of the pandemic on persons with disabilities. The group shared details about the lived experiences of persons living with disabilities during the pandemic, along with disability-specific issues, systemic gaps and potential responses, which helped in part to inform parts of this legislation.

The bill before us proposes to facilitate a one-time, tax-free, non-reportable payment of up to \$600 to all eligible individuals who receive the disability tax credit. The one-time payment would also be provided to those who are eligible for other disability benefits or supports, such as Canada Pension Plan disability benefits, Quebec pension plan disability benefits or one of the disability supports provided by Veterans Affairs Canada. This support will benefit approximately 1.7 million Canadians with disabilities who face additional expenses due to the COVID-19 pandemic.

These additional expenses might include higher costs for personal protective equipment; additional expenses related to hiring personal support workers and accessing other disability supports; paying for increased costs for medical supplies and medication; higher internet costs associated with physical distancing; and increased use of taxis and home delivery services to obtain groceries and prescriptions.

[*Translation*]

If this measure is adopted, eligible Canadians will receive the payment automatically.

Furthermore, Canadians with disabilities who are eligible for the disability tax credit but have not applied, will have to 60 days to apply after the bill receives Royal Assent. If they are eligible for the tax credit, they will receive the one-time payment.

Part 2 of the bill will help increase accessibility to ensure that people with disabilities are included in the economic recovery.

Finally, I would like to talk about statutory time limits, a unique challenge that the government intends to address through this legislation. The statutory time limits have a significant concrete impact not only on our justice system, but also on the federal regulations governing individuals and businesses.

Legislative measures are necessary to ensure that individuals and businesses can focus on resuming or maintaining their operations during this pandemic, knowing that their right to a fair legal process is protected.

Government operations have not been immune to the pandemic, and several provinces have actually recognized the need to extend the legal and regulatory time limits in their plans.

Because a large amount of resources has been allocated to combatting COVID-19, it may be more difficult to fulfill certain obligations within the required time.

The government is therefore proposing a series of measures grouped in An Act respecting the suspension or extension of time limits and the extension of other periods as part of the response to the coronavirus disease 2019. The short title is Time Limits and Other Periods Act (COVID-19).

[*English*]

The proposed legislation, partly informed by provincial counterparts, as well as stakeholders, can be broken down into two parts: the automatic suspension of limitation periods for dates between March 13, 2020, and September 13, 2020, or an earlier day to be fixed by the Governor-in-Council; it also provides for additional ministerial powers in order to suspend certain regulatory time limits.

Essentially, it would suspend limitation periods for civil proceedings before courts, similar to the actions of our provincial counterparts, and would grant some additional flexibility to courts. In addition, the legislation would authorize ministers to extend or suspend only the most urgent and problematic regulatory time periods that will have a significant impact on Canadians and Canada if they are not met.

[*Translation*]

The purpose of the new act is clearly set out. It is to temporarily suspend certain time limits and extend certain others to prevent any exceptional circumstances from making it difficult or impossible to meet those time limits.

It also aims to temporarily authorize the extension of other periods, for instance the validity of licences, in order to prevent unfair or undesirable effects on Canadians that may result from their expiry.

It is clearly stated that the bill is to be interpreted in accordance with the rule of law and the Canadian Charter of Rights and Freedoms.

It is also clearly stated that the bill would not apply in respect of the investigation of an offence or in respect of a proceeding respecting an offence, nor would it apply in respect of a time limit or other period that is established by or under the Corrections and Conditional Release Act.

[*English*]

For the first part of the bill pertaining to civil litigation, the new act would provide for the suspension of limitation periods established by and under federal legislation. For example, these include time limits for commencing a civil proceeding before a court, for doing something in the course of proceedings or for making applications for leave to commence a proceeding or to do something in relation to a proceeding. These provisions would

apply to any court referred to in federal legislation. The suspension would start on March 13, 2020, and end on September 13, 2020 — that is to say, for a maximum period of six months — or, depending on circumstances, it could end on an earlier day fixed by order of the Governor-in-Council.

The government has also included a provision that will allow courts to remain flexible and adjust the approach as appropriate for easy facilitation on the ground, while maintaining the same start date and preventing a suspension beyond six months. The courts may also take action concerning the effects of failure to comply with the time limit before its suspension, in particular by issuing orders that would cancel or modify these effects. In addition, in order to deal with unforeseen events, this legislation would allow the Governor-in-Council to lift a suspension in circumstances specified in the order.

[*Translation*]

This act also gives federal ministers the power to make temporary orders to suspend certain time limits or extend certain periods in acts set out in the schedule, in regulations made under those acts or in regulations set out in the schedule. The number of time limits and periods is limited so as to include only the most important ones.

These suspensions and extensions cannot exceed six months, including renewals. In addition, they do not apply to time limits or other periods that end on or after December 31, 2020, nor can they allow a time limit to continue after December 31, 2020, and a suspension by order cannot allow a time limit to continue after December 31, 2020.

Ministerial orders can however have retroactive effect to March 13, 2020, and may include provisions respecting the effects of a failure to meet the time limit or the expiry of a time limit that was then suspended or extended. To provide more flexibility, these orders may also provide that the suspensions or extensions apply only if the body specified consents, or they may state that the body can decide otherwise or vary the effects of the order.

[*English*]

The government has acknowledged the significant nature of this legislation and the unique circumstances leading to it by building numerous safeguards into the legislation to ensure that respect for the rule of law and the application of the Charter is applied in all circumstances. The Governor-in-Council would be empowered to make regulations, including restricting or imposing conditions on the power of ministers to make orders. As well, the addition of a sunset clause would ensure powers to make orders would not extend beyond September 30, 2020.

Also, for added transparency for Canadians, all orders on suspending and/or extending time limits would be made public on the Government of Canada website within 6 days of the order and stay published for a minimum of six months, and will be published in the gazette within 14 days of the order being given.

Finally, parliamentary oversight measures are provided for in this new legislation. Ministerial suspension or extension decisions and decrees must be submitted to each of the two

houses of Parliament within three days after being made or as soon as possible if the house concerned is not sitting. Following their tabling in a house of Parliament, they must be referred to a committee of that house.

• (1320)

Colleagues, it is the government's objective to remain resilient and eventually recover from the serious economic consequences imposed by COVID-19.

[Translation]

Bill C-20 helps ensure that people can keep their job or enter the workforce. This initiative comes with assistance for employers of all sizes and from all sectors of the Canadian economy. Many businesses are already benefiting from rehiring programs that help maintain the crucial relationship between the workplace and the employee. Bill C-20 complements existing measures.

Bill C-20 includes supplementary support measures for Canadians living with disabilities. It also proposes temporarily suspending certain deadlines and suspending or extending other deadlines in accordance with federal laws and regulations, given the volatility generated by this pandemic.

I encourage all senators to support this important bill.

[English]

I ask all honourable senators to support Bill C-20 for these measures to take effect as quickly as possible. They will go a long way in providing much-needed assistance for businesses and Canadians who need it the most, and will help pave the way back to a stable and healthy economy. Thank you.

[Translation]

Hon. René Cormier: Would the senator take a question?

Senator Moncion: With pleasure.

Senator Cormier: Senator, we know to what extent protecting privacy is an increasingly important issue in our country. Canadians will be concerned by the privacy measures envisaged in a context where, under this bill, their personal information will be shared between departments.

My question is the following: What will Employment and Social Development Canada do with the personal and taxpayer information that it collects from the Canada Revenue Agency and Veterans Affairs once this payment has been made? Can you confirm that the minister has duly notified the Privacy Commissioner that she intends to obtain personal and taxpayer information?

Senator Moncion: Thank you for those two questions. With regard to access to personal information, section 6 of the Privacy Act governs the collection, retention and disposal of personal information. That information is retained for a period of two years for administrative purposes. Under this act, individuals whose personal information has been used have two years to

request access to the information. They can ask the various departments that have used or received their personal information what they did with that information.

As for the second part of your question, Minister Qualtrough sent the Privacy Commissioner a first notice in June stating that requests would be made under the Privacy Act. In addition to the bill before us today, a Treasury Board directive also provides information on the expanded use of information and the various groups that will be affected by privacy matters. Again, the two-year rule still applies to the retention and disposal of that information.

Hon. Tony Loffreda: Would Senator Moncion agree to take other questions?

Senator Moncion: I'd be happy to.

Senator Loffreda: Thank you, senator. Since the beginning of the pandemic, dozens and dozens of business owners and Canadians have shared their concerns with me and told me about the challenges they're facing with regard to the Canada Emergency Wage Subsidy. Many of them complained about the fact that the program is complex, overly restrictive and difficult to understand.

Could you tell us a bit more about the government's approach to employees who are on forced leave or who have been temporarily laid off?

Senator Moncion: Thank you for the question. The government's approach to helping people on forced leave includes everything to do with the wage subsidy for employers to make sure that the employer-employee relationship is preserved.

Bill C-20's objectives include the base wage subsidy and top-up subsidies. These subsidies will help employers maintain the employer-employee relationship and help employees return to work more quickly. The other objective is to reduce layoffs as much as possible and support people who have to quarantine for 14 days when the employer hasn't the means to do that. The bill seeks to preserve the employer-employee relationship in order to help employers hire their employees back and to help employees go back to work. There are incentives for both employers and employees.

Senator Loffreda: I was wondering why they are treated differently and are subject to different rate structures. Thank you for that clarification. I thought this all seemed to add a layer of complexity to an already confusing system, but I understand it better now.

[English]

The second part of my question touches on the base subsidy rate and the top-up subsidy rate. I understand the top-up subsidy is a new feature that will help employers that have been subject to the worst effects of the economic shutdown.

[Senator Moncion]

As I previously stated, the government had to be more agile and flexible in its approach. Our Finance Committee also deplored the fact that a business was ineligible for all support simply because its revenue declined by 1% below the threshold, so I appreciate the changes being brought forward by Bill C-20.

I wonder if you could provide us with the rationale behind the government's decision to have two subsidy rates and introduce the new top-up rate. Could you provide us with a straightforward scenario where a business would be eligible for the top-up subsidy?

Senator Moncion: Thank you for the question. With respect to the first part of your question, we are looking at minimizing the financial effect of COVID-19 on employers.

In terms of the two levels of subsidy rates, the first level is to help employers who have been hit, and the second part, the top-up, is for employers who have been more affected than the first group.

For example, an employer could rehire part of his staff and receive — from the time that the pandemic started and the first wage subsidy was provided by the government — 75% of the wages that were supplemented for staff who were staying on. For staff who were being laid off, they had access to the emergency programs.

The severely affected industries — and we're looking at hospitality, such as hotels and tourism — were more affected because they were unable to restart or they were very much affected by the fact that there are no tourists and people were confined to their homes.

The government is trying to help companies get back and slowly restart their businesses, and they are subsidizing the restart of these businesses. How they are doing that is between the months of April and June, they are looking at the decrease in revenues during that period and comparing it to the same period in 2019. The decrease that employers have been subjected to from 2019 to 2020 is the base amount where the government will start calculating the subsidy that they will receive. They are using periods five and six, which is July and August, and they are saying that for a decrease of 60% of your business, you will get the subsidy and you can also get 25% more if you've been more affected. You could get an 85% subsidy. So you'll get the basic and the top-up.

• (1330)

I'm not sure if you want numbers, but in order for the government to help businesses, there is information on the website and there are also calculators where you put in this year's numbers and last year's numbers and it will do the calculation for you. It will tell you the subsidy that you will be receiving.

Senator Loffreda: Thank you for the clarification. You are comfortable, obviously, that more businesses will have access to Bill C-20, more businesses will be helped, and it will help in our economic recovery?

Senator Moncion: Thank you again for the question. Yes, because the government has decided that there was not going to be a threshold where businesses will be penalized because their decrease hasn't been low enough. They've been penalized enough as it is. The government is saying that it is going to work with all businesses to get them all back. The amount of help will depend on how much this decrease is.

Hon. Yonah Martin (Deputy Leader of the Opposition): I was going to save my criticism for the speech that I will be giving shortly on debate, but Senator Loffreda's questions reminded me of some things that I have heard, and I have some questions for the sponsor.

Thank you for your very thorough speech. I know the effort that would have gone into preparing that as the sponsor. I'm glad I'm the critic and not the sponsor for this bill in that Part 1 is very complex.

I'm thinking about the businesses that are disadvantaged because the owners may not be as proficient in English. They may be great business people, but the information is complex even for us to decipher, let alone those who are trying to be successful in Canada. Over the course of the COVID-19 pandemic period, we have, in my office, taken it upon ourselves to translate the different programs into Korean so that business people can understand what they can apply for.

Senator, you did mention that the department is going to post information and there's a calculator, but I'm wondering how confident you are and we can be that this information, which is very complex, can help businesses, even with those who do not speak English as proficiently. Is there going to be added effort? It is quite complex, in my opinion.

Senator Moncion: Thank you for the question. Yes, it is complex and language can be a barrier. The government and CRA try to help as many people as they can. For people from Korea who don't necessarily understand English well — I can't say for sure — there are probably people within the CRA or their communities who can help them. That's the first aspect.

The second aspect is that when you look at numbers, when you look at sales or revenues, yes, it looks complicated, but once you have your sales tallied and you put the numbers in an Excel spreadsheet, it's not that difficult. Comparing one period of three months in 2020 and three months in 2019 and making the calculation, you can get a ballpark very quickly just by saying \$100,000 versus \$70,000 or \$30,000. It looks complicated for people who don't necessarily understand, but it's the same as when you do your income tax. It looks very complicated, but when you use an Excel spreadsheet or the programs that are provided, it becomes easier.

For larger companies, they have access to their accounting firms. There is a lot of work that is going to be done by the accounting firms because that's when they are going to be asking for the wage subsidy. So the information is going to be provided. I understand that there will be a cost associated with the preparation of these numbers to companies or businesses, but it's also part of this pandemic, which was an unforeseen event that affected everyone's life.

Senator Martin: I have one more question.

The Hon. the Acting Speaker: Would you take another question, Senator Moncion?

Senator Moncion: Yes, please.

Senator Martin: I do believe accountants will be quite busy in assisting businesses. Hopefully, some of the smaller businesses will be able to afford such services.

You did mention tourism and hospitality several times, and I'm glad you did. It has come to my attention through some of the business people in B.C. how they have been impacted. I do worry about what will happen as these programs come to an end as their lifeline right now is government subsidy. Until the borders open, even with their best efforts, they will not be able to bring their businesses up to where they were.

Having looked at the bill, do you think that there is a need — perhaps with the Finance Committee or yourself and perhaps myself — to be focusing on what we need to do further for the tourism and hospitality industries?

Senator Moncion: Thank you again for the question.

I think the government is aware of the situation. The government will adjust the decision making as COVID-19 evolves. We will see within the next few months what will happen. Right now, we are looking to December 30. Beyond that, we'll see what the government does to adjust.

Hopefully, we will be able to restart our lives a little bit more, businesses will be able to restart again, things will pick up, COVID-19 will not spread and we will not have to go into a lockdown again. That would be very unfortunate for Canadians, for businesses, for everyone. I think we've had enough of this lockdown.

[*Translation*]

Senator Loffreda: Many entrepreneurs and business owners have asked me the following question.

[*English*]

It's a crisis that happens only once in 100 years, but many businesses and entrepreneurs have asked me the question, and Bill C-20 is very welcome.

Why wasn't it thought out at the beginning, where it was, as the Finance Committee said, more scalable, more progressive, more agile? We've gone through a few months of the crisis. There have been a lot of complications. A lot of businesses didn't know whether they did or did not have access. Could you elaborate as to why now and why not at the initial process, where we did say in this chamber — I myself did say it — why don't we make specific measures for specific businesses and make it agile so as many as possible could adhere to the assistance?

[*Translation*]

Senator Moncion: Thank you for the question. If you don't mind, I'll answer in French.

The government introduced the initial measures in order to provide Canadians with immediate assistance. I believe the government kept an eye on how the situation was evolving to determine which groups would be the most affected by the pandemic and the lockdown. I think the government also tried to anticipate what was going to happen next in order to plan the best possible measures for what lies ahead.

We were initially meant to study the bill in June. That was Bill C-17; however, it wasn't introduced in June, and so we're examining it in July.

The government planned to gradually adapt its approach based on aspects of COVID-19 that couldn't be fully predicted. It was more of a progression than an oversight. It's important to look at how Canadians and our businesses have been affected and to what extent.

[*English*]

Senator Martin: Honourable senators, I rise today to speak to Bill C-20, An Act respecting further COVID-19 measures.

• (1340)

Before I begin, I would like to take this opportunity to acknowledge the strength, resilience and genuine kindness of Canadians across our great nation, even though these past several months have been fraught with many challenges and setbacks. To all our health care and frontline workers — doctors, nurses, paramedics, police officers and firemen — thank you for your courage and for continuing to do your very best to keep Canadians safe. To neighbours, volunteers and perfect strangers, lending a helping hand and watching out for one another, we see you and thank you for reminding us how much Canadians care.

I hope all honourable senators, our staff and our entire Senate community are staying safe and well so that we can serve and work to the best of our abilities to care for our families and help our country get through these challenging times.

Now to the bill. Bill C-20 is yet another piece of legislation introduced as part of the government's response to the global pandemic and to the economic dislocation that the pandemic has caused. Unfortunately, like other legislation we have seen pass through this chamber in relation to the pandemic, it is yet another bill that seeks to correct shortcomings contained in previous bills.

In my view, it is another bill that has paid insufficient attention to what Canadian businesses are saying and introduces needless complexity into programs that are already highly complex and difficult to understand. The fact that this legislation proposes yet again to correct mistakes made in previous government bills is, quite frankly, unacceptable.

This has been a pattern with other legislation. By now it should not be occurring, yet we have seen it again and again. But rather than solving problems, these corrective bills seem to simply create new problems, even if some aspects are addressed.

Before getting into my specific critique of this bill, it is perhaps useful to briefly review its content. Part 1 of this bill amends the Income Tax Act to revise eligibility criteria for the Canada Emergency Wage Subsidy. In this regard, there are measures that are substantially the same as those contained in the government's previous Bill C-17 that it abandoned last month. The government proposes to provide employers with great flexibility in calculating the baseline remuneration for its employees. Under the bill, baseline remuneration will now be calculated either by using the dates March 1 to March 31, 2019, or, alternatively, by using the dates January 1 to March 15, 2020.

There is also some greater flexibility for those corporations formed through amalgamation for where a corporation may have been wound up into another company. Such companies can now use their combined revenues to demonstrate the 30% decline in their revenue, which is the test under the wage subsidy. Amendments are also introduced to exclude tax exempt trusts from applying for the Canada Emergency Wage Subsidy, and also to permit companies to outsource their payroll to another provider.

Part 2 of the bill then amends several acts related to the disclosure of information for administering a one-time benefit payment to persons with disabilities. This provision will provide a non-taxable and non-reportable payment of up to \$600 to approximately 1.7 million eligible individuals who are holders of a valid Disability Tax Credit Certificate who currently receive the Canada Pension Plan Disability Benefit or Québec Pension Plan disability benefits or who are in receipt of disability supports provided by Veterans Affairs Canada. It's a welcome provision, but one that should have been in place last month. In fact, all opposition parties were ready in June to move forward with the payments for Canadians living with disabilities, but that didn't happen and the government permitted Bill C-17 to languish. The result has been that the people who need this money have lost five weeks of support unnecessarily.

In Part 3 of the bill, the government also proposes to suspend limitation periods in civil litigation proceedings as well as to enable the extension or suspension of certain regulatory time limits. In the previous version of this bill, Bill C-17, the official opposition supported the provisions which will benefit Canadians in need. The government could have passed these measures last month were it not for its simultaneous attempt to limit parliamentary scrutiny over these and other provisions. What the opposition was asking for at the time was for Parliament to be recalled in order to permit a proper scrutiny of government legislation to resume.

In my view, it is increasingly apparent that this is absolutely essential, given the scope of spending being brought before Parliament and the government's cavalier approach to the administration of such spending. We believe that a return to regular parliamentary scrutiny can be done safely and effectively, but the government flatly refused that proposal. In my view, it was a missed opportunity.

So now, five weeks later, we have Bill C-20. I must say that even had we been able to pass Bill C-17 last month, it is clear we would still have been here today in any case, because we have new provisions in Bill C-20 — as has been the pattern of oversight and/or errors on the part of the government — designed to correct shortcomings in previous legislation.

What these new provisions in Bill C-20 do is extend the Canada Emergency Wage Subsidy to November 21, and they make possible a further regulatory extension to December 31. In response to serious critiques of the subsidy from businesses, particularly in relation to its complexities and shortcomings, the government has introduced further changes which, far from reducing the program's complexity, seem to make it even more complicated.

Under the provisions we have before us, the Canada Emergency Wage Subsidy will now be split into multiple parts. First, there will be the Canada Emergency Wage Subsidy for furloughed workers. This component will be "adjusted," to use the government's language, at the end of August to align it with the CERB and/or EI payments. There will then be a further Canada Emergency Wage Subsidy for active workers, which will include a base Canada Emergency Wage Subsidy for eligible workers experiencing less than a 50% decline in revenues. Then there will be yet another top-up Canada Emergency Wage Subsidy for employers who experience a three-month average revenue drop of more than 50%.

In the House this was described by the official opposition as introducing a "cobweb of complexity." I completely agree with that characterization, since it appears that we will have five distinct subsidy periods under what is being proposed with different benefit levels in those periods that will run from July 5 to November 21.

Then we will have the three scenarios I have just outlined applying within those distinct benefit periods. If one looks at the multiple scenarios that might result, businesses could be faced with numerous scenarios requiring considerable assistance from accountants and consultants to navigate. The real winners from all of this will be accountants, and businesses will be faced with additional overhead costs to pay for their services.

I know that some businesses have welcomed the fact that this new formula, even if complex, at least addresses some of the problems in the way that the Canada Emergency Wage Subsidy was previously structured. The way the subsidy was structured in the original design, employers were confronted with a cliff effect that resulted in the elimination of all support at the 30% revenue drop threshold. What has been introduced may correct some of the shortcomings of the original design, but few would argue that it is now less complex — precisely the opposite.

So many businesses in my province of British Columbia already have suffered financial, emotional and mental stress over the past five months. In fact, B.C. minister Carole James stated that job losses have been "concentrated" in wholesale, retail, accommodation, food and construction sectors over the past few months, and the province has seen its highest unemployment rate since 1987.

Based on an economic scenario released by the province, it is suggested that due to revenue losses, combined with relief measures that have been implemented, B.C. could face a deficit of \$12.5 billion alone.

Businesses are already investing in PPE and other special equipment and making changes to their store policy based on public safety rules imposed by their municipalities, which are necessary but costly and burdensome to implement. Almost every business in all sectors are operating with lower revenue but have higher operating costs.

- (1350)

Dental offices, for example, originally saw about 50 patients a day. Now they are reduced to only about 10 patients a day, yet they need to invest the most in health care protective equipment to ensure everyone is kept safe.

With the complex wage subsidy structure being introduced, they will bear further overhead costs as they try to navigate their way through the different categories of subsidies on top of an already complicated taxation system. Businesses and associations have been advocating for the government to make changes to the Canada Emergency Wage Subsidy so that it's easier for businesses to participate, not more difficult to understand.

I still hear from small, start-up owners in B.C. who have not been able to access any federal support for their new businesses because they didn't meet eligibility requirements and still will not under the new framework.

In my view, part of the problem seems to be that the government has not listened closely to the business owners on the ground — who deal with the day-to-day challenges of owning and operating a business — to minimize complexity and maximize work incentives.

Instead, from a distance, the government has yielded to departmental officials to design programs which have not paid sufficient heed to the real-time challenges and constraints of businesses. The result of these program flaws is that the government must continuously return to Parliament for fixes and tweaks of its programs. Regrettably, given the government's track record, I fully expect that this will continue.

Indeed, we now see the same scenario looming for the Canada Emergency Response Benefit. We have ample evidence now that the CERB, while a necessary support for Canadians at the start of the pandemic, is proving to be a disincentive to return to work.

A recent survey done by the Canadian Federation of Independent Business released last week revealed that small business staffing issues reveal a significant challenge for employers in rehiring or finding workers to reopen their business. Only one third of firms report normal staffing levels, and one quarter have a hard time finding staff in order to operate. Of those who refuse to return to work, a whopping 62% of respondents said that they preferred to stay on the CERB.

In the other place, the official opposition critic of the bill noted that under the current structure of CERB, workers who earn \$999 can keep the \$2,000 CERB. Yet if they earn \$1,001, they will lose that same benefit. He correctly noted that no one would make the decision to earn \$1,001 in order to lose \$2,000. That constitutes a de facto tax rate of 200% for people who are now among the most vulnerable.

In addition to this inherent structural problem with the CERB, we have no clarity from the government on what will come after the CERB. What we have is increasing evidence that this program is being poorly administered. Documents tabled in the House of Commons last week indicate that more than 221,000 Canadians have mistakenly received double CERB payments. Other studies have warned about serious disincentives and opportunities for fraud. Allan Lanthier, a former adviser to both the Department of Finance and the Canada Revenue Agency recently noted in a column in the *Financial Post* that while there have been about 5 million job losses since the start of the pandemic, 7.8 million CERB claims have been paid.

There may be several reasons for this, but we know that both overpayments and improper payments are definitely part of the problem. In fact, the government telegraphed early on that claims would only be screened in the most cursory fashion. We should not be surprised.

This is a government that has paid very little attention to money management since it took office. Indeed, we all recall that during the 2015 campaign the Prime Minister stated that he intended to run only small deficits and only for three years. Yet, even before the pandemic hit, the government had accumulated some \$100 billion in additional debt and had conveniently forgotten about its pledge to balance the budget.

Since March, it has now accumulated another third of a trillion dollars in additional debt. Some of that debt is certainly required, but by spending so recklessly in the good times it has made Canada more vulnerable in these challenging times.

I think it's also reasonably clear that the government is paying very little attention to the detail of its spending. Certainly, it is increasingly apparent that for the Minister of Finance close attention to detail is not one of his strong points.

Currently, he's claiming not to have remembered that tens of thousands of dollars of travel expenses were paid to him and his family by an organization to which he donated \$100,000 and to which the government then awarded millions in taxpayer dollars.

While the Minister of Finance may not be a details guy, someone in the government needs to start paying close attention because the future of Canadians is being squandered.

Earlier this month, the president and CEO of the Canadian Chamber of Commerce, Perrin Beatty, stated that the emerging deficit of at least \$343 billion this year will saddle Canada with the debt-to-GDP ratio of 49.1%. He said that this is “. . . a sum that will undermine Canada's fiscal capacity for decades.”

He further stated:

Today our net national debt is 768 billion dollars, and will reach 1 trillion dollars this year. If provincial and municipal debt is included, the situation is far more precarious. Because the federal government is the de facto backstop for these liabilities, Canada will face much closer scrutiny from investors, given our diminished ability to manage our fiscal affairs. We simply cannot afford to return to the pre-COVID policy agenda.

Canada needs a clear plan to restore private sector growth . . . We need a longer-term fiscal plan and forward guidance from the government.

Regrettably, thus far Canadians have not seen such a long-term fiscal plan. Instead, we have a government that is simply throwing money at problems with inadequate oversight and thought. That is why we need to have Parliament return in the fall to provide much needed oversight.

I'm heartened that senators in this chamber are increasingly recognizing the problem. The recent report from the Senate National Finance Committee stated:

The committee is concerned that the government has not provided sufficient clarity to Canadians who will continue to be unemployed or are unable to find full-time work and to businesses that are looking to reopen. To provide continuing support to Canadians, while giving them the confidence they can return to work safely, the federal government needs to **clarify how it will help those who remain unemployed when the Canada Emergency Response Benefit runs out, as well as provide declining benefits based on income, rather than a strict cut-off.**

I fully agree with senators on all sides of this aisle who arrived at this conclusion. I wish to acknowledge the leadership and efforts of the committee chair, Senator Percy Mockler; deputy chair, Senator Éric Forest; and the third member of the steering committee, Senator David Richards; the members of the committee and the committee clerk, analysts and support staff. I had the opportunity to serve on the committee as an ex officio member to know the hours of work that went into all of the meetings and drafting of the interim report.

So well done, senators, and to the Finance Committee, specifically.

For those senators who have declared their strong commitment to an expansive social safety net, that may become increasingly difficult to sustain without a return to fiscal responsibility. It is increasingly apparent that Canadians themselves are arriving at similar conclusions, and it is incumbent on the government to start to listen. It can probably start by hiring a new Finance minister — one who is concerned about the fiscal health of this country and pays attention to detail. That would be a good start.

But so much more is now required. I have a growing doubt that the current government is up to the challenge. The bill we have before us today, while some of its provisions are welcomed, constitutes more of the same. If we are to have real economic

recovery in this country, we will need a government that works closely with Canadian businesses to restore our fiscal and economic health.

That is clearly missing from this legislation, and hard-working Canadians and businesses who literally shutter their doors when asked by their government and health authorities out of civic duty are the ones who have suffered and will pay for the mistakes of their government for years and decades to come, as will their children and grandchildren. Thank you.

Hon. Peter Harder: “Now this is not the end. It is not even the beginning of the end. But it is, perhaps, the end of the beginning.”

With those words in November of 1942, Churchill rallied his people, after the defeat of Rommel at El-Alamein, and it marked a turning point in the war. The analogy is, of course, an imperfect one, but I believe it gives us pause, after six months of dealing with the coronavirus, to take stock of where we are in this beginning.

Six months since Canada's first case — almost literally six months — more than 100,000 Canadians have been infected, 9,000 have died, 80% in long-term care. Globally, greater than 15 million citizens of this planet have been infected, and the numbers keep rising. The reason I am optimistic is that I believe we have learned, the last six months, what some of the key actions that are necessary to at least get ahold of this contagion. I suggest that there are eight.

• (1400)

First, we must pay attention to science and inherently reward agility and flexibility in policy response to changing science and circumstances. Some in the Senate today suggested that the government should have been aware of the changes that have taken place in the last six months and done a number of initiatives earlier, including those that are in this bill. I take a different view. I take the view that a government that initiates early actions and responds to changing circumstances quickly is more adept and agile in listening to its citizens. So first: science, flexibility and agility.

Second, we knew that we had to keep the curve within ICU capacity. When we first debated these measures several months ago, the curve was out of line with our capacity and there was a real threat as to whether our health care systems would be able to deal with the case load. Keep the curve within the ICU capacity.

Third, we know that the future will increasingly be about testing and tracing. Enhancing our capacity for testing and tracing is crucial to dealing with the curve.

Fourth, PPE and masks. We must ensure that we have a supply of PPE in the certain event of some degree of a second wave.

Fifth is social distancing. This is difficult for many of us. The science of social distancing has proven that social distancing with masks, tracing and prudent actions by citizens is requisite to keeping this contagion within the bounds of management.

Sixth, travel and borders. Borders should be crossed only for essential travel until we're confident as to how the management of this contagion outside of our borders is taking place. Even within Canada, there are some jurisdictions that, despite the protestations of some, continue to prohibit in-province travel. Keeping a prudent approach has been helpful to us in the last six months, and we ought to recognize that is likely to continue.

Seventh, and very importantly, is keeping liquidity in the economy. That's what this bill is perfecting. It is responding to the changes and the adaptations of the economy as measures were introduced some months ago. Liquidity in the economy has been hugely advantageous to Canada and the ability of the Canadian economy to respond effectively in the reopening phase.

This leads me to the eighth point: We need a gradual and strategic reopening in the context of PPE, distancing, appropriate testing, et cetera.

The above requires much of all of us. This is not a government responsibility alone. It is governments, but more importantly, it is citizens.

Honourable senators will know that as I travel to the Senate, I drive past the United Church in Manotick, which always has a lovely phrase of some sort that gets me thinking. Today's was: "Patience, too, is a form of action." We need to remind our citizens that patience in what we are doing, with masks, social distancing, adjusting our legal frameworks and responding to the changing virus, is a form of action and we need to be patient. COVID fatigue is our greatest danger at this time of relative balance in our medical system.

This brings me to what I really wanted to say today, and it is about six urgent priorities I would wish the government to consider as it moves forward in this phase. I happen to believe in the architecture that David Dodge has suggested in a paper that he published, where he said that 2020 is about reopening the economy, 2021 will be about recovery and 2021-plus is about rebuilding the economy. The quote that I started my comments with today was from Churchill in 1942. There were three years left in the war, and the war, of course, didn't even get to the recovery. It's not without a sense that there is much in front of us that I suggest six urgent priorities.

The first is, of course, that we should reopen. But we should have strategic and thoughtful reopening and not go too quickly. If we go too quickly and need to retrench, we need to do that quickly too. In my province, Ontario, I believe that the reopening of bars has been undertaken far too quickly. If you look at the 60% of the most recent cases, they are youths. When we started this debate six months ago, that didn't seem to be a preoccupation; it was the over-60 population that was the preoccupation. We need to learn from the United Kingdom, Australia — and I won't even mention the United States — where there has been a recurrence of the virus because there was too quick an opening and not a strategic, sectoral opening. Be strategic in reopening.

Second, we need to focus on child care. This is not just the Government of Canada, it's provincial, regional and city governments. Child care is both a short- and long-term challenge. In the short term, we cannot have a reopening without an assurance by those we want to have return to work, that child care needs will be available, particularly if education returns, and schools opening are out of balance with our expectations of workforce reintegration. I worry that we will particularly lose female participation in the workforce if we do not have adequate, urgent short-term child care. What this pandemic has taught us is that we actually need a long-term solution in Canada. This is not something the Government of Canada alone can do, but it is an issue where there needs to be leadership from the Government of Canada, in cooperation with other jurisdictions, to ensure that resilience and ability to participate in the workforce it is not undermined by the absence of child care.

Third, I want to make a plea for international students. On May 1, when we debated a previous bill, I spoke about the gap concerning international students. International education is a \$21.6-billion enterprise in Canada — and those are 2016 numbers, so it is surely more than that. It directly employs about 170,000 people, and it is greater in its economic impact than auto parts, lumber or the aircraft industry. It is not to be sneezed at. At the end of March, there were 565,000 international students in Canada. Because of travel restrictions, the experts tell me that about 80% have remained in Canada, and 50% of those who have remained will be in some difficulty when returning to their educational institutions this fall. This 300,000 or so international student population needs to be urgently addressed — as we are on the cusp of August — and we should remind ourselves that the inability of international students to participate in our universities and colleges will undermine the economic well-being of those institutions, let alone the economic cost of the loss of international students. So I would urge that international students be given high priority in the coming days.

• (1410)

The third point is a vaccine, both the invention and procurement of a vaccine. Others have spoken about the importance of a vaccine. We know that until and unless there is a vaccine that is effective, we will be in a containment mode in reopening and recovery for some time. I would urge that action not only be around supporting a vaccine, which has been supported by a significant government intervention, but we also need to assure Canadians that there will be an appropriate procurement of vaccines available to Canadians to give them confidence that as we move to the recovery phase of this pandemic, Canadians will not be disadvantaged.

Fifth, we need to continue and upgrade our focus on international aspects of COVID. Vaccine nationalism is not the policy solution that we should be trumpeting. I was pleased to see the Prime Minister attach his name along with other world leaders in a recent article in *The Wall Street Journal* about cooperation on international COVID work, but I would urge the G7 and other international bodies that have responsibility for this to devote more attention. We also must become more informed ourselves, because we can have a vaccine and reopen in Canada but our vulnerability will be global.

Sixth and finally, I would like to return to a more normal Parliament. The Finance Committee has talked a bit about this, and I know there have been some politics around this — strange that Parliament would have some politics. My own view is that a hybrid model is the only way we can get to an early return to a more normal Parliament. I would urge us to put the politics aside and get to the technical ability to do this in the fall.

Why is that important? It's important that the national institution of Parliament reopens, as we are encouraging the private sector to reopen, but it is also to deal with the public policy issues that are not just in relationship to COVID-19 and its responses; there are other pieces of legislation that are ripe for debate and the contestation of views. We should encourage the government to return to a more normal Parliament — it will never be completely normal until we have a vaccine that is efficacious — so that we can test the confidence appropriately of the parliamentary institutions for the actions government has taken.

I want to end by thanking Senator Moncion for sponsoring this legislation and for the adaptability and the improvements it brings to the programs we have already adopted. I ask you to support the legislation as we get to a third reading vote. Thank you.

Hon. Donald Neil Plett (Leader of the Opposition): Would Senator Harder take a question?

Senator Harder: I am used to taking questions from you.

Senator Plett: Thank you, Senator Harder.

At least in your closing comments, you asked for support for the bill. That was the only comment that I heard in your speech that had anything to do with the bill. Nevertheless, I will ask my question based on your comments.

Why is it, Senator Harder, that when somebody disagrees with a hybrid setting that they are the ones who are political but the ones who want the hybrid setting, of course, are not political? I don't quite get that when somebody disagrees with somebody, they immediately are the political body.

Senator Harder: I thank the honourable senator for his question. That's what I say.

Let me put it this way: The hybrid solution is the only solution that will meet the public health requirements of both chambers. If we want the chambers to function in a more normal fashion, we're going to have to come to some understanding of the technical support that is necessary for a hybrid system to work.

If you want to argue that we should return an absolutely pre-COVID experience in both chambers, it cannot happen — not without public health concerns, sir. And I would suggest —

The Hon. the Acting Speaker: Senator Harder, I would like to inform honourable senators that your time has run out. If you would like to add another five minutes, you can request leave.

Senator Harder: I'm fine with that, unless other senators want to ask questions.

[*Translation*]

Hon. Chantal Petitclerc: Honourable senators, I rise today to support Bill C-20, An Act respecting further COVID-19 measures.

My intervention today is on Part 2 of the bill, which seeks to provide persons with disabilities a one-time payment of up to \$600 through Employment and Social Development Canada.

[*English*]

First, I want to thank Minister Carla Qualtrough for her work in the last few months in making this happen. But while I am sincere in my gratitude, I cannot help but think “it's about time” and “is this enough?” I join the many organizations and individuals from the community of persons with disabilities who share both appreciation for the work of Minister Qualtrough but also great concerns that persons with disabilities, while they have been affected by COVID-19 in a disproportionate manner, have been somewhat of an afterthought, receiving much-needed financial help too late and too little.

[*Translation*]

The challenge was to ensure that everyone with a disability could have access to this financial assistance in an effective and fair manner. Administering this support solely through the disability tax credit, or the DTC, may seem logical, but because of the gaps in that program, many persons with disabilities would not have met the criteria. Everyone agrees that the DTC has to be reformed, a recommendation that was also made by the Disability Advisory Committee struck by the Minister of National Revenue, Diane Lebouthillier. I know that the government is working on it, but until then what do we do?

[*English*]

The government has opted to deliver this payment through the Disability Tax Credit Certificate, Canadian Pension Plan disability or Quebec Pension Plan disability benefits, or disability supports provided by Veterans Affairs Canada. With the 60-day window to apply for the Disability Tax Credit Certificate after this bill receives Royal Assent, it is believed that this one-time payment could help 1.7 million Canadians with disabilities. Many fear that too many individuals with disabilities will fall into the still-existing gaps — for example, families living with persons on the spectrum of autism. The government needs to make sure that this will not happen.

The financial challenges to persons with disabilities are many. There is the cost of PPE, support workers and the increased use of taxis or delivery services like groceries, to name a few. For many, the one-time payment may very well fall short. Think about this: CERB provides for \$500 a week. If you live here in Ottawa, for example, the Ontario Disability Support Program will provide \$1,169 a month. So even with this one-time payment, the struggle is real.

[*Translation*]

Let's not forget that there are 6.2 million persons with disabilities in Canada. Of that number, 49% receive assistance for their daily activities, and 40% of those who are working age do not have a job. What is more, 42% are at least 70, which makes them even more vulnerable.

• (1420)

[*English*]

But behind the numbers, there are stories. There are Canadians going through this unprecedented time with substantial added obstacles. As a visually impaired person told me, "This has become a touchless world. I have never felt so blind in my life." And, with a sense of humour, "How on earth do I teach social distancing to my dog?"

A wheelchair user with very limited mobility asked me, "How am I supposed to deal with touchless delivery if I don't have the capacity to pick up anything from the ground?"

[*Translation*]

A hearing impaired woman told me that although she agrees with making masks mandatory inside public spaces, she can no longer read lips. In Quebec, Rosalie Taillefer-Simard, a young deaf woman, was even refused entry to a store because her mask had a transparent window.

I fully support extending patios onto the sidewalks, but just yesterday I came across a new patio where there wasn't enough room to pass and no temporary ramps to go around.

[*English*]

But that's nothing compared to individuals who, for many reasons, lost their personal home support and therefore their autonomy. There are horrible stories of individuals confined at home, unable to cook, to get dressed, suddenly with no or very limited support, whether their support is distancing, quit, opted for CERB, or chose to work in long-term care homes when the salary was increased in Quebec, for example. I will spare you the details out of respect for their integrity, but this should never happen in Canada.

I realize, Your Honour, that this may be distant from the bill that we are about to vote on but, as a Canadian with a disability, I feel it is my duty to voice those injustices. Only a year ago,

[Senator Petitcherc]

Royal Assent was given to Bill C-81, the Accessible Canada Act, with unanimous support from the House of Commons and the Senate. Now here we are in this pandemic, with Canadians not being vulnerable, but being made vulnerable because of the lack of services, lack of planning and the lack of intent. Maybe it is time to walk the talk.

We are all in this together, and it is together that we will get through it, leaving no one behind. So this is my plea for this government, for the provinces, municipalities, businesses, organizations, and for each of us, to take care of one another, and to make sure that when we think, plan, invest, when we move forward and towards this new normal, when we recover as a country, we always keep in mind the 6.2 million Canadians with disabilities and, therefore, no one will be left behind. Thank you.

Hon. Thanh Hai Ngo: Honourable senators, given the very limited scope we have available to exercise proper parliamentary oversight, I would like to take this debate on Bill C-20 as an opportunity to reflect on major events that have shaped the government's gross mismanagement, negligence and outright recklessness in responding to the COVID-19 global health emergency.

As ever more disturbing and damning revelations emerge on how this pandemic and ensuing economic crisis were mishandled and as we dig deeper, we are confronted with the troubling realization that far too many questions remain unanswered.

The U.S. military's National Centre for Medical Intelligence reported on the novel coronavirus as early as November, with its analysts warning U.S. officials and allies of a "cataclysmic event." In light of this critical disclosure, why was nothing done to proactively counter this looming threat?

The government's early warning system, the Global Public Health Intelligence Network, which has been instrumental in detecting the earliest signs of H1N1, MERS and Ebola, even helping other countries to prepare, was dismantled in May 2019, when analysts, whose top priority was to gather intelligence and spot early pandemics, were simply pulled away from their international surveillance duties. Why did Global Public Health essentially switch off this crucial warning system, leaving us utterly vulnerable and ill-prepared to face COVID-19?

The medical intelligence unit briefed the Defence Minister about the COVID-19 crisis on January 17. However, the government's Incident Response Group only met 10 days later to discuss a viral outbreak that would wreak havoc on the world and cost the lives of almost 650,000 people, including 9,000 Canadians.

Why wait as long as 10 days? What was more important than dealing early on with this "cataclysmic event"?

In a CBC article from July 22, one of Canada's top intelligence experts, Professor Wesley Wark, was reported saying that the delay shows that "there weren't a lot of alarm bells ringing anywhere in government." He stated further that:

Canada, for reasons that go unexplained, missed the opportunity to do proper risk assessments, to seize the opportunity of early warning and to get the response planning into gear.

While our allies were raising the alarm in November, and then our military in January, our public health agency was taking its marching orders from the World Health Organization, an organization with a reputation for corruption, incompetence and spewing Chinese Communist propaganda. The government disregarded the wealth of knowledge provided by our allies like South Korea and Taiwan — neighbouring countries to China — that garnered the world's admiration for their timely and effective response to the virus. Why did our government effectively hand over executive decision making of our public health crisis to the WHO instead of listening to our military intelligence and allies?

After having been briefed on the gravity of the public health risk posed by COVID-19, why did the government not alter its messaging in a way that accurately reflected the real danger to Canadians?

Why did the government opt not to close borders or to restrict flights early on, even after it was clear, contrary to what the Minister of Health and Canada's Chief Public Health Officer had indicated, that the virus posed a significant threat to Canadians? Was the Trudeau government trying to salvage its image to win votes for a United Nations Security Council seat at the expense of Canadian lives? Was it trying to save the airline industry, big corporations and his wealthy friends at the expense of our health and safety?

It was only when provinces and mayors threatened to take action that the government decided to act.

A CBC article from April 10 reported that as late as March 10, a:

. . . department-drafted briefing note prepared for Health Minister Patty Hajdu ahead of question period said that, with just 12 cases being reported nationwide at that point (even though publicly available numbers had already climbed higher), "the risk of spread of this virus within Canada remains low at this time."

According to the article, the note also said that the public health system was ". . . well-equipped to contain cases coming from abroad, limiting the spread in Canada."

Three days later, however, the federal government effectively locked down the entire country. How can the Ministry of Health be so out of touch with reality?

As confirmed in the findings of our Social Affairs Committee in its latest report, the ". . . National Emergency Strategic Stockpile (NESS) was not well-managed over the years and was not sufficiently and appropriately stocked to provide needed supplies across Canada."

I, along with Canadians, would like to understand why and what is being done to rectify the situation.

The report also goes on to make several other observations on how Canada's health system was completely caught off guard in the face of the pandemic. How is it even possible for a G7 country like ours to have our health system completely caught off guard like this? Did we not learn anything from SARS?

• (1430)

Even more unsettling is the committee's finding that we are not ready for a second wave. Six months into this pandemic — that's half of the year — and we are still not prepared for a second wave? Why hasn't the Trudeau government shown more leadership on this? Could it be that no easy solutions are to be found on the steps of Rideau Cottage?

In the early stages of this crisis, we shipped 16 tonnes of PPE to communist China. Why did the government allow China to hoard PPE across Canada instead of preparing for the pandemic and rebuilding our national stockpile? Of course, China was deliberately downplaying the gravity of the threat posed by the virus, thereby allowing for its continued hoarding of PPE from all over the world. Why did our government fall for this?

Given our government's sizeable PPE donation to China, their reliance on the Communist regime as the sole supplier for the subsequent procurement of much-needed and, in many cases, defective PPE to address a gaping nationwide shortage renders the situation all the more absurd.

Unfortunately, it doesn't stop there. Our government, resolute in its aversion to anything that resembles good judgment or common sense, continues to do business with a dictatorship in spite of significant trade bans to Canadian exports, in spite of serious threats to our national security, in spite of our two Michaels being kidnapped, the many other Canadians arbitrarily held hostage abroad, as well as those being harassed and intimidated on our very own soil. Despite all of this, our government sees no problem in collaborating with a Chinese firm and the Chinese military's research unit to develop a vaccine, with shipments of it destined for human trials in Canada currently being held up by the Communist regime, or awarding a security contract to a hostile Chinese state-owned enterprise to install sensitive security infrastructure in our embassies, consulates and high commissions, completely disregarding the very real threat this poses to our national security and cybersecurity.

The government's colossal policy failures are also glaringly evident when we look at the ways in which the economic recovery programs were designed and rolled out. For instance, why refuse to make CERB more flexible, and why was this program so poorly managed? While \$442 million of taxpayer dollars were wasted on erroneous CERB double payments, many Canadians continue to fall through the cracks. When a subsidy of

75% does not even attract the number of businesses projected by the government, who was behind the revolutionary idea of introducing a 10% wage subsidy? Why create a program that businesses can't even use?

The Canada Student Service Grant is the proverbial icing on the cake in this series of government fiascos. Who designed this program? Did they truly believe that paying students to volunteer was preferable to them actually working?

It gets even better. Apparently, two months just wasn't enough time to see if there were other eligible charities to administer the program. Who decided that almost \$43 million in fees to manage over \$900 million in grants was reasonable? Who decided to push the envelope to over \$900 million, even though it was clear that the distribution of the necessary number of \$5,000 grants to meet this huge sum would be impossible?

Even more alarming is that the best and, conveniently enough, only candidate for this nearly \$1 billion disbursement was not even a charity but a real estate shell company and holding arm of a group in breach of its bank covenants, with close ties to the two most powerful men in our country: the Prime Minister and the Minister of Finance. The flagrant violation of yet another breach of ethics by Prime Minister Trudeau and Mr. Morneau is a testament to their blind entitlement and complete disconnect from the struggles of everyday Canadians.

Mr. Morneau casually dismissed an offence that would result in the certain dismissal of the ordinary backbencher as "a mistake," that he "should have recused himself from the decision," that he "did not know" about the \$41,000 in travel expenses outstanding on lavish vacations for his family that apparently fell out of the sky. He also very conveniently must have "not known" that his own daughter worked for the very same organization. He then has the audacity to declare his intention to "continue working on behalf of Canadians." For him to presume he can simply write a cheque of \$41,000 — more than the annual income of the average person — with little more than a slap on the wrist is a slap in the face for Canadians.

With two scandalous ethics violations firmly under his belt, a third pending, being the first and only Prime Minister in our country's history to break a federal statute, it's safe to say that Prime Minister Trudeau and his administration have sunk to a new low in moral depravity, hypocrisy, corruption and cronyism. Canadians deserve better. They deserve accountability and a functioning Parliament that serves them, not the personal interests of the Prime Minister, his ministers and wealthy friends.

If the government had done its job properly and acted in the best interests of Canadians when the alarm was first signalled back in November or even in January, following the lead of countries that had implemented early and aggressive epidemic response measures, such as Taiwan, Singapore, South Korea, New Zealand and Australia, we surely wouldn't be in this mess. Our economy, our Parliament, our schools and our restaurants wouldn't have been shut down. Our businesses wouldn't have gone bankrupt. Canadians wouldn't have committed suicide. Our deficit wouldn't have exponentially reached \$343 billion. Our debt wouldn't have hit a staggering \$1 trillion. Three million

Canadians wouldn't have lost their jobs. This pandemic has claimed 9,000 Canadian lives, destroyed hundreds of thousands more and devastated our economy.

Unfortunately, the Trudeau government's administration seems to be more preoccupied with brand identity than actual substance. Instead of developing more robust health care, political and financial policy responses to the pandemic, our Prime Minister was more concerned with appealing to dictators in his bid to win a UN Security Council seat and promoting his own personal brand for his re-election campaign with his daily morning shows on the steps of his cottage.

This is the very same man, colleagues, who back in 2011 called for International Co-operation Minister Bev Oda to resign over allegations that included exorbitant spending of taxpayer dollars. Bev Oda's misconduct pales in comparison to the Prime Minister's now well-established and growing list of scandals. So the question is: When will the Prime Minister resign? Or does he think he's above the law?

Canadians are being mocked by their own government and left paying the price for this government's gross mismanagement —

The Hon. the Acting Speaker: Senator Ngo, your time has just elapsed. If you require more time, you can ask for more.

Senator Ngo: One more minute.

The Hon. the Acting Speaker: Is leave granted for one more minute?

Hon. Senators: Agreed.

The Hon. the Acting Speaker: Thank you.

Senator Ngo: Canadians are being mocked by their own government and left paying the price for this government's gross mismanagement, negligence, outright recklessness and self-entitlement.

Colleagues, this is my motto: Don't listen to what Justin Trudeau says. Instead, look to what he does. Actions speak louder than words. We have our work cut out for us when we come back in September. I want answers to these questions and accountability from our government. So do Canadians. Thank you.

• (1440)

[*Translation*]

Hon. Raymonde Gagné (Legislative Deputy to the Government Representative in the Senate): Would Senator Ngo take a question?

[English]

Senator Ngo: Your Honour, has my time expired?

The Hon. the Acting Speaker: You can have a few seconds if you want to engage.

[Translation]

Senator Gagné: Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

Senator Ngo, we are at third reading stage of Bill C-20, but you haven't said much about the bill in question. Do you support it or not?

[English]

Senator Ngo: Thank you for your question. The reason I spoke on this is because of the mess we're in due to the pandemic. If we didn't have this mess, we wouldn't have Bill C-20 or Bill C-17. In terms of whether or not I support the bill, you will have my answer after the upcoming vote on third reading.

Hon. Jim Munson: Meanwhile, back to Bill C-20.

Honourable senators, I do support the bill, but I have serious reservations about the disability portion of this bill. It's a long and winding road when it comes to people living with disabilities in this country and getting what is due to them during this unusual and uncertain time.

Speaking of time, honourable senators, it's taken a long time for this important bill to get here — too long. Politics has a habit of getting in the way of people's lives. I want to echo the sentiments of Senator Petitclerc when it comes to the issues we are talking about here today. Eighteen weeks after we debated and passed the CERB, we are here to debate the additional emergency relief measures in Bill C-20; and 18 weeks later, Canadians with disabilities are still waiting for relief.

According to Statistics Canada, it used to be one in five, but now it's one in four Canadians living with a disability. Those in the disability community are in crisis. They are feeling forgotten and that their concerns and challenges are being trivialized.

The reality of the situation is that their needs are being ignored. This bill will help to pay the bills but, in my view, doesn't go far enough. Costs continue to increase and disproportionately affect those with disabilities. I'm talking about additional expenses related to hiring personal support workers; the cost of personal protective equipment, or PPE; the increased cost of taking multiple trips for medical supplies or medication; the increased use of taxis; extreme isolation and loneliness; interruptions in services; and having to use home delivery services to obtain groceries or prescriptions.

Honourable senators, let's also remember that systemic racism intersects with the disproportionality of those affected. When it comes time to roll out this program — or any other wage subsidy, for that matter — racialized persons face additional barriers. These barriers are especially compounded for racialized persons with disabilities.

Bill C-20 is a step, but it's only one step in the right direction toward providing emergency relief support for all persons with disabilities.

Minister Qualtrough consulted her COVID-19 Disability Advisory Committee, or DAC, in the reworking of the relief measures in Bill C-20: an updated eligibility for the funds to also include recipients of the Canada Pension Plan Disability benefit and the Quebec Pension Plan disability benefit, as well as those receiving disability supports provided by Veteran Affairs Canada. This represents a big improvement in eligibility, from 1.2 million Canadians before to 1.7 million now.

Bill C-20 addresses the increased costs of living for persons with disabilities and provides for additional mechanisms to include, in my view, the forgotten many — those who are excluded from this one-time payment without approval into the disability tax credit program. If you're not part of the disability tax credit program, you had better not apply.

However, Bill C-20 has an opportunity to finally get it right. By updating the DTC eligibility requirements in the bill to include a 60-day window, where a DTC-eligible person who is not yet receiving the disability tax credit may apply, I am urging Ministers Qualtrough and LeBouthillier to work together and approve applications previously denied this tax credit, especially because this is the only delivery mechanism in this legislation.

For years, the autism community has been fighting for disability tax credit fairness. Last month, when Bill C-17 was introduced, CASDA, the Canadian Autism Spectrum Disorder Alliance, reiterated their call for a complete overhaul of the DTC. CASDA board member and autism self-advocate Rebekah Kintzinger describes the deficiencies with using the DTC to roll out this program.

“The language in the documentation and forms process of the disability tax credit makes it extremely difficult for autistic people to claim the DTC. Many who have previously qualified for it are denied the renewal of the DTC when the time comes. This causes a lengthy process of appeals involving medical professionals that the disabled person may no longer have access to.”

It just takes so much time and a lot of paperwork.

While the DTC remains a deficient delivery mechanism for this program, with the 60-day supplementary application window, this legislation finally opens a door — a little door — to getting it right and approving those who have been fighting for the disability tax credit long before COVID.

I've previously noted in the chamber that the COVID-19 Disability Advisory Committee does not include a representative from the autism community. That, honourable senators, is just not right. A person with autism should have the same rights as others with a disability.

Had the minister accepted the submission from CASDA to add Rebekah to the COVID-19 Disability Advisory Committee after she appeared before us during Committee of the Whole on May 1, Bill C-20 might have better reflected the needs of the autism community as an emergency relief measure. At that time, the minister welcomed the idea of an autism advocate on the committee. I would urge her again to update the membership of the committee to include a representative from the autism community.

It's not too late. It's never too late to get it right. These are human rights and this is Canada.

There is a common theme to the issues I have outlined, and that is the failure of governments and service providers to recognize and address the unique needs of persons with disabilities. Too often, recommendations or policies are made without taking into consideration how these will impact people with disabilities. In many situations, governments and service providers have not appropriately balanced the need to prevent the spread of COVID-19 with the rights of persons with disabilities to have equal access to health care services, education and accessible information.

Recently, senators had a conference call with the parliamentary secretary, and also with bureaucrats, about money that is going to folks who need it. I asked the question, and I didn't get a real answer to it: Who came up with the \$600? What analysis was made to say, yes, those in the disability community each deserve a one-time payment of \$600? With the CERB, they're getting \$2,000 monthly. How far does \$600 go in a small town in Canada in comparison to \$600 in a big city? I'm curious about that. I would like to get an answer someday, from somebody: Who sits down and says, "Okay, it's \$600"? It's \$600, but it's not enough. The argument can always be that it's never enough, but this seems an absurdly small amount.

• (1450)

I'm also tempted at this point, because I'm so disappointed, to throw in an amendment to this. I won't do that because I just looked at Senator Moncion, and she just about fainted. But if I did, what would happen? It would not be fair to the millions of others who have a disability. Why? Because it will go back to the house with an amendment, and then what happens there. Then it comes back here. We could play political ping-pong. Once again, that's politics getting in the way of people's lives.

I'm extremely upset about it. I have less than a year in this chamber, and I want to continue to keep fighting over the next 12 months for the rights of those with disabilities. We seem to think of it as we're doing something special for you because you're in a chair or you have autism. It's nothing about being special. It's about human rights. It's one in four Canadians. It's as simple as that. As we age, mark my words, we'll be looking at this in a very personal way, maybe for some of us. It's something that we really have to pay attention to.

[Senator Munson]

In closing, ARCH Disability Law Centre adds that these rights are legally protected by the Charter and provincial and federal human rights laws. They are a core value of Canadian society and should not be forgotten, especially during emergencies and pandemics.

We started these debates on emergency legislation in March. It is now well into the summer, and the disability community has been left to fend for themselves.

This legislation will pass — I'm happy about that — and provide relief for some. I'm looking forward to the need to evaluate how we allocate resources to individuals with disabilities so that they do not have to live in poverty.

As I said at the beginning, this legislation should have been passed months ago. It should have been in the forefront. Here we are, in the middle of summer, finally getting approval of something which should have been approved on day one.

An Hon. Senator: Hear, hear.

Senator Munson: At the end of the day — listen to the facts — one in four Canadians live with a disability, and we treat them as an afterthought. That's not right. Thank you.

Hon. Rosa Galvez: Honourable senators, I rise today to speak to Bill C-20, another emergency legislation to cope with the consequences of the COVID-19 crisis. Bill C-20 extends the Canada Emergency Wage Subsidy and provides a one-time payment to Canadians with disabilities and extends various government timelines.

Though I support this bill in principle, I will start by emphasizing the obligation to follow an efficient emergency management planning procedure, if we seek to minimize human and economic losses and come out of this crisis stronger and wiser. An efficient plan refers to a virtuous circle of measures related to prevention, in order to reduce the risk of events to occur; preparedness, to operationalize readiness and coordination to minimize consequences; response, in accordance with strategic priorities; and recovery, to redress, restore and improve past practices.

Around the world, plans were not perfect, but certainly some were more effective than others.

A potential inquiry into our emergency procedure would, unfortunately, reveal that prevention was poor. We were not prepared, and we don't yet have a plan for recovery. There was a lack of preparedness in the public health sector and an overall lack of emergency planning by businesses. Time is running against us, and we should be planning the recovery and working on prevention, which is the most effective and efficient approach in terms of cost and timeliness. Globally, colleagues, we need to do much better.

In this world-scale emergency, all of us, but particularly those in power, have to answer the question: Are we shouldering our responsibility? This is a historic moment, and future generations will talk about today's performance.

Our Senate National Finance Committee submitted its interim report on the economic response to the COVID-19 crisis on July 14. This report focused on the first phase of the emergency response and found that despite great efforts deployed, insecurity and potential risks persist; groups of citizens are still not covered by safety nets; transparency of government decisions and actions needs to improve; certain groups have been impacted unfairly by the crisis; and businesses risk more economic havoc. Bill C-20 seeks to attenuate this.

Countries in Europe and Asia were impacted by COVID-19 before us. Now they are moving ahead with recovery plans. Most of them are seeing the pandemic as what it is; a crisis that brought opportunities to build back better. Lots of reflection and analysis took place just before and during the crisis. Thus, many countries are revealing clean, just, smart, sustainable recovery plans as recommended by major international organizations, including, among many others, the OECD, the World Bank, the International Monetary Fund, the World Economic Forum, the International Energy Agency and the United Nations, all of which include Canada as an active member. Major investment bodies such as BlackRock and national central banks not only strongly support the building-back-better approach, but even go on to say that this approach will help prevent future crises.

[Translation]

It is not surprising that four recent polls by Abacus Data, Pollara Strategic, Ipsos and McAllister found that the majority of Canadians are in favour of and support a green, clean and just recovery and that most of the written submissions received by the National Finance Committee support such a recovery. The committee's report concludes the following:

The government also needs to begin soon the process of laying out a plan of how to rebuild the economy. In the fall, the committee will continue its study and examine how to build a smarter, fairer and more sustainable economy.

An excerpt from the July 8 economic and fiscal snapshot states the following:

This is an opportunity for Canada to build back better through investments in a strong, inclusive and green recovery, which supports new opportunities for workers in every region of this country. Looking to the future, the government must not only think of the months ahead, but the years and decades to come.

[English]

Experience from past emergencies tells us there is much work to do that demands extraordinary and timely actions. These last months were crucial, and a only few sittings with limited participation took place in the Senate. It is disappointing to Canadians who expect government and Parliament will ensure

democracy works, also during a crisis. In that sense, Recommendation No. 16 of the National Finance Committee's report reads:

That it is time to return to traditional procedures for approval by Parliament of government spending in order to provide appropriate oversight of government expenditures.

Personally, I have deep concerns about the lack of transparency about Export Development Canada and the Canada Account. I raised these concerns with Minister Morneau during the Senate sitting, committee work, and correspondence since we adopted Bill C-13 back in March. These worries are reflected in our report:

As the details provided by the government are limited, the committee is concerned that the government's presentation of its debt does not include all Crown corporation debt and the Canada Account, which could present a risk for taxpayers.

The report goes on to say:

For example, Export Development Canada's mandate was expanded to allow it to lend to more Canadian companies, not just those that export, and the Minister of Finance was given the power to determine the limit of liability and authorized capital of the corporation, including the limit of liability of the Canada Account, until September 30. For now, the limit of its lending liability was increased from \$45 billion to \$90 billion.

As you know, I closely follow issues regarding the energy-environment-economy nexus. Civil society organizations highlighted publicly that EDC provided 12 times more financial support in loans, insurance and guarantees to oil and gas as it did to a poorly defined clean-tech category from 2012 to 2017. Earlier this year, EDC approved a loan of up to \$500 million for the Coastal GasLink pipeline in British Columbia, despite having been opposed by hereditary leaders from all five clans of the Wet'suwet'en nation and sparking a national protest movement.

• (1500)

In addition to concerns with transparency and accountability, we must worry about the inefficiency of financial assistance that will not generate revenues or sustainable jobs, but will increase our already soaring number of stranded assets and will negatively impact our capacity to repay our mounting debt. Recovery must thus respect efficiency principles and increase social, environmental and economic resilience and preparedness, and do as much as possible to prevent or mitigate future crises.

A resilient recovery means people not only feeling but being safer, happier and healthier. The national finance interim report acknowledged criticisms of the GDP as a "weak indicator of actual well-being." The former Bank of Canada governor Mr. Poloz said:

"GDP is a very old and traditional measure of the economy. It misses a lot of things that matter a lot to people."

It is my hope that Canada will join other nations and use better adjusted indicators that will account for how well Canadians are actually doing in terms of meaningful employment, living wages, environmental quality and wealth distribution.

In this respect, even as Bill C-20 provides a one-time payment for people with disabilities, there are still worries some will not meet the eligibility criteria. The National Finance Committee echoed the calls of civil society actors and experts in urging the Government of Canada to “give full, fair and priority consideration to a basic income guarantee.”

As we reflect on how to build back better, many are paralyzed by the question of how to fund such a transformational path. The World Economic Forum has called for a great reset of capitalism.

I would like to offer some views for further reflection, hoping that the National Finance Committee will analyze this more deeply this fall.

A recent report by Canadians for Tax Fairness highlighted that in 2019, Canadian corporations stored a record high of \$381 billion in the top 12 tax havens; a sixfold increase since 1999. Put simply, the corporate tax revenues lost to tax havens could have helped pay for the unprecedented deficit Canada is incurring to support Canadians through this pandemic.

What if we funded the recovery by fixing loopholes in our tax system that allow for aggressive tax avoidance, in addition to withholding support for corporations who use tax havens?

It has been a decade, colleagues, since Canada promised to abolish inefficient fossil fuel subsidies, and we have an especially poor record on that matter. What if that money was invested in transition, clean-tech, circular economy strategies instead?

Time and time again, in my profession as an engineer, I have seen the dire consequences of poor planning, of hastily moving ahead for short-term profits, to benefit very powerful sectors at the sacrifice of the long-term public interest. Seven years ago this month, I witnessed firsthand the fire that took the lives of 53 people in Lac-Mégantic and ravaged the city centre and Chaudière River. Why? Because foreign resources had to get to foreign markets very quickly, at the expense of safety. Our infrastructure became a mere transit route for hazardous substances, was poorly maintained by their users and was destroyed by tragedy. Most of the rebuilding was at public expense. Is this an efficient approach to do business and build a sustainable economy?

The main reason I became a senator was to defend the rights of young generations for a safer, healthier and more prosperous future. As a grandmother of two little boys, my dedication to protect has never been stronger.

[*Translation*]

I identify with nascent climate change movements, such as Mothers Step In, and other environmental movements emerging among doctors, teachers and scientists. These people are acting in response to the maternal and survival instinct for future

generations. This is a completely natural instinct among all mammals, humans included, and it seems to be necessary to preserve life on earth.

Colleagues, it is time to bite the bullet and build a better world for tomorrow. I know it may seem impossible and at times hopeless, but action begets hope.

Thank you very much.

[*English*]

Hon. Elizabeth Marshall: Honourable senators, I rise to speak to Bill C-20, An Act respecting further COVID-19 measures.

Honourable senators, Bill C-20 is comprised of three parts. Part one revises the eligibility criteria for the Canada Emergency Wage Subsidy program. Part two provides for a payment to persons with disabilities for reasons related to COVID-19. Part three provides for legislative changes for flexibility in certain time limits or periods that are difficult or impossible to meet as a result of COVID-19.

My comments are directed to part one of the bill, which addresses the Canada Emergency Wage Subsidy program. This bill makes three changes to that program. First, it amends the Income Tax Act to revise the eligibility criteria for the Canada Emergency Wage Subsidy program. Second, it extends the Wage Subsidy program to November 21, 2020, with the ability to extend the program by regulation to December 31, 2020. Third, it provides a revised calculation of the wage subsidy for the fifth and subsequent qualifying periods of the program.

Honourable senators, as you know, the Finance Committee conducted hearings in spring and early summer on the government's response to the COVID-19 pandemic and its economic consequences. Our report was released earlier this month.

During our hearings, many witnesses indicated appreciation for the government's support, but also indicated that many businesses and individuals in need are not eligible for assistance under the current COVID-19 programs. The Canada Emergency Subsidy program, which is the subject of this bill, is one of these programs, however, there are other COVID-19 programs that should be adjusted and I would like to briefly comment on those before I discuss the wage subsidy program.

As I mentioned before, in this chamber, when we review bills in the Finance Committee, we look at what is included, but we also think about what is not included. I expected to see some changes to the Canada Emergency Commercial Rent Assistance program. This program was announced in April with the objective of lowering rent for small businesses by 75% for April, May and June. The program was subsequently extended to July.

Forgivable loans by CMHC would cover 50% of the rental payments, the landlord would cover 25% and business would pay the remaining 25%. The government initially estimated that the program would cost \$3 billion. But as of July 17, 42,000 businesses supporting 304,000 employees had been assisted to the amount of \$367 million, far short of the \$3 billion set aside for the program.

The Canadian Federation of Independent Business had this to say about the rent assistance program, and this is the quote from them, “That program, while well-intentioned, is a real mess. That program is not delivering money and relief to the business owners that need it.”

The Federation indicated that landlords were confused by the amount of financial information required, the complexity of the forms, and the technical difficulties with the application portal. The Federation also wanted the 70% lost revenue criteria to be reduced. They felt it was too high.

In summary, they said that the program is too complicated, too reliant on landlords to administer, and the all-or-nothing threshold of a 70% revenue reduction leaves many hard-hit businesses without assistance.

The Finance Committee, in its COVID-19 report, which was issued earlier this month, heard testimony expressing similar concerns, and recommended that the government consider modifying the program to make it more accessible to businesses facing financial hardship. So I see Bill C-20 as a missed opportunity. The Canada Emergency Rent Assistance program should also have been amended in this bill.

• (1510)

While Bill C-20 amends the Canada Emergency Wage Subsidy program, many people are also calling for adjustments to the Canada Emergency Response Benefit. The Canada Emergency Response Benefit, or CERB, provides recipients with a flat amount of \$2000 a month or \$500 weekly, with the effective period being March 15 to October 3. The program allows recipients to earn up to \$1,000 per month while collecting CERB.

The ninth report on Canada’s COVID-19 emergency response was released last week by the Department of Finance. That report indicated that as of July 16, there has been \$60 billion in payments to just over 8 million applicants for the CERB program. During the hearings of the Finance Committee in May and June, we heard from witnesses who suggested that changes to the CERB program be considered. Many people are saying that CERB should be adjusted and the government should provide information to Canadians on the future of the program. Will it terminate on October 3 or will it be extended? If it is to be extended, will the criteria be changed? Many people have said that the monthly limit of \$1,000 in other earnings should be changed so that CERB benefits are scaled back rather than terminated when an individual’s other earnings exceed \$1,000 a month.

In addition, some provinces are warning that the Canada Emergency Response Benefit could hamper economic recovery by providing a disincentive to work. A recent survey earlier this month by the Canadian Federation of Independent Business

found that 27% of respondents had encountered workers who had refused to return to work when recalled. Of those, 62% cited a preference to stay on the CERB program.

A frequently asked question at our Finance Committee hearings revolved around the transitioning of employees from CERB to the wage subsidy program. In my opinion, Bill C-20 was also a missed opportunity to adjust the CERB program and provide some information to Canadians on the future of the program.

I’d like to now speak about the wage subsidy program, which is reflected in Part 1 of Bill C-20. The wage subsidy program was initially put in place for a 12-week period from March 12 to June 6 and provided a 75% subsidy to businesses that qualified. To administer the program and calculate the subsidy, each set of four weeks is designated as a period, hence the first 12 weeks represented periods one, two and three. On May 15, the government announced the program would be extended for another 12 weeks, from June 7 to August 29. These additional 12 weeks were also broken down into four-week periods and were designated as periods four, five and six. The same eligibility criteria applied to periods one, two, three and four, which ended on July 4. Businesses that demonstrated a 15% drop in revenue for period one and a 30% drop in revenue for periods two, three and four were provided with a subsidy of 75% of employee wages up to \$847 per employee per week. In calculating how much the government was going to subsidize for each employee, they use a base salary of \$1,129 a week. That’s an important number to remember when you are working through the calculations.

However, businesses told the government that the wage subsidy program could better support businesses if the criteria were changed. They said that the 30% revenue decrease was like a cliff. If you had a 30% drop in revenues, you were entitled to the subsidy; you were in. If your revenues decreased 29%, you weren’t entitled to the subsidy; you were out. They said it was an all-or-nothing program. Many businesses suggested a graduated subsidy. As revenues increase, the wage subsidy would be gradually decreased. This was consistent with what the Finance Committee heard during its hearings on the COVID-19 programs. When the government first implemented the wage subsidy program, it initially estimated that the program would cost \$71 billion. However, as of June 29, the Canada Revenue Agency had paid out only \$18 billion of the \$71 billion allocated. The estimated cost of the program is now \$83.6 billion as announced on July 17 by the Minister of Finance. I suspect that was intended to reflect the new criteria that are reflected in this bill.

Bill C-20 lays out the revised formulae — and I say formulae plural because there are a number of formulae in the bill for the wage subsidy program. When I first looked at the bill and saw all the formulae reflected in the bill, I had to lay it aside. When Senator Gold sent out the background information on Bill C-20, he provided us with a link to the Department of Finance website, which provided some more detailed information on calculations in the program and it was a help in trying to work through the numbers.

Effective July 5, period five and onward, all employers with a revenue decline of less than 30% will now be eligible for the wage subsidy program. The new formula applies to the five four-week periods beginning July 5. These are periods, five, six, seven, eight and nine, beginning July 5 with period five and ending November 21 with period nine. In effect, there is a different formula for each of the five four-week periods, and the formula decreased the amount of subsidy over a period of time. For example, the maximum weekly benefits per employee, when there is a revenue drop of 50% or more, is \$677 for periods five and six; \$565 is the maximum subsidy for period seven; \$452 is the maximum subsidy for period eight; and a maximum subsidy for period nine is \$226. If the subsidy drop is under 50%, the subsidy is calculated differently. For periods five and six, it's 1.2 times the revenue drop times the base salary of \$1,129. For period 7, it's one times the revenue drop times the base salary of \$1,129. For period eight, it's now 0.8 times the revenue drop times the base salary of \$1,129. For period nine, it's 0.4 times the revenue drop times the base salary of \$1,129.

These formulae are for the base subsidy, and there are additional formulae for the calculating a top-up rate for the most affected employers if the business revenue drops 55%, 60%, 65%, 70% and over. Also, there is a safe harbour rule whereby, in periods five and six, employers who would have been better off with the formula used in periods one to four would be eligible for the 75% wage subsidy if they have a revenue decline of 30% or more.

I provide all of this information on the calculation of the base subsidy, and reference the top-up subsidy and the safe harbour rule to indicate the complexities of the program.

Dan Kelly, president of the Canadian Federation of Independent Business said during a recent Bloomberg interview that the program is positive in that it will support more employers and more businesses, but he said, "It is a confusing, confusing program." He didn't say it once. He said, "confusing, confusing." It takes a while to work through the numbers. He went on to say, "It is not for the faint-hearted." I discovered that over the last four days.

In our COVID-19 report issued earlier this month, the Senate Finance Committee recommended that the government consider the adoption of a progressive or scalable eligibility threshold for the Canada Emergency Wage Subsidy and that the duration of the subsidy be extended for particularly hard-hit sectors. This bill attempts to do that, but it is complex. I think it's going to help businesses because it expands, and it's going to provide access to financial assistance to more employers. However, I can tell you, if the accounting industry is suffering because of the pandemic, this program is going to be a big help to them because it won't just be the calculation of the subsidy, but they will also have to help business owners gather all of the information that they are going to need in order to calculate the subsidy.

• (1520)

Having said that, I expect further changes to this program, and I also expect further changes to some of the other programs, such as CERB and the rent assistance program.

[Senator Marshall]

Honourable senators, thank you very much. These conclude my remarks.

Hon. Donna Dasko: Honourable senators, I rise this afternoon to join my colleagues in this debate on Bill C-20. I would like to thank our colleague Senator Moncion for her presentation and her excellent answers to questions in the chamber today.

I support this legislation. I support the decision to provide a one-time payment to persons with disabilities for reasons related to COVID-19. I also think the changes to certain acts to increase the flexibility of time limits as a result of the pandemic are necessary.

Bill C-20 also includes major changes to the Canada Emergency Wage Subsidy, which was first put into place in the period from March to June, providing a 75% wage subsidy to some employers. The changes to this today include the elimination of the revenue threshold and tying the subsidy to actual revenue loss, the extension of the program until December 2020 and increased benefits for highly impacted firms.

This bill ends the 30% revenue decline as a threshold for obtaining the subsidy and introduces a sliding-scale mechanism that calculates wage subsidies as a percentage of revenue lost. Of course, this makes a great deal of sense and I have to wonder why this aspect of the program was not included originally. It does seem to make so much sense to do it that way, and it's a bit surprising that we would have to wait this long for this change. Nevertheless, the change is now here.

The revised program also anticipates a gradual reopening of the economy where the benefits received decline over the course of the subsidy program as revenues are expected to increase.

The second change to the program contained in this legislation is the extension of the program until December 2020, a full four months longer than the previous August end date. Ending the wage subsidy program too early could very easily undo the benefits of the federal government's investments in the economy so far. The longer runtime of this program, combined with the slow phase-out, should reduce the financial squeeze that firms will experience as they transition away from the subsidy.

Finally, this legislation includes a top-up for those businesses most affected by the pandemic. Companies that have experienced significant revenue decline will qualify for an additional wage subsidy equal to a percentage of the loss they have experienced. Those firms hardest hit by the lockdown will be able to receive an 85% revenue subsidy in the near term, a total that would slowly decrease, both as revenues increase and the program phases out into December 2020.

Senators, I had my career in the private sector. I understand what it's like to live with uncertainty. In running a business, you can have significant revenues and still be out of business in 12 months, or you can have moderate revenues and be out of business in six months. That's what it's like running a business and operating in a competitive environment. This is especially true for small- and medium-sized businesses.

But I also have to say that during my career in the private sector building a company, I never experienced anything comparable to what businesses are going through today. The work of a lifetime could be gone in a few weeks or a few months through absolutely no fault of their own.

That is why we have to support our businesses to keep going, to keep their workers and employees on the payroll, and to keep their companies afloat. Their feelings of vulnerability will still be there in this volatile environment, but at least their jobs and their businesses will be saved.

The sobering and substantial cost of this program — almost \$84 billion — reminds us of how huge the losses are. Let us also not forget that 5.5 million Canadian workers were impacted by the pandemic between February and April — 3 million jobs were lost and 2.5 million Canadians lost work hours.

Even as we assist Canadians and start to rebuild, we are constantly reminded that the pandemic is an economic crisis as much as it is a health crisis.

Let me turn to some thoughts about this health crisis. Over these past five months, Canadians have found their way through the worst of the pandemic. People have practised physical distancing, have given up seeing family and friends, have taken their children out of school and child care, have left their workplaces to work at home, and much more.

The federal government has provided massive financial supports, and the provinces have taken up the challenges of managing health care, education and the labour force in a crisis environment.

We have learned a lot. The Standing Senate Committee on Social Affairs, Science and Technology, of which I am a member, in assessing the government's response to COVID, has learned that seniors, health care workers, essential front-line workers and people with mental health conditions have been especially vulnerable.

In particular, the pandemic has exposed the huge weaknesses in our long-term-care sector. Many long-term care homes, for example, do not have the capacity to isolate sick patients or to allow for physical distancing. Many residents have died as a result, telling us clearly that we need to take action.

We also learned at committee that Canada is not well prepared for a second wave of infections, and that we need better diagnostic testing and contact tracing if we are going to contain the rise of new cases. We learned that the federal government needs more data — yes, more detailed data — to inform the development of evidence-based policies as we go forward. Many witnesses at committee called for more federal action and leadership.

Presumably, in response to these concerns, the federal government has recently committed emergency funding for the provinces under the so-called Safe Restart Agreement, announced on July 16. From the limited information I have read in the media and in a short release, we have learned that

\$19 billion will go to provinces and municipalities to increase testing and contact tracing, to build capacity in health care systems, assist in the procurement of PPE, support seniors and other vulnerable groups, and to help in providing child care and other activities.

Had the minister been here today in Committee of the Whole — and I have to say, I'm very disappointed that we do not have Committee of the Whole today so the minister or ministers could be here to answer questions — I would have asked about this program, since details of the Safe Restart Agreement do not appear to be readily available. I would have asked whether the promised funding is tied to specific outcomes in specific areas, and I would have asked whether the agreements required information collection and data sharing between the provincial ministries and federal departments and agencies.

The lack of data and information is not an issue unique to the long-term-care sector, but it is particularly important here, given the many calls for federal action in this area. We need to understand what actually affects outcomes, and that means collecting data on the entirety of the sector — on staffing levels, staffing qualifications, resident demographics, resident health statuses, the rate of informal care from families, additional private care, hospital visits and so on. This information must not stay within the facility, as it often does today in many provinces. It must be shared by health authorities to inform efforts to compare long-term care across regions, provinces and the country, and to facilitate policy development and a better regulatory framework.

• (1530)

Witnesses at our committee urged the federal government to make sure that its funding is tied to real improvements in specific areas, otherwise federal funds are always easily diverted elsewhere. So we have heard that point time and time again, and we have to make sure that this happens.

In recent weeks, we have seen an uptick in COVID cases, coinciding with the reopening of the economy in many provinces.

We have also seen increasing concerns about COVID on the part of Canadians.

New polling by the firm Leger Marketing has found that levels of concern and levels of worry about contracting the virus, among the public, have recently increased, and those concerns are back to the same levels that we found in April.

Canadians expect that we have learned from the policy missteps and successes of recent months, that we understand the issues better today and that we can deal with the second wave, if it comes, effectively and confidently.

In my view, Bill C-20 is good legislation, based on lessons learned, and responds well to the situation we find ourselves in today. Thank you very much.

Hon. Larry W. Smith: I have very brief comments to make on that because we've had a lot of information on Bill C-20, An Act respecting further COVID-19 measures.

The CEWS has proved to be a vital lifeline for Canadian businesses forced to shutter their operations as a direct consequence of the pandemic. However, the original CEWS program was designed with very rigid eligibility criteria, as has been discussed by Senator Marshall. Organizations, including many small- and medium-sized businesses, had to prove their revenues declined by more than 30% as a result of the pandemic. Businesses that saw a 29% reduction in revenues or less were automatically deemed ineligible by the government and lost out on the 75% wage subsidy.

In her response to my question about businesses competing with the CERB to draw back employees, Minister of Employment, Workforce Development and Disability Inclusion Carla Qualtrough told the Committee of the Whole in May:

We're dealing with that in a number of concrete ways. I would suggest the wage subsidy is the biggest because people are going off of CERB and back on to payrolls as a result of the 75% payroll subsidy. That's certainly what we want to see. In my ideal world, everybody who can go on to the wage subsidy would do so.

While the program provided relief for affected organizations, many more were left out because their revenues did not decline by more than 30%. Many months after the implementation of the CEWS, the Standing Senate Committee on National Finance heard on numerous occasions about the problematic threshold.

For organizations that saw revenue declines of less than 30%, the CEWS provided a disincentive to keep staff on payrolls. It made more economic sense for these employers to temporarily lay off their workers, have them apply to CERB and reopen when revenues returned to pre-COVID levels. In an example from the restaurant business, my son had two restaurants in Toronto, very successful, and had to close them down. Everyone took off on CERB. Fifteen of his employees said that if you want us back, you have to pay us cash, which is quite interesting.

The fact of the matter is, when you look at restaurant businesses in great malls like he was in, with 16 other restaurants, what's the big change going to be? The big change is going to be social distancing. How are you going to put 1,100 people in a facility when you're only going to have 300 people? How do you make margins when you're in the food business? One of the issues that will hopefully come out is that the government will look at sectoral cases, besides a global plan, to be able to help out sectoral businesses so that we won't have a major collapse in some of these areas.

In its report on the government response to the COVID-19 pandemic, which was published on July 14, the Finance Committee pointed to the fact that the thresholds for CEWS were too high, which explained the low take-up on the program and thus recommended:

That the Government of Canada consider the adoption of a progressive, or scalable eligibility threshold for the Canada Emergency Wage Subsidy; and that the duration of the subsidy be extended for particularly hard-hit sectors.

It would thus look at other areas that will need continued help.

This is what was really interesting — and Senator Marshall, you did a great job, but I was confused from the start not by you, but what I received from my guys — a new base rate will apply and will vary for businesses with differing levels of revenue declines. Employers with revenue declines between zero and 49% must multiply their percentage revenue decline by a factor of 1.2 in periods five and six, a factor of one in period seven, a factor of .08 in period 8 and so forth to calculate what the percentage of the maximum \$1,129 subsidy they would qualify for.

Many people in small businesses don't have the technical capabilities or the money to be able to do something like this, because it is complex.

It becomes even more complex with businesses with revenue declines of more than 50%. These companies will receive 60% of the maximum \$1,129 per employee in periods five and six, dropping to 50% in period seven, 40% in period eight and so on.

Additionally, according to Finance Canada:

Employers that have experienced a 3-month average revenue drop of more than 50 per cent would receive a top-up CEWS rate equal to 1.25 times the average revenue drop that exceeds 50 per cent, up to a maximum top-up CEWS rate of 25 per cent, which is attained at a 70-per-cent revenue decline.

I have a headache trying to understand this.

Of course, as Senator Marshall said, Dan Kelly, the president of the Canadian Federation of Independent Business, noted that his organization has been inundated with thousands of phone calls from business owners about the proposed changes, saying the new CEWS is “incredibly complicated and small business owners will need significant help in understanding whether they will qualify and how much support they may receive.”

So whatever sense this makes from someone like myself — and I think I do understand business — I'm not an accountant, I'm the marketing guy.

Colleagues, at a time when Canadian businesses are facing wide scale financial hardship, with many on the brink of bankruptcy, it is unfair to burden them with excessive administrative costs. I fear that these complex rules will create uncertainty about eligibility and add further costs that employers simply cannot absorb during these times.

While this change was necessary to expand the support net for struggling businesses, I call on the government to continue to focus and consult with stakeholder groups and simplify the CEWS program, which in simple terms means identifying categorical business sectors and trying to make sure that the program will have the maximum benefit to Canadians. For example, I understand that restaurants in Canada employ approximately 850,000 people. That is an important sector. If we believe that social distancing is one issue which will affect volumes in your facility, it's great to say we can have takeout, we can do other things, which is true, but you have to have volume in a restaurant, especially if you're selling food, because where you make all your money is selling liquor. Many restaurants are only selling food, for example, bring your own wine and doing other things, so there are areas where there's tremendous opportunity, but there are areas that will need more investigation so that we will be able to maintain the job numbers that restaurants in Canada have.

Let's wish us all good luck. It's a good first step. Let's see where it takes us. Thank you.

• (1540)

Hon. Scott Tannas: Honourable senators, I am rising today to speak to Bill C-20. There are three important components to the bill, obviously. One is the provision of payments to disabled Canadians to mitigate some of the extra expenses in this crisis. I want to acknowledge the interventions by Senator Petitclerc and Senator Munson. It's helpful, I'm sure. It seems awfully meagre to me, but it's a beginning. It's a start.

The bill also provides some flexibility of the government to extend deadlines and other time frames that are baked into legislation and allows them to kind of manage through the crisis without running afoul of deadlines and arbitrary dates.

My remarks today are going to be about the third component, which is the extension and revisions to the Canada Emergency Wage Subsidy.

I want to commend the government for their actions with this bill. I'm waiting for lightning to strike. The fact is that we have lots of opportunities to criticize, but I think this is an important step, and I commend the government for doing it. I also commend them for consulting, and not just consulting but actually listening to the various bodies, business organizations and our own Senate committee that heard testimony, and they've made improvements to the program.

The extended program is indeed a bit more complicated to calculate, but maybe it's not quite as complicated as some would believe because you don't have to understand it completely. What you have to do is understand how much your revenue has gone down. You will have one number every month, and you have to reapply each month. So you will have a number that it went down, and when you then step into the world of calculating, all you have to look for is where your one number applies and apply the formulas.

I think it will test some people who don't have a lot of resources in their own organizations around accounting. It will help the coffers of the accounting firms and the business consulting firms to that extent, but I have a lot of faith in entrepreneurs and their ability to reckon and calculate. While it is more complicated, I think it is targeted at the right set of employers at the right time.

Small- and medium-sized businesses will lead us out of this recession. I want to pay tribute to entrepreneurs across the country who are the backbone of our economy. Strong businesses are built around four simple pillars, in my estimation: people, strategy, execution and cash. Each one of those pillars is vital to the success of a business in the long term.

The pandemic and its onset brought about very sudden and dramatic change to business. When people talk about unprecedented, I think that was the most unprecedented thing, to literally wake up overnight and figure out that your whole business had been turned upside down. You still had, in those moments, people to worry about, including your own family, as well as all of your employees and customers. All of a sudden, can your customers pay their bills? Because I've got an invoice out to them. There are so many things that happened so fast, and businesses were forced to react. They needed to execute a short-term survival plan that involved preserving cash. It involved preserving the key core employees of the business, and they had to revisit their strategy.

This is a survival plan, which was the first thing that businesses needed to accomplish, and they needed to accomplish it quickly. Most of them — in fact, virtually all — had no contingency plan around this whatsoever.

You know what's interesting, I've had some discussions at very high levels with directors and executives of some of Canada's largest companies; the pandemic was not on their risk matrix. So we can forgive the plumber or the insurance guy or the pollster for not having a plan on this. They're in good company with the largest organizations across Canada.

That era of figuring out how you're going to survive in the short term and doing all the things that were necessary — such as talking to landlords and banks, laying off employees, making sure that you kept the most vital employees so that you'd be ready when the time came, starting to do little bits and pieces of business, put some new product out or do so in a different way that allowed you to start generating revenue — all of that survival plan is more or less done. It's in operation now.

The businesses across our country are now looking to 2021 and beyond. They're making plans around, I guess, a new strategy. There are key people in how to execute and how to make sure they have enough cash to execute their plans, pay their people and develop the strategy. This bill provides a critical bridge from now through to 2021.

Some pundits I've heard on TV say — and it's amazing, most of them haven't earned a dollar in business in their whole lives — the pandemic changes everything. It's going to be completely different from here on in. The world will be completely different. It will all be changed. Maybe. I doubt it.

But I'm sure that the economic crisis caused by this pandemic has revealed many weaknesses in our economy and many opportunities. It is in that environment of weaknesses and opportunities that entrepreneurs thrive. Entrepreneurs will consider and act upon weaknesses and opportunities.

So colleagues, I think that Canadian entrepreneurs of all ages, leading businesses of all sizes, will find the way to prosper and to bring our economy, in total, to prosperity in 2021 and beyond. This bill will help, and it deserves our support.

Senator Plett: Honourable senators, it will probably not come as any surprise that I will not echo Senator Tannas's comments about commending the government on this bill. However, I am happy to rise and add my voice to the debate.

I will, of course, give my opinion on the content of the bill, but this is also a good opportunity to measure what has been done so far in the fight against COVID-19 and its economic consequences.

• (1550)

Senator Munson talked about how long it had taken. Colleagues, seven weeks ago, on June 10, the government introduced Bill C-17 in the House of Commons. This bill did four things: One, it made changes to the Canada Emergency Wage Subsidy; two, it enacted the Time Limits and Other Periods Act; three, it authorized the Canada Revenue Agency to share information with other government departments in order to facilitate a one-time payment to persons with disabilities; four, it made amendments to the Canada Emergency Response Benefit Act.

All of these changes were necessary steps forward in order to provide support to Canadian employees and business owners during the recovery from the pandemic. However, the Conservative opposition pointed out at the time that there were serious shortcomings with this legislation.

First of all, while the bill proposed a few improvements to the Canada Emergency Wage Subsidy program, it completely skated around other changes that were critically needed. Business owners and economists had been banging on the Prime Minister's cottage door — or as some senators like to call it, his bungalow — for a month trying to get him to come out and see that there were serious problems with the program. Instead of listening to their advice, he decided to make a few tweaks here and there while ignoring the most significant shortcomings.

The second issue with Bill C-17 was that the one-time payment to persons with disabilities was going to completely miss hundreds of thousands of persons with disabilities.

There are many persons with disabilities in Canada who live on very low incomes or who have no income, who do not qualify for the Disability Tax Credit and therefore would not receive this

payment. There are others who receive benefits through the Canada Pension Plan Disability benefit, the Québec Pension Plan disability benefit or through Veterans Affairs. All of these could have been bypassed by the program if it had gone ahead under Bill C-17.

Rather than simply rubber stamping a flawed bill like the government wanted, Andrew Scheer requested that the government take a few more days to debate and possibly amend the bill in order to get it right. The Conservatives, of course, were supported by the Bloc and the NDP in this request. The government flatly refused. Apparently, showing up for two days of work in a row was a bit too much to ask. The Liberals decided that they would act like Parliament was just a nuisance. They decided that they could govern alone, even though they are in a minority situation.

By the next day, the Prime Minister had taken time to meet with his communications advisers, and they had their spin all worked out. Standing in front of his cottage, the Prime Minister spoke haltingly and tried his best to sound sincere. He said:

I want to take a moment to speak to everyone who lives with a disability, or cares for someone with a disability.

We will not give up.

We're not going to let you be left behind.

And we'll keep working to get you the help you need and deserve.

Apparently, working to get the help you need and deserve did not include staying at the office for another day or two. It did not include working with the other parties to get the job done. And it did not include being honest about the fact that unless this government gets its way, they will just take their ball and go home. That, colleagues, is exactly what happened. On June 10, the Prime Minister took his bill and went home because he couldn't be bothered to allow Parliament to do its job properly.

Today, colleagues, is July 27, seven weeks later, and we finally have a bill before us that makes necessary changes to the Canada Emergency Wage Subsidy and expands the \$600 payment to reach more Canadians with disabilities.

On May 19, the Minister of Justice wrote to the critics of the three opposition parties in the House about the Time Limits and Other Periods Act and said:

It is important to act, both to protect the legal rights of Canadians and to ensure that they do not have to choose between protecting their health and meeting inflexible deadlines.

Why the government chose to wait two months before moving with these changes is a mystery. I remind you that no one is objecting to these measures. Bill C-20 is far from perfect, but it is an improvement over Bill C-17. It still misses about 1 million Canadians with disabilities, and it will still give the tax-free payment to rich people who don't need it. But at least, after

having seven weeks to think about it, the Prime Minister came to the realization that there are veterans with disabilities in Canada who should be included as well.

Regrettably, however, because he dithered for so long, it is now going to take more than two months for the payments to persons with disabilities to be completed. That is more than six months from when the pandemic began. This government hasn't advertised this delay, but the evidence is tucked away in clause 10, Part 2 of the bill, which says:

Any amount payable by the Minister of Employment and Social Development in relation to the administration of a program to provide a one-time payment to persons with disabilities for reasons related to the coronavirus disease 2019 (COVID-19), including any administrative cost, is to be paid out of the Consolidated Revenue Fund.

Bill C-17, which was introduced on June 10, was going to make the payments under the statutory authority of the Public Health Events of National Concern Payments Act. Now that spending authority was suddenly being changed and incorporated right into Bill C-20.

When my office inquired about why this change was necessary, we were told that the payments to persons with disabilities:

... will not be completed before the September 30th repeal of the *Public Health Events of National Concern Payments Act*. As a result, Bill C-20 has a provision for authority to access funding in the Consolidated Revenue Fund.

Colleagues, the Public Health Events of National Concern Payments Act is set to be automatically repealed on September 30, but because the Prime Minister decided to take his bill and go home instead of staying at the office to finish the job, the payments to persons with disabilities won't be completed by then.

This is troubling. Six hundred dollars may not seem like much to the Finance Minister, who took two years to realize that he had an extra \$41,000 lying around, but to many Canadians with disabilities, this payment is a lifeline. The payment was announced by the government on June 5, and four months later, some persons with disabilities will still be waiting for their cheque.

Colleagues, if you're having trouble understanding why it took the government seven weeks to pass this bill when it could have been done in two or three days, you are not alone. On the one hand, the Prime Minister claims to be working to get Canadians the help they need and deserve, but on the other hand, he decides to take a personal day rather than showing up for work last Monday when this legislation was introduced. On the one hand, this government wants to give Canadians the impression that they are not going to let anyone be left behind, but on the other hand, they have to insert clauses into almost every piece of COVID legislation to allow policy to be implemented retroactively because they can't get their act together on time.

They are constantly making announcements with no clue about how they are going to implement those promises. Individuals and business owners are left scrambling to figure out what they are supposed to do to receive the assistance that was announced.

• (1600)

Just last week the Canadian Federation of Independent Business issued a statement about the changes that this bill makes to the Canada Emergency Wage Subsidy, and they said:

... the new rules are incredibly complicated and small business owners will need significant help in understanding whether they will qualify and how much support they may receive.

This wage subsidy program has been mismanaged from the get-go.

You will remember, colleagues, that at first the subsidy was equal to 10% of an employee's salary. When Minister Morneau appeared here in front of the Committee of the Whole on March 25, I asked him why it was only 10%. I gave him some examples of what was done elsewhere. I specifically pointed out Denmark, which had a 75% wage subsidy. This is what Minister Morneau answered, showing the arrogance so typical of this government:

... if you look at what Denmark is doing, I think you will conclude that, in fact, ours is superior. In Denmark's case, they are only allowing firms that have a significant reduction in revenue to have access to that wage subsidy.

He added:

When you do the math — I know this will be coming in a couple of days — I think you'll see and I know that small businesses will see that this provides them with significant support.

Guess what? It was the minister who did the math. He figured out that his program would not attract anyone, and two days later announced a new and improved wage subsidy at the same 75% as Denmark and with the same criteria of revenue reduction. That was the first of the signs of the incompetence of the Liberal government in finding and rolling out practical solutions for Canadian businesses during this pandemic.

The Liberal government waited and waited before unveiling the wage subsidy and making it a reality. But businesses, especially small ones, could not wait while Minister Morneau and his officials were doing their math. They laid off their employees, who turned to CERB, and once that had been done the chances of rehiring people were slim.

That is why, if you look at the projections of costs for CERB and the wage subsidy versus the reality, you will see that the government missed the target. Justin Trudeau and his team thought that the wage subsidy would be the tool used by businesses, but because of their incompetence they pushed people instead to CERB. This created serious distortions on the job market. There are countless businesses looking for manpower and cannot find workers because people prefer to be on CERB. The government knows that. They know that they have to phase

out the CERB program, but they cannot figure out how. How do you incentivize people to go back to work while not letting those who truly cannot find work fall without a safety net?

We are one month away from the deadline, and no one knows what to expect. Several people, including Conservatives, have been saying for weeks that the CERB program has to be changed to make sure that people are incentivized to work, but the Trudeau government, showing its usual arrogance, refuses to listen to those voices — probably simply because the idea is not theirs.

So CERB was a good emergency measure, one that should have been the backstop, the safety net, but because they are incompetent the Liberals have turned this program into the frontline lifeline, thereby creating a brake on economic recovery. But the wage subsidy and CERB are not the only programs that the Prime Minister announced on the porch of his cottage, or again, as Senator Moncion wants it to be called, his bungalow.

The Canada Emergency Business Account was announced on March 27. That, colleagues, was four months ago today. There are countless stories about entrepreneurs who cannot qualify for this program for one reason or another. Clearly this was designed by people who do not understand the reality of small business.

Last week, this is what the Canadian Federation of Independent Business said:

CFIB urges the federal government to make quick progress to reform other key business support programs, including proceeding with promised changes to eligibility for the Canada Emergency Business Account, and expanding the size of the loans and the percentage forgiven upon repayment. It is also critical that we make immediate changes to the Canada Emergency Commercial Rent Assistance program as it is just not working for small business owners.

The Canada Emergency Commercial Rent Assistance program was announced on April 16. That was 103 days ago. Again, this program is so complex that practically no small business can benefit from it. It was a program designed not for small businesses but for large landlords and their creditors. The economic crisis caused by COVID-19 truly started four and a half months ago, yet business owners are still waiting for the government to fix these programs so that the programs do what the government promised they would.

The Large Employer Emergency Financing Facility, known as LEEFF, is another disaster. You will remember that I asked Minister Morneau, the last time we sat, how many companies had applied to LEEFF. Because he either did not know or because he was unwilling to tell the truth, the minister asked me to write to his office to get the answer, which I did. Well, today, six weeks later, I still do not have that answer. We can easily predict that the number of applicants to this program will be zero — a program designed for no one. You have to wonder, when designing this program, were the Liberals just incompetent or did they just want a marketing opportunity making the Prime Minister and his ministers look busy, knowing full well that the program is so flawed that no one would be interested.

This government is very good at making grandiose announcements, but it is utterly incompetent when it comes to following through and getting things done in a timely manner for Canadians. We have seen numerous examples of this incompetence in both the government's preparation for a possible pandemic and in their response when COVID-19 actually arrived.

The Social Affairs Committee and the National Finance Committee pointed some of these out in their recent reports. I want to thank them for their excellent work. The Social Affairs Committee noted that:

. . . the federal National Emergency Strategic Stockpile (NESS) was not well-managed over the years and was not sufficiently and appropriately stocked to provide needed supplies across Canada.

This is regrettable. The Trudeau government has been in power for close to five years now, and it must be held accountable for the state of unpreparedness that Canada was in when the virus attacked.

We heard recently that the Minister of Defence was briefed in January, two months before the crisis really hit Canada, on what was going on in Wuhan, but the government failed to measure the gravity of the crisis and instead relied on Chinese Communist Party propaganda. We learned how the Chinese government was stockpiling PPE, only to sell it later at hyper-inflated prices. But this government refused to close the borders and it refused to stock up on PPE, even sending precious stocks to China. In getting ready to deal with COVID-19 and in its response on the health front, this government was incompetent and it cost Canadian lives.

• (1610)

We can be thankful that health care is provided by the provinces of our federation. The various provinces were able to limit the damage, even if they had to push the Trudeau government to act. We can thank the premiers and the dedicated provincial civil servants and the front-line workers.

The Social Affairs Committee, in its report on COVID-19, states “that Canada is not prepared for a second wave” because this government was so inept in preparing for the first wave, and reacting to it, and because this government is now engulfed in the largest corruption scandal since Adscam. Canadians should be fearful of this second wave, should it come. With this crew at the helm of the ship, Canada may well end up on Gilligan's Island after the next wave. I recently saw a picture on social media showing Pierre Elliot Trudeau and Justin Trudeau with the warning that the second wave is always worse than the first, and I could not agree more. While it was asleep at the wheel on the health front, the Liberal government was trying to look busy on the economic front, but as I have already started to show, it was incompetent in designing and implementing measures to reduce the economic impact of the pandemic and the shutdown of the economy.

I have spoken at length on the programs for businesses, but what about the programs for individuals? As I said, the CERB program was a good temporary measure; a stopgap. But by refusing to modify it to include incentives to work, the

government is hampering our economic recovery. I understand that the government needed to act quickly in mid-March and could not be too fussy about who would get CERB, but four months later we can ask ourselves: Why do students who live with their parents, and who were working for a few hours a week in a store before the pandemic, still receive CERB payments? The Fraser Institute calculated that the CERB program has sent \$11.8 billion to young people who live with their parents. Is that good policy? We have story after story of fraud regarding CERB payments.

The Prime Minister himself said there would probably be around a billion dollars' worth of fraud, yet that does not seem important to the Liberals. After all, what is a billion dollars when your heart is in the right place, as we have learned with the WE scandal? What is even more unacceptable is that the government has numbers about the levels of fraud. As *Le Journal de Montreal* reported last week, it would not release them to the public. This is certainly not because the estimated level of fraud is less than what the Prime Minister predicted.

Speaking of millions and billions being thrown around, we learned last week that more than a quarter of the federal public servants were granted special paid leave during the pandemic. People sitting at home, not working in the office, not working from home, at a cost of about half a billion dollars. Don't you think that some of these folks could have helped elsewhere? Businesses across Canada were forced to turn on a dime and reorganize how they work. They figured out how people could work from home, how they could be transferred to another department, but not our federal government. That was too complicated for Prime Minister Trudeau and his cabinet. When you are busy running around spending billions of dollars, you don't have time to think about how the border agents, who are no longer needed since the borders are closed, could be deployed elsewhere. Sure, this would have helped, but it is complicated and does not bring votes, so let's forget it.

As of last week, the government estimated the cost of its response to COVID-19 at over \$325 billion. How this mountain of debt is going to be handled remains a mystery. We know that the Bank of Canada is buying a large chunk of the federal government debt. Will it offload it? If so, how and when? We do not know. I have asked Minister Morneau right here in this chamber and he would not answer. How will this affect inflation and interest rates? Canadians will have to guess, because our finance minister will not tell us how he plans to get out of this mess. I guess he is too busy going through old receipts for luxury trips to see if he needs to reimburse something else. While provinces and other countries have fiscal updates and budgets, the Liberal government gives us a snapshot. It's like expecting a movie and getting a Polaroid instead.

Honourable senators, this government has not shown a great level of competency since 2015. Besides legalizing pot, it cannot show any great achievement. In steering the country through a situation like the pandemic and its economic consequences, you need leadership — good leadership. You need competence, just like Stephen Harper and Jim Flaherty showed in 2008, otherwise the damage can be deep and long-lasting. I am fearful for our future because Justin Trudeau and his cabinet are so incompetent

that they are starting to cause real damage to our economy and our democratic system. What are they going to do to steer us out of the mess we are finding ourselves in? Will they raise taxes? If they do, they will damage the fragile economy even further. Will they cut spending? This is highly unlikely because Justin Trudeau's entire legacy rests on not cutting spending, and letting the budget balance itself. If there is one thing that Justin Trudeau showed us over the years, it is he is completely unable to make any difficult decisions. Justin Trudeau is simply not up to the job and will not exercise the leadership necessary to make difficult decisions. If left in charge of the ship of state, Canadians can expect him to lower the sails and drift. Inflation will begin to kick in, which will dilute the weight of our national debt while weakening our economy and making every Canadian poorer.

Honourable senators, the unfortunate reality is that we have a federal government which is incompetent, out of touch with economic reality and refuses to think outside of its ideological framework. We will need to be extra vigilant in the coming months to hold this government to account, because more bad decisions at this time could have a significant and long-lasting impact on the economy and on future generations of Canadians.

Our National Finance Committee made some excellent observation in its latest report, including the following:

The committee is also concerned by the lack of accountability and transparency for government spending. The committee believes that it is time to return to traditional procedures for approval by Parliament of government spending in order to provide appropriate oversight of government expenditures.

Lastly, Canadians and Parliamentarians need to have a clear picture of the state of the government's finances on a regular basis. The government should release an economic and fiscal update quarterly for the duration of the economic crisis.

It will be interesting to see what the government's response is to these recommendations. Regardless, one thing is certain: We need Parliament to be back in September. Not on Zoom calls, not hybrid sittings. We need to find ways to meet in our traditional manner while respecting public health guidelines. Let's not make it a political issue, I agree.

I have spoken at length about the incompetence of Justin Trudeau, Bill Morneau and the rest of the Liberal wrecking crew. Sadly, honourable senators, I have not covered everything. The gold medal of incompetence in reacting to the effects of COVID-19 is the bungling of the Canada Student Service Grant. The Canada Student Service Grant, or CSSG, was announced on April 22. In the government's words, the CSSG:

... will help students gain valuable work experience and skills while they help their communities during the COVID-19 pandemic. For students who choose to do national service and serve their communities, the new Canada Student Service Grant will provide up to \$5,000 for their education in the fall.

• (1620)

Colleagues, today is July 27. There is one month left before students go back to school, and the program hasn't even started yet. In fact, the government has not even figured out how it will work and who will administer it. It took them two months to announce the official launch and less than three days for the whole thing to start to unravel beneath their feet.

I am not sure if the root problem of this government is arrogance, incompetence or corruption, but I am beginning to think it is all three.

Consider for a moment what has taken place with the CSSG. From what we know, the government began looking at how to help students weather the pandemic financially in early April. On April 5, the finance minister discussed ideas with the Prime Minister and, two days later, WE Charity was contacted by the minister's department to probe the idea further. Two days after that, on April 9, WE Charity sends an unsolicited proposal for a youth program to Youth Minister Bardish Chagger and Small Business Minister Mary Ng. What a coincidence.

A week later, Minister Chagger met with WE co-founder Craig Kielburger to discuss their proposal. Oddly enough, when Minister Chagger appeared before the House of Commons Finance Committee she failed to mention this meeting.

On April 19, Rachel Wernick, a senior official with ESDC, contacted WE Charity to discuss possibilities for a student service program. It is not clear who pushed Ms. Wernick to call WE. She said it had been mentioned by someone in Minister Morneau's department.

Three days after that, on April 22, the Prime Minister announces that his government will be launching the Canada Student Service Grant program. The very same day, WE Charity emails Ms. Wernick an updated proposal for a grant, which included details of the proposed program that even Ms. Wernick had not yet been made aware of.

How, colleagues, does that happen? How could WE know in advance what the Prime Minister was about to announce on the steps of his bungalow? WE knew even before the bureaucrat in charge of the program what the program would look like. And the government has the gall to tell us it was bureaucrats who decided that WE would be the beneficiary?

On May 5, Minister Chagger brings a proposal to the COVID-19 cabinet meeting, which recommends the WE Charity as the preferred administrator of the program. And it is approved. On May 22, the whole of cabinet considers and approves the plan.

One month later, on June 25, the government announces that WE Charity has been awarded \$19.5 million to run the \$912 million program. We would learn later that the program was actually worth \$44 million to the organization.

You would think that someone would have taken this month between the decision and the announcement to do some due diligence on WE or see if there were other options. No, either because these people were incompetent or because they knew that the fix was in. It had to be WE, no matter what.

Right after the public announcement, the wheels began to fall off. On June 28th, the Conservatives asked Auditor General Karen Hogan to investigate the arrangement, noting that this was a sole-source, untendered contract with a group that had well-documented connections to the Trudeaus.

In the coming days, the grant to WE Charity was cancelled as the ethics commissioner announced two separate investigations into the matter, and conflicts of interest began surfacing faster than the public could keep up with.

On July 9, WE Charity confirmed that Margaret Trudeau had been paid a total of \$312,000 for speaking at 28 WE events between 2016 and 2020. Alexandre Trudeau, the Prime Minister's brother, was paid \$40,000 for eight events in the 2017-18 academic year. Sophie Grégoire Trudeau received \$1,400 for a single appearance in 2012. On March 4, both Sophie and her mother-in-law, Margaret Trudeau, were headline speakers at a WE Day in the U.K.

On their website, WE Charity describes Sophie as “. . . more than an ambassador of WE Well-being, she is its mentor, booster and champion.”

Last August, Finance Minister Bill Morneau announced \$3 million in federal funding to WE for its WE Are Social Entrepreneurs program. The announcement was made in the same month that his daughter began working for the charity and one month before the federal election was called.

In his testimony to the Finance Committee last week, Minister Morneau admitted that the WE Charity had paid expenses for two trips he took with his family to the tune of \$41,366. He also said that his family had previously made two donations of \$50,000 each to the WE Charity, including one in June of this year. Global News reported that, in total, WE Charity was the recipient of at least \$5.5 million in federal government funding from 2015 to 2019.

But the troubling links between the Trudeau government and WE don't stop there. Gerald Butts, the Prime Minister's former principal secretary and best friend, who resigned in disgrace, has been listed as an outstanding partner and supporter of the WE Charity. Mélanie Joly, the Minister of Economic Development and Official Languages, participated in multiple WE events.

Seamus O'Regan, the PM's Minister of Natural Resources, worked with the WE Charity as the honorary chair of Artbound, a charity that fundraises on behalf of WE. Katie Telford, Justin Trudeau's chief of staff, was a co-founder of the Artbound charity that Minister O'Regan chaired. Between the two of them, they are reported to have been involved in helping to raise \$400,000 for the WE Charity in 2010 and 2011.

We don't know everything about the WE scandal yet. The Ethics Commissioner, the Lobbying Commissioner, the RCMP and at least two House committees will certainly be able to unearth additional information, even if the Liberals are obviously trying desperately to cover their tracks and filibuster the work of the committees.

Beyond the obvious ethical breaches in this affair, the whole program, how it was designed and rolled out raises serious questions. It raises questions about the Liberal Party of Canada. Is it true that it is receiving lists of participants from WE? What are the links between the Liberal Party and WE? Was WE trying to turn young people into brand fanatics for the Trudeau and the Liberal brands, as they promised to other sponsors?

It raises questions about WE Charity. What is the true corporate structure? Why was the real estate division chosen to deliver CSSG? Is WE solvent? Is it true that it spends only 20% or so of its revenues on actual international development? Where is the other 80% going? How did WE plan to deliver the programs? Was it really offering money to other charities and teachers to hunt down volunteers to inflate the numbers? Was it planning to sell personal information of participants to corporations?

• (1630)

When they gave free luxury trips to the Minister of Finance and his family, what were they expecting in return? Were WE and its principals registered lobbyists when they were dealing with government officials? Why did they pay members of the Trudeau family for speaking engagements but not other speakers? Why did so many employees, managers and directors leave WE in the last few months?

It raises serious questions about Minister Morneau. What is the true extent of his relationship with WE? What did he know about WE's financial difficulties when he designed a program that supposedly only WE could deliver? How can we trust a Finance Minister who forgets villas in France and \$41,000 trips?

It raises serious questions about Prime Minister Trudeau. Did his family receive free trips from WE? We know they accepted and received free vacations from the Aga Khan. What did he know about WE's problems? What was his personal involvement in the design of this program?

It raises serious questions about the government and the public service. Why did the government choose to allocate close to a billion dollars to this program instead of increasing amounts to the Canada Summer Jobs program? Who thought that giving grants to students was better than giving them jobs?

Why did the government favour this scheme that bypasses labour laws, especially minimum-salary provisions? How did the government do the math in this program? It expected 20,000 students would receive this grant. That's \$100 million if every student volunteered for the maximum number of hours. Even with WE's fee of between \$19 and \$44 million, you are still close to \$800 million short.

Why did the government agree to sign with the real estate arm of WE? Why not do business with the charity itself? What due diligence was done? Why did the government decide to ask only WE to bid on this? How did WE know about the program before even the bureaucrat in charge of implementing it did?

Colleagues, the CSSG was a ridiculous, overly complex program, unless, of course, it was designed not to help students but to help WE. So who are the true masterminds behind this? Were they incompetent or is there something more nefarious? Perhaps when the government announced the CSSG program, we read the Prime Minister's statement incorrectly. Perhaps the time he said "we," he actually meant "WE" with the capital letters: "Together, WE will get through this difficult time."

As you know, I wrote to the Speaker on July 13, asking him to reconvene the Senate so we could try to get to the bottom of this. In my letter, I noted that the Senate is uniquely positioned to get to the bottom of this ordeal. To quote the Prime Minister himself:

If the Senate serves a purpose at all, it is to act as a check on the extraordinary power of the prime minister and his office

This scandalous affair is exactly the type of situation where the Senate needs to step up and be a check on the extraordinary power of the Prime Minister. Canadians expect us, especially in times of crisis, to hold the government of the day to account.

To my great disappointment, I have not received an answer, not even an acknowledgment of receipt. It seems to me that we have enough talent in this chamber to go deeper into this file to shed additional light on how this program was designed. We are a complementary chamber to the House of Commons. I am sure we could complement their work on this. We will see if the Speaker agrees with me.

One other question that bothers me about WE is why the Prime Minister and the ministers never thought that there could be problems with choosing WE to do this work. It is incredible that there could be these many conflicts of interest converging on one government program and it didn't raise any red flags with anyone in the Prime Minister's Office or around the cabinet table.

On the one hand, it's unbelievable, and yet, on the other hand, if you've been following the performance of this government, it's not surprising. This is, after all, the same Finance Minister who forgot to declare his villa in France in his ethics reporting. This is the same Finance Minister who sponsored Bill C-27, which happened to increase the value of pensions sold by the minister's company, Morneau Shepell. When the bill was tabled in the House of Commons, the value of Morneau Shepell shares jumped, and Minister Morneau just happened to still be holding \$21 million worth of shares.

This is the same Prime Minister who was found guilty of breaking the Conflict of Interest Act 10 times in less than four years. In 2017, former commissioner Mary Dawson ruled on Trudeau and his family accepting a vacation on the Aga Khan's private island in the Bahamas. Everyone in Canada knows you cannot accept free holidays from third parties when you are a member of the cabinet. Everyone except the Liberals, who apparently have to relearn this lesson every couple of years.

Then again in 2019, Ethics Commissioner Mario Dion found that Trudeau had tried to influence then-Justice Minister Jody Wilson-Raybould to overrule a decision not to grant a deferred prosecution agreement to SNC-Lavalin.

Between the two incidents, Justin Trudeau was found guilty of one count of contravening section 5 of the Conflict of Interest Act, four counts of contravening section 9, one count on section 11, two counts on section 12 and two counts on section 21. That, colleagues, is 10 violations of the Conflict of Interest Act.

And now the Prime Minister is under investigation again by the Ethics Commissioner, along with his Finance Minister.

We should not forget the other ethical challenges of the Prime Minister. The SNC-Lavalin affair was more than just breaching the code of ethics; the Prime Minister made a mockery of the separation of power between his office and the Attorney General. He was so incompetent or so corrupt that he pushed aside the Shawcross Principle in order to help friends get away from criminal prosecution. And to get his way, he threw the first Indigenous Justice Minister under the bus.

Speaking of Indigenous women, who can forget the "thank you for your donation" incident where the PM's elitist and condescending attitude was on full display. Before that, we had "elbowgate," when Justin Trudeau pushed aside fellow MP Ruth Ellen Brousseau because he was in a hurry to vote. His time was more precious than others, and pushing aside women who get in the way is something our fake feminist Prime Minister will do without hesitation.

That was in line with Justin Trudeau's behaviour in the "Kokanee grope" incident, where he groped a female journalist. Then he said he would not have done this had he but known that the woman was a national reporter. I guess in his mind, it's more acceptable if the woman was not a national reporter. We all remember that our Prime Minister decided that this was indeed a lesson not just for him but for all of us. We now know that some "people experience things differently".

In 2015, we learned that Justin Trudeau was billing charities for speaking engagements, even as an MP. This was a first, colleagues — a sitting politician who charges people to hear him speak. When he got caught, he said he was sorry and wrote a cheque. A few weeks later he was caught again; he had charged the House of Commons for expenses that had also been reimbursed by the organizations to which he spoke. Again, we had the "I'm sorry; here's a cheque" routine.

And finally, let's not forget the three, four, five or more incidents where Justin Trudeau wore blackface because he thought it was funny to pretend that he was black. We don't

know how many times he did that because he can't remember how many times he did it. It seems that it was a classic for Justin Trudeau, the comedian, to wear blackface. Seriously, colleagues — who in their right mind was doing that in the 1980s? What does this show about Justin Trudeau's true character?

• (1640)

This government has fostered a culture of arrogance, incompetence and corruption to the point that they have become so inoculated to ethical breaches that they no longer even recognize them. They have been dragged, screaming and kicking, over a flaming bed of hot coals that they themselves created before they even admit that something might be wrong. Then, when caught, they would like us to forgive and forget, because they mumble, "I'm sorry," with a little tear in the corner of their eye. We all know they are not sorry about anything. They are not even good actors.

Look at how they handled the WE scandal. The Prime Minister's first response to reports that there were problems with how this program was being handled was to try to tell us that the WE Charity was the only organization capable of administering the program. It sounded just like "these allegations are false," which the Prime Minister told us about *The Globe and Mail* story and SNC-Lavalin, and they all proved 100% true.

The Prime Minister actually believed that the Canadian public would buy this argument in defence of providing sole-source contracts of almost a billion dollars, for a program that does not make any sense, to an organization that has deep ties to his family, his Finance Minister, his cabinet and his party. There is no explanation for this except that his government is so blinded by the brilliance of their own self-righteousness that they can no longer even recognize an ethical breakdown when it's glaring them in the face.

That's why, in the midst of the WE scandal, we see the Prime Minister and his cabinet acting shocked and offering up lukewarm apologies like they had no idea what was going on. You can see it in the annoyed looks that flash across their faces when they are being asked questions by the opposition or sometimes even the Liberal press. It's like they are offended that anyone would dare question whether their motives are anything less than lily-white. They are so steeped in their own self-righteousness that they actually believe it's real.

The problem, colleagues, is not that the government wasn't fully aware of the lines they were crossing; it's just that, for them, this is nothing more than business as usual.

Bear with me for a few more minutes and I will refresh your memory.

In addition to the ethical breaches and questionable conduct I have already mentioned, let's not forget about the following: While he was President of the Treasury Board, Scott Brison tried to block approval for the contract for a naval supply ship being built at the Davie shipyard in Quebec because he was lobbied to do so by New Brunswick's powerful Irving family, owners of a rival Halifax shipyard.

Minister Brison also tried to argue that there was no need for him to set up a conflict of interest screen to prevent him from participating in government decisions involving two of Atlantic Canada's wealthiest families, even though he used to chair one of their investment firms and his spouse continued to sit on the company's board of directors.

What about Dominic LeBlanc, who, in spite of connections to the powerful Irving family, was appointed to be Minister of Fisheries, Oceans and the Canadian Coast Guard? He had to consult with the Ethics Commissioner for weeks in order to figure out how to stickhandle around this obvious conflict of interest.

Then there was the time when Minister LeBlanc flew from Moncton to Montreal and back aboard a jet owned by J.D. Irving, Limited. Nothing to see here. But when the Ethics Commissioner, Mario Dion, found Minister LeBlanc guilty of breaking the Conflict of Interest Act because he awarded a lucrative Arctic surf clam licence to a company linked to his wife's cousin, he couldn't wiggle out of that one.

Speaking of Dominic LeBlanc and Scott Brison, we still don't know their exact role in the Vice-Admiral Norman affair. The Liberals tried to renege on a contract for a supply ship in order to give it back to the Irvings. When they got caught, they decided they would get the head of Vice-Admiral Norman. The Prime Minister even sent him to trial before the police had completed its investigation. Scott Brison and Judy Foote left their positions. Vice-Admiral Norman was paid a sum of money and had to sign a confidentiality agreement. That was a first-class cover-up.

What about Seamus O'Regan? The government spent \$180,000 defending him in a defamation case. Indigenous Services Minister Marc Miller was called on the carpet for hosting a private fundraiser for his election campaign that was held in New York City, and he never did reveal the donor list.

Minister Maryam Monsef had to admit that she was actually not born in Afghanistan, as she had told people and led people to believe for years. Minister Sajjan was found to have lied about his role in Afghanistan. Minister Champagne was discovered to have mortgages with the Bank of China for two apartments in London. John McCallum was fired as ambassador in Beijing for improper comments on Canada's relationship in China. Gerald Butts and Katie Telford, who were at the time Justin Trudeau's two top aides, received \$207,000 in moving expenses, of which they agreed to repay a significant portion only after the story went public and caught fire.

Then there was Marwan Tabbara. He was allowed to run for the Liberal Party in the 2019 election even though detailed allegations of sexual harassment had already been made against him. After being arrested in April of this year, he remained in caucus for almost two months because the PMO claimed they knew nothing about it.

Let's not forget Jody Wilson-Raybould, Jane Philpott and Celina Caesar-Chavannes. If I have to remind you about what happened here, then we are really in trouble. Three strong women thrown under the bus because they would dare to stand up to Justin Trudeau.

Darshan Singh Kang had to leave the Liberal caucus over accusations of sexual harassment. Liberal MP Nicola Di Iorio didn't show up for work for a year after he announced his resignation. Then the public found out he didn't actually resign. Are we supposed to believe that no one in the Liberal government knew about that?

Former Liberal MP Raj Grewal admitted he racked up millions of dollars in debts playing casino blackjack and ended up resigning from the Liberal caucus after the news came to light following an RCMP investigation. But after suddenly announcing he had paid off his seven-figure debts, he stayed on as a member of Parliament for the rest of the parliamentary session. You may recall that Mr. Grewal was already under investigation by the federal Ethics Commissioner at the time and was later found guilty of being in violation of conflict of interest.

Colleagues, I am nowhere near finished detailing the list of ethical breaches and misconduct committed by the Prime Minister, his cabinet and other party MPs. But even if I have unlimited time — and I do — I will stop there because I think you get the point.

This government has lost its moral compass, if ever it had any, and they have lost the moral right to govern. All of these, and many that I did not mention, are tributaries into the stream of polluted water that we find ourselves swimming in today as we are to hold to account a government that has no understanding or appreciation of the concept. No wonder Canada has slipped to twelfth position on the world corruption ranking this year. This is all Justin Trudeau's work.

Colleagues, it is difficult to see a way forward out of this mess that does not include the resignation of both the Prime Minister and the Finance Minister. They have repeatedly violated the trust of the people of Canada and demonstrated ambivalence toward the responsibility of the offices they carry.

Today we are joining with other voices — politicians, media and ordinary citizens — that are calling for the resignation of the Prime Minister and the Finance Minister to make way for a better tomorrow, for Canada and for all Canadians.

In this chamber, we have a choice to make: Are we going to paper over the serious issues that have arisen with this government or are we going to call for transparency, accountability and a better course of action?

As you all know, colleagues, the Conservative Party of Canada is about to elect a new leader. I will not make any prediction on who will win, but I know this: We will elect a leader that will take this incompetent and corrupt Liberal government to task. We will elect a leader who will unite our party. We will elect a leader who will offer to Canadians an exciting vision for the future of our country.

Colleagues, when we next meet, we will most likely have this new leader, and I can guarantee you that the Conservative Senate caucus will come back here energized like never before. We will demand accountability from this government. We will carry the voice of the more than six million Canadians who voted Conservative in the last election. We will carry the voice of millions more who are now fed up with the Trudeau government.

We will carry the voice of all those who are saying Morneau and Trudeau have got to go, should they decide to try to hang on to their jobs.

• (1650)

Today, I will not keep our Deputy Leader of the Government in suspense. She doesn't have to ask me how we will vote. We will allow this bill to pass on division, but we are not going to give this government a pass. We believe that Canada is at a critical moment that requires real leadership, responsible leadership, courageous leadership, leadership we desperately need but do not have.

Some Hon. Senators: Hear, hear.

The Hon. the Acting Speaker: Are honourable senators ready for the question?

Hon. Senators: Question.

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

Some Hon. Senators: Agreed.

An Hon. Senator: On division.

(Motion agreed to and bill read third time and passed, on division.)

[*Translation*]

BUSINESS OF THE SENATE

Hon. Raymonde Gagné (Legislative Deputy to the Government Representative in the Senate): Honourable senators, with leave of the Senate and notwithstanding rule 5-5(j), I move:

That the sitting be suspended to the call of the chair, with the bells to ring for five minutes before the sitting resumes.

The Hon. the Acting Speaker: Is leave granted, honourable senators?

Hon. Senators: Agreed.

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

Hon. Senators: Agreed.

[Senator Plett]

(Motion agreed to.)

(The sitting of the Senate was suspended.)

(The sitting of the Senate was resumed.)

• (1730)

ROYAL ASSENT

The Hon. the Acting Speaker informed the Senate that the following communication had been received:

RIDEAU HALL

July 27, 2020

Mr. Speaker,

I have the honour to inform you that the Right Honourable Julie Payette, Governor General of Canada, signified royal assent by written declaration to the bill listed in the Schedule to this letter on the 27th day of July, 2020, at 5:12 p.m.

Yours sincerely,

Assunta Di Lorenzo

Secretary to the Governor General and Herald Chancellor

The Honourable
The Speaker of the Senate
Ottawa

Bill Assented to Monday, July 27, 2020:

An Act respecting further COVID-19 measures (*Bill C-20, Chapter 11, 2020*)

[*English*]

ADJOURNMENT

MOTION ADOPTED

Hon. Raymonde Gagné (Legislative Deputy to the Government Representative in the Senate): Honourable senators, with leave of the Senate and notwithstanding rule 5-5(g), I move:

That, when the Senate next adjourns after the adoption of this motion, it do stand adjourned until Tuesday, September 22, 2020, at 2 p.m.

The Hon. the Acting Speaker: Is leave granted, honourable senators?

Hon. Senators: Agreed.

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

Hon. Senators: Agreed.

(Motion agreed to.)

THE LATE MARION EVELYN PATE

The Hon. the Acting Speaker: Before we go to the adjournment motion, Senator Gagné, I would like to highlight that on July 24, Marion Evelyn Pate passed away. Of course, she is the mother of our dear friend, the Honourable Senator Pate. With her, she had her beloved husband, her beloved children, her grandchildren and her great-grandchildren. On behalf of all senators, Senator Pate, we would like to extend our sincere condolences. God rest her soul, and we know she lives on in the memory of her loved ones and her family.

(At 5:35 p.m., the Senate was continued until Tuesday, September 22, 2020, at 2 p.m.)

APPENDIX

DELAYED ANSWERS TO ORAL QUESTIONS

EMPLOYMENT, WORKFORCE DEVELOPMENT AND LABOUR

CANADA SUMMER JOBS PROGRAM

(Response to question raised by the Honourable Yonah Martin on February 5, 2020)

The Canada Summer Jobs (CSJ) 2020 Application Period was extended to February 28, 2020 from February 24, 2020.

National priorities are set on an annual basis to support the program's objectives and to help young people, especially those facing barriers to employment, to transition to the labour market. In addition, Members of Parliament (MPs) set local priorities. Both are considered during assessment.

The CSJ 2020 national priorities are:

1. Organizations that provide services to or intend to hire youth who self-identify as being part of underrepresented groups or as having additional barriers to entering or staying in the labour market;
2. Opportunities offered by organizations that provide services to persons with disabilities or intend to hire youth with disabilities;
3. Opportunities for youth in rural areas, remote communities, or Official Language Minority Communities;
4. Opportunities offered by organizations that focus on protecting and conserving the environment;
5. Opportunities for youth to work in small businesses.

The Government of Canada continues to support the skilled trades and seniors through programs including the Skilled Trades Awareness and Readiness Program and the New Horizons for Seniors Program.

Feedback received from MPs, employers and youth is compiled and analyzed to continuously improve the program.

FOREIGN AFFAIRS AND INTERNATIONAL TRADE

EXPORT DEVELOPMENT CANADA

(Response to question raised by the Honourable Leo Housakos on February 5, 2020)

Global Affairs Canada (GAC)

The following reflects a consolidated response approved on behalf of Global Affairs Canada ministers.

The Canada Account is a tool used to finance export related transactions which are deemed to be in Canada's national interest. The Canada Account has been set up under section 23 of the *Export Development Act* and is administered by Export Development Canada (EDC) on behalf of the Government of Canada. The Minister for International Trade is accountable for the Canada Account and approves, with the concurrence of the Minister of Finance, transactions under this account. Larger transactions are referred to Cabinet for approval.

Although write-offs are a last resort and are rare, on occasion EDC recommends that the Government forgive amounts owing under a Canada Account loan. At times, a recommendation to write off a portion of a loan is made in order to maximize recovery on a non-performing loan. Requests for the write-off of all or part of a loan are approved by the Minister for International Trade with the concurrence of the Minister of Finance, when this is deemed to be in the best interests of Canada and of Canadians. The Government is, however, unable to provide more details on this specific transaction as it would result in making public confidential information about a private company.

INDIGENOUS AND NORTHERN AFFAIRS

RIGHTS OF INDIGENOUS WOMEN

(Response to question raised by the Honourable Mary Jane McCallum on February 20, 2020)

The Minister of Crown-Indigenous Relations would like to thank the Senator for drawing attention to this important issue.

The department is working with Indigenous organizations and provincial and territorial governments to co-develop a National Action Plan to address violence against Indigenous women, girls, and LGBTQ and Two-Spirit people, and respond to the Calls for Justice. A whole-of-government approach is being taken to address issues raised in the National Inquiry Final Report and Calls for Justice, including the impact and effect of natural resource projects on the vulnerability of Indigenous women, girls and LGBTQ and Two-Spirited people in neighbouring communities.

As called for by the National Inquiry, the National Action Plan is intended to address the unique needs, experiences and cultural contexts of Indigenous peoples and

communities. We are working to ensure the plan represents diverse regional perspectives and needs of communities, survivors of gender-based violence, and views of family members of missing and murdered Indigenous women, girls, and LGBTQ and Two Spirit people.

This input into the National Action Plan is essential and we are working with them throughout COVID-19 to understand new timelines. We remain committed to addressing the root causes of violence raised in the Final Report.

TRANSPORT

DELIVERY INFRASTRUCTURE FOR THE ATLANTIC PROVINCES

(Response to question raised by the Honourable Diane F. Griffin on February 27, 2020)

Transport Canada

The railways worked hard to restore the system following the February rail blockades and continue to work hard to maintain their networks during the current challenges related to COVID-19. They also work directly with their customers to ensure the movement of critical goods.

The Government of Canada closely monitors the status of the rail network, during both normal times and during exceptional times such as the February protests and the current challenges presented by COVID-19. Transport Canada officials have an open line of communications with transportation service providers, including railways such as CN and CP, to better understand how their supply chains are faring and to ensure the safety and efficiency of the national transportation network. Transport Canada officials also have an open line of communication with the shipper community, and other users of the transportation network, to understand any impacts on the movement of critical goods.

Specifically regarding advisory groups, Transport Canada hosts stakeholder forums to encourage discussion between other government departments, provinces, and industry, regarding mutual priorities and goals in the transportation sector. Such forums help to create good working relationships, so that when challenges emerge, we have well-established points of connection. All jurisdictions across Canada participate in these forums, including the Maritimes.

INDIGENOUS AND NORTHERN AFFAIRS

SUPPORT FOR WOMEN AND CHILDREN EXPERIENCING VIOLENCE

(Response to question raised by the Honourable Mary Coyle on May 15, 2020)

In response to the Inquiry's Final Report, the department is engaging with provincial and territorial governments, Indigenous leaders and organizations, family members and survivors, experts, academics, and others to determine next steps towards developing a National Action Plan.

In response to COVID-19, our government is investing \$10 million into shelters on reserve and in Yukon; \$15 million for Indigenous organizations that provide service to Indigenous peoples on and off reserve; and \$40 million through Women and Gender Equality Canada, including up to \$30 million to address the immediate needs of shelters and sexual assault centres.

Indigenous organizations have told us that rates of gender-based violence have increased for Indigenous women and children during COVID-19, so we are continuing to move forward with programs aimed at addressing the root causes of violence. We will continue to make every effort to increase support to Indigenous women and children since the pandemic began. For more information on what we have been doing, please refer to our website at: <https://www.rcaanc-cirnac.gc.ca/eng/1591125706865/1591125725240>.

The federal government, with partners, remains committed to developing a National Action Plan to address the systemic causes of violence against Indigenous women, girls, and 2SLGBTQQIA people.

CANADIAN SECURITY INTELLIGENCE SERVICE

CORRUPTION OF BORDER SERVICES PERSONNEL

(Response to question raised by the Honourable Jean-Guy Dagenais on June 17, 2020)

Canada Border Services Agency (CBSA)

As a law enforcement agency entrusted with protecting Canada's borders, the CBSA holds its employees to a high standard of conduct at all times. In addition to other law enforcement agencies, there are 5,733 Border Services Officers at the forefront working at ports of entry who are responsible for international borders beyond CBSA facilities.

The Agency has a variety of measures in place to ensure that its systems and members are not exploited by organized crime. Background checks are conducted on all employees upon employment, and at ongoing, regular intervals. Further, its human resources program focuses on the promotion of integrity, values and ethics.

The CBSA works closely with federal and domestic partners to ensure non-federal port of entry employees working in Customs Controlled Areas undergo the

appropriate security clearances in order to access these areas.

There are numerous internal controls, policies and procedures in place to ensure the integrity of our operations and our systems. All allegations of improper conduct by CBSA employees are taken very seriously and are thoroughly investigated. Since December 5, 2019, two employees were investigated for potential links to organized crime. One individual is no longer a CBSA employee and the other case is ongoing.

The First Session of the Forty-third Parliament was prorogued by Proclamation of Her Excellency the Governor General on Tuesday, August 18, 2020.

THE SPEAKER

The Honourable George J. Furey

THE GOVERNMENT REPRESENTATIVE IN THE SENATE

The Honourable Marc Gold

THE LEADER OF THE OPPOSITION

The Honourable Donald Neil Plett

FACILITATOR OF THE INDEPENDENT SENATORS GROUP

The Honourable Yuen Pau Woo

THE INTERIM LEADER OF THE CANADIAN SENATORS GROUP

The Honourable Scott Tannas

LEADER OF THE PROGRESSIVE SENATE GROUP

The Honourable Jane Cordy

OFFICERS OF THE SENATE

INTERIM CLERK OF THE SENATE AND CLERK OF THE PARLIAMENTS

Richard Denis

LAW CLERK AND PARLIAMENTARY COUNSEL

Philippe Hallée

USHER OF THE BLACK ROD

J. Greg Peters

THE MINISTRY

(In order of precedence)

(July 1, 2020)

The Right Hon. Justin P. J. Trudeau	Prime Minister
The Hon. Chrystia Freeland	Minister of Intergovernmental Affairs
	Deputy Prime Minister
The Hon. Lawrence MacAulay	Minister of Veterans Affairs
	Associate Minister of National Defence
The Hon. Carolyn Bennett	Minister of Crown-Indigenous Relations
The Hon. Dominic LeBlanc	President of the Queen's Privy Council for Canada
The Hon. Navdeep Bains	Minister of Innovation, Science and Economic Development
The Hon. Bill Morneau	Minister of Finance
The Hon. Jean-Yves Duclos	President of the Treasury Board
The Hon. Marc Garneau	Minister of Transport
The Hon. Marie-Claude Bibeau	Minister of Agriculture and Agri-Food
The Hon. Mélanie Joly	Minister of Economic Development
	Minister of Official Languages
The Hon. Diane LeBouthillier	Minister of National Revenue
The Hon. Catherine McKenna	Minister of Infrastructure and Communities
The Hon. Harjit S. Sajjan	Minister of National Defence
The Hon. Maryam Monsef	Minister for Women and Gender Equality
	Minister of Rural Economic Development
The Hon. Carla Qualtrough	Minister of Employment, Workforce Development and Accessibility
	Minister of Health
The Hon. Patty Hajdu	Minister of Diversity, Inclusion and Youth
The Hon. Bardish Chagger	Minister of Foreign Affairs
The Hon. François-Philippe Champagne	Minister of International Development
The Hon. Karina Gould	Minister of Families, Children and Social Development
The Hon. Ahmed Hussen	Minister of Natural Resources
The Hon. Seamus O'Regan	Leader of the Government in the House of Commons
The Hon. Pablo Rodriguez	Minister of Public Safety and Emergency Preparedness
The Hon. Bill Blair	Minister of Small Business, Export Promotion and International Trade
The Hon. Mary Ng	Minister of Labour
The Hon. Filomena Tassi	Minister of Environment and Climate Change
The Hon. Jonathan Wilkinson	Minister of Justice
The Hon. David Lametti	Attorney General of Canada
The Hon. Bernadette Jordan	Minister of Fisheries and Oceans and the Canadian Coast Guard
The Hon. Joyce Murray	Minister of Digital Government
The Hon. Anita Anand	Minister of Public Services and Procurement
The Hon. Mona Fortier	Minister of Middle-Class Prosperity
	Associate Minister of Finance
The Hon. Steven Guilbeault	Minister of Canadian Heritage
The Hon. Marco Mendicino	Minister of Immigration, Refugees and Citizenship
The Hon. Marc Miller	Minister of Indigenous Services
The Hon. Deb Schulte	Minister of Seniors
The Hon. Dan Vandal	Minister of Northern Affairs

SENATORS OF CANADA

ACCORDING TO SENIORITY

(July 1, 2020)

Senator	Designation	Post Office Address
The Honourable		
George J. Furey, <i>Speaker</i>	Newfoundland and Labrador	St. John's, Nfld. & Lab.
Jane Cordy	Nova Scotia	Dartmouth, N.S.
Mobina S. B. Jaffer	British Columbia	North Vancouver, B.C.
Pierrette Ringuette	New Brunswick	Edmundston, N.B.
Percy E. Downe	Charlottetown	Charlottetown, P.E.I.
Paul J. Massicotte	De Lanaudière	Mont-Saint-Hilaire, Que.
Terry M. Mercer	Northend Halifax	Caribou River, N.S.
Jim Munson	Ottawa/Rideau Canal	Ottawa, Ont.
Elaine McCoy	Alberta	Calgary, Alta.
Lillian Eva Dyck	Saskatchewan	Saskatoon, Sask.
Larry W. Campbell	British Columbia	Vancouver, B.C.
Dennis Dawson	Lauzon	Sainte-Foy, Que.
Sandra M. Lovelace Nicholas	New Brunswick	Tobique First Nations, N.B.
Stephen Greene	Halifax - The Citadel	Halifax, N.S.
Michael L. MacDonald	Cape Breton	Dartmouth, N.S.
Michael Duffy	Prince Edward Island	Cavendish, P.E.I.
Percy Mockler	New Brunswick	St. Leonard, N.B.
Pamela Wallin	Saskatchewan	Wadena, Sask.
Yonah Martin	British Columbia	Vancouver, B.C.
Patrick Brazeau	Repentigny	Maniwaki, Que.
Leo Housakos	Wellington	Laval, Que.
Donald Neil Plett	Landmark	Landmark, Man.
Linda Frum	Ontario	Toronto, Ont.
Claude Carignan, P.C.	Mille Isles	Saint-Eustache, Que.
Carolyn Stewart Olsen	New Brunswick	Sackville, N.B.
Dennis Glen Patterson	Nunavut	Iqaluit, Nunavut
Elizabeth Marshall	Newfoundland and Labrador	Paradise, Nfld. & Lab.
Pierre-Hugues Boisvenu	La Salle	Sherbrooke, Que.
Judith G. Seidman	De la Durantaye	Saint-Raphaël, Que.
Rose-May Poirier	New Brunswick—Saint-Louis-de-Kent	Saint-Louis-de-Kent, N.B.
Salma Ataullahjan	Ontario (Toronto)	Toronto, Ont.
Fabian Manning	Newfoundland and Labrador	St. Bride's, Nfld. & Lab.
Larry W. Smith	Saurel	Hudson, Que.
Josée Verner, P.C.	Montarville	Saint-Augustin-de-Desmaures, Que.
Norman E. Doyle	Newfoundland and Labrador	St. John's, Nfld. & Lab.
Jean-Guy Dagenais	Victoria	Blainville, Que.
Vernon White	Ontario	Ottawa, Ont.
Thanh Hai Ngo	Ontario	Orleans, Ont.
Diane Bellemare	Alma	Outremont, Que.
Douglas Black	Alberta	Canmore, Alta.
David M. Wells	Newfoundland and Labrador	St. John's, Nfld. & Lab.
Lynn Beyak	Ontario	Dryden, Ont.
Victor Oh	Mississauga	Mississauga, Ont.
Denise Batters	Saskatchewan	Regina, Sask.
Scott Tannas	Alberta	High River, Alta.
Peter Harder, P.C.	Ottawa	Manotick, Ont.
Raymonde Gagné	Manitoba	Winnipeg, Man.
Frances Lankin, P.C.	Ontario	Restoule, Ont.
Ratna Omidvar	Ontario	Toronto, Ont.
Chantal Petitclerc	Grandville	Montreal, Que.
Murray Sinclair	Manitoba	Winnipeg, Man.
Yuen Pau Woo	British Columbia	North Vancouver, B.C.
Patricia Bovey	Manitoba	Winnipeg, Man.
René Cormier	New Brunswick	Caraquet, N.B.
Nancy J. Hartling	New Brunswick	Riverview, N.B.
Kim Pate	Ontario	Ottawa, Ont.
Tony Dean	Ontario	Toronto, Ont.
Diane F. Griffin	Prince Edward Island	Stratford, P.E.I.
Wanda Elaine Thomas Bernard	Nova Scotia (East Preston)	East Preston, N.S.

Senator	Designation	Post Office Address
Sabi Marwah	Ontario	Toronto, Ont.
Howard Wetston	Ontario	Toronto, Ont.
Lucie Moncion	Ontario	North Bay, Ont.
Renée Dupuis	The Laurentides	Sainte-Pétronille, Que.
Marilou McPhedran	Manitoba	Winnipeg, Man.
Gwen Boniface	Ontario	Orillia, Ont.
Éric Forest	Gulf	Rimouski, Que.
Marc Gold	Stadacona	Westmount, Que.
Marie-Françoise Mégie	Rougemont	Montreal, Que.
Raymonde Saint-Germain	De la Vallière	Quebec City, Que.
Dan Christmas	Nova Scotia	Membertou, N.S.
Rosa Galvez	Bedford	Lévis, Que.
David Richards	New Brunswick	Fredericton, N.B.
Mary Coyle	Nova Scotia	Antigonish, N.S.
Mary Jane McCallum	Manitoba	Winnipeg, Man.
Robert Black	Ontario	Centre Wellington, Ont.
Marty Deacon	Waterloo Region	Waterloo, Ont.
Yvonne Boyer	Ontario	Merrickville-Wolford, Ont.
Mohamed-Iqbal Ravalia	Newfoundland and Labrador	Twillingate, Nfld. & Lab.
Pierre J. Dalphond	De Lorimier	Montreal, Que.
Donna Dasko	Ontario	Toronto, Ont.
Colin Deacon	Nova Scotia	Halifax, N.S.
Julie Miville-Dechêne	Inkerman	Mont-Royal, Que.
Bev Busson	British Columbia	North Okanagan Region, B.C.
Marty Klyne	Saskatchewan	White City, Sask.
Patti LaBoucane-Benson	Alberta	Spruce Grove, Alta.
Paula Simons	Alberta	Edmonton, Alta.
Peter M. Boehm	Ontario	Ottawa, Ont.
Josée Forest-Niesing	Ontario	Sudbury, Ont.
Brian Francis	Prince Edward Island	Rocky Point, P.E.I.
Margaret Dawn Anderson	Northwest Territories	Yellowknife, N.W.T.
Pat Duncan	Yukon	Whitehorse, Yukon
Rosemary Moodie	Ontario	Toronto, Ont.
Stan Kutcher	Nova Scotia	Halifax, N.S.
Tony Loffreda	Shawinigan	
Judith Keating	New Brunswick	Fredericton, N.B.
Brent Cotter	Saskatchewan	Saskatoon, Sask.

SENATORS OF CANADA

ALPHABETICAL LIST

(July 1, 2020)

Senator	Designation	Post Office Address	Political Affiliation
The Honourable			
Anderson, Margaret Dawn	Northwest Territories	Yellowknife, N.W.T.	Independent Senators Group
Ataullahjan, Salma	Ontario (Toronto)	Toronto, Ont.	Conservative Party of Canada
Batters, Denise	Saskatchewan	Regina, Sask.	Conservative Party of Canada
Bellemare, Diane	Alma	Outremont, Que.	Independent Senators Group
Bernard, Wanda Elaine Thomas	Nova Scotia (East Preston)	East Preston, N.S.	Progressive Senate Group
Beyak, Lynn	Ontario	Dryden, Ont.	Non-affiliated
Black, Douglas	Alberta	Canmore, Alta.	Canadian Senators Group
Black, Robert	Ontario	Centre Wellington, Ont.	Canadian Senators Group
Boehm, Peter M.	Ontario	Ottawa, Ont.	Independent Senators Group
Boisvenu, Pierre-Hugues	La Salle	Sherbrooke, Que.	Conservative Party of Canada
Boniface, Gwen	Ontario	Orillia, Ont.	Independent Senators Group
Bovey, Patricia	Manitoba	Winnipeg, Man.	Progressive Senate Group
Boyer, Yvonne	Ontario	Merrickville-Wolford, Ont.	Independent Senators Group
Brazeau, Patrick	Repentigny	Maniwaki, Que.	Independent Senators Group
Busson, Bev	British Columbia	North Okanagan Region, B.C.	Independent Senators Group
Campbell, Larry W.	British Columbia	Vancouver, B.C.	Canadian Senators Group
Carignan, Claude, P.C.	Mille Isles	Saint-Eustache, Que.	Conservative Party of Canada
Christmas, Dan	Nova Scotia	Membertou, N.S.	Independent Senators Group
Cordy, Jane	Nova Scotia	Dartmouth, N.S.	Progressive Senate Group
Cormier, René	New Brunswick	Caraquet, N.B.	Independent Senators Group
Cotter, Brent	Saskatchewan	Saskatoon, Sask.	Independent Senators Group
Coyle, Mary	Nova Scotia	Antigonish, N.S.	Independent Senators Group
Dagenais, Jean-Guy	Victoria	Blainville, Que.	Canadian Senators Group
Dalphond, Pierre J.	De Lorimier	Montreal, Que.	Progressive Senate Group
Dasko, Donna	Ontario	Toronto, Ont.	Independent Senators Group
Dawson, Dennis	Lauzon	Ste-Foy, Que.	Progressive Senate Group
Deacon, Colin	Nova Scotia	Halifax, N.S.	Independent Senators Group
Deacon, Marty	Waterloo Region	Waterloo, Ont.	Independent Senators Group
Dean, Tony	Ontario	Toronto, Ont.	Independent Senators Group
Downe, Percy E.	Charlottetown	Charlottetown, P.E.I.	Canadian Senators Group
Doyle, Norman E.	Newfoundland and Labrador	St. John's, Nfld. & Lab.	Conservative Party of Canada
Duffy, Michael	Prince Edward Island	Cavendish, P.E.I.	Independent Senators Group
Duncan, Pat	Yukon	Whitehorse, Yukon	Independent Senators Group
Dupuis, Renée	The Laurentides	Sainte-Pétronille, Que.	Independent Senators Group
Dyck, Lillian Eva	Saskatchewan	Saskatoon, Sask.	Progressive Senate Group
Forest, Éric	Gulf	Rimouski, Que.	Independent Senators Group
Forest-Niesing, Josée	Ontario	Sudbury, Ont.	Independent Senators Group
Francis, Brian	Prince Edward Island	Rocky Point, P.E.I.	Independent Senators Group
Frum, Linda	Ontario	Toronto, Ont.	Conservative Party of Canada
Furey, George J., <i>Speaker</i>	Newfoundland and Labrador	St. John's, Nfld. & Lab.	Non-affiliated
Gagné, Raymonde	Manitoba	Winnipeg, Man.	Non-affiliated
Galvez, Rosa	Bedford	Lévis, Que.	Independent Senators Group
Gold, Marc	Stadacona	Westmount, Que.	Non-affiliated
Greene, Stephen	Halifax - The Citadel	Halifax, N.S.	Canadian Senators Group
Griffin, Diane F.	Prince Edward Island	Stratford, P.E.I.	Canadian Senators Group
Harder, Peter, P.C.	Ottawa	Manotick, Ont.	Progressive Senate Group
Hartling, Nancy J.	New Brunswick	Riverview, N.B.	Independent Senators Group
Housakos, Leo	Wellington	Laval, Que.	Conservative Party of Canada
Jaffer, Mobina S. B.	British Columbia	North Vancouver, B.C.	Independent Senators Group
Keating, Judith	New Brunswick	Fredericton, N.B.	Independent Senators Group
Klyne, Marty	Saskatchewan	White City, Sask.	Independent Senators Group
Kutcher, Stan	Nova Scotia	Halifax, N.S.	Independent Senators Group
LaBoucane-Benson, Patti	Alberta	Spruce Grove, Alta.	Non-affiliated
Lankin, Frances	Ontario	Restoule, Ont.	Independent Senators Group
Loffreda, Tony	Shawinigan		Independent Senators Group
Lovelace Nicholas, Sandra M.	New Brunswick	Tobique First Nations, N.B.	Progressive Senate Group
MacDonald, Michael L.	Cape Breton	Dartmouth, N.S.	Conservative Party of Canada

Senator	Designation	Post Office Address	Political Affiliation
Manning, Fabian	Newfoundland and Labrador	St. Bride's, Nfld. & Lab.	Conservative Party of Canada
Marshall, Elizabeth	Newfoundland and Labrador	Paradise, Nfld. & Lab.	Conservative Party of Canada
Martin, Yonah	British Columbia	Vancouver, B.C.	Conservative Party of Canada
Marwah, Sabi	Ontario	Toronto, Ont.	Independent Senators Group
Massicotte, Paul J.	De Lanaudière	Mont-Saint-Hilaire, Que.	Independent Senators Group
McCallum, Mary Jane	Manitoba	Winnipeg, Man.	Independent Senators Group
McCoy, Elaine	Alberta	Calgary, Alta.	Canadian Senators Group
McPhedran, Marilou	Manitoba	Winnipeg, Man.	Independent Senators Group
Mégie, Marie-Françoise	Rougemont	Montreal, Que.	Independent Senators Group
Mercer, Terry M.	Northend Halifax	Caribou River, N.S.	Progressive Senate Group
Miville-Dechéne, Julie	Inkerman	Mont-Royal, Que.	Independent Senators Group
Mockler, Percy	New Brunswick	St. Leonard, N.B.	Conservative Party of Canada
Moncion, Lucie	Ontario	North Bay, Ont.	Independent Senators Group
Moodie, Rosemary	Ontario	Toronto, Ont.	Independent Senators Group
Munson, Jim	Ottawa/Rideau Canal	Ottawa, Ont.	Progressive Senate Group
Ngo, Thanh Hai	Ontario	Orleans, Ont.	Conservative Party of Canada
Oh, Victor	Mississauga	Mississauga, Ont.	Conservative Party of Canada
Omidvar, Ratna	Ontario	Toronto, Ont.	Independent Senators Group
Pate, Kim	Ontario	Ottawa, Ont.	Independent Senators Group
Patterson, Dennis Glen	Nunavut	Iqaluit, Nunavut	Conservative Party of Canada
Petitclerc, Chantal	Grandville	Montreal, Que.	Independent Senators Group
Plett, Donald Neil	Landmark	Landmark, Man.	Conservative Party of Canada
Poirier, Rose-May	New Brunswick—Saint-Louis-de-Kent	Saint-Louis-de-Kent, N.B.	Conservative Party of Canada
Ravalia, Mohamed-Iqbal	Newfoundland and Labrador	Twillingate, Nfld. & Lab.	Independent Senators Group
Richards, David	New Brunswick	Fredericton, N.B.	Canadian Senators Group
Ringuette, Pierrette	New Brunswick	Edmundston, N.B.	Independent Senators Group
Saint-Germain, Raymonde	De la Vallière	Quebec City, Que.	Independent Senators Group
Seidman, Judith G.	De la Durantaye	Saint-Raphaël, Que.	Conservative Party of Canada
Simons, Paula	Alberta	Edmonton, Alta.	Independent Senators Group
Sinclair, Murray	Manitoba	Winnipeg, Man.	Independent Senators Group
Smith, Larry W.	Saurel	Hudson, Que.	Conservative Party of Canada
Stewart Olsen, Carolyn	New Brunswick	Sackville, N.B.	Conservative Party of Canada
Tannas, Scott	Alberta	High River, Alta.	Canadian Senators Group
Verner, Josée, P.C.	Montarville	Saint-Augustin-de-Desmaures, Que.	Canadian Senators Group
Wallin, Pamela	Saskatchewan	Wadena, Sask.	Canadian Senators Group
Wells, David M.	Newfoundland and Labrador	St. John's, Nfld. & Lab.	Conservative Party of Canada
Wetston, Howard	Ontario	Toronto, Ont.	Independent Senators Group
White, Vernon	Ontario	Ottawa, Ont.	Canadian Senators Group
Woo, Yuen Pau	British Columbia	North Vancouver, B.C.	Independent Senators Group

SENATORS OF CANADA
BY PROVINCE AND TERRITORY
 (July 1, 2020)

ONTARIO—24

Senator	Designation	Post Office Address
The Honourable		
1 Jim Munson	Ottawa/Rideau Canal	Ottawa
2 Linda Frum	Ontario	Toronto
3 Salma Ataullahjan	Ontario (Toronto)	Toronto
4 Vernon White	Ontario	Ottawa
5 Thanh Hai Ngo	Ontario	Orleans
6 Lynn Beyak	Ontario	Dryden
7 Victor Oh	Mississauga	Mississauga
8 Peter Harder, P.C.	Ottawa	Manotick
9 Frances Lankin, P.C.	Ontario	Restoule
10 Ratna Omidvar	Ontario	Toronto
11 Kim Pate	Ontario	Ottawa
12 Tony Dean	Ontario	Toronto
13 Sabi Marwah	Ontario	Toronto
14 Howard Wetston	Ontario	Toronto
15 Lucie Moncion	Ontario	North Bay
16 Gwen Boniface	Ontario	Orillia
17 Robert Black	Ontario	Centre Wellington
18 Marty Deacon	Waterloo Region	Waterloo
19 Yvonne Boyer	Ontario	Merrickville-Wolford
20 Donna Dasko	Ontario	Toronto
21 Peter M. Boehm	Ontario	Ottawa
22 Josée Forest-Niesing	Ontario	Sudbury
23 Rosemary Moodie	Ontario	Toronto
24

SENATORS BY PROVINCE AND TERRITORY

QUEBEC—24

Senator	Designation	Post Office Address
The Honourable		
1 Paul J. Massicotte	De Lanaudière	Mont-Saint-Hilaire
2 Dennis Dawson	Lauzon	Ste-Foy
3 Patrick Brazeau	Repentigny	Maniwaki
4 Leo Housakos	Wellington	Laval
5 Claude Carignan, P.C.	Mille Îles	Saint-Eustache
6 Judith G. Seidman	De la Durantaye	Saint-Raphaël
7 Pierre-Hugues Boisvenu	La Salle	Sherbrooke
8 Larry W. Smith	Saurel	Hudson
9 Josée Verner, P.C.	Montarville	Saint-Augustin-de-Desmaures
10 Jean-Guy Dagenais	Victoria	Blainville
11 Diane Bellemare	Alma	Outremont
12 Chantal Petitclerc	Grandville	Montreal
13 Renée Dupuis	The Laurentides	Sainte-Pétronille
14 Éric Forest	Gulf	Rimouski
15 Marc Gold	Stadacona	Westmount
16 Marie-Françoise Mégie	Rougemont	Montreal
17 Raymonde Saint-Germain	De la Vallière	Quebec City
18 Rosa Galvez	Bedford	Lévis
19 Pierre J. Dalphond	De Lorimier	Montreal
20 Julie Miville-Dechéne	Inkerman	Mont-Royal
21 Tony Loffreda	Shawinegan	
22		
23		
24		

SENATORS BY PROVINCE—MARITIME DIVISION

NOVA SCOTIA—10

Senator	Designation	Post Office Address
The Honourable		
1 Jane Cordy	Nova Scotia	Dartmouth
2 Terry M. Mercer	Northend Halifax	Caribou River
3 Stephen Greene	Halifax - The Citadel	Halifax
4 Michael L. MacDonald	Cape Breton	Dartmouth
5 Wanda Elaine Thomas Bernard	Nova Scotia (East Preston)	East Preston
6 Dan Christmas	Nova Scotia	Membertou
7 Mary Coyle	Nova Scotia	Antigonish
8 Colin Deacon	Nova Scotia	Halifax
9 Stan Kutcher	Nova Scotia	Halifax
10		

NEW BRUNSWICK—10

Senator	Designation	Post Office Address
The Honourable		
1 Pierrette Ringuette	New Brunswick	Edmundston
2 Sandra M. Lovelace Nicholas	New Brunswick	Tobique First Nations
3 Percy Mockler	New Brunswick	St. Leonard
4 Carolyn Stewart Olsen	New Brunswick	Sackville
5 Rose-May Poirier	New Brunswick—Saint-Louis-de-Kent	Saint-Louis-de-Kent
6 René Cormier	New Brunswick	Caraquet
7 Nancy J. Hartling	New Brunswick	Riverview
8 David Richards	New Brunswick	Fredericton
9 Judith Keating	New Brunswick	Fredericton
10		

PRINCE EDWARD ISLAND—4

Senator	Designation	Post Office Address
The Honourable		
1 Percy E. Downe	Charlottetown	Charlottetown
2 Michael Duffy	Prince Edward Island	Cavendish
3 Diane F. Griffin	Prince Edward Island	Stratford
4 Brian Francis	Prince Edward Island	Rocky Point

SENATORS BY PROVINCE—WESTERN DIVISION

MANITOBA—6

Senator	Designation	Post Office Address
The Honourable		
1 Donald Neil Plett	Landmark	Landmark
2 Raymonde Gagné	Manitoba	Winnipeg
3 Murray Sinclair	Manitoba	Winnipeg
4 Patricia Bovey	Manitoba	Winnipeg
5 Marilou McPhedran	Manitoba	Winnipeg
6 Mary Jane McCallum	Manitoba	Winnipeg

BRITISH COLUMBIA—6

Senator	Designation	Post Office Address
The Honourable		
1 Mobina S. B. Jaffer	British Columbia	North Vancouver
2 Larry W. Campbell	British Columbia	Vancouver
3 Yonah Martin	British Columbia	Vancouver
4 Yuen Pau Woo	British Columbia	North Vancouver
5 Bev Busson	British Columbia	North Okanagan Region
6

SASKATCHEWAN—6

Senator	Designation	Post Office Address
The Honourable		
1 Lillian Eva Dyck	Saskatchewan	Saskatoon
2 Pamela Wallin	Saskatchewan	Wadena
3 Denise Batters	Saskatchewan	Regina
4 Marty Klyne	Saskatchewan	White City
5 Brent Cotter	Saskatchewan	Saskatoon
6

ALBERTA—6

Senator	Designation	Post Office Address
The Honourable		
1 Elaine McCoy	Alberta	Calgary
2 Douglas Black	Alberta	Canmore
3 Scott Tannas	Alberta	High River
4 Patti LaBoucane-Benson	Alberta	Spruce Grove
5 Paula Simons	Alberta	Edmonton
6

SENATORS BY PROVINCE AND TERRITORY

NEWFOUNDLAND AND LABRADOR—6

Senator	Designation	Post Office Address
The Honourable		
1 George J. Furey, <i>Speaker</i>	Newfoundland and Labrador	St. John's
2 Elizabeth Marshall	Newfoundland and Labrador	Paradise
3 Fabian Manning	Newfoundland and Labrador	St. Bride's
4 Norman E. Doyle	Newfoundland and Labrador	St. John's
5 David M. Wells	Newfoundland and Labrador	St. John's
6 Mohamed-Iqbal Ravalia	Newfoundland and Labrador	Twillingate

NORTHWEST TERRITORIES—1

Senator	Designation	Post Office Address
The Honourable		
1 Margaret Dawn Anderson	Northwest Territories	Yellowknife

NUNAVUT—1

Senator	Designation	Post Office Address
The Honourable		
1 Dennis Glen Patterson	Nunavut	Iqaluit

YUKON—1

Senator	Designation	Post Office Address
The Honourable		
1 Pat Duncan	Yukon	Whitehorse

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