



# DEBATES OF THE SENATE

---

1st SESSION



45th PARLIAMENT



VOLUME 154



NUMBER 3

---

OFFICIAL REPORT  
(HANSARD)

Wednesday, May 28, 2025

The Honourable RAYMONDE GAGNÉ,  
Speaker

## CONTENTS

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

*Publications Centre:* [Publications@sen.parl.gc.ca](mailto:Publications@sen.parl.gc.ca)

---

Published by the Senate  
Available on the Internet: <http://www.parl.gc.ca>



## THE SENATE

Wednesday, May 28, 2025

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

• (1410)

Prayers.

[*Translation*]

### BUSINESS OF THE SENATE

**The Hon. the Speaker:** Honourable senators, there have been consultations, and there is an agreement to allow a photographer in the Senate Chamber to photograph the introduction of new senators.

Is it agreed, honourable senators?

**Hon. Senators:** Agreed.

[*English*]

### NEW SENATORS

**The Hon. the Speaker:** Honourable senators, I have the honour to inform the Senate that the Clerk of the Senate has received certificates from the Registrar General of Canada showing that the following persons, respectively, have been summoned to the Senate:

Dawn Elizabeth Arnold

Farah Mohamed

### INTRODUCTION

**The Hon. the Speaker** having informed the Senate that there were senators without waiting to be introduced:

The following honourable senators were introduced; presented His Majesty's writ of summons; took the solemn affirmation, which was administered by the Clerk of the Senate; and were seated.

**Hon. Dawn Arnold**, of Moncton, New Brunswick, introduced between Hon. Marc Gold, P.C., and Hon. René Cormier.

**Hon. Farah Mohamed**, of Toronto, Ontario, introduced between Hon. Marc Gold, P.C., and Hon. Marnie McBean.

**The Hon. the Speaker** informed the Senate that each of the honourable senators named above had made and subscribed the declaration of qualification required by the Constitution Act, 1867, in the presence of the Clerk of the Senate, the Commissioner appointed to receive and witness the said declaration.

### VISITORS IN THE GALLERY

**The Hon. the Speaker:** Honourable senators, I wish to draw your attention to the presence in the gallery of Dr. Paul Goobie, Senator Arnold's husband; Emma and Zack, their children; and Craig Arnold, Senator Arnold's brother. They are accompanied by other guests of Senator Arnold.

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

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

### DISTINGUISHED VISITOR IN THE GALLERY

**The Hon. the Speaker:** Honourable senators, I wish to draw your attention to the presence in the gallery of our former colleague the Honourable Nancy J. Hartling. She is the guest of the Honourable Senator Arnold.

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

**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 Alaudin and Dilshad Mohamed, Senator Mohamed's parents; Amina Mohamed and Tomas Lind, her sister and brother-in-law; as well as Hailie Lind, her niece. They are accompanied by the Honourable A. Anne McLellan, P.C., O.C.; Her Worship Christina Smith, Mayor of Westmount; and other guests of Senator Mohamed.

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

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

### NEW SENATORS

### CONGRATULATIONS ON APPOINTMENTS

**Hon. Marc Gold (Government Representative in the Senate):** Honourable senators, I rise today on behalf of the Government Representative Office to welcome two new colleagues to the Senate of Canada, Senators Arnold and Mohamed.

Senators Arnold and Mohamed, you will, no doubt, notice you are joining a very diverse body of Canadians with a wide variety of backgrounds and experiences, each of whom is able to contribute to our work in a unique and valuable way.

[Translation]

Senator Arnold, your experience in municipal politics as councillor-at-large and mayor of Moncton have undoubtedly equipped you to carefully scrutinize and offer valuable insights into the important bills coming our way. Your commitment and passion when it comes to the arts and culture are admirable. I'm eager for you to continue promoting them in the Senate.

[English]

Senator Mohamed, your decades of experience in the charitable sector and your experience in and devotion to addressing systemic inequities both at home and abroad are unparalleled. Your time as a CEO of the King's Trust Canada and the Malala Fund along with your work for Canada's Forest Trust Corporation have provided you with a unique perspective from which we will all benefit.

• (1420)

As I have said to many of your colleagues before, as recently as this week, we have all been where you are today. I know it must seem daunting at the beginning; it certainly did to all of us, certainly to me, but know that every one of your colleagues is happy to answer your questions, provide advice if asked and point you in the right direction to assist you in this new chapter of your lives.

Once again, dear colleagues, thank you. On behalf of the Government Representative Office, welcome to you both.

**Hon. Leo Housakos (Leader of the Opposition):** Honourable senators, I am pleased to rise once again this week to welcome two new and exceptional colleagues to our ranks, Senator Farah Mohamed and Senator Dawn Arnold. Senators, today marks the formal beginning of your service in the Senate of Canada, but it is by no means the beginning of your leadership, advocacy and contribution to public life.

Senator Mohamed, your story is one of resilience, courage and visionary purpose. As a former young refugee from a refugee family from Uganda, you have devoted your life to building a more inclusive, equitable and sustainable world. From leading the Malala Fund to founding Fora and heading The King's Trust Canada, you have consistently worked to elevate the voices of those too often left out, especially women, girls and marginalized youth.

I would be remiss if I did not highlight the special presence of your mom and dad at the swearing-in ceremony today. We, of course, know how amazing that is. In particular, I want to thank Mr. and Mrs. Mohamed because I have had the privilege of meeting Senator Mohamed before this swearing-in ceremony. I want to thank you for the character, courage and values you have instilled in Senator Mohamed.

Your voice will bring strength to this chamber, particularly in matters of gender equity, social innovation and global engagement.

Senator Arnold, you come to us after 30 years of experience in municipal government, community development and publishing, including 8 years as the first female Mayor of Moncton. You have long championed environmental sustainability, bilingualism, cultural development and democratic engagement. You have built a legacy of civic growth and inclusive leadership, and you bring to the Senate a deep understanding of how national decisions ripple into local communities.

You remind us that good government is grounded in listening, transparency and community connection.

Senators, your paths have been very different, but both are rooted in public service and, of course, a deep love of our great country. We welcome your convictions, experience and courage. We look forward to the contributions you will no doubt make to this chamber and to the country you serve.

I want to reiterate that our door is always open. As I have said before, ours is a big tent caucus and one that understands the four principles of supporting government legislation, opposing government legislation, holding government to account and, of course, good private members' bills. Welcome to the Senate. I look forward to working with you.

[Translation]

**Hon. Raymonde Saint-Germain:** Colleagues and distinguished guests, today we welcome two colleagues who, like the rest of us, see their new role in the Senate of Canada as a tremendous honour. Both of these colleagues are also fully aware of the demanding responsibilities that fall to us, and both are entirely capable and qualified to carry them out.

[English]

Senator Arnold, I am pleased to welcome you as such an accomplished former municipal official truly dedicated to public service. In addition to your nine years as Mayor of Moncton, you had been on the city council since 2012 and were still popular when you left office. That is quite a feat.

The municipal level of government is the closest to the population it stands for and therefore has a very demanding task. Now that you are a federal parliamentarian, I know you will bring the same proximity, efficiency and care for your fellow citizens that made you such a respected figure in your city of Moncton and across New Brunswick.

[Translation]

Your long list of achievements, including your volunteer work in the arts, culture and communications, are equally remarkable. They attest to your wide-ranging expertise. Your many talents and solid experience are additional assets that will benefit us all in the course of our work.

[English]

Senator Mohamed, from our first conversation, I have noticed your deep and unwavering sense of duty.

I have no doubt that it is this very sense of duty and public service that made you agree to serve as a senator even though you could also have found success elsewhere. But it is because you place public interest before personal considerations that you will become a great contributor to the Senate of Canada.

Anyone looking at your professional history is impressed by the diversity and depth of your achievements. You strike me as a strategic doer, an achiever and someone who can manage whatever situation you face. While this may be a new role, your knowledge of Parliament as a former staffer to federal MPs and a minister will make, I am certain, for a seamless transition.

Dear Senator Arnold, dear Senator Mohamed, all members of the Independent Senators Group warmly welcome you and look forward to working alongside you. Thank you, *meegwetch*.

**Hon. Rebecca Patterson:** Honourable senators, today we welcome two more senators now taking their seats — and not benches; it is a good day. We have Senator Dawn Arnold representing New Brunswick and Senator Farah Mohamed representing Ontario.

Before I begin, I will disclose to Senator Mohamed that we share common roots because I, too, have strong links to St. Catharines — with an “a” — Ontario, where I did much of my nursing studies and pursued some professional opportunities. I hope to speak to you soon to discover our common links, and I bet we know common people.

With that out of the way, I have the unenviable position of being the fourth speaker when we have already said wonderful things about everybody.

Senator Mohamed and Senator Arnold both have very impressive CVs, and the Canadian Senators Group echoes impressions of how excellent you are for this chamber. I figured I had to dig a little deeper to see what I could find. I was hoping to go further, and I consulted a much higher online authority: I decided to check out your LinkedIn pages. I must tell you, in all seriousness, that we could not have found two better new colleagues. Here is what I found, because you know we have to go over this.

Senator Arnold has accumulated an impressive number of endorsements related to her skills in policy development, strategic planning, public relations and public speaking. The Senate will greatly benefit from your expertise in these areas because we know how to talk. Your endorsed skills make you a prime candidate to be a senator, and we are very pleased to have you join us here. Your professional experience, background and commitment to public service will greatly benefit us and all Canadians as we examine, study and deliberate the future of this country.

[ Senator Saint-Germain ]

According to your LinkedIn pages, Senator Mohamed, you have also received very positive comments and recommendations from former colleagues and clients alike. Here are two of the more notable ones. The first says:

Farah’s passion for her work was evident . . . Farah’s commitment to women’s issues and how they relate to the international political economy makes me excited to follow her career path. . . .

The second says, “Farah has an unfailing ability to accomplish complex projects while inspiring everyone she works with to excel.” We’re ready for it.

She has impressive endorsements of 54 skills by her peers online, all very positive.

With comments and endorsements like these, the bar is now set very high for you, Senator Mohamed, as you assume your duties as a senator. It is music to our ears, even if you are no longer a member of the board of Music Canada.

Thank you again, LinkedIn. To the both of you, we look forward to your contributions. On behalf of my colleagues in the Canadian Senators Group, I welcome you both to the Senate of Canada.

**Hon. Brian Francis:** Honourable senators, on behalf of the Progressive Senate Group, I’m happy to join the other leaders in welcoming another two colleagues today. There is a bit less pomp and circumstance than there was yesterday, but this is nevertheless an important moment for these new senators who have waited several months to take their places in this chamber. It’s nice to finally make it official.

Senator Dawn Arnold has a proven track record of community building, so I have no doubt that she will continue to be an excellent advocate for her communities here in the Senate. Moncton’s loss is a gain for New Brunswick and, indeed, for all of Canada. Her municipal experience and her commitment to arts and culture — especially Francophone culture — will be valuable in her new role as senator.

• (1430)

Welcome, Senator Arnold.

Senator Farah Mohamed has both founded and led charitable sector organizations, particularly to address systemic inequalities and to defend the rights of women and girls. Her fierce passion and dedication for justice and human rights issues will be welcomed here. Though she may be used to being on the other side having worked in the other place as a staffer, I have no doubt that she will fit right in as a senator.

Welcome, Senator Mohamed.

As we heard yesterday, the government has an ambitious agenda, and Canadians will be looking to all parliamentarians to work together for the good of our country.

On behalf of the Progressive Senate Group, I am pleased to officially welcome you to the Senate. We look forward to working with you both.

*Wela'lin.* Thank you.

Canada should be issuing and the only statement we should be supporting. Canada needs to stand unequivocally with its ally Israel not only to bring home the hostages, but also to make it clear that Jewish Canadians here in Canada should be safe in their homes and in their country.

Thank you.

[Translation]

## SENATORS' STATEMENTS

### ANTI-SEMITISM

**Hon. Leo Housakos (Leader of the Opposition):** Honourable senators, I rise today to plainly say what few others appear willing to say: Jews are no longer safe in our country. It's not that they feel unsafe; they are unsafe, and we, as politicians, are in no small part to blame.

Anti-Semitism and Jew hatred are now expressed openly, shamelessly and without restraint in Canada. It appears in our streets, on our campuses, on social media and even in the rhetoric of certain Western political leaders who — willingly or not — repeat Hamas talking points to attack Israel.

Recently, the Liberal government made the troubling decision to summon the Israeli ambassador not to express solidarity in the face of rising anti-Semitism, but to reprimand Israel after warning shots were fired in the vicinity of a diplomatic delegation that had veered off an agreed-upon path in a combat zone — a luxury not afforded to the more than 1,200 innocent Israelis murdered on October 7 and certainly not afforded to the two Israeli diplomatic staff who were murdered days later in Washington, D.C., by a pro-Hamas militant as they left a cultural event at the Jewish museum.

Meanwhile, here in Canada, Charlotte Kates, the international coordinator of a terrorist group, Samidoun, publicly justified the murder of those two young Israelis and brazenly insinuated that the same should happen here in Canada.

But we're lecturing Israel.

We hear chants in our streets like "From the river to the sea" and calls for intifada. These are not harmless slogans.

What does our government do? We issue a joint statement with the U.K. and France condemning Israel's military operation in Gaza. That statement was praised, honourable colleagues, by Hamas. This is now the second time that this terrorist organization has publicly expressed support for Canada's position.

When a group responsible for the murder of over 1,200 civilians, including eight Canadians, applauds your foreign policy, you are definitely on the wrong side of history and on the wrong path.

Let's be clear: This war could end tomorrow and millions of Palestinians could be liberated from the tyranny of Hamas if that terrorist group laid down its weapons, released the hostages and abandoned its mission of destruction. That's the only statement

### MENTAL HEALTH WEEK

**Hon. Sharon Burey:** Colleagues, I rise today to call your attention to Mental Health Week, which was held from May 5 to 11, 2025.

Canada has made a lot of progress when it comes to recognizing the importance of mental health. Take, for example, the report entitled *Out of the Shadows at Last: Transforming Mental Health, Mental Illness and Addiction Services in Canada*, published in 2006 by the Standing Senate Committee on Social Affairs, Science and Technology.

[English]

But 20 years later, the stubborn fact remains that the outcomes all of us desire are increasingly out of reach. Currently, approximately 50% of Canadians report having unmet mental health needs, and there is a crisis in child and youth mental health. Alarming, 75% of children with mental disorders do not have access to specialized treatment services.

Released in May 2025, UNICEF Report Card 19 ranked Canada nineteenth out of thirty-six wealthy countries in child and youth well-being. We have increasingly become more conscious that there is no health without mental health. What is also undeniable is the astronomical economic, justice and societal costs and the impact on productivity and quality of life.

Building a strong Canada requires our focused attention on productivity. Estimates from the Mental Health Commission of Canada suggest that the annual direct and indirect costs of mental health issues amount to \$90 billion while more recent estimates from the Boston Consulting Group indicate an economic impact of over \$200 billion annually.

Studies indicate that for every dollar invested there can be up to \$30 in improved productivity. The Conference Board of Canada reports that treating a cohort of 10-year-old children for depression and anxiety could save \$1 trillion over their lifetimes.

One of the recommendations from the roundtable report on mental health parity across the lifespan supports enshrining mental health, substance use and addiction parity in legislation.

The government deserves commendation for its investments in the Youth Mental Health Fund. However, it is crucial to note that, in this current government, we do not yet have a minister of mental health and addictions.

Colleagues, in these extraordinary times, let us seize the moment, focus on building mental health, substance use and addiction parity and invest in Canada's future. Our children are depending on us.

Thank you. *Meegwetch.*

### VISITORS IN THE GALLERY

**The Hon. the Speaker:** Honourable senators, I wish to draw your attention to the presence in the gallery of members of the Canadian Network for Neglected Tropical Diseases and visiting delegates from the United Kingdom, Ghana and Madagascar. They are the guests of the Honourable Senators Kutcher, Boehm and Ravalia.

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

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

### NEGLECTED TROPICAL DISEASES

**Hon. Stan Kutcher:** Honourable senators, I rise to draw our attention to the importance of neglected tropical diseases, or NTDs.

Today, we have welcomed to our chamber national and global leaders who are working tirelessly to rid the world of the scourge of these treatable illnesses. I would like to acknowledge the work of my friends and colleagues Senator Boehm and Senator Ravalia on this very important issue.

NTDs are 21 illnesses and conditions that affect one in eight of the most vulnerable people living in the world today. People with NTDs suffer from permanent disability, stigma, loss of household income and social exclusion. Many of these diseases are not new but are known from antiquity with well-documented evidence of their devastating impact.

Globally, there has been a concerted effort to control and eliminate NTDs. Through the largest public-private partnerships in the history of global public health, medicines are made available for distribution in affected countries through the World Health Organization. For every dollar invested in NTD programs, \$26 of donated drugs is procured. Billions of treatments have been distributed over the last 20 years.

These efforts have resulted in great gains. Now, 56 countries have eliminated at least one NTD. However, recent cuts in international assistance funding have put these gains at risk. Because of these cuts, over 140 million people may not be able to receive the treatment they need this year alone.

Under the current President of the United States, or POTUS, administration, the long-standing compassion and care for the global most vulnerable have been shattered. With this flight from doing what is right, other countries will need to step up to fill the breach. We must stay the course. Canada and other like-minded nations must step up to address the challenges of NTDs.

• (1440)

Can we do it? Yes, we can.

In January 2022, I stood before this chamber and asked that Canada work through the Pan American Health Organization, or PAHO, to fund the elimination of blinding trachoma in the region of the Americas. Colleagues, that happened.

In 2023, a \$15-million Canadian investment in trachoma elimination — the most substantial remaining commitment for NTDs within PAHO — was made. I am proud of what Canada stepped up to do then, and I know that we must do more now.

Today, we have an opportunity to show global leadership in the fight against NTDs. Let us not stop this race within metres of the finish line. What's the prize? It's global health security and a better future for millions of our brothers and sisters. And for us, it's the satisfaction of a needed job well done.

[*Translation*]

### VISITORS IN THE GALLERY

**The Hon. the Speaker:** Honourable senators, I wish to draw your attention to the presence in the gallery of Gracia Kasoki Katahwa, Mayor of Côte-des-Neiges—Notre-Dame-de-Grâce, and Thierno Souleymane Diallo, President of the Board of Directors of the Fédération Africaine et Associations du Canada, who is accompanied by another member of the federation. They are the guests of the Honourable Senator Gerba.

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

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

### AFRICA DAY

**Hon. Amina Gerba:** Colleagues, I'm very pleased to be with you here again for the Forty-fifth Parliament. I would like to take this opportunity to welcome all of our new colleagues.

I rise today in recognition of Africa Day, May 25, which commemorates the founding of the Organization of African Unity, now the African Union, on that date in 1963. On that day, Emperor Haile Selassie of Ethiopia said, and I quote, "History teaches us that unity is strength."

Sixty-two years later, that unity has grown even stronger with the creation of the African Continental Free Trade Area, a coalition of 54 countries with a combined GDP of more than \$3.4 trillion U.S.

Africa has 1.4 billion people — 1.4 billion consumers — and some 70% of them are under 30 years old. This dynamic and ambitious youth cohort is a force the world must reckon with now and in the future. Africans are now setting their own development priorities, as laid out in the African Union's Agenda 2063: The Africa We Want.



Colleagues, in March of this year, Canada reached a historic milestone by adopting the first-ever Canada's Africa Strategy. I would also note that, on May 12, the City of Montreal passed a motion officially designating May 25 of each year as Africa Day. We have with us in the gallery the mayor of the borough of Côte-des-Neiges—Notre-Dame-de-Grâce, Gracia Kasoki Katahwa, the lead on this ambitious proposal in Montreal's municipal council, along with members of the Fédération Africaine et Associations du Canada, the FAAC, which initiated the proposal.

[English]

As the Co-Chair of the Canada-Africa Parliamentary Association, I warmly invite you to the dinner reception we are hosting tonight in collaboration with the group of African ambassadors.

[Translation]

I look forward to seeing you at the SJAM at 6 p.m. today.

Thank you.

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

[English]

#### VISITORS IN THE GALLERY

**The Hon. the Speaker:** Honourable senators, I wish to draw your attention to the presence in the gallery of Joanna McCallum, councillor for the Town of Canmore, and her daughters Sophia and Opal. They are the guests of the Honourable Senator Sorensen.

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

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

[Translation]

#### FORTY-FIFTH PARLIAMENT

**Hon. René Cormier:** Honourable senators, what a privilege it is to be gathered here, welcoming 12 new colleagues, at the start of the Forty-fifth Parliament, some 157 years, 10 months, and 28 days after Canada was founded.

[English]

It is often said that each first day of a new adventure carries within it the potential for transformation, like an invitation to draw on the lessons of the past to build a different future together. To you, new senators — who have just taken your first steps in this chamber and who are inspired by a strong desire to serve our country — know that you are already instilling, through your presence, a new and renewed human energy. With your remarkable life experiences, you bring unique expertise in sectors such as education, the economy, ports, health, diplomacy, social service, women's rights and sexual minorities' rights.

Moreover, as Pride Month approaches, I would like to point out that the Senate now has seven senators from the 2SLGBTQIA+ communities — a historic first in the upper chamber.

[Translation]

That said, colleagues, regardless of your background or origins, the Senate group you have joined, or whether you decide to remain unaffiliated, you will always find that the Senate is a place ripe for collaboration. Of course, there will be some turbulence as you participate in vigorous, sometimes heated debates; however, you will discover that genuine, professional cooperation is possible among colleagues who share the same desire to serve the Canadian nation in good faith and to the best of their knowledge and abilities.

French writer Ernest Renan described a nation as:

. . . having made great things together and wishing to make them again.

[English]

In the current geopolitical context, the Forty-fifth Parliament of Canada is called upon more than ever to make important decisions to ensure the political, economic and cultural sovereignty of our country and the protection and security of Canadians. As the chamber of sober second thought and the defender of minorities and regions, the Senate has a crucial role to play in this regard.

Thanks to the expertise of its members, its ability to rise above overly partisan debates and its capacity to act as a bulwark against the democratic excesses of the other place, there is no doubt that the upper chamber requires — more than ever — rigorous, effective governance and the unwavering commitment of all in fulfilling the mission of our democratic institution.

[Translation]

I will conclude by quoting the great Senator Pierre Claude Nolin, forty-third Speaker of the Senate, who said, and I quote:

As appointed parliamentarians, as Senators, we should treat each other with the same dignity and respect whether we sit with the Government, the Opposition, or as Independents. In this way, we can work better together in carrying out our shared responsibility of fulfilling the constitutional mandate of the Senate, to provide sober second thought in the important work we do here.

[English]

This is what I wish for us and for all Canadians, colleagues. *Meegwetch.*

## THE LATE HIS HOLINESS POPE FRANCIS HIS HOLINESS POPE LEO XIV

**Hon. Tony Loffreda:** Honourable senators, I rise today with a heavy heart but also with hope for the future to pay homage to Pope Francis and celebrate Pope Leo. I had the honour to attend Pope Francis' funeral and Pope Leo's inaugural mass.

A man of the people, humble, compassionate and progressive, Pope Francis passed away on April 21, 2025. He was a highly respected religious leader whose pontificate was defined by a profound commitment to interreligious dialogue, climate change advocacy and concern for marginalized populations.

In his last homily on Easter Sunday — the Church's holiest day — Pope Francis urged us to do the following:

. . . to renew the gift of hope within us, to surrender our sufferings and our concerns to hope, to share it with those whom we meet along our journey and to entrust to hope the future of our lives and the destiny of the human family. And so we cannot settle for the fleeting things of this world or give in to sadness; we must run, filled with joy. . . .

• (1450)

While his departure does fill us with sadness, his life's work must also fill us with joy. I am confident the College of Cardinals elected the right successor to pursue his mission of kindness and compassion.

Born Robert Francis Prevost, Pope Leo becomes the two hundred and sixty-seventh head of the Catholic Church and the first North American. In his inaugural homily, he reminded us:

. . . we still see too much discord, too many wounds caused by hatred, violence, prejudice, the fear of difference, and an economic paradigm that exploits the Earth's resources and marginalizes the poorest. . . .

His Holiness hopes that the Church can be “. . . a small leaven of unity, communion and fraternity within the world. . . .” And he called on our goodwill to build a world where peace reigns.

His message can serve as a guiding light toward reconciliation, non-violence and peaceful dialogue, especially in today's increasingly fractured world.

Honourable colleagues, as we open the Forty-fifth Canadian Parliament, I hope the message of humility and compassion that shaped Pope Francis' legacy will guide us during our deliberations. Equally important is Pope Leo's message of unity and dialogue. We may occasionally disagree — sometimes passionately — but we must do so with respect, understanding and empathy as we work to better the lives of our fellow citizens.

Regardless of faith, there is a universality in their message that we can — and should — all embrace. Thank you. *Meegwetch.*

## ROUTINE PROCEEDINGS

### BUSINESS OF THE SENATE

**The Hon. the Speaker:** Honourable senators, there is an agreement that, notwithstanding any provision of the Rules, for today's sitting, Routine Proceedings extend beyond 30 minutes, until the end of business related thereto.

Is it agreed, honourable senators?

**Hon. Senators:** Agreed.

### THE ESTIMATES, 2025-26

#### MAIN ESTIMATES 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 Main Estimates for the year 2025-26.

### THE HONOURABLE DONALD NEIL PLETT

#### SPEECH OF THE HONOURABLE SENATOR ON THE OCCASION OF HIS RETIREMENT TABLED

**Hon. Yonah Martin (Deputy Leader of the Opposition):** Honourable senators, I have the honour to table, in both official languages, a copy of the speech made by the Honourable Donald Neil Plett on the occasion of his retirement from the Senate.

### ETHICS AND CONFLICT OF INTEREST FOR SENATORS

#### NOTICE OF MOTION TO AFFECT COMMITTEE MEMBERSHIP AND PROCEEDINGS

**Hon. Marc Gold (Government Representative in the Senate):** Honourable senators, I give notice that, at the next sitting of the Senate, I will move the following government motion:

That, notwithstanding rules 12-3(2)(f) and 12-26(1) and subsections 35(2), (4), (5) and (8) of the Ethics and Conflict of Interest Code for Senators, the Honourable Senators Boniface, Busson, Carignan, P.C., Harder, P.C., Seidman and Smith be appointed to serve on the Standing Committee on Ethics and Conflict of Interest for Senators, until such time as a motion pursuant to rule 12-26(1) is adopted by the Senate or the Senate otherwise replaces the membership of the committee;

That, notwithstanding rule 12-26(2) and subsection 35(2) of the Ethics and Conflict of Interest Code for Senators, the quorum of the committee be four members;

That, notwithstanding the provisions of the previous two paragraphs, following the retirement of the Honourable Senator Seidman, she not be replaced as a member of the committee, which from that time have five members, of whom three constitute the quorum;

That, notwithstanding rule 12-26(1), for the duration of the membership of the committee pursuant to this order, when a vacancy occurs in the membership of the committee, the replacement member be appointed by order of the Senate;

That the committee be authorized to meet even though the Senate may then be sitting, and that rule 12-18(1) be suspended in relation thereto; and

That the committee be authorized to hold hybrid meetings or meetings entirely by videoconference, with the following provisions applying in relation to such meetings:

1. all members of the committee participating count towards quorum;
2. such meetings be considered to be occurring in the parliamentary precinct, irrespective of where participants may be located, subject to point 4(a);
3. the committee be directed to approach in camera meetings with the utmost caution and all necessary precautions, taking account of the risks to the confidentiality of in camera proceedings inherent in such technologies;
4. subject to variations that may be required by the circumstances, to participate in a meeting of the committee by videoconference senators must:
  - (a) participate from a designated office or designated residence within Canada;
  - (b) use a device and a headset with integrated microphone provided by the Senate and authorized for videoconferences with interpretation;
  - (c) be the only people visible during the videoconference;
  - (d) have their video on and broadcasting their image at all times, unless the meeting is suspended; and
  - (e) leave the videoconference if they leave their seat, unless the meeting is suspended; and
5. if the committee holds a hybrid or videoconference meeting in public, the provisions of rule 14-7(2) be applied so as to allow recording or broadcasting through facilities arranged by the Clerk of the

Senate, and, if such a meeting cannot be broadcast live, the committee be considered to have fulfilled any obligations under the Rules relating to public meetings by making any available recording publicly available as soon as possible thereafter.

## THE ESTIMATES, 2025-26

### NOTICE OF MOTION TO AUTHORIZE NATIONAL FINANCE COMMITTEE TO STUDY MAIN ESTIMATES WITH THE EXCEPTION OF VOTE 1 TO BE STUDIED BY JOINT COMMITTEE ON THE LIBRARY OF PARLIAMENT

**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 Main Estimates for the fiscal year ending March 31, 2026, with the exception of Library of Parliament Vote 1, when and if the committee is formed;

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;

That the Standing Joint Committee on the Library of Parliament be authorized to examine and report upon the expenditures set out in Library of Parliament Vote 1 of the Main Estimates for the fiscal year ending March 31, 2026, when and if the committee is formed; and

That, in relation to the expenditures set out in Library of Parliament Vote 1, a message be sent to the House of Commons to acquaint that house accordingly.

## ADJOURNMENT

### NOTICE OF MOTION

**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, when the Senate next adjourns after the adoption of this motion, it do stand adjourned until Tuesday, June 3, 2025, at 2 p.m.

[Translation]

## NATIONAL FRAMEWORK ON SICKLE CELL DISEASE BILL

### FIRST READING

**Hon. Marie-Françoise Mégie** introduced Bill S-201, An Act respecting a national framework on sickle cell disease.

(Bill read first time.)

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

(On motion of Senator Mégie, bill placed on the Orders of the Day for second reading two days hence.)

[English]

• (1500)

## FOOD AND DRUGS ACT

### BILL TO AMEND—FIRST READING

**Hon. Patrick Brazeau** introduced Bill S-202, An Act to amend the Food and Drugs Act (warning label on alcoholic beverages).

(Bill read first time.)

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

(On motion of Senator Brazeau, bill placed on the Orders of the Day for second reading two days hence.)

[Translation]

## ALCOHOLIC BEVERAGE PROMOTION PROHIBITION BILL

### FIRST READING

**Hon. Patrick Brazeau** introduced Bill S-203, An Act to prohibit the promotion of alcoholic beverages.

(Bill read first time.)

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

(On motion of Senator Brazeau, bill placed on the Orders of the Day for second reading two days hence.)

[English]

## NATIONAL FRAMEWORK ON HEART FAILURE BILL

### FIRST READING

**Hon. Yonah Martin (Deputy Leader of the Opposition)** introduced Bill S-204, An Act to establish a National framework on heart failure.

(Bill read first time.)

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

(On motion of Senator Martin, bill placed on the Orders of the Day for second reading two days hence.)

## CORRECTIONS AND CONDITIONAL RELEASE ACT

### BILL TO AMEND—FIRST READING

**Hon. Kim Pate** introduced Bill S-205, An Act to amend the Corrections and Conditional Release Act.

(Bill read first time.)

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

(On motion of Senator Pate, bill placed on the Orders of the Day for second reading two days hence.)

## NATIONAL FRAMEWORK FOR A GUARANTEED LIVABLE BASIC INCOME BILL

### FIRST READING

**Hon. Kim Pate** introduced Bill S-206, An Act to develop a national framework for a guaranteed livable basic income.

(Bill read first time.)

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

(On motion of Senator Pate, bill placed on the Orders of the Day for second reading two days hence.)

## CRIMINAL RECORDS ACT

### BILL TO AMEND—FIRST READING

**Hon. Kim Pate** introduced Bill S-207, An Act to amend the Criminal Records Act, to make consequential amendments to other Acts and to repeal a regulation.

(Bill read first time.)

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

(On motion of Senator Pate, bill placed on the Orders of the Day for second reading two days hence.)

### CRIMINAL CODE

#### BILL TO AMEND—FIRST READING

**Hon. Kim Pate** introduced Bill S-208, An Act to amend the Criminal Code (independence of the judiciary).

(Bill read first time.)

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

(On motion of Senator Pate, bill placed on the Orders of the Day for second reading two days hence.)

[Translation]

### PROTECTING YOUNG PERSONS FROM EXPOSURE TO PORNOGRAPHY BILL

#### FIRST READING

**Hon. Julie Miville-Dechéne** introduced Bill S-209, An Act to restrict young persons' online access to pornographic material.

(Bill read first time.)

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

(On motion of Senator Miville-Dechéne, bill placed on the Orders of the Day for second reading two days hence.)

[English]

### UKRAINIAN HERITAGE MONTH BILL

#### FIRST READING

**Hon. Stan Kutcher** introduced Bill S-210, An Act respecting Ukrainian Heritage Month.

(Bill read first time.)

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

(On motion of Senator Kutcher, bill placed on the Orders of the Day for second reading two days hence.)

### NATIONAL FRAMEWORK ON SPORTS BETTING ADVERTISING BILL

#### FIRST READING

**Hon. Marty Deacon** introduced Bill S-211, An Act respecting a national framework on sports betting advertising.

(Bill read first time.)

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

(On motion of Senator Deacon (*Ontario*), bill placed on the Orders of the Day for second reading two days hence.)

### NATIONAL STRATEGY FOR CHILDREN AND YOUTH BILL

#### FIRST READING

**Hon. Rosemary Moodie** introduced Bill S-212, An Act respecting a national strategy for children and youth in Canada.

(Bill read first time.)

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

(On motion of Senator Moodie, bill placed on the Orders of the Day for second reading two days hence.)

• (1510)

### CANADA ELECTIONS ACT

#### BILL TO AMEND—FIRST READING

**Hon. Donna Dasko** introduced Bill S-213, An Act to amend the Canada Elections Act (demographic information).

(Bill read first time.)

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

(On motion of Senator Dasko, bill placed on the Orders of the Day for second reading two days hence.)

### SPECIAL ECONOMIC MEASURES ACT

#### BILL TO AMEND—FIRST READING

**Hon. Donna Dasko** introduced Bill S-214, An Act to amend the Special Economic Measures Act (disposal of foreign state assets).

(Bill read first time.)

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

(On motion of Senator Dasko, bill placed on the Orders of the Day for second reading two days hence.)

[*Translation*]

#### NATIONAL IMMIGRATION MONTH BILL

##### FIRST READING

**Hon. Amina Gerba** introduced Bill S-215, An Act respecting National Immigration Month.

(Bill read first time.)

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

(On motion of Senator Gerba, bill placed on the Orders of the Day for second reading two days hence.)

#### CHIGNECTO ISTHMUS DYKELAND SYSTEM BILL

##### FIRST READING

**Hon. Jim Quinn** introduced Bill S-216, An Act to declare the Chignecto Isthmus Dykeland System and related works to be for the general advantage of Canada.

(Bill read first time.)

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

(On motion of Senator Quinn, bill placed on the Orders of the Day for second reading two days hence.)

[*English*]

#### CANADA REVENUE AGENCY

##### BILL TO AMEND—FIRST READING

**Hon. Percy E. Downe** introduced Bill S-217, An Act to amend the Canada Revenue Agency Act (reporting on unpaid income tax).

(Bill read first time.)

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

(On motion of Senator Downe, bill placed on the Orders of the Day for second reading two days hence.)

#### CONSTITUTION ACT, 1982

##### BILL TO AMEND—FIRST READING

**Hon. Peter Harder** introduced Bill S-218, An Act to amend the Constitution Act, 1982 (notwithstanding clause).

(Bill read first time.)

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

(On motion of Senator Harder, bill placed on the Orders of the Day for second reading two days hence.)

[*Translation*]

#### JUDICIAL INDEPENDENCE DAY BILL

##### FIRST READING

**Hon. Pierre Moreau** introduced Bill S-219, An Act to establish Judicial Independence Day.

(Bill read first time.)

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

(On motion of Senator Moreau, bill placed on the Orders of the Day for second reading two days hence.)

[*English*]

#### HELLENIC HERITAGE MONTH BILL

##### FIRST READING

**Hon. Tony Loffreda** introduced Bill S-220, An Act to designate the month of March as Hellenic Heritage Month.

(Bill read first time.)

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

(On motion of Senator Loffreda, bill placed on the Orders of the Day for second reading two days hence.)

#### NATIONAL BIRD OF CANADA BILL

##### FIRST READING

**Hon. Salma Ataullahjan** introduced Bill S-221, An Act to provide for the recognition of the Canada jay as the national bird of Canada.

(Bill read first time.)

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

[Translation]

(On motion of Senator Ataullahjan, bill placed on the Orders of the Day for second reading two days hence.)

## THE SENATE

NOTICE OF MOTION THAT ALL COMMITTEES CONSIDER THE INFLUENCES AND IMPACTS OF TECHNOLOGY IN ANY STUDIES FOR THE REMAINDER OF CURRENT SESSION

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

That, for the remainder of the current session, all committees consider the influences and impacts of technology in any study, including the consideration of bills, the subject matter of bills, estimates and special studies, authorized by the Senate, including any such work already authorized but not yet completed.

NOTICE OF MOTION TO CALL ON GOVERNMENT TO CREATE A NATIONAL STRATEGY TO ENGAGE CANADIANS ABROAD

**Hon. Yuen Pau Woo:** Honourable senators, I give notice that, at the next sitting of the Senate, I will move:

That the Senate call on the Government of Canada to create a national strategy to engage Canadians abroad.

• (1520)

## NEED FOR SAFE AND PRODUCTIVE DEVELOPMENT AND USE OF ARTIFICIAL INTELLIGENCE

### NOTICE OF INQUIRY

**Hon. Rosemary Moodie:** Honourable senators, I give notice that, two days hence:

I will call the attention of the Senate to the need for the safe and productive development and use of artificial intelligence in Canada.

## QUESTION PERIOD

### PRIME MINISTER'S OFFICE

#### GOVERNMENT PRIORITIES

**Hon. Leo Housakos (Leader of the Opposition):** Honourable senators, my question is for the Leader of the Government. This morning, we learned that the former Liberal government spent \$330,000 to rebrand VIA Rail's high-frequency rail project before the project was even officially announced.

I'd like to remind senators that, according to Ryan Katz-Rosene, an associate professor at the University of Ottawa, it is concerning to see the government focusing on how to maximize the marketing appeal of the project instead of trying to address challenges in the transport sector. This type of irresponsible spending, with no accountability or economic logic, is a perfect example of the wastefulness characterized by the Liberal government at the time and the current Carney government. What tangible measures, if any, will be taken to ensure that taxpayers' money is used wisely?

**Hon. Marc Gold (Government Representative in the Senate):** Thank you for your question. I congratulate you on your appointment as the Leader of the Opposition here in the Senate.

Prime Minister Carney was very clear, not only during the election period, but also after as Prime Minister and even here today, in saying that he will focus on Canada's economic development, including major projects of national interest that will transform our country in order to create new opportunities so that our businesses and citizens can engage with the world.

Honourable senator, you're well aware that the Prime Minister has also been very clear about taxation and fiscal responsibility, which are very important to him. As you also know, and I will close with this, next week, all of the provinces and the two territories will meet in Saskatoon to discuss these projects of national interest.

**Senator Housakos:** Senator Gold, those are fine words, but the announcements that were made to improve the government's image are nothing new. They were a specialty of the Trudeau government. Yesterday's Speech from the Throne was full of grand promises, but was lacking on how those would be implemented.

Can you reassure Canadians that Mr. Carney's Liberals will truly shift into action to keep their promises, and explain what they are going to do to actually succeed this time?

**Senator Gold:** The Prime Minister was very clear about the fact that the government will focus on results to ensure the well-being of Canadians.

As you know, we will soon be introducing legislation to deliver on many election promises. Regarding the government's other priorities, we look forward to legislation being introduced and studied in the weeks and months to come.

#### OFFICIAL LANGUAGES

**Hon. Rose-May Poirier:** Honourable senators, my question is for the Leader of the Government in the Senate. The mandate of the Commissioner of Official Languages was supposed to end on January 28 but was extended by six months until the end of July. However, in March, Prime Minister Carney didn't make official languages a priority in his cabinet. In fact, it wasn't until francophone communities expressed their disappointment that he added the title of Minister responsible for Official Languages to Minister Guilbeault's responsibilities. This does little to inspire confidence that the Liberal government is listening to the needs of francophones.

Leader, what progress has the government made on appointing a new commissioner?

**Hon. Marc Gold (Government Representative in the Senate):** Thank you for the question. This government recognizes the paramount importance of our two official languages and, I would also add, the importance of Indigenous languages. This was clear in all of the Prime Minister's speeches before, during and after the election.

With regard to your specific question, I don't have any information on the matter, but as soon as the announcement is made, I will inform the members of this chamber.

**Senator Poirier:** It took the government two years to appoint Commissioner Thériault in 2018, after appointing an interim commissioner for six months, followed by the partisan appointment of Madeleine Meilleur and then another six-month interim term. This all resulted in an unnecessary two-year delay.

Can you commit to us today that Prime Minister Carney will respect the non-partisan process and appoint a new commissioner by July 28?

**Senator Gold:** The Prime Minister has said very clearly in all of his speeches that he will act in the best interests of Canadians in every aspect of his responsibilities as Prime Minister, and the government will do the same.

#### CANADIAN HERITAGE

##### ONLINE STREAMING

**Hon. Julie Miville-Dechéne:** Senator Gold, the Government of Quebec just introduced a bill that would enable it to impose French-language content quotas on platforms such as Netflix and Disney.

Quebec is quite legitimately seeking to protect its language from English cultural invasion, and it is disappointed that the federal government is dragging its feet in this regard. It is true that Bill C-11, the Broadcasting Act, was passed over two years

ago, but the CRTC still hasn't taken any action to increase the discoverability of French-language content. Does Quebec have good reason to be losing hope that the federal government will take action?

**Hon. Marc Gold (Government Representative in the Senate):** Thank you for your question and your ongoing commitment in this regard. It is to your credit.

The government firmly believes that content produced in Canada should be easily accessible on streaming platforms in Canadians' official language of choice.

Our government is aware that the Quebec government introduced a bill on the discoverability of French-language content. It will carefully examine the bill and may have more to say on this in the coming days.

**Senator Miville-Dechéne:** Thank you. However, isn't there a risk of contradictions between the federal Broadcasting Act, which seeks to increase discoverability, and the upcoming Quebec law, which will impose quotas? Are we not asking broadcasting platforms to do two contradictory things? What will happen then? Which law will prevail?

**Senator Gold:** As you know, I was a constitutional expert in my former life, so I won't get into the weeds on constitutional rules around which language takes precedence in the bill.

I've said it before and I'll say it again. The government will take a close look at this bill and may have some answers later on.

[English]

#### EMPLOYMENT AND SOCIAL DEVELOPMENT

##### CANADA DISABILITY BENEFIT

**Hon. Mary Coyle:** First, I want to express my happiness at reuniting with all of you, my colleagues, and welcoming — very warmly and with all of our appreciation — our new colleagues who are here in the chamber. It is great to be back.

Senator Gold, I'm so pleased to be able to spend your last month with you serving Canadians here in the Senate. This is a special month. I am happy to be here with you.

Yesterday, we heard the King speak about building Canada's economy to become the strongest in the G7. We heard of the opportunities to think and act big. We heard that a country is only truly strong when it serves everyone.

• (1530)

I applaud the emphasis on protecting, transforming and growing Canada's economy. This is imperative for Canada to be strong and free and for Canadians to be able to count on good jobs and incomes. We need growth in national revenues to be that country that serves everyone.



This is National Accessibility Week in Canada, and the first month of eligibility for the much-awaited Canada Disability Benefit is this June — in other words, next week — with payments slated to commence this July. The Accessible Canada Act came into force six years ago, and the September 2020 Speech from the Throne announced the new Canada Disability Benefit. So, it's time.

Senator Gold, can you confirm that the Canada Disability Benefit will be available for application as planned this June with people receiving the benefit in July?

**Hon. Marc Gold (Government Representative in the Senate):** Thank you, senator, for your question, for your kind remarks, and also, importantly, for your continued advocacy on this issue.

My understanding, colleagues, is that the government is still on track and expects that the payments will begin in July 2025, and that further information regarding the application process will be shared in short order. Should there be any developments, I will be sure to update this chamber. That is my understanding as it stands today.

**Senator Coyle:** Great news. Thank you, Senator Gold.

Groups such as Disability Without Poverty are worried about the lack of information being provided by the federal government to Canadians on the Canada Disability Benefit. Alberta has still not committed to not clawing back provincial, social and disability payments as they await more direction from the federal government. As you know, there have been any many concerns raised about the limited eligibility for the benefit as it stands now and its low amount. For now, the focus is on getting the promised benefit out to the people who need it.

Senator Gold, what is the government doing to widely provide information on eligibility and how Canadians can actually access the Canada Disability Benefit? Will we be seeing legislation or some other measure that will be able to provide for the exemption of the benefit from being treated as income for tax purposes?

**Senator Gold:** Thank you for your question. I'm not in a position to speculate on any legislation in this area, as this chamber understands. I can only say, again, that information with regard to the application process will be forthcoming and that the government remains on track for the cheques to finally — much awaited — be available as of July.

[Translation]

## INDUSTRY

### INTERPROVINCIAL TRADE

**Hon. Josée Verner:** My question is for the Government Representative in the Senate.

The Speech from the Throne affirmed the Prime Minister's election promise to work with the provinces and territories to deliver "free trade across the nation" by July 1.

Considering how challenging implementing the Canadian Free Trade Agreement has been since 2017, that's a tall order.

Can you confirm that this particular free trade system will eliminate all barriers to internal trade under federal and provincial jurisdiction, including barriers that affect sensitive sectors in certain provinces, or might we expect some exceptions?

**Hon. Marc Gold (Government Representative in the Senate):** Thank you for the question and for highlighting how important it is to this government to make our economy more efficient and more vigorous in ways that benefit all Canadians.

As you know, the federal government is committed to doing its part to address barriers that fall under federal jurisdiction.

In addition, there have been several conversations with the provinces and territories, with another meeting scheduled for this week. We are waiting for a new bill that will detail exactly what we need to study. At that point, we'll have more details about the government's election promise.

**Senator Verner:** July 1 is 33 days away; this timeline is very ambitious.

Are you able to fill us in on the progress of intergovernmental discussions on this matter following the Prime Minister's virtual meeting with his provincial and territorial counterparts on May 7, 2025?

**Senator Gold:** Thank you for the question. Unfortunately, I can't disclose discussions held between ministers. As I said before, we will be studying a bill soon. You should have answers to your questions then.

[English]

## PRIVY COUNCIL OFFICE

### NATION BUILDING

**Hon. Brian Francis:** Senator Gold, at a time when Canada is facing growing external pressure such as protectionist policies and shifting global markets, internal unity and collaboration are more important than ever. Yet we continue to see rising feelings of alienation in parts of the country, particularly in Western Canada, with some voices even raising the prospect of separation.

How is your government working to address these regional concerns in a meaningful way? What specific actions are you taking to promote a stronger sense of national cohesion that ensures all provinces and territories feel not only heard and included but also united?

**Hon. Marc Gold (Government Representative in the Senate):** Thank you for your question. This is a great and diverse country, and one that, throughout its history, has reckoned with the challenges that result from the differences in our regions, our perspectives, our experiences and our aspirations. The government is committed to working with leadership in the provinces, territories and Indigenous communities to make sure that all of the government's actions, whether it's with regard to the economy as a whole or to specific projects of national importance, are done so not only with proper consultation, input and engagement of those stakeholders, but also of communities, individuals, businesses and the like to make sure that all voices are heard so that the economy — to again paraphrase the words of the Prime Minister — is as strong as it can be. But it will only be as strong as it can be if it works to the benefit of all Canadians, and that includes all of the regions for our country as well.

**Senator Francis:** Senator Gold, yesterday's Speech from the Throne noted that, "When Canadians come together, Canada builds things that last."

Can you explain how your government plans to get provinces and territories to collaborate on these so-called projects of national significance?

**Senator Gold:** Thank you for your question. My understanding is that Prime Minister Carney, from the very beginning of his tenure as prime minister and even before the election, reached out to the leadership of provinces, territories and Indigenous communities to engage them in the important work of nation building because we are a great nation with a proud history. But all nations, all democracies especially, are works in progress.

We're at a pivotal moment. This government is committed to working with its partners in the provinces, territories and Indigenous leadership to make sure those projects reflect the needs of the communities and regions of this country.

## FINANCE

### DEBT MANAGEMENT REPORT

**Hon. Elizabeth Marshall:** My question is also for Senator Gold.

Senator Gold, the 2023-24 fiscal year ended 14 months ago, yet we're still waiting for the Debt Management Report for that year. We need that report to review the Main Estimates that were just tabled here today.

If you look at the parliamentary calendar, it's possible the government could delay tabling that report until September or October, which would be 18 months after the fiscal year. Can

you tell us when the government will be tabling the 2023-24 Debt Management Report? Hopefully, it is within the next few days.

**Hon. Marc Gold (Government Representative in the Senate):** Senator Marshall, it's such a pleasure to receive questions from you. I smile because it's nice to see you, but you also represent a very serious voice for fiscal accountability and responsibility in this chamber, and it's to your credit.

I don't have the answer that you're seeking. It is important that we have all the tools to do our work. I will certainly raise this with my counterparts at the earliest opportunity.

• (1540)

**Senator Marshall:** To carry on with accountability and transparency, we're also still waiting for the government to provide the Departmental Results Report data and the Full-time Equivalents data on the GC InfoBase website for five organizations. I won't list the five organizations, but I can say the Privy Council Office is one of them.

We need that information to review the Main Estimates. We have been waiting and should have had it last fall. Can you tell us when the government will post that data on the website? Again, it would be very helpful if they could do that within the next few days. I understand most of the data is available.

**Senator Gold:** Again, thank you for your question. I'll certainly add that to the questions that I will raise with my counterpart.

## INTERNATIONAL TRADE

### TRADE TARIFFS

**Hon. David M. Wells:** I want to welcome our new colleagues. I look forward to working with all of you. My question is for Senator Gold, Leader of the Government in the Senate.

Senator, on April 3, the Prime Minister announced a 25% tariff on U.S. vehicle imports and other goods. On April 15, Finance Minister Champagne said:

From day one, the government has reacted with strength and determination to the unjust tariffs imposed by the United States on Canadian goods. . . .

That same day, the Prime Minister dropped these tariffs — the ones that were a response of ". . . strength and determination . . ." — foregoing \$20 billion in revenue he said would be used to support Canadian companies negatively impacted by the U.S. tariffs. Given the \$20 billion cited and the government's lack of a fiscal plan, how does this government plan to address this shortfall?

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

The issues surrounding the tariffs and how Canada has and will continue to respond are matters of great importance for Canadians and the sector to which you referred. But they're also a matter of priority for the government with regard to our larger relationship with the United States and other trading partners. The Government of Canada, the Prime Minister and his ministers — some of his ministers are regularly engaged not only with their counterparts in the United States, but with executives in the auto industry, leaders of unions and so on to ensure that Canada's very important auto and auto parts industry continues to thrive for the benefit of the workers who depend upon it and their families.

**Senator D. M. Wells:** I have a supplementary on that one, leader. In the absence of a federal budget — there has not been one since spring of 2024, and there likely will not be one until October of this year — as well as a free ride on the tariffs on U.S. goods and the \$20-billion shortfall, how can Canadians have confidence in the government's fiscal approach?

**Senator Gold:** Canadians can have confidence that this government is laser-focused on the economy. It's not simply the Prime Minister who brings a wealth of experience and knowledge to the task, but the team that this government has assembled — both within cabinet and the resources and relationships upon which this government can draw worldwide. This should provide Canadians with assurance that this government is focused on the major challenges of our time, which are the changing world order in economic terms and the need for Canada to re-engineer its economy for the future to take advantage of the enormous opportunities that await us. This government is determined to do what it can, as quickly and as effectively as it can, to reap those benefits for all of Canada.

[Translation]

## EMPLOYMENT AND SOCIAL DEVELOPMENT

### CANADA DISABILITY BENEFIT

**Hon. Chantal Petitclerc:** Honourable senators, we're in the middle of National AccessAbility Week and, as you know, there is still much to be done. My colleague Senator Coyle has already articulated my major concerns regarding the Canada Disability Benefit, which should be available in the coming months and continues to raise many concerns. I won't repeat the same question about the situation in Alberta, but I look forward to hearing the answers to Senator Coyle's questions.

However, I would like an answer to the following question. Every Liberal government cabinet since 2015 has had a minister explicitly responsible for the inclusion of persons with disabilities. This is no longer the case today, which is causing a great deal of concern. I was going to say, "within our community," but it worries me personally. Are we right to be concerned? Does this reflect a lack of commitment on the part of the government towards people with disabilities? I would remind you that our goal is to create a barrier-free Canada by 2040. Does this not jeopardize that goal?

**Hon. Marc Gold (Government Representative in the Senate):** Thank you for the question and for your advocacy in that regard. The simple answer is "no," but that's easy for me to say. I understand the concerns, and it's important to emphasize how significant they are for many Canadians with disabilities. I fully understand their concerns. The government decided to make cabinet a little smaller in order to better respond to major national and international issues. I'm quite sure that the absence of a dedicated minister doesn't mean that the government has abandoned or turned its back on its commitment to such important objectives for the well-being of our society.

[English]

## HEALTH

### ACCESS TO HEALTH CARE

**Hon. Flordeliz (Gigi) Osler:** My question is for Senator Gold. Senator Gold, the prosperity and security of a nation depend on the health of its citizens. Yesterday's Speech from the Throne may have offered hope to some Canadians, but not to the 6.5 million who are without a family doctor. Health care, arguably the most pressing issue for millions of people, was not mentioned as a national priority.

This morning, there was a CBC headline about a 96-year-old Nova Scotian woman who has resorted to placing a classified ad to find a family doctor. The government's election platform had at least a few commitments to improving health care. But yesterday's Speech from the Throne did not include any new promises to strengthen or repair our ailing health systems.

Senator Gold, what is the government's plan to address the growing health care crisis, particularly access to primary care?

**Hon. Marc Gold (Government Representative in the Senate):** Thank you for your question. It's clear to all Canadians, and has been for some time, that all levels of government and all partners in the health care systems across this country must work harder to transform our health care system so it can better serve Canadians. The example you gave of the Nova Scotian woman is unfortunately too typical in all provinces and regions of this country.

We need to get more health care workers into the system, and all levels of government have to play their part. This government continues to play its role as a federal government to provide serious, direct health care funding to the provinces and territories to help in their efforts and responsibility to transform and improve the health care system for their citizens and residents.

I understand that the deals that were made with the provinces and territories target what matters most to Canadians: more doctors, health care professionals and nurses; shorter wait times; and, briefly, a better health care system for us.

**Senator Osler:** Thank you, Senator Gold. I would continue to encourage the government to show leadership when it comes to health care.

In its election platform, the government committed to modernizing Canada's health care system by launching a task force for public health care innovation. The task force is meant to invest in and scale up made-in-Canada solutions, improve data quality and ensure accountability.

Senator Gold, when will this task force be launched? How will its work be made transparent and accountable to Canadians, particularly those still waiting to access primary care?

**Senator Gold:** Thank you for your question. I'm not aware of the timeline for that, but I'll certainly make inquiries of the relevant minister.

• (1550)

## CANADIAN HERITAGE

### SPEECH FROM THE THRONE

**Hon. Patrick Brazeau:** Senator Gold, yesterday, we heard King Charles make a land acknowledgment about being on unceded Algonquin land. He talked about the Algonquin people. Personally, that made me a very proud Algonquin. However, at the same time, I started looking around this same room, and, unfortunately, I didn't see very many other Algonquin people. There were no Algonquin drummers. There were no Algonquin chiefs. There were no Algonquin Elders. Elder Claudette Commanda, who happens to be my first cousin, said yesterday that perhaps there was a breach of protocol. When Canada hosts G7 meetings, they don't ask another country to host them. When a province in the Council of the Federation hosts a meeting, they don't ask another province to host it.

On behalf of all the communities that make up the Algonquin Nation, could you please provide an update and look into exactly what happened, as there was no Algonquin representation in hosting the King on Algonquin land?

**Hon. Marc Gold (Government Representative in the Senate):** Thank you for your question. I understand the disappointment underlying it.

It is not the responsibility of my office nor of the government, generally, to deal with matters of protocol, but I'll certainly make the appropriate inquiries.

**Senator Brazeau:** I appreciate that. Like I said, you know me, and I'm not looking to point fingers and blame. I know it's a multi-faceted process.

Having said that, we all have a job to do, and my job is to speak on behalf of the Algonquin Nation that clearly wasn't included in hosting the King on Algonquin land. For the future, let's look into this to ensure that it never happens again and that the Algonquin people, especially the Elders, do not feel disrespected.

**Senator Gold:** Thank you for raising that matter with me. I will certainly make inquiries.

[Translation]

## ORDERS OF THE DAY

### SPEECH FROM THE THRONE

#### MOTION FOR ADDRESS IN REPLY—DEBATE ADJOURNED

**Hon. Marc Gold (Government Representative in the Senate)** moved:

That the following Address be presented to His Majesty the King:

To His Most Excellent Majesty Charles the Third, by the Grace of God King of Canada and His other Realms and Territories, Head of the Commonwealth.

MAY IT PLEASE YOUR MAJESTY:

We, Your Majesty's most loyal and dutiful subjects, the Senate of Canada in Parliament assembled, beg leave to offer our humble thanks to Your Majesty for the gracious Speech which Your Majesty has addressed to both houses of Parliament.

(On motion of Senator LaBoucane-Benson, debate adjourned.)

(At 3:55 p.m., the Senate was continued until tomorrow at 2 p.m.)

## CONTENTS

Wednesday, May 28, 2025

PAGE	PAGE
<b>Business of the Senate</b>	<b>ROUTINE PROCEEDINGS</b>
The Hon. the Speaker . . . . . 16	<b>Business of the Senate</b> . . . . . 22
<b>New Senators</b>	<b>The Estimates, 2025-26</b>
Introduction . . . . . 16	Main Estimates Tabled
<b>Visitors in the Gallery</b>	Hon. Patti LaBoucane-Benson . . . . . 22
The Hon. the Speaker . . . . . 16	<b>The Honourable Donald Neil Plett</b>
<b>Distinguished Visitor in the Gallery</b>	Speech of the Honourable Senator on the Occasion of His
The Hon. the Speaker . . . . . 16	Retirement Tabled
<b>Visitors in the Gallery</b>	Hon. Yonah Martin . . . . . 22
The Hon. the Speaker . . . . . 16	<b>Ethics and Conflict of Interest for Senators</b>
<b>New Senators</b>	Notice of Motion to Affect Committee Membership and
Congratulations on Appointments	Proceedings
Hon. Marc Gold . . . . . 16	Hon. Marc Gold . . . . . 22
Hon. Leo Housakos . . . . . 17	<b>The Estimates, 2025-26</b>
Hon. Raymonde Saint-Germain . . . . . 17	Notice of Motion to Authorize National Finance Committee
Hon. Rebecca Patterson . . . . . 18	to Study Main Estimates with the Exception of Vote 1 to
Hon. Brian Francis . . . . . 18	be Studied by Joint Committee on the Library of
	Parliament
	Hon. Patti LaBoucane-Benson . . . . . 23
	<b>Adjournment</b>
	Notice of Motion
	Hon. Patti LaBoucane-Benson . . . . . 23
<b>SENATORS' STATEMENTS</b>	<b>National Framework on Sickle Cell Disease Bill</b>
<b>Anti-Semitism</b>	(Bill S-201)
Hon. Leo Housakos . . . . . 19	First Reading
<b>Mental Health Week</b>	Hon. Marie-Françoise Mégie . . . . . 24
Hon. Sharon Burey . . . . . 19	<b>Food and Drugs Act (Bill S-202)</b>
<b>Visitors in the Gallery</b>	Bill to Amend—First Reading
The Hon. the Speaker . . . . . 20	Hon. Patrick Brazeau . . . . . 24
<b>Neglected Tropical Diseases</b>	<b>Alcoholic Beverage Promotion Prohibition Bill</b>
Hon. Stan Kutcher . . . . . 20	(Bill S-203)
<b>Visitors in the Gallery</b>	First Reading
The Hon. the Speaker . . . . . 20	Hon. Patrick Brazeau . . . . . 24
<b>Africa Day</b>	<b>National Framework on Heart Failure Bill (Bill S-204)</b>
Hon. Amina Gerba . . . . . 20	First Reading
<b>Visitors in the Gallery</b>	Hon. Yonah Martin . . . . . 24
The Hon. the Speaker . . . . . 21	<b>Corrections and Conditional Release Act (Bill S-205)</b>
<b>Forty-fifth Parliament</b>	Bill to Amend—First Reading
Hon. René Cormier . . . . . 21	Hon. Kim Pate . . . . . 24
<b>The Late His Holiness Pope Francis</b>	<b>National Framework for a Guaranteed Livable Basic</b>
<b>His Holiness Pope Leo XIV</b>	<b>Income Bill (Bill S-206)</b>
Hon. Tony Loffreda . . . . . 22	First Reading
	Hon. Kim Pate . . . . . 24
	<b>Criminal Records Act (Bill S-207)</b>
	Bill to Amend—First Reading
	Hon. Kim Pate . . . . . 24

## CONTENTS

Wednesday, May 28, 2025

PAGE	PAGE
<b>Criminal Code (Bill S-208)</b>	<b>The Senate</b>
Bill to Amend—First Reading	Notice of Motion that All Committees Consider the
Hon. Kim Pate . . . . . 25	Influences and Impacts of Technology in Any Studies for
	the Remainder of Current Session
<b>Protecting Young Persons from Exposure to Pornography</b>	Hon. Colin Deacon . . . . . 27
<b>Bill (Bill S-209)</b>	Notice of Motion to Call on Government to Create a National
First Reading	Strategy to Engage Canadians Abroad
Hon. Julie Miville-Dechéne . . . . . 25	Hon. Yuen Pau Woo . . . . . 27
<b>Ukrainian Heritage Month Bill (Bill S-210)</b>	<b>Need for Safe and Productive Development and Use of</b>
First Reading	<b>Artificial Intelligence</b>
Hon. Stan Kutcher . . . . . 25	Notice of Inquiry
<b>National Framework on Sports Betting Advertising Bill</b>	Hon. Rosemary Moodie . . . . . 27
<b>(Bill S-211)</b>	
First Reading	
Hon. Marty Deacon . . . . . 25	
<b>National Strategy for Children and Youth Bill (Bill S-212)</b>	
First Reading	
Hon. Rosemary Moodie . . . . . 25	
<b>Canada Elections Act (Bill S-213)</b>	
Bill to Amend—First Reading	
Hon. Donna Dasko . . . . . 25	
<b>Special Economic Measures Act (Bill S-214)</b>	
Bill to Amend—First Reading	
Hon. Donna Dasko . . . . . 25	
<b>National Immigration Month Bill (Bill S-215)</b>	
First Reading	
Hon. Amina Gerba . . . . . 26	
<b>Chignecto Isthmus Dykeland System Bill (Bill S-216)</b>	
First Reading	
Hon. Jim Quinn . . . . . 26	
<b>Canada Revenue Agency (Bill S-217)</b>	
Bill to Amend—First Reading	
Hon. Percy E. Downe . . . . . 26	
<b>Constitution Act, 1982 (Bill S-218)</b>	
Bill to Amend—First Reading	
Hon. Peter Harder . . . . . 26	
<b>Judicial Independence Day Bill (Bill S-219)</b>	
First Reading	
Hon. Pierre Moreau . . . . . 26	
<b>Hellenic Heritage Month Bill (Bill S-220)</b>	
First Reading	
Hon. Tony Loffreda . . . . . 26	
<b>National Bird of Canada Bill (Bill S-221)</b>	
First Reading	
Hon. Salma Ataullahjan . . . . . 26	
	<b>QUESTION PERIOD</b>
	<b>Prime Minister's Office</b>
	Government Priorities
	Hon. Leo Housakos . . . . . 27
	Hon. Marc Gold . . . . . 27
	Official Languages
	Hon. Rose-May Poirier . . . . . 28
	Hon. Marc Gold . . . . . 28
	<b>Canadian Heritage</b>
	Online Streaming
	Hon. Julie Miville-Dechéne . . . . . 28
	Hon. Marc Gold . . . . . 28
	<b>Employment and Social Development</b>
	Canada Disability Benefit
	Hon. Mary Coyle . . . . . 28
	Hon. Marc Gold . . . . . 29
	<b>Industry</b>
	Interprovincial Trade
	Hon. Josée Verner . . . . . 29
	Hon. Marc Gold . . . . . 29
	<b>Privy Council Office</b>
	Nation Building
	Hon. Brian Francis . . . . . 29
	Hon. Marc Gold . . . . . 30
	<b>Finance</b>
	Debt Management Report
	Hon. Elizabeth Marshall . . . . . 30
	Hon. Marc Gold . . . . . 30
	<b>International Trade</b>
	Trade Tariffs
	Hon. David M. Wells . . . . . 30
	Hon. Marc Gold . . . . . 31
	<b>Employment and Social Development</b>
	Canada Disability Benefit
	Hon. Chantal Petitclerc . . . . . 31
	Hon. Marc Gold . . . . . 31

## CONTENTS

Wednesday, May 28, 2025

PAGE

PAGE

### Health

Access to Health Care

Hon. Flordeliz (Gigi) Osler . . . . . 31

Hon. Marc Gold . . . . . 31

### Canadian Heritage

Speech from the Throne

Hon. Patrick Brazeau . . . . . 32

Hon. Marc Gold . . . . . 32

---

### ORDERS OF THE DAY

#### Speech from the Throne

Motion for Address in Reply—Debate Adjourned

Hon. Marc Gold . . . . . 32