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NATIONAL ASSEMBLY OF QUÉBEC

FIRST SESSION

FORTY-THIRD LEGISLATURE

Votes and Proceedings

of the Assembly

Wednesday, 27 March 2024 — No. 111

**President of the National Assembly:
Madam Nathalie Roy**

The Assembly was called to order at 9:40 a.m.

ROUTINE PROCEEDINGS

Statements by Members

Mr. Laframboise (Blainville) made a statement to underline the 100th birthday of Ms. Albina Lemay.

Ms. Dionne (Rivière-du-Loup–Témiscouata) made a statement to underline the work of the organization Ligne de vie du Témiscouata.

Mr. Zanetti (Jean-Lesage) made a statement to ask for the remuneration of internships in the public sector.

Ms. Bourassa (Charlevoix–Côte-de-Beaupré) made a statement to pay tribute to Ms. Julie Gauthier.

Mr. Morin (Acadie) made a statement to pay tribute to Mr. Philippe Rachiele.

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Ms. Hébert (Saint-François) made a statement to underline the volunteer work of the Thivierge family.

Mr. St-Louis (Joliette) made a statement to underline the inauguration of the Maison de la musique René-Charette.

Mr. Lemieux (Saint-Jean) made a statement to underline the work of the environment committee of Hôpital du Haut-Richelieu for its green operating rooms.

Ms. Lachance (Bellechasse) made a statement to pay tribute to Ms. Simone Laflamme.

Mr. Caron (Portneuf) made a statement to underline Irish Heritage Month.

Ms. Duranceau (Bertrand) made a statement to underline the 150th anniversary of Municipalité de Saint-Donat.

Ms. Lakhoyan Olivier (Chomedey) made a statement to underline Nowruz.

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At 9:55 a.m., Mr. Benjamin, Third Vice-President, suspended the proceedings for a few minutes.

The proceedings resumed at 10:03 a.m.

Moment of reflection

Introduction of Bills

Mr. Jolin-Barrette, Minister of Justice, moved that leave be granted to introduce the following bill:

56 An Act respecting family law reform and establishing the parental union regime

The motion was carried.

Accordingly, Bill 56 was introduced in the Assembly.

Presenting Papers

Mr. Legault, Premier, tabled the following:

The 2023–2027 strategic plan of the Ministère du Conseil exécutif – March 2024 review.

(Sessional Paper No. 1474-20240327)

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Ms. Guilbault, Minister of Transport and Sustainable Mobility, tabled the following:

The 2023–2027 strategic plan of the Commission des transports du Québec.
(Sessional Paper No. 1475-20240327)

Presenting Reports from Committees

Mr. Simard (Montmorency), Committee Chair, tabled the following:

The report from the Committee on Public Finance, which met on 21 and 26 March 2024 to continue the debate on the budget speech in accordance with Standing Order 275.

(Sessional Paper No. 1476-20240327)

Oral Questions and Answers

The Assembly proceeded to Oral Question Period.

Motions Without Notice

Mr. Arseneau (Îles-de-la-Madeleine), together with Ms. Caron (La Pinière), Ms. Labrie (Sherbrooke) and Ms. Nichols (Vaudreuil), moved a motion on the recommendations of the report from the Health and Welfare Commissioner; this motion could not be debated for want of unanimous consent.

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By leave of the Assembly to set aside Standing Order 185, Mr. Allaire (Maskinongé), together with Ms. Maccarone (Westmount–Saint-Louis), Mr. Fontecilla (Laurier-Dorion), Mr. Paradis (Jean-Talon) and Ms. Nichols (Vaudreuil), moved:

THAT, on this 27 March, the National Assembly mark the first anniversary of the death of Sergeant Maureen Breau, who tragically lost her life in the line of duty;

THAT the Members of this Assembly recognize the sacrifices made by police officers to serve and protect our society, a commitment that Sergeant Breau embodied with courage and an unparalleled sense of duty;

THAT the Assembly take this opportunity to remember that, since 1852, Québec has lost 190 police officers who died in the line of duty;

THAT it recall the dangerous and unpredictable nature of this profession and that it is our duty to both recognize and honour their tremendous sacrifice and continuously seek to improve the safety of those who ensure our daily protection;

THAT it recognize the importance of working with all relevant stakeholders to better protect our peace officers who perform their duties with great altruism;

THAT, lastly, it observe a minute of silence to honour her memory and ensure that her extraordinary devotion and courage are not forgotten.

By leave of the Assembly, the motion was carried.

At the request of Mr. Benjamin, Third Vice-President, the Assembly observed a minute of silence.

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By leave of the Assembly to set aside Standing Order 185, Ms. Garceau (Robert-Baldwin), together with Ms. Ghazal (Mercier), Mr. St-Pierre Plamondon, Leader of the Third Opposition Group, and Ms. Nichols (Vaudreuil), moved:

THAT the National Assembly acknowledge that several projects for shelters for women who are victims of domestic violence are currently awaiting authorization and funding from the government;

THAT it declare that these projects must be considered from a much wider perspective than merely their cost per unit and be given priority due to their considerable impact on the lives and safety of women and children;

THAT it underline the urgent need to take action in order to increase the number of shelters;

THAT, lastly, it ask the CAQ government to quickly carry out these projects and grant the required funding.

The question was put on this motion, and an electronic division was thereupon demanded.

The motion was carried on the following vote:

(Division No. **227** in Appendix)

Yeas: **106** Nays: **0** Abstentions: **0**

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By leave of the Assembly to set aside Standing Order 185, Mr. Cliche-Rivard (Saint-Henri–Sainte-Anne), together with Mr. Carmant, Minister Responsible for Social Services, Ms. Prass (D’Arcy-McGee), Mr. Arseneau (Îles-de-la-Madeleine) and Ms. Nichols (Vaudreuil), moved:

THAT the National Assembly mark Social Work Week, held from 24 to 30 March 2024 under the theme “Social workers: at the centre of all transitions”;

THAT it recall the essential role played by the more than 16,000 social workers in Québec with regard to prevention and intervention with children, individuals, couples, families, groups and communities who are experiencing difficult times or starting a new stage of life;

THAT it encourage the Québec government to continue promoting social services as a distinct and essential link in the social safety net of our communities;

THAT, lastly, the National Assembly congratulate social workers for their dedication and invaluable contribution despite what is often a difficult work context.

By leave of the Assembly, the motion was carried.

Notices of Proceedings in Committees

Mr. Lévesque, Deputy Government House Leader, convened the following committees:

- the Committee on Transportation and the Environment, to continue its clause-by-clause consideration of Bill 48, An Act to amend mainly the Highway Safety Code to introduce provisions relating to detection systems and other highway safety-related provisions;

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- the Committee on Planning and the Public Domain, to continue its public hearings within the framework of special consultations on Bill 45, An Act to amend the Act respecting safety in sports mainly to better protect the integrity of persons in recreation and sports;
- the Committee on Labour and the Economy, to undertake its clause-by-clause consideration of Bill 51, An Act to modernize the construction industry, and to continue public hearings within the framework of special consultations on Bill 44, An Act to amend mainly the Act respecting the Ministère de l'Économie et de l'Innovation with respect to research.

And, by leave of the Assembly to set aside Standing Order 143, he convened the following committee:

- the Committee on Public Finance, to undertake public hearings within the framework of special consultations on Bill 53, An Act to enact the Act respecting protection against reprisals related to the disclosure of wrongdoings and to amend other legislative provisions.

Mr. Benjamin, Third Vice-President, gave the following notices:

- the Committee on Labour and the Economy shall hold a deliberative meeting to discuss the possibility of examining petitions on modernizing the concept of de facto union for social assistance recipients;
- the Committee on Citizen Relations shall hold a deliberative meeting to discuss the possibility of examining a petition on Québec's participation in the Family-based humanitarian program for Colombians, Haitians and Venezuelans.

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ORDERS OF THE DAY

Business Having Precedence

Budget Speech

The Assembly resumed the debate, which had been adjourned on 20 March 2024, on the motion moved by Mr. Girard, Minister of Finance, and on the motions stating a grievance moved by Mr. Beauchemin (Marguerite-Bourgeoys), Mr. Bouazzi (Maurice-Richard), Mr. Paradis (Jean-Talon), Mr. Tanguay, Leader of the Official Opposition, Mr. Zanetti (Jean-Lesage), Ms. Prass (D'Arcy-McGee), Ms. Labrie (Sherbrooke), Ms. McGraw (Notre-Dame-de-Grâce), Ms. Dufour (Mille-Îles), Mr. Fontecilla (Laurier-Dorion), Ms. Caron (La Pinière), Ms. Zaga Mendez (Verdun), Mr. Kelley (Jacques-Cartier), Mr. Grandmont (Taschereau), Mr. Derraji (Nelligan), Ms. Garceau (Robert-Baldwin), Ms. Ghazal (Mercier), Ms. Cadet (Bourassa-Sauvé), Mr. Marissal (Rosemont), Ms. Setlakwe (Mont-Royal-Outremont), Mr. Leduc (Hochelaga-Maisonneuve), Mr. Fortin (Pontiac), Mr. Cliche-Rivard (Saint-Henri-Sainte-Anne), Mr. Arseneau (Îles-de-la-Madeleine) and Mr. Ciccone (Marquette), subject to the receivability of these motions.

By leave of the Assembly to set aside Standing Order 276, Mr. Bouazzi (Maurice-Richard) commented on behalf of the Second Opposition Group.

The debate being concluded, Mr. Benjamin, Third Vice-President, declared that the motions stating a grievance were receivable, except the motions moved by Mr. Zanetti (Jean-Lesage), Mr. Grandmont (Taschereau) and Mr. Leduc (Hochelaga-Maisonneuve), with respect to which he ruled the following:

RULING FROM THE CHAIR

Pursuant to Standing Order 191, motions stating a grievance can set forth the grounds on which they are based; arguments, on the other hand, are not allowed.

In the past, parliamentary jurisprudence has established that “grounds” is understood to mean the reasons for which a Member censures the government. “Arguments”, meanwhile, consists of all that tends to support the conclusion sought in the motion. Jurisprudence has shown that explaining the consequences of the act referred to in the motion stating a grievance is also comparable to argumentation.

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In light of these criteria, the motions stating a grievance moved by the Members for Jean-Lesage, Taschereau and Hochelaga-Maisonneuve are to be considered motions containing arguments.

Indeed, they are similar in form and wording to other motions stating a grievance that were declared out of order by the Chair in the past, notably in rulings made on 11 June 2003, 21 April 2015, 20 April 2021 and 8 December 2022.

Mr. Benjamin, Third Vice-President, then proceeded to put the question on the motions stating a grievance moved during the debate and on the motion moved by Mr. Girard, Minister of Finance, that the Assembly approve the budgetary policy of the Government; electronic divisions were thereupon demanded.

At the request of Mr. Lévesque, Deputy Government House Leader, the electronic divisions were deferred until Routine Proceedings on the next sitting day.

Government Motions

Mr. Jolin-Barrette, Minister of Justice, moved:

THAT the National Assembly:

Concur in the reservations expressed by the Government in its reply, tabled in the National Assembly on 21 March 2024, to the report from the Committee on the Remuneration of Criminal and Penal Prosecuting Attorneys for the period 2023–2027, tabled in the National Assembly on 17 October 2023;

Approve the 23 recommendations mentioned in sections I to V of the report from the Committee on the Remuneration of Criminal and Penal Prosecuting Attorneys for the period 2023–2027.

A debate arose thereon.

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Mr. Lacombe, Minister of Culture and Communications, informed the Assembly that the Honourable Manon Jeannotte, Lieutenant-Governor of Québec, recommended this motion for the Assembly's consideration.

The debate continued.

At the end of his address, Mr. Morin (Acadie) moved the following amendment motion:

THAT the motion be amended as follows:

By replacing "the reservations expressed by the Government in its reply" on the second line by "the Government's reply".

The motion, as amended, would read as follows:

THAT the National Assembly:

Concur in the Government's reply, tabled in the National Assembly on 21 March 2024, to the report from the Committee on the Remuneration of Criminal and Penal Prosecuting Attorneys for the period 2023–2027, tabled in the National Assembly on 17 October 2023;

Approve the 23 recommendations mentioned in sections I to V of the report from the Committee on the Remuneration of Criminal and Penal Prosecuting Attorneys for the period 2023–2027.

The amendment was declared in order.

The amendment was negatived.

The motion was carried.

At 12:56 p.m., by leave of the Assembly to set aside Standing Order 20, Mr. Benjamin, Third Vice-President, suspended the proceedings until 3:00 p.m.

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The proceedings resumed at 3:00 p.m.

Business Standing in the Name of Members in Opposition

Mr. St-Pierre Plamondon, Leader of the Third Opposition Group, moved:

THAT the National Assembly note that an Australian study published on 4 March 2024 in the scientific journal *JAMA Pediatrics* confirms that screen time is harmful to young children's development;

THAT it underline that the Institut de la Statistique du Québec's longitudinal study has also established a correlation between exposure to screen time at a young age and academic performance in elementary school;

THAT it acknowledge that overexposure to screen time has a proven impact on children's development of cognitive abilities, health, in particular vision problems, and attention and behavioural problems;

THAT it note that many countries, including France, the Netherlands and the Scandinavian countries, have taken measures to address this issue;

THAT it affirm that children's overexposure to screen time is a public health issue;

THAT it note that the Digital Action Plan for Education and Higher Education, which has been out of date since 2023, is insufficient and must be improved to effectively address the negative impacts of children's overexposure to screen time;

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THAT, accordingly, the National Assembly ask the Government to table a new and improved Digital Action Plan for Education and Higher Education to better limit children's exposure to screen time, and that the plan be implemented for the start of the next school year.

Mr. Lévesque, Second Vice-President, informed the Assembly of the allocation of speaking time with respect to this limited debate: 10 minutes to the mover of the motion for his reply; 49 minutes 15 seconds to the parliamentary group forming the Government; 26 minutes 23 seconds to the parliamentary group forming the Official Opposition; 16 minutes 40 seconds to the Second Opposition Group; 16 minutes 12 seconds to the Third Opposition Group; and 1 minute 30 seconds to the independent Member. Within this framework, any time not used by the independent Member or by a parliamentary group shall be redistributed among the parliamentary groups in the proportions established above. Lastly, individual addresses shall not be limited.

A debate arose thereon.

At the beginning of his address, Mr. Poulin (Beauce-Sud) moved:

THAT the motion moved by Mr. St-Pierre Plamondon, Leader of the Third Opposition Group, be amended as follows:

By striking out the 6th and 7th paragraphs and replacing them with the following:

THAT it note that the Government has implemented the Québec Strategy on the Use of Screens and the Health of Children 2022–2025;

THAT, accordingly, the National Assembly ask the Government to continue its work on rolling out the strategy.

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The motion, as amended, would read as follows:

THAT the National Assembly note that an Australian study published on 4 March 2024 in the scientific journal *JAMA Pediatrics* confirms that screen time is harmful to young children's development;

THAT it underline that the Institut de la Statistique du Québec's longitudinal study has also established a correlation between exposure to screen time at a young age and academic performance in elementary school;

THAT it acknowledge that overexposure to screen time has a proven impact on children's development of cognitive abilities, health, in particular vision problems, and attention and behavioural problems;

THAT it note that many countries, including France, the Netherlands and the Scandinavian countries, have taken measures to address this issue;

THAT it affirm that children's overexposure to screen time is a public health issue;

THAT it note that the Government has implemented the Québec Strategy on the Use of Screens and the Health of Children 2022–2025;

THAT, accordingly, the National Assembly ask the Government to continue its work on rolling out the strategy.

The debate continued on the main motion moved by Mr. St-Pierre Plamondon, Leader of the Third Opposition Group, and on the amendment motion moved by Mr. Poulin (Beauce-Sud), subject to the permission of its author.

By leave of the Assembly, the 10 minutes allocated to the mover of the motion for his reply were given to Mr. Arseneau (Îles-de-la-Madeleine).

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Pursuant to Standing Order 98.1, Mr. Bérubé (Matane-Matapédia), in the name of Mr. St-Pierre Plamondon, Leader of the Third Opposition Group, refused the amendment proposed by Mr. Poulin (Beauce-Sud).

The debate being concluded, the question was put on this motion, and an electronic division was thereupon demanded.

At the request of Mr. Lévesque, Deputy Government House Leader, the division on the motion moved by Mr. St-Pierre Plamondon, Leader of the Third Opposition Group, was deferred until Routine Proceedings on the next sitting day.

Government Bills

Passage

Mr. Jolin-Barrette, Minister of Justice, moved the passage of Bill 54, An Act to follow up on the Table Justice-Québec with a view to reducing processing times in criminal and penal matters and to make the administration of justice more efficient.

After debate thereon, the motion was carried and, accordingly, Bill 54 was passed.

Passage

Mr. Drainville, Minister of Education, moved the passage of Bill 47, An Act to reinforce the protection of students, including with regard to acts of sexual violence (*modified title*).

A debate arose thereon.

At 6:30 p.m., Ms. Soucy, First Vice-President, adjourned the Assembly until Thursday, 28 March 2024 at 9:40 a.m.

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ROYAL ASSENT

On Wednesday, 24 March 2024 at 3:05 p.m. in the Office of the Lieutenant-Governor, in the presence of Mr. Boulet, Minister of Labour, Ms. Tremblay (Hull) and Ms. Mallette (Huntingdon), Delegates of the Premier, and of Ms. Aubé,ittings and Parliamentary Procedure Advisor and Delegate of the Secretary General, the Honourable Manon Jeannotte, Lieutenant-Governor of Québec, was pleased to assent to the following bill:

- 42 An Act to prevent and fight psychological harassment and sexual violence in the workplace

Then, at 3:30 p.m. in the Office of the Lieutenant-Governor, in the presence of Mr. Charette, Minister of the Environment, the Fight Against Climate Change, Wildlife and Parks, and Mr. Lemay (Masson), Delegates of the Premier, and of Ms. Aubé,ittings and Parliamentary Procedure Advisor and Delegate of the Secretary General, the Honourable Manon Jeannotte, Lieutenant-Governor of Québec, was pleased to assent to the following bill:

- 41 An Act to enact the Act respecting the environmental performance of buildings and to amend various provisions regarding energy transition

Then, at 4:05 p.m. in the Office of the Lieutenant-Governor, in the presence of Ms. Roy, Minister of Families, Ms. Gendron (Châteauguay), Ms. Tardif (Laviolette–Saint-Maurice) and Ms. Lecours (Lotbinière-Frontenac), Delegates of the Premier, and of Ms. Aubé,ittings and Parliamentary Procedure Advisor and Delegate of the Secretary General, the Honourable Manon Jeannotte, Lieutenant-Governor of Québec, was pleased to assent to the following bill:

- 46 An Act to improve the protection of children receiving educational childcare services

NATHALIE ROY

President

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APPENDIX

Electronic Divisions

On the motion moved by Ms. Garceau (Robert-Baldwin), together with Ms. Ghazal (Mercier), Mr. St-Pierre Plamondon, Leader of the Third Opposition Group, and Ms. Nichols (Vaudreuil):

(Division No. 227)

YEAS - 106

Allaire (CAQ)	Drainville (CAQ)	Lachance (CAQ)	Prass (QLP)
Arseneau (PQ)	Dubé (CAQ)	Laforest (CAQ)	Proulx (CAQ)
Asselin (CAQ)	Dufour (CAQ)	Laframboise (CAQ)	Provençal (CAQ)
Beauchemin (QLP)	(Abitibi-Est)	Lafrenière (CAQ)	Reid (CAQ)
Bélanger (CAQ)	Dufour (QLP)	Lakhoyan Olivier (QLP)	Rivest (CAQ)
(Prévost)	(Mille-Îles)	Lamontagne (CAQ)	Roberge (CAQ)
Bélanger (CAQ)	Duranceau (CAQ)	Lamothe (CAQ)	Rotiroti (QLP)
(Orford)	Émond (CAQ)	LeBel (CAQ)	Rouleau (CAQ)
Bérubé (PQ)	Fitzgibbon (CAQ)	Lecours (CAQ)	Roy (CAQ)
Blais (CAQ)	Fontecilla (QS)	(Les Plaines)	Sainte-Croix (CAQ)
Blanchette Vézina (CAQ)	Fortin (QLP)	Lecours (CAQ)	Schmaltz (CAQ)
Blouin (CAQ)	Fréchette (CAQ)	(Lotbinière-Frontenac)	Schneeberger (CAQ)
Bouazzi (QS)	Gagnon (CAQ)	Leduc (QS)	Setlakwe (QLP)
Boulet (CAQ)	Garceau (QLP)	Lefebvre (CAQ)	Simard (CAQ)
Bourassa (CAQ)	Gendron (CAQ)	Lemay (CAQ)	Skeete (CAQ)
Bussière (CAQ)	Ghazal (QS)	Lemieux (CAQ)	St-Louis (CAQ)
Cadet (QLP)	Girard (CAQ)	Lévesque (CAQ)	St-Pierre Plamondon (PQ)
Caron (QLP)	(Groulx)	(Chapleau)	Tanguay (QLP)
(La Pinière)	Girard (CAQ)	Maccarone (QLP)	Tardif (CAQ)
Caron (CAQ)	(Lac-Saint-Jean)	Mallette (CAQ)	Thouin (CAQ)
(Portneuf)	Grandmont (QS)	Marissal (QS)	Tremblay (CAQ)
Champagne Jourdain (CAQ)	Grondin (CAQ)	Martel (CAQ)	(Dubuc)
Charest (CAQ)	Guilbault (CAQ)	McGraw (QLP)	Tremblay (CAQ)
Charette (CAQ)	Guillemette (CAQ)	Montigny (CAQ)	(Hull)
Chassin (CAQ)	Haytayan (CAQ)	Morin (QLP)	Zaga Mendez (QS)
Ciccone (QLP)	Hébert (CAQ)	Nadeau-Dubois (QS)	Zanetti (QS)
Cliche-Rivard (QS)	Jeannotte (CAQ)	Nichols (IND)	
D'Amours (CAQ)	Jolin-Barrette (CAQ)	Paradis (PQ)	
Déry (CAQ)	Julien (CAQ)	Picard (CAQ)	
Dionne (CAQ)	Kelley (QLP)	Poulet (CAQ)	
Dorismond (CAQ)	Labrie (QS)	Poulin (CAQ)	