



NATIONAL ASSEMBLY OF QUÉBEC

FIRST SESSION

FORTY-THIRD LEGISLATURE

Votes and Proceedings

of the Assembly

Tuesday, 4 February 2025 — No. 177

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

The Assembly was called to order at 10:00 a.m.

Moment of reflection

ORDERS OF THE DAY

Government Bills

Passage in Principle

Mr. Boulet, Minister of Labour, moved that Bill 88, An Act amending the Act respecting the process of negotiation of collective agreements and the settlement of disputes in the municipal sector, do now pass in principle.

After debate thereon, the motion was carried, and Bill 88 was accordingly passed in principle.

Mr. Caire, Deputy Government House Leader, moved that Bill 88 be referred to the Committee on Institutions for clause-by-clause consideration.

The motion was carried.

Passage in Principle

Mr. Caire, Minister of Cybersecurity and Digital Technology, moved that Bill 82, An Act respecting the national digital identity and amending other provisions, do now pass in principle.

After debate thereon, the motion was carried, and Bill 82 was accordingly passed in principle.

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Mr. Caire, Deputy Government House Leader, moved that Bill 82 be referred to the Committee on Public Finance for clause-by-clause consideration.

The motion was carried.

At 11:50 a.m., at the request of Mr. Caire, Deputy Government House Leader, Ms. Soucy, First Vice-President, suspended the proceedings until 1:40 p.m.

The proceedings resumed at 1:40 p.m.

ROUTINE PROCEEDINGS

Statements by Members

Mr. Lévesque (Chauveau) made a statement to applaud the organization Servio's socio-professional project Café-In.

Ms. Caron (La Pinière) made a statement to underline White Cane Week.

Mr. Schneeberger (Drummond-Bois-Francis) made a statement to pay tribute to Mr. Brian Illick.

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Mr. Zanetti (Jean-Lesage) made a statement to share a letter from the 388-user committee.

Ms. Grondin (Argenteuil) made a statement to underline the efficiency of Hydro-Québec's preventive interventions in the Argenteuil riding.

Ms. McGraw (Notre-Dame-de-Grâce) made a statement to underline the work and commitment of the citizens of the Notre-Dame-de-Grâce riding in the context of Black History Month.

Ms. Tremblay (Hull) made a statement to pay tribute to Ms. Jo-Anne Donoghue.

Mr. Lemieux (Saint-Jean) made a statement to underline the 250th anniversary of the Siege of Fort Saint-Jean.

Ms. Tardif (Lavolette-Saint-Maurice) made a statement to pay tribute to Mr. Gilles Bourdon.

Ms. Blanchette Vézina (Rimouski) made a statement to pay tribute to Ms. Monique Vézina.

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Mr. Carmant (Taillon) made a statement to underline Suicide Prevention Week.

Mr. Drainville (Lévis) made a statement to congratulate Ms. Sylvie Héon, recipient of the Council of the Federation Literacy Award.

At 1:55 p.m., Mr. Benjamin, Third Vice-President, suspended the proceedings for a few minutes.

The proceedings resumed at 2:04 p.m.

Moment of reflection

The President informed the Assembly that she had, within the prescribed time, received a request for an urgent debate from Mr. Cliche-Rivard, House Leader of the Second Opposition Group. This request concerns the U.S. tariffs.

RULING FROM THE CHAIR

In light of the criteria established by the Standing Orders and parliamentary jurisprudence, the Chair makes the following conclusions regarding the receivability of the request.

First, the request concerns a specific and particularly urgent matter. Jurisprudence has established that the matter must concern a sudden, acute crisis or the worsening of such a crisis. In the case at hand, although the threat of tariffs has been in the news for some time, it remained hypothetical until it was carried out by the President of the United States on 1 February 2025. In this regard, the carrying out of the threat constitutes a sudden worsening of the situation. The President of the United States announced yesterday that the tariffs will be suspended for one month, but that does not make the issue any less urgent. Québec must still prepare for the imposition of tariffs, and the crisis is still serious.

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The matter must also fall under the Assembly's jurisdiction. This is the case here, as evidenced in the jurisprudence on urgent debates regarding foreign economic measures that impact the Québec economy. Although there is an international and a Canada-wide aspect to the tariffs imposed by the United States, they will result in tangible impacts for Québec, which has many financial and commercial means to respond to them.

The Chair must also take into consideration whether the matter cannot or could not be discussed under other circumstances. The Chair must consider whether the matter was addressed under other circumstances and whether there will be any upcoming opportunities to do so. Today is the first sitting day since the tariff threat was carried out. It is therefore the Assembly's first opportunity to really discuss this issue. Although a Minister's statement will be made on the matter, this is a separate parliamentary procedure, with a different objective, and is subject to the Executive's initiative. This action by the Executive does, however, underscore the high priority given to these tariffs.

The main receivability criterion remains the urgency of holding such a debate. The circumstances must be exceptional and the matter must be urgent enough to justify interrupting the legislative proceedings, and it is up to the Chair to interpret this criterion. The Chair considers that the seriousness of the situation justifies the holding of an urgent debate. The public is entitled to expect a response from parliamentarians, who must be able to express their views on the matter. This is all the more true as the Chair was informed that the parliamentarians are in agreement regarding the holding of this urgent debate.

For all these reasons, the request for an urgent debate by the House Leader of the Second Opposition Group is deemed to be receivable.

Statements by Ministers

Mr. Legault, Premier, made a statement about the U.S. tariffs.

Mr. Tanguay, Leader of the Official Opposition, commented on behalf of the Official Opposition.

Ms. Ghazal (Mercier) commented on behalf of the Second Opposition Group.

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Mr. St-Pierre Plamondon, Leader of the Third Opposition Group, commented on behalf of the Third Opposition Group.

Presenting Papers

Mr. Drainville, Minister of Education, tabled the following:

The 2023–2024 annual report of the Comité d'agrément des programmes de formation à l'enseignement.

(Sessional Paper No. 2204-20250204)

Ms. Laforest, Minister of Municipal Affairs, tabled the following:

The report on the implementation of the 2018–2022 government strategy to ensure the occupancy and vitality of our territories, extended to 2024;

(Sessional Paper No. 2205-20250204)

The 2025–2029 government strategy to ensure the occupancy and vitality of our territories.

(Sessional Paper No. 2206-20250204)

Mr. Jolin-Barrette, Government House Leader, tabled the following:

The reply to a written question from Ms. Prass (D'Arcy-McGee) on the number of interventions without the consent of vulnerable persons – Question No. 201, *Order Paper and Notices* of 28 November 2024;

(Sessional Paper No. 2207-20250204)

The reply to a written question from Ms. Rotiroti (Jeanne-Mance-Viger) on Ville de Montréal's requests to the Québec government to improve the situation in Montréal's Village – Question No. 204, *Order Paper and Notices* of 28 November 2024;

(Sessional Paper No. 2208-20250204)

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The Government's reply to a petition tabled on 20 November 2024 by Ms. Dufour (Mille-Îles) on implementing a rail corridor development strategy using the Electrification and Climate Change Fund.

(Sessional Paper No. 2209-20250204)

The President tabled the following:

The new seating plan of the National Assembly, dated 4 February 2025;

(Sessional Paper No. 2210-20250204)

A copy of the notice of motion moved by Mr. Arseneau (Îles-de-la-Madeleine) to be placed on the *Order Paper and Notices* of Wednesday, 5 February 2025 under Business Standing in the Name of Members in Opposition.

(Sessional Paper No. 2211-20250204)

Presenting Reports from Committees

Mr. Schneeberger (Drummond-Bois-Francis), Committee Chair, tabled the following:

The report from the Committee on Planning and the Public Domain, which held public hearings on 28, 29 and 30 January 2025 within the framework of special consultations on Bill 86, An Act to ensure the long-term preservation and vitality of agricultural land.

(Sessional Paper No. 2212-20250204)

Ms. Maccarone (Westmount-Saint-Louis), Committee Chair, tabled the following:

The report from the Committee on Transportation and the Environment, which held public hearings on 28, 29 and 30 January 2025 and on 4 February 2025 within the framework of special consultations on Bill 81, An Act to amend various provisions relating to the environment.

(Sessional Paper No. 2213-20250204)

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Oral Questions and Answers

The Assembly proceeded to Oral Question Period.

Motions Without Notice

Mr. Arseneau (Îles-de-la-Madeleine), together with Mr. Fortin (Pontiac), Mr. Marissal (Rosemont) and Ms. Nichols (Vaudreuil), moved a motion on bonuses awarded to Santé Québec's management personnel and senior executives; this motion could not be debated for want of unanimous consent.

By leave of the Assembly to set aside Standing Order 185, Ms. Fréchette, Minister of Economy, Innovation and Energy, together with Ms. Zaga Mendez (Verdun), Mr. Paradis (Jean-Talon), Ms. Nichols (Vaudreuil) and Mr. Lefebvre (Arthabaska), moved:

THAT the National Assembly affirm the importance of continuing the efforts to counter the economic threat posed by the Trump administration's proposed tariffs;

THAT it reiterate the need to further develop and promote local purchasing and encourage Québec consumers to buy Québec products;

THAT it recall the importance of continuing to diversify our export markets in order to reduce our economic dependence on the U.S. market and increase our trade relations with other Canadian provinces and the rest of the world;

THAT it call on all parliamentarians and all Quebecers to work together in the face of this new economic threat.

By leave of the Assembly, the motion was carried.

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Mr. Beauchemin (Marguerite-Bourgeoys), together with Mr. St-Pierre Plamondon, Leader of the Third Opposition Group, Ms. Nichols (Vaudreuil) and Mr. Chassin (Saint-Jérôme), moved a motion on a policy on productivity in Quebec; this motion could not be debated for want of unanimous consent.

Mr. Leduc (Hochelaga-Maisonneuve), together with Mr. Paradis (Jean-Talon), moved a motion on the Québec government's consultations to redefine the Québec economy; this motion could not be debated for want of unanimous consent.

Notices of Proceedings in Committees

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

- the Committee on Planning and the Public Domain, to continue its clause-by-clause consideration of Bill 79, An Act to enact the Act respecting contracting by municipal bodies and to amend various provisions mainly for the purpose of reducing the administrative burden of municipal bodies;
- the Committee on Labour and the Economy, to continue its clause-by-clause consideration of Bill 87, An Act respecting mainly the development and enhancement of industrial land and the governance of the Société du parc industriel et portuaire de Bécancour;
- the Committee on Institutions, to undertake clause-by-clause consideration of Bill 88, An Act amending the Act respecting the process of negotiation of collective agreements and the settlement of disputes in the municipal sector.

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

- the Select Committee on the Impacts of Screens and Social Media on Young People's Health and Development shall hold a public meeting to undertake the second phase of special consultations and public hearings.

Information on the Proceedings of the Assembly

Mr. Benjamin, Third Vice-President, informed the Assembly that on Wednesday, 5 February 2023, during Business Standing in the Name of Members in Opposition, a debate would be held on the motion moved by Mr. Arseneau (Îles-de-la-Madeleine).

This motion reads as follows:

THAT the National Assembly acknowledge that the Minister of Health is requiring budget cuts of \$1.5 billion in the health network by 31 March 2025;

THAT it recall that Santé Québec has abolished hundreds of positions across all the regions and announced many cuts to services;

THAT it recognize that the public health system is already dealing with a shortage of caregivers, emergency room closures and dilapidated buildings;

THAT it require Santé Québec to make public the entire plan for budget cuts in health care;

THAT, lastly, the National Assembly recognize that the Québec government must take responsibility for the \$1.5 billion in health cuts and for the impacts of these cuts on services to citizens.

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ORDERS OF THE DAY

Urgent Debates

Before entering upon the urgent debate on the U.S. tariffs, Mr. Benjamin, Third Vice-President, informed the Assembly of the allocation of speaking time for the proceedings with respect to this limited debate: 57 minutes to the parliamentary group forming the Government; 31 minutes 4 seconds to the parliamentary group forming the Official Opposition; 20 minutes 34 seconds to the Second Opposition Group; 6 minutes 51 seconds to the Third Opposition Group; and 1 minute 30 seconds to each independent Member. Within this framework, any time not used by the independent Members or by a parliamentary group shall be redistributed among the parliamentary groups in the proportions established above. Lastly, individual addresses shall not be limited.

The urgent debate arose thereon.

The debate expired and, pursuant to Standing Order 91, no question was put.

Mr. Lévesque, Deputy Government House Leader, moved the adjournment of the Assembly until Wednesday, 5 February 2025 at 9:40 a.m.

The motion was carried.

Accordingly, at 6:05 p.m., Mr. Benjamin, Third Vice-President, adjourned the Assembly until Wednesday, 5 February 2025 at 9:40 a.m.

NATHALIE ROY

President