

(1) Mr. LeBel (Rimouski) – **20 October 2021**

To the Government

Answer tabled on **23 November 2021** (Sessional Paper No. 95-20211123)

Although the territory is vast, the three regions that make up eastern Québec—Bas-Saint-Laurent, Gaspésie and Îles-de-la-Madeleine—maintain close ties. Often, workers from Bas-Saint-Laurent and Gaspésie cross the river to work in Côte-Nord and vice versa.

In such a context of exchange, not only of labour but also goods and services, ferry services between the two shores are obviously crucial. Even before the fiasco of acquiring the *F.-A.-Gauthier*, which does a rather poor job of ensuring the Matane–Côte-Nord link, a service such as that of Rimouski–Forestville has proved that it is essential.

The Société des traversiers commissioned a study from a private firm to evaluate the various impact scenarios should one or both of the Rimouski–Forestville and Trois-Pistoles–Les Escoumins ferries close. First, let me digress to question the STQ’s decision to publish the report in the midst of a municipal election campaign. We were not even a month away and it would have been better to wait for the newly elected municipal officials to take office before posting this document on the state-owned enterprise’s website.

That said, I am also wondering why the study was heavily redacted. I can understand that there are some business-sensitive items requiring confidentiality. However, was it necessary to redact the report’s entire conclusion? This lack of transparency, especially coming from the STQ, whose credibility has been damaged by the *F.-A.-Gauthier* incidents, is causing concern and giving rise to different interpretations in the regional community, at a time when we should all be focusing on the relaunch of the Rimouski–Forestville ferry, which had to suspend its operations for the 2021 season.

My question is the following:

Will the Government commit to ensuring that the STQ be more transparent about its conclusions on the future of our ferries and clearly reiterate its intentions to relaunch the river navigation service between Rimouski and Forestville?

(2) Ms. Charbonneau (Mille-Îles) – **21 October 2021**

To the Minister of Forests, Wildlife and Parks

Answer tabled on **4 November 2021** (Sessional Paper No. 72-20211104)

On two occasions, the Premier of Québec has created great expectations within the forestry industry and communities with commitments to deliver a new forestry regime.

In 2020, after months of waiting, the Government announced minor changes which left all forestry stakeholders disappointed.

In May 2021, the Minister definitively closed the door on a legislative amendment to the forestry regime that was nevertheless desired by all stakeholders, without offering any clear explanation why, directly contradicting the commitment made by the Premier.

Today, concerns and worries persist. The people in the sector are asking, more than ever, for changes to the forestry regime.

Can the Minister explain to us why the Government backtracked on the Premier's commitment to carry out a major reform of the forestry regime and how he intends to ensure more stability for the forestry industry, which provides nearly 60,000 jobs in our regions

(3) Mr. LeBel (Rimouski) – **21 October 2021**

To the Government

Answer tabled on **23 November 2021** (Sessional Paper No. 96-20211123)

In 2021, the Minister of Labour, Employment and Social Solidarity will table the government action plan on community action (PAGAC), which is highly anticipated because it will mark the 20th anniversary of Québec's Policy for the Recognition and Support of Community Action.

Community organizations are an essential link in the social safety net. This movement includes 4,000 organizations from all regions of Québec and employs 60,000 people, which represents 1.4% of all jobs in the province-. These services provide assistance to one million people who are affected by various hardships. Community associations operate on different levels, mainly to defend individual and collective rights, and offer services in various sectors such as health and social services, the fight against poverty and to keep youth in school, the promotion of literacy, social development, housing, social workers in the field (street workers), etc. These organizations played a key role during the pandemic by providing assistance to thousands of Quebecers in extremely difficult circumstances.

Obviously, in this context where the impacts of the pandemic and health measures will continue to be felt for several years to come, a lack of sufficient funding will become more difficult than ever to bear for these human resources who work in the community and who are struggling to keep their organizations alive. This issue seriously impacts, at different levels, all associations' ability to maintain their activities, for example:

- Working conditions are precarious and often below the Québec average.
- The retention of staff is a colossal challenge because salaries and employee benefits are not competitive.
- These human resources are exhausted and unfortunately, this situation too often leads to a burnout.

- Managing volunteers has become more problematic since the onset of the pandemic because of the necessity to manage vaccine passports within organizations.

Our health and education systems have been the focus of attention for over a year and it is essential to consider the community sector's contribution to various fields of activity in our society.

My question is the following:

Autonomous community action organizations are key players in the post-pandemic recovery. Does the Government intend to index the annual funding for the overall mission of community organizations? Will he reply favourably to the autonomous community action organizations' request for \$460 million, while respecting their autonomy and ability to take action to reduce socioeconomic inequalities and offer free, quality, universal public services?

(4) Ms. Sauvé (Fabre) – **21 October 2021**

To the Minister Responsible for Seniors and Informal Caregivers

Answer tabled on **23 November 2021** (Sessional Paper No. 97-20211123)

In the spring of 2020, the Government announced the creation of a paid, intensive training program to recruit 10,000 orderlies. In exchange, the orderlies were required to agree to work in a CHSLD for a period of at least one year.

Can the Minister tell us:

- The number of orderlies that have completed the intensive training program, broken down by CISSS/CIUSSS;
- The number of orderlies that began working for a CHSLD, broken down by CISSS/CIUSSS;
- The number of orderlies that were still employed by a CHSLD on 1 October 2021, broken down by CISSS/CIUSSS;
- The number of orderlies that are on a medical leave of absence, broken down by CISSS/CIUSSS;
- The number of orderlies who have quit their employment, broken down by CISSS/CIUSSS;
- The number of orderlies who have repaid their training, broken down by CISSS/CIUSSS;
- The number of orderlies who are required to repay their training, broken down by CISSS/CIUSSS.

(5) Ms. Nichols (Vaudreuil) – **21 October 2021**

To the Minister of Municipal Affairs and Housing

Answer tabled on **7 December 2021** (Sessional Paper No. 169-20211207)

The 2020–2021 annual management report of the Tribunal administratif du logement (Administrative Housing Tribunal) revealed a major increase in the delays citizens who have recourse to this body.

For the years 2019–2020 to 2020–2021, the delay for a case to be heard before the Administrative Housing Tribunal rose by 40%, which means, in practice, that wait times have gone up from around 3 1/2 months in 2019–2020 to almost 5 months the following year.

For cases related to the fixing or review of rent, the average six-month wait renters experienced in 2019–2020 rose to more than a year in 2020–2021, without mentioning the extended wait times for urgent civil proceedings.

Whereas our neighbours in Ontario can receive legal services within a reasonable wait time of a few weeks, here in Québec the situation is worsening and the COVID-19 pandemic seems to be the reason used to justify every problem, including wait times that are much too long.

What does the Minister intend to do to reduce wait times at the Administrative Housing Tribunal as of this year?

(6) Mr. Fortin (Pontiac) – **26 October 2021**

To the Minister of Transports

Answer tabled on **25 November 2021** (Sessional Paper No. 114-20211125)

This summer, several media articles reported on a new and alarming phenomenon: the failure of drivers and passengers to wear seat belts in road vehicles.

Last year, more than a third of the people who died on Québec roads were not wearing a seat belt. This was a significant increase compared to the previous year.

Wearing seat belts saves lives and the benefits of doing so are extensively documented and proven.

According to a number of experts, it seems that the failure to wear seat belts is due to forgetfulness or a lack of interest in safe practices, perhaps due to a lack of awareness. The last seat belt awareness campaign was in 2018.

The Société de l'assurance automobile (SAAQ) stated that it wants to wait and see if 2020 was an atypical year before planning actions. However, we think that this wait is difficult to justify.

Other statistics have shown that, due to telework and behavioural changes brought about by the pandemic, there have been fewer accidents, but that these have been deadlier. Some patrol officers say that the decrease in congestion has led people to drive faster.

Every serious injury or death related to the failure to wear a seat belt is one too many and is unacceptable. Road safety is an important issue for everyone.

Can the Minister tell us what he intends to do to address the failure to wear seat belts?

(7) Mr. Fortin (Pontiac) – **26 October 2021**

To the Minister of Transports

Answer tabled on **10 December 2021** (Sessional Paper No. 180-20211209)

In January 2020, one of the Sûreté du Québec's helicopters crashed during a search for the victims of a snowmobile accident in Saguenay.

Eight months later, in August 2020, the Government purchased a used Airbus H145 helicopter by means of an untendered agreement.

A year later, untendered negotiations took place for the purchase of two Bell 412 helicopters.

According to the pilots affected, by proceeding in this manner, the Government is not allowing itself to explore avenues that would enable it to acquire the aircraft required to meet their operational needs. For example, the 412 model does not have the ability to "hover" in the case of an engine failure. Nearly two years later, the fleet consists of two different models. Pilots criticize the lack of standardization which, under difficult conditions, could increase the risk of pilot error.

All three cases involved contracts worth several tens of millions of dollars. The Government pleads that urgent action was needed but we can see that the untendered agreement process took several months.

The process and advantages of calling for tenders are, however, clear. The Government has developed expertise in acquiring goods and services in order to be able to properly invest taxpayers' money.

Can the Minister tell us if it would have been possible to use a call for tenders, and why this wasn't done in a direct and formal manner?

What justified the urgent need to make these untendered purchases?

Can the Minister tell us how, without a call for tenders, he can guarantee that this is the best choice to meet the needs, at the best price and in the shortest timeline?

(8) Mr. LeBel (Rimouski) – **26 October 2021**

To the Government

Answer tabled on **30 November 2021** (Sessional Paper No. 142-20211130)

The Coalition nationale pour la tarification sociale en transport is a group of community organizations from several regions in Québec calling for a social fare for public transportation.

Several social exclusion issues are attracting the attention of these groups:

- Without an adequate and accessible public transportation service, people living in poverty have little or no chance to develop personally in their social relationships since they must limit their contacts.
- Because people living in poverty do not have access to the service, they are prevented from exercising their right to work, education and health.
- A universal tariff restricts people living in poverty from accessing the service.
- In many rural communities, public transportation is very limited or non-existent.

It has become clear that offering a social fare for passenger transportation based on users' income and ability to pay enhances quality of life and fights poverty and social exclusion.

My question is the following:

In order to ensure the longevity of public transportation services, and the respect and dignity of persons, can the Government commit to increasing its financial contributions to municipalities so that they may offer a social fare for public transportation (regular and adapted) in the regions of Québec?

(9) Mr. Rousselle (Vimont) – **26 October 2021**

To the Minister of Public Security,

Answer tabled on **7 December 2021** (Sessional Paper No. 170-20211207)

The resurgence of gun violence in Québec and the proliferation of shootings in the past months have raised concerns, and rightly so, among the various forces of peace officers, who fear for their safety.

Highway controllers are the only peace officers who do not carry a service weapon.

Nevertheless, they are called on to intervene in dangerous situations. The Government considers their work dangerous enough to provide them with bullet-proof vests with their uniform. However, highway controllers are limited to carrying a baton and pepper spray during their interventions, despite having undergone weapons training.

Considering the fact that they intervene with heavy duty vehicles, which may contain goods destined for the black market, there is reason to be concerned for their safety.

Can the Minister tell us what the Government's position is regarding the Fraternité des constables du contrôle routier du Québec's request to bear arms?

Does the Minister deem highway controllers to be adequately equipped to perform their job safely?

(10) Mr. Fortin (Pontiac) – **26 October 2021**

To the Minister of Higher Education,

Answer tabled on **25 November 2021** (Sessional Paper No. 115-20211125)

In June 2019, the Government decided to broaden the Intern Perseverance and Success Scholarship, in particular in the health and social services sectors, by adding new programs. Unfortunately, interns in their propaedeutical or first year of studies in a master's degree in social work were not included in that list. What is surprising is that their fellow students registered in a bachelor's degree in social work, who participate in internships that are for all intents and purposes identical, were included.

As a result, these master's students are deprived of \$2,700. One must understand that such an internship requires students to work four days a week, in addition to their other classes. It is therefore difficult to hold down another job during that period, and that is to say nothing of those students who have dependents.

In light of the above,

1. Can the Minister of Higher Education explain why she did not include students in propaedeutical studies in the master's degree in social work in the Intern Perseverance and Success Scholarship?
2. Will she reconsider her decision and include these students as of the 2022 winter semester?

(11) Mr. Arseneau (Îles-de-la-Madeleine) – **2 November 2021**

To the Minister of Health and Social Services

Answer tabled on **7 December 2021** (Sessional Paper No. 171-20211207)

Every year, 7,000 Quebecers are diagnosed with colorectal cancer, and 2,700 die from it. This cancer is the second deadliest in Québec. Early detection is the key to increasing patient survival rates, the idea being to detect the cancer at an early stage, before the signs and symptoms of the disease appear.

Currently, Quebecers must have a prescription to take an iFOBT (immunochemical fecal occult blood test). In the context of a shortage of family doctors, this is an obstacle to accessing the test. However, according to the Canadian Cancer Society, the 5-year survival rate for this type of cancer is 90% in the case of an early stage detection, but only 13% for an advanced stage cancer, which shows the importance of early detection.

In Québec, unlike elsewhere in Canada, we still do not have an organized colorectal cancer screening program. And yet, in 2016, a \$10 million investment was announced to launch the PQDCCR (Québec Colorectal Cancer Screening Program) in 2018; we are now at the end of 2021, and the program has still not been implemented.

Given this situation, our questions to the Minister of Health and Social Services are as follows:

- Will the Minister of Health and Social Services commit to implementing the PQDCCR in all regions of Québec by the end of next year? If not, will the Minister of Health and Social Services commit to providing a timeline for implementation of the PQDCCR?
- Will the Minister of Health and Social Services explain why the PQDCCR implementation has been delayed for years, despite millions of dollars in investments?

(12) Mr. LeBel (Rimouski) – **3 November 2021**

To the Government

Answer tabled on **30 November 2021** (Sessional Paper No. 143-20211130)

An increasing number of Quebecers are not able to pay for oral health care. That's right, unfortunately in 2021 people in Québec are going without dental care for financial reasons.

Private and public insurance plans determine access to these services. So, because of the huge cost for families to enrol in a dental insurance program, they must choose to not see a dental professional in order to be able to pay for housing, food and other expenses.

However, oral health is an essential component of an individual's overall health. The science is clear on the links, in particular between inflamed gums and metabolic disorders such as diabetes.

Now is the time to address the social inequalities in health and correct the systemic inequities in the delivery of oral health services.

We know that the cost of a visit to the dentist, especially for specialized treatments, is very expensive. The solution therefore lies with the Régie de l'assurance maladie du Québec (RAMQ), which must cover oral care in the same way it covers other health care services.

My question is the following:

So that all Quebecers can go to the dentist without breaking the bank.

For the one in four Quebecers who must endure pain just because they do not have enough savings.

Will the Government, between now and the next election, include oral health care in the Québec Health Insurance Plan?

Will the government finally reach an agreement with the professionals regarding dental care covered by the RAMQ?

(13) Mr. Polo (Laval-des-Rapides) – **3 November 2021**

To the Minister of Immigration, Francization and Integration

Answer tabled on **1 February 2022** (Sessional Paper No. 202-20220201)

The 2020–2021 annual management report of the Ministère de l'Immigration, de la Francisation et de l'Intégration shows that the Ministère failed to reach its personnel retention target. The retention rate for regular personnel was 92.1% in 2020–2021; its goal was 94%.

As an explanation, the Ministère indicated that a survey had been carried out as part of a process to mobilize personnel in fall 2020 and that measures to support mobilization and promote personnel retention should follow.

Can the Minister inform us of the measures that will be implemented to help reach the goal for personnel retention in the Ministère for the current and future years?

(14) Mr. Polo (Laval-des-Rapides) – **3 November 2021**

To the Minister of Immigration, Francization and Integration

Answer tabled on **1 February 2022** (Sessional Paper No. 202-20220201)

The 2020–2021 annual management report of the Ministère de l'Immigration, de la Francisation et de l'Intégration shows that the Ministère failed to reach its target rate of immigrants in Québec.

How does the Minister explain the lack of progress in retaining immigrants? How does she reconcile this lack of progress with Coalition Avenir Québec's clear commitment to take in "fewer immigrants in order to take care of them"?

(15) Mr. Polo (Laval-des-Rapides) – **3 November 2021**

To the Minister of Immigration, Francization and Integration

Answer tabled on **1 February 2022** (Sessional Paper No. 202-20220201)

According to data available from Statistics Canada, for at least five years, the Québec immigrant employment rate rose significantly, from 57.8% in 2014 to 64% in 2018.

However, since the Coalition Avenir Québec government came to power, the employment rate for immigrants who arrived in the last five years seems to be in decline.

As a result, the targets set in the Ministère de l'Immigration, de la Francisation et de l'Intégration's 2019–2023 strategic plan to reduce the gap between the employment rate of immigrants who arrived in the last five years in Québec and the rate in Canada were not met for a second consecutive year.

Can the Minister explain to us how she intends to reverse this trend?

(16) Mr. LeBel (Rimouski) – **4 November 2021**

To the Government

Answer tabled on **30 November 2021** (Sessional Paper No. 144-20211130)

The pandemic that we have been facing for more than a year and a half now has revealed many things to us. For example, our services for the elderly, particularly in CHSLDs and seniors' residences, are often chaotic. We have not given serious thought to the impact of having hundreds of elderly people, who are by nature more vulnerable to health problems, living together under the same roof.

We have also neglected to focus on young children, because we believed they were less likely to become infected with COVID-19 and be affected by it. Anyone who follows the news at all understands that this is only partially true and that we should not further neglect our children's health security.

This preamble leads me to point out another blind spot in the Government's response to the pandemic. Shortly after the death toll in seniors' housing began to climb, we all learned of studies that revealed the potential role of ventilation systems in spreading the virus. This raises a critical public health question: in what condition are the ventilation systems in our public buildings?

Hundreds of thousands of Quebecers go to government-owned or -leased facilities every day. Schools, hospitals, housing services for the elderly, government agency and service offices; the list is long and obviously does not end there.

Are all these places vectors for the spread of not only COVID-19, but also other health problems as well? Can people with respiratory problems go to these places without fear of being adversely affected by contaminants in the air they breathe? In addition, the Government has just lifted its recommendation for teleworking, which makes my comments all the more relevant.

My questions are the following:

Does the Government acknowledge the risks of spreading contaminants of all kinds (bacteria, viruses, etc.) in the ventilation systems in use in the premises it owns or leases?

What measures does the Government intend to take to ensure the safety of ventilation equipment in its owned or leased premises?

Will the Government commit to tightening controls on these systems with respect to pre-pandemic measures, whether that be their inspection, cleaning or upgrading when necessary?

(17) Mr. Polo (Laval-des-Rapides) – **9 November 2021**

To the Minister of Immigration, Francization and Integration

Answer tabled on **1 February 2022** (Sessional Paper No. 203-20220201)

On 20 October 2020, the Ministère de l'Immigration, de la Francisation et de l'Intégration adjusted its 2019–2023 strategic plan, lowering several of its goals so as to take into consideration the COVID-19 pandemic's impact on the department's activities.

The targets for 2020–2021 were also changed, although more than half of that fiscal year had already passed.

Based on the results in the 2020–2021 annual report of the Ministère de l'Immigration, de la Francisation et de l'Intégration, nearly 20% of the goals have been successfully completed, but only because the revised goals' targets were lowered in October 2020.

Can the Minister tell us if she considers that, in terms of accountability, amending targets during the year constitutes a good practice for properly assessing the department's performance in reaching its targets and can she specify all the goals that were lowered during the year through full accountability?

(18) Mr. Polo (Laval-des-Rapides) – **9 November 2021**

To the Minister of Immigration, Francization and Integration

Answer tabled on **1 February 2022** (Sessional Paper No. 203-20220201)

Under the Canada–Quebec Accord Relating to Immigration and Temporary Admission of Aliens, the Québec government receives financial compensation from the Government of Canada to address Canada's withdrawal from the delivery of immigrant integration and francization services.

Can the Minister tell us the amount received in 2020–2021?

(19) Mr. Polo (Laval-des-Rapides) – **9 November 2021**

To the Minister of Immigration, Francization and Integration

Answer tabled on **1 February 2022** (Sessional Paper No. 203-20220201)

Since 2004, the Ministère de l'Immigration, de la Francisation et de l'Intégration has produced a statistical bulletin every quarter on permanent immigration to Québec.

However, those bulletins have not been available on the department's website since the second quarter of 2020.

Can the Minister tell us when the department intends to resume this practice, which makes it possible to track changes in permanent immigration to Québec with full transparency?

(20) Ms. St-Pierre (Acadie) – **10 November 2021**

To the Minister of Culture and Communications

Answer tabled on **30 November 2021** (Sessional Paper No. 145-20211130)

The Centre de conservation du Québec (CCQ) charges by the hour for services to restore objects and works of art and for expertise services in preventive conservation, training and documentation.

In 2020–2021, the charges for these services increased by:

- 2.63% for nonprofit organizations;
- 2.04% for public agencies;
- 2.27% for for-profit businesses and individuals.

Regarding any rate increases, on 3 October 2019 the Premier said that what we have told Quebecers, and promised during the election campaign, is that in Québec, in the future, no tax or rate will increase by more than inflation. That's a promise, and like all our promises, we're going to keep it.

On 27 November 2019, in response to a written question from the Member for Verdun, the Minister of Culture and Communications replied that the increase in CCQ rates was due to a five-year catch-up policy in effect until 2019–2020 and that thereafter, the rates will increase at the beginning of each fiscal year in keeping with inflation.

Considering that in 2020 inflation in Québec was 0.8% according to the Institut de la Statistique du Québec (ISQ), can the Minister explain to us how she plans to reconcile these rate increases with the Premier's formal commitment and her 27 November 2019 response?

(21) Ms. St-Pierre (Acadie) – **10 November 2021**

To the Minister of Culture and Communications

Answer tabled on **30 November 2021** (Sessional Paper No. 145-20211130)

The 2020–2021 annual management report of the Ministère de la Culture et des Communications states, on page 43, that the action to improve the synergy and coordination of cultural initiatives of the department and its state-owned enterprises has been put on hold.

The work of the committee set up in 2018 to work on procedures to promote dialogue and collaboration between the department and its state-owned enterprises has been put on hold.

Can the Minister tell us her intentions with regard to resuming this committee's work?

(22) Ms. St-Pierre (Acadie) – **10 November 2021**

To the Minister of Culture and Communications

Answer tabled on **30 November 2021** (Sessional Paper No. 145-20211130)

The 2020–2021 annual management report of the Ministère de la Culture et des Communications includes results for the department's 2016–2020 sustainable development action plan.

The results show that the targets for seven of the eight objectives were not met, so the success rate is only 12.5%.

Can the Minister tell us how satisfied she is with these results, the reasons why each failed target was not met and the measures she intends to put in place to meet the targets?

(23) Ms. St-Pierre (Acadie) – **10 November 2021**

To the Minister of Culture and Communications

Answer tabled on **30 November 2021** (Sessional Paper No. 145-20211130)

The 2020–2021 annual management report of the Ministère de la Culture et des Communications mentions, on page 41, the suspension of the action to implement a Réflexe Montréal framework agreement on the Québec government's and Ville de Montréal's commitments for the recognition of the special status of the metropolis and for the continuation of discussions with Ville de Montréal to develop an agreement to delegate the application of the art and architecture integration policy, better known as the "1% policy".

Can the Minister tell us the reason for this suspension and indicate to us how committed she is to carrying out the planned action for the occupancy and vitality of the territories?

(24) Mr. LeBel (Rimouski) – **10 November 2021**

To the Government

Answer tabled on **8 December 2021** (Sessional Paper No. 174-20211208)

The lifting of the public health emergency by the start of 2022 is great news, but for 136 young people with significant disabilities, it is a quite different story. They are housed in 9 resources managed by community organizations whose main mission is to provide housing with services available 24/7. These resources were created, in conjunction with the institutions in the health and social services network, to offer an alternative for young people with disabilities who would otherwise be in CHSLDs.

The end of the \$4 per hour premium granted during the pandemic to the beneficiary attendants who work with these people will have serious impacts on the living environment of the 136 young people with disabilities who will have to move into a CHSLD. Indeed, this decision creates two categories of beneficiary attendants in Québec, because the premium has become a permanent measure in the public network (in CHSLDs and hospitals) and in the intermediate resources network. Clearly, the premium must be made permanent in order to prevent an exodus of beneficiary attendants to other jobs.

For these residents, the option of living in a CHSLD is so out of the question that we can read in their testimonies that they feel the only other option for them is to request medical assistance in dying. The labour challenge is at the heart of the survival of these living environments; above all, it is important not to create two categories of beneficiary attendants with the dreaded consequences for these people for whom living in dignity is a fundamental right.

My questions are the following:

Will the Government consider the request from community housing resources to make the premium for their beneficiary attendants a permanent measure?

How does the Government intend to ensure the sustainability of these special living environments for young people with severe disabilities by preventing the exodus of their personnel to other positions in the network?

(25) Ms. St-Pierre (Acadie) – **11 November 2021**

To the Minister of Culture and Communications

Answer tabled on **30 November 2021** (Sessional Paper No. 146-20211130)

The 2020–2021 annual management report of the Ministère de la Culture et des Communications states, on page 50, that 13.5% of requests for access to administrative documents were processed after the legal time limit of 30 days.

The Act respecting Access to documents held by public bodies and the Protection of personal information provides, in section 47, that a response must be provided within 20 days of receiving the request, and that an additional 10 days may be invoked.

To explain this result, the Ministère refers to the effect of the COVID-19 pandemic on the processing of 20 requests that required access to paper-only versions, documents to which it was impossible for the personnel to have access during the reorganization arising from the confinement ordered under the public health emergency.

While this explanation is perfectly logical, it remains that the Ministère seems to be struggling to comply with the legal obligation to reply to requests within 30 days: according to the Ministère's 2019–2020 annual management report, 10% of requests made that year were processed after the time limit provided.

Given that access to information within the prescribed time is one of the pillars of the principle of transparency, can the Minister tell us what measures will be implemented to ensure that requests for access to administrative documents will be processed according to the time limits provided for by law in the Ministère de la Culture et des Communications?

(26) Mr. Tanguay (LaFontaine) – **11 November 2021**

To the Minister Responsible for Access to Information and the Protection of Personal Information

Answer tabled on **8 December 2021** (Sessional Paper No. 175-20211208)

The 2020–2021 annual management report of the Ministère du Conseil exécutif states, on page 55, that 6% of requests for access to administrative documents were processed after the legal time limit of 30 days.

The Act respecting Access to documents held by public bodies and the Protection of personal information provides, in section 47, that a response must be provided within 20 days of receiving the request, and that an additional 10 days may be invoked.

Given that access to information within the prescribed time is one of the pillars of the principle of transparency, can the Minister tell us what measures will be implemented to ensure that requests for access to administrative documents will be processed according to the time limits provided for by law in the Ministère du Conseil exécutif?

(27) Mr. Tanguay (LaFontaine) – **11 November 2021**

To the Minister Responsible for Democratic Institutions and Electoral Reform,
Answer tabled on **30 November 2021** (Sessional Paper No. 147-20211130)

The 2020–2021 annual management report of the Ministère du Conseil exécutif states, on page 27, that the Ministère continued its work on Bill 39, An Act to establish a new electoral system.

Given that the consultations on Bill 39 ended on 6 February 2020 and that the only legislative activity concerning Bill 39 that took place during the period covered by the 2020–2021 annual management report from April 2020 to March 2021 was the bill's passage in principle on 8 October 2020, can the Minister specify the nature of the work carried out by the Ministère regarding Bill 39?

(28) Ms. Dorion (Taschereau) – **11 November 2021**

To the Minister of Labour, Employment and Social Solidarity
Answer tabled on **23 November 2021** (Sessional Paper No. 98-20211123)

I would like to draw the Minister of Labour, Employment and Social Solidarity's attention today to the situation, in particular, of persons receiving benefits under the Social Solidarity Program or Social Assistance Program who need assistive devices provided by CISSS and CIUSSS professionals, whose physical disabilities make them also eligible for assistive devices under the MSSS's AVQ-AVD program. These include a wide range of devices such as toilet seats, syringes, walkers, walking canes, etc.

The important thing to understand here is that a two-tiered system currently exists in our health and social services network. Here is a concrete example to illustrate my point for the Minister. Ms. Tremblay is not receiving benefits under the Social Assistance Program or Social Solidarity Program. She undergoes an in-home assessment by a health professional from her local CLSC. Based on the assessment, it is determined that she needs an adjustable toilet seat or a bath bench. Her occupational therapist, physiotherapist or nurse then fills out a material assistance request form for the CLSC's AVQ-AVD program. The completed form is then evaluated by a health professional team, and, if approved, the cost of the devices is fully covered by the AVQ-AVD program and a long-term loan is made. However, when Ms. Caron, a Social Assistance Program recipient, needs the same seat, additional steps are required because she has a paying agency. A special benefit is granted by the MTESS to the MSSS for this type of assistive device resulting in it being partially covered by the MTESS and partially by the AVQ-AVD program. The AVQ-AVD program pays the balance still owing once the MTESS has granted its amount. To obtain this special benefit, a doctor's prescription is required as well as two price estimates from specialized stores. For example, for an electric bed costing \$2,000, the MTESS will pay \$435 and the AVQ-AVD program covers the balance. However, for a person with a disability who is not a social assistance recipient, the MSSS will cover 100% of the costs through its AVQ-AVD program. This process is simpler, faster, more efficient and requires less work time for CISSS and CIUSSS health professionals. No doctor or specialist doctor is required.

For a toilet seat costing \$39, a health professional paid on average \$48 per hour must take several hours of their time to obtain documents from a doctor or health specialist, then sent to the MTESS officer to obtain a SR-006 form (for a special benefit authorization). The authorization must then be signed by the beneficiary and submitted to the AVQ-AVD program, in the case of an MTESS beneficiary. As most such beneficiaries do not have a family physician, they end up going to an emergency room or walk-in medical clinic to obtain said prescriptions, which have been previously partially written up by CLSC professionals (to be signed by a doctor). Otherwise, the CLSC professionals have to retrace, contact, track down and take up doctors, precious time with this and then wait several weeks for said prescriptions to be sent by fax. Most often these same professionals have to search for the prescriptions because the beneficiaries often have severe disabilities that make it difficult to perform this type of task. All of this is not without mentioning the fact that some specialists and their administrative assistants are even contacted for assistive

devices that could be prescribed by the health professionals the patients are already in contact with. In the midst of a shortage of family doctors, this seems like a rather strange allocation of resources.

It would be in the MTESS's interest to simply transfer the maximum eligible amount directly to the CLSCs at the request of the CLSC professionals, thus avoiding the need for medical prescriptions and price estimates. This would save the MSSS unnecessary salary expenses, paid simply to transfer small amounts from one government department to another.

In light of the aforementioned, my questions to the Minister of Labour, Employment and Social Solidarity are as follows:

- Does the Minister intend to set up a system for transferring the maximum eligible amount directly to a CLSC at the request of a CLSC health professional, thus avoiding the need for prescriptions and price estimates?
- If not, does the Minister intend to streamline the special benefit program to allow social assistance or social solidarity recipients to obtain prescriptions/recommendations for these assistive devices from the university-educated professionals authorized to do so by the CISSS and CIUSSS rather than doctors?

(29) Mr. Gaudreault (Jonquière) – **24 November 2021**

To the Minister of Energy and Natural Resources

Answer tabled on **1 February 2022** (Sessional Paper No. 204-20220201)

On July 9 of this year, Hydro-Québec confirmed that the Saint-Narcisse dam, which was commissioned in 1925, would be dismantled. The state-owned enterprise also stated that this decision was final.

However, the dam has an important heritage value for many residents of the municipality as well as for its mayor. Many were hoping that another project would be implemented in its facilities.

Consequently, as regards this project:

1. I would like to ask the Minister to make public the studies he has regarding the dam's dismantling, restoration and refurbishing.
2. I would also like the Minister to make public the information he has regarding the dam's condition.
3. I would like to know what steps the Minister has taken to ensure a proper assessment of the different options for the dam.
4. I would like the Minister to take into account the fact that an initial version of this question was put to him in mid-September 2021, but that an answer was never provided because parliamentary proceedings were prorogued.

(30) Mr. Rousselle (Vimont) – **24 November 2021**

To the Minister of Public Security

Answer tabled on **1 February 2022** (Sessional Paper No. 205-20220201)

The 2021–2024 strategic plan of the Anti-Corruption Commissioner states that the number of cases reported by the public to the Commissioner decreased from 874 in 2017–2018 to 396 in 2019–2020. According to the Commissioner, this fact is concerning, because public reports are among the main sources for launching an investigation.

On page 14 of his Strategic Plan, the Commissioner points out that this does not constitute a general decrease in corruption-related crime. He states that overall crime is lower, but that one cannot say the same for corruption.

Can the Minister tell us what measures will be taken to remedy this situation, considering that the Commissioner's indicators show that the drop is most likely due to public perception?

(31) Mr. Rousselle (Vimont) – **24 November 2021**

To the Minister of Public Security

Answer tabled on **1 February 2022** (Sessional Paper No. 206-20220201)

The 2020–2021 annual management report of the Bureau de la sécurité privé reported a spike in the number of temporary licences, in particular due to the increased need for security guarding as a result of the COVID-19 pandemic.

The number of temporary licences for security guarding rose from 714 in 2019–2020 to 13,581 in 2020–2021.

Can the Minister tell us what measures have been put in place to ensure the quality of training and the supervision for such a large number of security guards with a temporary licence?

In addition, can the Minister tell us if the Bureau de la sécurité privé foresees a sustained demand for security guards and whether adequate resources are in place to train and licence such a large number of guards?

(32) Mr. LeBel (Rimouski) – **24 November 2021**

To the Government

Answer tabled on **1 February 2022** (Sessional Paper No. 207-20220201)

When asked who was responsible for managing the situation in the CHSLDs and planning for the influx of vulnerable seniors at the beginning of the pandemic, the former Minister of Health and Social Services replied that the CISSS and CIUSSS directors general were responsible, adding that he asked the directors general to update a plan drawn up in 2009 to address the H1N1 crisis at a January 22, 2020 meeting.

However, the minutes of that meeting show that updating the plans was never discussed. This prompted Coroner Géhane Kamel to ask if the directive was not instead given at the end of February. The Minister's reply was simply that he could not answer.

An important email sounding the alarm on the situation at the CHSLD Herron and on 23 deaths that were likely to occur was “probably” received by members of his office staff, then forwarded to the Minister Responsible for Seniors and Informal Caregivers. No follow-up was given to that call for help.

Those are two examples of how the matter was bungled, in addition to the destruction of inspection reports and other unimaginable revelations heard week after week.

The Public Protector, Marie Rinfret, identified a number of causes for this “unprecedented humanitarian crisis”, including improperly evaluating the CHSLDs’ ability to deal with the situation, underestimating CHSLD residents’ vulnerability to the virus, and personnel not knowing how to deal with infection during a major outbreak that was exacerbated by a lack of personal protective equipment and dilapidated facilities. The fact that public health directives were constantly changing also complicated things, especially with the lack of a manager at each facility.

As a result, during the COVID pandemic, more than 5,210 people living in CHSLDs – that is, 13% of the approximately 40,000 Quebecers living in these residences – died.

Over 50% of the 10,000 deaths in Québec occurred in CHSLDs. To this, we can add 20% of deaths in seniors’ residences. What a tragic toll! In comparison, long-term care facilities accounted for 43% of the deaths in France, 34% in the United Kingdom, and 28% in Germany.

Currently, we are becoming aware, collectively, as a nation, of the importance of knowing the whole truth about how our seniors were treated during this pandemic. I repeat, more than 5,000 seniors have died since March 2020.

My question is the following:

Following the Public Protector’s report and the many revelations heard before Coroner Géhane Kamel, will the Government act quickly to set up an independent, roving public inquiry commission to look into the circumstances that led to this disaster?

(33) Mr. LeBel (Rimouski) – **25 November 2021**

To the Government

Answer tabled on **10 December 2021** (Sessional Paper No. 190-20211210)

Three of Services Québec’s regional offices will close their doors in Eastern Québec: Saint-Pascal in Kamouraska, and Percé and New Carlisle in the Gaspésie region. Citizens will now have to consult online the documents they used to have access to in these offices or they will have to travel to the closest regional office.

Once again, we have been assured that these closures will not cause any loss of resources or services. I doubt this, and in any case, we are forcing those who need these services to travel in an area that is a little bit bigger than Parliament Hill. The Bas-Saint-Laurent and Gaspésie regions are vast. Some people simply will not be able to afford to travel to get services they used to have access to closer to home.

In both regions, we denounce the loss of local services for citizens caused by the closure of these offices. As seems to be the trend, we will oblige citizens to use online services, but not everyone knows how to do so with ease.

Curiously, these regional service shutdowns occur at a time when the Government is promising to transfer 5,000 public servants to work in the regions. For the moment, the transfer clearly seems to be going in the opposite direction.

My question is the following:

Can we expect the reopening of the Services Québec offices in Saint-Pascal, Percé and New Carlisle and can we obtain the plan or strategy for the deployment of 5,000 public servants to the regions that the Government has promised?

(34) Mr. Rousselle (Vimont) – **1 December 2021**

To the Minister of Public Security

Answer tabled on **1 February 2022** (Sessional Paper No. 208-20220201)

The Government is currently having difficulty recruiting correctional officers to work in detention centres, a problem that is concerning. Not less than 400 positions remain to be filled and 300 officers are currently experiencing an extended work stoppage. This critical understaffing is causing an increase in conflicts among colleagues and the number of overtime hours logged, as well as leading to consecutive departures and early retirements.

The president of the Syndicat des agents de la paix en services correctionnels du Québec, Mr. Mathieu Lavoie, is concerned and has stated that “we are losing control of our facilities because of these working conditions” [Translation].

Increased violence in facilities, the presence of arms and, more recently, the delivery of illegal goods by drone are putting officers in danger.

Furthermore, a number of correctional officers have begun migrating to the federal prison system, which offers higher salaries. Provincial facilities are no longer able to convince officers to stay in their jobs, within their organization, because salaries are not competitive. Retaining staff is a challenge because salaries and employee benefits are not competitive enough.

The correctional officers’ collective agreement expired in March 2020, and officers are rightly demanding adequate working conditions.

Does the Minister consider that the situation in Québec detention centres is safe?

Can the Minister guarantee that the understaffing of correctional officers will not result in an increased risk of prisoners escaping from our Québec detention centres?

In addition, can the Minister tell us how she intends to follow up on Québec correctional officers’ demands?

Lastly, can the Minister tell us what actions she intends to take to remedy the problems recruiting and retaining personnel?

(35) Mr. LeBel (Rimouski) – **1 December 2021**

To the Government

Answer tabled on **1 February 2022** (Sessional Paper No. 209-20220201)

We all understand that the world of information has radically changed. Whereas “traditional” media (newspapers, radio, television, journals, magazines) constituted the main source of information for the majority of our citizens only 20 years ago, they have since buckled under the pressure from the all-powerful Web.

As a result, traditional media’s advertising revenues have been diverted to the giants, Google and Facebook, which rake in advertising income without paying the content producers, notably local and regional media companies.

Although Bell Media is a large and very profitable company, two weeks ago, the private radio stations affiliated with it in Rimouski announced that they were abolishing one of the three journalist positions. These information professionals serve not only the Rimouski area, but also three regional county municipalities and a total of 43 municipalities. You can imagine the workload, which was already heavy for three journalists, that must now be assumed by two journalists, who must also deliver news broadcasts during the day.

Since the Canadian Radio-television and Telecommunications Commission (CRTC) is responsible for broadcasting licence compliance, I will not dwell on the fact that a company required to comply with its broadcasting obligations made a decision with such critical consequences for the dissemination of journalistic information without first taking the time to submit that decision to its governing body. Instead, I would invite you to review the work carried out barely one year ago by the National Assembly Committee on Culture and Education on the future of information media.

After holding public hearings in which it heard citizens, information professionals and the heads of newspaper companies, the Committee submitted some 30 observations and recommendations. I would like to mention a few:

- The Government must continue and intensify its financial support for the various media to ensure the ongoing dissemination of quality information in all regions of Québec (pp. 13-16).
- That the Government of Québec maintain its refundable tax credit for at least 25% of the payroll of newsroom staff that produce original written information content or that operate technologies that produce or disseminate that content (pp. 10 and 12).
- That the Government of Québec demand that the federal government transfer management of copyright and the associated royalties, while considering neighbouring rights and related reforms recently made around the world (pp. 10 and 12-13).

My question is the following:

Will the Government of Québec commit to immediately implementing the Committee on Culture and Education's recommendations on the future of information media?

- (36) Ms. Lessard-Therrien (Rouyn-Noranda-Témiscamingue) – **3 December 2021**
To the Minister of the Environment and the Fight Against Climate Change
Answer tabled on **1 February 2022** (Sessional Paper No. 210-20220201)

The project to expand the Port of Montreal's Contrecoeur terminal raises many issues related to the environment, and the health and safety of the population of the whole province of Québec, and in particular of the community directly concerned, namely the Montréal's South Shore.

On 1 March 2021, this project was deemed not likely to cause any of the significant adverse environmental effects set out under the *Canadian Environmental Assessment Act*. However, the scope of the environmental assessment included only the port infrastructure and the activities taking place in the project area and in the Montréal Port Authority's area of jurisdiction.

Because of this, all land service circulation outside the project area was not included when assessing possible impacts that would result from operations at the Contrecoeur Port Terminal. The same goes for impacts related to increased road and rail transport on public health and safety (noise, air quality, quality of life), the risk of accidents and failures, and the transport of hazardous materials, which were not taken into consideration in the area outside of the parameters of the project in the environmental assessment.

Last May, the federal government officially prohibited any destruction of the critical habitat of the Copper Redhorse, where the Port of Montreal's Contrecoeur terminal expansion project is located. Pending future decisions that may result from this legal measure, citizens have asked the provincial government to seize this moment to mandate the BAPE to investigate areas not covered by the federal agency that are under Québec jurisdiction.

My question to the Minister of the Environment and the Fight Against Climate Change is the following: Does his department accept the citizens' request, sent last July 28, to hold a BAPE inquiry into possible impacts related to land service at the Contrecoeur port terminal project?

- (37) Mr. LeBel (Rimouski) – **7 December 2021**
To the Government
Answer tabled on **1 February 2022** (Sessional Paper No. 211-20220201)

More and more citizens of my region are complaining about the price of gasoline being higher here than elsewhere in Québec. According to the Régie de l'énergie, the Rimouski-Neigette RCM shares the unenviable record for the highest gas prices in Québec with the regions of Gaspésie and Baie-James. Why is this?

Here are some comparisons taken from the Régie de l'énergie's daily prices for 6 December 2021: Rimouski – \$152.2, Chicoutimi – \$137.8, Sainte-Foy – \$145.9, Montréal – \$144.1 and Gatineau – \$136.5.

Many Rimouski consumers complain of always having to pay more in Rimouski than anywhere else – even more than in Montréal, and that this is not normal, and they want the huge price difference to be recognized... and they are rightly asking just what is going on in Rimouski? I add to these observations that this huge price gap is even harder to explain knowing that if these citizens drive about 50 kilometres

east or west of Rimouski they will pay 3 to 4 cents less per litre for their gas in Trois-Pistoles or Mont-Joli. Is there a Bermuda Triangle of oil in Rimouski-Neigette?

As if all that weren't enough, I would like to remind you that Bas-Saint-Laurent benefits from a tax rebate of 2.3 cents per litre to compensate for the distance from petroleum distribution centres. So I repeat: why are Rimouski citizens currently paying 3 cents more for a litre of gas than citizens living in Trois-Pistoles, and why is this situation ongoing?

For four different vehicle categories, CAA-Quebec calculated what an increase of 2, 4 and 6 cents in the price of a litre of gas would mean for a motorist traveling 15,000 km annually starting with a base rate of 137.9 cents per litre. The annual additional cost ranges from \$22.49 for a compact vehicle in the event of a 2-cent increase, to \$116.69 for a full-size pickup truck in the event of a 6-cent increase.

We live in a large region where a lot of driving is required, which adds to the negative impact of this gas price inequity and has consequences on personal income, the regional economy and even our community organizations. In addition, for various reasons, the public transportation services are struggling to adapt to local needs.

Increased gasoline prices are also having an impact on the delivery of Meals on Wheels to seniors living in the region. The region covers a vast territory and at the Centre d'action bénévole Rimouski-Neigette, volunteers deliver 325 to 350 meals each week. To compensate for the higher gas prices, delivery routes must sometimes be reorganized to keep travel costs down.

My questions to the Government are as follows:

Does the Government recognize the inequity the citizens of Rimouski-Neigette face when it comes to the price of a litre of gasoline, not just when compared to the whole of Québec, but even when compared with the whole of the Bas-Saint-Laurent region?

How does the Government intend to correct this situation, which is also harming the Rimouski-Neigette economy?

(38) Mr. Tanguay (LaFontaine) – **8 December 2021**

To the Minister of Justice

Answer tabled on **1 February 2022** (Sessional Paper No. 212-20220201)

The 2020–2021 annual management report of the Conseil de la justice administrative identifies a failure to meet four of the five indicators in its service statement.

In addition to the pandemic context, which has caused difficulties for all public bodies, the Conseil states that the high number of inquiries carried out to mobilize its staff explains the deterioration of certain indicators.

Does the Minister consider that the Conseil de la justice administrative has the necessary staff and resources to carry out its mission? Also, can the Minister tell us what actions he intends to take to ensure that the objectives set out in his strategic plan are achieved?

(39) Ms. Melançon (Verdun) – **8 December 2021**

To the Minister of the Environment and the Fight Against Climate Change

Answer tabled on **2 February 2022** (Sessional Paper No. 234-20220202)

The Québec Water Strategy 2018–2030 was released on 27 June 2018. It is based on three successive action plans that identify the specific measures to be implemented.

Can the Minister tell us what progress has been made on this strategy and what actions the Government is taking to promote its progress?

(40) Ms. Melançon (Verdun) – **8 December 2021**

To the Minister of the Environment and the Fight Against Climate Change

Answer tabled on **1 February 2022** (Sessional Paper No. 213-20220201)

Regarding the landfill site in the town of Coventry, Vermont, located near Lake Memphremagog.

Considering that 90% of the population of Sherbrooke and many shoreline residents (175,000 people) draw their drinking water from Lake Memphremagog and that trace amounts of contaminants have already been found in Sherbrooke's water, can the Minister update us on the situation and tell us what actions the Government has taken on this issue since 2018?

(41) Ms. Labrie (Sherbrooke) – **9 December 2021**

To the Minister of Education

Answer tabled on **1 February 2022** (Sessional Paper No. 214-20220201)

In the factsheet “Enseigner et apprendre dehors” (outdoor teaching and learning) published in June 2020 and created in collaboration with the Fondation Monique-Fitz-Back, your department acknowledged the positive links between the outdoor learning approach and benefits such as student commitment, healthy lifestyles, critical and creative thinking, a heightened awareness of environmental responsibility and a greater sense of community. However, the outdoor learning approach is based on a specific program to be followed and curriculum to be learned, with common learning goals to be obtained. As a result, the target goals are mainly academic and the chances of broadening the scope are diminished.

In that context, a working committee comprised of citizens in Longueuil has taken steps to establish an alternative school with the forest school approach in Longueuil. The learning method proposed by the working committee for this new alternative school retains the concepts of respect for humans and their environment, community involvement and mutual assistance promoted by alternative schools that provide outdoor learning, and it is unique in that it is student-centred and each child's overall development is ensured through a wide array of experiences, exploration, free play and discovery. The forest school approach is also part of a long-term process in which the academic structure may include diverse disciplines, such as meditation, risk management, gardening and interaction with nature. Although the aim is not to attain immediate measurable results, this approach does provide students the benefits of outdoor learning, and more.

The reputation of forest schools in Scandinavian countries, where the concept was introduced in the 1950s, is well established and the success of their approach is proven. Such schools are increasingly popular around the world and can be found in France, Denmark, Germany, England and the United States. In Québec, the pilot project École Forêt Nature in the Mauricie region yielded promising results after its first year of activities in 2016, but without being officially recognized by the Ministère de l'Éducation. The alternative primary school Saules-Rieurs in Verdun appears to be on track to meet the educational objectives for its target date in 2022.

It took more than four years of effort for the working group to finally gain the potential support of the Centre de services scolaire Marie-Victorin. However, facilitating the development of this type of school would not only help to decentralize academic institutions, but also meet a growing demand for such schools and make more options available to the parents of school-age children, with an educational framework they want.

My question is the following:

Will the Minister commit to considering

- streamlining the process for developing alternative forest schools in order to make it simpler and faster;
- recognizing and supporting initiatives to provide forest learning activities;
- promoting the forest school approach, which is student-centred and ensures each child's overall development through regular, high-quality contact with nature?

(42) Ms. Rotiroti (Jeanne-Mance-Viger) – **9 December 2021**

To the Minister of Tourism

Answer tabled on **1 February 2022** (Sessional Paper No. 215-20220201)

The 2020–2021 annual management report of the Société de développement et de mise en valeur du Parc olympique identifies issues related to the maintenance of the stadium's roof.

The cumulative number of tears in the stadium's roof has surpassed 16,000 and the report mentions on page 29 that the general state of the roof just goes to show once again the importance of replacing the current roof as soon as possible.

Can the Minister provide us with the expected timeline and budget for replacing the Olympic Stadium roof?

(43) Ms. Robitaille (Bourassa-Sauvé) – **9 December 2021**

To the Minister of Agriculture, Fisheries and Food

Answer tabled on **2 February 2022** (Sessional Paper No. 235-20220202)

In February 2021, a study on competitiveness in Québec's grain sector was published. That study, commissioned by the Ministère de l'Agriculture, des Pêcheries et de l'Alimentation du Québec (MAPAQ), was completed in order to provide an overview of the situation in the grain sector in comparison with their different competitors on the international stage.

That study has reinforced findings in recent years that the overall environment in which Québec grain producers are evolving does not allow them to rival foreign competitors if nothing is done in the way of subsidies and rewards for producers' services and agri-environmental efforts.

Along those same lines, societal concerns, sustainable development efforts, and climate change will have a significant impact on grain producers' competitiveness if the status quo is maintained. The Plan d'agriculture durable (PAD) captures these issues well, but the financial support granted is still insufficient and the timeline is too short. As a result, it is not up to this monumental challenge.

The grain sector is caught in the eye of the commercial storm raging between the United States and China. In the face of this situation, the sector is powerless. By comparison, American grain producers received subsidies totalling \$12 billion to address the adversity, whereas Québec grain producers received no

financial assistance. The illustration is even more revealing when we see that the most recent amount per hectare in the United States was \$242/ha and \$80/ha in Québec in 2019. That represents a structural constraint on the Québec grain producers' competitiveness in the market.

In the European politico-economic community, grain producers receive financing 5 to 7 times higher than the amounts mentioned above. Clearly, producers here are disqualified from the game of economic competitiveness.

This shows that the Québec government does not do enough in terms of accompanying and financing Québec grain producers. The Québec government is responsible for offering better chances of success for its farmers, in order to stand out in a competitive global market such as this, especially if other market measures will affect producers. In this regard, the PAD, in its current form, is woefully inadequate to meet this imposing challenge. The grain sector provides a large majority of the grains required for other agricultural sectors and for several processing sectors.

Considering this structurally unfavourable perspective, Québec producers have, for some time, been anxiously waiting and asking the Québec government to hold a summit on the competitiveness of the grain sector. Headed by the MAPAQ, this exercise, with the support of Agriculture and Agri-Food Canada, would allow for the coordination of a series of actions to meet the colossal challenges in the grain sector and for farmer support to be properly adjusted.

In this context, my questions to the Minister of Agriculture, Fisheries and Food are the following:

- Does the Minister recognize the specific needs for grain production and the strong societal expectations in that respect, and in that sense, does the Minister plan to grant compensation so that Québec grain producers can be competitive in the international market, where the competitors are heavily subsidized and face fewer constraints?
- How does the Minister plan to follow up on the MAPAQ study on competitiveness in Québec's grain sector?
- Does the Québec government intend to hold a summit on competitiveness in the grain sector with all those involved in the agriculture and agri-environment sectors?

(44) Mr. Derraji (Nelligan) – **9 December 2021**

To the Minister of Economy and Innovation

Answer tabled on **9 February 2022** (Sessional Paper No. 259-20220209)

The field of quantum research is one of the fields that will ensure Québec's future economic prosperity.

Québec can count on a number of leading higher education institutions from which the talents required to develop a quantum ecosystem graduate; however, challenges in retaining those talents exist.

In its last budget, the federal government earmarked \$360 million to launch a National Quantum Strategy.

Québec has the opportunity to demonstrate vision, just as it did twenty years ago in developing the video game industry, an extremely rich and dynamic sector in our current economy.

Can the Minister tell us what actions the Government intends to take to support development of the quantum sector?

(45) Mr. Leitão (Robert-Baldwin) – **9 December 2021**

To the Minister of Finance

Answer tabled on **9 February 2022** (Sessional Paper No. 260-20220209)

On May 26, I introduced Bill 797, An Act to amend the Business Corporations Act to include benefit corporations.

Benefit corporations are business corporations whose articles contain a statement according to which they commit to operating responsibly and sustainably, while promoting one or more social interests or public benefits.

This is an appropriate way to direct businesses to work in a way that is greater than for their sole economic interests. Benefit corporations are going to see growth worldwide, especially in connection with the economic transition towards a green economy.

Can the Minister inform us if he intends to follow up on Bill 797?

(46) Mr. Leitão (Robert-Baldwin) – **9 December 2021**

To the Minister Responsible for Government Administration and Chair of the Conseil du trésor

Answer tabled on **1 February 2022** (Sessional Paper No. 216-20220201)

Since 2018, the Government has twice enlarged the Plan québécois des infrastructures (PQI), bringing the total investments listed in the plan from \$100.4 billion to \$135 billion in the next 10 years.

Such a level of infrastructure expenses raises questions as to the capacity of Québec's construction sector to carry out all these projects and the effects of a possible overheating resulting in an increase in the cost of carrying out the projects.

Certain recent calls for tenders did not obtain the required number of bidders or had bids that were well over the governmental assessment of the project's cost.

Knowing that inflation is higher than the Government expected in its March 2021 budget, 5.1% instead of 2%, can the Chair of the Conseil du trésor tell us if the envelope of \$135 billion is still realistic or if the projects risk being postponed or abandoned?

(47) Mr. Leitão (Robert-Baldwin) – **9 December 2021**

To the Minister for Government Digital Transformation

Answer tabled on **1 February 2022** (Sessional Paper No. 217-20220201)

In the last few years, many computer security incidents have occurred at companies of all sizes, jeopardizing the personal information of the Quebecers who do business with these companies.

Québec municipalities and cities have also been subject to cyber attacks, especially in the form of ransomware, resulting in significant costs that are borne by the taxpayers of these municipalities and cities.

Considering that when it comes to protecting citizens' personal information, a single weak link can lead to identity theft and fraud that can have major impacts on citizens, what actions does the Minister intend to take to strengthen computer security practices at small- and medium-sized businesses, large businesses and Québec municipalities and cities?

(48) Mr. Leitão (Robert-Baldwin) – **9 December 2021**

To the Minister Responsible for Government Administration and Chair of the Conseil du trésor
Answer tabled on **8 February 2022** (Sessional Paper No. 254-20220208)

On 20 February 2020, the National Assembly passed Bill 37, An Act mainly to establish the Centre d'acquisitions gouvernementales and Infrastructures technologiques Québec.

During the passage of this bill, the potential impact of grouping government purchases around local purchasing and small- and medium-sized Québec businesses was one of the issues we expressed concern about.

Eighteen months after the passage of this Act, the Government has still not published the regulations to specify local content in calls for tenders.

Is the Chair of the Conseil du trésor satisfied with the amount of local purchasing by the Centre d'acquisitions gouvernementales and can she specify her timeframe for publishing regulations under this legislation?

(49) Mr. Arseneau (Îles-de-la-Madeleine) – **10 December 2021**

To the Minister of Transport
Answer tabled on **2 February 2022** (Sessional Paper No. 236-20220202)

The 2019 passage of the Act respecting remunerated passenger transportation by automobile led to turmoil in the taxi industry. Certain aspects of this new Act were widely denounced by stakeholders in the industry.

Consequently, as regards this industry:

1. I would like to ask the Minister if the work of the advisory panel on modernizing the taxi industry will continue, and if so, when is the committee's next meeting? Could the Minister also provide us with the dates of all previously held meetings?
2. Following the passage of the new Act, taxi drivers' lost the right to practice the profession upon authorization renewal, due to a legal matter dating back several years, even though this matter had been disclosed during registration procedures prior to 2019, without affecting their right to practice their profession. Could you explain why this is?
3. Industry members point out that some fines are particularly disproportionate to the nature of the offence; for example, forgetting to have a vehicle qualified – which costs \$9 – results in a fine of \$3,750 including fees. Is the department considering an analysis of the situation to address this complaint from the industry?

(50) Mr. Fontecilla (Laurier-Dorion) – **10 December 2021**

To the Minister of Municipal Affairs and Housing
Answer tabled on **1 February 2022** (Sessional Paper No. 218-20220201)

The housing crisis that is happening all across Québec, in both large urban centres and remote regions, is hitting modest and low-income households hard, and is also affecting middle-class households. In the current context of real estate speculation, a housing shortage, skyrocketing rents and reprehensible practices such as “renovictions”, the percentage of income needed to pay rent continues to increase.

Fortunately, Québec has a program to fund social housing, the AccèsLogis program, which allows a portion of the real estate market to operate sheltered from speculative or abusive tendencies in the private market, thus helping to keep rents truly affordable for the most vulnerable households.

However, due to the lack of adequate funding for AccèsLogis and the failure to index eligible costs to keep up with inflation, several thousand housing units announced and promised by previous and current governments have still not been delivered and made available to the tens of thousands of households stuck on waiting lists.

The construction of over 7,000 planned units has yet to begin – due to a lack of funding – despite the current Premier’s 2018 election commitment in this regard. What’s more, stakeholders in the field estimate that at least 10,000 additional social housing units are being developed to meet housing needs and will require AccèsLogis funding in the near future.

Lastly, the Government’s November 25 budget update heightened concerns about the future of social housing in Québec, as the Government announced \$304 million over five years for access to housing in the private market, but did not budget any monies for social housing.

Considering the foregoing, I would like to ask the Minister the following questions:

- Will the Minister commit to funding all the social housing units already planned for in the next budget?
- Will the Minister commit to providing for multi-year planning of at least 10,000 new AccèsLogis social housing units per year in the next budget?
- Will the Minister commit to continuing the social housing construction program under the co-operative and non-profit housing formula?

(51) Mr. Fontecilla (Laurier-Dorion) – **10 December 2021**

To the Minister of Finance

Answer tabled on **1 February 2022** (Sessional Paper No. 219-20220201)

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(52) Mr. Zanetti (Jean-Lesage) – **1 February 2022**

To the Minister of the Environment and the Fight Against Climate Change

Answer tabled on **15 February 2022** (Sessional Paper No. 266-20220215)

In 2021, the World Health Organization (WHO) updated its Global Air Quality Guidelines for the first time since 2005. The guidelines concern six pollutants: particulate matter (PM 2.5 and PM 10), ozone (O₃), nitrogen dioxide (NO₂), sulfur dioxide (SO₂), and carbon monoxide (CO).

The WHO aims to achieve the lowest possible concentrations of particulate matter in the air, since no threshold has been identified below which no damage to human health is observed. Air pollution can cause many chronic and acute cardiovascular and respiratory diseases, as well as lung cancer and stroke.

According to the WHO, air pollution causes 7 million premature deaths per year worldwide. In terms of premature mortality, it is comparable to other risk factors such as smoking and poor nutrition. According to a Health Canada report entitled *Health Impacts of Air Pollution in Canada: Estimates of morbidity and premature morbidity outcomes – 2021 Report*, in 2016 there were 4,000 premature deaths from air pollution in Québec.

Although not legally binding, the guideline levels recommended by the WHO deserve serious consideration by policymakers around the world. By improving air quality, our government could not only protect Quebecers' health, but also achieve significant economic benefits. The Lancet Commission on Pollution and Health has reported that "In the USA, an estimated US\$30 in benefits (range, \$4–88) has been returned to the economy for every dollar invested in air pollution control since 1970, which is an aggregate benefit of \$1.5 trillion against an investment of \$65 billion."

My questions for the Minister of the Environment and the Fight Against Climate Change are the following:

- Does the Minister intend to introduce changes to the *Clean Air Regulation* to comply as closely as possible with the guidelines recommended by the WHO for the six pollutants mentioned?
- Can the Minister explain to us the reasons for his decision?

(53) Ms. Labrie (Sherbrooke) – **1 February 2022**

To the Minister of Education

Answer tabled on **15 March 2022** (Sessional Paper No. 371-20220315)

During the examination of the "Preschool, Primary and Secondary Education" component of the 2020–2021 estimates of expenditure by the Ministère de l'Éducation et de l'Enseignement supérieur, I queried the Minister of Education on the issue of sexual violence in Québec's education system. More specifically,

I questioned him on Monday, 17 August 2020, during a meeting of the Committee on Culture and Education, as to whether his department had done a study on the impact of sexual violence on the educational path of victims, in particular, on the incidence of school dropouts. He indicated to me that his department did not have such a study. When asked about the possibility of commissioning a study in order to better intervene to mitigate the impacts and to prevent individuals from dropping out of school, the Minister committed to do so.

Therefore, my questions to the Minister are the following:

- Did the Minister commission this study?
- If so:
 - Who was mandated to carry out the study?
 - When was the mandate given?
 - What is the cost of the study?
 - When are the results expected?

(54) Mr. LeBel (Rimouski) – **1 February 2022**

To the Government

Answer tabled on **15 March 2022** (Sessional Paper No. 372-20220315)

The labour shortage is affecting emergency aid resources, while some of them are being forced to suspend certain services.

In the Bas-Saint-Laurent region, the Maison de l'Espoir de Mont-Joli is putting its services on hold for the month of February, while the crisis intervention and suicide prevention centre in Rimouski is suspending its housing services indefinitely.

The intervention team at the suicide prevention centre is exhausted. The problem of recruiting employees exasperated by the labour shortage we all know is taking its toll on the intervention teams.

The general director of Rimouski's suicide prevention centre, Valérie Quimper confirmed that, after almost two years of the pandemic, response teams are heavily fatigued, which is not only the case for us, but for other organizations as well. She added that requests for assistance have spiked sharply due to pandemic stress-related factors.

Many other organizations find themselves in this situation. The Table régionale des organismes communautaires du Bas-Saint-Laurent reports that many organizations in the region are experiencing significant challenges related to the pandemic and the shortage of workers.

The pressure has been strong since the start of the pandemic, particularly for services related to food insecurity, domestic violence and mental health, and fatigue has set in among the workers who keep these organizations going.

It is becoming clear that community organizations are being affected by these growing needs. They are trying to meet those needs as best they can, but they simply cannot compensate for an overburdened health and social services system.

I can testify that during virtual meetings with my team and community organizations, increasingly we are seeing and feeling the fatigue of organizations leaders, who are also becoming very emotional.

Underfunding and working conditions are at the heart of the problem, which has existed for too long, and we are asking more and more of community organizations. At the end of February, community organizations will be suspending their services in rotating waves throughout Québec as a means to demand better funding. The situation is urgent!

My question is the following:

Will the Government respond positively to the requests of independent community organizations, namely:

- by investing an additional \$460 million in global mission funding for autonomous community action organizations (ACAs) to strengthen their capacity to act and by making special funding available to take into account the additional needs caused by COVID-19;
- by annually indexing the grant for the global mission of all ACA organizations to keep up with increases in operating costs?

(55) Ms. Ghazal (Mercier) – **3 February 2022**

To the Minister of Finance

Answer tabled on **23 February 2022** (Sessional Paper No. 297-20220223)

On January 18, the G15+ collective, which brings together union members, employers, environmental groups and academics, launched a tool with 51 indicators that provide the most accurate portrait possible of Quebecers' well-being. The objective is to use this tool to guide the policies put in place by policymakers.

The proposal has the merit of broadening policymakers' vision and going beyond simply measuring gross domestic product (GDP) and job creation. Obviously, these two economic indicators are part of the 51 indicators, but by themselves they are far from sufficient. Indeed, the G15+ collective has called on all of its members to develop, in addition to economic indicators, social indicators such as quality of life, poverty and culture, and environmental indicators such as water quality, biodiversity and sustainable mobility. This will provide a wealth of important information for a government that wants to understand the interdependence and complexity of different aspects of our society.

While the health crisis and environmental crisis present major challenges to our society, it is encouraging to see that actors from different spheres of society have pulled together to take such a rigorous and extensive approach. But this is just the first step. The Government must seize the opportunity to catch up with other nations that have gone much further than Québec in measuring the well-being of their populations.

My question is the following:

Will the Government agree to seize this opportunity provided by the G15+ collective by enhancing the tool for measuring changes in Quebecers' well-being and by using this tool for its public policies and decisions?

(56) Mr. LeBel (Rimouski) – **3 February 2022**

To the Gouvernement

Answer tabled on **24 February 2022** (Sessional Paper No. 351-20220224)

On 21 September 2017, with the Association québécoise de défense des droits des personnes retraitées et préretraitées (AQDR), the Association québécoise des retraité(e)s des secteurs public et parapublic (AQRP), the Association des retraitées et retraités de l'éducation et des autres services publics du Québec (AREQ), Réseau FADOQ and the Regroupement interprofessionnel des intervenantes retraitées des services de santé (RIIRS), I tabled a petition with 14,000 signatures calling for the holding of an Estates General on seniors' living conditions.

In 2017, we were already saying, with good reason, that the Government needed to realize the significance of an aging population. We said that it was necessary to reflect on what was going to happen in 10, 15 and 20 years, and to start laying the groundwork. We also made the point that the aging of the population was not a problem in itself, but that the Government needed a comprehensive plan to address the many related challenges. We told the Government that if they continued to address each issue in a piecemeal fashion, we would not have enough resources. We needed a truly comprehensive policy on aging. Five years ago... ironic, isn't it?

That was in 2017. Since then, we have been hit with a deadly pandemic. The main victims have been Québec seniors, and let us remember that the first wave, in the spring of 2020, led to the death of 4,836 seniors in care homes. Québec seniors had to endure confinement measures and deprivation bordering on ageism.

It is now 2022, so five years later, and we have before us a report from the Health and Welfare Commissioner, a damning inquiry into the performance of health and social services for the elderly. Quebec was not prepared, the Commissioner says. Her finding is unequivocal: there has been a collective failure. She adds that, in its management, the Government has demonstrated a paternalistic attitude towards seniors. She says we thought we knew what was good for them and we did not consult them enough when developing the strategy to deal with the pandemic.

So is it any wonder that the Coalition pour la dignité des aînés (CDA), which is comprised of six major national associations representing close to 150,000 Québec seniors, is strongly reaffirming the need to hold an Estates General on seniors' living conditions in order to make the best decisions for the future and ensure that things change?

It is essential that all civil society actors come together, with seniors, and move forward towards new ways of doing things that will make it possible to reform practices that are no longer adequate and that lead to crises such as the ones we have been experiencing for the past two years. Such a meeting will also help to increase awareness of the impacts of an aging population and adapt our society to this reality.

After years of talking about the challenges of aging, it is time to build consensus on issues such as health, poverty, pension management, housing, transportation, urban planning, work organization, physical activity and culture.

My question is the following:

Can the Government, and why not all political parties, commit to convening, in the next term, an Estates General on the ability of Québec society to adapt to its aging population?

(57) Ms. Lessard-Therrien (Rouyn-Noranda-Témiscamingue) – **8 February 2022**

To the Minister of Agriculture, Fisheries and Food

Answer tabled on **16 March 2022** (Sessional Paper No. 389-20220316)

The Farm Income Stabilization Insurance Program (ASRA) is a collective program that pays compensation when a product's average selling price is lower than the insured income based on the average production cost of specialized farm businesses.

All the production cost expense items, except the remuneration of operators (producer-owners), are updated every five years using a new survey.

Although it is indexed annually, the historical remuneration to which that indexing applies no longer reflects the reality of today's operators, as demonstrated by the work of the Centre d'études sur les coûts de production en agriculture (CECPA).

To remedy this situation, CECPA proposes that the methodology be adjusted to better reflect the number of hours worked and management time spent by operators. With the proposed adjustments, CECPA's calculations justify an increase in operator remuneration of between 12.8% and 15.9%. This increase would result in an annual salary of between \$74,100 and \$76,100 (compared to \$65,685 for 2019).

In December 2019, the board of directors of the Financière agricole du Québec (FADQ) accepted the conclusions in the CECPA report and forwarded the report to the Ministère de l'Agriculture, des Pêcheries et de l'Alimentation du Québec to obtain the required authorizations. The FADQ has estimated that this update would cost a maximum of \$20 million per year. The additional cost could be funded from the FADQ's budget surplus.

Since then, the Minister has not revealed his plans.

My questions to the Minister of Agriculture, Fisheries and Food are the following:

- Will the Minister take the necessary steps to update operator remuneration in the ASRA program, as recommended by the Financière agricole du Québec?
- Does the Minister have a timetable for completing this update, which is so beneficial to our farm producers?

(58) Mr. Zanetti (Jean-Lesage) – **8 February 2022**

To the Minister for Health and Social Services

Answer tabled on **30 March 2022** (Sessional Paper No. 444-20220330)

The number of Quebecers with dementia will double in the next 20 years, a "tidal wave" that is predictable, but for which the health network is not prepared, experts warn. Nouha Ben Gaied, director of research and development at the Federation of Québec Alzheimer Societies, says that the next disease of the century is Alzheimer's. Alzheimer's disease is the most common form of dementia, which covers the spectrum of symptoms associated with declining mental functions. According to the World Health Organization (WHO), there is a new case of Alzheimer's every seven seconds. We have seen the breakthroughs made possible by significant government investments in scientific and medical research for other public health issues such as HIV/AIDS. The Alzheimer Society of Canada recommends an investment of \$150 million over five years to implement a fully funded and robust national dementia strategy.

In this context, my questions to the Minister for Health and Social Services are the following:

- How much public money has been invested annually over the past 10 years in dementia and Alzheimer's research?
- What investments are planned for this research in future years?

(59) Mr. Gaudreault (Jonquière) – **8 February 2022**

To the Minister Responsible for Government Administration and Chair of the Conseil du trésor

Answer tabled on **15 March 2022** (Sessional Paper No. 373-20220315)

On 26 November 2018, the Government announced the expansion and restructuring of the emergency department of the Hôpital de Jonquière in the Jonquière riding. The announcement stated that development of the functional and technical program was authorized to begin. Since this phase is still in progress and the deadline has already been extended, the public is concerned about the real willingness to complete the work in accordance with the planned schedule.

The SQI says it has additional delays to consider, which are due to the pandemic and to specific projects that the Government wants to promote.

Consequently, as regards this project:

1. Does the Minister intend to follow through on her Government's 2018 announcement and thus meet the 2024 final deadline?
2. Can the Minister take action to ensure the initial deadlines are met to carry out work on a project that has been formally announced and which the local population is eagerly waiting for?

(60) Mr. LeBel (Rimouski) – **8 February 2022**

To the Government

Answer tabled on **24 March 2022** (Sessional Paper No. 435-20220324)

The labour shortage is very significant for the community organizations and public institutions working in the field of health and social services not only in Québec, but also in my region, the Bas-Saint-Laurent.

The Québec government's Opération main-d'œuvre was announced in recent weeks. This initiative aims to address the labour shortage in Québec, in certain targeted sectors, including professions related to mental health and youth protection. Perspective Québec incentive scholarships will be offered to students in the health and social services sector. Surprisingly, the social work program does not appear in the list of programs included by the Ministère de l'Enseignement supérieur. However, social work graduates have been working in these sectors for more than 50 years.

This non-recognition of the social work program will result in future students going into programs that are eligible for these scholarships, such as special education or university programs. Obviously, when students have to choose a program, they will prefer the one that offers financial incentives of up to \$15,000. However, the social work program prepares future workers able to serve in the field of health and social services.

According to teachers at the Cégep de Rimouski, excluding college students in social work from this program will worsen the shortage of workers in the CISSS and community organizations, even though this program was created specifically to address this shortage.

My questions are the following:

- Why did the Minister of Higher Education and her department exclude the social work program and on what grounds did they come to this conclusion?
- Will the Government add the social work program to the list of programs recognized for the *Perspective Québec* scholarships, since we need more and more workers now?

(61) Mr. Barrette (La Pinière) – **9 February 2022**

To the Minister of Justice

Answer tabled on **17 March 2022** (Sessional Paper No. 396-20220317)

On January 11, we learned from an article in the newspaper *Le Droit* that a man stood trial in a prison lavatory.

A 46-year-old man, incarcerated at the Rivière-des-Prairies detention centre, attended a two-hour Gatineau courthouse hearing via videoconference from a washroom. In addition, no chair was provided to the accused and the background noise was such that the trial had to be suspended.

What is even more surprising is that, according to the same article, this is not a unique situation. In fact, one correctional officer said that all video appearances were made from the washrooms.

When asked to comment on the situation, Jean-Claude Bernheim, President of the John Howard Society of Quebec, said he was utterly shocked and appalled.

Can the Minister tell us if he supports the practice of making video appearances from correctional facility washrooms, and if he does not support this practice, can he tell us what solutions will be implemented to ensure that dignity is upheld in our justice system?

(62) Mr. LeBel (Rimouski) – **10 February 2022**

To the Government

Answer tabled on **15 March 2022** (Sessional Paper No. 374-20220315)

A citizen in my riding drew my attention to the fact that the wait times for cataract surgery are extremely long. In this citizen's case, the wait time is up to a year and a half. How can one wait so long to regain sight?

According to an article in the January 28 edition of the *Journal de Montréal*, the rescheduling of ophthalmology appointments has delayed almost 40,000 cataract surgeries since the start of the pandemic.

For some vulnerable seniors, this will have undeniable consequences on their autonomy and mental health, since their activities will be reduced due in particular to the risk of falling,

Since a large number of cataract surgeries have been postponed since the start of the pandemic, as confirmed by the spokesperson for the Ministère de la Santé et des Services sociaux (MSSS), Robert Maranda, my question is the following:

How does the Government intend to correct this situation?

(63) Ms. Dorion (Taschereau) – **10 February 2022**

To the Minister of Labour, Employment and Social Solidarity

Answer tabled on **15 March 2022** (Sessional Paper No. 375-20220315)

Today, I would like to draw the Minister's attention to the funding of the community groups under his department's responsibility.

The Minister is well aware that autonomous community action organizations play an essential role in our society as a motor of social transformation and a pillar of Québec's social safety net – one of his department's important missions being precisely to support funding for the missions of several of them. Among these are included community development corporations, which are organizations that coordinate the actions of groups by sector. There are 67 of these in Québec, including two that still do not receive funding from the secretariat. The work these groups do is essential to sustaining the Minister's mission, because it coordinates comprehensive, concerted and effective action. It is high time that this was justly recognized.

For many years, the groups have campaigned to have the scope of Québec's 4,000 autonomous community action organizations' financial needs recognized and the harmful impacts of their underfunding considered. Such underfunding has a major impact on the population these organizations serve and on the working conditions of their employees. In 2019, under the Minister's directions, the department began work to develop a new government action plan on community action to ensure greater recognition and support of community action. These consultations have taken place but we are still waiting for the policy plan and the funds earmarked to implement it properly.

A recent economic impact study of CDCs conducted by AppEco shows that the positive impacts on employment and GDP of a government investment in the community sector is greater than that of a similar investment in the Québec economy as a whole. Despite this, we see that real funding for CDCs has actually declined by 12% since 2001.

To fully achieve its mission, the CDC network needs an additional \$8.7 million in funding starting in 2022–2023. Such an amount would allow the CDCs to make up for the shortfall of the past 20 years, to improve their community interventions and to meet the increase in needs, by enabling each to rely on a team of at least three full-time employees.

In view of the foregoing, my questions to the Minister of Labour, Employment and Social Solidarity are as follows:

- Does the Minister intend to table a government action plan for community action in time for the 2022 budget?
- Does the Minister intend to include substantial investments with this plan to sustain the organizations' mission, and will he do so in time for the next budget?
- Does the Minister intend to grant additional funding of \$8.7 million to the CDC network in order to make up for the shortfall of the past 20 years?

(64) Ms. Lessard-Therrien (Rouyn-Noranda–Témiscamingue) – **10 February 2022**

To the Minister of Forests, Wildlife and Parks

Answer tabled on **15 March 2022** (Sessional Paper No. 376-20220315)

For several years, populations of forest-dwelling and mountain ecotype woodland caribou have been in serious decline in Québec. They have been designated a “vulnerable species” in Québec since 2005 under the *Act respecting threatened or vulnerable species*. The government is legally bound to put protective measures in place. By postponing the adoption of its strategy for woodland caribou until 2024, the government is sending a clear message that protecting caribou is not a short-term priority. Meanwhile, territories, which were supposed to be protected, are being opened up to forestry companies.

In Val-d’Or, there are only 7 caribou left, whereas there were around 50 at the end of the 1970s. In Charlevoix, there are barely 20 caribou, whereas thirty years ago their population was over 120. In the Gaspésie region, fewer than 30 mountain ecotype woodland caribou remain, whereas ten years ago there were nearly 200. Experts have determined that populations have very little chance of surviving in the medium or long term when more than 35% of their habitat is disturbed, and today disruption is affecting from 60% to 85% of their habitat.

We have been consulting communities and experts on this issue for decades and the consensus is clear: we must protect forest-dwelling and mountain woodland caribou at the same time as our natural heritage riches.

My question to the Minister of Forests, Wildlife and Parks is as follows:

Will he table his strategy for the protection of forest-dwelling and mountain woodland caribou no later than this spring, as he promised?

(65) Mr. Zanetti (Jean-Lesage) – **15 February 2022**

To the Minister of Finance

Answer tabled on **15 March 2022** (Sessional Paper No. 377-20220315)

Certain legislation around the world, in particular that in France, now includes a legal framework allowing a person who has recovered from an illness not to disclose it to insurance companies beyond a certain period established by law. Thus, instead of cancer survivors having to face a lifetime of insurability problems, they are offered the “right to be forgotten”: the right to not to have to disclose to an insurance company a condition they had previously suffered from but for which they were successfully treated.

Indeed, individuals who have received cancer treatment and then gone through a period of remission are considered cured by medicine, yet continue to face discrimination from insurance companies. The Québec State could therefore intervene to remedy this flaw by establishing an appropriate legislative framework.

In 2017, a bill was introduced in this regard, and then an amendment to Bill 141 in 2018. However, no further progress has been made.

In light of the aforementioned, my questions to the Minister of Finance are as follows:

- Why has the Québec government never taken action with respect to the “right to be forgotten”?
- Does the Minister plan to strengthen the legislative framework regulating the practices of Québec insurance companies to eliminate all forms of prejudice against people who have been recognized as being medically cured, but not by insurers?

(66) Ms. Labrie (Sherbrooke) – **15 February 2022**

To the Minister of Education

Answer tabled on **15 March 2022** (Sessional Paper No. 378-20220315)

Autonomous community action organizations play an essential role in our society as a motor of social transformation and a pillar of Québec's social safety net. Through the Minister's department, 203 organizations are receiving funding from the Programme d'action communautaire sur le terrain de l'éducation (PACTE) and 14 organizations are awaiting funding. These organizations work to keep students in school, to promote continuing education and literacy, and/or are street schools. Their work is essential, and it is high time that this be justly recognized.

In 2019, the government took steps to develop a new government action plan on community action, with the goal of ensuring greater recognition and support of community action. Consultations have taken place, but we are still awaiting the master plan and the funds to implement it.

In light of the aforementioned, can the the Minister of Education tell us:

1. When the 14 organizations still awaiting support from the PACTE program will receive funding?
2. If the next budget will make it possible to sustainably support the mission of the organizations funded by the PACTE?

(67) Mr. LeBel (Rimouski) – **15 February 2022**

To the Government

Answer tabled on **24 February 2022** (Sessional Paper No. 352-20220224)

At the height of the pandemic, the Government completely dropped the ball when it came to the management of contagion in CHSLDs and in private seniors' residences. This has been confirmed in the reports from the Public Protector, Marie Rinfret, and the Health and Welfare Commissioner, Joanne Castonguay, as well as comments made by Coroner Géhane Kamel.

There was indeed a proliferation of uniform guidelines for these residences, which are nevertheless different. The inability to properly explain these guidelines, which changed every day, still leads to incomprehension to this day, which makes the managers of these resources very cautious about the measures to be taken. Often, this caution interferes with seniors' freedom and quality of life.

Last week, private seniors' residences (PSR) spoke out against overly strict health measures. The "rigidity" of the CISSS and CIUSSS towards the elderly is causing detrimental effects on triple-vaccinated residents. An article in *La Presse* stated that two managers, who requested anonymity for fear of reprisals, said that they had been threatened with losing their certification after requesting accommodations for their establishment.

Despite the general reopening and easing of measures, the elderly are unfortunately still prisoners of extreme measures. These people just spent two years in isolation and they are in their final years of life, so let us give them the right to live life fully.

We often hear the government repeat that a balance must be struck between the measures they wish to impose and their impact on the population. I think that, in this instance, we must weigh the measures imposed against the immense sadness, loneliness and poor quality of life of many seniors.

My question is the following:

I know the government is aware of the fact that this is not easy, but can it agree with the various PSRs and CHSLDs on less strict measures that are better adapted to their realities as well as those of the elderly, as is the case for the population at large?

(68) Mr. LeBel (Rimouski) – **17 February 2022**

To the Government

Answer tabled on **16 March 2022** (Sessional Paper No. 389-20220316)

There has been a shortage of veterinarians in the Est-du-Québec region, in particular in my riding of Rimouski, for many years.

If your pet is in pain, you must wait and hope to quickly find a veterinarian to ease its suffering, which is sad. However, if you are a farmer, this wait has a price, and it is often expensive: a loss of time, of production and sometimes even of an animal that plays a key role in your farm's income. This week, *La Presse* reported that some farmers have had to euthanize animals because of the wait time for obtaining a veterinarian's assistance.

It is therefore unacceptable that the citizens in my riding, who help supply the Québec pantry and who in doing so earn their living, sustain such losses. Yet there is a solution. It was even presented to the Government which, against all logic, has dilly-dallied in implementing it.

I am referring here to the faculty of veterinary medicine of Université de Montréal which, in collaboration with Université du Québec à Rimouski (UQAR), submitted a plan more than a year ago, in December 2020, to open a second veterinary training centre in Rimouski. In Québec, those who wish to enter this profession may only attend a university program in Saint-Hyacinthe.

These two universities' joint project offers a win-win situation. First, it would increase the capacity for veterinary training from the current number of 96 per year to nearly 130. In the context of a shortage, these additional veterinarians would be very welcome. Furthermore, the fact that these professionals could be trained in Rimouski would surely contribute to the attraction and retention of aspiring veterinarians in our region, thus reducing the severe shortage in the region.

My question is the following:

Considering the fact that we would have to wait at least seven years from the date of its announcement before reaping any benefits, will the Government commit to immediately approving the plan to establish a veterinary medicine campus submitted by Université de Montréal and UQAR?

(69) Mr. Zanetti (Jean-Lesage) – **17 February 2022**

To the Minister for Health and Social Services

Answer tabled on **23 March 2022** (Sessional Paper No. 425-20220323)

I would like to bring to the Minister for Health and Social Services' attention, the subject of funding for the community organizations under his department's responsibility.

Autonomous community action organizations play an essential role in our society by driving social development and providing a social safety net in Québec. In his department, 3,000 organizations operate in the health and social services sector. Unfortunately, in recent years, government funding has not improved the situation of these groups overall, but rather has only increased the funding of certain less-funded organizations. The 2019, 2020 and 2021 budgets represented a mere 2 to 5% increase in the PSOC envelope and, as such, hardly made an impact. In addition, the funding of organizations is indexed based on the Consumer Price Index, despite the fact that their operating costs increase at a greater rate than that of households, and this adds pressure on these groups.

Community groups operating in the health and social services sector make an essential contribution to the Minister's mission, and it is high time that this contribution be appropriately recognized. For many years, these groups have been advocating for recognition of the extent of the financial needs of the 4,000 autonomous community action organizations in Québec and for acknowledgement of the negative impacts they have sustained because of underfunding. These impacts significantly affect not only the people served by these organizations, but also the already difficult working conditions of their workers. In 2019, under the direction of the Minister of Labour, Employment and Social Solidarity, the Government began work to develop a new government action plan on community action to ensure greater recognition and support of community action. These consultations have been held but we are still waiting for the policy plan and the fundsearmarked to implement it properly.

In light of the aforementioned, my questions to the Minister for Health and Social Services are the following:

1. Does the Minister intend to ensure that the Government honours its commitment to table a government action plan on community action and that the plan will be accompanied by substantial investments that will sustainably support the mission of the organizations under the PSOC?
2. Does the Minister intend to ensure that this increase in PSOC funding is included in the next budget?

(70) Mr. LeBel (Rimouski) – **23 February 2022**

To the Government

Answer tabled on **23 March 2022** (Sessional Paper No. 426-20220323)

According to an analysis of the most recent data compiled by *Le Devoir*, francophone CÉGEPs and universities in Québec's regions are sustaining the greatest collateral damage from the high rates of rejection of international students by Immigration Canada.

It is increasingly apparent that Canada is systematically rejecting *en masse* students from francophone African countries. The education sector in Québec is denouncing its impact on such an essential clientele, one which is highly welcomed in the regions.

We learned that the rejection rates for international student visa applications to attend any of the regional campuses of Université du Québec (UQ) are often as high as 60% to 80%. The rejection rates in anglophone universities are much lower.

According to *Le Devoir*, the results for Université du Québec à Trois-Rivières (UQTR) speak volumes. Last year, 79% of the 9,000 students who applied for a study permit were rejected by Immigration, Refugees and Citizenship Canada (IRCC). In 2020 and 2019, the rejection rates were 88% and 78%, respectively.

The rejection rate for study permits was highest among students from francophone African countries, reaching as high as 90%. Université du Québec à Rimouski (UQAR), which admits many francophone African students, saw over 70% of its 2,000 international students denied a visa.

The rejection rates for study permits could also be higher for colleges in the regions. Many universities and CÉGEPs in the regions operate and innovate by developing their training thanks to the contribution of international students. International recruitment is more active in the programs for fields where there is a labour shortage.

It is unacceptable that our universities and CÉGEPs should sustain collateral damage due to the high rates of rejection of international students by Immigration Canada, both from the standpoint of the students, whose dreams are shattered, and of our regions, who heartily anticipate this new cultural wealth and, of course, this workforce we so sorely need.

My questions are the following:

Has the Government communicated to Ottawa the concerns of our university and college networks and, if not, does it intend to do so?

How does the Government intend to support those networks and ensure that the regions can welcome the international francophone students who wish to study in Québec and perhaps even settle here?

(71) Ms. Lessard-Therrien (Rouyn-Noranda-Témiscamingue) – **24 February 2022**

To the Minister of the Environment and the Fight Against Climate Change

Answer tabled on **15 March 2022** (Sessional Paper No. 379-20220315)

In March 2013, Ville de Drummondville held a public referendum to find out whether the population agreed with the expansion of Waste Management's engineered landfill in Saint-Nicéphore. The majority of the population voted against the landfill expansion. Following this result, the municipality amended its zoning by-law to prohibit the expansion of the site.

Despite a court decision in favour of the municipality and negative opinions on the expansion from specialists at the Ministère des Affaires municipales et de l'Habitation as well as at the Ministère de la Santé et des Services sociaux, the Government authorized continuing operation of the site through an Order in Council (993-2020) and ordered a special planning zone on the territory. In August 2021, a consultation session on the special planning zone was held, during which the majority of the population present voted against the process. Sections 158 to 165 of the *Act respecting land use planning and development* state that a special planning zone is a zone created for the purpose of solving a development or environmental problem whose urgency or seriousness, in the opinion of the Government, warrants its intervention.

Around the same time, the Minister of the Environment and the Fight Against Climate Change mandated the Bureau d'audiences publiques sur l'environnement (BAPE) to examine the disposal of ultimate waste. The BAPE report concluded that a paradigm shift is needed to achieve our landfill diversion targets. It recommends, among other things, promoting the regionalization of waste disposal.

The new strategy for the beneficial use of organic waste announced by the Minister will increase the disposal fee from \$23.75 to \$30 per tonne. However, we know that the last increases of the fees did not result in discouraging disposal. Increasing funding for waste management is significant and will help to establish a system of ecocentres that are more resilient and efficient at processing construction, renovation and demolition (CRD) waste, as well as other waste. However, the \$10 million invested to reduce industrial, commercial and institutional (ICI) waste will reduce this sector's quantities by only 50,000 tonnes per year, according to Recyc-Québec. We already know that these measures will not ensure that our goals are achieved.

My questions are the following:

How does the Minister plan to find a sustainable solution to this environmental problem whose urgency and seriousness warrant, in his opinion, imposing a special planning zone, while respecting the recommendations of the BAPE inquiry on ultimate waste disposal?

Will he commit to recognizing the uniqueness of this situation and to not ordering a special planning zone for a second time in order to control an environmental problem created by poor waste management?

(72) Mr. LeBel (Rimouski) – **24 February 2022**

To the Government

Answer tabled on **13 April 2022** (Sessional Paper No. 476-20220413)

When a diagnosis of autism spectrum disorder (ASD) is made, parents' lives are turned upside down. Obviously, this comes with an increase in stressors, numerous appointments, financial needs and psychological distress for the parents. To keep their balance and that of the family, parents need assistance, whether it is psychosocial or financial.

It is extremely difficult to obtain the supplement for handicapped children and, furthermore, the administrative burden returns over the years despite the permanent diagnosis. This is a neurological problem, not a physical one. It is an invisible disability, but it obviously has an impact on the family.

My question is the following:

Autism spectrum disorder is a permanent neurodevelopmental disability that will be present throughout the person's entire life. Will the Government recognize and consider this diagnosis as permanent by stopping the reassessments to renew Retraite Québec's supplement for handicapped children?

(73) Ms. Ghazal (Mercier) – **15 March 2022**

To the Minister Responsible for Government Administration and Chair of the Conseil du trésor

Answer tabled on **14 April 2022** (Sessional Paper No. 484-20220414)

On 3 February 2022, the Minister Responsible for Government Administration and Chair of the Conseil du trésor tabled Bill 12, An Act mainly to promote Québec-sourced and responsible procurement by public bodies, to reinforce the integrity regime of enterprises and to increase the powers of the Autorité des marchés publics.

The purpose of this bill is to promote local purchasing, the taking into account of factors other than price (mainly environmental considerations) and public procurement integrity. It also provides that public bodies must conduct an evaluation of their procurement requirements that furthers the pursuit of sustainable development and that tenderers concerned with high standards of environmental integrity may be favoured when awarding public contracts.

In the last two years, Quebecers have used and disposed of several hundreds of thousands of disposable face masks. On a worldwide scale, 129 billion single-use masks are used every month. And yet, reusable, ecological and safe alternatives have been developed right here in Québec.

For example, ECO99 masks, which meet CNESST standards and BNQ certification criteria and which are effective after 100 maintenance cycles – or the masks made by Frëtt Design, a Québec company that has invested more than half a million dollars in research and development to design masks that comply with the American Society for Testing and Materials' ASTM F3502 standard as well as the EN 14683 standard, which is the requirement for medical face masks in Europe. Even though these reusable masks have been recognized by a number of independent experts and consultants as being equivalent to the N95 mask, they are unfortunately still subject to outdated regulations with a standard meant for high-particulate work environments, such as mines.

In view of the foregoing, my question to the Minister responsible for Government Administration and Chair of the Conseil du trésor is as follows:

In order to adhere to the principles of Bill 12, will the Conseil du trésor fulfill its duty to set an example by recommending the purchase of safe and Québec-made reusable masks for the Government's non-medical organizations and institutions?

(74) Mr. LeBel (Rimouski) – **15 March 2022**

To the Government

Answer tabled on **5 April 2022** (Sessional Paper No. 453-20220405)

After 25 years of work and cooperation, domestic help social economy businesses (EÉSADs) must become the priority partners of the health and social services network for home care. They are the largest home care provider outside the public network.

Unfortunately, the work of the Réseau de coopération des EÉSAD shows that there is a lack of access to home care due to the limited financial capacity of seniors. I believe that there is an urgent need to act.

The EÉSADs are committed to immediately and significantly expanding their services if the government adopts simple and effective measures that reflect Quebecers' ability to pay. These solutions, many of which could be implemented in the next budget, would make it possible to achieve, in the short term, a major change in the daily lives of seniors, people with a loss of autonomy or functional limitations, and their families.

The announcement of the government's intention to shift to home care coincides with the review of the Financial Assistance Program for Domestic Help Services (PEFSAD), which has been underway for several months. This program accounts for about 25% of home care in Québec, but it could be even more adapted to the needs and be a real lever for strong growth in home care services.

The EÉSADs are the result of a citizen initiative to respond to community needs and they are authorized to offer home care throughout Québec, while prioritizing the most vulnerable users and services adapted to individual needs. The EÉSADs want to participate in the major shift affecting three areas: accessibility and decision-making autonomy, the offer and quality of home care services, and workforce recruitment and retention.

My question is the following:

Will the Government commit to adopting concrete solutions with the EÉSADs to make the necessary shift to home care, while ensuring that EÉSAD users can afford the hours of service they need?

(75) Ms. Dorion (Taschereau) – **17 March 2022**

To the Minister of Labour, Employment and Social Solidarity

Answer tabled on **12 April 2022** (Sessional Paper No. 469-20220412)

I would like to bring to the Minister's attention the funding of the community organizations under his department's responsibility.

Autonomous community action organizations play an essential role in our society by driving social development and providing a social safety net in Québec. Nearly 350 organizations involved in the collective defence of rights are still awaiting adequate funding from the Minister's department, both for existing organizations and for organizations pending. Despite the 2019 increase, those organizations are still awaiting a substantial increase that would enable them to fulfill all aspects of their mission. As those organizations approach the renewal of their three-year agreements, I would like to point out to the Minister the importance of including an indexation process based on the increase in operating costs so as to maintain the organizations' activities and improve the working conditions of the workers in those fields. The work those groups perform is essential to achieving a fairer, egalitarian society, whose members support one another, and it is high time that work was rightly acknowledged.

For many years, these groups have been advocating for recognition of the extent of the financial needs of the 4,000 autonomous community action organizations in Québec and for acknowledgement of the negative impacts they have sustained because of underfunding. These impacts significantly affect not only the people served by these organizations, but also the already difficult working conditions of their workers. In 2019, under the direction of the Minister of Labour, Employment and Social Solidarity, the Government began work to develop a new government action plan on community action to ensure greater recognition and support of community action. These consultations have been held but we are still waiting for the policy plan and the funds earmarked to implement it properly.

In light of the aforementioned, my questions to the Minister responsible for the rights enhancement component of the government action plan on community action (PAGAC) are the following:

1. Does the Minister intend to ensure that the Government honours its commitment to table a government action plan on community action before the end of this legislature?
2. Does the Minister intend to ensure that the next budget will include substantial investments for autonomous community action that will sustainably support the mission of the organizations under his responsibility?
3. Can the Minister assure us that he will then implement an indexation process based on the increase in operating costs so as to maintain the organizations' activities and improve the working conditions of the workers in those fields?

(76) Mr. Fontecilla (Laurier-Dorion) – **22 March 2022**

To the Minister of Municipal Affairs and Housing

Answer tabled on **14 April 2022** (Sessional Paper No. 485-20220414)

On 11 March 2022, the Fédération régionale des OSBL d'habitation de la Montérégie et de l'Estrie (FROHME) and the tenants of Villa Belle Rivière in Richelieu called for the cancellation of the sale of immovables comprising 60 social housing units for seniors to a private developer whose identity has not been revealed to date.

The Villa Belle Rivière owns two buildings whose construction was financed through government subsidies. However, the board of directors of this non-profit organization (NPO) has decided to sell its only immovable assets intended for rental to seniors, and this is while we are experiencing an unprecedented housing crisis and the entire region is mobilized to develop affordable social housing.

According to the spokesperson for the tenants, Ms. Sylvie Adam, residents are very concerned about the situation and want the government to intervene to save the NPO in order to preserve the affordability and quality of the housing units for the seniors who live there and to avoid similar situations in the future.

My questions to the Minister of Municipal Affairs and Housing are the following:

- What does the Minister intend to do to save the Villa Belle Rivière non-profit organization?
- Does the Minister plan to change the legal framework for non-profit organizations to prevent them from being sold to private developers?

(77) Ms. Labrie (Sherbrooke) – **22 March 2022**

To the Minister of Education

Answer tabled on **26 April 2022** (Sessional Paper No. 501-20220426)

On 23 September 2020 and 23 August 2021, deputy ministers at the Ministère de l'Éducation (MEQ), Mr. Eric Blackburn and Mr. Alain Sans Cartier, sent correspondence to the directors of school service centres and school boards announcing the launch of a major project to be conducted in close collaboration with the school network and its partners.

The deputy ministers specified the objectives of this major project of the MEQ, namely the simplification of administrative processes related to the declaration of the special education codes and the simplification of associated funding rules, in particular the measure on additional assistance for students with disabilities or serious behavioural problems.

The correspondence reaffirms the Minister of Education's intention to ensure an optimal response to the needs of the province's students and to maximize the impact of professional resources in the communities in order to prioritize direct services to students, beyond administrative processes.

Although the Ministère de l'Éducation confirms, in its correspondence, the extension to June 2022 of the measures aimed at easing the quality assurance process, the school network and its partners, who were initially to take part in the student services funding review project, have still not received any indication of the direction of the project's work, whose recommendations were initially to be part of the plan for the start of the 2022–2023 school year.

Can the Minister of Education inform us of the progress of the work that was initially intended to free up professional resources to better serve students and support their educational success, and can he confirm that the target date for implementing the review of funding of services for students with disabilities, social maladjustments or learning difficulties remains the beginning of the 2022–2023 school year?

(78) Mr. LeBel (Rimouski) – **22 March 2022**

To the Government

Answer tabled on **27 April 2022** (Sessional Paper No. 510-20220427)

In the 1990s, oil companies competed fiercely. At that time, you could fill your tank for about 40 cents a litre – something that is hard to imagine when today we are paying almost five times as much, depending on the region. That price war resulted in the closure of many independent gas stations, thereby reducing opportunities for competition in certain markets, particularly in my riding of Rimouski.

Ultimately, this left a multitude of abandoned gas stations. In Rimouski alone, which has 50,000 inhabitants, a good half-dozen of these abandoned facilities still scar the city centre landscape and sides of busy arteries, including Route 132 which runs along the St. Lawrence.

What's more, nothing obliges the operators of gas stations – most often, very profitable oil companies – to decontaminate the land they own or lease, even if for years it represented a highly lucrative, but polluting, business. As a result, we currently find ourselves in a situation where very successful companies can simply leave without having to assume any environmental accountability whatsoever.

They leave the buildings that no longer serve them to rot and decay, leaving the task of decontaminating the hydrocarbon-laden soil to possible future owners or tenants. It's not hard to understand why potential buyers are not rushing to purchase such properties; as such, we continue to be subjected to polluted urban environments and ground soils while no one is held accountable, often for many years. I can point out such a location in my riding that has been abandoned for at least three decades.

Furthermore, there does not appear to be a register of Québec's abandoned gas stations that we can consult. With the expected electrification of automobiles, we expect this phenomenon to worsen. We must therefore address this matter now.

My question to the Minister is the following:

Will the Government commit to legislate to put a stop to the reckless abandonment of gas stations and to oblige the owners or tenants of these facilities to dismantle them and to decontaminate the land before the conclusion of any transaction and within one year of closing?

(79) Ms. Ghazal (Mercier) – **22 March 2022**

To the Minister of Finance

Answer tabled on **5 April 2022** (Sessional Paper No. 454-20220405)

Celiac disease is a chronic autoimmune disease. It causes inflammation of the intestine induced by the ingestion of gluten and affects people who are genetically predisposed. There is no known cure to date for celiac disease, other than a strict gluten-free diet.

It is estimated that approximately 85,000 Quebecers may be affected by celiac disease. This disease causes not only physical pain and discomfort, but also significant nutritional deficiencies in both children and adults.

The parents of children with celiac disease receive the Supplement for Handicapped Children. They receive \$205 per month until the child reaches the age of majority. Once they reach the age of majority, they are no longer eligible for the Supplement for Handicapped Children. Adults with celiac disease can deduct the costs for gluten-free food under the tax credit for medical expenses. Since 2003, these individuals have been able to claim the additional cost of gluten-free foods as an eligible expense under the tax credit for medical expenses, which amounts to the difference between the cost of gluten-free foods and the cost of similar foods with gluten.

However, the tax credit for adults with celiac disease is problematic for several reasons, including the fact that it disadvantages less affluent individuals who must pay the full amount before being reimbursed. People who do not pay taxes do not have access to the tax credit either. Those who do have access to the tax credit are faced with the administrative burden of keeping track of receipts that fade over time (and cannot be used as supporting documentation) and individual entries of all food receipts. This is so cumbersome and restrictive that many end up abandoning it. According to the preliminary results of a survey carried out in the fall of 2021 by Université de Montréal entitled *Vivre avec la maladie cœliaque - évaluation de l'impact sur la qualité de vie*, 50% of the participants never filed a tax credit application and 86.8% reported feeling embarrassed by the additional expense of purchasing gluten-free foods.

Therefore, on 12 February 2021, Cœliaque Québec filed a request for access to information (RAI): on the one hand, for documents confirming the number of people who have benefited annually from the tax credit for people with celiac disease in the last 10 years and, on the other hand, the average amount associated with the tax credit. In response to the RAI, the Secrétariat du Conseil du Trésor indicated that it did not have this information. If the government uses the tax credit to determine the differentiated financial needs of people affected by celiac disease, it would be important to know to what extent this measure is actually used and effective.

My question is the following:

Given that it is both inequitable and complex, the tax credit currently available represents an unwarranted barrier to being reimbursed for the one and only treatment for celiac disease, that is, a strict gluten-free diet for life. Why not offer a monthly benefit that would provide financial support to adults with celiac disease? Why not offer the same benefit to people 18 years of age and older, who are recipients of the social solidarity allowance and who are diagnosed with celiac disease, as the one granted to the parents of children with celiac disease through the Régie des Rentes du Québec, i.e. \$205 per month, as requested by Cœliaque Québec?

(80) Ms. Ghazal (Mercier) – **22 March 2022**

To the Minister of Culture and Communications

Answer tabled on **5 April 2022** (Sessional Paper No. 455-20220405)

On 21 September 2020, the Minister of Culture and Communications announced a call for projects as part of the program *Aide au développement des infrastructures culturelles*. This program aims to lend support to projects for new construction, expansion, development, upgrading, renovation and restoration of cultural infrastructure, with the goal of helping to restart the Québec economy and promoting access to quality cultural spaces and equipment.

The program has a total envelope of \$100 million, consisting of \$50 million from the Québec government and \$50 million from the Canada Infrastructure Program. Most Canadian provinces and territories have benefited from this program through bilateral agreements to finance their cultural infrastructure. British Columbia, for example, received an envelope similar to that of Québec, but agreed to receive projects also from non-profit organizations.

In Québec, several social economy enterprises and organizations working in the cultural sector could benefit from this restart. For example, the École supérieure de ballet du Québec has been looking for several years for a place to compete with other major North American ballet schools, especially Toronto's, and thereby attract the best talent. Québec's school is currently in a building that is not suited for its activities.

As the Minister just named Ms. Ludmilla Chiriaeff, the founder of this institution soon to celebrate its 45th anniversary, as a historical figure, this is a golden opportunity for Québec to find a location worthy of the international reputation of its students. Management at the École supérieure de ballet du Québec recently had the opportunity to achieve its objective while also preserving our religious heritage by moving into the neighbouring Saint-Denis church. However, due to a lack of financial means it unfortunately does not have the ability to rehabilitate the building. This heartbreaking decision could be overturned if NPOs were accepted as part of this agreement.

My question is the following:

Why did the Minister decide to exclude non-profit organizations from her call for projects under the program *Aide au développement des infrastructures culturelles*, unlike other Canadian provinces, such as British Columbia?

(81) Mr. Fontecilla (Laurier-Dorion) – **23 March 2022**

To the Minister of Energy and Natural Resources

Answer tabled on **13 April 2022** (Sessional Paper No. 477-20220413)

Bill 35, An Act to modernize certain rules relating to land registration and to facilitate the dissemination of geospatial information, was passed in the National Assembly on 7 October 2020, and has since come into force. One of the reforms contained in the bill is the closure of registry offices, following the digitization and overhaul of the information contained in the land register. This reform introduces a new method for accessing this information on the department's website. Much of this information is crucial for the population, especially tenants. They need to be able to know the identity of their landlords, and registry offices were an important resource in this regard. For disadvantaged people, who are more often victims of evictions or abuse by their landlord, it is therefore now nearly impossible to access such information (due to digital divide and credit card requirement).

In light of the above, my question for the Minister of Energy and Natural Resources is the following:

What does the Minister intend to do to guarantee access to property information for disadvantaged people who do not have access to the Internet or who have difficulty using Web services, and who do not always have a credit card?

(82) Mr. Leitão (Robert-Baldwin) – **29 March 2022**

To the Minister of Finance

Answer tabled on **4 May 2022** (Sessional Paper No. 540-20220504)

As a result of the rigorous journalistic work done by Maxime Bergeron of the daily newspaper *La Presse*, we learned of the appearance of some 270 cryptocurrency ATMs in Québec in recent years.

These ATMs are a choice means for laundering money, in particular because of the confidential nature of transactions, the ability to convert small denominations into cryptocurrency anonymously and the still inadequate oversight governing this new reality. Not surprisingly, the journalist mentions links between a major player in this industry and criminal circles.

Among other things, we learned that Revenu Québec, which is responsible for issuing permits for this type of ATM, did not know the number of such ATMs currently in use in the province.

In reaction to the various articles on this issue, the Government recognized that it had to do better.

Can the Minister tell us what actions are being taken to ensure the proper oversight of cryptocurrency ATMs and what timeline has been given to Revenu Québec to comply?

(83) Mr. Fontecilla (Laurier-Dorion) – **29 March 2022**

To the Minister of Municipal Affairs and Housing

Answer tabled on **14 April 2022** (Sessional Paper No. 486-20220414)

Québec is currently experiencing a housing crisis that affects many households in all regions, in addition to a cost of living crisis that particularly affects low-income earners. This situation affects many rental lessees. Furthermore, lessees of dwellings built less than five years ago are facing a major obstacle: the impossibility, in the event of a disagreement with the lessor, of having the Tribunal administratif du logement (TAL) fix the amount of rent, due to Section F of the lease and article 1955 of the *Civil Code of Québec*. Thus, many lessees are seeing their rents increase drastically. Some people are even forced to leave their dwellings because they cannot afford these unfair increases in their rent.

On several occasions over the last few weeks, I have questioned the Minister of Municipal Affairs and Housing on this issue. She always gave me the same answer, namely that she is working on this file. No additional information on the work being done by the Minister has been provided.

My questions to the Minister of Municipal Affairs and Housing are the following:

- What is the Minister currently doing to ensure that lessees of dwellings less than five years old enjoy the same rights to have their rent fixed by the TAL as other lessees?
- When will the Minister announce changes in this regard?

(84) Ms. Maccarone (Westmount–Saint-Louis) – **30 March 2022**

To the Minister of Justice

Answer tabled on **24 May 2022** (Sessional Paper No. 575-20220524)

A recent Léger Marketing survey commissioned by Fondation Émergence reveals disturbing findings about the harassment experienced by LGBTQ+ people in the workplace.

While 35% of Quebecers have been subjected to at least one instance of psychological or sexual harassment in recent years, which is already a very worrying proportion, 65% of LGBTQ+ people surveyed revealed that they too have been subjected to such treatment.

In fact, LGBTQ+ people were more likely to receive unwanted advances or be subjected to offensive jokes, insults and mockery. Even worse, for one-third of LGBTQ+ people surveyed, workplace harassment was so distressing that they quit or considered quitting their jobs.

These behaviors painfully illustrate how far we still must go to build an ever more inclusive society.

In response to these intolerable situations, Fondation Émergence has launched an enhanced training program focused on the prevention of harassment and the inclusion of LGBTQ+ people in the workplace, in partnership with the Conseil du patronat du Québec and the Commission des normes, de l'équité, de la santé et de la sécurité du travail. This is a first step, but other actions must follow to eradicate this scourge.

Can the Minister give us his reaction to the survey? Can the Minister tell us how much money has been allocated to the Fondation Émergence initiative? And, lastly, can the Minister tell us if the Government plans to introduce new measures to promote harassment-free workplaces for LGBTQ+ people?

(85) Mr. Fortin (Pontiac) – **5 April 2022**

To the Minister of Transport

Answer tabled on **11 May 2022** (Sessional Paper No. 562-20220511)

The MRC de Rouville in Montérégie recently issued a press release to denounce the administrative burden of the Ministère des Transports (MTQ), which has in particular compromised local projects that citizens appreciate and are expecting.

For example, the extension of La Route des Champs, a popular bike path between Marieville and Richelieu, was to be built on an abandoned railway right-of-way. This project, originally scheduled for the summer of 2022, has been postponed due to the MTQ's failure to act quickly on the matter.

In March 2021, the MRC de Rouville informed the MTQ that it was able to take charge of this work as the project manager. Since then, no significant progress has been made.

The mayor of Sainte-Angèle-de-Monnoir has even suggested that if no progress is made, the new section, now scheduled for 2023, is likely to be inaugurated while a bridge included in that part of the route has not yet received all the necessary authorizations for its reconstruction.

Can the Minister explain how municipal and regional elected officials have had to appear in the media to denounce his department's failure and how he intends to quickly remedy the situation so that the projects citizens are expecting can move forward?

(86) Mr. LeBel (Rimouski) – **5 April 2022**

To the Government

Answer tabled on **4 May 2022** (Sessional Paper No. 541-20220504)

In Québec, there are 37 palliative care hospices that care for approximately 5,000 end-of-life patients each year, and tens of thousands of caregivers. The 341 beds in these non-profit organizations are an integral part of the network's palliative care beds, and of government statistics.

However, these 37 organizations are now without any funding contracts or even addenda to ensure their daily operations. Yet these care settings are experiencing exactly the same labour shortage, recruitment and retention issues as the public sector in caring for and accompanying Quebecers at the end of life.

They have been kept waiting for many long months, as it has been 18 months since negotiations on their funding agreement began, and their annual funding agreement with the MSSS has still not been reached and hospices do not know what budget they will have to pay and recruit caregivers in the coming years.

Currently, more than 80% of Alliance des maisons de soins palliatifs du Québec members are experiencing an approximately 20% shortage of nurses, nursing assistants and orderlies. While MSSS and CISSS/CIUSSS stakeholders are asking hospices to maintain their maximum capacities and the free services they offer, the labour shortage means that their staff are struggling to ensure a continuous presence that is essential to quality care.

Furthermore, hospices are now not only without an agreement with the MSSS, but also without any notice of payment for the instalment normally due at the beginning of April of each year. This situation puts them in a precarious position with regard to the cash they have available to pay their invaluable workforce. This situation has therefore forced hospices to turn completely to the philanthropy of their community to survive the coming months. This is unacceptable.

Hospices say that, until they know how much money will be allocated to them, they cannot offer salary conditions equivalent to the network pay scales and they are rightly asking for their funding agreement to be reached.

My question is the following: Will the Government respond to hospices' requests with regard to increasing their funding and immediately signing a new funding agreement?

(87) Mr. LeBel (Rimouski) – **7 April 2022**

To the Government

Answer tabled on **12 May 2022** (Sessional Paper No. 570-20220512)

Since the start of the pandemic, the government has in some measure recognized the magnitude of the task facing health care workers. The government has accelerated the recruitment of attendants to try to alleviate the scarcity of these workers and has granted workers in this field what is now referred to as the “COVID-19 bonus” and has just extended it until May.

While financial compensation alone cannot provide relief to overworked employees, it at least sends a signal that the government recognizes the efforts being made by health care workers.

However, these are not the only workers in our public services system who have experienced significant additional pressure. Teachers have also had to achieve real feats of strength in the last 24 months.

During the pandemic, our teachers have had to adapt to a multitude of unprecedented situations. These include: suspending classes in the home stretch of the school year and then resuming again with all the challenges of bringing students up to speed after such interruptions, distance learning, hybrid education, which also involves bringing up to speed young students returning to school after a stay at home, compulsory mask wearing, canceling and reinstating mandatory mask wearing, having to constantly adapt to fluctuating COVID-19 cases, etc. The teaching profession was already very demanding, but became even more so during this pandemic, affecting the psychological wellbeing of our teachers.

Yet, despite this situation, and despite the fact that they hold the future of Québec in their hands, our teachers have not yet received any recognition from their employer – the government. They deserve some form of financial compensation.

My questions are the following:

Does the Government recognize the significant increase in the workload of Québec teachers due to the unprecedented context of the COVID-19 pandemic?

As a result of this situation and in order to be consistent with the compensation granted to health care workers, will the Government agree to grant a “COVID-19 bonus” to Québec’s teachers?

(88) Ms. Massé (Sainte-Marie–Saint-Jacques) –**14 April 2022**
To the Minister of Municipal Affairs and Housing
Answer tabled on **26 May 2022** (Sessional Paper No. 596-20220526)

In the southern part of my riding, Sainte-Marie-Sainte-Jacques, there are three large sites where major real estate projects are being developed. Approximately 10,000 housing units are to be built on the sites formerly owned by the Maison de Radio-Canada, the Molson Brewery and Porte Sainte-Marie, to the east of the Jacques Cartier Bridge. Each of these sites will be developed over a period of 8 to 12 years.

Between 2018 and 2020, a rigorous public consultation process carried out by the Office de consultation publique de Montréal contributed to the city of Montréal’s reflections on its Special Planning Program (SPP) project for the Faubourgs sector, where these large sites are located. Citizen participation reached record highs. For the pre-consultation, there were more than 1,000 participations, 223 written contributions and 58 oral statements. In addition, nearly 100 people asked more than 250 questions and the commission received more than 130 written opinions, 36 of which were discussed with the commissioners during the consultation process. The city of Montréal has therefore granted significant privileges to real estate developers, based on conditions of social acceptability mainly related to maintaining social diversity, which is achieved in large part through the construction of affordable social and family housing on the sites in question.

At the same time, the city of Montréal adopted the By-law for a Diverse Metropolis, which ensures the construction of a certain percentage of social housing in major real estate projects. This by-law applies to two of the three sites, namely the Molson Brewery and Porte Sainte-Marie sites.

With regard to the Radio-Canada site, an agreement governing the development of the site was negotiated and signed by the city of Montréal and the developers in 2017, which was before the By-law for a Diverse Metropolis came into effect. This agreement, which is still in effect, provides that 20% of the housing built on the site will be social housing, while 10% will be affordable housing. Let us recall that an entire neighbourhood, the Faubourg à m'lasse, was destroyed to allow the construction of the Maison de Radio-Canada, following the eviction of hundreds of families from this working-class neighbourhood.

To sum up, while families in the Centre-Sud neighbourhood are facing an unprecedented housing crisis, there is a great need for social housing. In addition to the endless wait lists of the Office d'habitation municipal de Montréal, the Comité Logement Ville-Marie has more than 1,000 households on its wait list for social housing. Fortunately, the three real estate developers have committed to building their respective share of social housing on the sites, for an estimated total of nearly 2,000 social housing units in this area alone.

My question is the following:

Considering the enormous need for social housing and the favourable context for the construction of social housing, both for the city of Montréal and for real estate developers, can the Minister confirm that Québec will provide sufficient funding to build the 2,000 units planned? Furthermore, can the Minister confirm the percentage of these units that will qualify for a subsidy from the Rent Supplement Program?

(89) Mr. LeBel (Rimouski) – **14 April 2022**

To the Government

Answer tabled on **25 May 2022** (Sessional Paper No. 583-20220525)

Québec is going through an inflationary period the likes of which has not been seen for at least three decades. This has of course affected citizens' disposable income and the profitability of many businesses.

I therefore find it very difficult to understand how the Minister of Finance, in his recent budget, could have forgotten the many businesses whose operations depend directly on fossil fuels. Whether it be transportation companies or farmers, it is not always possible for them to have their customers absorb the increased cost of their fuel bill.

A farmer in my riding told me that her diesel bill had almost tripled in one year! And higher fuel prices are also hitting carriers hard. For example, bulk carriers, which are often worker-entrepreneurs, cannot increase their contract prices accordingly, as they are subject to the Recueil des tarifs of the Ministère des Transports du Québec. For at least three years, the department itself has acknowledged that the amounts provided no longer reflect the pre-pandemic reality. Imagine how big the gap is now!

If these entrepreneurs do not obtain support to counter skyrocketing fuel prices, the year 2022 will severely test their ability to survive.

My question is the following:

Will the Government commit to offering financial support for these businesses affected by rising fuel prices?

(90) Ms. Lessard-Therrien (Rouyn-Noranda–Témiscamingue) – **26 April 2022**

To the Minister of the Environment and the Fight Against Climate Change,
Answer tabled on **31 May 2022** (Sessional Paper No. 610-20220531)

On 3 February 2022, I tabled a petition in the National Assembly on stopping the use of bromadiolone in Québec, in particular at Société des établissements de plein air du Québec (Sépaq) sites.

Bromadiolone is a highly toxic poison used to control rodents. Its use can result in the death of many creatures including birds of prey. Banned in a number of countries, states and provinces, such as France, California and British Columbia, this poison is still widely used in Québec, even though there are alternative rodent control methods based on non-toxic repellents.

Sépaq has already publicly stated that it has decided to no longer use bromadiolone for rodent control and will apply methods that do not pose a risk to nature's food chain.

My question for the Minister of the Environment and the Fight Against Climate Change is the following:

Does the Minister intend to ban the use of bromadiolone for rodent control throughout Québec?

(91) Ms. Ghazal (Mercier) – **26 April 2022**

To the Minister of Education

Answer tabled on **7 June 2022** (Sessional Paper No. 649-20220607)

On last 28 September, the CSSDM and the École Laurier school administration announced the decision to carry out major renovations to the parents of the approximately 500 children who attend this neighbourhood school located in the Mercier riding.

I was approached by many parents concerned about the future of their child's education, elected municipal officials and the governing board of École Laurier. A parents' committee mobilized and launched an online petition that gathered 361 signatures, asking for concerted work to preserve the quality of life in their neighborhood school. I had the opportunity to deliver this petition to the Minister in person on 7 December in the National Assembly Chamber.

In accordance with the *Education Act*, the CSSDM consulted the governing board of Laurier elementary school regarding the possibility of amending the deed of establishment. Following extensive consultation and joint action with the parents of pupils of École Laurier, its governing body submitted six recommendations to the CSSDM included in a resolution which was adopted on 7 December 2021. These recommendations included, among other things, offering a daycare service with a drop-off point in the neighbourhood in the mornings and evenings. This recommendation was retained following a survey completed by 328 parents of the 521 students. The survey showed that a significant majority (79%) wanted to use a daycare service located near the school.

The 2022-2025 three-year plan for the allocation and destination of buildings was adopted last 16 February, thus making official the relocation of École Laurier to Centre Lajeunesse (7378 Lajeunesse), 2.8 km from the school, for a period of two years. At an extraordinary meeting of the governing board on 14 March, the CSSDM presented the different transport and daycare service scenarios to parents. The purpose of this presentation was to "take the pulse" of the community before making a final decision. Three scenarios were presented to parents: Daycare in the transitional building and application of the transport policy (Option 1); Daycare near the school and implementation of shuttles between daycare location and school location (Option 2); Transitional daycare and modifications to the transport policy (Option 3). The CSSDM strongly recommended

Option 1, without however taking into consideration the survey results showing that 79% of parents wanted a daycare service in proximity (Option 2). The CSSDM recommended excluding Option 2 citing catastrophic logistics scenarios, yet never contacted elected municipal officials to plan transportation or organizations that own premises adjacent to the school. Although Option 3 was exceptionally added by the CSSDM to meet the needs of the Laurier school community, it seems to have had more of an effect on parents' concerns about the safety of their children.

The CSSDM then asked the governing board to conduct a second survey regarding the three options presented, while mentioning that time was running out and that it was becoming increasingly difficult to organize the relocation in a concerted and socially responsible manner. Alternative solutions, including two additional options, quickly emerged from the community. The governing board wanted to include them in the second survey submitted to parents, but the CSSDM refused. However, the *Education Act* clearly states that the governing board may consult all parents of the school's pupils on any matter related to educational services. The governing board could therefore have included the alternative options in the survey to gather parents' needs, since this is part of its mandate.

I myself was present at the extraordinary meeting of the governing board of École Laurier on 14 March when the Director of School Organization Services of the CSSDM, Mr. Mathieu Desjardins, mentioned the “particular context” of École Laurier, namely the number of students and the central location. There is no doubt that this “particular context” makes the relocation of this school considerably more complex and that it is relevant to consider all alternative options.

When the Québec government passed its school board reform in June 2020, the clear objective was to bring decision-making as close as possible to students and the people directly involved with them, and always with their best interests in mind. I would like to emphasize the important participation of several parents of pupils from École Laurier in the CSSDM bodies reserved for them, being those people directly involved with the students, in this case, the governing board, the parents' committee and meetings of the board of directors of the CSSDM.

My questions to the Minister of Education are the following:

- Taking the case of École Laurier as an example, does the Minister consider that the school relocation mechanism is in keeping with the spirit of the school governance reform?
- Considering that the board of directors of the CSSDM has been under supervision for almost a year, are the CSSDM teams ready to coordinate a project of this scope and complexity?
- Why did the CSSDM fail to take into consideration the choice of 79% of parents who want to have a daycare service near the school?

(92) Mr. LeBel (Rimouski) – **26 April 2022**

To the Government

Answer tabled on **11 May 2022** (Sessional Paper No. 563-20220511)

Rising gas prices are destabilizing the budgets of many organizations in my region. One impact of this is that our volunteer centre, the Centre d'action bénévole de Rimouski-Neigette (CAB) must end its accompanied-transport services agreement with the Centre de traitement de l'aide financière de dernier recours (last-resort financial assistance centre) at the end of the month.

The CAB did not achieve the outcome it was expecting from discussions with the relevant authorities to increase the amount granted per kilometre travelled to accompany beneficiaries of last-resort assistance (currently \$0.465). For this reason, the CAB must unfortunately withdraw from this agreement. As of 30 April 2022, the organization will no longer offer accompanied-transport services to clients who are social assistance beneficiaries.

What is the explanation for the CAB receiving \$0.52 from the CISSS to accompany seniors, while the Ministère du Travail, de l'Emploi et de la Solidarité sociale pays \$0.465 to accompany social assistance recipients? Does the Government have an explanation?

In any event, the termination of the agreement will have major impacts on the health and safety of many beneficiaries. These people must be treated the same as others who need this service. The same amount of compensation must be provided for the accompaniment service, regardless of the clientele.

My question is the following:

People receiving social assistance must be treated with respect and dignity, which is why I am asking the Government to review the accompanied-transport services agreements to ensure they are fair for all. Does the Government intend to address this situation immediately given that as of 1 May social assistance recipients will be held hostage and their health will be compromised?

(93) Mr. LeBel (Rimouski) – **28 April 2022**

To the Minister of Justice

Answer tabled on **3 June 2022** (Sessional Paper No. 635-20220603)

Over the years, in response to demands by various citizen rights groups, governments have committed to having a specific mechanism for presenting Cabinet briefs that propose bills or reforms.

This mechanism, known as the “impact clause”, must make it possible to assess the impact of a bill or reform on, for example, the environment, youth or poverty.

With respect to poverty, the *Act to combat poverty and social exclusion* passed in 2002 “requires” that the Government carefully examine any brief submitted to the Cabinet in order to assess its impact on poverty. Some of the Government’s recent actions, particularly with regard to housing, give me reason to doubt that the “poverty impact clause” is really taken seriously.

Recently, the Coalition pour la dignité des aînés (CDA), a group of national seniors’ associations, has proposed that a “seniors impact clause”, inspired by the “youth impact clause” in briefs presented to the Cabinet, be provided for in the development of public policies.

My questions to the Minister of Justice and Chair of the Comité de législation are as follows:

- How many “impact clauses” must be respected when preparing briefs for the Cabinet?
- Can he confirm that the poverty impact clause is truly respected?
- Lastly, is he open to introducing a new seniors impact clause?

(94) Mme Weil (Notre-Dame-de-Grâce) – **3 May 2022**

To the Minister of Transport

Answer tabled on **3 June 2022** (Sessional Paper No. 636-20220603)

The Dalle-Parc is a project to create a bicycle and pedestrian green bridge connecting the Notre-Dame-de-Grâce neighbourhood and the Town of Montreal West, both in my riding, with the Sud-Ouest borough, by crossing over Autoroute 20. This project has the advantage of linking neighbourhoods that are isolated from each other by the Turcot Interchange project.

Furthermore, according to the Conseil régional de l'environnement de Montréal, this green bridge project would eventually be a key part of a green corridor linking the riverbanks and Parc Angrignon to Cavendish Boulevard. Many elected officials, citizens, experts and organizations support the completion of this green link.

Following two feasibility studies, funded by the Québec government and Ville de Montréal and conducted in 2019 and 2020, we have no additional information on the implementation or funding of this green and essential project, which promotes active transportation and improves the quality of life of citizens in the surrounding neighborhoods and on the island of Montreal.

Can the Minister give us a status report on the budgets and timelines for the green bridge project?

(95) Mr. LeBel (Rimouski) – **3 May 2022**

To the Government

Answer tabled on **25 May 2022** (Sessional Paper No. 584-20220525)

An issue has been brought to my attention regarding health care workers' rights to practice. It seems that various professional orders have taken their mandate to inspect health care workers to a new level. Why is this? There doesn't seem to be any particular reason, other than perhaps telework. In the particular context of the ongoing health crisis and the critical shortage of health care workers, we can legitimately be concerned about this new and different management by professional orders. The workers' representatives have received little or no explanation from the professional orders.

According to these representatives, this situation causes health care workers to be absent for long periods of up to eight months, without pay and at their own expense. It seems inconceivable to me, or at the very least questionable, to proceed in this way at a time when health care workers' availability is at an all-time low. Such an attitude can only exacerbate the exodus of workers to other professions where they will be respected. This directly affects the care offered to the population, and what particularly concerns me is that it seems to have an impact on the recruitment of health care workers in the regions, which is an additional challenge in the context of the health crisis.

My questions are the following:

- Is the Government aware of this situation?
- Does it intend to take action on this particular issue, which is of critical importance to me, to health care workers and to the regional population?

(96) Ms. Ghazal (Mercier) – **5 May 2022**

To the Minister of Health and Social Services

Bill 96, while being a step forward for the protection and promotion of the French language, raises some questions related to the services offered by the Ministère de la Santé et des Services sociaux.

The Québec State has the duty to ensure that every resident of Québec, regardless of their level of French, has equitable access to the health and social services that are essential to their health and well-being.

In section 2 of the *Act respecting health services and social* it is stated that it is necessary to “take account of the distinctive geographical, linguistic, sociocultural, ethnocultural and socioeconomic characteristics of each region” and that it is necessary to “foster, to the extent allowed by the resources, access to health services and social services in their own languages for members of the various cultural communities of Québec.” This section reflects the kind of humanism States that respect minorities must put forward.

Section 349 of the same Act states that it is necessary to “facilitate accessibility to health and social services in a manner which is respectful of the characteristics of those cultural communities.”

Despite this, many people from ethnocultural communities do not feel reassured by the amendments being made to the *Charter of the French language* by Bill 96.

I often say the way we debate is important, and in this matter, I would have liked to hear the Government, either through the Premier or the Minister Responsible for the French Language, clearly explain the impact this bill will have in the delivery of health services.

My questions to the Minister are as follows:

- Can the Minister confirm that access to state-paid interpreters will be allowed, even after 6 months, for immigrants and refugees?
- If so, will the use of a state-paid interpreter be permitted for all health care and all social services provided through the public network, or only for certain types of care or under certain circumstances? Is it the healthcare professional who determines whether the use of an interpreter is required? Will the use of an interpreter be permitted even for individuals who speak a little French, but are more comfortable in their mother tongue?
- Can the Minister give us some guidance on the scope of the exception that allows the use of a language other than French “where health, public safety or the principles of natural justice so require”? More specifically, does it cover all health care and social services provided through the public network, or only some?
- Can the Minister tell us what would happen if an immigrant or a refugee who arrived more than 6 months previous had to receive health care or social services and that person did not master either French or English?
- Could a physician who speaks a language other than French or English use that language to speak with a person from an immigrant or refugee background who arrived more than 6 months previous and who has a very limited understanding of French? Would this be allowed for salaried professionals in the public network such as nurses, social workers, speech therapists and psychologists?

(97) Ms. Perry Mélançon (Gaspé) – **5 May 2022**

To the Minister Responsible for Government Administration and Chair of the Conseil du trésor
Answer tabled on **31 May 2022** (Sessional Paper No. 611-20220531)

On 24 February, the Government announced the Plan de régionalisation de 5 000 emplois de l'administration publique. The territories covered by the job transfers were identified in particular according to the economic vitality index (EVI) of the RCMs and the plan states that the municipalities with the greatest need for high-quality jobs will be able to benefit from the positions created or transferred by the public service. That same day, the Government revealed the initial location of 15 shared government offices, two of which are located in Gaspésie, that is in New Richmond and Gaspé.

The MRC de la Haute-Gaspésie, which has the lowest EVI in the region, and even in Québec, was excluded in this first announcement. Considering that the elected officials from Haute-Gaspésie and the mayor of the central city have often expressed their wish to welcome jobs from Québec's public service, that they have had discussions with the Government on this topic and that the city has the infrastructure required for such transfers, questions remain in the community since the announcement on 24 February regarding the choice made by the Government for the first phase of regionalizing positions. It is recognized that more than 3,000 other positions will be transferred in Québec's regions by 2028 and Haute-Gaspésie wishes to be included in this initiative.

My question to the Minister is the following:

What process in Gaspésie was used to determine the cities where the first shared government offices would be established: analysis of the situation, consultation partners, data collected and discussions that enabled the Secrétariat du Conseil du trésor to make its decision?

(98) Mr. Arseneau (Îles-de-la-Madeleine) – **10 May 2022**

To the Minister of Health and Social Services

Answer tabled on **10 June 2022** (Sessional Paper No. 685-20220610)

The User Travel Policy was revised on 28 April 2021 to provide for increased compensation for patients who must travel to large centres to receive health care. Although it was well-received, this revision is still not sufficient to represent the actual costs and duration of travel. Considering inflation and the long distances to be covered, it is obvious that patients in the regions still have to spend money to obtain health care and services.

The Minister of Health and Social Services undertook to adjust the current scale of charges during the examination of the estimates of expenditure last 27 April.

In light of this undertaking, our questions to the Minister of Health and Social Services are the following:

- Will the Minister harmonize the compensation for the cost of an overnight stay and road travel with the scale of charges applicable to public servants? Will the Minister of Health and Social Services undertake to index the amount of the indemnities paid on an annual basis, based on inflation?
- Will the Minister commit to modifying the User Travel Policy so that it applies to users living in a geographical location of more than 100 km instead of 200 km?
- Will the Minister commit to reimbursing patients for the actual duration of trips for their entire stay?

(99) Mr. LeBel (Rimouski) – **10 May 2022**

To the Government

Answer tabled on **9 June 2022** (Sessional Paper No. 677-20220609)

I witnessed a great hullabaloo in front of my riding office yesterday.

Dozens of artisan truckers arrived in front of the building with their vehicles and honking their horns. I can testify that this makes a lot of noise, but I fear there will be even more if we do not listen to their demands.

These entrepreneurs, who are often both employer and sole employee, have been hit hard by the drastic increase in fuel prices in recent weeks. If you think that \$2 per litre is expensive to fill up your car, know that diesel is sometimes sold for up to 60 cents more. However, no one in the Government has bothered, to date, to simply listen to them.

On 21 March, I wrote to the Minister of Economy and Innovation to raise his awareness of this serious problem. No reply, not even an acknowledgment of receipt from him. I previously placed a question on the *Order Paper* on this topic, to which I am still waiting for an answer. In the most recent budget, the Government has made absolutely no provision for this. The clock is ticking, because if the Government does not support artisan truckers, on the eve of the peak season for construction in Québec, these entrepreneurs will work nearly at a loss. Imagine the impact the disappearance of these businesses would have on our regions, where they are an essential link in our economy.

Today I am referring this to the Minister of Transport, since the *Recueil des tarifs du ministère des Transports*, which determines the tariffication of services of artisan truckers, is under his jurisdiction. The truckers tell me that the Ministère itself recognized that its tariffs did not reflect reality, even before the pandemic and the war in Ukraine. Negotiations for the revision of the *Recueil* have been underway for three years without success.

My questions are the following:

- Does the Government acknowledge the undue burden of fuel prices on artisan truckers?
- Will the Government commit to offering financial support for these businesses affected by rising fuel prices?

(100) Mr. Fontecilla (Laurier-Dorion) – **10 May 2022**

To the Minister of Public Security

Answer tabled on **8 June 2022** (Sessional Paper No. 662-20220608)

Quebec is currently collaborating with the Canada Border Services Agency (CBSA) to allow immigrants who have committed no crime to be detained in Québec prisons. However, a report recently revealed the unacceptable conditions of detention experienced by these people: arbitrary and indefinite detentions, physical abuse and mistreatment, separation of children and parents, etc. According to a legal opinion obtained by Amnistie internationale Canada francophone, the migrant incarceration practices currently in place in Canada are in violation of international human rights law.

It goes without saying that Québec must stop condoning CBSA's unacceptable practices. Migrants are already experiencing many extremely difficult situations that have an impact on their physical and mental health. It is obvious that detention only increases the precariousness of their health.

My questions to the Minister are the following:

- How can she justify the fact that the Ministère de la Sécurité publique is still working with the CBSA despite these revelations in recent months?
- Does she plan to terminate the agreement between her department and the CBSA?

(101) Mr. Arseneau (Îles-de-la-Madeleine) – **10 May 2022**

To the Minister of Municipal Affairs and Housing

Answer tabled on **10 June 2022** (Sessional Paper No. 686-20220610)

Nunavik is facing a disturbing number of infant deaths, mostly under obscure or unexplained circumstances. The region's police chief even had to alert Québec's Bureau du Coroner. The latter indicates that the situation is alarming. Several of these deaths have been classified as being caused by Sudden Infant Death Syndrome.

Although there is no certainty regarding the specific causes of this syndrome, certain elements have been identified as risk factors, including smoking and bed sharing. Sixty percent of children under the age of 6 live in overcrowded homes. Housing is a major issue in Nunavik, and this can have serious consequences for infants. However, the Québec government is not doing enough in this matter to ensure that people living in Nunavik, especially infants, enjoy healthy and dignified living conditions.

My question to the Minister is the following: What is she doing to ensure the rapid and sufficient development of housing in Northern Québec, especially for the Inuit communities of Nunavik?

(102) Mr. Arseneau (Îles-de-la-Madeleine) – **24 May 2022**

To the Minister of Transport

Answer tabled on **10 June 2022** (Sessional Paper No. 687-20220610)

According to Order in Council No. 1060-2021 dated 7 July 2021, it appears that amendments to the *Regulation respecting road vehicles used for the transportation of students* (chapter T-12, r. 17) do not apply to a school bus used to transport students to a location served by a Hydro-Québec independent electric power distribution system mentioned in Schedule II. Yet, although the Magdalen Islands archipelago is served by an independent Hydro-Québec system, it is not included in the locations listed in Schedule II of this Regulation.

Given this situation, our questions to the Minister of Transport are as follows:

- Will the Minister of Transport commit to amending Schedule II of the *Regulation respecting road vehicles used for the transportation of students* (chapter T-12, r. 17) to include Îles-de-la-Madeleine among the locations served by an independent Hydro-Québec system?
- Will the Minister of Transport commit to applying in Îles-de-la-Madeleine the same standard applicable to other locations served by a Hydro-Québec independent electric power distribution system?
- Will the Minister commit to implementing these amendments by the beginning of the next school year?

(103) Mr. Fortin (Pontiac) – **24 May 2022**

To the Minister of Transport

During the consultations on Bill 22, An Act to amend the Automobile Insurance Act, the Highway Safety Code and other provisions, various briefs were submitted. One of them proposed to add two elements to the bill to improve practices with the SAAQ and insurers.

The first idea is to require the holders of a driver's licence that has been suspended, for example for drinking and driving or demerit points, to provide the SAAQ with proof of insurance for a period of 3 to 5 years. According to the brief's author, this measure would be advantageous for good drivers when they renegotiate their insurance premiums. In his view, it would make it possible to more appropriately set the premiums for motorists based on their behaviour and thus lower the cost for good drivers while increasing it for offenders.

The second idea concerns productivity, bureaucracy and wait times. It is a matter of driving records. Currently, to access one's driving record, the SAAQ system requires that a request be submitted on paper by mail. Citizens who want to obtain their driving record must therefore contend with postal and bureaucratic delays. Insurers may also access driving records while incurring costs and delays. In short, the brief seems to propose solutions, such as electronic access, to facilitate information sharing while ensuring the protection of personal data.

Can the Minister tell us what follow-up he is committed to regarding this brief and, further to my first question, can he explain the grounds on which he is basing his decision?

(104) Mr. LeBel (Rimouski) – **24 May 2022**

To the Government

Answer tabled on **7 June 2022** (Sessional Paper No. 650-20220607)

Currently, soccer fans, and especially hockey fans, are bombarded with online gambling ads. You have to watch a hockey playoff game on TV to realize the extent of the phenomenon: "This period is brought to you by Bet.net!" A commentator-journalist-expert adds that if he trusts Bet, fans can also. Then, Leo, Jack and others take turns at every commercial during overtime.

However, in its own advertising, Loto-Québec warns fans that only Loto-Québec is allowed to advertise online gaming sites and that other sites are illegal. The government-owned corporation states that "a star does not make an illegal gaming website legal. When a well-known public figure acts as a spokesperson for an illegal gaming website in Québec, the site still remains illegal in Québec."

The situation is serious. According to the INSPQ, for the past twenty years, the development of online gambling has raised public health concerns around the world. This has led Loto-Québec to put in place numerous measures to prevent players from engaging in irresponsible behaviour; such initiatives are not found on illegal sites, which are heavily advertised.

According to the INSPQ, online players usually exhibit more psychosocial problems than offline players. "2% of the 4.2 million players in Québec experience gambling problems, while among online players, this proportion rises to 23%." This can result in depression, suicide, poverty and family conflicts.

My questions are the following:

- The Government has the power to legislate, so why does it not recognize this issue and take action now to ban illegal online gambling sites?
- Why does the Government allow ads from illegal sites to be shown in Québec?

(105) Ms. Dorion (Taschereau) – **24 May 2022**

To the Minister of Transport

On 28 April 2022, the Québec government unveiled the 2022–2027 implementation plan for the 2030 Plan for a Green Economy, increasing investments in the fight against climate change, as announced in the 2022–2023 Québec budget.

This follows the 22 March 2022 budget statement, which raised much hope regarding confirmation of the Québec government’s determination to electrify transportation in the province. Subsequently, the paid passenger transportation industry had to admit that taxi electrification had been put on hold because investments were by no means enough to complete this component, which is however essential for Québec’s ecological transition.

However, this “new version” of the implementation plan allocates increased funding for several important areas, including electrification and efficiency in transportation (\$3.48 billion). Specifically, page 47 of the document states that \$10.8 million will be invested over 4 years, including the current year, to electrify 40% of taxis by 2030.

Obviously, this is a worthwhile investment. However, several questions remain for the paid passenger transportation industry.

In light of the aforementioned, my questions to the Minister of Transport are the following:

- Can the Minister explain to Québécois and to the paid passenger transportation industry what this amount means in terms of the MTQ program, and what the timelines are?
- Can the Minister confirm whether this is an extension of the existing electrification program, or whether it is a pre-announcement of a new upcoming program?
- If it turns out that these amounts are to pre-announce new programs for taxi electrification, then when does the Minister intend to inform the public with an official announcement?

(106) Mr. Fontecilla (Laurier-Dorion) – **24 May 2022**

To the Minister of Finance

Québec is currently experiencing a massive housing crisis. Québécois are facing significant rent increases, many “renovictions” and unacceptable tactics by many real estate owners.

Real estate speculation is no stranger to this, quite the contrary, especially through money laundering. In fact, the Québec real estate market is currently heavily invested in money laundering, according to several observations and studies conducted in recent years. Other jurisdictions are also struggling with this situation. British Columbia has launched a major investigation which resulted in a report with very clear conclusions: money laundering in real estate is a growing phenomenon throughout Canada and elsewhere in the world. According to this information, billions of dollars are at stake.

My questions to the Minister are the following:

- Does the Minister of Finance think it is appropriate to launch a public inquiry into real estate money laundering, as British Columbia recently did?
- What steps is his Government taking to address this problem?

(107) Mr. Barrette (La Pinière) – **25 May 2022**

To the Premier

On two occasions, first on 23 April 2021 and then on 1 October 2021, Mr. Michel Lépine, President of NOBCO Micro-systèmes, sent the Premier a formal request for a public inquiry into a matter involving Mr. Lépine and his company, National Bank and, at the time, the CSST.

Mr. Lépine alleges there may be embezzlement, even fraud, in the performance of a \$130 million contract involving at least the three above-mentioned parties, the result of which he was defrauded.

Without passing judgment on the substance of the allegations, it appears to me that Mr. Lépine has legitimate reason to consider himself in the position of a whistleblower and to expect a follow-up to his request.

However, as of 31 December 2021, Mr. Lépine had still not received any follow-up to his two requests. Faced with this lack of response, Mr. Lépine sent an affidavit concerning his allegations to the Premier's office on 8 March 2022.

Allegations of fraud, corruption, fabrication, and even destruction of evidence – this situation, if proven true, and given Mr. Lépine's professional background as an SPVM investigator, not only necessitates the Premier's attention, but also from an ethical point of view should make him want to answer the following questions.

First, can the Premier assure us that a detailed response will be given to Mr. Lépine as soon as possible? Also, can he give the House an update on this matter? And, lastly, can the Premier tell us whether an assessment has been carried out, and if so, what the conclusions are and how he intends to follow-up on this assessment?

(108) Mr. Leduc (Hochelaga-Maisonneuve) – **2 June 2022**

To the Minister of Education

The sustainability of funding for popular education centres (CEPs), in full compliance with their mission and the principle of independent community action, has been a longstanding demand since the creation of the Programme d'action communautaire sur le terrain de l'éducation (PACTE). In a telephone meeting with the Member for Hochelaga-Maisonneuve on 30 June 2020, the Minister affirmed his desire to resolve the main issues before the start of the 2020 school year, namely the payment of operating costs and the sustainability of CEP funding. The Minister mentioned in February 2021, in connection with the sustainability of funding, that teams were in the process of

drafting the new program and that it was a long and complex process necessitating several stages of validation at different levels (MEQ, MCE and SCT). The Minister mentioned that it would be ideal for the program to be completed for the next year in order to regularize the situation of CEPs such as the Centre-Sud Social Committee. It has now been over a year since that update and CEPs still do not have confirmation of the program.

During the 12 April 2022 visit of the six CEPs to the National Assembly, the Minister mentioned during the meeting that he would soon have good news for the CEPs regarding their funding. The Minister could not confirm whether it was regarding the new program or another source of funding. However, to date, these centres are still without news.

Furthermore, the CEP in my riding, the Pavillon d'éducation communautaire d'Hochelaga-Maisonneuve (PECHM), is experiencing a particular situation related to work needed to address maintenance problems in its building. In 2016, a budget of \$12 million was obtained by the Alliance of Popular Education Centres (InterCEP) to carry out building maintenance work. However, the PECHM alone was excluded from this budget. This situation was also brought to the Minister's attention by the PECHM's director in a letter dated last 5 May.

In light of the above:

1. Can the Minister reaffirm his commitment to resolving InterCEP's longstanding demands, as was done during his meeting with the Member for Hochelaga-Maisonneuve, particularly regarding the sustainability of its funding?
2. If this is indeed the Minister's intention, what timetable does he recommend for resolving this issue that is in accordance with their mission and the principle of independent community action?
3. Whose decision was it to exclude the PECHM from the work planned for in the \$12 million budget obtained in 2016?
4. What is the plan and timetable for the work required to maintain the PECHM's services?

(109) Ms. Lessard-Therrien (Rouyn-Noranda-Témiscamingue) – **8 June 2022**

To the Minister of Agriculture, Fisheries and Food

On 8 February 2022, as part of his 2020–2030 Sustainable Agriculture Plan, the Minister of Agriculture, Fisheries and Food announced a program to compensate Québec farmers for agri-environmental practices.

Despite the announced \$70 million envelope to recognize farm producers' efforts and environmentally friendly farming practices that go beyond regulatory requirements and generate significant environmental gains, the total government compensation for producers will finally be \$14 million per year, for three years.

On 22 March 2022, the Minister of Finance's budget confirmed the allocation of \$29 million over five years to enhance the Sustainable Agriculture Plan in order to recognize and reward good farming practices, in line with the Government's accelerated strategy in this election year.

Although there is still a long way to go to adequately support Québec's grain producers and thereby ensure their national and international competitiveness, the investments to reward environmentally friendly farming efforts are welcomed with open arms by the farming community, in particular Québec's grain sector. However, as the Government's own 2020 study on the competitiveness of Québec grain producers clearly shows, this sector requires not only economic security programs, but also, more broadly, a major government commitment to support it financially in meeting its current challenges, in particular with regard to society's environmental expectations.

In this context, our questions to the Minister of Agriculture, Fisheries and Food are the following:

- Does the Minister sincerely believe that these amounts are sufficient for the agricultural sector to meet the environmental challenges head-on, especially considering society's high expectations in this regard?
- Can the Minister tell us how he intends to support Québec farmers who have already implemented environmentally friendly practices and meet the needs expressed from all regions of Québec so that the services provided are equitable for all?
- Does the Minister believe that we should continue to focus on compensation, research, transfer and consulting services to meet the challenge of actively and continuously implementing environmentally friendly farming practices?
- Is the Minister aware that the investments announced in 2022 to reward producers' environmentally friendly efforts are still much less than what is provided in the United States and Europe, and that this is a threat to their competitiveness in the coming years?