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Thursday, November 9, 2023

The Honourable RAYMONDE GAGNÉ,  
Speaker

## CONTENTS

(Daily index of proceedings appears at back of this issue).

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## THE SENATE

Thursday, November 9, 2023

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

Prayers.

### SENATORS' STATEMENTS

#### REMEMBRANCE DAY

**Hon. Donald Neil Plett (Leader of the Opposition):** Honourable senators, I rise today in this chamber ahead of Remembrance Day to recognize the bravery, sacrifice and heroism of our veterans and those who are currently wearing the uniform with honour in defence of this great nation and the freedoms we all cherish so deeply.

My home province of Manitoba has provided some great heroes of both world wars, as has every other province from coast to coast to coast. Today, I want to acknowledge some of their contributions.

I will first mention Major William Barker from Dauphin, Manitoba, who served in World War I as a flying ace and in the Royal Flying Corps. As part of his distinguished service, he was credited for having provided air support to our troops at the Somme and destroying 52 enemy aircraft and nine enemy balloons. His contributions earned him a Military Cross with bar, a Distinguished Service Order and the Victoria Cross, presented to him by King George V.

Another great Manitoban and highly decorated war hero was Sergeant Tommy Prince from the Brokenhead Band at Scantbury, Manitoba. In World War II, Prince served in the Canadian First Special Service Force — a joint Canadian and American unit that became a versatile assault group with a reputation for specialized reconnaissance and raiding. Following his service in southern France, Sergeant Prince was summoned to Buckingham Palace, where King George VI decorated him with the Military Medal and — on behalf of the U.S. President — the Silver Star.

Colleagues, these two Manitobans served their country with the highest distinction. They have inspired other Canadians through their self-sacrifice.

We honour their service and that of so many others. Collectively, these Canadians have ensured that we can continue to live in peace and freedom.

In doing so, we must never forget what they themselves sacrificed. They have had experiences that changed them forever. Many have come home plagued by demons we cannot even imagine — and many never came home at all.

As Canadians, we must never forget what they sacrificed on a personal level.

We are also being increasingly reminded that the freedoms they fought for are facing new threats. We have a profound obligation not only to remember, but also to be ready to defend the freedoms that they won and secured for us. If we as parliamentarians value the serving men and women of today, then we have an obligation to ensure that we prepare and provide for them tools, training and support to protect them in the face of the terrible struggles they will have to endure.

To all of those in uniform in the service of Canada, who fought for a selfless cause on behalf of their country: We owe you our lives and our freedom. As a nation, we are eternally grateful and will always remember. We promise to do our utmost to remain vigilant.

May God bless all of them, and may God bless Canada.

#### INDIGENOUS VETERANS DAY AND REMEMBRANCE DAY

**Hon. Jane Cordy:** Honourable senators, I rise today to pay tribute to all those who have served in our Armed Forces, many of whom deployed around the world, never to return home; countless more returned home carrying with them the traumas of war.

I often think of my father, Private Lauchie MacKinnon, from Grand Mira, Cape Breton, and his experience of serving during World War II, when he was deployed, and fought, in Holland and Italy at the age of 19.

When we were children, my father never spoke to us about the horrors of war. Instead, he spoke to us about the other things he saw or did, like Canadian troops going to the Vatican for mass given by the Pope or being on leave in Edinburgh and going into a pub where he randomly met his cousin, who was also from Grand Mira.

My brother, Commander Charlie MacKinnon, also served in the Canadian Armed Forces. I have told the story before, but I remember when, as a member of the Canadian NATO Parliamentary Association, or CANA, I travelled to Kabul, Afghanistan, while my brother was stationed there.

During Veterans' Week and Remembrance Day, my father and brother are never far from my thoughts. I know that all of us here today have family or close friends who have served or continue to serve.

This year, Canada marks the seventy-fifth anniversary of United Nations peacekeeping efforts. Over those 75 years, Canadian military personnel, as well as members of our Royal Canadian Mounted Police forces, have been deployed to countries in turmoil all over the globe on multinational peace operations, defending democracy and standing up for security around the world.

As conflict around the world is on the rise and hitting closer to home every day, on this Remembrance Day, we honour the 125,000 military members who served or continue to serve on peace missions — as well as those Canadians who were killed while deployed. Many more returned home with physical and psychological trauma.

Yesterday, we marked Indigenous Veterans Day to honour the estimated 12,000 First Nations, Métis and Inuit soldiers who served alongside our allies, and we remember the nearly 500 who lost their lives defending our freedoms. As Senator Francis so poignantly expressed yesterday, these soldiers not only returned home with physical and psychological injuries, but also faced social injustices and continued policies of cultural discrimination. We must continue to do better in recognizing the contributions of First Nations, Métis and Inuit to Canada's Armed Forces.

Honourable senators, it is important for all Canadians to take a moment this week to reflect on the contributions of our Armed Forces and remember all those who answered the call, defending our democracy and protecting the vulnerable around the world.

Thank you.

#### VISITOR IN THE GALLERY

**The Hon. the Speaker:** Honourable senators, I wish to draw your attention to the presence in the gallery of Jasper, Hanna, Noa and Lucille, Senator Boyer's grandchildren, as well as Norman Fleury, a Michif interpreter.

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

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

#### BUSINESS OF THE SENATE

**The Hon. the Speaker:** Honourable senators, as is allowed by our practice, Senator Boyer will speak in Michif during our proceedings today. Senators may listen to the simultaneous interpretation on the English or French channel.

#### PRESERVATION AND REVIVAL OF INDIGENOUS LANGUAGES

**Hon. Yvonne Boyer:** Honourable senators, today I will be delivering my statement in Michif, the language that the Métis grandfathers and grandmothers spoke. Elder Norman Fleury helped me write this speech; he is my teacher and will be interpreting for you. As I stand here in this chamber, there are children across the homeland who are learning the Michif language and culture in schools. This gives me hope that our language will survive through the generations, for its protection and revitalization must come through the young people. I speak Michif today to honour my kin and their resilience, and to show it is a living language. This statement is for the ancestors and our future, the children . . .

[*Editor's Note: Senator Boyer spoke in Michif — interpretation follows.*]

[ Senator Cordy ]

Honourable senators, I am Yvonne Boyer. I am a member of the Métis Nation. My roots are in Saskatchewan and the Red River in Manitoba. I am the great-granddaughter of Narcisse Boyer, who was an American Michif from the Turtle Mountain Chippewa Band in North Dakota. And I am related to Alexis L'Esperance, who was the leader of the La Loche Boat Brigade, which were military boatmen who supported Louis Riel during the Red River Resistance of 1869-70. I also have family in Northern Ireland in the province of Ulster.

• (1410)

This language that I am speaking is called Michif. The Michif language has been around for a long time. From us — we made it ourselves. It is our language. Our old people are working hard so that our language doesn't die. I am trying to speak my language. If we lose our language, we will lose who we are and our nation.

Today, as I speak my Michif language with all of you, I would like to say who we are as Michifs, and also that it is important that we keep what was given to us by the Creator and we don't lose our way of life.

It's for our children and future generations. I say thank you to Norman Fleury for the Michif language.

[*English*]

I urge everyone here to support the preservation and revival of Michif and other Indigenous languages. It's crucial for us to embrace our culture, to empower our communities and to ensure that the Michif voice, once quieted, echoes through generations to come.

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

#### VISITORS IN THE GALLERY

**The Hon. the Speaker:** Honourable senators, I wish to draw your attention to the presence in the gallery of Commanding Officer, Lieutenant-Colonel Blais, and Regimental Sergeant Major, Chief Warrant Officer Larivière. They are accompanied by other serving members and veterans of the Canadian Armed Forces. They are the guests of the Honourable Senator Patterson (*Ontario*).

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

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

#### REMEMBRANCE DAY

**Hon. Rebecca Patterson:** Honourable senators, during this week of remembrance, both conflict and geopolitical instability place the peace and security that we enjoy, as Canadians, increasingly under pressure.

Like countless conflicts in the past, Canadian women and men have always answered the call to defend Canada and our values — at home and abroad. In April, I spoke to you about the 38th Ottawa Overseas Battalion and the actions of Captain Thain MacDowell, who earned the Victoria Cross at Vimy Ridge.

In June, I relayed to you that Francis Godon of the Royal Winnipeg Rifles described how landing at Juno Beach on D-Day was like wading through ketchup because the sand was so thick and red with the blood of the fallen.

It is too easy to think of conflict as something in the past. Canadian schoolchildren learn about Vimy and Juno as a matter of study, and they wear poppies in November. They might even hear stories of modern veterans like Captain Ashley Collette, an infantry officer with the Royal Canadian Regiment, who received the Medal of Military Valour for her leadership under fire and her performance in combat. That was critical to defeating the enemy attempts to reoccupy a key village in Afghanistan.

But how will many of them learn about the other conflicts that Canadians have engaged in since the Second World War, such as the Battle of Medak Pocket? This battle saw our soldiers from the Princess Patricia's Canadian Light Infantry — 30 years ago in September 1993 — engage in an eight-day battle with Croatian troops.

Speaking about the conflict in the Balkans, one soldier who was there described their experience as follows:

One of the lessons is that civilization is a very thin veneer that can be readily ripped away and in this case, we saw neighbours killing neighbours. It was very, very sad to see.

But it speaks to the naivety that we have here in our country. We should be thankful for what we have. Canada is so secure and insular.

Colleagues, Canada's security comes at a price. That price is paid directly by those who serve and have served. It also has a long-lasting impact on their families, loved ones and the communities that support them. All of us need to remember that.

Senators, this is my first Remembrance Day since my retirement from the Canadian Armed Forces. I invite all of you to reflect upon the moral imperative of the decisions that we, as senators, make about security and defence — which is paid for in blood by those Canadians who serve, and have served, this great country.

As we approach November 11, I will reflect upon those who served and came home — many with permanent wounds of service, both visible and invisible. I will remember our fallen who did not come home. I will never forget. We must never forget.

[*Translation*]

We will remember them. Thank you.

[*English*]

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

**Hon. Yonah Martin (Deputy Leader of the Opposition):** Honourable senators, Veterans' Week — leading up to Remembrance Day — is an important week for all Canadians. On November 3, Veterans' Week began with the wreath-laying ceremony in the Senate Chamber. A solemn candlelit tribute to veterans was held at the Canadian War Museum on November 6. Ceremonies and events took place for National Indigenous Veterans Day on November 8. Over the course of Veterans' Week, No Stone Left Alone ceremonies have taken place in cemeteries across Canada, where students and participants laid poppies on the graves of veterans.

This year — 2023 — also marks the seventy-fifth anniversary of United Nations peacekeeping, as well as the seventieth anniversary of the Korean War armistice. On Remembrance Day, we gather to pay tribute to the brave men and women who have served our great nation, and to honour the memory of those who made the ultimate sacrifice. It is a day when we remember the profound debt of gratitude we owe to all of our veterans.

The Korean War is Canada's third-bloodiest war. More than 26,000 Canadians served in Korea between 1950 and 1953, and more than 7,000 served in peacekeeping duties after the signing of the armistice. Those courageous men and women fought in harsh conditions — in a faraway land across an ocean — to protect the people of Korea from communist tyranny. They faced formidable challenges, and endured harsh winters, sweltering summers and the grim realities of war.

The battles they fought, like the Battle of Hill 355 and the Battle of Kapyong, stand as testaments to their unwavering determination and the indomitable spirit of our Armed Forces.

But it is not just their physical battles that we remember today — it is the emotional and psychological scars that many brought back with them. In the face of the horrors of war, they displayed remarkable resilience, and today, we remember those veterans who might still bear the invisible wounds of conflict.

Through their sacrifices, our Korean War veterans helped shape a world where freedom and democracy triumphed over tyranny and oppression. Their commitment to defending the principles we hold dear has left a legacy of freedom and peace that we continue to cherish today.

As we gather in this chamber to honour all of our veterans — past and present — we must also acknowledge the importance of supporting our veterans, not just on Remembrance Day, but every day. Let us be grateful for their service, and the service of those who — today — don Canada's uniform. Let us commit to being there for them when they need care, understanding and support. On this Remembrance Day, let us pay tribute to them by ensuring that their legacies endure, and by promising to uphold the ideals they fought so valiantly to protect. We will remember them.

[*Translation*]

We will remember them.

[*Editor's Note: Senator Martin spoke in Korean.*]

[*English*]

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

#### VISITOR IN THE GALLERY

**The Hon. the Speaker:** Honourable senators, I wish to draw your attention to the presence in the gallery of Glen McCallum, President of the Métis Nation of Saskatchewan. He is the guest of the Honourable Senator McCallum.

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

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

• (1420)

#### INDIGENOUS VETERANS DAY AND REMEMBRANCE DAY

**Hon. Bev Busson:** Honourable senators, I too am honoured to rise today to remember the Canadians who so selflessly have given their lives while serving our country and to pay tribute to our veterans and current members of the Canadian Armed Forces.

Every year in November, we come together here in the Senate, with a poppy on our lapel and pride in our hearts, to show our respect and to honour those who have served and sacrificed so much to safeguard our safety and security.

Yesterday, November 8, was National Indigenous Veterans Day, a day of recognition for the military service and sacrifices of our First Nations, Inuit and Métis people who served in Canada's wars and whose sacrifices have, unfortunately, not been recognized until recently.

This Saturday, November 11, we honour the sacrifices and dedication of all Canada's veterans to ensure their legacies are kept alive in the minds and the hearts of each Canadian by taking a moment to remember.

Canada exists today because, from 1914 to 1918, more than 650,000 Canadians volunteered to serve knowing full well that crossing the Atlantic could mean they were never coming home. For more than 66,000, this nightmare became a reality.

Between 1939 and 1945, six long and grueling years, our people would again answer the call, including my mother and father. This time, they helped defeat the regime in Europe, which tried so desperately to rule the world with hate and tyranny.

Canadians also fought valiantly for peace and democracy in the Korean War and later in the Middle East and Afghanistan. Both our Canadian Armed Forces and the RCMP have been

instrumental in maintaining order and security as peacekeepers in countries where conflict has raged. They have also been here for us at home, going to all parts of the country to respond to natural disasters and emergencies that require their immediate intervention.

Now, as we witness the war in Ukraine and the war in Gaza, it is even more important to cherish our freedom and to take the time to recognize and contemplate the cost of that privilege. To the families of our fallen, to our veterans and to the current members of our Armed Forces, you are in our minds and in our hearts, remembered forever by a grateful nation that will never let the memory of your dedication or sacrifice fade.

On behalf of the Senate of Canada and all Canadians, please accept our profound gratitude for your service and your sacrifice. Lest we forget.

#### VISITOR IN THE GALLERY

**The Hon. the Speaker:** Honourable senators, I wish to draw your attention to the presence in the gallery of Sarah Worthman, researcher, writer and queer heritage advocate. She is the guest of the Honourable Senator Cormier.

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

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

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## ROUTINE PROCEEDINGS

### THE ESTIMATES, 2023-24

#### SUPPLEMENTARY ESTIMATES (B) TABLED

**Hon. Patti LaBoucane-Benson (Legislative Deputy to the Government Representative in the Senate):** Honourable senators, I have the honour to table, in both official languages, the report of the Office of the Parliamentary Budget Officer entitled *Supplementary Estimates (B) 2023-24*, pursuant to the *Parliament of Canada Act*, R.S.C. 1985, c. P-1, sbs. 79.2(2).

#### TREASURY BOARD

#### 2022-23 DEPARTMENTAL RESULTS REPORTS TABLED

**Hon. Patti LaBoucane-Benson (Legislative Deputy to the Government Representative in the Senate):** Honourable senators, I have the honour to table, in both official languages, the Departmental Results Reports for the fiscal year ended March 31, 2023.

[ Senator Martin ]

**THE ESTIMATES, 2023-24**NOTICE OF MOTION TO AUTHORIZE NATIONAL FINANCE  
COMMITTEE TO STUDY SUPPLEMENTARY  
ESTIMATES (B)

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

That the Standing Senate Committee on National Finance be authorized to examine and report upon the expenditures set out in the Supplementary Estimates (B) for the fiscal year ending March 31, 2024; and

That, for the purpose of this study, the committee have the power to meet, even though the Senate may then be sitting or adjourned, and that rules 12-18(1) and 12-18(2) be suspended in relation thereto.

**INDIGENOUS PEOPLES**NOTICE OF MOTION TO AUTHORIZE COMMITTEE TO STUDY  
FEDERAL SPECIFIC CLAIMS POLICY AND PROCESS

**Hon. Brian Francis:** Honourable senators, I give notice that, at the next sitting of the Senate, I will move:

That the Standing Senate Committee on Indigenous Peoples be authorized to examine and report on the federal specific claims policy and process including, but not limited to:

- (a) the research and development of specific claims;
- (b) the settlement of specific claims including compensation and availability of mediation;

That the committee report to the Senate no later than October 30, 2025;

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

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

NOTICE OF MOTION TO AUTHORIZE COMMITTEE TO STUDY THE  
IMPLEMENTATION OF THE UNITED NATIONS DECLARATION ON  
THE RIGHTS OF INDIGENOUS PEOPLES ACT, 2021

**Hon. Brian Francis:** Honourable senators, I give notice that, at the next sitting of the Senate, I will move:

That the Standing Senate Committee on Indigenous Peoples be authorized to examine and report on the implementation of the *United Nations Declaration on the*

*Rights of Indigenous Peoples Act, 2021* by Canada and First Nations, Inuit and Metis peoples, including, but not limited to any of the priorities raised within the Government of Canada's *United Nations Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples Act Action Plan, 2023*;

That the committee report to the Senate no later than October 30, 2025;

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

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

**QUESTION PERIOD****CANADIAN HERITAGE**

## REMEMBRANCE DAY

**Hon. Donald Neil Plett (Leader of the Opposition):** Senator Gold, I recently asked you about the NDP-Liberal government's new directive placing restrictions on public prayers at Remembrance Day ceremonies. After considerable backlash, the Chaplain General has reportedly clarified:

In light of questions that have been raised concerning the Directive, any chaplain who participates in a Remembrance Day ceremony this year can propose a spiritual reflection or opt for the practice of recent years, which included the recitation of a preamble.

Leader, "the practice of recent years" and "preamble" are another way of saying "prayers." I also note that this so-called clarification refers to Remembrance Day "this year." What about next year and every year after that? What happens, leader?

**Hon. Marc Gold (Government Representative in the Senate):** Thank you, senator, for clarifying. You have actually confirmed the answer that I gave on a number of occasions. The directive was never to ban prayer, it was simply to encourage the time spent in ways that are inclusive of the diversity, religious and otherwise, of all those who will be participating. The clarification makes that clear. To your question, I believe the general directive will apply generally.

**Senator Plett:** The Chaplain General also reportedly said that ". . . a committee will be formed to review the new directive . . ." The Trudeau government wouldn't be forced to backtrack and promise a committee review if they did nothing wrong, would they? They clearly have no moral compass.

Leader, will you offer an apology for your response to Senator MacDonald on October 19, when you accused him of misleading in this chamber? Also, who gets to sit on this committee and who will appoint them?

**Senator Gold:** Thank you for your questions. I did not mislead the committee in my answer previous to your question nor am I misleading anyone now, and no, I don't have an apology to offer at this juncture.

## PUBLIC SERVICES AND PROCUREMENT

### PROCUREMENT PROCESS

**Hon. Leo Housakos:** Senator Gold, we know that Justin Trudeau is not worth the cost but we also see that he has a hard time with transparency and accountability.

• (1430)

On Tuesday, the Canada Border Services Agency, or CBSA, announced the suspension of contracts with three companies caught up in the Royal Canadian Mounted Police, or RCMP, investigation of "ArriveScam." First, why only the CBSA? These companies have several contracts with many Trudeau departments at all levels of government. Second, why was it only done now? Why not when the RCMP investigation began? Why not when the whistle-blowers, more than two years ago, brought this information to public light?

Last week, when Minister Blair was before this committee, he promised to get back to us in regards to Dalian contracts in his very own department. Why does it take days and weeks to get simple information from this government? Are you able to provide this chamber information in regard to whether the Department of National Defence, or DND, and Minister Blair's suspending of its contracts with Dalian, CORDEX and GC Strategies will occur? It's a simple yes or no. When will we cancel the contracts with these companies?

**Hon. Marc Gold (Government Representative in the Senate):** Thank you for your question. The minister made an undertaking to this chamber, and I have every confidence that he will honour that.

As I said on many occasions, honourable senators, any misconduct in relation to the procurement process is unacceptable. That is why the RCMP is investigating. That is why the contracts have been suspended. Until the results of those investigations are complete and made public, no further comment is forthcoming.

**Senator Housakos:** You can avoid some RCMP investigations if your government were forthcoming with transparent information.

During testimony in the House of Commons last week, we heard that the order to go with GC Strategies was given from above. We also heard that the person who carried the water for the government and gave this order got a promotion without any public tender or any public or competitive process.

My question is very simple: Did this promotion happen because this person helped Liberal insiders line their pockets? At the end of the day, why should decent, law-abiding citizens always get caught up in Liberal scams?

**Senator Gold:** These are allegations and are not substantiated. For whatever reasons this promotion was given, I'm sure it was for similar reasons that the previous government gave promotions to that very same person on a number of occasions.

## IMMIGRATION, REFUGEES AND CITIZENSHIP

### IMMIGRATION LEVELS

**Hon. Donna Dasko:** My question is directed to Senator Gold. As you may know, Canadians hold the most positive views towards immigration of any country in the world. However, a recent survey conducted by the Environics Institute in September shows:

... a significant jump in the proportion of Canadians who believe the country accepts too many immigrants, marking a dramatic reversal from a year ago when public support for immigration numbers stood at an all-time high . . .

One year ago, attitudes were more positive than they had ever been. Let's be clear, this is not about where immigrants are coming from, who they are or how they might contribute, but about the numbers that are coming.

Senator Gold, is this shift in opinion a reflection on immigration policy or is it, as is sometimes said, a failure to communicate adequately to Canadians the benefits of immigration?

**Hon. Marc Gold (Government Representative in the Senate):** Thank you for your question. It is the position of this government that continued immigration is key to growing our economy and strengthening our communities. The government's position on immigration is clear. It seeks to ensure that immigration continues to grow our economy while at the same time balancing the pressures that growing immigration imposes on our housing, infrastructure and essential services.

I have been assured that the government will continue to support and embrace newcomers and ensure that they have the supports they need to integrate into our communities and are supported fully in their new lives here in Canada.

**Senator Dasko:** Senator, how can the government ensure that this country remains the most welcoming country in the world? Thank you.

**Senator Gold:** The government and Canadians will continue in the spirit and practice of welcoming newcomers into our communities. The government's policies on immigration reflect that policy and the aspiration that I believe we all share as Canadians.



## HEALTH

### LONG-TERM CARE SYSTEM

**Hon. Iris G. Petten:** My question is for the Leader of the Government in the Senate. I recently met with the Canadian Association for Long Term Care which brought up the importance of improving data collection in long-term care.

Senator Gold, will the government commit to two vital initiatives: one, prioritizing the funding of IT systems critical for data collection; and two, devising, delivering and financing a nationwide health workforce data strategy that encompasses the long-term care sector?

**Hon. Marc Gold (Government Representative in the Senate):** Thank you for the question. The government has been very clear that every senior in Canada deserves to live in dignity, safety and comfort regardless of where they live.

As senators know, long-term care is a matter regulated by provincial and territorial governments. However, the federal government is developing a safe long-term care act, and that act is being informed by public consultations and the feedback from provincial and territorial partners, stakeholders, experts and Canadians.

**Senator Petten:** Senator Gold, only two thirds of long-term care homes use the interRAI, the leading resident assessment tool connected directly to the Canadian Institute for Health Information. Will the government commit to dedicating resources to facilitate the usage of the long-term care facility interRAI tool by every Canadian long-term care home?

**Senator Gold:** Thank you, senator. The government works closely with its provincial and territorial counterparts — and Indigenous communities and leadership — with regard to health. Again, the role that the federal government has in this is to provide funding. It is the provinces who have to prioritize in the best interests of their own citizens and take into account their own best judgment. Lots of money is flowing to the provinces and will continue to do so to support Canadians.

## FINANCE

### OPEN BANKING

**Hon. Colin Deacon:** My question is for the Government Representative in the Senate. Senator Gold, last week, you kindly committed to follow up with the Minister of Finance and Deputy Prime Minister about open banking. Could you also ask her about marginalized and young Canadians who wonder if they will ever own a home? Open banking would give these Canadians access to convenient and safe tools to build credit score, better manage their cash flow, qualify for a mortgage on better terms and more easily compare offers across mortgage lenders.

Currently, banks monopolize the use of their customer data. Citizens in all other G7 countries have the right to securely use and access their financial data for their benefit rather than the bank's.

On behalf of those Canadians who do not currently have the financial ability to purchase a home, when will they get access to the many digital tools and competitive offerings that open banking will provide?

**Hon. Marc Gold (Government Representative in the Senate):** Thank you for raising this issue. Canadians deserve a durable financial sector that is globally competitive and also provides them with the tools that they need to navigate in this world.

As the financial sector becomes more digitized, we would all agree that standards are necessary, and more appropriately, the standards must be modernized to ensure that Canada continues to have a stable and secure financial sector, but, at the same time, that Canadians have confidence that the financial sector operates with the highest regard for both privacy and security.

I have been informed that the Department of Finance is continuing to work on developing the next steps and moving forward with open banking.

**Senator C. Deacon:** Thank you, Senator Gold. Maybe confidence can be gained from the fact that the *Globe and Mail* editorial board recently endorsed the implementation of open banking, citing that pro-consumer reforms are the key to lowering prices and fees for Canadians. Thanks to the thorough and robust consultations that Finance Canada did, all that remains is political will.

Hopefully, we can find that an announcement is forthcoming. I look forward to consumer rights being enhanced and universal access to this internationally acclaimed regulatory change will be made. Thank you.

**Senator Gold:** I will certainly transmit those concerns and the *Globe and Mail* article to the attention of the minister.

## HEALTH

### CANADIAN DENTAL CARE PLAN

**Hon. Jane Cordy:** Senator Gold, I want to follow up on a question that I asked October 4 on behalf of Cliff Williams, a Nova Scotia senior who is relying on the new Canadian Dental Care Plan to access dental services.

As I stated in my last question, one third of Canadians do not have dental insurance, and one in five avoid dental services because the price is prohibitive. We know that dental care is health care. I applaud the government for its commitment to providing financial assistance to those Canadians who face barriers in accessing dental services by bringing forward the new dental care plan.

• (1440)

A government media release from March 31 — from which you read your answer to my question on October 4 — simply says that by the end of 2023, the Canadian Dental Care Plan will become available to uninsured Canadians under 18, persons with disabilities and seniors with an annual family income of less than \$90,000.

Senator Gold, Mr. Williams' question is a simple one: When will the benefits be available to eligible seniors? As there are only a few weeks until the end of 2023, is the government still guaranteeing that the benefits will be available before the end of the year?

**Hon. Marc Gold (Government Representative in the Senate):** Thank you for your question and for your continued advocacy on this important issue. The government is still of the view that — as you mentioned — the Canadian Dental Care Plan is expected to roll out for those categories of eligible Canadians that you mentioned.

I have been informed that by 2025, the Canadian Dental Care Plan will be fully implemented to cover all who are eligible. Once fully implemented, the Canadian Dental Care Plan will support up to 9 million uninsured Canadians.

I'm told that there will be more information forthcoming and shared in the coming weeks. Given the scale and scope of this important program, the government is taking the time necessary to finalize all elements of the plan so that it is communicated clearly to Canadians.

**Senator Cordy:** Thank you for that, Senator Gold.

My next question follows up on what you said. Will you reach out to the minister and report back to the Senate with an update and updated information for seniors? Then, when I or other senators get phone calls, we can give them some updated information, perhaps with some goalposts as to when certain things could be happening. That would be helpful for us.

**Senator Gold:** Thank you. I will certainly communicate to the minister. Again, I repeat: I have been advised that more information will be forthcoming in the weeks to come. We look forward to that.

[*Translation*]

## PUBLIC SAFETY

### ROYAL CANADIAN MOUNTED POLICE

**Hon. Pierre-Hugues Boisvenu:** Senator Gold, my question is obviously for you.

A recent damning report by the National Security and Intelligence Committee of Parliamentarians reveals the alarming state of federal policing. According to the report, systemic weaknesses and poor resource management are undermining its ability to effectively protect Canadians against growing threats like violent extremism and cybercrime.

[ Senator Cordy ]

At a time when Canada is likely to be the target of terrorist threats, the Royal Canadian Mounted Police, or RCMP, appears to be bogged down by internal challenges. Governance was described as weak, and resources appear to be poorly distributed, with local police forces absorbing most of the budget to the detriment of crucial federal operations.

In this context, how does your government justify such turmoil in our national police force, a situation that undermines national interests? What immediate action does your government plan to take to rectify this situation in order to ensure that the RCMP is better equipped to deal with current and future threats to Canadian security?

**Hon. Marc Gold (Government Representative in the Senate):** Thank you, Senator Boisvenu, for raising this important issue concerning the scope of the RCMP's responsibilities.

The National Security and Intelligence Committee of Parliamentarians did indeed just publish a report that points to and sheds light on the following issue: How can we ensure that the RCMP can continue to protect Canadians from increasingly serious foreign — and perhaps even domestic — threats, while serving the public in several provinces and territories, the way that the Sûreté du Québec does in Quebec?

This is an important question being studied within the RCMP in an effort to maximize its effectiveness and meet the needs and desire of the provinces and territories to have better control over their police forces.

**Senator Boisvenu:** Senator Gold, this scathing report on dysfunction within the RCMP, which comes on the heels of an equally scathing report on dysfunction within the Canadian Armed Forces, points to glaring shortcomings with respect to national security.

This report is an indictment of the Trudeau government's management. When will the government take this seriously and recognize that the RCMP and the Canadian Armed Forces are in urgent need of in-depth reform?

**Senator Gold:** The Government of Canada is taking the reforms needed within both of these important entities very seriously. That's why the reports to the government are being taken seriously. In fact, many of the recommendations in those reports have been accepted already.

[*English*]

## ENVIRONMENT AND CLIMATE CHANGE

### CARBON TAX

**Hon. Denise Batters:** Senator Gold, the Trudeau government has repeatedly claimed that their punishing carbon tax scheme aims to encourage Canadians to use more efficient sources of energy. We in Saskatchewan have been doing that for decades. In the early 1980s, Progressive Conservative premier Grant Devine changed our province's heat source from heating oil to natural gas at a then cost of about \$150 million — a huge investment for

our small province. Now only about 0.3% of Saskatchewan homes still heat with oil. That is roughly equivalent to the number of Liberals we elect — net zero.

The Trudeau government's supposedly national carbon tax carve-out applies only to homes heated with oil, which creates much more pollution than natural gas. Why is your government discriminating against the Saskatchewan people when we implemented cleaner energy 40 years ago?

**Hon. Marc Gold (Government Representative in the Senate):** Thank you, Senator Batters. You have made me nostalgic for the good old days when there was a Progressive Conservative Party. But I digress.

Kudos to any government who took action and takes action to help its citizens transition to a cleaner, more sustainable economy, whether it is provincial, territorial, Indigenous or federal.

The fact remains that what you have termed the “carbon tax” — the price on pollution — continues to be and continues to be considered to be the most effective market-driven tool to create incentives for businesses and Canadians to make the change to a cleaner, more sustainable form of energy. It continues to be the centrepiece of this government's environmental policy.

**Senator Batters:** Justin Trudeau's Minister of Rural Economic Development said that if the Prairies also want the carbon tax carve-out, they should elect more Liberals. Thanks, but no. This sure does not say much for Ralph Goodale's years at the Trudeau cabinet table when the carbon tax was created. Regional discrimination is no way to run a country. When will this Trudeau government cut the hot air and axe this unfair tax on home heating for all Canadians?

**Senator Gold:** It is not the intention of this government to implement that which you suggest. The government continues to believe that maintaining the price on pollution on a national basis remains the most effective way forward to combat climate change.

## GLOBAL AFFAIRS

### HUMANITARIAN AID

**Hon. Leo Housakos:** Senator Gold, Canada is providing financial aid to Gaza through a series of what the Trudeau government calls “trusted partners.” These are the same partners who operated in Gaza for years when Canadian aid ended up in the pockets of Hamas operatives. They include World Vision, whose manager of Gaza operations was convicted of funnelling millions of dollars of aid money and resources to Hamas. Yet here we are again sending Canadian financial aid — taxpayers' money — to World Vision and other organizations.

My question is this: What measures have been put into place by this government to make sure that when Canadians' hard-earned taxpayer money is sent to provide aid in Gaza or other areas of the world, that money doesn't end up in the pockets of terrorist organizations like Hamas?

**Hon. Marc Gold (Government Representative in the Senate):** It is my understanding, senator, that the Canadian aid, which is designed to assist the people in Gaza, is directed to organizations that are monitored and audited — that are monitored; I don't want to use a technical term misleadingly — and that measures are in place to ensure, to the best of the government's ability, that the funds are not diverted.

Hamas is a terrorist organization. It is a worldwide sponsor of terrorism. Its barbarity was celebrated by Hamas to the repulsion of all decent human beings. Canada provides aid to the citizens of Gaza who themselves are victims — and in many ways hostages — of this terrorist organization, and will continue to do so in pursuit of its humanitarian principles.

**Senator Housakos:** The reason Canadian dollars end up in the hands of terrorists more often than not — and have in the past — is because when our auditors audit the trusted partners, as we call them, they can only audit so far up until that partner subcontracts the work to another entity, at which point the auditors cannot carry out their work.

• (1450)

Everyone knows this. The government knows this. Has the government taken steps in order to put an end to this practice? When we go through these trusted partners, do we insist that they execute the work and not subcontract the work, which leads to Canadian dollars going into the hands of terrorists like Hamas?

**Senator Gold:** I have been advised that the government takes all appropriate and possible measures to ensure that the aid reaches those whom it is designed and intended to assist: civilians in Gaza or, indeed, elsewhere in the world where many citizens are subject to non-democratic — sometimes autocratic — governments.

### SHARING OF INTELLIGENCE INFORMATION

**Hon. Donald Neil Plett (Leader of the Opposition):** Senator Gold, Conservative MP Michael Chong recently pointed out that the U.K. government's advice regarding travel to our country states, “Terrorists are likely to try to carry out attacks in Canada.” This advice appears to have been updated on November 3.

However, Canada's official National Terrorism Threat Level is “Medium,” meaning that a violent act of terrorism could occur, and has been at this level since October 2014.

Leader, these are two very different assessments. Does our Five Eyes partner know something that Canadians are not being told?

**Hon. Marc Gold (Government Representative in the Senate):** Senator, I can't comment on how other countries make their decisions on travel advisories. I can say with confidence that work is being done daily in Canada to assess the level of risk to which Canadians are exposed. In that regard, the work that our institutions do to protect us is also informed by the deep and close relationships that we have with our Five Eyes partners and other democratic allies.

Our law enforcement and security services are monitoring all potential threats, and have robust measures in place to protect Canadians.

**Senator Plett:** The Leader of the Conservative Party of Canada, Pierre Poilievre, asked the Prime Minister to explain this discrepancy three times during yesterday's Question Period in the House of Commons. He also can't tell us anything; it seems like you and him are alike there. The Prime Minister did not come close to answering, which is, sadly, what Canadians have come to expect from him, Senator Gold.

Can you explain the discrepancy here, leader? Are the U.K. and Canadian governments not sharing intelligence anymore?

**Senator Gold:** Canada works closely with the U.K. and other Five Eyes partners, and we share intelligence and work collaboratively to defend our citizens.

It is obvious to all parliamentarians that neither the Prime Minister nor the Government Representative in the Senate is going to be disclosing what intelligence information is shared between countries, including the extent of it or the nature of it.

**Senator Plett:** What is there that you can share — the time of day?

## VETERANS AFFAIRS

### NATIONAL MONUMENT TO CANADA'S MISSION IN AFGHANISTAN

**Hon. Yonah Martin (Deputy Leader of the Opposition):** Government leader, although you claimed that your government has not mismanaged the creation of the National Monument to Canada's Mission in Afghanistan, there are many who would disagree.

Former Supreme Court Justice Louise Arbour gave an interview on Monday in which she said the Trudeau government chose to "cheat" the winning design team by ignoring their own rules in awarding the design contract to another team. Justice Arbour served as an adviser to the team chosen by a jury.

Leader, I hope you would agree with me that a former Supreme Court Justice using the word "cheat" to describe your government's actions should not be taken lightly. Who made the decision to overturn the jury's decision, and did that directive come from the Office of the Prime Minister?

**Hon. Marc Gold (Government Representative in the Senate):** I'm not sure that there is anybody in this chamber who has any greater respect for former Justice Louise Arbour than me. We were colleagues and friends, and our relationship goes back half a lifetime.

However, as I have said in this chamber on many occasions in response to this question, the design that was chosen — notwithstanding the recommendation of the jury — was the one that the veterans and their families preferred and felt better honoured their role and, indeed, their sacrifice.

It is, I think, appropriate to underline that fact as we celebrate Veterans' Week, and as we anticipate Remembrance Day. Let's remember what this is supposed to honour. It is supposed to honour those men and women — those Canadians — who served and sacrificed. Their views counted in this decision, as they properly should have.

**Senator Martin:** I agree about honouring our veterans and their service, which is why this is such an important project.

It is about the process, senator, and our Afghan veterans deserve better than this, as do the families of the fallen. Now there are delays.

A House of Commons committee has voted to further investigate the mismanagement of this monument over the objections of its Liberal members.

Leader, does the Trudeau government commit to providing all relevant, unredacted documents to the House committee?

**Senator Gold:** I'm sure that the committee will do its work in the spirit of honouring the veterans, and will do so with dignity, integrity and a non-partisan approach to our veterans' demands. I'm sure that they will have the appropriate level of cooperation from the government in that regard.

## FINANCE

### AWARDING OF CONTRACTS

**Hon. Donald Neil Plett (Leader of the Opposition):** Leader, the Trudeau government recently tried to hide why it wrote off hundreds of millions of taxpayers' dollars, and who received the money. They finally admitted this loss relates to an unfulfilled contract with a Quebec company for COVID vaccines.

While that's pretty bad, it is not the only example of this government hiding information about a massive loss of money. In the 2018-19 fiscal year, Export Development Canada wrote off \$196 million, and the only thing that Global Affairs Canada said was that it was doing so in the best interests of Canada.

Leader, once again, the Prime Minister is not worth the cost. If your government can provide basic information on one loss, why can't they provide it on another?

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

As the government has stated, and as I have announced in this chamber, the loss to which you refer regarding the vaccines was a product of the precautions that the government took to ensure not only a safe supply of vaccines, but also the hope of developing a capacity in Canada to manufacture certain kinds of vaccines — it's a capacity that, unfortunately, was lost in the past when previous governments made decisions that, at the time, seemed to be in the best interests of Canadians, but it left us without that capacity.

**Senator Plett:** A response that I received in 2021 to my written question about the \$196-million loss said:

The government is unable to provide more details on this specific transaction, as it would result in making public confidential information about a private company.

Senator Gold, this \$196 million belongs to Canadian taxpayers. They deserve better than eight long years of the Trudeau government saying, “Take our word for it.”

What company was involved?

**Senator Gold:** Thank you. The passion with which you ask the question still does not change the fact that in matters of this kind — as it is in business — there are confidentiality agreements understood, regulated and protected by law that do not make it appropriate, necessarily, to provide the information that you are seeking.

I am not assuming any more than that about the circumstances.

#### ANSWERS TO ORDER PAPER QUESTIONS TABLED

##### NATIONAL REVENUE—CANADA REVENUE AGENCY— LEGALIZATION OF CANNABIS

**Hon. Patti LaBoucane-Benson (Legislative Deputy to the Government Representative in the Senate)** tabled the reply to Question No. 200, dated February 2, 2023, appearing on the *Order Paper and Notice Paper* in the name of the Honourable Senator Plett, regarding the legalization of cannabis — Canada Revenue Agency.

##### MENTAL HEALTH AND ADDICTIONS—HEALTH CANADA— LEGALIZATION OF CANNABIS

**Hon. Patti LaBoucane-Benson (Legislative Deputy to the Government Representative in the Senate)** tabled the reply to Question No. 200, dated February 2, 2023, appearing on the *Order Paper and Notice Paper* in the name of the Honourable Senator Plett, regarding the legalization of cannabis — Health Canada.

##### FISHERIES, OCEANS AND THE CANADIAN COAST GUARD— FISHERIES AND OCEANS

**Hon. Patti LaBoucane-Benson (Legislative Deputy to the Government Representative in the Senate)** tabled the reply to Question No. 251, dated September 19, 2023, appearing on the *Order Paper and Notice Paper* in the name of the Honourable Senator Plett, regarding Fisheries and Oceans Canada.

##### AGRICULTURE AND AGRI-FOOD—GRAIN ACT REVIEW

**Hon. Patti LaBoucane-Benson (Legislative Deputy to the Government Representative in the Senate)** tabled the reply to Question No. 254, dated September 19, 2023, appearing on the *Order Paper and Notice Paper* in the name of the Honourable Senator Plett, regarding the *Canada Grain Act* review.

##### VETERANS AFFAIRS—PROVISION OF BENEFITS OR SERVICES TO FAMILY MEMBERS OF VETERANS WHO ARE IN FEDERAL OR PROVINCIAL PRISONS

**Hon. Patti LaBoucane-Benson (Legislative Deputy to the Government Representative in the Senate)** tabled the reply to Question No. 260, dated September 19, 2023, appearing on the *Order Paper and Notice Paper* in the name of the Honourable Senator Plett, regarding Veterans Affairs Canada and the provision of benefits or services to family members of veterans who are in federal or provincial prisons.

• (1500)

## ORDERS OF THE DAY

### BUSINESS OF THE SENATE

**The Hon. the Speaker:** The standing vote is deferred to 5:30. Senator McCallum?

**Hon. Mary Jane McCallum:** We will keep the vote to 5:30.

**The Hon. the Speaker:** Senator McCallum, can you please repeat your comment?

**Senator McCallum:** Honourable senators, with your leave, I would like to withdraw the motion and have the vote at 5:30.

**The Hon. the Speaker:** It is not clear what you are asking. Could you please repeat that?

**Senator McCallum:** I was supposed to ask for leave, and Senator Klyne has withdrawn his motion. So I am maintaining the vote should go ahead at 5:30. It is done.

**The Hon. the Speaker:** So you are not asking for leave?

**Senator McCallum:** No, I'm not.

**The Hon. the Speaker:** That's fine. Thank you.

**Hon. Donald Neil Plett (Leader of the Opposition):** Your Honour, now I would like to have a clarification. We were of the impression, Your Honour, that Senator McCallum was going to ask leave for her to withdraw her amendment because Senator Klyne had a different amendment. If that is the case, there would not be a vote at 5:30. Now I am hearing that she is asking leave for a vote at 5:30. We already have that. If she is asking leave to withdraw her amendment so that Senator Klyne — apparently, they have an agreement, which we are certainly not objecting to — we would not object to leave for her to withdraw, but I think we need to be clear what she is trying — because I am not clear right now.

**The Hon. the Speaker:** I asked if she was asking leave, and she confirmed that she was not asking leave to withdraw the amendment. The standing vote has been deferred to 5:30. So we will have the vote at 5:30.

## LEGAL AND CONSTITUTIONAL AFFAIRS

### COMMITTEE AUTHORIZED TO STUDY 2023 STATUTES REPEAL ACT

On the Order:

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

That the report on the *Statutes Repeal Act* for the year 2023, tabled in the Senate on February 1, 2023, be referred to the Standing Senate Committee on Legal and Constitutional Affairs for examination and report; and

That the committee submit its report to the Senate no later than Tuesday, December 5, 2023.

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

**Hon. Senators:** Question.

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

**Hon. Senators:** Agreed.

(Motion agreed to.)

## ADJOURNMENT

### MOTION ADOPTED

**Hon. Patti LaBoucane-Benson (Legislative Deputy to the Government Representative in the Senate),** pursuant to notice of November 8, 2023, moved:

That, when the Senate next adjourns after the adoption of this motion, it do stand adjourned until Tuesday, November 21, 2023, at 2 p.m.

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

**Hon. Senators:** Question.

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

**Hon. Senators:** Agreed.

(Motion agreed to.)

## GREENHOUSE GAS POLLUTION PRICING ACT

### BILL TO AMEND—THIRD READING—DEBATE

**The Hon. the Speaker:** Stand. Senator Wells is not here.

**Hon. Donald Neil Plett (Leader of the Opposition):** No, there are a number of other speakers on here —

**The Hon. the Speaker:** Senator Wells is not —

**Senator Plett:** Well, first of all, you should not make comments about whether people are here or not, but there are other speakers on the list.

**The Hon. the Speaker:** Senator Wells, would you like to move third reading?

**Hon. David M. Wells** moved third reading of Bill C-234, An Act to amend the Greenhouse Gas Pollution Pricing Act.

He said: Honourable senators, today I rise to speak to Bill C-234, An Act to amend the Greenhouse Gas Pollution Pricing Act. I would like to begin again by thanking the Standing Senate Committee on Agriculture and Forestry for their study of this bill; the chair of that committee, the Honourable Senator Rob Black; and the vice-chair, the Honourable Senator Paula Simons, who also chaired one of the meetings. I would like to thank all committee members, both regular members and those who came in for the rigorous discussion.

There has been some commentary on the presence of the non-regular members leading discussions on certain aspects of the bill's study, but I want to note that no senator plays a subordinate role on a committee. Aside from voting privilege, it is the right of any senator to join a committee for the study of a bill, and they have every equal right to do so, and I welcome that, especially when their views are not in accord with mine.

As we have heard in the debate at the report stage, the committee held 10 hours of meetings, heard from 24 witnesses and received 12 briefs in addition to further debate all senators listened to at report stage on Tuesday.

Colleagues, as you know, this bill amends the Greenhouse Gas Pollution Pricing Act, also known as the carbon tax, to provide an exemption for propane and natural gas for agricultural purposes. It is a commonsense bill which I believe is worthy of the support of this chamber for a number of reasons. I will outline these for you.

First, the purpose of the carbon tax is to create an incentive for consumers to reduce their use of carbon-intensive fuels by adopting more efficient and lower-carbon options. This is a worthwhile objective; however, farmers have no viable fuel alternatives to which they can easily switch; it is either unavailable or cost-prohibitive. Where it has been neither of those, farmers, ranchers and growers have switched because it makes business sense to do so.

In my speech at report stage, you will recall that I spoke about the added installation of sun shields, increased ventilation and many other initiatives that can make their operations more efficient when it comes to their fuel costs. This means that retaining the carbon tax for propane and natural gas does not serve the purpose. This is even more clear when we note that diesel and gasoline — common fuels for heaters, coolers and grain dryers — are exempt from the carbon tax. This point was raised repeatedly at committee. The Ontario Federation of Agriculture put it this way in their brief:

... the fuel charge in Part 1 of the Greenhouse Gas Pollution Pricing Act is an ineffective mechanism to drive greenhouse gas emission reductions in the agricultural sector in a short to medium term outlook. With no viable alternatives to propane and natural gas for grain drying and barn heating, and high price inelasticity for energy use, the charge collected on these fuels simply takes money out of farmers' pockets, who are already working with very tight margins.

• (1510)

The carbon tax is supposed to send a price signal to incentivize a transition to lower carbon-emitting fuels. However, because of the absence of such alternatives, this price signal does not work when it comes to propane and natural gas used for agricultural purposes. An exemption — and that is the focus of this bill — is warranted.

Farmers can already apply for an exemption certificate which exempts them from paying any carbon tax on gasoline and diesel fuel. Bill S-234 merely seeks to extend that existing exemption to propane and natural gas. This doesn't undermine the effectiveness of the carbon tax but is a logical extension of the existing policy, especially because that propane and natural gas are considered transition fuels and thus emit less carbon in the atmosphere than diesel and gasoline.

In addition to the existing exemption on gasoline and diesel fuel, the government also introduced a rebate which acknowledged the need to provide relief from the carbon tax on propane and natural gas used for agricultural purposes.

When the rebate was announced in the Economic and Fiscal Update 2021, the government stated:

Recognizing that many farmers use natural gas and propane in their operations, and consistent with the Budget 2021 commitment, the government proposes to return fuel charge proceeds directly to farming businesses in backstop jurisdictions via a refundable tax credit, starting for the 2021-22 fuel charge year.

The public policy objective was clear: to return fuel charge proceeds derived from agricultural use of natural gas and propane directly to farming businesses. Regrettably, however, the rebate fails to achieve this objective because it is calculated according to farm size and, to quote the Department of Finance:

There is no link between propane or natural gas actual usage on a farm and the amount of credit received.

Colleagues, this means that the rebate is not actually a rebate, because it is not connected to actual carbon tax costs. Instead, it is an ad hoc refundable tax credit calculated at \$1.73 per \$1,000 of eligible farming expenses for all farms. Eligible farming expenses are those amounts deducted in calculating income from farming for income tax purposes, excluding any deductions arising from mandatory and optional inventory adjustments and transactions with non-arm's length parties.

To be clear, this means that the non-rebate rebate has no connection to actual expenses incurred by farmers from the application of the carbon tax on propane and natural gas. It is not linked.

Colleagues, there has been some discussion about double-dipping on the rebate and the exemption, and I would like to address that here. You will recall Bill C-8, sponsored in the Senate by the Honourable Clement Gignac, which addressed that rebate. Here is what we heard: Jenna Robbins, Senior Director, Strategic Planning and Policy from the Department of Finance, said the Minister of Finance sets the payment rate. If Bill C-234 were to pass, the payment rate would be set to zero. This was also mentioned at the bottom of the older Library of Parliament report that was circulated to some colleagues earlier this week.

Another measure the government could take to ensure there would be no double-dipping, in addition to the one outlined above, is a policy directive to the CRA to stop processing payments past the date on which C-234 receives Royal Assent. This was mentioned in the *What We Heard Report* from the Agriculture Carbon Alliance. We can expand on that: The formula in Bill C-8 has the ability to adjust the qualifying rebate days within a taxation year. Therefore, the CRA has the ability to process rebates up until the date on which C-234 becomes law. After that point, the Finance Minister can set the payment rate to zero. Eventually, the Income Tax Act would be amended to remove the vestigial provision brought in under C-8 using a legislative vehicle like a Budget Implementation Act.

Colleagues, the government's objective was correct; many farmers use natural gas and propane in their operations, and the fuel charge proceeds from those fuels should be returned directly to them. Regrettably, the rebate does not accomplish this, which is why Bill C-234 is warranted and necessary. It will achieve the stated objective.

Colleagues, we should also support this bill because retaining the carbon tax on propane and natural gas not only fails to reduce carbon emissions, but also inhibits farmers' efforts to transition to lower-carbon energy options. The reason for this is quite simple: It takes money out of the pockets of farmers, which cannot be recaptured by passing on the cost immediately or changing to a low-carbon fuel source. This means that rather than furthering the public policy purpose of the carbon tax, it works against it.

You'll recall that I noted in my report stage speech that one medium-sized poultry operation would be paying \$250,000 per year once the carbon price reaches \$170 per tonne. Any payback analysis that included a yearly contribution like that would make a far more efficient capital investment decision that would actually go toward reducing emissions from barn heating and cooling and grain drying.

The Parliamentary Budget Officer, or PBO, reported that the carbon tax on natural gas and propane will cost farmers \$978 million by 2030. This will extract almost \$1 billion from the farmers' bottom line, which significantly impacts their ability to invest in new technologies. By passing Bill C-234, we can help ensure that farmers retain this capital in their operations, giving them greater opportunity and resources to continue reinvesting in more sustainable farming practices.

Implementing Bill C-234 would be good for farmers, ranchers and growers and better for the environment because it acknowledges that propane and natural gas are lower-emitting fuels and does not disincentivize operators from using them.

Colleagues, while federal programs such as the Agricultural Clean Technology Program and tax rebate programs are aimed at providing relief to farmers from the fuel surcharges for natural gas and propane, these programs have proven difficult to access and are oversubscribed. The programs are welcomed and needed, but they reach only a small percentage of farmers.

Further, these programs only cover a portion of the actual costs expended by farmers in order to upgrade their fuel source. This means that farmers must be in a position where they need to replace their grain dryers before the program becomes economical for them. The Senate Standing Committee on Agriculture and Forestry learned that a grain dryer will last for decades and is a significant capital purchase. Upgrading them just because the government will cover a portion of the cost does not mean such a move is automatically economical. Even if the government's budget for these programs were unlimited, farmer uptake would not be.

The final reason that I would like to give you today for supporting Bill C-234 is because the carbon tax on natural gas and propane places Canadian farmers at a disadvantage in comparison to international competitors who are not subject to similar fuel charges. That means our businesses are automatically less cost-efficient than their competitors, and this additional cost is not only more expensive for farmers but also Canadian consumers.

[ Senator Wells ]

Nicholas Rivers, an associate professor at the University of Ottawa, told the committee:

There are some exemptions to the carbon price for fuels used on farms, but these exemptions currently do not apply to fuel used for grain drying or for heating buildings. This means that grain farmers face the full carbon price on fuel used for grain drying, and do not receive output-based rebates. However, like cement and steel, grains are an internationally traded commodity, and there are legitimate concerns that the carbon price puts Canadian grain farmers at a disadvantage relative to their international peers.

Colleagues, farmers are price takers, not price makers. Thus, in order to stay competitive, they are forced to absorb the cost of the carbon tax into their operations and charge more in the following years if it is in their power to do so, and often it is not.

Here is how the government put it in their backgrounder on the Greenhouse Gas Pollution Pricing Act, or GGPPA:

The purpose of the GGPPA is to reduce greenhouse gas emissions by ensuring that carbon pollution pricing applies broadly throughout Canada.

At the same time, the Government recognizes that particular groups or sectors have a need for targeted relief from the fuel charge – in particular because of the small number of alternative options they may have in the face of carbon pollution pricing.

Colleagues, exemptions are not a bug or a “carve-out.” I recall sparring with our colleague Senator Woo over this word at second reading back in June. The government's backgrounder specifically stated that exemptions are a feature of a carbon tax system. They are necessary to ensure that the policy is targeted and effective and does not create undesirable results. Exemptions already exist for farmers and fish harvesters, along with additional targeted relief for residents of rural and small communities, users of aviation fuels in the territories, greenhouse operators, power plants that generate electricity for remote communities, Indigenous Peoples and — as we heard recently — those who heat their homes with oil.

Bill C-234 is not breaking new ground. It is one small but necessary adjustment to the existing suite of fair exemptions and, in this case, will have significant impact on the ability of farmers to compete on a level playing field with international competitors and continue to adopt more efficient technologies. Canada's farmers, ranchers and growers have spoken with one voice on this bill, and we've all heard it loud and clear.

• (1520)

Finally, colleagues — and perhaps on a more personal note — I signed up to sponsor this bill not because I come from a farming background or even a strong farming region. I'm from Newfoundland, and there is probably a good reason the



Agriculture Committee didn't go to a place called "The Rock" for a soil study. I wanted to be the sponsor because it seemed like advocating for fairness was the right thing to do.

The debate on this bill has been vigorous, contentious, affects significant public policy and has forced me to do my homework. It has included not just honourable colleagues but sparked an important debate among farmers, ranchers, growers, public policy-makers and consumers. It is an excellent example of what the Senate does best, and it has been an honour to be a small part of it with you. Thank you.

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

**Hon. Denise Batters:** Will Senator Wells take a couple of questions?

**Senator Wells:** I will, Senator Batters.

**Senator Batters:** Thank you. I appreciate that.

Senator Wells, thank you very much for your detailed speech on Bill C-234, which is so crucial to farmers not only in my home province of Saskatchewan but across the country.

You mentioned in your speech that grain dryers are a significant capital expense, and just having a tiny bit of experience with this — being that many years ago and for about 30-some years my dad sold farm equipment, including grain dryers, I know how significant this expense is. I wanted to give some of our colleagues a chance to know about that as well.

Isn't it true that a new grain dryer, which is the most efficient type that can be purchased right now, is probably an expense costing between \$100,000 to \$150,000 each for a farm? I'm not talking about a commercial grain dryer, just a regular farm one. It may even be more now as the costs have gone up considerably.

**Senator Wells:** Senator Batters, thank you for your question. I will be frank — I don't know the price of a grain dryer. But I do know that after debate finished on Tuesday, I went to the Canola Growers Association reception and I spoke with a family farmer who has a canola farm about an hour north of Ottawa. She told me that if Bill C-234 passes — and it is not a big farm — they will be able to buy a grain dryer instead of having to send grain to North Gower, just south of Ottawa, and their payback period would be 12 years with the savings that they would realize from not having to pay the carbon tax.

I don't know the price of a dryer, but I do know that for this small canola farmer, who wishes to dry their own grain on their own farm because they have more control — and, of course, there would be fewer transport costs sending it out — that a 12-year payback is reasonable on a piece of industrial equipment. Further, with that additional money in their pockets, going to the bank and seeking credit would be a lot easier than if it were otherwise.

**Senator Batters:** With respect to the natural gas that's used to heat the barns and that type of thing, Senator Wells, can you give us some indication as to the costs for that? I understand that

you've recently received some correspondence from a chicken farmer in Alberta who talked about the massive costs. I think they relayed that, last year, the heating cost for their barn was \$120,000, and that it was \$180,000 this year. When the carbon tax reaches \$170 per tonne, it will be \$480,000 annually.

Are those the types of costs that we are trying to help farmers with so that food can eventually cost less for us?

**Senator Wells:** Thank you for your question. Now, I will also tell you I don't know a lot about chicken farming, but I did visit a poultry farm in southern Alberta. I asked for a tour. They wouldn't give me a tour because of biosecurity and that sort of thing, which I understand. But I spent a lot of time asking about their operation. I hope to get to your question.

The time it takes from the hatching of an egg to the selling of a chicken is eight weeks. This is a constant. They have eight barns on two sites. I think they actually use propane because their community is not furnished with natural gas. They have limited choices already, so they use propane. They gave me their numbers based on the price of carbon, and at \$170 per tonne, it will be close to half a million dollars per year. That was a modest-sized operation. It wasn't big.

I do know that the price of natural gas is decreasing. Senator Dalphond pointed that out at committee, and he is correct. But that's not a constant. We don't know what the price of natural gas will be next year. Or propane. We live in a volatile, geopolitical world, and hope is not a plan when you are trying to make money from a business.

Other than that, it is costly. I know this particular farmer was doing all they could — again, it was a family farm. They had the best insulation, and heat shields on the sunny side of the barn to deflect the heat so it wouldn't have a greater effect on their barn. They used ventilation. Of course, in the prairie winter, they have to heat the place.

Again, I think I mentioned this in an earlier speech, but there is a very narrow range in which they have to keep these chickens. Three or four degrees above, and they last minutes. Anything below, and he said they last a little bit longer, but they will still die. That's what I know about the price and the cost that it takes these farmers with respect to the fuel they need for heating and cooling the barns.

[*Translation*]

**Hon. Julie Miville-Dechêne:** Senator Wells, would you take a question?

**Senator Wells:** Absolutely.

**Senator Miville-Dechêne:** Like you, I tried to do my homework on this bill, because I hate to see inequities between the regions.

The past few days have been difficult. I became particularly interested in the refundable tax credit that the government implemented in 2021 after noticing how unfair the situation was.

Does this refundable tax credit offset a certain amount of the carbon tax? If we do the math, we see that, in Alberta, the average amount a farm spends on heating and on the carbon tax is 0.5% of all its expenditures. As for the carbon tax, the refundable tax credit offsets 0.17% of those costs. That means that, on average, farmers get a cheque that offsets about a third of their heating and carbon tax expenses.

Given that the carbon tax costs a lot less than heating costs, farmers are receiving a rather substantial amount of compensation. It is true that we are talking about an average and that the cheque is an average amount for everyone.

However, in a way, doesn't this reward those who use less energy, while penalizing those who use more natural gas and diesel?

That is my somewhat complicated question.

[English]

**Senator Wells:** Now I regret saying yes to answering your question.

I will take the percentages you gave at face value. With the refundable tax credit, or the rebate, it is not targeted specifically even at farms that use propane and natural gas. It is targeted at all farms for all eligible expenses, which, again, those eligible expenses don't have to include propane or natural gas.

The other thing I learned is that refundable tax credit is altogether about 7% to 10%. It's a very low percentage of what the full expenses would be on natural gas and propane.

• (1530)

I don't know if this fully answers your question, but while it is applied over a broader number of farms, it is not targeted at those specifically who use the fuels we are talking about, natural gas and propane.

[Translation]

**Senator Miville-Dechêne:** Since I am not an accountant and you may not be one either, we will have to agree to disagree. I think that different numbers are making the rounds on refundable tax credit repayments and on what all that is really creating. Thank you.

**The Hon. the Speaker:** Was that a question?

[ Senator Miville-Dechêne ]

[English]

**Senator Wells:** I agree with you. The fact that this legislation is very clean in giving the exemption for exactly that purpose — the purpose of not paying the pollution pricing amount specifically on natural gas and propane — causes the circumstances of not having to worry about applying credits elsewhere on other eligible farm costs that are not fuel.

[Translation]

**Hon. Pierre J. Dalphond:** Would Senator Wells take another question?

[English]

**Senator Wells:** Of course, Senator Dalphond.

**Senator Dalphond:** Thank you, senator. Thank you for your speech. There is a lot that has been said, and I am glad that you agreed with some of the things I said speaking of Budget 2023.

Do you know how much it costs for somebody who is raising chickens or turkeys in Ontario using natural gas? How much does the carbon tax cost this year per cubic metre on the price of gas?

**Senator Wells:** I do not know that exact amount, no.

**Senator Dalphond:** I spoke with farmers, and I can give you the information. I have the bills. The tax on carbon this year is two cents per cubic metre. That is the increase. Last year it was two cents. The year before it was two cents per cubic metre. Maybe, Senator Wells, you can tell us the price of natural gas in Ontario?

**Senator Wells:** Thank you, Senator Dalphond, for your question. I do not know the price of natural gas in Ontario. I only know the amount of actual dollars that farmers have to pay — large, medium and small — is considerable and derives no benefit to their farm and probably no benefit to the environment.

**Senator Dalphond:** Would you accept another question?

**Senator Wells:** Yes.

**Senator Dalphond:** The price now is \$1.21 per cubic metre. It was \$1.39 a year ago, including the tax on carbon.

My next question is about the need to maintain competitiveness. I certainly agree with the principle that we should have an agricultural sector which is competitive.

Senator Wells, maybe you missed it, but some witnesses before the committee mentioned, and the evidence has shown, that for 60% and more of the grain growers in Ontario, Bill C-234 will not apply. Why? Because they use third-party warehouses and dryers. These people will not benefit from your bill. So 60% or even 65% of grain producers in Ontario will not benefit from it.

You say we have to maintain competitiveness. The bill does not seem to achieve that.

One of the representatives — I do not know if you are aware of it, but I asked him questions in committee. The question to you is the following: What is the difference of the competitiveness between the producers who will have access to the rebate and those, the 60% and even more, who will not have access to it?

**Senator Wells:** Thank you, Senator Dalphond.

That's a great question. First I will go to the question of the 60% or more who don't use or have on-farm drying.

You will have possibly heard my answer to Senator Batters' question that led me to talk about the farmer I spoke with Tuesday night who currently does off-site drying in North Gower, and they are an hour north of here. North Gower is a little bit south of here. This is an opportunity for them to do on-site drying and gain the benefit. I would imagine that 60% or more, whatever the number is — I do not even know if it is that, but if you say it is, I will take it at face value — will give the opportunity for that grain drying to be done on-site and, therefore, benefit from Bill C-234.

Frankly, I have to say that I cannot remember your second question.

**Senator Dalphond:** I can repeat it. Is it true that the difference between the grain producers in Ontario who will benefit from your bill and those who will not benefit from it, the majority, is, according to the witnesses, maybe 1%, more likely less?

**Senator Wells:** Thank you, Senator Dalphond.

I would have to say that in the enormous outpouring we received from farmers, ranchers and growers and their associations that speak for their total amounts, including mushroom producers and others, it would appear to me that there will be a greater benefit than 1%. I think we would all agree that of all the emails and outreach and phone calls, if it were a 1% question, I don't think we would have received that much.

Of course, the Parliamentary Budget Officer said that a billion dollars taken from the industry would be reinvested in the things we want for businesses: to be more productive, have a greater volume of goods for the price, upgrade their infrastructure, which would actually make an impact on the environment. A billion dollars back into the sector is significant enough that it would take care of that 1% you referenced.

**Senator Dalphond:** Will you accept another question?

**The Hon. the Speaker:** Do you have a question, Senator Quinn?

**Hon. Jim Quinn:** Yes.

**The Hon. the Speaker:** Senator Wells, will you accept a question?

**Senator Wells:** Yes, I'll accept a question from Senator Quinn.

**Senator Quinn:** Thank you, Senator Wells, for your speech and the debate and questions back and forth.

Regarding your example of the farm south of North Gower that ships up to North Gower to have grain dried, the place that dries the grain, will it benefit from Bill C-234? If so, would it be safe to assume that the person sending the grain to that facility would have less likelihood of increased costs going to the right to use that facility?

**Senator Wells:** Thank you, Senator Quinn. That is a good question. The farmer who would send the grain to North Gower for off-site drying told me they proposed to dry the grain on their own farm with a new dryer. She showed me a picture on her phone of what this dryer looked like. I was highly engaged because I do not know anything about this, and I am happy to learn what a grain dryer looks like. They would do it on their own site. They would have immediate savings in their costs because if they send it to North Gower, they are also paying the additional cost of transport.

They are probably absorbing some of the higher costs that the off-site dryer would have because they would be subject to a carbon tax.

The first part of your question was, "Would the off-site grain dryer in North Gower benefit?" Probably not because they will get less product, because that will be staying on the farm for a more efficient, less costly drying that would not, obviously, include the carbon tax.

**The Hon. the Speaker:** Senator Dalphond, do you have another question?

**Senator Dalphond:** I do not know if Senator Wells will take another question from me.

**Senator Wells:** Senator Dalphond, it is my policy to take questions until my time is up.

**Senator Dalphond:** Thank you very much. I will not take that as an invitation as there are 12 minutes left.

In evidence before the committee, the President of the Saskatchewan Association of Rural Municipalities said that he bought himself a new dryer. According to his experience, which he shared as I questioned him, and as the Ontario Ministry of Agriculture published numbers on this, there were savings of approximately 30% on the cost of natural gas. You use far less natural gas.

Don't you see that what you are proposing now is that we should not have the tax because they want to keep the old equipment but we should remove the tax in order for them to buy new equipment?

• (1540)

Don't you think it will be better to keep the tax and force them to buy new equipment — and save 30% on their cost of gas?

**Senator Wells:** Thank you, Senator Dalphond, for that final question.

I have run a number of businesses. I would take 30% savings on anything any day. If you go back to the example I used, it was clear, in fact, and it was recent — two days ago — they are not

currently drying. They are sending it off-site, and that costs them. They will dry. They are going to install their dryer, and that will be a saving into the future. She said, "This is a 12-year payback and that is perfect for us. We can afford that and cover that."

The money that will not be going to the government under the carbon tax program will help them pay for it. I do not see the downside of that in any way. I do not see it. It gives them certainty of scheduling of drying. Some weeks or some months they need to dry more, some they would need to dry less. But they would be able to make that decision based upon what is on their farm. Those are operational savings that they would have as well.

**Hon. Pamela Wallin:** On this topic about drying off-site, I happen to come from a province that has 40% of the country's farmland, so this is what we do for a living. When you keep wet grain on your farm waiting in the queue to go somewhere else to dry it, you lose quality. That is the first loss of money.

The distances are huge in Saskatchewan to go to drying facilities, or they can be. There are huge transportation costs. The differential there is significant. The difference between old equipment and new equipment in terms of efficiency is also very important. I am looking for your thoughts on this, that we just keep a bunch of old equipment around because it might justify this kind of program is an absurd way to approach dealing with the environment or, for that matter, feeding the world.

**Senator Wells:** Senator Wallin, thank you for your question.

Sometimes people won't upgrade their equipment because they can't afford it. They have to make do with what they have. We see that not just in farm operations; we see that in homes as well.

Depending upon what the grain is, you will have different requirements in drying. Corn, I learned, takes longer because it absorbs more water. It does not dry as quickly. The weather is not always consistent for drying, so that is why they have to use automatic dryers.

I learned it is also true that if a product is not dried in the right amount of time, you will get mould and rot. You mentioned the reduction in quality. That is the elimination of quality and elimination of any revenue from that, despite having the costs to get it that far.

All I can say is, you are absolutely right: Having on-site drying gives not just a financial benefit but an operational benefit.

**Hon. Paula Simons:** Senator Wells, will you take a question?

**Senator Wells:** I will, Senator Simons.

**Senator Simons:** This is the editor and fact checker in me. Senator Quinn asked you a question about whether this would lower costs for off-site grain drying.

To clarify for everyone, is it not true that this bill does not apply to off-site commercial grain dryers but only, in fact, applies to farmers using grain dryers on their own farms?

**Senator Wells:** Thank you, Senator Simons. You are right. This only applies to on-site grain drying. But having been in business and having done quite a bit of production costing in my life, I would make the assumption that it would be more expensive per unit for the off-site grain dryer, regardless of the tax, only because they would have less volume. They would still have their drying costs but less volume. Perhaps I should not assume, but normally the higher the volume you have, to a certain point, the less costly your per-unit costs are.

**Senator Simons:** To clarify again, for the record, if this bill is to pass, it will have no impact whatsoever on industrial dryers who will still have to pay the full carbon tax?

**Senator Wells:** To be clearer, off-site dryers will not have the benefit of an exemption from the carbon tax. I can't say they won't have a benefit, or it will be worse, because they will have a different volume.

In that respect, it may be different. But that is not what we're talking about. I have been doing production costing since my early twenties. Their production costs will be different because their production balanced against their fixed costs and their variable costs will be different.

**Senator Batters:** Isn't it true that brand-new grain dryers that are the most efficient do have a saving on the energy costs; however, the substantial cost is that a brand-new very efficient grain dryer could be \$150,000 or more? Isn't that correct?

**Senator Wells:** Thank you, Senator Batters.

A grain dryer is a huge cost. If you have a larger farm, you are going to require more drying capacity. That would either be multiple dryers or a dryer that has that higher capacity. I can only imagine that will be a higher capital cost. Certainly, if it is on-farm, then at least you have some of the benefit of not having to pay the tax on the drying operation.

**Senator Batters:** Right.

**Senator Wells:** Certainly, one of the things that I did learn is when a farmer goes to a bank or goes to a lender, their case is a whole lot better when they don't have this additional burden and they can apply that benefit that is retained in their earnings to their application for funds. Normally it is a long-term lease. Certainly, it would be more beneficial along those lines.

**Hon. Robert Black:** Senator Wells, will you take a question?

**Senator Wells:** Yes, Senator Black.

**Senator Black:** For my clarity, did you say that you spoke with someone on Tuesday evening who was using a commercial grain dryer, but if this benefit or exemption came into being, they

would build a dryer on their farm and stop using that commercial dryer, in which case the one they build is likely going to be a new one and likely high-efficiency? Am I correct?

**Senator Wells:** Thank you, Senator Black. Yes, she showed me a picture of a grain dryer. I did not know what a grain dryer looked like until I saw the picture.

Yes, it would. It was new. They showed the tanks of propane and all that would go with it. It clearly would be more efficient, and that is also a saving. I do not know. They are one hour north of Ottawa. North Gower is about a half-hour south of Ottawa. I don't know the state of the equipment in North Gower, but something brand new would certainly be more efficient than something that exists now.

[*Translation*]

**Hon. Lucie Moncion:** I really liked the questions that were asked, because they were all about figures and numbers. If there is one thing we didn't study about Bill C-234, it was the whole financial side of things, which would have allowed us to distinguish between capital expenditures, taxable expenses, expenses related to heating costs, and so on. The fact that we skipped this aspect means that part of the conversation around Bill C-234 was left out.

[*English*]

I rise today to speak at third reading on Bill C-234, An Act to amend the Greenhouse Gas Pollution Pricing Act. Amending the Greenhouse Gas Pollution Pricing Act is a complex issue.

• (1550)

The Agriculture Committee heard from numerous experts during their five meetings on Bill C-234. Many of those witnesses told the committee that while alternatives to propane and natural gas grain dryers were limited, many efficiency improvements are already available, which can offset the cost increases associated with the carbon price by reducing fuel use by 30%.

In short, there was no clear consensus on Bill C-234. Many witnesses opposed the exemptions set out in this bill, particularly those who don't stand to benefit from it.

Given that the Agriculture Committee report was rejected, this bill, once again, deals with barn heating. Witnesses spoke about technologies that are available today to reduce the greenhouse gas emissions in barn heating. Tom Green from the David Suzuki Foundation said there are evermore examples of farms that are reducing their fossil fuel consumption and improving energy efficiency.

For instance, a poultry farm in Linden, Alberta, has a 175-kilowatt rooftop solar system. In other cases, a poultry barn built with a high-efficiency thermal envelope reduces energy consumption by 83% per ton of eggs — 83% efficiency increases. This technology is now available.

Colleagues of mine on the Agriculture Committee could have spent significant time digging further into the benefits and drawbacks of this policy decision. They also said they would have appreciated a report from the Standing Senate Committee on National Finance which never came and which I think would have been important for the calculations that are very important in this bill, as I said earlier.

Importantly, the committee didn't fully explore the realities of climate change and the potential cost to the agricultural sector if left unmitigated. However, we must conclude that those costs are consequential.

We heard that this bill will lead to less action on climate change. Mr. Lindberg, a manager with Environment and Climate Change Canada, said that:

. . . economics and massive experience with markets tell us that without this incentive, all things being equal, less action will be taken to reduce the use of these fuels. . . . All things being equal, without carbon pricing, we definitely see higher emissions globally in the economy.

Senators, we need action on climate change. We should not incentivize inaction. While some colleagues have determined this legislation is necessary to present circumstances, I think we can all agree that we do not know whether such a carve-out will be necessary in eight years from now. But this legislation assumes we will need to extend the carve-out far into the future, which is why this legislation includes a very unusual set of clauses which empowers the government — eight years from now — to extend the sunset period through an order-in-council and motions in both houses. This, colleagues, is a low bar and the decision to extend the sunset period for this carve-out implies a willingness to perpetuate it in the future.

As Senator Woo pointed out at the Agriculture Committee on October 24, the eight-year sunset period will make it more difficult for any farmers to make a transition if they have not done the necessary preparations in the intervening period. The carbon price will have gone up substantially between now and 2031.

I don't think we heard evidence that this justifies the inclusion of this uncommon, low-bar approach to extending the effective life of this carve-out.

Given the real and devastating crisis caused by climate change, it is incumbent upon parliamentarians to conduct fulsome analysis of our policy decisions and their impacts today and into the future. If, when this legislation sunsets, lawmakers wish to create a new carve-out, they can introduce new legislation to address this issue.

For those reasons, I would like to move the following amendment, which eliminates Bill C-234's mechanism to extend the exemption beyond the sunset period by Governor-in-Council resolution and motions of the House of Commons and the Senate.

## MOTION IN AMENDMENT—DEBATE ADJOURNED

**Hon. Lucie Moncion:** Therefore, honourable senators, in amendment, I move:

That Bill C-234 be not now read a third time, but that it be amended, in clause 2,

(a) on page 2, by replacing lines 24 to 37 with the following:

“of the day on which this Act comes into force.”;

(b) on page 3, by deleting lines 1 to 9.

Thank you.

**The Hon. the Speaker:** In amendment, it was moved by the Honourable Senator Moncion, seconded by the Honourable Senator Dupuis, that Bill C-234 be not read a third time, but that it be amended in clause 2(a) on page 2 by replacing lines 24 to 37 with the following —

**An Hon. Senator:** Dispense.

**The Hon. the Speaker:** I will repeat. (a) on page 2, by replacing lines — may I dispense?

**Some Hon. Senators:** Dispense.

**The Hon. the Speaker:** On debate, senator — honestly, Senator Clement?

**Hon. Bernadette Clement:** Was it a question?

**The Hon. the Speaker:** It is on debate.

**Hon. Denise Batters:** I have a question.

**The Hon. the Speaker:** Leave to permit questions? Usually after an amendment we go on debate.

**Senator Clement:** Okay.

**The Hon. the Speaker:** Is there leave to allow questions?

Will you take a question, Senator Moncion?

**Senator Moncion:** Yes, I will.

**The Hon. the Speaker:** Senator Wells, do you have a question?

**Hon. David M. Wells:** No, I was going to go on debate.

**The Hon. the Speaker:** Senator Clement, you have a question?

**Senator Clement:** I do not.

**Senator Batters:** Senator Moncion, there was an amendment that I believe was similar to this that was proposed at the Agriculture Committee at clause by clause and it was defeated. Is this the same amendment?

**Senator Moncion:** I believe that it is similar.

**Senator Clement:** Your honour, I move adjournment of the debate.

**Hon. Donald Neil Plett:** On debate.

**The Hon. the Speaker:** I recognized Senator Clement.

It is moved by Senator Clement, seconded by Honourable Senator Petitcherc, that further debate be adjourned until the next sitting of the Senate. Is it your pleasure, honourable senators, to adopt the motion?

**Some Hon. Senators:** No.

## POINT OF ORDER

**Hon. Donald Neil Plett:** Point of order. I was standing. I thought Senator Clement wanted to either ask a question or go on debate. This is extremely rare and very unfair.

I was standing on debate and for Your Honour to allow somebody to move an adjournment motion while people are standing on debate is, I believe, definitely out of order.

**Hon. Leo Housakos:** Point of order.

Not only is this outrageous, I have never before seen in my time in this place someone get on their feet, move an amendment without debating on the amendment. The tradition in this place is you get up on debate, move your amendment, make your debate, take questions on your amendment and then you go into debate. Then, after that, we can try to adjourn because obviously we know what we are trying to do here.

The fact that we are skipping all of these other necessary steps — amend, debate, ask questions of the amender, go to other debates and then ask for a question? Come on, Your Honour, please.

• (1600)

**The Hon. the Speaker:** I will say that I did recognize, first of all, Senator Clement. She was going to adjourn debate. But I recognized Senator Batters and she did ask a question.

**Senator Plett:** And you recognized Senator Wells as well, on debate.

**The Hon. the Speaker:** They both got up at the same time.

**The Hon. the Speaker:** Do you have a point of order?

**Hon. David M. Wells:** It is on the point of order, unless you've ruled on the point of order.

**The Hon. the Speaker:** No. I can hear the arguments.

**Senator Wells:** Thank you. From where I stand, I can see you and I can see Senator Clement. I know that I was standing, and I also saw that you struggled to remember my name. I understand that; that's not an issue personally with me at all. It was then that you deferred to Senator Clement. But I know clearly, Your

Honour — and I guess you can choose whom you wish to recognize, but I know that I was standing up on debate with respect to Senator Moncion's —

**Senator Batters:** And you are the sponsor.

**Senator Wells:** — the sponsor of the bill.

**The Hon. the Speaker:** Senator Wells, you were not actually — you interpreted my — reading my mind. But I must say that I did remember your name. I recognized Senator Clement, and she has the right to adjourn the debate.

**An Hon. Senator:** You have the right to debate.

**The Hon. the Speaker:** She has adjourned the debate.

**An Hon. Senator:** Not if we haven't finished debate.

**The Hon. the Speaker:** Senator Clement has moved that further debate be adjourned until the next sitting of the Senate. I will call the question.

It is moved by the Honourable Senator Clement, seconded by the Honourable Senator Petitclerc, that further debate be adjourned until the next sitting of the Senate. Is it your pleasure, honourable senators, to adopt the motion?

**Some Hon. Senators:** Yes.

**Some Hon. Senators:** No.

**The Hon. the Speaker:** I think the “nays” have it.

**Senator Plett:** Your Honour, you have not yet ruled on the point of order.

**The Hon. the Speaker:** I said that I think the “nays” have it. I see two senators rising.

*And two honourable senators having risen:*

**The Hon. the Speaker:** All those in favour will please say “yea.”

**Some Hon. Senators:** Yea.

**An Hon. Senator:** You've already said the “nays” have it.

**The Hon. the Speaker:** Order. There are two senators rising. Do we have agreement on the bell?

**An Hon. Senator:** One hour.

**The Hon. the Speaker:** Thank you. The vote will take place at 5:03. Call in the senators.

• (1700)

**The Hon. the Speaker:** The question is as follows: It was moved by the Honourable Senator Clement, seconded by the Honourable Senator Petitclerc, that further debate be adjourned until the next sitting of the Senate.

Motion agreed to on the following division:

YEAS  
THE HONOURABLE SENATORS

Audette	Francis
Boehm	Gold
Boniface	Harder
Busson	Hartling
Cardozo	Kutcher
Clement	LaBoucane-Benson
Cordy	Loffreda
Cormier	Miville-Dechêne
Cotter	Moncion
Cuzner	Petitclerc
Dalphond	Petten
Dasko	Ringuette
Deacon ( <i>Ontario</i> )	Saint-Germain
Dupuis	Simons—29
Forest	

NAYS  
THE HONOURABLE SENATORS

Ataullahjan	Martin
Batters	McCallum
Black	McPhedran
Boisvenu	Oh
Burey	Osler
Dagenais	Patterson ( <i>Ontario</i> )
Gignac	Plett
Greene	Prosper
Housakos	Quinn
Klyne	Richards
MacDonald	Seidman
Marshall	Wells—24

ABSTENTIONS  
THE HONOURABLE SENATORS

Nil

• (1710)

LANGUAGE SKILLS ACT

BILL TO AMEND—SECOND READING—DEBATE CONTINUED

On the Order:

Resuming debate on the motion of the Honourable Senator Carignan, P.C., seconded by the Honourable Senator Housakos, for the second reading of Bill S-220, An Act to amend the Languages Skills Act (Governor General).

**Hon. Bernadette Clement:** Honourable senators, I note that this item is on day 15, and I'm not ready to speak at this time. Therefore, with leave of the Senate and notwithstanding rule 4-15(3), I move the adjournment of the debate for the balance of my time.

**The Hon. the Speaker:** Is it agreed, honourable senators?

**Some Hon. Senators:** Yes.

**Some Hon. Senators:** No.

**Hon. Pierrette Ringuette:** Your Honour, I take the adjournment of the debate.

**The Hon. the Speaker:** It is moved by the Honourable Senator Ringuette, seconded by the Honourable Senator Petitclerc, that this motion be adjourned to the next sitting of the Senate.

Is it your pleasure, honourable senators, to adopt the motion?

**Some Hon. Senators:** Yes.

**Some Hon. Senators:** No.

**The Hon. the Speaker:** All those in favour of the motion will please say "yea."

**Some Hon. Senators:** Yea.

**The Hon. the Speaker:** All those opposed to the motion please say "nay."

**Some Hon. Senators:** Nay.

**The Hon. the Speaker:** In my opinion, the "yeas" have it.

(On motion of Senator Ringuette, debate adjourned, on division.)

NATIONAL FRAMEWORK ON ADVERTISING FOR SPORTS  
BETTING BILL

SECOND READING—DEBATE

On the Order:

Resuming debate on the motion of the Honourable Senator Deacon (*Ontario*), seconded by the Honourable Senator Busson, for the second reading of Bill S-269, An Act respecting a national framework on advertising for sports betting.

**Hon. Stan Kutcher:** Honourable senators, today I rise to speak in support of Bill S-269, An Act respecting a national framework on advertising for sports betting.

I would like to thank Senator Marty Deacon for introducing this important piece of legislation and acknowledge the interventions of previous speakers during the second reading debate. I will not repeat what has already been said; rather, I will focus on the potential harms that this bill might, in part, be able to mitigate: those of the public health challenge of problematic gambling.

I will focus on the developmental cohort in which problematic gambling often begins: young people.

Last winter, I was watching an NHL hockey game with some of my grandsons. In between the fragments of vigorous play, we were treated to a deluge of advertising for online sports betting. Indeed, it seemed that the amount of time provided for exhorting the virtues of online sports betting might have been close to equal to that for watching the game.

During one of the many commercials promoting online gambling, one of my grandsons exclaimed that he wanted to place a bet so that he could win "tons and tons of money." That led to a conversation about what gambling was, the odds of winning and losing, the recreational enjoyment of making a wager and the catastrophic impacts on the lives of some people who become problem gamblers. After we finished our chat, and following some considered contemplation, my grandson inquired, "Why would Auston Matthews say it was good if it was not good?"

Indeed, colleagues, that was a question I could not answer without getting into the realm of speculation and the siren lure of lucre, so I simply said, "I don't know the answer to that."

Colleagues, as kids grow up, they need heroes. They take their inspiration from heroes. Their heroes are often celebrities and can become their role models.

[*Translation*]

BUSINESS OF THE SENATE

**The Hon. the Speaker:** Honourable senators, it being 5:15 p.m., I must interrupt the proceeding. Pursuant to rule 9-6, the bells will ring to call in the senators for the taking of a



deferred vote at 5:30 p.m., on the motion in amendment of the Honourable Senator McCallum, seconded by the Honourable Senator McPhedran.

Call in the senators.

• (1730)

[*English*]

### NATIONAL COUNCIL FOR RECONCILIATION BILL

#### THIRD READING—MOTION IN AMENDMENT NEGATIVED

On the Order:

Resuming debate on the motion of the Honourable Senator Audette, seconded by the Honourable Senator LaBoucane-Benson, for the third reading of Bill C-29, An Act to provide for the establishment of a national council for reconciliation, as amended.

And on the motion in amendment of the Honourable Senator McCallum, seconded by the Honourable Senator McPhedran:

That Bill C-29, as amended, be not now read a third time, but that it be further amended in the preamble, on page 1, by replacing line 1 with the following:

“Whereas, since time immemorial, First Nations and Inuit peo-”.

**The Hon. the Speaker:** Honourable senators, the question is as follows: It was moved by the Honourable Senator McCallum, seconded by the Honourable Senator McPhedran:

That Bill C-29, as amended, be not now read a third time, but that it be further amended in the preamble, on page 1, by replacing line 1 with the following:

“Whereas, since time immemorial, First Nations and Inuit peo-”.

Motion in amendment of the Honourable Senator McCallum negatived on the following division:

### YEAS THE HONOURABLE SENATORS

Ataullahjan  
Boisvenu  
Klyne  
Marshall  
McCallum  
McPhedran

Oh  
Osler  
Prosper  
Quinn  
Richards  
Wells—12

### NAYS THE HONOURABLE SENATORS

Audette	Gignac
Black	Gold
Boehm	Greene
Boniface	Harder
Busson	Hartling
Cardozo	Jaffer
Clement	Kutcher
Cormier	LaBoucane-Benson
Cotter	Loffreda
Cuzner	Miville-Dechéne
Dagenais	Moncion
Dasko	Petitclerc
Deacon ( <i>Ontario</i> )	Petten
Forest	Ringuette
Francis	Saint-Germain—30

### ABSTENTIONS THE HONOURABLE SENATORS

Batters	Martin
Cordy	Patterson ( <i>Ontario</i> )
Dalphond	Plett
Housakos	Seidman—9
MacDonald	

#### THIRD READING—DEBATE

On the Order:

Resuming debate on the motion of the Honourable Senator Audette, seconded by the Honourable Senator LaBoucane-Benson, for the third reading of Bill C-29, An Act to provide for the establishment of a national council for reconciliation, as amended.

**Hon. Leo Housakos:** Thank you, Senator McCallum, for this important piece of legislation, which encompasses very important issues in this country. Of course, at the end of the day, they need to be debated in this place. However, they need to be debated in a spirit of confidence that this institution respects rules and procedures. At the end of the day, if we have difficulty with those rules and procedures, I think it makes it very difficult to arrive at strong conclusions that the public, stakeholders and Canadians across the country have faith in.

It also makes it difficult when we have trouble applying basic procedures in this place for various reasons but, more importantly, because they are not respected by the Speaker — i.e., the fact that I’m on debate.

Every senator on a motion on a bill has a right to be on debate. At the end of my time on debate, I have the right to put forward an amendment, and at the end of that amendment, you have the right to question the person putting forward the amendment. Of course, after that, the Speaker is obligated to ask the floor if there is further debate on the amendment before it. Once that element is concluded, then, of course, the Speaker can call for a question or we can call for question. If there is no willingness to go to question, you can adjourn it. That is how a democracy works in a credible way.

Until we start learning those rules and procedures and applying them from beginning to end in order to get credible results, this institution will continue to be maligned in the eyes of the Canadian public, and we all have an obligation to keep that in mind. I also want to inform the house that it is my procedural right at this moment, on debate, to adjourn the Senate.

Therefore, I move:

That the Senate do now adjourn.

**Senator Plett:** A good motion.

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

**Hon. Senators:** Agreed.

(Motion agreed to.)

*(At 5:39 p.m., pursuant to the order adopted by the Senate earlier this day, the Senate adjourned until Tuesday, November 21, 2023, at 2 p.m.)*

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## CONTENTS

Thursday, November 9, 2023

	PAGE		PAGE
<b>SENATORS' STATEMENTS</b>		<b>QUESTION PERIOD</b>	
<b>Remembrance Day</b>		<b>Canadian Heritage</b>	
Hon. Donald Neil Plett . . . . .	4783	Remembrance Day	
<b>Indigenous Veterans Day and Remembrance Day</b>		Hon. Donald Neil Plett . . . . .	4787
Hon. Jane Cordy . . . . .	4783	Hon. Marc Gold . . . . .	4787
<b>Visitor in the Gallery</b>		<b>Public Services and Procurement</b>	
The Hon. the Speaker . . . . .	4784	Procurement Process	
<b>Business of the Senate</b>		Hon. Leo Housakos . . . . .	4788
The Hon. the Speaker . . . . .	4784	Hon. Marc Gold . . . . .	4788
<b>Preservation and Revival of Indigenous Languages</b>		<b>Immigration, Refugees and Citizenship</b>	
Hon. Yvonne Boyer . . . . .	4784	Immigration Levels	
<b>Visitors in the Gallery</b>		Hon. Donna Dasko . . . . .	4788
The Hon. the Speaker . . . . .	4784	Hon. Marc Gold . . . . .	4788
<b>Remembrance Day</b>		<b>Health</b>	
Hon. Rebecca Patterson . . . . .	4784	Long-term Care System	
Hon. Yonah Martin . . . . .	4785	Hon. Iris G. Petten . . . . .	4789
<b>Visitor in the Gallery</b>		Hon. Marc Gold . . . . .	4789
The Hon. the Speaker . . . . .	4786	<b>Finance</b>	
<b>Indigenous Veterans Day and Remembrance Day</b>		Open Banking	
Hon. Bev Busson . . . . .	4786	Hon. Colin Deacon . . . . .	4789
<b>Visitor in the Gallery</b>		Hon. Marc Gold . . . . .	4789
The Hon. the Speaker . . . . .	4786	<b>Health</b>	
<hr/>		Canadian Dental Care Plan	
<b>ROUTINE PROCEEDINGS</b>		Hon. Jane Cordy . . . . .	4789
<b>The Estimates, 2023-24</b>		Hon. Marc Gold . . . . .	4790
Supplementary Estimates (B) Tabled		<b>Public Safety</b>	
Hon. Patti LaBoucane-Benson . . . . .	4786	Royal Canadian Mounted Police	
<b>Treasury Board</b>		Hon. Pierre-Hugues Boisvenu . . . . .	4790
2022-23 Departmental Results Reports Tabled		Hon. Marc Gold . . . . .	4790
Hon. Patti LaBoucane-Benson . . . . .	4786	<b>Environment and Climate Change</b>	
<b>The Estimates, 2023-24</b>		Carbon Tax	
Notice of Motion to Authorize National Finance Committee		Hon. Denise Batters . . . . .	4790
to Study Supplementary Estimates (B)		Hon. Marc Gold . . . . .	4791
Hon. Patti LaBoucane-Benson . . . . .	4787	<b>Global Affairs</b>	
<b>Indigenous Peoples</b>		Humanitarian Aid	
Notice of Motion to Authorize Committee to Study Federal		Hon. Leo Housakos . . . . .	4791
Specific Claims Policy and Process		Hon. Marc Gold . . . . .	4791
Hon. Brian Francis . . . . .	4787	Sharing of Intelligence Information	
Notice of Motion to Authorize Committee to Study the		Hon. Donald Neil Plett . . . . .	4791
Implementation of the United Nations Declaration on the		Hon. Marc Gold . . . . .	4791
Rights of Indigenous Peoples Act, 2021		<b>Veterans Affairs</b>	
Hon. Brian Francis . . . . .	4787	National Monument to Canada's Mission in Afghanistan	
<hr/>		Hon. Yonah Martin . . . . .	4792
		Hon. Marc Gold . . . . .	4792
		<b>Finance</b>	
		Awarding of Contracts	
		Hon. Donald Neil Plett . . . . .	4792
		Hon. Marc Gold . . . . .	4792

