

(1) Ms. Labrie (Sherbrooke) – **29 November 2022**

To the Minister Responsible for Government Administration and Chair of the Conseil du trésor
Answer tabled on **31 January 2023** (Sessional Paper No. 274-20230131)

Bill 12, introduced in the Second Session of the 42nd Legislature and assented to on 2 June 2022, became the *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*.

This Act is part of the Government's public procurement strategy, which aims to further open public procurement to Québec enterprises, in addition to giving priority to Québec-sourced and responsible procurement.

As a result of fruitful discussions during the clause-by-clause consideration leading to the passage of this Act, significant provisions aimed at promoting access to our public contracts for social economy enterprises within the meaning of the *Social Economy Act* (chapter E-1.1.1) have been included in this legislation.

Given this very relevant objective, we consider that it is important to know where we are starting from in order to better measure the progress made.

My questions are the following:

- What is the monetary value and share of public procurement obtained by social economy enterprises in recent years?
- What is the monetary value and share of public procurement obtained by social economy enterprises in the last year for which we have complete information?
- What are the Government's objectives with regard to developing the monetary value and share of public contracts obtained by social economy enterprises in the coming years?

(2) Mr. Leduc (Hochelaga-Maisonneuve) – **30 November 2022**

To the Minister of Transport and Sustainable Mobility
Answer tabled on **31 January 2023** (Sessional Paper No. 275-20230131)

The inauguration of the Pie-IX bus rapid transit (Pie-IX BRT) on November 7 is good news that we have long been waiting for. Unfortunately, a major shadow is cast over the project. Let's review its history.

Announced in 2009, the Pie-IX BRT was initially scheduled to be commissioned for 2013. However, the project has suffered several delays. Over the years, various electrification scenarios have been studied, including the use of trolleybuses, but this option has been discarded.

In March 2014, the project was presented to Montréal's executive committee, where BRT stations could be seen running from Montée Saint-François in Laval to Notre-Dame Street in Hochelaga-Maisonneuve, for a total of 21 stations.

In 2016, we went from 21 stations to 17. I decried the fact that the project stopped at Pie-IX metro station and left out the entire Hochelaga-Maisonneuve neighbourhood, for only 3 stops. In 2018, we asked for and obtained a phase 2 extension of the BRT to Notre-Dame, which was the same as the initial project. Work finally began in 2019.

Thirteen years after the project was announced, the Pie-IX BRT came into service not with 21 stations, but with 17. Yes, because we learned in the last few weeks that the section between Pie-IX station and Notre-Dame Street was suspended due to a call for tenders that was deemed inconclusive. However, on March 22, 2022, the STM's project website stated: "We are also planning to extend the Pierre-De Coubertin Avenue BRT to Notre-Dame Street. This phase is [...] expected to begin in fall 2022. The integrated Pie-IX BRT is one of the projects that was developed following the joint declaration from the Quebec and Montréal governments to revitalize the east end of the city".

How can we think about revitalizing the east end of Montréal if we cannot install a bus lane from the south to the north of the city? We need this extension to serve the southern part of the neighbourhood. The Minister must commit to rectifying the situation quickly. We will not accept this setback.

In light of the above:

1. Since the Government is a key funder of this project, is it abandoning the last three stops of the Pie-IX BRT or is it firmly committed to supporting the completion of this project?
2. I was 25 years old when the decision was made to set up this public transit project, and now, at 38, I can finally take the Pie-IX BRT. Will I have to wait until I am 50 years old to see the last three stops connecting Notre-Dame to Pie-IX station so that my riding is fully capable of having a public transit option worthy of the name? When will we see the Pie-IX BRT line completed?

- (3) Ms. Rotiroti (Jeanne-Mance–Viger) – **30 November 2022**
To the Minister of Immigration, Francization and Integration
Answer tabled on **31 January 2023** (Sessional Paper No. 276-20230131)

We recently learned in an article in the Journal de Montréal that the time it takes to start a francization course in the Capitale-Nationale region has increased significantly, up to three months between eligibility for the course and its start.

This delay penalizes immigrants who have chosen to settle in Québec and who rely on these francization courses to be able to enter the labour market, in French.

According to data provided by the Ministère de l'Immigration, de la Francisation et de l'Intégration during the consideration of the 2022–2023 estimates of expenditure, the average time between the notice of eligibility for courses and the start of the full-time francization course in Québec was 26 working days. The three-month delay currently mentioned represents an anomalous situation that must be corrected.

Can the Minister tell us what specific measures she intends to put in place with francization stakeholders and partners in the Capitale-Nationale region to deal with the increased demand for francization courses, and will she commit to returning the delays to normal in the coming months?

(4) Ms. Rizqy (Saint-Laurent) – **6 December 2022**

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

Answer tabled on **7 February 2023** (Sessional Paper No. 341-20230207)

In its 2021–2022 annual report, the Commission des droits de la personne et des droits de la jeunesse follows up on the Québec government's achievement of the targets set out in the Act respecting equal access to employment in public bodies.

On page 30 of the report, we are told that Indigenous peoples' representation in the 338 public bodies subject to this law has been stagnant at the rate of 0.4% for the last three years.

Can the Chair of the Conseil du Trésor inform us of the measures that are in place to rectify this situation and specify what her objectives and timetable are to ensure that Indigenous peoples find their rightful place in Québec's public bodies?

(5) Ms. Labrie (Sherbrooke) – **8 December 2022**

To the Minister Responsible for Social Services

Answer tabled on **7 February 2023** (Sessional Paper No. 342-20230207)

On 2 April 2019, the members of the Committee on Health and Social Services (CHSS) unanimously carried, pursuant to Standing Order 149, an order on the alarming increase in the use by children and youth of psychostimulants in relation to attention deficit hyperactivity disorder (ADHD).

The CHSS held hearings on 6, 7, 8 and 13 November 2019 and tabled its report on 4 December 2020. This report contains 17 recommendations, mainly intended for Social Services. For each recommendation, can the Minister update me on the status of completion and the timetable for implementation?

(6) Ms. Labrie (Sherbrooke) – **31 January 2023**

To the Minister of Justice

Answer tabled on **14 March 2023** (Sessional Paper No. 404-20230314)

As the Minister knows, having access to family mediation services provides positive benefits for families and the justice system. These benefits are such that in 2020, the Minister thought it appropriate to extend access to this service to persons without common dependent children, which was an excellent decision.

However, in the current context of inflation, access to family mediation is jeopardized by the stagnation of the fees paid to family mediators, an increasing number of whom are wondering if they want to continue this practice. Indeed, the fees set out in the *Regulation respecting family mediation* have not been indexed since 2012.

Given that the *Regulation respecting the mediation of small claims* has provided for annual indexing since 2012 and prescribes higher fees than those for family mediation, I would like to ask the following questions:

- When does the Minister intend to review the *Regulation respecting family mediation* in order to update mediator fees?
- Does the Minister intend to include a section providing for annual indexing in the revised *Regulation respecting family mediation* to ensure consistency with the *Regulation respecting the mediation of small claims*?

(7) Ms. Setlakwe (Mont-Royal–Outremont) – **31 January 2023**

To the Minister Responsible for Access to Information and the Protection of Personal Information
Answer tabled on **22 February 2023** (Sessional Paper No. 387-20230222)

On December 13, the Commission d'accès à l'information released a report on ensuring better protection for young people's personal information in the digital age entitled "Mieux protéger les renseignements personnels des jeunes à l'ère numérique" (summary report only available in English).

In its press release announcing the release of the report, the Commission stated that the digital age offers young people almost unlimited access to websites, apps and games, from a very young age. Behind every service lies a company that uses, shares and stores the personal information it collects from its users. These companies may use that information for profiling purposes in order to influence the behaviour of young people or to make decisions about them. Such practices often pose risks to the fundamental rights of minors.

The Commission made 12 recommendations to enhance the protection of personal information, including prohibiting the sale of personal information about a minor in any circumstances.

Can the Minister tell us what follow-up actions he intends to take for each of these recommendations and the timeline he has set to make the necessary legislative changes?

(8) Mr. Bérubé (Matane-Matapédia) – **2 February 2023**

To the Minister of Health

Answer tabled on **15 March 2023** (Sessional Paper No. 417-20230315)

For several years, the Cardiology Service of the Centre hospitalier régional de Rimouski has been stressing the need for a hemodynamics room to serve the population of eastern Québec.

The region meets the criteria; this decision is purely political. A committee of cardiologists and citizens proved that the region meets all the conditions for a hemodynamics service.

This is further demonstrated by the numerous reports and files submitted to the Minister of Health and Social Services. If the government wants to be fair to the population of eastern Québec, it must swiftly announce the installation of a hemodynamics room in Rimouski. Every year, more than 1,400 patients in eastern Québec require this type of care.

To obtain such care, the people must travel to Québec. Some patients who are too unstable die during the transfer, while others must live with permanent impairments because of the wait times. This situation is untenable and unfair for all patients.

While seven regions of Québec have hemodynamics services, patients in the Bas-Saint-Laurent and Gaspésie regions face stress, distance and discomfort.

Does the Minister of Health recognize the need to set up a hemodynamics room in the Centre hospitalier régional de Rimouski and, if so, will he commit to conducting this project in the current term, and what is his timeframe for its completion?

- (9) Mr. Grandmont (Taschereau) – **21 February 2023**
To the Minister of Transport and Sustainable Mobility
Answer tabled on **21 March 2023** (Sessional Paper No. 438-20230321)

Québec's paratransit services are experiencing an unprecedented crisis. More than a hundred organizations working with persons with disabilities have joined forces to urge the Government to address the current loss in paratransit services. With cancelled trips, reduced operating hours, a lack of specialized vehicles and driver shortages, Québec's paratransit services are dysfunctional.

For many persons with disabilities, paratransit services are their only means of transport to a medical clinic, to their workplace, to the grocery store or simply to visit their family members or their friends. This public transportation service is necessary to enable persons with disabilities to fully perform their role as citizens.

The paratransit network is calling for the creation of a working group with a mandate to manage the crisis. This group would include:

- Organizations representing persons with disabilities and their families;
- Organizations representing seniors;
- Organizations representing carriers as well as taxi and minibus providers;
- The Ministère des Transports et de la Mobilité durable;
- The Ministère de la Santé et des Services sociaux;
- The Ministère de l'Emploi et de la Solidarité sociale;
- The Ministère de l'Éducation;
- The Ministère de l'Enseignement supérieur;
- The Union des municipalités du Québec;
- The Fédération québécoise des municipalités;
- The Secrétariat aux aînés of the Ministère de la Famille.

This working group is necessary for Québec to get out of the current situation that affects tens of thousands of Quebecers.

My question to the Minister of Transport and Sustainable Mobility is the following: will she follow up on this request from the community and create the working group?

- (10) Mr. Bérubé (Matane-Matapédia) – **22 February 2023**

To the Minister of Tourism

Answer tabled on **29 March 2023** (Sessional Paper No. 476-20230329)

In February 2022, we learned that the process for the replacement of the Olympic Stadium roof was once again delayed. In an interview at the time, the Minister stated that the review of the timeline was currently on the drawing board adding that she still expected the roof to be replaced as soon as possible.

Can the Minister tell us the timeline for replacing the Olympic Stadium roof?

- (11) Mr. Kelley (Jacques-Cartier) – **22 February 2023**

To the Minister of Health

Answer tabled on **21 March 2023** (Sessional Paper No. 439-20230321)

The city of Beaconsfield borders Highway 20. Residents in my riding are concerned about the impact of the noise from the highway on their health.

Can the Minister of Health tell us if his department or the Direction nationale de la santé publique have any studies on the impact of highway noise on public health and, if this is not the case, whether he intends to carry out such a study in the near future?

- (12) Ms. Lakhoyan Olivier (Chomedey) – **23 February 2023**

To the Minister of Labour

Answer tabled on **21 March 2023** (Sessional Paper No. 440-20230321)

A labour dispute has been going on at Notre-Dame-des-Neiges Cemetery for over 20 weeks now, which has resulted in delays and difficult situations for the burial of the deceased.

The mourning of the bereaved families is disrupted by this labour dispute, as the remains are temporarily placed in a morgue while awaiting their eventual burial.

Can the Minister of Labour make tools available to the parties involved in this labour dispute to facilitate its resolution, with respect for the deceased and the bereaved families?

- (13) Mr. Morin (Acadie) – **14 March 2023**

To the Minister Responsible for Relations with the First Nations and the Inuit

Answer tabled on **18 April 2023** (Sessional Paper No. 510-20230418)

At the end of February, members of the Atikamekw community of Wemotaci erected blockades on forest roads to put an end to logging and to preserve their territory in the Haute-Mauricie region.

They consider that the Government, through the Bureau de mise en marché des bois, has acted without prior consultation and, especially, without consent in the planning of forest activities.

The Atikamekw have requested a discussion with the Government but the latter has not yet responded to them.

Can the Minister Responsible for Relations with the First Nations and the Inuit tell us what he intends to do to resolve this situation?

(14) Mr. Bouazzi (Maurice-Richard) – **16 March 2023**

To the Minister of Finance

Answer tabled on **25 April 2023** (Sessional Paper No. 534-20230425)

Recently, damning reports from B'Tselem (2021), Human Rights Watch (2021) and Amnesty International (2022), three major Israeli and international human rights organizations, denounced the crime against humanity of apartheid in Israel-Palestine. These reports add to the considerable body of documentation on the issue of violations of international law and human rights by the State of Israel against Palestinians.

As the Minister is no doubt aware, the situation in Israel-Palestine is very closely linked to the territory and its occupation. Under international law, the Israeli settlements in occupied territories constitute a violation of the *Fourth Geneva Convention*. Consequently, the Government of Canada does not recognize permanent Israeli control over the territories occupied in 1967 – namely the Golan Heights, the West Bank, East Jerusalem and the Gaza Strip.

However, the Société des alcools du Québec currently sells 36 wine products from Israeli. However, half of these were not produced from the juice of grapes grown within the internationally recognized borders of the State of Israel, or were only partially so.

I therefore bring to the attention of the Minister the fact that 18 wine products on the shelves of the SAQ are mislabeled as being of Israeli origin, with the label wording “Made in Israel” or “Product of Israel”.

This labelling is misleading. Several citizens have contacted me and feel deceived and misled by the labeling in question, which denies agricultural exploitation on Palestinian territory that does not comply with international law.

The Canadian Food Inspection Agency (CFIA) issued a decision on 13 May 2022, forwarded to the Liquor Control Board of Ontario (LCBO), concerning two products misidentified as “Products of Israel”. This labeling without explanatory information was considered “false” by the CFIA.

My questions are the following:

- Will the Minister undertake to ensure that the SAQ take the appropriate measures to rectify the situation, that is to say, that it removes the 18 wine products in question until such time as they comply with labelling laws?
- Does the Minister intend to ensure, in the name of respect for international law, that no wine produced in illegal settlements be found on the shelves of the SAQ?

(15) Mr. Bouazzi (Maurice-Richard) – **16 March 2023**

To the Minister of Finance

Answer tabled on **25 April 2023** (Sessional Paper No. 535-20230425)

Policity Ltd. is an Israeli company that is the architect and administrator of Israel’s National Police Academy. It trains all Israeli police officers, including militarized units, who receive training in repressive practices such as crowd control, house raids, strong-arm techniques, target shooting and undercover operations.

Israel's National Police Academy also trains police officers in prisons, where cases of torture and degrading treatment of Palestinian political prisoners, including children, have been widely documented by both local (Israeli and Palestinian) and international human rights organizations. In concrete terms, Policy is one of the pillars of the ongoing system of oppression and expropriation experienced by Palestinians in Palestine-Israel. You will recall that this system was recently denounced in a cascade of reports from human rights organizations, such as Amnesty International and Human Rights Watch, which see in it the crime against humanity of apartheid.

However, 25% of the shares of the company Policy Ltd. are held by G4S, a private security company targeted by an international campaign since 2012. Although G4S divested itself of its Israeli subsidiary in 2016, it still owns more than a quarter of the shares of Policy Ltd.

Several pension funds or sovereign wealth funds have recently dissociated themselves from G4S, such as KLP, Norges Bank and MP Pension – the Danish pension fund for academics.

However, this is not the case for the CDPQ. Indeed, the Caisse is the main shareholder of Allied Universal, which acquired G4S in 2021. More specifically, Allied Universal maintains a 0.03% investment in Policy. The Caisse is therefore financially linked through its holdings in Policy Ltd.

Given this financial association, the Coalition Boycott, Désinvestissement et Sanctions du Québec (BDS-Quebec) met with the CDPQ twice in 2022. The CDPQ expressed its willingness to socialize its portfolio companies, notably through shareholder dialogue. Its representatives also mentioned that the company no longer brings in income in Israel.

BDS-Quebec points out that the CDPQ's involvement in G4S/Policy, which must end, highlights a much larger problem facing the Caisse: that of the ethical nature of its investments whenever human rights are in question.

My questions are the following:

- In light of the above, is the Minister concerned about the CDPQ's financial association with Policy Ltd?
- Does he intend to ensure that the CDPQ has a specific policy and investment criteria for serious political contexts of human rights violations and that it complies with them?

(16) Ms. Labrie (Sherbrooke) – **22 March 2023**

To the Minister of Justice

Answer tabled on **25 April 2023** (Sessional Paper No. 536-20230425)

As the Minister knows, last autumn, the federal government passed Bill C-5, which favours diversion measures for simple drug possession offences. This approach is widely supported by scientific literature and by the hands-on experience of police officers and community organizations. It would help to destigmatize people who use drugs and, by doing so, help better protect their health and dignity. This new legislative measure introduced by the federal government has been very well received by addiction counsellors, who believe that adopting a similar approach in Québec would make it possible to reduce overdose cases while helping to relieve the justice system of cases that are more of a social and public health issue.

My question is the following:

Given that Québec does not have federal prosecutors and that it is up to the Minister to provide guidance to prosecutors on the application of this law, I would like to know when the Minister intends to issue directives in this regard, and what approach he intends to prioritize?

(17) Ms. Ghazal (Mercier) – **22 March 2023**

To the Minister of Education

Answer tabled on **27 April 2023** (Sessional Paper No. 549-20230427)

Last September, during the first governing board meeting of Grand-Pré elementary school, the parents and school staff learned that this would be the last year the school would offer specialized language classes. Grand-Pré is a specialized school that serves students with disabilities who have been evaluated by speech therapists as having severely impaired verbal communication and moderately to severely impaired verbal comprehension.

The school is located in the municipality of Saint-Jacques, in the Lanaudière region. It is a specialized school, which makes it distinct from local schools, since it serves all students of the Des Samares school service centre who require services adapted to their needs. This grouping has existed since 1998 and has led to the growth of considerable expertise. The Des Samares school service centre has decided to distribute its classes in five schools spread out across the territory, in particular with the objective of bringing students closer to their school.

Nadia Ménard, president of the governing board and mother of a seven-year-old student at the school remarked that all children attending these classes have severe dysphasia, both in terms of receptive and expressive language skills. Several of them have other disabilities, and the vast majority have experienced a difficult, even catastrophic time in their home school before being admitted to Grand-Pré. Learning that our children would be sent back to so-called regular schools, that the school's expertise was going to vanish, and that this would all be done in a rush in the context of a labour shortage has been very distressing for several families.

The CCSEHDAA, an advisory committee on services for handicapped students and students with social maladjustments or learning disabilities, was not consulted, nor were the parents' committee, the governing board and the teaching staff. No one is against inclusion, but not at any cost; not at the expense of the mental health, development, safety and self-esteem of our children with special needs. Not at the expense of everything they have at Grand-Pré school.

I did a family survey. The majority of them (84% of respondents) support maintaining the current arrangement, sometimes even despite having to travel for almost two hours to get to Grand-Pré. This demonstrates the exceptional, high-quality and reassuring service that our vulnerable children receive there.

We understand the desire of the school service centre to bring closer or even be able to offer language services to the inhabitants of municipalities farther north. What we do not understand is the need to discontinue the excellent services given to the language classes grouping at Grand-Pré. The other argument put forward is that it would allow students in language class to complete their entire elementary education at the same school. This is certainly a praiseworthy idea, but the decision to relocate all classes next September would mean that more than a third of the students would have to attend a third school in three years. We are talking here about children who are very sensitive to change and whose families say that their arrival at Grand-Pré has drastically improved their motivation, learning and behaviour.

Ms. Menard finished by saying that local MNAs, all CAQ members, have informed the Minister of Education about this situation. The Minister would have expressed his disagreement with the decision taken, but since it is not a question of a school closure, but rather a relocation of specialized classes, he would have no authority under the *Education Act* to take action and exercise a veto. The school service centre thus informed our elected officials that the decision would be maintained, regardless of the opinions of parents and the Ministère de l'Éducation. Parents are anxious and distressed; some are considering withdrawing their child from the school system so as not to expose them to the nightmare they had to go through before their enrolment at Grand-Pré school.

However, research done suggests that the Minister of Education would have a certain discretionary power with regard to the decisions taken by school service centre when services for students with special needs are affected. In particular, when certain committees are not consulted, which is required under the regulations of various school service centres and in keeping with the *Education Act*.

My questions are the following:

- 1) Given the many procedural errors committed by the Des Samares school service centre, does the Minister intend to reverse this decision?
- 2) Knowing that the majority of parents opposed the reorganization of services, what does the Minister intend to do to help these parents and students?

(18) Ms. Nichols (Vaudreuil) – **28 March 2023**

To the Minister of Transport and Sustainable Mobility

Answer tabled on **20 April 2023** (Sessional Paper No. 527-20230420)

The Île-aux-Tourtes bridge is an important piece of road infrastructure used by no less than 87,000 vehicles every day. This piece of infrastructure, which came into service in 1965, has now fallen into disrepair.

As part of the planning for the replacement bridge, it is imperative to include lanes reserved for public transportation other than the shoulders, for the sake of the environment and the quality of life of our citizens and because of the bridge's impact on the economic development of the Vaudreuil-Soulanges region.

Can the Minister of Transport and Sustainable Mobility explain her reasons for the complete removal of the lanes dedicated to public transportation?

(19) Ms. Nichols (Vaudreuil) – **30 March 2023**

To the Minister of Public Security

Answer tabled on **4 May 2023** (Sessional Paper No. 554-20230504)

There exists specialized software aimed at simplifying child pornography investigations.

The police use these tools to automate and facilitate the processing of huge quantities of searched images and videos. Thus, the use of these software tools leads to efficiency by considerably reducing the time and resources needed. These software allow for rapid identification of victims and suspects, as well as classification of evidence, as they automatically compile faces and create lists. When searching for pornography, the priority is to do everything possible to save the victims, neutralize the producers of child pornography and discourage collectors from supplying the industry.

Can the Minister of Public Security tell us whether the Sûreté du Québec (SQ) has ever used such software and, if so, which one(s)?

Does the SQ currently use such software and, if so, which one, since when, and for how much longer is it committed to using it?

What other municipal police forces use this type of software in Québec?

(20) Mr. Grandmont (Taschereau) – **5 April 2023**

To the Minister of Transport and Sustainable Mobility

Answer tabled on **11 May 2023** (Sessional Paper No. 574-20230511)

The Municipality of the Township of Potton has adopted by-law 2023-490, which allows all off-highway vehicles to travel on 50 kilometres of municipal roads. By turning these public roads into off-highway vehicle paths, the new by-law puts not only off-highway vehicle users in danger, but all users of Potton roads (be they residents or visitors).

By endorsing this by-law that is the only one of its kind in Québec, we are contributing to setting a precedent transferable to the provincial level. Manufacturers of off-highway vehicles are themselves opposed to the use of their products on paved and unpaved public roads. The Specialty Vehicle Institute of America, the largest group of off-highway vehicle manufacturers, states that off-highway vehicles are designed and manufactured “for off-road use only”, and the US Consumer Product Safety Commission stated that all-terrain vehicles “can reach highway speeds, but with their low-pressure tires and high centre of gravity, they are more prone to tip over or go out of control”.

Beyond the semantic inconsistency in the by-law, the *Act respecting off-highway vehicles* is clear. The Act prohibits the operation of off-highway vehicles on public highways; aims to develop the safe use of off-highway vehicles on the trails designed for that purpose and only exceptionally allows municipalities to open segments of public highways for off-highway vehicle operation in order to secure the passage between off-highway vehicle trails, while protecting other road users through adequate signs and signals. Such a by-law goes against the principles of the *Act respecting off-highway vehicles* and risk to increase the number of accidents and deaths as studies have shown in jurisdictions that allow off-highway vehicle operation on public roads.

My question to the Minister of Transport and Sustainable Mobility is the following:

Will the Minister disallow By-law 2023-490 while the municipality holds formal consultations to demonstrate a certain level of social acceptability?

(21) Mr. Fontecilla (Laurier-Dorion) – **5 April 2023**

To the Minister Responsible for Housing

Answer tabled on **24 May 2023** (Sessional Paper No. 590-20230524)

According to the most recent report on property health by the Société d’habitation du Québec, dated 31 March 2022, 40.2% of the 64,663 affordable housing units in Québec require major renovations, compared to 28.9% in 2020.

Meanwhile, we learned that \$275 million available through the second component of the Canada-Québec Housing Agreement, which was to be used to renovate low-rent housing, was instead used for construction through the AccèsLogis program.

In a *La Presse* article on 27 February 2023, the Minister's press secretary, Mr. Philippe Couture, stated that while it was true that some money was temporarily allocated to the AccèsLogis program, that was only to ensure that no federal funding was lost while waiting for the launch of a renovation program for low-rent housing, which was a requirement of the agreement. He added that the program would soon be presented to the Government for authorization.

My question to the Minister Responsible for Housing is the following:

Considering that the Canada-Québec agreement was signed in October 2020, why was a Québec renovation program not established in 2021 or 2022, if that was a requirement for receiving investments?

(22) Ms. Cadet (Bourassa-Sauvé) – 5 April 2023

To the Minister of the French Language

Answer tabled on **9 May 2023** (Sessional Paper No. 557-20230509)

On 28 February 2023, the Office québécois de la langue française published a study on the quality of French on commercial signs.

This study revealed that even though only 1% of linguistic discrepancies on commercial signs detract from the clarity of the message, a considerable number of the discrepancies are related to typography (33%), spelling (19%), grammar (15%) and loan words from other languages (10%).

Can the Minister of the French Language inform us of his intended follow-up actions to this study, and does he intend to put incentives in place to promote the quality of the French language on commercial signs?

(23) Mr. Fontecilla (Laurier-Dorion) – **18 April 2023**

To the Minister of Finance

Answer tabled on **23 May 2023** (Sessional Paper No. 582-20230523)

The financial assistance provided under the Basic Income Program is taxable, just like other last-resort financial assistance benefits, including the Social Solidarity Program. There is no withholding tax at the time of payment. To date, citizens receiving social assistance have almost always fallen short of provincial exemption requirements. However, with the increase in the Basic Income Program and the indexation of the amounts paid out, minimal as they may be, social solidarity recipients will have to pay income tax for the first time ever in Québec.

My question to the Minister of Finance is the following:

Will the social assistance recipients affected by this taxation be compensated for the income tax they will have to pay for the 2022 taxation year, considering the basic personal amount deduction is lower than the sum of the benefits received? Will the Minister commit not to seize the solidarity credit of the individuals affected? Will corrective measures be made for 2023, given that the problem will be much worse by then?

(24) Mr. Fontecilla (Laurier-Dorion) – **18 April 2023**

To the Minister Responsible for Social Solidarity and Community Action

Answer tabled on **25 May 2023** (Sessional Paper No. 598-20230525)

The financial assistance provided under the Basic Income Program is taxable, just like other last-resort financial assistance benefits, including the Social Solidarity Program. There is no withholding tax at the time of payment. To date, citizens receiving social assistance have almost always fallen short of provincial exemption requirements. However, with the increase in the Basic Income Program and the indexation of the amounts paid out, minimal as they may be, social solidarity recipients will have to pay income tax for the first time ever in Québec.

Furthermore, with the entry into force of the Basic Income Program in January 2023, certain individuals who have been recognized as having a severely limited capacity for employment and who have access to programs such as Retraite Québec disability pensions, IVAC pensions, certain other pension annuities, etc. would be entitled to a lumpsum payment (the difference between their social assistance amount and pension amount) and to a financial assistance claim slip providing them with the right to free medications and help for certain special needs.

My questions to the Minister Responsible for Social Solidarity and Community Action are the following:

- 1) Will the Minister commit to ensuring that all persons concerned are informed of this right by the responsible, respective departments? Will she see to it that a message is sent out to them?
- 2) Will the social assistance recipients affected by this unexpected taxation be compensated for the income tax they will have to pay for the 2022 tax year? Will corrective measures be undertaken for 2023, given that the problem will be worse by then?

(25) Mr. Derraji (Nelligan) – **19 April 2023**

To the Premier

Answer tabled on **2 June 2023** (Sessional Paper No. 639-20230602)

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 on his request.

Faced with a lack of response following his correspondence, Mr. Lépine also sent an affidavit concerning his allegations to the Premier's office, specifically 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, necessitates the Premier's attention.

My questions are the following:

- 1) Can the Premier assure me that a detailed response will be given to Mr. Lépine as soon as possible?
- 2) Can the Premier give the House an update on this matter? Has an assessment been carried out, and if so, what are its conclusions and how does the Premier intend to follow up on it?

(26) Mr. Bérubé (Matane-Matapédia) – **20 April 2023**

To the Minister of Finance

Answer tabled on **23 May 2023** (Sessional Paper No. 583-20230523)

As of June 2022, two-thirds of Québec microdistilleries are not profitable, despite record sales in recent years. The first microdistilleries that will have to close down are those with high added value, that is, those that grow their raw materials, add value to them and transform them “from grain to bottle”. Since July 2018, microdistilleries with an industrial licence have had the option of selling their products at the production sites (on-site sales). However, these sales are subject to a significant markup imposed by the Société des alcools du Québec (SAQ). The markup imposed by the SAQ is disproportionate compared to other Canadian provinces.

The Union québécoise des microdistilleries (UQMD) recognizes the distribution and retail work done by the SAQ and considers the markup reasonable for SAQ in-store sales. However, sales at the production sites do not require any involvement by the SAQ, but the markup is essentially the same. The UQMD is therefore proposing that the Government implement a simple and risk-free solution, which is to eliminate the markup paid by microdistilleries for the sales at their production sites.

In order to right a wrong that has been experienced since July 2018, the UQMD is asking the SAQ to retroactively reimburse to distilleries, for all sales made since that time, the markup on the purchase price of spirits sold at the production sites.

My questions are the following:

1. Does the Minister of Finance support the solution proposed by the UQMD?
2. Does the Minister of Finance support the retroactive application of this solution?
3. Will the Minister of Finance follow up as necessary with the SAQ to ensure that this solution is applied by the end of June 2023?
4. If not, what does the Minister of Finance intend to do in the short term to ensure the future of Québec’s microdistillery industry?

(27) Mr. Leduc (Hochelaga-Maisonneuve) – **26 April 2023**

To the Minister Responsible for Housing

Answer tabled on **1 June 2023** (Sessional Paper No. 630-20230601)

On 30 December 2022, tenants Jean-François Raymond and Joseph Picard, residents of Rue Ontario Est, in Montréal, for 22 years and 54 years respectively, received a notice of eviction asking them to vacate their apartments. Their new landlord wants to evict them in order to change the destination of the dwellings by converting them into short-term tourist accommodations of the Airbnb type.

On 8 March 2023, during a press conference alongside Mr. Raymond, the Member for Gouin and I asked the Government to move rapidly to amend article 1959 of the *Civil Code of Québec* so that evictions are no longer permitted to create tourist accommodations. At the time, we pointed out that this straightforward legislative amendment could be done in a day or even in just a few hours, without costing taxpayers a single penny, and that it had the potential to prevent the eviction of countless tenants.

We would like to recall a few remarks made by Mr. Raymond, which were reported on by a number of Québec media outlets. He said that that he was experiencing a lot of stress and was fearful not knowing where his family would go believing they would no longer have the means to live on the island. He added that tenants are being evicted to create tourist accommodations, yet many hotels are struggling with low hotel room occupancy rates.

During a March 10th press conference, in response to a journalist's question relating to changing the destination of dwellings, the Minister Responsible for Housing said that she found it deplorable that vulnerable people are being evicted from their housing after years of living there for very questionable reasons and that she had no intention of letting the situation continue. She also said that she was ready to take action, whether it be for evictions to create Airbnbs, section F of leases or brutal renovations.

On April 12th, Mr. Raymond sent the Minister a letter by email, of which I also received a certified copy. In the letter, he thanks the Minister for having publicly shared her intention to take action against evictions made to change the destination of dwellings and urges her to act quickly on her commitment to introduce amending legislation that would be retroactive. Indeed, Mr. Raymond indicates that he wants to benefit, like many other Québec households, from the legislative change to be made to article 1959 of the *Civil Code of Québec* in order to be able to keep the apartment he has lived in for 22 years, but that he will most likely have to leave on June 30th. Lastly, he asks the Minister to use her discretionary power to counter his eviction and that of Mr. Picard.

While Québec is currently undergoing an unprecedented housing crisis, evicting tenants to create tourist accommodations should not be permitted by law. Hundreds of Québec households are currently struggling to find affordable housing, and that number is likely to increase substantially as 1 July 2023 approaches.

In light of the above, my questions are the following:

1. Will the Minister reaffirm her willingness to act quickly to legislate on the issue of evictions resulting from a change in the destination of dwellings to make way for Airbnb-type tourist accommodations?
2. If such is the will of the Minister, what timetable does she recommend for tackling such evictions, since she declared on 9 March 2023 that she had no intention of allowing the situation continue?
3. Will the Minister commit to legislating on the issue of evictions resulting from a change made to the destination of dwellings to create Airbnb-type tourist accommodations by the end of the current parliamentary sessional period?
4. Does the Minister intend to reply by June 30th to the letter emailed to her by Mr. Raymond on 12 April 2023?
5. Can the Minister explain the reasons preventing her from quickly passing legislative amendments to article 1959 of the *Civil Code of Québec*?
6. Will the Minister commit to passing legislative amendments to article 1959 of the *Civil Code of Québec*, with retroactive effect, by June 30th?

7. If this is not the case, why can't the Minister, to alleviate the unfortunate consequences of her inaction, commit to ensuring that the legislative amendments meant to protect tenants, including the amendment of article 1959 of the *Civil Code of Québec*, will be applicable retroactively?

(28) Mr. Arseneau (Îles-de-la-Madeleine) – **3 mai 2023**

To the Minister of Health

Answer tabled on **8 June 2023** (Sessional Paper No. 679-20230608)

During the examination of the estimates of expenditure on 26 April 2023, the Minister of Health indicated that the Ministère de la Santé would publish, in the coming days, an indexation policy regarding the User Travel Policy.

In addition, on 3 March 2023, the Member for Gaspé presented a petition on revising the health and social services network's User Travel Policy.

Given the above, our questions to the Minister of Health are the following:

- When will this indexation policy be published?
- Will this policy apply retroactively to 1 January 2023?
- Does the Minister intend to revise the User Travel Policy, in particular to increase the compensation for accommodation and travel expenses so that it covers the actual expenses incurred by patients?

(29) Mr. Bérubé (Matane-Matapédia) – **11 May 2023**

To the Minister for Health and for Seniors

Answer tabled on **8 June 2023** (Sessional Paper No. 678-20230608)

According to a news article by journalists Thomas Gerbet and Daniel Boily published on 10 May 2023 and a document produced by the Québec government's Secrétariat aux aînés and made public on 3 May, Coalition avenir Québec (CAQ) ridings have more seniors' housing than the party's relative weight. The two documents also show that in many CAQ regions, there are more spaces available than there are seniors who need them. Furthermore, there are no plans to build seniors' housing in the Matane-Matapédia riding, which has one of the highest average ages in Québec with a median age of 52 years. Meanwhile, the Hull, Mirabel, Les Plaines and Jean-Talon ridings, which have a median age of 38 years, lower than the rest of Québec (43 years), will get seniors' housing.

My question is the following: why is there no seniors' housing in the Matane-Matapédia riding, and why are there no plans to build one despite its population's high average age?

(30) Ms. Labrie (Sherbrooke) – **23 May 2023**

To the Minister of Health

Answer tabled on **20 September 2023** (Sessional Paper No. 747-20230920)

Under the Regulation respecting hearing devices and insured services, retired people are entitled to reimbursement for one hearing aid, while people who are employed and have an income are entitled to reimbursement for two hearing aids. This situation increases retired people's financial insecurity.

In 2019, the office of the Minister responsible for Seniors and Informal Caregivers stated that a review of the Regulation was underway. This review was not completed while Québec government departments were busy managing the COVID-19 crisis. However, in May 2022, the office of the Minister of Health, which is now responsible for reviewing the Regulation, stated that this review was planned for the next few months. One year later, the Regulations have still not been reviewed and retirees are still financially vulnerable.

In light of the above, my question to the Minister of Health is the following:

When will the Minister change this policy to end this age discrimination?

(31) Mr. Leduc (Hochelaga-Maisonneuve) – **23 May 2023**

To the Minister of Labour

Answer tabled on **13 September 2023** (Sessional Paper No. 720-20230913)

The Association Québécoise des Entrepreneurs en Infrastructure (AQEI) is concerned about the increasing number of accidents and deaths of road workers and flag persons, which are largely due to the negligent behaviour of drivers. Flag persons are essential to the safety of both road users and construction workers. Unfortunately, their work is constantly questioned and criticized, which ultimately puts their safety at risk. All too often, the Move-Over Law is not complied with, drivers do not slow down and flag persons are insulted.

As this is an issue that affects several government bodies, such as the Ministère du Travail, the Ministère des Transports et de la Mobilité durable, the Ministère de la Sécurité publique and the SAAQ, they tend to pass the buck to each other. Meanwhile, the lives of flag persons are still at risk. On 27 March 2023, a flag person was hit by an impatient driver who fled the scene.

For this reason, the AQEI would like the Government to implement several measures to better protect the safety of road workers and flag persons. Firstly, the AQEI proposes the establishment of a joint panel where all those affected by this issue can discuss the measures to be implemented to increase the safety of flag persons. Secondly, it proposes the launch of an awareness campaign to make drivers aware that their actions can endanger the lives and safety of flag persons. Thirdly, the AQEI proposes that the fines for failure to comply with the Move-Over Law and speed limit be increased to encourage compliance with the regulations. In addition, it proposes that the SAAQ update its training for future drivers to include safety around work sites. Lastly, the AQEI proposes that police officers be assigned to work sites to ensure that drivers are more compliant with the regulations.

Considering the above, my question is the following:

Given that there are already several panels (in particular at the Ministère des Transports et de la Mobilité durable) where this issue is discussed, but that a global and common dialogue between all stakeholders is more than necessary, will the Minister of Labour commit as of today to set up a joint advisory panel where all the stakeholders concerned by this matter, including those mentioned above, can finally hold discussions in order to implement solutions to ensure that the lives of flag persons are better protected?

(32) Ms. Lakhoyan Olivier (Chomedey) – **23 May 2023**

To the Minister of Tourism

Answer tabled on **13 September 2023** (Sessional Paper No. 721-20230913)

I recently met with representatives of the Maison du tourisme de Tadoussac to hear their concerns.

Tadoussac, a municipality of about 800 people, welcomes between 250,000 and 300,000 tourists annually who come to enjoy the region's natural resources. In fact, delegates from the international association of the Most Beautiful Bays in the World Club will visit the municipality in 2025 for their annual convention.

However, Tadoussac needs support to be able to continue receiving a large number of visitors each year. The authorities need an estimated \$15 million to upgrade their washroom facilities.

In addition, the building that houses the Maison du tourisme de Tadoussac needs work, especially on the roof and exterior walls, in order to keep the building in good condition. Financial support is also necessary in this regard.

The Maison du tourisme de Tadoussac's representatives do not feel adequately supported by the Minister of Tourism. Will the Minister listen to Tadoussac's concerns so that the municipality can continue to be an attractive tourist destination?

(33) Mr. Bouazzi (Maurice-Richard) – **24 May 2023**

To the Minister of Finance

Answer tabled on **14 September 2023** (Sessional Paper No. 731-20230914)

The Act respecting the implementation of certain provisions of the Budget Speech of 25 March 2021 and amending other provisions (Bill 17) was assented to on 24 February 2022. It amended the *Act respecting the Québec Pension Plan* (the Act), in particular the application of a penalty on the retirement pensions of disability pension beneficiaries.

This unexpected amendment was part of a bill that amended over 20 legislative texts and was adopted without consultations. Furthermore, this was done at a time when proceedings on this penalty's compliance with the charters were, and still are, being brought before the Administrative Tribunal of Québec, with special consultations on the Québec Pension Plan (QPP) planned the following year.

Before the coming into force of these amendments, the Act reduced by 36% the retirement pensions of people who had received a disability pension between the ages of 60 and 65. This was the same exclusion applied to the retirement pensions of workers who retire early and who start receiving their pension at the age of 60 instead of 65. Since the coming into force of Bill 17, the reduction imposed on the retirement pensions of disability pension beneficiaries remains, although it varies between 18 and 24%. Other measures, which will come into force in 2024, intend to cap the disability pension at 60 years of age, thereby forcing beneficiaries to "choose" an early retirement pension.

This penalty was maintained despite the fact that we are the only jurisdiction in Canada that imposes it and that, in February 2017, the Commission des droits de la personne et des droits de la jeunesse (CDPDJ) published the document "Avis concernant la pénalité à la rente de retraite du RRQ que subissent les personnes qui reçoivent une rente d'invalidité en vertu du même régime", in which it formally declared the penalty to be discriminatory in nature.

Thus, the QPP deprives affected individuals of almost a quarter of their retirement pension, despite it being established that they are generally no longer able to significantly contribute to the QPP, that disabilities lead to an important reduction in income and that the costs related to the condition of people with disabilities increase as they age. Furthermore, this loss is not compensated, or is compensated only in part, by the Guaranteed Income Security federal programs, despite Retraite Québec's claims.

In view of the above, my questions to the Minister of Finance are as follows:

- Considering the CDPDJ found that a penalty of 36% on the retirement pensions of people who had received a disability pension between the ages of 60 and 65 was discriminatory, does the Minister deem that it is no longer discriminatory at a rate of 24%?
- Does the Minister acknowledge that this penalty, denounced by the community, by the Office des personnes handicapées du Québec, by opposition parties and by the CDPDJ, is an injustice towards seniors with a severe limitation for employment and who benefit from a disability pension?
- Will the Minister commit to meeting the groups interested in this issue during the hearings which will precede the passage of the bill that will follow up on the consultations held in 2023 on the future of the QPP?

(34) Ms. Ghazal (Mercier) – **7 June 2023**

To the Minister of Culture and Communications

Answer tabled on **17 October** (Sessional Paper No. 977-20231017)

On 20 April 2023, the National Assembly unanimously voted in favour of a motion to legally designate the jig as part of Québec's intangible heritage under the *Cultural Heritage Act*.

The designation mechanism was introduced in order to have a measurable impact on the safeguarding and development of recognized cultural practices, in the spirit of UNESCO's 2003 convention, which inspired the Québec legislation.

In 2019–2020, approximately 1.4% of the heritage budget (0.09% of the culture budget) was allocated to living heritage, which does not include the considerable sums allocated to municipal heritage officers, who are assigned as a priority to built heritage. The situation has barely changed since then, and not enough to make a significant difference, as called for by the heritage community throughout Québec. In particular, the budget is overly dependent on ad hoc projects that are supposed to compensate for underlying circumstances that are disadvantageous and in some cases discriminatory.

For example, in Québec it is possible to study music from elementary school all the way to university without hearing a single piece from the traditional Québec instrumental repertoire, even though the diatonic button accordion and dance evenings are legally designated as part of Québec's intangible heritage. The same applies to the Conservatoire de musique despite it being under the direct responsibility of the Ministère de la Culture et des Communications.

Considering that the Québec State has committed to supporting living heritage and the various disciplines associated with traditional culture, this situation appears to be incoherent.

A national safeguarding and development strategy for intangible heritage was announced by the Ministère de la Culture et des Communications in 2020, though no information has been made public since.

Such a strategy would position Québec as a true North American leader in living heritage management and allow future generations of Quebecers to fully benefit from the opportunity to practise activities that are passed down from generation to generation, including those of the First Peoples. The successful measures for the designation of dance evenings (the only designation that to date has directly led to concrete national actions) can serve as inspiration going forward.

The national strategy could draw inspiration from the indicators in the overall results framework of UNESCO's Convention for the Safeguarding of the Intangible Cultural Heritage to identify relevant areas for action. It could also take into account the document entitled "Pour une désignation légale réussie d'un élément du patrimoine immatériel", published by the Conseil québécois du patrimoine vivant, which provides guidance for stakeholders on such matters.

Does the Minister intend to launch a national safeguarding and development strategy for intangible heritage, along with the resources necessary to implement it?

(35) Mr. Zanetti (Jean-Lesage) – **7 June 2023**

To the Minister of Education

Answer tabled on **28 September 2023** (Sessional Paper No. 852-20230928)

Québec is currently facing two shortages in educational childcare services: a shortage of available spaces and a shortage of early childhood educators. In the project Grand chantier pour les familles, the Québec government set the following objectives:

- ensure that there is a qualified workforce in sufficient numbers;
- improve the salary and working conditions of the network staff;
- promote the profession of early childhood educator.

We commend these efforts and would like to have a portrait of the evolution of the situation with regard to educators:

My questions are the following:

- 1) For the 2022–2023, 2021–2023, 2020–2021 and 2019–2020 school years, how many enrolments were there in the different early childhood education programs (including work-study pathways, accelerated training programs (ACS) and early childhood education technical programs)? Please include the private and public educational institutions in the number of enrolments.
- 2) For the 2022–2023, 2021–2023, 2020–2021 and 2019–2020 school years, how many students graduated from these various programs?

(36) Mr. Zanetti (Jean-Lesage) – **7 June 2023**

To the Minister of Families

Answer tabled on **20 September 2023** (Sessional Paper No. 748-20230920)

Québec is currently facing two shortages in educational childcare services: a shortage of available spaces and a shortage of early childhood educators. In the project Grand chantier pour les familles, the Québec government set the following objectives:

- ensure that there is a qualified workforce in sufficient numbers;
- improve the salary and working conditions of the network staff;
- promote the profession of early childhood educator.

We commend these efforts and would like to have a portrait of the evolution of the situation with regard to educators:

My questions are the following:

- 1) For the 2022–2023, 2021–2023, 2020–2021 and 2019–2020 school years, how many enrolments were there in the different early childhood education programs (including work-study pathways, accelerated training programs (ACS) and early childhood education technical programs)? Please include the private and public educational institutions in the number of enrolments.
- 2) For the 2022–2023, 2021–2023, 2020–2021 and 2019–2020 school years, how many students graduated from these various programs?
- 3) How many Québec selection certificates were issued for the educator and educator assistant job categories for 2022, 2021, 2020 and 2019?

(37) Mr. Grandmont (Taschereau) – **8 June 2023**

To the Minister of Tourism

Answer tabled on **20 September 2023** (Sessional Paper No. 749-20230920)

La Route de Champlain is a recreotouristic NPO, established in 2015 in Montréal-Nord, which has helped introduce thousands of citizens to affordable, safe and ecological water activities using kayaks and fully electric boats.

During the summer of 2022, La Route de Champlain operated four sites on the island of Montréal as well as several others along the Richelieu River in the Montérégie region thanks to the work of its 43 employees. The COVID-19 pandemic and the refurbishment of the Parc Aimé-Léonard greatly weakened the organization by reducing traffic and complicating operations. The 2022 season should have been an opportunity for the organization to bounce back. However, starting in May 2022, management had to juggle budget items in an attempt to salvage the season, and in June 2022, the payment of wages started to be erratic.

Under these circumstances, the organization has not paid its 43 employees since July 2022. In a normal bankruptcy situation, employees are covered by the Wage Earner Protection Program for their last six months of wages. Since the employees ended their season in August and have not been paid since July, they are therefore without such protection.

Currently, the Fonds de développement des entreprises touristiques (FDET) is in the process of seizing the organization's equipment, which remains its only remaining asset and the employees' last hope to see their summer's efforts be reduced to nothing.

The 43 employees are stuck between the organization's poor management and a creditor who wishes to minimize losses. Employees still have the possibility to sue the administrators, but since they are insolvent, they will never see the \$130,000 in wages owed to them.

The remaining option for the 43 employees is to suspend the seizure of the organization's equipment by the Fonds de développement des entreprises touristiques. The organization would then be able to liquidate its assets in order to pay its former employees.

My question to the Minister of Tourism is the following:

Is the Minister open to suspending the FDET's seizure of the equipment so that the former employees of La Route de Champlain can be duly paid?

(38) Mr. Bérubé (Matane-Matapédia) – **9 June 2023**

To the Minister of Agriculture, Fisheries and Food

Answer tabled on **4 October 2023** (Sessional Paper No. 858-20231003)

Essentially, the number one issue for Québec's grain sector is the competitiveness of its producers, both nationally and internationally. Producers are seeing a lack of concrete measures to boost and ensure their competitiveness. They want to be a part of Québec's economic growth, but the current situation makes it very difficult for them to do so. The grain sector has significant export potential, and this can only contribute to Québec's collective enrichment, in particular through reinvestment in public services.

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 international competitors.

That study reinforces the findings in recent years that the overall environment in which Québec grain producers are operating jeopardizes their ability to compete with foreign competitors if nothing is done in terms of subsidies and rewards for producers' agri-environmental efforts. The study also shows that there is relatively inadequate support with regard to economic protection, even though the grain sector is the foundation of the entire agricultural sector.

With this in mind, the MAPAQ established a mainly administrative competitiveness committee, which organized a series of meetings with representatives of the grain sector and La Financière agricole du Québec in order to coordinate their actions.

However, during the last election campaign, the Québec government stated that it still aims to better understand the grain sector's issues and ensure that the existing mechanisms allow producers to remain industry leaders – and it committed to continuing work in this respect.

Given the above, my questions are the following:

- 1- Does the Québec government recognize that the grain sector is the foundation of the entire agricultural sector?
- 2- Does the Québec government recognize that the grain sector creates collective wealth for Québec?
- 3- What actions do you intend to take to support the specific, remote regions that are currently facing specific issues, in particular the distance from buyers and processors and the high transportation costs?

(39) Mr. St-Pierre Plamondon (Camille-Laurin) – **9 June 2023**

To the Minister Responsible for Government Administration and Chair of the Conseil du trésor
Answer tabled on **20 September 2023** (Sessional Paper No. 750-20230920)

The Association des microbiologistes du Québec (AMQ) includes more than 500 members who are part of the various fields of microbiology: agri-food, molecular, biopharmaceutical or clinical microbiology and public, industrial or environmental health.

The Association des biologistes du Québec (ABQ) is a professional association, officially registered on 21 March 1974, for the purpose of bringing together the biologists of Québec. The ABQ is a non-profit organization which includes more than a thousand members from the diverse field of biological sciences.

These two associations have many things in common, not least the fact that the practice of microbiology and biology in Québec is characterized by the absence of professional supervision. Indeed, both disciplines lack a professional order, which results in public protection issues on the subject of applied sciences.

The obsolescence of the *Professional Chemists Act* is just as worrying, so that today more than ever, we find it increasingly difficult to define the exclusive scope of practice of chemistry and to determine the exceptions provided for in the Act. This situation poses serious difficulties of application and interpretation in the field and before the courts, and compromises the protection of the public.

Chemistry, microbiology and biology are three disciplines of applied sciences, and they share an important connection in terms of knowledge and practice environments. This is especially clear from the interrelation of their scopes of practice and the interprofessional nature of the activities they carry out, in particular in the health and environmental sectors.

For all these reasons, the AMQ and the ABQ are making joint presentations to government authorities so that microbiologists and biologists can join the Ordre des chimistes du Québec (the Ordre) within the framework of a modernized *Professional Chemists Act*. The Ordre is open to this idea.

Joining a professional order would not only ensure the recognition and confirmation of their expertise but would also allow microbiologists and biologists to consolidate their communication, popularization and education efforts to the public, while ensuring public protection in applied sciences. The Ordre shares a similar opinion: the modernization of the *Professional Chemists Act* would guarantee public protection in the practice of chemistry.

My questions are the following:

- Does the Québec government recognize the need to oversee the microbiologists and biologists of Québec through a professional order?
- If so, what measures and what timetable does it recommend for integrating microbiologists and biologists into Québec's professional system?
- Is the Québec government aware of the dangers looming over Quebecers from the illegal practice of chemistry?
- Is the Québec government open to integrating microbiologists and biologists into the Ordre des chimistes du Québec?

(40) Mr. Bérubé (Matane-Matapédia) – **9 June 2023**

To the Minister of Immigration, Francization and Integration

Answer tabled on **27 September 2023** (Sessional Paper No. 840-20230927)

The regionalization of immigration is an important issue for Québec and for all our regions. In this respect, the Abitibi-Témiscamingue region has shown leadership, in particular through the development of the Centre d'accompagnement pour le recrutement de la main-d'œuvre immigrante project promoted by Panorama Québec via the Centre local de développement Rouyn-Noranda. The purpose of this project is to establish and maintain a comprehensive, innovative and efficient strategy for attracting and integrating immigrant workers.

This project emerged from collaboration between many regional stakeholders, including the Centre local de développement Rouyn-Noranda and the regional county municipalities of Abitibi, Abitibi-Ouest, Vallée-de-l'or and Témiscamingue. It is strongly supported in a region with a lower proportion of immigrants than the Québec average.

Nevertheless, despite the tabling of the project in March 2023, there has been no follow-up from the Ministère.

Given the situation, my questions to the Minister of Immigration, Francization and Integration are the following:

- Does the Government recognize the mobilization in the Abitibi-Témiscamingue region around the Centre d'accompagnement en recrutement de la main-d'œuvre immigrante Panorama Québec project, which emerged from collaboration between, notably, the Centre local de développement Rouyn-Noranda and the regional county municipalities of Abitibi, Abitibi-Ouest, Vallée-de-l'or and Témiscamingue?
- Does the Government support the Centre d'accompagnement en recrutement de la main-d'œuvre immigrante project promoted by Panorama Québec?
- Is the Government committed to financially supporting the project?

(41) Ms. Zaga Mendez (Verdun) – **9 June 2023**

To the Minister of Agriculture, Fisheries and Food

Answer tabled on **4 October 2023** (Sessional Paper No. 859-20231003)

Essentially, the number one issue for Québec's grain sector is the competitiveness of its producers, both nationally and internationally. Producers are seeing a lack of concrete measures to boost and ensure their competitiveness. They want to be a part of Québec's economic growth, but the current situation makes it very difficult for them to do so. The grain sector has significant export potential, and this can only contribute to Québec's collective enrichment, in particular through reinvestment in public services.

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 international competitors. That study reinforces the findings in recent years that the overall environment in which Québec grain producers are operating jeopardizes their ability to compete with foreign competitors if nothing is done in terms of subsidies and rewards for producers' agri-environmental efforts. The study also shows that there is relatively inadequate support with regard to economic protection, even though the grain sector is the foundation of the entire agricultural sector.

With this in mind, the MAPAQ established a mainly administrative competitiveness committee, which organized a series of meetings with representatives of the grain sector and La Financière agricole du Québec in order to coordinate their actions.

However, during the last election campaign, the Québec government stated that it still aims to better understand the grain sector's issues and ensure that the existing mechanisms allow producers to remain industry leaders – and it committed to continuing work in this respect. The Government also committed to investing an additional \$50 million in the Ministerial Initiative on Compensating Agri-Environmental Practices.

Given the above, my questions are the following:

- 1- Does the Québec government recognize that the grain sector is the foundation of the entire agricultural sector?
- 2- Does the Québec government recognize that the grain sector creates collective wealth for Québec?
- 3- What actions do you intend to take to support the specific, remote regions that are currently facing specific issues, in particular the distance from buyers and processors and the high transportation costs?
- 4- How will the \$50 million investment for agri-environmental practices be allocated, in particular in the grain sector?

(42) Mr. Zanetti (Jean-Lesage) – **12 September 2023**

To the Minister Responsible for Social Solidarity and Community Action
Answer tabled on **17 October** (Sessional Paper No. 980-20231017)

According to the Bilan-Faim report published in 2022, Québec food banks currently respond to over 2 million monthly requests for food aid, an increase of 20% since 2021. The food inflation that has been raging for several months has compounded the issue of food insecurity in the province. Increasingly, food distribution organizations are seeing new faces and, in order to meet the growing demand, many of them have no choice but to reduce the size of their food baskets.

Before the latest budget was tabled, food banks were asking for a one-time financial assistance of \$24 million. Instead, the budget provided for an additional \$2 million per year, which is clearly inadequate. Furthermore, community organizations face uncertainty as they have no idea what their share of this sum will be.

My questions to the Minister are the following:

- Can the Minister provide details of how the additional funds will be allocated between the different organizations for both amounts promised, that is, the additional \$2 million for foodstuffs and the \$20 million over four years as part of the Québec Infrastructure Plan (layout of physical facilities)?
- Can the Minister define the timeline for this allocation?

(43) Ms. Ghazal (Mercier) – **12 September 2023**

To the Minister of Education
Answer tabled on **17 October** (Sessional Paper No. 978-20231017)

The month of May is allergy month, and I would like to note that Québec ranks last in terms of support for students with allergies. The Minister has very few statistics on the implementation of the protocol developed by the Montréal public health department, the number of allergic reactions requiring in-school emergency response, the availability of auto-injectors for all or any other data on the matter. There has long been talk of a mystery reference framework to be developed in collaboration with the Ministère de la Santé, but the issue has dragged on and the 75,000 students with allergies remain at risk when they attend school, a place which should be safe for everyone.

The little available information shows that some private schools are often better equipped than public schools, both in terms of personnel training and deployment of measures to protect students with allergies. Such disparity goes against the very concept of equity in education. There is also a discrepancy in the application of the food allergy protocol in the metropolis and in the rest of the province. A few years ago, the Montréal public health department carried out a pilot project and issued a reference document to compensate for the government's lack of action.

Does the Minister not believe that all students with allergies in the province deserve a safe academic experience, regardless of their financial situation or place of residence?

Can the Minister provide a timeline and a summary of the concrete measures he intends to take, and can he, moving forward, commit to investing the sums necessary to protect all the young people living with food allergies, with no disparity by region or type of school attended?

(44) Ms. Ghazal (Mercier) – **12 September 2023**

To the Minister of Education

Answer tabled on **17 October** (Sessional Paper No. 979-20231017)

Following the passage of Bill 144, *An Act to amend the Education Act and other legislative provisions concerning mainly free educational services and compulsory school attendance*, by the National Assembly of Québec in 2017, homeschooling is now formally enshrined in the *Education Act*. It was essential for the Government to determine regulatory standards applicable to homeschooling, as legal uncertainty had prevailed until then. Today, an estimated 8,000 Québec children are homeschooled.

Bill 144 not only provided for the establishment of a Québec-wide advisory panel on homeschooling, but also that the panel would advise the Minister on any matter he submits to it. The panel's purpose was to provide a forum for discussion and agreement on homeschooling by bringing together stakeholders from the education sector, home-education associations, competent professionals and academic researchers. Unfortunately, the advisory panel has yet to be convened by the current government. We deem it important to reconnect and discuss the many issues surrounding homeschooling by convening the advisory panel given the major regulatory changes of recent years and in order to comply with the law.

The 2017 legislative amendment also led to the creation of the Direction de l'enseignement à la maison to assist families who wish to begin homeschooling and those who are already doing so.

More recently, the Government carried out a major reform of the complaint process in the education network with the passage of the *Act respecting the National Student Ombudsman*. Student ombudsmen are now under the responsibility of the National Student Ombudsman, who manages the new autonomous organization independently from the school network. In addition, the complaint management system encompasses private institutions. However, homeschooled students were left out of this reform.

Indeed, though certain homeschooled children receive services from school service centres covered by the new legislation, this only concerns a very small part of their administrative follow-up. Meanwhile, the majority of children receive follow-up services from the Direction de l'enseignement (DEM) à la maison, which is not covered by that legislation. Currently, in the event of a disagreement between the family and their DEM resource person, the only recourse available is a complaint to the latter. These complaints are handled by the resource person and their superior, so there is no neutral third party.

My questions are the following:

1. Could the complaint process for homeschooling families be improved and made impartial, as is currently the case for regular school students with the National Student Ombudsman?
2. When will the Minister convene the Québec-wide advisory panel on homeschooling?

(45) Mr. Arseneau (Îles-de-la-Madeleine) – **19 September 2023**

To the Minister of Labour

Answer tabled on **18 October** (Sessional Paper No. 994-20231018)

Currently in Québec, the wait times for injured workers to get a medical appointment are often long. This leads to delays in care and therefore increases the risk of chronic pain and prolongs the time it takes to return to work.

In this context, allowing injured workers to directly consult chiropractors could result in substantial savings for the Commission des normes, de l'équité, de la santé et de la sécurité du travail (CNESST) and for the Québec health network. The cost savings would be achieved by, among other things, reducing the compensation time, while respecting chiropractors' capacity to accept patients.

An analysis of Ontario data has shown that injured workers who initially consulted a chiropractor had shorter compensation periods than those who consulted a primary care doctor. By extrapolating these results to the Québec context, one can consider that if injured Québec workers suffering from back pain – the most common type of injury according to the Institut de recherche Robert-Sauvé en santé et en sécurité du travail – had direct access to chiropractic care, there could be potential savings of \$11.8 million annually in wage compensation alone. Currently in Québec, these patients must first obtain a medical prescription from their doctor before consulting a chiropractor.

By offering direct access to chiropractic care, we could reduce the compensation time for Québec workers suffering from lower back pain. This would contribute to not only a faster return to work, but also a faster return to normal life for workers. This approach would help reduce health system costs through a better distribution of resources. It would also be consistent with the components of the health plan, including interdisciplinarity and breaking down professional silos – to the benefit of users.

After a work accident, prompt care for the victim may prevent their condition from worsening and becoming chronic. The long wait times for consultation may delay the return to work or to normal life, significantly affecting patients' quality of life.

The solution is for the CNESST to grant chiropractors, through regulation, the status of "health professional" under the *Act respecting industrial accidents and occupational diseases* – in order to promote access to chiropractic care for injured workers and thereby avoid a duplication of fees for consulting a doctor and then a chiropractor.

In this regard, we are calling on the Minister to obtain answers to the following questions:

1. Is the Minister open to allowing injured workers to directly access chiropractic care – in particular to enable a faster return to work, generate savings for the State and help reduce congestion in the health network?
2. Is the Minister in favour of granting – by the CNESST – the status of "health professional" to chiropractors under the *Act respecting industrial accidents and occupational diseases*?

(46) Ms. Zaga Mendez (Verdun) – **21 September 2023**

To the Minister of the Environment, the Fight Against Climate Change, Wildlife and Parks
Answer tabled on **31 October 2023** (Sessional Paper No. 1050-20231031)

The 23 March 2023 marked the fifth anniversary of an unfulfilled commitment by the Québec government: the creation of a public register to access essential environmental information with a single click. This register, provided under section 118.5 of the *Environment Quality Act*, is necessary to effectively protect the rights of the population and to promote a healthy environment.

March 2018 marked the coming into force of the revised *Environment Quality Act* after three years of work. One of the priorities of this reform was to improve public access to environmental information. Accordingly, the legislation provided for the creation of a register to record all requested or granted ministerial authorizations. This register is a considerable gain as regards access to environmental information and is a major added value of the reform. Five years later, however, it is the only component of the *Environment Quality Act* that has yet to be implemented.

Having timely and reliable access to key environmental information is a fundamental democratic right. It also serves as an important resource for the protection of ecosystems and the right to a healthy environment for all. In concrete terms, this online register would allow all citizens who want to be informed of a project's environmental impacts on their living environment to do so with just one click. As things stand, the procedure for accessing this information remains too burdensome. Citizens must first submit an access to information request to the Ministère, wait a few weeks, possibly seek recourse before an administrative tribunal, namely the Commission d'accès à l'information and, in the event of such a scenario, wait several months before they can attend their hearing.

In March 2023 the Quebec Environmental Law Centre and over 80 organizations and public personalities signed an open letter asking the Government to implement this register in the following 30 days. Unfortunately, this request went unheeded.

Given the above, my question to the Minister is the following: when does the Government intend to implement the public register, which has been provided under section 118.5 of the *Environment Quality Act* for the past 5 years?

- (47) Mr. Bérubé (Matane-Matapédia) – **26 September 2023**
To the Minister of Health
Answer tabled on **8 November 2023** (Sessional Paper No. 1074-20231108)

In August, in collaboration with the Association des chirurgiens-dentistes du Québec, I proposed some solutions to the Minister of Higher Education and the Minister of Health to address the shortage of dentists and dental hygienists and improve access to dental care in the regions. Lack of dental care is a burden on an increasing number of Quebecers, in particular those living in the regions. Long wait times and significant distances between patients and the nearest dental clinic interfere with access to care.

To address the shortage of dentists and dental hygienists, we propose the following measures:

- That the Québec government address the labour shortage in oral health care by attracting new employees in the field of dental medicine to the regions where services are lacking, and that it do so by implementing the financial incentives provided for in the framework agreement with the MSSS for dentists working in remote regions;
- That the Ministère de l'Enseignement supérieur dedicate a number of spaces primarily for candidates from the regions affected by the shortage in the admission criteria of university dental medicine programs;
- That the Ministère de l'Enseignement supérieur increase and support dental hygiene training in CEGEPs to better serve all of Québec;

- That the Government forgive the debts of dental medicine and dental hygiene students who choose to practise in rural and remote regions, and that dental hygiene students have access to incentives such as the Québec Perspective Scholarship program.

My question is the following: does the Minister of Health support these measures, and will his department implement those under its jurisdiction shortly?

(48) Mr. Bérubé (Matane-Matapédia) – **26 September 2023**

To the Minister of Higher Education

Answer tabled on **7 November 2023** (Sessional Paper No. 1070-2031107)

In August, in collaboration with the Association des chirurgiens-dentistes du Québec, I proposed some solutions to the Minister of Higher Education and the Minister of Health to address the shortage of dentists and dental hygienists and improve access to dental care in the regions. Lack of dental care is a burden on an increasing number of Quebecers, in particular those living in the regions. Long wait times and significant distances between patients and the nearest dental clinic interfere with access to care.

To address the shortage of dentists and dental hygienists, we propose the following measures:

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- That the Ministère de l'Enseignement supérieur dedicate a number of spaces primarily for candidates from the regions affected by the shortage in the admission criteria of university dental medicine programs;
- That the Ministère de l'Enseignement supérieur increase and support dental hygiene training in CEGEPs to better serve all of Québec;
- That the Government forgive the debts of dental medicine and dental hygiene students who choose to practise in rural and remote regions, and that dental hygiene students have access to incentives such as the Québec Perspective Scholarship program.

My question is the following: does the Minister of Higher Education support these measures, and will her department implement those under its jurisdiction shortly?

(49) Mr. Bérubé (Matane-Matapédia) – **26 September 2023**

To the Minister of Transport and Sustainable Mobility

Answer tabled on **31 October 2023** (Sessional Paper No. 1051-20231031)

The Côte-Nord region is geographically isolated and the ferry service is unpredictable. There are often long lines to take the ferry and the congestion must be improved. This is a major development issue for the Côte-Nord region. There is a regional consensus on the project to build a bridge over the Saguenay River, but the Québec government has been slow to present its studies and confirm its real intentions with respect to this project.

My question is the following: does the Québec government intend to build a bridge over the Saguenay River and, if so, what is the timeframe for its completion?

(50) Mme Maccarone (Westmount–Saint-Louis) – **27 September 2023**

To the Minister of Public Security

Answer tabled on **31 October 2023** (Sessional Paper No. 1052-20231031)

On 18 September, Radio-Canada revealed that between 2017 and August 2023, a total of 112 kg of fentanyl had been seized at the border and within Canada—enough to kill 56 million people.

In Montréal, in a single day, on 10 September 2023, 9 people had to be taken to hospital for overdoses potentially linked to fentanyl.

According to the Public Health Agency of Canada, 541 Quebecers died from an opioid overdose in 2022; according to Health Canada, fentanyl has been involved in 75% of overdose deaths since 2016. More than 350 criminal groups could now be active in the fentanyl market in the country, according to a memo from Public Safety Canada.

This data clearly illustrates the magnitude of the fentanyl trade and the overdose crisis that is affecting the country. In this context, my questions to the Minister of Public Security are the following:

1. Can the Minister provide the data and studies that he has on the prevalence, production and illegal trade of fentanyl in Québec?
2. What measures do the Québec government, the Ministère de la Sécurité publique and the Sûreté du Québec currently have in place to fight the production and illegal trafficking of fentanyl in Québec?
3. Can the Minister provide a timeline and a summary of the concrete actions he intends to take to fight the increased trafficking and prevalence of fentanyl and to protect the health of Quebecers?

(51) Mr. Marissal (Rosemont) – **27 September 2023**

To the Minister of Health

Answer tabled on **8 November 2023** (Sessional Paper No. 1075-20231108)

In June 2021, Health Canada approved Trikafta, a breakthrough medicine to treat people living with cystic fibrosis.

Cystic fibrosis is the most common fatal disease affecting Canadian children and young adults. It causes various effects on the body, but mainly affects the digestive system and lungs. The disease's persistence and chronic lung infection eventually lead to death in the majority of people with the disease.

A Canadian study published in the *Journal of Cystic Fibrosis* found that access to Trikafta as of 2021 would result in considerable health benefits for Canadians with the disease. By 2030, Trikafta could reduce the number of people living with severe lung disease by 60% and the number of deaths by 15%.

Health Canada's approval of Trikafta means that physicians can now prescribe the drug to their cystic fibrosis patients.

The RAMQ ensures the drug's reimbursement since September 2021, and in April 2022 Health Canada's approval was extended to children 6 to 11 years of age.

Obstacles still remain, however, as children 2 to 5 years of age await Health Canada's review on the use of Trikafta and the cost of deductibles for the drug remain excessive for families.

My question to the Minister of Health is the following: Does he intend to act in order to reduce the cost of deductibles related to medications such as Trikafta, and is he keeping an eye out for the response from Health Canada in order to ensure the shortest delay in accessibility to the drug, should its use be extended to 2 to 5-year-olds?

(52) Mr. Bérubé (Matane-Matapédia) – **28 September 2023**

To the Minister of Health

Answer tabled on **8 November 2023** (Sessional Paper No. 1076-20231108)

I have called on the Minister of Health for years now with regard to the implementation of hemodialysis services in the Matanie and Matapédia regions, services that are vital to the citizens of my riding. Unfortunately, they must travel more than a hundred kilometres, three times a week, to access these services. We are talking about an hour-long trip each way. The financial consequences are significant, as is the impact on the health, security and families of patients.

In eastern Québec, only the Matanie and Matapédia regions do not have access to such a service. Rivière-du-Loup and Rimouski to the west and Sainte-Anne-des-Monts and Maria to the east do have access to hemodialysis services. Patients in the Matanie and Matapédia regions are therefore the only ones who must travel so far to obtain this essential care.

Not only does the current situation have a direct impact on the quality of the services provided to patients, but it once again illustrates the disparity and inequality in the provision of health care to patients in the regions, such as those in the Matanie and the Matapédia.

My questions are the following:

- Why has no hemodialysis service been implemented in these two regions?
- Will the Ministère de la Santé implement hemodialysis services in hospital centres for the residents of the Matanie and Matapédia regions and, if so, what is its timeframe to do so?

(53) Mr. Arseneau (Îles-de-la-Madeleine) – **28 September 2023**

To the Minister of Health

Answer tabled on **21 November 2023** (Sessional Paper No. 1089-20231121)

Currently, multidisciplinary councils bring together all the technicians and professionals who exercise functions directly related to health services, social services, research or teaching (excluding physicians, dentists, nurses and midwives) and their primary mandate is to give opinions and make recommendations directly to the board of directors and the president and executive director of their health institution. The tabling of Bill 15, An Act to make the health and social services system more effective, in particular with the creation of the Santé Québec agency, will bring a paradigm shift to the health and social services field. The bill will have a direct impact on the participative management of all the network's technicians and professionals.

The bill as it is currently introduced proposes that all the professional councils, in particular the multidisciplinary councils, now issue their opinions and recommendations to the interdisciplinary council for the evaluation of trajectories and clinical organization, which will include physicians, dentists, pharmacists, nurses and representatives of the two multidisciplinary councils. This interdisciplinary council would henceforth be the main body mandated to make recommendations directly to the president and executive director of a health institution.

However, as an essential part of direct services to users, the multidisciplinary councils currently allow professionals in the field to express themselves directly to administrators, in order to contribute and positively influence the decisions regarding the services offered and the best practices to put forward. This makes it possible to avoid intermediaries and ensure the neutrality and independence necessary for the opinions and recommendations submitted by the multidisciplinary council.

Inclusion of those professionals in the field and their expertise in an interdisciplinary council formalizes in the structure the direct link with the president and executive director and the departments concerned. However, it is important that multidisciplinary councils be able to report to the president and executive directors of the institution councils in order to ensure independence and neutrality in their mandates. The multidisciplinary councils act as a real filter for health professionals' recommendations to the president and executive director of their institution. Clearly, continuity must be preserved in the current consultation model.

My questions are the following:

- Does the Minister recognize that, through the multidisciplinary councils currently established—consisting of professionals in the field at each institution—significant interprofessional collaboration is already present and useful in the network?
- Is the Minister open to the existing councils that are currently multidisciplinary reporting directly to the president and executive director?

(54) Mr. St-Pierre Plamondon (Camille-Laurin) – **3 October 2023**

To the Minister Responsible for Government Administration and Chair of the Conseil du trésor
Answer tabled on **17 October 2023** (Sessional Paper No. 981-20231017)

The Association des biologistes du Québec (ABQ) is a professional association, officially registered on 21 March 1974, for the purpose of bringing together the biologists of Québec. The ABQ is a non-profit organization which includes more than a thousand members from the diverse field of biological sciences.

Biologists, as experts on life in all its forms, including interactions between living organisms and their environment, are called upon to carry out, depending on their specialty, laboratory analysis, biomedical, pharmaceutical and agronomic research, sampling of various environments, studies on ecosystems and ecosystem services, environmental and toxicological assessments, and resource and natural heritage management.

The practice of biology in Québec is characterized by the absence of professional supervision. Indeed, much like microbiology, biology lacks a professional order, which results in public protection issues on the subject of applied sciences. As the Minister knows, biology and microbiology share an important connection in terms of knowledge and practice environments. This is especially clear from the interrelation of their scopes of practice and the interprofessional nature of the activities they carry out, in particular in the health and environmental sectors.

Joining a professional order would not only maintain the recognition and confirmation of their expertise, but would also allow biologists to consolidate their communication, popularization and education efforts for the public, while ensuring public protection in applied sciences.

The supervision of a professional order would ensure that the studies, recommendations and advice of biologists, which are used in the framework of major governmental decisions, are scientifically valid.

My questions are the following:

- On 19 September 2023, the Minister said that she was open to considering the matter of the supervision of microbiologists. Since biologists and microbiologists share an important connection, does the Québec government recognize the need to also oversee the biologists of Québec through a professional order?
- If so, what measures and what timetable does it recommend for integrating biologists into Québec's professional system?

(55) Mr. Grandmont (Taschereau) – **3 October 2023**

To the Minister of Transport and Sustainable Mobility

Answer tabled on **8 November 2023** (Sessional Paper No. 1077-20231108)

The Ministère des Transports et de la Mobilité durable as well as Ville de Longueuil have been questioned several times by citizen groups on the noise barrier project, which would run parallel to Route 116, along Rue Raoul in the borough of Saint-Hubert.

Following an information session about the project held on 29 June 2023, Ville de Longueuil tried to convince its citizens they had to put their health on the line so that it could recover the sums planned for the noise barrier for the construction of parks, soccer fields and a bike path along Route 116. Furthermore, the only solution to carry out the noise barrier project would be a proposed sectorial tax targeting only 265 homes.

Twenty-five years have gone by since 1998, and neither the Ministère nor Ville de Longueuil seem to be taking the situation seriously. During phase I in 2014, which was a pilot project and to which the Ministère financially contributed, the residents affected did not have to pay a sectorial tax.

The Ministère has a policy on road noise that includes a corrective approach and an integrated planning approach. Regarding the noise barrier along Route 116, the Ministère is responsible for carrying out corrective measures, as it is the one that transformed Boulevard Sir Wilfrid-Laurier into Route 116, resulting in an increase in traffic. Future work on Autoroute 30 will also have an impact on the traffic flow of Route 116. It is in this regard that the Ministère is responsible for integrated planning.

Lastly, it seems that ever since the election of the CAQ government, the Ministère des Transports et de la Mobilité durable has refused to revise its share of funding of 50%, whereas other municipalities received up to 75% in funding. In that respect, citizen committees will be submitting an access to information request on the financial breakdown of all noise barriers built since 2018.

These committees suggested many ideas to Ville de Longueuil and the Ministère, namely:

- Build the barrier over many phases;
- Seek funding from the federal government as well as private businesses established along Route 116, since they contribute to noise pollution;
- Reduce the speed of traffic in the affected residential sector;
- Self-finance the barrier through advertising billboards;
- Demand a contribution from CN, which is also responsible for noise pollution; and
- Following the increase in the costs of living and construction, perhaps review the Ministère's policy on the construction of noise barriers.

The World Health Organization and the Institut national de santé publique du Québec (INSPQ) ruled that noise was a public health issue and that it has detrimental effects on the well-being and health of individuals. Given the current situation, both the Ministère and Ville de Longueuil appear to be contesting this notion, despite the INSPQ's definition being very clear.

My questions to the Minister of Transport and Sustainable Mobility are the following:

- Why has no common budgetary solution between the Ministère and Ville de Longueuil been submitted following the recent granting of a loan by-law?
- Has the Ministère received a grant application from Ville de Longueuil under the *Act respecting the Société de financement des infrastructures locales du Québec* (c. S-11.0102)?
- If noise is universally considered a public health issue, why must 265 homes bear the costs for the health of the entire population of the neighbourhood? Does public health not fall under provincial jurisdiction?
- Why does the Ministère des Transports et de la Mobilité durable not increase the funding it allocates to municipalities (75%) to reduce the impact of noise on its own national roads, such as Route 116?

(56) Mr. Bérubé (Matane-Matapédia) – **17 October 2023**

To the Premier

Answer tabled on **31 October 2023** (Sessional Paper No. 1053-20231031)

The Abitibi-Témiscamingue region is represented by three Coalition avenir Québec Members, namely the Member for Abitibi-Est, the Member for Abitibi-Ouest, and the Member for Rouyn-Noranda-Témiscamingue.

My question is the following:

Why is the minister responsible for the Abitibi-Témiscamingue region not an elected Member from this region, as is the case for other regions of Québec?

(57) Mr. Bérubé (Matane-Matapédia) – **17 October 2023**

To the Premier

Answer tabled on **31 October 2023** (Sessional Paper No. 1054-20231031)

The Gaspésie–Îles-de-la-Madeleine region is represented by two Coalition avenir Québec Members, namely the Member for Gaspé and the Member for Bonaventure.

My question is the following:

Why is the minister responsible for the Gaspésie–Îles-de-la-Madeleine region not an elected Member from this region, as is the case for other regions of Québec?

(58) Mr. Zanetti (Jean-Lesage) – **17 October 2023**

To the Minister of the Environment, the Fight Against Climate Change, Wildlife and Parks

Answer tabled on **2 November 2023** (Sessional Paper No. 1064-20231102)

On 22 December 2021, the Government adopted a regulation to increase the daily nickel standard from 14 ng/m³ to 70 ng/m³, five times the previous standard.

On 28 April 2022, despite increased citizen mobilization and numerous experts and groups voicing their opinion against it, the new standard came into effect. The researcher mandated by the Ministère de l'Environnement et de la Lutte aux changements climatiques to assess the change in standard proposed a daily standard of 40 ng/m³. However, the Minister opted instead for a 70 ng/m³ standard—almost double that proposed by the researcher—claiming that this was a threshold value, rather than a target value.

On 17 December 2022, the Vieux-Limoilou station recorded 120 ng/m³ of nickel (171% of the 70 ng/m³ standard).

On 29 December 2022, the Vieux-Limoilou station recorded 130 ng/m³ of nickel (186% of the standard).

On 6 January 2023, 151 ng/m³ of nickel were recorded, still at the Vieux-Limoilou station (216% of the standard).

On 23 March 2023, the Ministère sent a nickel concentration graph to the members of the Comité de vigilance des activités portuaires (CVAP). This graph shows several instances where the new nickel standard was exceeded between June 2022 and January 2023.

On 13 April 2023, during a CVAP meeting, an officer of the Ministère made a presentation on the presence of nickel in ambient air. The two December 2022 exceedances were discussed in the presence of the director of community relations of the Port of Québec.

On 29 August 2023, the CEO of the Port of Québec, Mr. Mario Girard, the Minister of the Environment, and the mayor of Ville de Québec, Mr. Bruno Marchand, held a press conference on air quality in the city of Québec's downtown area.

- At this press conference, the CEO of the Port of Québec stated that there had been no exceedances of the nickel standard during the previous year. However, the minutes of the 13 April CVAP meeting prove that this statement is false.

- The Minister of the Environment did not deny the Port of Québec CEO's assertion, even though his own department notified the CVAP in April of several instances where the nickel standard was exceeded.

On 21 September 2023, Québec solidaire tabled the minutes of the 13 April 2023 meeting of the CVAP and demanded answers from the Government.

During Question Period, the Leader of the Second Opposition Group confronted the Premier with proof that the Ministère de l'Environnement was aware of the exceedances of the nickel standard in Limoilou between June and December 2022. The proof was the minutes of the 13 April 2023 CVAP meeting, during which the Ministère informed the Port of Québec of these exceedances.

The Minister of the Environment finally confirmed that he was aware of the exceedances, but that since the question had not been put to him directly at the 29 August press conference, he had not seen fit to contradict the Port of Québec's claims.

Lastly, the information we have thus far – reported in the media – is that the Minister of the Environment has not yet sent any notices of non-compliance or fines to the Port of Québec for the three exceedances that occurred in December 2022 and January 2023.

In light of the information brought to the attention of the Minister of the Environment and the Fight Against Climate Change, I would like him to answer the following questions:

1. To date, has the Minister sent notices of non-compliance or fines to the Port of Québec or the companies transshipping nickel on the Port of Québec grounds, or to both, for the three above-mentioned exceedances?
2. If not, why does the Minister not enforce the nickel standard he himself introduced?
3. According to the Minister, what is the difference between a target value and a threshold value?
4. Is the nickel standard of 70 ng/m³ a threshold value?
5. Does the Minister believe that the three nickel exceedances in December 2022 and January are attributable to the Glencore company's nickel transshipment operations (note that the company itself acknowledges its responsibility, citing hardware failure)?

(59) Mr. Bouazzi (Maurice-Richard) – **17 October 2023**

To the Minister of Economy, Innovation and Energy

Answer tabled on **29 November 2023** (Sessional Paper No. 1145-20231129)

On 28 September 2023, the Minister of Economy, Innovation and Energy announced the Northvolt project, continuing his series of announcements related to the battery industry. We support the implementation of such an industry in Québec, insofar as the batteries can play a role in reducing greenhouse gases emissions (GHGs) in Québec.

To do this, however, the development of the battery industry must be part of a broader strategy expressly and explicitly aimed at reducing GHGs. As we know, replacing every conventional vehicle in Québec with an electric car is not a solution to the ecological crisis, as half a car's ecological impact is tied to its construction. This is all the more true for electric vehicles, whose batteries require considerable quantities of resources and energy.

If the batteries we manufacture are not used here, if they are installed in large vehicles such as Hummers, if they are recharged on power grids that are still hydrocarbon-fuelled, or if they are only used to manufacture new vehicles to add to the existing fleet, rather than as a replacement, then I'm afraid this industry will not help reduce GHGs, either here or elsewhere.

My question is the following:

What is the specific GHG reduction target for the battery industry in Québec? What measures, conditions or strategies does the Minister intend to implement to ensure that the batteries we manufacture will truly help reduce GHGs?

(60) Mr. Bouazzi (Maurice-Richard) – **17 October 2023**

To the Minister of the Environment, the Fight Against Climate Change, Wildlife and Parks
Answer tabled on **2 November 2023** (Sessional Paper No. 1065-20231102)

On 25 September 2023, Thomas Gerbet of Radio-Canada published an article announcing the Government's intention to not include "plexes" or houses in its future bill to rate buildings according to their energy performance. Indeed, the office of the Minister has confirmed that the bill will apply to institutional, commercial and multi-unit residential buildings.

However, energy efficiency in buildings is one of Québec's major environmental challenges, with buildings accounting for 10% of our GHG emissions. By including smaller dwellings, the rating system would cover a wider range of buildings and make it possible to achieve better energy efficiency more quickly.

My question is the following:

In a context where the Government is seeking to increase Québec's energy power, how can the Minister explain his decision to not include "plexes" or houses in the energy performance rating system?

(61) Ms. Lakhoyan Olivier (Chomedey) – **18 October 2023**

To the Minister of Tourism

Answer tabled on **29 November 2023** (Sessional Paper No. 1146-20231129)

Ms. Emmanuelle Legault, President and CEO of the Palais des congrès de Montréal, warned the Québec government of the consequences that await the Palais if its expansion project does not go ahead.

She wrote that the status quo condemns the Palais to a slow marginalization and a significant decrease in economic benefits generated, jobs created and tax revenues for the governments.

If nothing is done, the Palais could become a "second-class" centre, which would make the metropolis less attractive for international events, according to the Chamber of Commerce of Metropolitan Montreal.

This year alone, between January and July, the Palais des congrès de Montréal had to refuse 52 requests for conferences and events due to a "lack of availability or space".

Given that the Québec government has already spent over \$20 million to expropriate the required land east of Rue Saint-Urbain, can the Minister tell us how she intends to follow up on the President and CEO of the Palais des congrès de Montréal's appeal?

(62) Ms. Labrie (Sherbrooke) – **24 October 2023**

To the Minister of Higher Education

Answer tabled on **23 November 2023** (Sessional Paper No. 1132-20231123)

In February 2023, during the 38th meeting of the caucus of the Quebec Student Union, the Minister of Higher Education expressed her intention to consult the student community for the purpose of leading a reform on student financial assistance.

In light of this, my questions are the following: who in the Ministère is responsible for this consultation, what is its timeframe, what are the terms of participation, and what is the precise mandate of the consultation?

(63) Ms. Cadet (Bourassa-Sauvé) – **24 October 2023**

To the Minister of the French Language

Answer tabled on **9 November 2023** (Sessional Paper No. 1084-20231109)

The 2022–2023 annual management report of the Ministère de la Langue française shows, on page 29, its expenditures by sector of activity.

According to the report, the 2022–2023 expenditure budget of the Secrétariat à la promotion et à la valorisation de la langue française was set at \$24.2 million and the expected expenditures for 31 March 2023 stood at \$18.7 million.

Can the Minister shed some light on the reasons why nearly \$5.5 million do not appear to have been invested, given the importance of promoting and valuing the French language?

(64) Mr. Derraji (Nelligan) – **24 October 2023**

To the Minister of Immigration, Francization and Integration

Answer tabled on **29 November 2023** (Sessional Paper No. 1147-20231129)

An article from the Le Devoir newspaper, published on 20 October 2023, indicated that immigration files can sit for up to four years on the shelves of the federal department of Immigration, Refugees and Citizenship Canada.

Can the Minister inform us on the number of Québec files awaiting processing, as well as give us a breakdown by category, immigration program and waiting period in years?

(65) Ms. Nichols (Vaudreuil) – **26 October 2023**

To the Minister of Transport and Sustainable Mobility

Answer tabled on **22 November 2023** (Sessional Paper No. 1107-20231122)

On 4 October 2023, a request was sent to the Minister of Transport and Sustainable Mobility concerning the name of the new Île-aux-Tourtes bridge.

In this regard, we contacted the Commission de la toponymie and learnt about the planned processes. We were told that in a case such as the new Île-aux-Tourtes bridge, the decision falls within the political sphere. Consequently, we submit our questions directly to the Minister.

Firstly, we would like the Minister to tell us what she intends to do regarding the name of the new bridge.

How will she proceed in deciding on the name of the new Île-aux-Tourtes bridge?

Is she considering consultations?

Is she considering recommendations?

Has the process of finding a name for this new structure begun?

What are the deadlines identified by the office of the Minister of Transport and Sustainable Mobility for initiating and completing the process?

In the same vein, we ask the Minister if she is considering the official request she received to name the new Île-aux-Tourtes bridge in honour of Paul Gérin-Lajoie.

Many citizens of the Vaudreuil-Soulanges region, as well as elected officials from Ville de Vaudreuil-Dorion supported this proposal through Resolution No. 23-09-0859/2, which was adopted on 19 September 2023. Furthermore, the community has taken it upon itself to inform Mr. Gérin-Lajoie's family, who are obviously not only in agreement with this initiative, but also moved by the idea that the Government would grant him this honour.

It is important to highlight that Paul Gérin-Lajoie was Member for Vaudreuil-Soulanges from 1960 to 1969. A great builder of modern Québec, he contributed to the economic, social and cultural development of not only the Vaudreuil-Soulanges region, but also of Québec as a whole and its international policy. We owe him the Gérin-Lajoie doctrine, which asserted the right for Québec to establish direct relations with other countries.

Nicknamed the father of education in Québec, he implemented major transformations to our education system and was actively involved in the creation of Cité-des-Jeunes high school in Vaudreuil-Dorion.

It goes without saying that a piece of infrastructure as valuable to the region as this future bridge should bear the name of a person who has marked the evolution of our society's values, culture and history, both regionally and nationally. We feel that Paul Gérin-Lajoie is the ideal person to receive this honour.

(66) Ms. Nichols (Vaudreuil) – **2 November 2023**

To the Minister Responsible for the Montérégie Region

Answer tabled on **8 December 2023** (Sessional Paper No. 1208-20231208)

On 26 September 2023, the Government announced the creation of an expert committee whose mandate is to make recommendations for Québec to adapt to climate change. Mr. Alain Bourque, vice-chair of the committee, stated during an interview with Paul Arcand that the Government has the ability and the responsibility to fight climate change on multiple fronts at the same time, which include heat islands and the measures to prevent them.

A major project is currently underway in the Vaudreuil riding. The new Vaudreuil-Soulanges hospital is ranked among the 20 largest construction projects in North America. Although the parking lot for the new hospital was originally planned to be multi-level, the newest plans instead provide for a surface parking lot. This decision was taken unilaterally and solely based on financial considerations as a means to avoid a 3% increase in total project costs.

Furthermore, the surface parking lot with 1,869 spaces, which is equivalent to 5.7 hectares of multi-level parking, will be located in an agricultural area.

This project has been criticized by both the population and the elected officials of the Vaudreuil-Soulanges region. There is currently a petition on the National Assembly website on this issue. As Member for Vaudreuil, my riding office regularly receives complaints from the organizations and business people of the region, including those in the Soulanges riding.

I have questioned the Minister of Health on this matter several times, but neither the Member for Soulanges nor the Minister Responsible for the Montérégie Region has commented on the issue.

Accordingly, and to answer the many questions raised by citizens, can the Minister Responsible for the Montérégie Region tell us how we should respond to the complaints made by Soulanges constituents with regard to the new Vaudreuil-Soulanges hospital's surface parking lot located on farmland?

In addition, can the Minister Responsible for the Montérégie Region raise this issue with her colleague, the Minister of Health, in the name of not only the business community of the Vaudreuil riding, but also of the Soulanges riding?

(67) Ms. Massé (Sainte-Marie–Saint-Jacques) – **2 November 2023**

To the Minister of Health

Answer tabled on **30 November 2023** (Sessional Paper No. 1176-20231130)

During the previous reform of the health care system, Mr. Barrette abolished the universal parking stickers that gave in-home caregivers access to all parking spaces.

Since then, in-home support teams end up wasting a lot of time parking their vehicles before being able to provide care to their patients. Some even receive fines because they are sometimes forced to park in prohibited areas. Think of an assistant who must give an insulin shot and cannot afford to drive in circles for 40 minutes. Furthermore, if a fine is issued, the assistant ends up having to pay it out of their own pocket. In a society that advocates for home support, the current situation is untenable.

My question to the Minister of Health is the following:

Does the Minister commit to reinstating the universal parking sticker measure to facilitate the organization and efficiency of care provided by in-home support teams?

(68) Ms. Cadet (Bourassa-Sauvé) – **7 November 2023**

To the Minister of Employment

Answer tabled on **7 December 2023** (Sessional Paper No. 1195-20231207)

In the 2022–2023 annual management report of the Ministère de l'Emploi et de la Solidarité sociale, tabled in the National Assembly last September, we note on page 47 that the total number of employees in 2022–2023 is 7,211, which is 512 more than in the previous year's annual management report.

Given that the employees of the Ministère du Travail do not appear to be included in this statistic, can the Minister explain to us this considerable variance in the number of employees within her department?

(69) Ms. Massé (Sainte-Marie–Saint-Jacques) – **7 November 2023**

To the Minister of Health

Answer tabled on **8 December 2023** (Sessional Paper No. 1209-20231208)

We recently learned, in an article published by La Presse on 25 September 2023, that the RAMQ confirmed that “lipodystrophy treatments using dermal filling agents for HIV patients are insured services within the meaning of the *Health Insurance Act*, since they are medically required”.

The article also mentions that talks have been going on for at least three years between the Ministère de la Santé et des Services sociaux and the Fédération des médecins omnipraticiens du Québec, but that no agreement has been reached due to the treatment distribution issues. And yet, the article urges for the implementation of mechanisms for the distribution of the treatment in the public network!

The lipodystrophy syndrome was first described in a 1998 cross-sectional study aimed at documenting and specifying the bodily changes observed in a growing number of people under antiretroviral treatment (Carr et al., 1998).

We have known for a very long time that lipodystrophy causes irreversible bodily changes and that people with facial lipoatrophy live in precarious social, psychological and financial conditions. This situation leads to social disaffiliation, marked by a deterioration of social relationships and discrimination in employment. And since poverty makes access to dermal fillers difficult, it is a fact that people suffering from this condition have to turn to social assistance to meet their needs. Lastly, it must be said that all those affected by facial lipoatrophy, regardless of socioeconomic class, suffer discrimination in employment.

For too many years now, the HIV-AIDS movement has been reflecting on the issue of coverage for filler products, taking into account not only the indirect costs of facial lipoatrophy, but also the direct costs of this condition, which carries a heavy psychological burden. This burden leads to mental health problems and requires ongoing medical or even pharmacological treatment. In addition, there are the costs of the complications that can arise for immunocompromised individuals who undergo restorative treatment abroad or in conditions that endanger their health.

The time for reflection has passed. These filler products are not meant to embellish, but to correct the faces of people with facial lipoatrophy. Therefore, they are medically required and deemed necessary to correct this condition. In a society that promotes access to healthcare and inclusivity, this situation must be urgently reversed. With this in mind, I invite the Minister to understand that filler products are essential for reconstructing a lipoatrophic face, just as breast implants are essential for reconstructing the breast after a mastectomy.

My question to the Minister of Health is the following:

Does the Minister of Health commit to making lipodystrophy filler treatment available to HIV patients by 1 December 2023, on World AIDS Day?

(70) Mr. Zanetti (Jean-Lesage) – **9 November 2023**

To the Minister Responsible for Canadian Relations and the Canadian Francophonie

Answer tabled on **1 February 2024** (Sessional Paper No. 1265-20240201)

At the end of October, the Francophone and Acadian communities said they were “deeply disappointed” by the Francophone immigration targets adopted by the federal government, which keep these communities in demographic decline.

Indeed, the Federation of Francophone and Acadian Communities of Canada called for the federal government to adopt a target of 12% for francophone immigration outside Québec by 2024, but the federal government instead settled on a target of 6% for the coming year.

The Minister Responsible for Canadian Relations and the Canadian Francophonie publicly supported the Francophone and Acadian communities’ call for a federal francophone immigration target of 12%, for which we thank him.

My question to the Minister Responsible for Canadian Relations and the Canadian Francophonie is the following:

What does the Minister intend to do to support the Canadian Francophonie in this moment of profound disappointment?

(71) Mr. Zanetti (Jean-Lesage) – **9 November 2023**

To the Minister Responsible for Canadian Relations and the Canadian Francophonie

Answer tabled on **1 February 2024** (Sessional Paper No. 1266-20240201)

The Government recently decided to increase the tuition fees for out-of-province Canadian students.

Every year, thousands of francophones and francophiles from other provinces and territories study in French in Québec’s universities and CEGEPs.

Section 29.7 of Bill 96 provides that the Minister of Higher Education, Research, Science and Technology is responsible for contributing to “the mobility of francophone students across Canada”.

My questions to the Minister Responsible for Canadian Relations and the Canadian Francophonie are the following:

- 1) How will the increase in tuition fees, from \$9,000 to \$17,000 per year, contribute to the promotion of francophone students’ mobility in the country?
- 2) How does the Minister reconcile this measure with Bill 96?
- 3) Was the Federation of Francophone and Acadian Communities of Canada consulted before this measure was adopted?

(72) Ms. Nichols (Vaudreuil) – **9 November 2023**

To the Minister of Higher Education

Answer tabled on **6 February 2024** (Sessional Paper No. 1282-20240206)

Thousands of Quebecers have seen the Radio-Canada report on the bullying of students at the Centre québécois de formation aéronautique.

A citizen of the Vaudreuil riding, worried about a family member who is planning to receive training at this institution, is asking for explanations.

We have learned that there has been frequent bullying, harassment and sexual abuse by certain instructors at this flight school affiliated with the Cégep de Chicoutimi. Unfortunately, the students cannot count on support from the administration, which is accused of being very complacent.

Québec can rely on the *Education Act*, and in this regard we ask that the Minister inform us whether the Centre québécois de formation aéronautique has an action plan to prevent and fight bullying and violence.

We would also like the Minister to provide the title of the person responsible for implementing this plan and to inform us whether the plan has been distributed to staff, students and parents of students who are minors.

As regards prevention, we would like the Minister to send us the data on the anti-bullying and anti-harassment training given to students, staff and the administration. We would like to know how many people have been trained and with what frequency.

And, lastly, can the Minister make public all the measures she intends to take, further to the report in question, to prevent such behaviour from happening again, identify the culprits, and ensure that they are held accountable for their actions?

(73) Ms. Ghazal (Mercier) – **21 November 2023**

To the Minister of Culture and Communications

Answer tabled on **1 February 2024** (Sessional Paper No. 1267-20240201)

In 2018, following the election of the CAQ government, the new Minister of Culture and Communications decided to retain the 2018–2023 government action plan on culture introduced by the Quebec Liberal Party a few days prior to the end of the previous legislature. This action plan, tabled together with the new cultural policy, was long overdue.

The Minister of Culture and Communications improved the action plan by enhancing the content of school libraries and providing recurrent funding for school cultural outings, which was applauded by many. This action plan involved 34 departments and bodies committed to working with the Ministère de la Culture et des Communications and its network of 13 state-owned enterprises and bodies. It was designed to implement the objectives set out in the cultural policy.

This action plan will expire at the end of the year.

My question to the Minister of Culture and Communications is quite simple:

Does he intend to table a new government action plan on culture for the years 2024 to 2029?

(74) Ms. Nichols (Vaudreuil) – **22 Novembre 2023**

Minister Responsible for Housing

Answer tabled on **30 January 2024** (Sessional Paper No. 1228-20240130)

For several weeks now, mayors have noticed, through the media, that the provincial and federal governments have started discussions on funding for the construction of housing. To their great dismay, the mayors are excluded from these discussions, despite being key stakeholders.

It has been reported that the federal Housing Accelerator Fund aims to reduce administrative delays in the processing of requests from municipalities. Though no announcement has yet been made on this subject, it would seem that municipalities will have to cut red tape and review their zoning rules to promote the construction of housing near public transit services.

It is well known that in some cases, the federal government signs agreements directly with municipalities, enabling faster money transfers than transfers to the government of Québec. This situation is due to legislation that prevents the federal government and Québec municipalities from negotiating with each another.

Clearly, Québec municipalities would like to make up for lost time by asking the Government to provide that the rules governing the Québec program be as efficient and streamlined as those of Canada Mortgage and Housing Corporation's Housing Accelerator Fund program.

Based on the available information, many cities of Québec have applied to the Housing Accelerator Fund and are anxiously waiting for the provincial and federal levels of government to come to an agreement and decide to consider their applications. Some municipalities are even considering filling the gaps in the provincial program by creating new municipal programs.

Consequently, could the Québec government make public the breakdown of federal housing funding received since the tabling of the last budget in March 2023?

Furthermore, could the Québec government consult the municipalities before deciding on the rules of the future Québec housing construction program?

Out of respect for Québec municipalities who have been waiting for far too long, could the Québec government provide an official report on the situation?

Lastly, could the Québec government inform municipal governments of its actions before confronting them with a fait accompli?

(75) Ms. Nichols (Vaudreuil) – **29 November 2023**

To the Minister of Health

Answer tabled on **15 February 2024** (Sessional Paper No. 1353-20240215)

On 25 October 2023, we sent a letter to the Minister of Health to formally ask the Institut national d'excellence en santé et en services sociaux (INESSS) to address the disease called lipedema.

Lipedema is a disease that affects only women and which consists of an abnormal buildup of fat in the legs and intense chronic pain. The World Health Organization (WHO) has recognized it as a chronic disease since 2018.

For five years now, women with lipedema have been anxiously waiting for Québec to follow in the WHO's footsteps. Their daily lives are painful, which has impacts on their mental health, ranging from psychological distress to eating disorders.

The fact that lipedema has not yet been recognized as a condition in Québec means that women cannot get the medical care they need in Québec. We are referring to mitigation measures, such as the purchase of stockings and lymphatic drainage treatments, but also to making treatments such as surgery available. Currently, women with lipedema have very few options and they are very expensive. Testimonials in this regard show that treatments abroad lead to expenses of tens of thousands of dollars for women with this disease.

Québec does not have to start from scratch on this issue, as it can examine what has been done elsewhere, such as in Germany, which has been treating this disease for approximately fifteen years. We can also rely on the expertise of a leading expert on the subject in Québec, Dr. Michel Alain Danino, head of plastic surgery at the Centre hospitalier de l'Université de Montréal.

The Ministère de la Santé et des Services sociaux is responsible for deciding whether to cover the costs of treatments for a disease. However, the Ministère draws on the recommendations of the Institut national d'excellence en santé et en services sociaux. In this particular case, the INESSS has no recommendations for the Ministère, since it is currently waiting for a mandate from the Ministère to begin the analysis and assessment required to take a stance on the matter.

Too many women suffer from the effects of lipedema in their daily lives, and it is time for this situation to be remedied.

On behalf of all the women who suffer from this disease and who are helpless in the face of the many financial and human obstacles before them, can the Minister of Health formally mandate the INESSS to quickly address this disease and its treatments?

- (76) Ms. Maccarone (Westmount–Saint-Louis) – **29 November 2023**
Minister of International Relations and La Francophonie
Answer tabled on **30 January 2024** (Sessional Paper No. 1229-20240130)

At the end of August 2023, Global Affairs Canada issued updated travel advice for travellers to the United States, in which the department informed members of the 2SLGBTQIA+ community that they could be victims of discrimination if they travel to certain states.

Can the Minister tell us whether she has taken measures to raise her American counterparts' awareness of the security risks that members of Québec's 2SLGBTQIA+ community may face when travelling in the United States?

- (77) Ms. Zaga-Mendez (Verdun) – **1 December 2023**
To the Minister of Agriculture, Fisheries and Food
Answer tabled on **30 January 2024** (Sessional Paper No. 1230-20240130)

The torrential rains of July are a recent example of the ravages of climate change. Farmers are among the first to feel the adverse effects of climate change, as they face increasingly difficult conditions. To give an idea of the extent of the damage caused this summer, according to a La Presse article, "as of October 27, 7,064 damage claims had been filed with La Financière agricole du Québec – the province's farm producer insurer – compared to 3,813 last year".

Québec's grain sector is particularly affected by adverse weather. Increasingly difficult conditions threaten the survival of farm businesses and, in turn, jeopardize the achievement of food self-sufficiency. It is essential to support the farming community, in particular the grain sector – which is the basis of all other forms of farm production – so that all may adapt to climate change with the perspective of modernising practices according to an agri-environmental approach.

As the Minister knows, the ecological transition comes at a great cost to agricultural producers, who are already dealing with the impacts of climate change. While support has been announced for the coming year, there is no sign of long-term support, even though agri-environmental practices take time to implement, and crops require extensive planning. In this regard, it is essential that the Ministerial Initiative on Compensating Agri-Environmental Practices (Initiative) receive a stable funding commitment over the next five years. This long-term support will ensure continuity of this commitment and boost the confidence of producers, who are often forced to self-finance. The budgetary planning of initiatives to compensate agri-environmental practices cannot be done haphazardly, given the importance of agriculture and the impacts arising from this transition. To date, the Minister has announced \$23.2M of the \$50M put forward in his election commitment.

Given the above, my questions to the Minister are the following:

1. Is there a plan to sustain the Ministerial Initiative on Compensating Agri-Environmental Practices?
2. Can the Minister specify when and how the \$23.2M announced to bolster the Initiative will be implemented, and what is to become of the remaining portion of the \$50M promised?
3. Can the Minister tell us what figures he is relying on when he puts forward that farms specialized in grains located in peripheral regions are as profitable as those located in central regions?

(78) Mr. Leduc (Hochelaga-Maisonneuve) – **5 December 2023**

To the Minister of Public Security

Answer tabled on **31 January 2024** (Sessional Paper No. 1251-20240131)

The SPHÈRES project aims to support people aged 12 to 24 who are being sexually exploited. It does so through a personalized approach that focuses on their needs and aspirations. The project is a community initiative carried out in collaboration with several partners: the Marie-Vincent Foundation, L'Anonyme, En Marge 12–17, the SPVM and the CIUSSS du Centre-Sud-de-l'Île-de-Montréal. These organizations have been able to generate a community practice and a social net tailored to supporting victims through a continuum of services.

This project is in line with several recommendations of the Select Committee on the Sexual Exploitation of Minors, on which I sat for many months during the previous legislature. For example, the SPHÈRES project meets recommendations 14, 19 and 20 of Chapter 3, Prevention and training. It also meets recommendations 49, 51, 54 and 56 of Chapter 5, Reconstruction and rehabilitation: breaking the cycle of exploitation.

In addition, the project has succeeded in joining both institutional and community practices for the well-being of young minors, which is already an important victory in the fight against this scourge that is sexual exploitation. To better depict the extent of the phenomenon, 95% of young people who access the project's support services are minors. Though it is a distressing statistic, it clearly shows that the project's target audience has been reached.

Lastly, there is the issue of the time required for a minor to break the cycle of sexual exploitation. The SPHÈRES project has existed for nearly 7 years now, and the lack of funding raises fears that the project will end. In the fight against the sexual exploitation of minors, the SPHÈRES project deserves all the support it needs.

Considering the above, my questions are the following:

1. The Government's goal is to protect young victims of sexual exploitation, and to do so, it created the Select Committee on the Sexual Exploitation of Minors. Having myself sat on this committee, I take pride in having done my work as a legislator in a non-partisan manner. Considering that the recommendations of the Select Committee line up with the SPHÈRES project as the path forward in the fight against the sexual exploitation of minors, how does the Minister intend to maintain the continuum of services?
2. The SPHÈRES project is extremely innovative, so much so that it has problems fitting into the frameworks of the different funding programs. Consequently, we are left with having to fund a project that has proven its worth with non-recurring funding. Will the Minister commit to finding a solution that provides recurring funding to the SPHÈRES project to the level required to protect our youth?

(79) Ms. Cadet (Bourassa-Sauvé) – **5 December 2023**

To the Minister of Labour

Answer tabled on **31 January 2024** (Sessional Paper No. 1252-20240131)

The goal of the CNESST's hearing aid program is to fulfill the needs of workers with hearing loss caused by exposure to noise in their work environment. In its current form, the program ensures that its beneficiaries have access to a variety of hearing aids that use disposable batteries.

However, the rechargeable hearing aid is a technology that will soon dominate that entire market. In other words, companies that make hearing aids will abandon the production of devices that use disposable batteries in the coming months.

Currently, there is nothing in the CNESST's hearing aid program to ensure that rechargeable hearing aids have the same certification and selection criteria as hearing aids that use disposable batteries.

Can the Minister tell us what specific measures he intends to put in place with the CNESST to ensure that the beneficiaries of the CNESST's hearing aid program can make the mandatory transition from hearing aids that use disposable batteries to rechargeable hearing aids as smoothly as possible?

80) Mr. Bouazzi (Maurice-Richard) – **6 December 2023**

To the Minister of the Environment, the Fight Against Climate Change, Wildlife and Parks

Answer tabled on **30 January 2024** (Sessional Paper No. 1231-20240130)

Since 2014, Montreal International Fuel Facilities Corporation (MIFFC)'s airport fuel terminal project has led to legitimate concerns among citizens, environmental groups, and Ville de Montréal. The corporation is planning the imminent construction of a kerosene storage and transshipment facility for aircraft in the east end of Montréal, which would result in an annual transfer of kerosene of 1.4 to 1.9 billion litres across many of the city's residential neighbourhoods by tank cars and through heavy use of the Trans-Northern pipeline, known for its numerous incidents.

Given Québec's climate goals, the lack of a study by the Bureau d'audiences publiques sur l'environnement (BAPE) on the transportation of hydrocarbons arising from this project, Ville de Montréal's staunch opposition, and the lessons learned from the tragedy that occurred in Lac-Mégantic ten years ago, many questions remain about the project's environmental impacts and public health risks.

My questions are the following:

1. Does the Minister intend to ask for a BAPE study on the transportation of hydrocarbons arising from MIFFC's airport fuel terminal project?
2. How does the Minister intend to eliminate the risks to the population?

81) Ms. Dufour (Mille-Îles) – **6 December 2023**

To the Minister of Municipal Affairs

Answer tabled on **30 January 2024** (Sessional Paper No. 1232-20240130)

We have recently learned that no fewer than 741 elected municipal officials have left office since the 2021 election.

The extent of this phenomenon can be explained in particular by the negative climate experienced by elected municipal officials, which can include intimidation from disgruntled citizens.

The Union des municipalités du Québec believes this is an issue for local democracy, and rightfully so.

Can the Minister tell us what additional measures she intends to take to stop this trend and help create a healthier climate that allows elected municipal officials to perform their duties?

82) Ms. Maccarone (Westmount–Saint-Louis) – **7 December 2023**

To the Minister Responsible for the Status of Women

Answer tabled on **6 February 2024** (Sessional Paper No. 1283-20240206)

The 2017–2022 government action plan to fight against homophobia and transphobia expired on 31 March 2022. It was then extended until 31 March 2023 but has been out of date for nearly two years now. We are still waiting for the the 2023–2027 government action plan to be tabled.

During the examination of the 2023 estimates of expenditure, the Minister answered a question by mentioning that the consultations on the new government action plan had been completed and that the action plan would therefore be made public quickly, in June.

We are now at the end of 2023, and a new action plan has not yet been tabled, nor has the old action plan been renewed.

Can the Minister Responsible for the Status of Women explain this delay and the specific measures she has taken to ensure that the 2023–2027 government action plan to fight against homophobia and transphobia is tabled as soon as possible, and can she tell us her new timetable?

(83) Mr. Kelley (Jacques-Cartier) –**8 December 2023**

To the Minister of Natural Resources and Forests

Answer tabled on **6 February 2024** (Sessional Paper No. 1284-20240206)

We recently learned, in articles published by ICI Radio-Canada, that the municipality of Gatineau had experienced an explosion in the number of mineral titles, also called “mining claims”.

In May 2023, 829 lots were the subject of mining claims, including 250 lots within the urban perimeter. Given the scope of the phenomenon, in June 2023, the municipality of Gatineau sent a letter to 722 property owners to inform them that their land had been claimed for potential exploration.

The mayor of Gatineau would like the Québec government to grant more power to municipalities so that they are able to declare which territories are incompatible with mining activities. This request is in line with that of the Union des municipalités du Québec (UMQ), which would also like municipalities to have real power to designate portions of their territory that are incompatible with mining activities.

The municipalities recognize that the current law technically allows them to delimit territory that they want to exclude from any mining activities. However, they deplore the fact that the law does not grant them any real power and they denounce the fact that the Ministère des Ressources naturelles has so far refused the majority of their requests.

Can the Minister tell us what specific measures she intends to put in place so that municipalities can truly designate portions of their territory that are incompatible with mining activities?

(84) Mr. Derraji (Nelligan) –**8 December 2023**

To the Minister of Finance

Answer tabled on **30 January 2024** (Sessional Paper No. 1233-20240130)

The Québec government’s monthly report on financial transactions provides an overview of its monthly financial results. The report is produced to increase the transparency of public finances and to provide regular monitoring of the achievement of the budgetary balance target for the fiscal year. Since the beginning of 2023, only six reports have been published, at a rate of one per month from January to June. However, in the previous year, the Government had published a report in each month of the year.

Can the Minister explain the reasons that led him to not publish the reports for the months of July to December 2023?

Furthermore, can he commit to releasing a publication schedule for future monthly reports in 2024 to improve the Government’s financial transparency?

(85) Mr. Morin (Acadie) –**8 December 2023**

To the Minister Responsible for Relations with the First Nations and the Inuit

Answer tabled on **14 February 2024** (Sessional Paper No. 1349-20240214)

I recently met with union representatives whose members work in the north, including some in Indigenous communities.

Sadly, they are experiencing staff retention issues in the health and education sectors, which is notably caused by the limited or insufficient access to health services in remote regions. These resignations have a negative impact on the educational success of students in Indigenous and Inuit communities and worsen the problem of access to healthcare in those communities.

Still on the subject of health, many people struggle with difficulties in accessing medications for treatment. They have no choice but to leave their community for the major centres and obtain their medications themselves, all while being ill.

Furthermore, the representatives have told me of the major drinking water supply issue faced by the Inuit and Cree communities. The crisis is so serious that some use snow or non-potable river water and get sick as a result.

What actions does the Minister intend to take to improve access to health services, drinking water and education in the northern regions and in the First Nations and Inuit communities?

(86) Mr. Kelley (Jacques-Cartier) – **8 December 2023**

To the Minister for the Economy

Answer tabled on **22 February 2024** (Sessional Paper No. 1379-20240222)

During the interpellation by the Member for Jacques-Cartier to the Minister of Economy, Innovation and Energy on “Energy challenges: an issue for our society and our economy”, the Minister for the Economy mentioned that in order to quickly build new sources of energy production, we would have to resist the forces of inaction.

Can the Minister for the Economy explain what forces of inaction are present in Québec with regard to the construction of new energy sources, and what does he intend to do to resist them?

(87) Ms. Cadet (Bourassa-Sauvé) – **8 December 2023**

To the Minister of Labour

Answer tabled on **31 January 2024** (Sessional Paper No. 1253-20240131)

The Faubourg Boisbriand is a residential area no older than 15 years that was built on the grounds of the former GM plant in Boisbriand. It includes 27 buildings with six condo units each, for a total of 162 condominiums.

This residential area is affected by major water-related problems. All of the buildings are, to varying degrees, affected by rotting wooden structures and mould. Furthermore, these issues arising from the premature aging of the buildings’ structure is causing serious public health problems. The firm Bâtisso published an air quality assessment report which noted that all the surface samples contained a fungal contamination indicating the presence of a problematic fungal flora.

In the face of such issues, the condo owners must decide between rectifying the existing buildings or tearing it all down. The architect André Flora-Velinho conducted an analysis on the rehabilitation costs of the buildings. According to him, the task would cost nearly \$54 million in total. This works out to \$2.9 million per building, which is nearly \$500,000 per condo owner.

These problems cause considerable anxiety and frustration among the condo owners. Families can no longer reside in their home, and yet they must still pay for their syndicate and their hypothec. When questioned on this issue, the Minister of Labour said that he was extremely concerned and that everyone was working hard to find the best solutions possible to support the affected citizens and review the building inspection practises in Québec.

Can the Minister tell us what specific measures he intends to put in place to help the condo owners of the Faubourg Boisbriand, as well as his deadline for doing so? Can he also provide the current status of his application for the review of the inspection model, undertaken with the Régie du bâtiment du Québec and its partners, and specify the relevant deadline?

(88) Mr. Bouazzi (Maurice-Richard) – **30 January 2024**

To the Minister of Finance

Answer tabled on **12 March 2024** (Sessional Paper No. 1407-20240312)

The viable income index, which has been developed by the Institut de recherche et d'informations socioéconomiques (IRIS), allows us to precisely and exhaustively determine the income required to meet basic needs (food, clothing, housing, transportation and other staple goods), and thus enables Québec households to enjoy a decent life free of poverty. In 2023, this income ranged from \$27,047 to \$37,822 for a single person, depending on their region of residence.

In November 2022, the Association québécoise de défense des droits des personnes retraitées et préretraitées (AQDR) and the Observatoire québécois des inégalités published an alarming report in which they revealed that 49.2%, or nearly half of seniors aged 60 and older, live below the viable income threshold. In 2023, the IRIS published a study entitled “Vieillir au Québec, constats et solutions pour un meilleur système de retraite” (“aging in Québec: findings and solutions for a better retirement system”), in which it was revealed that 409,860 people aged 65 and older were living on less than a “viable income”.

Tax measures such as the senior assistance tax credit, the solidarity tax credit and the tax credit for home-support services for seniors are designed to effectively redistribute income to support seniors living in precarious situations. However, these measures do not guarantee a decent standard of living, despite the 2022 increase in the senior assistance tax credit.

My questions are the following:

- Does the Minister take the viable income index into account in his tax policies?
- Considering that close to half of seniors live below the viable income threshold, does the Minister intend to extend the non-refundable tax credit to seniors under 70?
- What additional measures does the Minister intend to implement to ensure that every senior in Québec can live a decent life, free from poverty?

(89) Mr. Morin (Acadie) – **30 January 2024**

To the Minister of Immigration, Francization and Integration

Answer tabled on **13 March 2024** (Sessional Paper No. 1427-20240313)

Québec immigrant admission delays constitute a considerable issue. Indeed, according to files held by the federal government and the immigration targets set by the Québec government, several years may elapse between Québec's approval of an application and the arrival of the immigrants on our soil.

Can the Minister once again inform us on the number of Québec files awaiting processing by the federal department of Immigration, Refugees and Citizenship Canada, as well as give us a breakdown by category and immigration program so that we may monitor their progress?

(90) Ms. Massé (Sainte-Marie–Saint-Jacques) – **1 February 2024**

To the Minister Responsible for Relations with the First Nations and the Inuit

Answer tabled on **12 March 2024** (Sessional Paper No. 1408-20240312)

During the launch of the 2022–2027 Government Action Plan for the Social and Cultural Wellness of the First Nations and Inuit, the Minister Responsible for Relations with the First Nations and the Inuit announced his intention, as well as that of the Government, to take action on the matter of Indigenous languages. Then, on National Indigenous Peoples Day (21 June 2022), the Minister announced his interest in legislating on Indigenous languages in Québec. Accordingly, his Secrétariat established an interdepartmental committee (made up of at least seven different departmental teams) with the mandate of developing a strategy and a bill on Indigenous languages. This interest was also confirmed in the midst of the election campaign (on 30 September 2022) when the Premier promised that his Government would table a bill on Indigenous languages were he to be re-elected.

It is important to point out that the Secrétariat du ministre responsable des Relations avec les Premières Nations et les Inuit and the interdepartmental committee have established and implemented a strategy without having preliminarily consulted First Nations leaders and their associated bodies.

This was clearly denounced by Mr. Ghislain Picard, Chief of the Assembly of First Nations Québec-Labrador, in an open letter sent to the Premier and signed on 16 August 2022. Mr. Picard demands that the Québec government cease all operations aimed at legislating on First Nations languages in Québec and asks that the Government respect and that it not impede on First Nations jurisdiction (Mr. Picard to the Premier, 16 August 2022). First Nations leaders have repeatedly communicated their concerns about the Minister's intentions, including a denunciation by the First Nations Chiefs on 23 November 2022, another letter sent by Chief Picard to the Premier on 8 March 2023, and various communiqués and letters published between March and June 2023.

Despite this, the Minister chose to carry out a series of public representations (between March and June 2023) as the first step in collecting information on his intention to legislate on Indigenous languages.

The First Nations again voiced their discontent by pointing out the Government's paternalistic and colonialist approach and the lack of a co-development approach with First Nations leaders, which is contrary to Article 19 of the United Nations Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples: "States shall consult and cooperate in good faith with the indigenous peoples concerned through their own representative institutions in order to obtain their free, prior and informed consent before adopting and implementing legislative or administrative measures that may affect them."

Though the Minister appears to have recently offered a path of dialogue to the elected officials and representatives of the First Nations, he has nevertheless tabled a bill on the cultural safety of Indigenous persons (Bill 32) that has been severely criticized both by First Nations leaders and experts.

The First Nations in Québec, just like Quebecers, are proud of their languages and their cultures, and they are therefore better able to solicit and devise the policies required to ensure the protection, the preservation, the strengthening, and the revitalization of their own languages. They hold ancestral rights to self-government and to language and culture, and these rights are recognized and protected under the *Constitution Act, 1982*, the 2019 *Indigenous Languages Act* and international law.

My questions to the Minister Responsible for Relations with the First Nations and the Inuit are the following:

Can the Minister tell us whether his Secrétariat continues to work on the development of a bill relating to Indigenous languages? Will the Minister put a stop to the strategy established by the interdepartmental committee of 2022, and will he commit to not issuing policies or legislating on First Nations languages without the free, prior and informed consent of First Nations leaders? Yes or no?

(91) Ms. Massé (Sainte-Marie–Saint-Jacques) – **7 February 2024**

To the Minister of Finance

Answer tabled on **12 March 2024** (Sessional Paper No. 1409-20240312)

Since November 2011, direct deposit registration has been a requirement to receive the solidarity tax credit. Even though the Commission des droits de la personne et des droits de la jeunesse issued a public notice on the very next day after this requirement was imposed, stating that it infringed on economic and social rights, Mr. Charest's Liberal government did not even consider backtracking on this discriminatory practice.

I have been personally asked about this issue by citizens living below the poverty line. It doesn't matter if they meet the eligibility criteria for the solidarity tax credit; if they don't have access to direct deposit, Revenu Québec will deny them the tax credit. However, many people in Québec are illiterate, and even more have difficulty reading and do not have the skills required to complete the direct deposit application forms. This only makes things even more precarious for groups that are already economically vulnerable.

I wanted to know how many people are affected by this requirement each year and, accordingly, how much funding is not provided to the people who should be entitled to it. My team recently submitted an access to information request to Revenu Québec to know the extent of this discrimination.

I was stunned to learn that 55,561 households that were entitled to the solidarity tax credit in 2023 had not received it. This is over \$20 million in funds withheld from people living below the poverty line, funds which they are entitled to, and which remain in the coffers of the government. Of equal concern is the fact that Revenu Québec predicts that the issue will only be exacerbated in 2024. It will more than double, with 106,091 households being denied this financial support for the next tax season, for a total of more than \$47 million in unpaid solidarity tax credits.

In the context of a cost-of-living crisis, and with the new plan to combat poverty and the social assistance reform expected this spring, can people experiencing economic insecurity count on the Minister of Finance to show coherence and cooperate with his colleague, the Minister Responsible for Social Solidarity and Community Action, to put an end to the direct deposit registration requirement? Can the Minister commit to retroactively pay the sums to the people who are entitled to them?

(92) Ms. Massé (Sainte-Marie–Saint-Jacques) – **7 February 2024**

To the Minister Responsible for Social Solidarity and Community Action
Answer tabled on **12 March 2024** (Sessional Paper No. 1409-20240312)

Since November 2011, direct deposit registration has been a requirement to receive the solidarity tax credit. Even though the Commission des droits de la personne et des droits de la jeunesse issued a public notice on the very next day after this requirement was imposed, stating that it infringed on economic and social rights, Mr. Charest's Liberal government did not even consider backtracking on this discriminatory practice.

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In the context of a cost-of-living crisis, and with the new plan to combat poverty and the social assistance reform expected this spring, can people experiencing economic insecurity count on the Minister Responsible for Social Solidarity and Community Action to show coherence and cooperate with her colleague, the Minister of Finance, to put an end to the direct deposit registration requirement? Can the Minister commit to retroactively pay the sums to the people who are entitled to them?

(93) Mr. Morin (Acadie) – **7 February 2024**

To the Minister Responsible for Government Administration and Chair of the Conseil du trésor
Answer tabled on **13 March 2024** (Sessional Paper No. 1428-20240313)

For many years, the Association des microbiologistes du Québec has been asking for better oversight of their profession through the creation of a professional order.

The Chair of the Conseil du trésor will agree that microbiologists have an important public health role, in both the public and private spheres.

Unfortunately, the lack of oversight makes it possible for unqualified people to use the title of microbiologist, which presents a risk to Quebecers' health and safety.

An October 2023 survey showed that Quebecers shared the association's concerns about the risks to their health and safety due to the lack of oversight. In fact, 96% of respondents agreed that a professional order should be created for microbiologists.

Can the Chair of the Conseil du trésor tell us the status of the Association des microbiologistes du Québec's request for the creation of a professional order?

(94) Ms. Cadet (Bourassa-Sauvé) – **7 February 2024**

To the Minister of Labour

Answer tabled on **12 March 2024** (Sessional Paper No. 1410-20240312)

We recently learned from a *Journal de Montréal* article that many employees of the Commission de la construction du Québec (CCQ) have been dismissed in recent years for professional misconduct.

Examples given in the article to justify these dismissals include conflict of interest, time theft, misrepresentation, disrespectful behavior and even inappropriate language.

Given the CCQ's leading role in the Québec construction industry, we believe this is a troubling situation that must be addressed.

Can the Minister tell us what specific measures he intends to implement at the CCQ to ensure the highest standards of ethics and integrity?

(95) Mr. Morin (Acadie) – **8 February 2024**

To the Minister Responsible for Relations with the First Nations and the Inuit

Answer tabled on **14 March 2024** (Sessional Paper No. 1440-20240314)

A group of Innu protestors are occupying an encampment erected at kilometre 59 of Chemin de la Domtar, north of Dolbeau-Mistassini.

They are claiming their right to control the development of natural resources on their family territory.

An injunction was granted to end the blockade on the road. However, the situation is not resolved.

What is the Government's plan regarding entering into a constructive dialogue with the Innu community to take its needs into account?

(96) Ms. Caron (La Pinière) – **8 February 2024**

To the Minister Responsible for Seniors and Minister for Health

Answer tabled on **12 March 2024** (Sessional Paper No. 1411-20240312)

On 14 November 2023, members of the Colline's in-patients' committee interpellated Ms. Julie Labbé, Director General of the CIUSSS du Saguenay-Lac-Saint-Jean, on end-of-life care at the Centre d'hébergement de la Colline.

Normally, patients receiving end-of-life care have access to a semi-private room so that they and their families can navigate this final step of life fully and with dignity. However, it appears that, since the beginning of the COVID pandemic, this room has been regularly used for patients waiting for a place in a long-term care centre, apparently on the orders of CIUSSS management.

The result is that there is no place and no alternatives for end-of-life patients of the Centre d'hébergement de la Colline and their families.

Can the Minister call upon the CIUSSS du Saguenay-Lac-Saint-Jean to ensure that end-of-life patients at the Centre d'hébergement de la Colline are given priority?
Is the Minister considering other solutions for patients waiting for a place in the Centre d'hébergement?

(97) Ms. Lakhoyan Olivier (Chomedey) – **13 February 2024**

To the minister of Tourism

Answer tabled on **19 March 2024** (Sessional Paper No. 1449-20240319)

In recent weeks, I learned that the Classique internationale de canots de la Mauricie would be coming to an end after 90 years of existence, due to financial problems. Rising travel costs and weather-related risks have contributed to these issues, as have the pandemic years.

This event attracted several thousand people to the Rivière Saint-Maurice, bringing economic benefits to local restaurant and business owners.

Does the Minister of Tourism have a plan to save this historic event for tourism in the Mauricie region?

(98) Ms. Nichols (Vaudreuil) – **15 February 2024**

To the Minister of Education

The teacher shortage is very real and its impacts are devastating. The quality of the teaching provided to our children is being affected, but even worse is the fact that in many cases teaching is not happening at all. And “no teaching” means “no evaluation”.

This is the case for many students at École secondaire des Échos in Vaudreuil-Dorion. In their report cards for the first term of the 2023–2024 school year, no results were entered for French, the only reason being that the students have not been evaluated.

These students are preparing for college and are very worried about the negative impacts on their applications. Will their grade point average be negatively affected? Will they be less likely to be accepted by a college?

We therefore ask the Minister of Education to clarify this matter for us. First of all, can the Minister explain why some students have not been evaluated?

Secondly, can the Minister explain what measures he intends to implement in order to not adversely affect the overall average of high school students, in particular that of graduates?

Furthermore, to reassure students and their parents, can the Minister confirm that CEGEP applications will be accepted despite the absence of certain evaluations?

(99) Mr. St-Pierre Plamondon (Camille-Laurin) – **20 February 2024**

To the Minister of Transport and Sustainable Mobility

Answer tabled on **26 March 2024** (Sessional Paper No. 1470-20240326)

The Camille-Laurin riding is a major entry point on Montréal Island. The current work on the Louis-Hippolyte-La Fontaine bridge-tunnel has a significant impact on the daily lives of our fellow citizens, in several areas.

In a letter sent on 6 April 2023, which received no reply, I asked the Minister about the lack of studies justifying the Ministère's decision to implement a one-way street on Honoré-Beaugrand at the Souigny and Dubuisson corners. This layout leads to many misunderstandings and frustration among the neighbourhood's residents.

The situation is all the more problematic since the closure of the ramp between Souigny and Autoroute 25 brings a considerable number of vehicles onto local streets. On this issue as well, there is no justification to explain the section being closed until 2025.

However, as I have already spoken with the Minister on several occasions, traffic congestion is also a problem on Rue Notre-Dame. Despite citizen mobilization and complaints repeated over decades, no mitigation measures are in place to reduce the nuisances related to trucking on this artery leading to the Port of Montréal.

Lastly, in general, the lack of communication from the Ministère on all these issues leads to the frustration of citizens, which is felt not only in our riding office, but also on a recurring basis at the Mercier-Hochelaga-Maisonneuve borough council.

My questions are the following:

- Can the Minister of Transport and Sustainable Mobility consider carrying out a traffic study to respond to the population's incomprehension of several decisions mentioned in that letter?
- Can the Minister of Transport and Sustainable Mobility organize an information session where citizens can ask their questions relating to traffic issues in the neighbourhood?

(100) Ms. Nichols (Vaudreuil) – **22 February 2024**

To the Minister of Health

Answer tabled on **11 April 2024** (Sessional Paper No. 1502-20240411)

The Minister of Health is aware: the population of the greater Vaudreuil-Soulanges region finds his unilateral decision to build a surface parking lot at the new Vaudreuil-Soulanges hospital incomprehensible.

Rather than building a multi-level parking lot as was initially agreed, the Government decided to move ahead with an enormous 5-hectare parking lot located in an agricultural area.

Guy Pilon, mayor of Ville de Vaudreuil-Dorion, and Olivier Van Neste, director general of that municipality, publicly spoke out against that decision, as have the MRC de Vaudreuil-Soulanges, the Union des municipalités du Québec, the Communauté métropolitaine de Montréal, the Chambre de commerce et d'industrie de Vaudreuil-Soulanges and the Conseil régional de l'environnement de la Montérégie.

Representatives from numerous environmental protection organizations are going in the same direction. In particular, Marie-Janick Robitaille, a researcher in Université Laval's geography department who collaborated on the mapping of heat islands around the site of the future Vaudreuil-Soulanges hospital, Dany Doiron, an associate researcher at the MUHC research centre, and the Direction de la santé publique.

La Presse reported, on 19 February 2024, that Santé publique had issued a scientific opinion, a three-page argument dated April 2019, and produced a fact sheet on responsible parking. All these documents favour a multi-level parking lot. However, the Minister has never referred to these numerous documents that go against his decision to keep the surface parking lot. Accordingly, could the Minister of Health make public the three previously cited documents as well as any other document concerning the construction of the parking lot for the new Vaudreuil-Soulanges hospital?

(101) Ms. Nichols (Vaudreuil) – **22 February 2024**

To the Minister of Transport and Sustainable Mobility

The population of the greater Vaudreuil-Soulanges region finds the Government's unilateral decision to build a surface parking lot for the new Vaudreuil-Soulanges hospital incomprehensible.

Rather than building a multi-level parking lot, as was initially agreed, the Government decided to move ahead with an enormous 5-hectare parking lot located in an agricultural area.

Given that the need for parking space at the Vaudreuil-Soulanges hospital is directly related to the lack of a structuring public transit network in the region, as established by expert Jean-Michel Champagne, can the Minister tell us, first of all, how and when she intends to improve support to the municipality of Vaudreuil-Dorion, which will have to increase its offer of public transport services heading to the new hospital?

Though the arrival of the new Vaudreuil-Soulanges hospital has been eagerly awaited for a long time, it will generate considerable automobile traffic. Traffic which the city's current layout will be unable to manage. As underlined in the 19 February 2024 *La Presse* article entitled "Un état exemplaire (quand ça adonne)", the marginal place of public transport is indeed baffling. Not only will the Île-aux-Tourtes bridge not have any lanes reserved exclusively for public transportation, but the project to integrate the REM on the new Île-aux-Tourtes bridge and to build a REM station in the Vaudreuil-Soulanges region appears to be stalled. According to Guy Pilon, mayor of Vaudreuil-Dorion, the situation is absurd and unacceptable. Given that these two ridings are undergoing an explosion in population, can the Minister explain which studies the Government and the REM project sponsor, CDPQ Infra, used to dismiss the extension of the REM toward Vaudreuil-Dorion?

(102) Mr. Zanetti (Jean-Lesage) – **22 February 2024**

To the Minister of the Environment, the Fight Against Climate Change, Wildlife and Parks

In 2021, the World Health Organization (WHO) reviewed its air quality guidelines for certain major air pollutants: fine particulate matter (PM 2.5 and PM 10), ozone, nitrogen dioxide, sulfur dioxide and carbon monoxide.

Given that the Clean Air Regulation (CAR) was passed in 2011, the standards applicable in Québec were compared with the reference values developed by the WHO in 2005 and not with those developed in 2021.

In January 2023, the Groupe de travail sur les contaminants atmosphériques (GTCA), established by the Minister, made public its report on the air quality in the Limoilou-Basse-Ville sector entitled *Rapport sur le portrait de la qualité de l'air du secteur Limoilou-Basse-Ville, propositions de mesures d'atténuation et recommandations*. The GTCA targets fine particulate matter as pollutants that are a priority and especially harmful. It also identified total suspended particulates (TSP) as a priority. The report *Mon environnement, ma santé*, presented by the Direction de santé publique de la Capitale-Nationale on 13 March 2023, also points to fine particulate matter.

Note that the CAR does not contain any PM 10 standards, and has no annual standards for PM 2.5 or TSP.

On 6 February 2024, the Association québécoise des médecins pour l'environnement published a frame of reference for healthy air entitled *Cadre de référence pour un air sain*. The Association asks, among other things, for the update of the toxicity threshold of certain air pollutants, including fine particulate matter of 2.5 micrometers.

My questions to the Minister of the Environment, the Fight Against Climate Change, Wildlife and Parks are the following:

1. Does the Minister intend to follow the experts' recommendations and reduce the particulate matter (PM 2.5), ozone, nitrogen dioxide and sulfur dioxide standards to be in line with the WHO's new guidelines?
2. Does the Minister intend to set a standard (daily and annual) for PM 10, according to the guideline levels from the WHO?
3. Does the Minister plan to add a high season standard for ozone, a 24-hour standard for carbon monoxide and an annual standard for PM 2.5, all based on the guideline levels from the WHO?
4. Does the Minister intend to set an annual standard for total suspended particulates?

(103) Mr. Zanetti (Jean-Lesage) – **22 February 2024**

To the Minister of the Environment, the Fight Against Climate Change, Wildlife and Parks
Answer tabled on **13 March 2024** (Sessional Paper No. 1429-20240313)

The Clean Air Regulation requires operators of incinerators to perform source emissions testing only once per year. In accordance with the technique set out in the Regulation respecting the landfilling and incineration of residual materials, incinerator emissions testing must be carried out as follows: three, four-hour samplings per chimney, per test.

In addition, the Clean Air Regulation does not require a sampling run to include the starting up of furnaces, even though each furnace start-up is likely to cause pollution peaks.

The BAPE report on the state of affairs and management of final waste entitled *L'état des lieux et la gestion des résidus ultimes*, published in January 2022, assessed that, in regard to incinerators, the requirement of the Clean Air Regulation to perform a minimum of only one source emissions testing per year for contaminants emitted into the atmosphere by incinerators with a capacity of 1 t/h or more is largely insufficient to ensure compliance with standards. The commission of inquiry considers that the Regulation should be revised in this matter to allow for a reliable assessment that is representative of the changes in emissions (p. ix).

In January 2023, the Groupe de travail sur les contaminants atmosphériques (GTCA), established by the Minister, went even further in its report on the air quality of the Limoilou–Basse-Ville sector, entitled *Rapport sur le portrait de la qualité de l'air du secteur Limoilou-Basse-Ville, propositions de mesures d'atténuation et recommandations*, stating that methodological concerns were highlighted to the GTCA with regard to the representation and size of the testing of industrial chimneys during compliance tests. Those concerns were also raised during the public hearing of BAPE on the management of final waste (BAPE, 2022). Recommendations were presented by BAPE in its report No. 364. The GTCA keeps to the recommendations made to that effect in the report already sent to the MELCCFP (BAPE, 2022) (p. 55).

My questions to the Minister of the Environment, the Fight Against Climate Change, Wildlife and Parks are the following:

1. Does the Minister intend to follow the experts' recommendations and revise the number of required source emissions testing in order to increase the frequency and duration of monitoring of air pollution emissions released by the incineration plants to ensure a better representation of the occasional sampling?
2. Will the Minister make a certain number of furnace start-ups mandatory for each sampling run, always with the goal of making the occasional sampling more representative?

(104) Mr. Morin (Acadie) – **12 March 2024**

To the Minister Responsible for Relations with the First Nations and the Inuit

Answer tabled on **16 April 2024** (Sessional Paper No. 1512-20240416)

Last 12 and 13 September, special consultations and public hearings were held on Bill 32, An Act to establish the cultural safety approach within the health and social services network.

Since then, we have heard nothing about the bill.

Can the Minister tell us what his intentions are for the future of this bill?

(105) Mr. Ciccone (Marquette) – **12 March 2024**

To the Minister of Health

Answer tabled on **11 April 2024** (Sessional Paper No. 1503-20240411)

On 11 January 2024, an article on vaping published in *La Presse* entitled “Vapotage — Y a des limites à se faire niaiser” reported that, although the sale of non-tobacco flavoured vaping products has been banned since 31 October 2023, the Minister of Health's new regulation misses the mark.

Many dépanneurs and specialty shops are flouting the rules by selling a plethora of flavour concentrates that can easily be mixed with a neutral e-liquid base. Considering that merchants admit to not knowing what exactly is in these flavours, with some suggesting the products may be carcinogenic if inhaled, does the Minister have a plan to ensure compliance with his regulation, and especially, to protect the health of young Quebecers?

(106) Ms. Nichols (Vaudreuil) – **13 March 2024**

To the Minister Responsible for Social Solidarity and Community Action

Answer tabled on **17 April 2024** (Sessional Paper No. 1520-20240417)

As the Minister knows, people experiencing homelessness who take advantage of the provisions of subsidized housing programs, such as the Rent Supplement Program or low-rental housing, benefit from social support that allows for better reintegration.

However, at the moment, women victims of conjugal violence have no levers for support once they leave the family home. Considering the housing crisis, many women are currently forced to stay in their toxic environment for lack of affordable housing, and especially, housing suitable for their families. In addition to this issue, as mentioned, is the absence of support when they access the Rent Supplement Program or low-rental housing, which greatly reduces their chances of success.

The consequences are disastrous. In the Vaudreuil riding, some women have lost their access to social housing because of a lack of support. It is likely that they and their children have had to return to their toxic environment where violence prevails.

To help the women and children stuck in these situations, we ask that, first, the Minister explain to us the services available to women victims of conjugal violence who are rebuilding their lives in subsidized housing.

In addition, is it possible to improve the support services offered to women victims of conjugal violence and the organizations responsible for managing subsidized housing?

(107) Ms. Ghazal (Mercier) – 13 March 2024

To the Minister of Higher Education

Answer tabled on **16 April 2024** (Sessional Paper No. 1513-20240416)

For more than thirty years now, the École nationale du meuble et de l'ébénisterie de Montréal (ENME) has offered a unique collegiate woodworking training program.

Gifted with a competent team and modern equipment, the ENME is a true jewel. Its students thrive in programs that are adapted to the business and professional network.

The decision of the Cégep de Victoriaville's board of directors to close the Montréal campus in 2027 seems ill-advised. For the good of our metropolis and its cultural and economic influence, a solution to this closure must be found.

The idea that the Montréal college network could lose such an institution is inconceivable. The ENME is responsible for an important portion of the increasingly needed succession for the carpentry industry in Québec.

As the ENME is in the Mercier riding, which I represent, I can anticipate the impacts of this closure, which will first be felt by the teaching staff, the school support staff and the professional who work at the school, as well as the students. However, this closure will also impact the furniture sector as a whole.

My question to the Minister of Higher Education is the following:

Does the Minister intend to support the École nationale du meuble et de l'ébénisterie de Montréal to prevent its closure? Does she intend to propose alternative solutions to keep the school open?

(108) Mr. Marissal (Rosemont) – **14 March 2024**

To the Minister of Health

In Québec, the *Act respecting prescription drug insurance* provides that patients must pay a portion of the costs related to the purchase of prescription drugs. This contribution includes a deductible amount and a coinsurance payment.

For most people, the maximum annual contribution is \$1,196, and this must be adhered to by the RAMQ and private insurers alike, without exception. For patients insured by the RAMQ, this amount is spread over 12 months, with a monthly maximum contribution. This means that patients do not pay more than \$99.65 per month (for a total of \$1,196 per year).

However, when a patient has private insurance, the insurer does not spread the amount payable over 12 months (because there is no monthly maximum contribution) and payment is required in full at the time of purchase at the pharmacy. Since the amount owed depends on the cost of the medication itself and the percentage of the coverage under the patient's plan, there is often a significant amount to be paid for several consecutive months at the start of the year.

This situation can impose a heavy financial burden on vulnerable patients with private insurance compared to patients covered by the public prescription drug insurance plan.

My questions to the Minister of Health are the following:

What measures does the Minister intend to take to require private insurers to set up a process for the monthly distribution of deductible and coinsurance payments similar to that of the RAMQ?

If so, does the Minister intend to apply the Act so as to guarantee that every patient in Québec, regardless of whether they are covered privately or by the RAMQ, can have their deductible and coinsurance payments spread over 12 months?

(109) Mr. Derraji (Nelligan) – **19 March 2024**

To the Minister of Transport and Sustainable Mobility

Answer tabled on **23 April 2024** (Sessional Paper No. 1533-20240423)

The Assembly recently held its consideration of Interim Supply for 2024–2025 during which I asked the Minister of Transport and Sustainable Mobility questions about public transit bus electrification. However, several questions have yet to be answered.

Can the Minister tell us the cost of one all-electric bus and the range of a battery? Can she also tell us the cost of retrofitting or building a garage for electric buses for each public transit authority?

(110) Mr. Leduc (Hochelaga-Maisonneuve) – **20 March 2024**

To the Minister of Labour

Answer tabled on **18 April 2024** (Sessional Paper No. 1527-20240418)

It is now well known that the rising cost of living and the housing crisis have a significant impact on seniors, as they live mainly on fixed incomes. This precarious situation also includes seniors who were victims of work accidents or occupational diseases during their working lives and who now collect a retirement pension at the age of 65.

Currently, however, the *Act respecting the Québec Pension Plan* (AQPP) and the *Act respecting industrial accidents and occupational diseases* (AIAOD) unfairly penalize victims of work accidents and occupational diseases who receive income replacement indemnities over a long period. Indeed, many of them receive a lower pension amount than they would have otherwise received had they not been victims of an employment accident or an occupational disease. This situation is contrary to the purpose of the AIAOD to provide compensation for victims of employment injuries or occupational diseases.

The AQPP does not provide for victims of employment injuries and occupational diseases to fully contribute to the Québec Pension Plan while they receive income replacement indemnities. The AQPP only takes into account an individual's working income to determine their pensionable salary, which excludes income replacement indemnities.

As for the AIAOD, contributions made to the Québec Pension Plan are subtracted from income replacement indemnities without being paid into the Québec Pension Plan. To calculate the net income and the income replacement indemnity equal to 90% of that net income, the CNESST subtracts all contributions made from the gross income. Victims of work accidents and occupational diseases are therefore deprived of their Québec Pension Plan contributions, as well as those made by their employer, for the duration of their total disability. The pensions of victims who hold suitable employment and receive income replacement indemnities to make up for the wage difference between their pre-injury occupation are similarly affected. It is important to point out that this second type of indemnity represents the vast majority of long-term indemnities.

As a result, the vast majority of victims of work accidents and occupational diseases cannot benefit from the exclusion measures provided for in the AQPP and are instead penalized when they retire. In many cases, this can represent a loss of several hundreds of dollars per month. However, a solution that has already been considered by the CNESST, or the CSST as it was called at the time, could easily resolve this issue.

Indeed, before the passage of the AIAOD in 1985, injured workers received indemnities from the CSST until their death. These life pensions were abolished with the introduction of the AIAOD. In the 1981 draft bill on compensation for employment injuries, the CSST had considered a measure to make up for the abolition of the life pensions. The draft bill provided that the CSST would pay the pension contribution subtracted from the income replacement indemnity, and the employer's contribution, directly into the Québec Pension Plan. It was agreed that the amounts deducted for this purpose would be taken from the CSST's accident fund. The following excerpt from the draft bill clearly shows the CSST's vision at the time: "The beneficiary of an income replacement indemnity contributes to the pension plan provided for in the *Act respecting the Québec Pension Plan* (chapter R-9) as if they had continued to work. The Commission deducts the worker's share from the indemnity and assumes the employer's share (...) the worker is then in the same situation they would have been in had they continued to work. This prevents the worker from suffering further harm because of their injury." [Translation]

In other words, it would be possible to apply the CSST's reasoning and amend the AIAOD and the AQPP, in particular sections 63 and 45 respectively, so that victims of work accidents and occupational diseases are no longer unfairly penalized upon their retirement.

Considering the above, my questions are the following:

1. Will the Minister of Labour acknowledge that the housing crisis and rising cost of living particularly affect seniors, including seniors who have been victims of work accidents and occupational diseases?
2. Will the Minister of Labour acknowledge that, in such circumstances, effective measures must be considered to support seniors?
3. Can the Minister of Labour tell us if the CNESST has estimated the costs of implementing the above-mentioned solution, that is, having the CNESST pay the worker and the employer's contributions into the Québec Pension Plan?
4. If not, can the Minister of Labour ask the CNESST to estimate the costs of such a measure?
5. Will the Minister of Labour commit to legislating so that victims of work accidents and occupational diseases are no longer unfairly penalized upon retirement?

(111) Ms. Cadet (Bourassa-Sauvé) – **20 March 2024**

To the Minister Responsible for Youth

Answer tabled on **24 April 2024** (Sessional Paper No. 1539-20240424)

We all know that the Maisons des jeunes (youth centres) play an important role for young people.

How does the Minister Responsible for Youth plan to support the infrastructure and equipment needs of the youth centres that are members of the Regroupement des maisons des jeunes du Québec, so that they can provide young people with a safe and stimulating environment?

Similarly, with a view to maintaining and developing the Maisons des jeunes du Québec, does the Minister plan to adopt specific measures to facilitate access for the Maisons des jeunes to funds dedicated to social innovation and the implementation of experimental projects addressing emerging youth issues?

(112) Ms. Nichols (Vaudreuil) – **21 March 2024**

To the Minister of Finance

Answer tabled on **23 April 2024** (Sessional Paper No. 1534-20240423)

In August 2023, the Premier admitted that more needed to be done with regard to housing, in particular for those most in need.

Though he claimed he would consider all measures to be undertaken, the budget tabled on 12 March 2024 indicates that this is not the case.

According to the Office régional d'habitation de Vaudreuil-Soulanges (ORHVS), families are the main victims of the housing crisis. There is no supply of 5 ½, 6 ½, or 7 ½-unit apartments. As a result, in 2023, the ORHVS had to house families with young children in hotels.

Consequently, the housing crisis rages on and stakeholders in the field are questioning more than ever the initiatives ignored by the Government, in particular those intended to promote the construction of affordable housing.

Housing parents and children in hotels is not a sustainable solution, nor is it healthy for the mental health of families, not to mention the fact that the costs of these supposedly temporary accommodations are remarkably high.

Accordingly, the Government's tax measures to stimulate and possibly accelerate housing construction must take into account avoidable expenses such as hotel costs.

A study commissioned by the Association des professionnels de la construction et de l'habitation du Québec indicates that suspending the QST would help turn unprofitable rental projects into profitable development projects. Does the Minister intend to follow in the footsteps of the federal government and other Canadian provinces and grant a tax holiday?

Can the Minister explain what measures taken in his budget will make it possible for families housed in hotels of the Vaudreuil and Soulanges region to be relocated as early as 2024?

(113) Mr. Bérubé (Matane-Matapédia) – **28 March 2024**

To the Minister of the Environment, the Fight Against Climate Change, Wildlife and Parks

For several years, the MRC des Basques has been asking the Québec government to take action to buy the rights to the Club des Appalaches, the last private hunting and fishing club in Québec, in order to give all citizens access to the right to hunt and fish within its territory. Since 1901, only a small number of hunters and fishers have been authorized to engage in hunting and fishing activities in the unorganized territory of Lac-Boisbouscache, which is the property of the State. This request raises important issues related to environmental preservation, regional development, access to land and territorial governance.

My questions are the following:

Does the Québec government intend to take positive action in regard to this request from the MRC des Basques? If so, what are the details of the procedure? If not, why?

(114) Mr. Bérubé (Matane-Matapédia) – **28 March 2024**

To the Minister of Health

Many residents of our regions have to travel long distances to access health services, without reaching the 200-km threshold required to receive financial assistance from the Ministère de la Santé for travel expenses.

For example, a resident of Sainte-Anne-des-Monts, Tourelle sector, who travels 194 km to the Centre hospitalier de Rimouski is not reimbursed under the travel expense policy. The situation is especially concerning considering the increased cost of fuel and accommodations and the centralization of health care. This often puts a financial strain on people who are sick and who have to travel frequently to obtain health care.

If the Government decides that there is not enough demand for specialized or highly specialized care in regions to warrant investment and, consequently, we make patients travel, the cost must be covered by the State. If Québec's health care system is universal, free and accessible to everyone in the territory, then those who live in remote regions should not have to unfairly carry a heavier financial burden because we decide not to provide health care in these areas. In this context, it is necessary to review the 200-km rule, which seems to be a purely arbitrary threshold.

My questions are the following:

- Will the Ministère de la Santé change its User Travel Policy to significantly reduce the minimum distance eligible for reimbursement?
- If yes, what will the new conditions be (new threshold, timetable, etc.)?

(115) Mr. Bérubé (Matane-Matapédia) – **28 March 2024**

To the Minister of Culture and Communications

The École nationale de l'humour is a higher education institution unique in Québec that, thanks to support from the Ministère de la Culture et des Communications, has trained more than 700 comedians, writers and screenwriters.

The school's current facilities on the corner of Rue Sherbrooke and Avenue De Lorimier no longer meet its needs or allow it to achieve its growth objectives. Moving to the heart of the Quartier Latin would allow it to be closer to cultural presenters, including the Espace St-Denis, the Maison de la chanson and the Bordel Comédie Club, and make a positive contribution to the revitalization of the Quartier.

Based on feasibility studies, the École nationale de l'humour's management identified two buildings in the Quartier Latin on Rue Saint-Denis that meet the institution's current and future needs. Ms. Louise Richer, Executive Director of the École nationale de l'humour, also submits that "the Quartier des Spectacles Partnership welcomes the eventual arrival of the school on Rue Saint-Denis as a pillar of revitalization". [Translation]

The École nationale de l'humour asked the Ministère de la Culture et des Communications for support to carry out the necessary work to adapt the building for its training purposes but has yet to receive a firm commitment. Furthermore, the budget documents and the Québec Infrastructure Plan tabled on 12 March 2024 make no mention whatsoever of the project.

My questions to the Minister of Culture and Communications are the following:

- 1- Does the Government intend to allocate funding in the current fiscal year to allow the l'École nationale de l'humour to acquire new facilities in the heart of the Quartier Latin and adapt the space for its teaching mission?
- 2- Does the Government recognize that this project will make a positive impact on the revitalization of the Quartier Latin in the short term, which is a goal of the Government, as stated by the Minister Responsible for the Metropolis and the Montréal Region?

(116) Ms. Nichols (Vaudreuil) – **28 March 2024**

To the Minister of Transport and Sustainable Mobility

The Minister is well aware that the citizens of the Vaudreuil and Soulanges ridings are affected daily by the management of transportation and sustainable mobility.

Firstly, the construction project for a Highway 20 bypass route is stalling under the pretext that a BAPE study is required, unlike other governmental projects.

Secondly, sustainable mobility in the Vaudreuil-Soulanges region has no hope of improving since the CAQ government still refuses to extend the REM to Vaudreuil-Dorion or even add lanes reserved for public transportation on the new Île-aux-Tourtes bridge.

Nothing is being done to help the citizens of Vaudreuil-Soulanges alleviate their daily frustrations. For months now, the riding offices of Vaudreuil and Soulanges have been receiving high volumes of calls, messages and comments related to the situation and traffic congestion. Every day, social media is flooded with statements from exasperated citizens.

Under these circumstances, it is unthinkable that citizens continue to endure this nightmare for three more years. The livelihood and family issues of many people are at stake, businesses are at risk, and moves and relocations are anticipated, not to mention the distress of the thousands of people who have no choice but to use the road network to get around every day.

Given this intolerable situation, it is imperative that mitigation measures be quickly implemented.

Can the Minister ensure that the work necessary to reinforce the current bridge be carried out as soon as possible so as to reopen the lanes and re-establish dynamic traffic management?

Could the Minister make access to Highway 30 free at all times?

Lastly, could the Minister ensure the optimal synchronization of traffic lights on Boulevard Harwood in Vaudreuil-Dorion?

(117) Mr. Fortin (Pontiac) – **9 April 2024**

To the minister of Agriculture, Fisheries and Food

Although grain producers have already begun modernizing their agri-environmental practices, they require the financial support of the State to continue and speed up this process, in order to keep pace with the legitimate expectations of society.

Despite the Minister of Agriculture, Fisheries and Food's allocation to the first two cohorts of the Initiative on Compensating Agri-Environmental Practices and the amounts pledged as part of electoral promises, it is essential that stable funding be secured for the next five years.

Such a commitment would ensure sustainable funding and boost the confidence of grain producers, who are often forced to self-finance. Given the importance of agriculture, in particular the grain sector, and the effects of this necessary agri-environmental transition, the budgetary planning of agri-environmental compensation cannot be carried out on an irregular basis. Sustained financial support would contribute to the achievement of the government's objectives set out in the 2020–2030 sustainable agriculture plan entitled "Plan d'agriculture durable 2020-2030" with regard to sustainable development in the food sector.

- Given that the Minister had the chance to witness the scale of agri-environmental transition efforts during his visit to France, and that that country provides much more support compared to Québec, would the Minister be willing to provide an annual agri-environmental practices funding of \$50M to grain producers in order to facilitate this transition?
- Is the Minister in favour of implementing a visionary and sustainable initiative on compensating agri-environmental practices that no longer falls under her sole responsibility?

(118) Mr. Fortin (Pontiac) – **9 April 2024**

To the minister of Agriculture, Fisheries and Food

Grain producers working in remote regions must deal with significant issues: the distance from processors, high transport costs for grain sold and inputs purchased, the obligation to coordinate travel so that trucks are full both coming and going, a smaller number of buyers that produces a downward effect on prices and, lastly, weather and agronomic conditions that limit crop choices and the potential for profit.

For the grain sector to overcome these obstacles, it is imperative that the Ministère de l'Agriculture, des Pêcheries et de l'Alimentation implement a program that is specifically aimed at producers in the regions concerned. The issues they face require appropriate economic levers, notably substantial investments to improve profitability, increase the competitiveness of the grain sector and maintain its appeal for future producers.

The Government uses data based on a generalization and a consideration of Québec agriculture in its entirety to demonstrate that remote regions perform as well as central regions. However, producers in remote regions are struggling to survive financially, which leads to abandoned land. In this regard, it would be both useful and relevant to implement investment tax credits intended for producers in peripheral regions to promote the development of their business infrastructure, and to comprehensively cover the crop rotations of these producers using income security programs.

Can the Minister of Agriculture tell us what he intends to do to financially support grain producers in remote regions so that they can continue their transition to sustainable agriculture and maintain their appeal for the next generation of farmers?

(119) Mr. Fortin (Pontiac) – **11 April 2024**

To the Minister of Health

On 9 February 2024, a *La Tribune* article entitled “97 % des besoins en pharmaciens en dialyse ne sont pas comblés au CIUSSS de l’Estrie-CHUS” stated that it is almost impossible to have access to a pharmacist for some of the CIUSSS de l’Estrie-CHUS’ dialysis services due to the critical staff shortage in this area.

The article reveals that in the fields of dialysis, emergency care, intensive care and oncology, the shortage rates in the Estrie region range from 16% for oncology to 97% for dialysis. The shortage rates for emergency care and intensive care range from 37% to 52%, respectively.

Can the Minister quickly take the necessary corrective action to ensure that the population of the Estrie region has access to care which, in many cases, can be essential for the patient?

(120) Mr. Bouazzi (Maurice-Richard) – **17 April 2024**

To the Minister of Economy, Innovation and Energy

In Québec, energy access issues are invisible, but a significant number of households are in a state of energy poverty. This means that they are struggling to pay their electricity bill and must deprive themselves of other essentials to pay the bill or reduce their electricity consumption to below what is required for their basic needs.

Each year, Hydro-Québec enters into hundreds of thousands of payment arrangements with its residential customers and carries out tens of thousands of service interruptions. For example, in 2019, Hydro-Québec entered into nearly 379,000 payment arrangements with its residential customers. That same year, the homes of 57,000 customers in collections were affected by service interruptions, a number that is equivalent to the population of Saint-Hyacinthe. In 11% of the cases, the customer experienced a service interruption lasting more than a week. During a time of extreme cold or heat, not having electricity for multiple days can jeopardize these people’s health.

Consuming energy in your home is not a choice: it is necessary to meet your basic needs, such as eating, heating, washing and staying healthy. Furthermore, access to energy is a condition that must be met for everyone to fully enjoy their fundamental human rights. Energy poverty is therefore a serious problem with very serious consequences.

Poorly ventilated, badly heated, or inadequately insulated housing is a danger to the health and safety of those living in it. The lack of electricity or heating has major impacts on health. For example, cold and damp homes that are inadequately heated increase the rates of mortality and morbidity among vulnerable households. Cold weather and heating issues increase the risk of developing diseases and excess mortality. The same goes for hot weather and air conditioning issues.

Various studies have identified three main families of conditions related to energy poverty: respiratory diseases, cardiovascular diseases and mental illnesses. Energy poverty also increases the risk of infections (due to poor food or personal hygiene) and accidents (due to, among other things, inadequate lighting).

Energy poverty issues also affect people's ability to eat well. How can you preserve and cook your food when your fridge or stove isn't working? To avoid having to eat unsafe food, some households resort to ready-to-eat meals, which significantly increase grocery expenses.

My question is the following:

Although electricity rates are relatively low in Québec, an increasing number of households are struggling to pay their electricity bill. One in seven people (16% of the population of Québec) is experiencing energy poverty. What is the Minister's plan to ensure that the bill to regulate clean energies he has promised to table does not result in more energy poverty in Québec?

(121) Mr. Grandmont (Taschereau) – **24 April 2024**
To the Minister of Transport and Sustainable Mobility

Under standard 4202 for hot mix asphalt formulated according to the Laboratoire des chaussées formulation method, the percentage of recycled road surfacing may not exceed 20%, with a limit of 10% for motorway surface layers.

The Québec road construction industry agrees that the percentage of recycled material varies between 14% and 17%, depending on the year. As reported by the US National Asphalt Pavement Association, the road surface recycling rate is 32% in Ohio, 29% in Michigan, 24% in Minnesota, 21% in Wisconsin, and 24% in Idaho, the northernmost states. France recycles 22% of its roads and Germany 28%, according to the European Asphalt Pavement Association. Lastly, Japan recycles 47% of its roads.

Asphalt has been proven to be a 100% recyclable material, and increasing the percentage of recycled asphalt aggregates presents numerous advantages. First, asphalt recycling offers substantial financial savings for taxpayers, simply because the resource (aggregates) to be recycled is already extracted and coated with a bituminous binder and is often available in nearby construction sites. Second, it reduces the GHG emissions resulting from the production process (extraction, production, and transport). Lastly, increasing the volume of recycled aggregates means that the same volume of recycled material is not extracted from Québec's natural resources: quarries, gravel pits and sand pits. Recycling saves natural resources that are not extracted.

Furthermore, road recycling techniques can be carried out *in situ* or “on site”. *In situ* road recycling entails all the work involved: collection of existing asphalt, crushing, screening, heating, mixing with binder and reinstallation of the asphalt in a single pass. Finally, the surface is compacted before being reopened to traffic. These techniques are widely used in Ontario (more than a million square metres each year). They are rarely used in Québec (around 100,000 square metres). Yet it is widely accepted that these techniques, which require minimal transport of materials, result in further financial savings, lower GHG emissions and very few untapped natural resources. The Ontario Ministry of Transportation regularly reports at specialized conferences that the quality and service life of existing recycling techniques are identical to or better than those of road construction using new materials.

My questions to the Minister of Transport and Sustainable Mobility are the following:

- What are the targets of the Ministère des Transports et de la Mobilité durable with respect to road recycling?
- What is the recycling trajectory of the Ministère des Transports et de la Mobilité durable, and what are its aims and timeframe?
- Will the Ministère des Transports et de la Mobilité durable impose on site recycling techniques across all its territorial divisions?