



Trump lies his way into a corner

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NEWS

Steel industry players say retaliatory tariffs for Canadian steel need 'real teeth' as lobbying efforts heat up

BY JESSE CNOCKAERT

With the U.S. effectively cut off from Canadian steel because of a high tariff, Algoma Steel's message to Ottawa is that much stronger measures will be needed to

help the ailing industry pivot to the domestic market over the long term if a trade deal cannot be reached.

"If the U.S. market is closed off to Canadian steel-makers with a 50 or 25-per-cent tariff, we have to have competitive access to the

Canadian market, and right now we just don't have it with the amount of foreign steel that's being dumped and traded into Canada," said Mike Garcia, CEO of Algoma Steel. "If a trade

Continued on **page 20**

NEWS

Health Canada plan forecasts a \$1-billion spending drop by 2027-28

BY TESSIE SANCI

Expiring funding for programs that include the National Strategy for Drugs for Rare Diseases and the Emergency Treatment Fund could lead to a drop of \$1-billion in spending between the 2025-26 and 2027-28 fiscal years, according to Health Canada's most recent departmental plan.

"For expiring budgetary spending authorities, the department would have to request funding for these initiatives for future years," reads the 2025-26 plan.

The plan states that the department expects to spend a total of \$10.285-billion on programs (which excludes internal services)

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WHO'S WHO IN THE PMO

A deeper look into who's doing what inside
Prime Minister Mark Carney's PMO, by *The Hill
Times'* deputy editor Laura Ryckewaert p. 22.



Man on the move: Prime Minister Mark Carney, pictured behind the scenes at the Museum of History in Gatineau, Que., on July 17, 2025, before the Prime Minister's First Nations Summit on Bill C-5, the One Canadian Economy Act. *The Hill Times* photograph by Andrew Meade

NEWS

Tighter registration threshold for lobbying means more transparency, but also more administrative work for businesses in challenging times, say lobbyists

BY JESSE CNOCKAERT

Recently announced changes that will dramatically increase how many organizations or corporations could need to

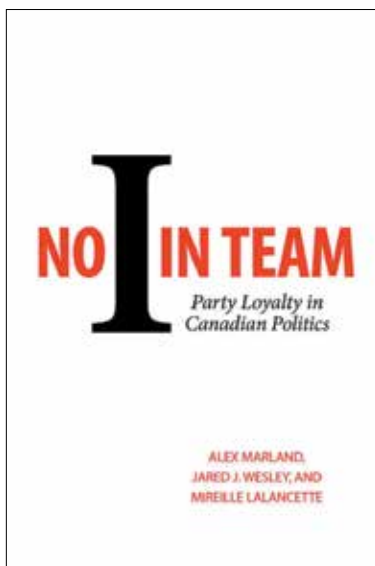
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Heard on the Hill



By Christina Leadlay

This just in: Alex Marland to release new book this fall, *No I In Team: Party Loyalty in Canadian Politics*, and it looks like another good one



Acadia University's Alex Marland has co-written a new book with Jared J. Wesley and Mireille Lalancette. *No I In Team: Party Loyalty in Canadian Politics* will be out in October. Handout photograph and book cover courtesy of University of Toronto Press

Alex Marland has a new book coming out in October, *No I In Team: Party Loyalty in Canadian Politics*, published by the University of Toronto Press. Written by Marland, Jared J. Wesley, and Mireille Lalancette, it's been in the works for years, Marland said on social media last week. "It's packed with new research and insights from across the country. We strive to answer a perplexing question: why are Canadian politicians so loyal to their parties?"

The University of Toronto Press describes the book as "meticulously researched," and

that it "provides the first in-depth examination of the forces shaping party loyalty in Canadian politics, revealing how Members of Parliament and provincial legislators are conditioned to prioritize partisan interests over constituents and independent judgment. The authors show how institutional rules, political pressure, social dynamics, and digital technologies reinforce a system demanding unwavering loyalty. Drawing on extensive interviews with politicians and senior staff, plus analyses of thousands of news stories spanning four decades, this book traces

how party discipline evolved into message discipline, where control over speech is as strict as control over votes."

Marland, who teaches political science at Acadia University, is also the Jarislowsky Chair in Trust and Political Leadership, and author of *Canadian Politics and Democracy in the Age of Message Control* (UBC Press 2016); and *Whipped: Party Discipline in Canada* (UBC Press 2020). Marland is a newshound, a pundit, and focuses his research on the "intricate dynamics of Canadian politics." This upcoming book looks like another good one.

Bruce Heyman really, really likes Canada

You might have noticed that **Bruce Heyman**, the former United States ambassador to Canada under president **Barack Obama**, is a big fan of Canada, especially right now, during the Canada-U.S. trade war. If you haven't noticed, just take a look at his Twitter/X feed. His most recent dalliance into crooning for Canada? He posted a story from *CultMtl* that named Canada among the top five countries with the best quality of life, based on a 2024 study by *U.S. News & World Report*.

"I would rank it higher!" posted Heyman. By the way, the top 10 countries are: 1. Denmark 2. Sweden 3. Switzerland 4. Norway 5. Canada 6. Finland 7. Germany 8.



Bruce and Vicki Heyman at the Jamie Anderson fundraiser at the Blacksheep Inn in Wakefield, Que., in 2014. *The Hill Times* photograph by Jake Wright

Australia 9. Netherlands 10. New Zealand. The U.S. ranked No. 22.

Heyman, 67, who is from Chicago and a big Chicago Cubs fan, said he'd one day like to see a "cross border World Series, sister series" between the Toronto Blue Jays and the Chicago Cubs.

"Canada has a lot of supporters and fans in the U.S.A. and as the former U.S. ambassador to Canada, I am proudly at the front of the line," he has pinned to the top of his X feed. Heyman is now the CEO of Power Sustainable, an asset management subsidiary of Power Corporation.

Doug Roche named 2025 winner of Canadian Leadership for Nuclear Disarmament award

Doug Roche was named this year's winner of the Canadian Leadership for Nuclear Disarmament (CLND) Distinguished Achievement Award on July 17, and will be honoured this fall in Ottawa.

"We are immensely proud to give this year's award to Douglas Roche, honouring his unwavering and inspiring leadership, for

more than 50 years, resolutely focused on ridding the world of its catastrophically deadly arsenal of nuclear weapons," said **Alex Neve**, CLND chairperson, in a press release. "There is no one who has been so steadfast, brought so many others to this vital campaign, and shown all Canadians the moral clarity and pragmatic necessity of the cause. Douglas Roche embodies the very epitome of the essence and finest qualities of leadership. And he has ardently and eloquently shown us all just what is at stake: our very survival."

Roche—a former MP, ambassador for disarmament, and



Here's looking at you, kid: Douglas Roche, pictured at the Cartier Place Hotel in Ottawa on Oct. 17, 2015. *The Hill Times* photograph by Marie-Danielle Smith

senator—is also a visiting professor at the University of Alberta, and has played a key role in the creation of effective nuclear disarmament advocacy groups, through the Parliamentarians for Global Action, the Middle Powers Initiative, and the Canadian Network to Abolish Nuclear Weapons. He is the author of 25 books, articles, and speeches,

and is a contributor to *The Hill Times*. He also has nine honorary doctorates, and is an officer of the Order of Canada.

Roche, 96, will receive his award at the University of Ottawa on Oct. 23, after delivering his lecture, "Creative Dissent: A Politician's Struggle for Peace."

Other previous recipients of this award are: **Murray Thomson**, **Bev Tollefson Delong**, **Fergus Watt**, **Adele Buckley**, **Paul Dewar**, **Peggy Mason**, **Metta Spencer**, **Debbie Grisdale**, **Mary-Wynne Ashford** and **Jonathan Down**, **Jennifer Allen Simons**, **Tariq Rauf**, and **Ernie Regehr**.

Rick Anderson roots for Erin O'Toole

Rick Anderson, once a former top adviser to the federal Liberal Party and later to the Reform Party and its United Alternative campaign among other political experience, had only good things to say on social media recently about former federal Conservative leader **Erin O'Toole**, 52, who was ousted by his party in 2022 and replaced by Conservative Leader **Pierre Poilievre** in 2023.

"Too bad the federal Conservatives do not have @erinotoole around these days, to help them produce more insightful, substantive, contributions to the global trade discussion," Anderson posted on July 15.

O'Toole, who was considered a more moderate member of the Conservatives, is now the



Erin O'Toole, left, and Rick Anderson. *The Hill Times* photographs by Andrew Meade and Jake Wright

president and managing director of ADIT North America. On July 15, O'Toole told CBC News that he thought Prime Minister **Mark Carney** has "generally done a really good job" on setting a new tone of negotiations with U.S. President **Donald Trump** on tariffs, and said there needs to be a resolution, "but not at all costs."

Akin named acting bureau chief at Global News, steps in for Stephenson

Global News Ottawa bureau chief **Mercedes S tephenson** announced on social media on July 22 that she will be taking her parental leave soon, "as baby will arrive in the not so distant future," and that **David Akin** will be taking over as acting bureau chief. Stephenson said she will be back in 2026, but urged sources to send "political, investigative, or just plain good story tips to David," and national security stories to **Stewart Bell**.

Stephenson took to social media on May 2 to ask for advice on having a baby at 44 years old. "OK wisdom of fellow Xers ... do your thing. First baby arriving in September. I'll be 44... What do I need to know? What do I need to get? What should I avoid? I have no idea what I'm doing. Thank you to those who have reached out with advice, so kind!" Stephenson wrote.

Best, to Stephenson and to Akin. *The Hill Times*



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NEWS

U.S. tariffs on pharmaceuticals could complicate an already complex supply chain

Drug companies could begin questioning whether to manufacture drugs or conduct clinical trials in Canada, says Life Sciences Ontario CEO.

BY TESSIE SANCI

Canada's level of pharmaceutical drug exports pales in comparison to other products on the United States' list of tariff targets, but experts say the impacts would still be significant because of the industry's integrated and complex global supply chain.

Pharmaceutical products made up two per cent of total Canadian exports in 2024, with a value of \$11.3-billion, according to data from Trading Economics. The two most popular products, which make up more than a third of total exports, are oil and related products (valued at \$145.07-billion) and vehicles (\$57.98-billion).

But calculating the value of where finished pharmaceuticals come from doesn't tell the full story.

As an example, Jason Field, president and CEO of Life Sciences Ontario, told *The Hill Times* the story of a biotechnology company based in British Columbia. The company's leaders told Field that they use an active pharmaceutical ingredient (the component of a drug that provides the therapeutic benefit) produced in Ontario. That ingredient is then sent to Florida for the formulation of the drug. From there, the drug is sent to multiple sites in North America for clinical trials.

"So, what this company said was, if these tariffs came into play, they would have to start considering, are they going to manufacture that [active pharmaceutical ingredient] in Canada anymore, or would they just do it in the U.S.? And if they're doing [that] manufacturing in the U.S., is it going to be worth it if they're going to be tariffed on it every time it crosses the border? Are they even going to run clinical trials in Canada anymore?" Field told *The Hill Times*.

Potential consequences of those types of decisions include a loss of manufacturing jobs, but also the possibility there will be fewer available clinical trials in Canada, which is how patients receive early access to new treatments, according to Field.



U.S. President Donald Trump recently told reporters that he may announce his final decision on pharmaceutical tariffs at the end of July. Photograph courtesy of White House photographer by Daniel Torok

Mina Tadrous, an associate professor at the University of Toronto's Leslie Dan Faculty of Pharmacy, said he read a study where a clinician tracked a pharmaceutical from the beginning to the end of its manufacturing, and found the drug travelled through nine countries.

"Now, you multiply that by thousands of drugs, you have an opportunity now that something is going to go wrong. ... As you add more complexity or you try to manoeuvre, you increase the probability that something is going to go wrong," Tadrous told *The Hill Times*.

He added that the worst drug shortage he ever saw was not due to war or a hurricane but the merging of two pharmaceutical companies that decided to make changes to their manufacturing process to reduce repetition. "That caused a slew of issues," Tadrous said.

U.S. tariffs have thus far hit commodities including steel and aluminum, which have been in place since March 2025, and will soon be applicable to copper on Aug. 1. Pharmaceuticals have been on U.S. President Donald Trump's tariff wish list and *The Guardian* reported on July 16 that Trump has said he may announce these particular tariffs at the end of this month.

Laura Dawson, executive director of the Future Borders Coalition, said that Canada is a "bit player in a larger drama" surrounding the application of tariffs on pharmaceutical products.

"My sense on the tariffs is it really has very little to do with Canadian production and much more about creating pressure to relocate pharmaceutical manu-

facturing in the United States," Dawson told *The Hill Times*.

That pressure seems to be working. Reuters reported on July 22 that Roche, Eli Lilly & Co, Johnson & Johnson, Novartis, and Sanofi have all announced new investment plans for U.S.-based operations this year. The most recent company to do this is AstraZeneca, which announced on July 22 that it will spend USD\$50-billion to expand its manufacturing and research capabilities in the U.S. by 2030.

Field said that tariffs will "absolutely" have an impact on recent Canadian initiatives to bolster domestic life sciences manufacturing in the wake of the COVID-19 pandemic.

The federal government, Ontario, and British Columbia have all come out with life sciences strategies since 2021 in response to the pandemic, when Canada found itself in a global competition with other countries for vaccines and other therapeutics to manage COVID-19.

"A 40-year decline in the sector left Canada without the large-scale and flexible biomanufacturing capacity necessary to quickly produce a COVID-19 vaccine when the pandemic hit," reads a press release about the launch of the federal life sciences strategy on July 28, 2021.

The release states that the federal strategy has two goals: "to grow a strong, competitive domestic life sciences sector, with cutting-edge biomanufacturing capabilities, while creating good jobs for Canadians, and to make sure Canada is prepared for pandemics and other health emergencies in the future."

Field said that the pandemic "created a stronger global competition for investments in life sciences. So if you start layering tariffs onto that context, it's going to start to skew these things and ... it's a consideration in that overarching competitiveness."

He said that governments in Canada have been working on being competitive for life sciences investments by streamlining regulatory approvals and reducing the delays in public insurance reimbursements and making medicines available to patients.

"All of that is great, but it may become a moot point if tariffs create a steep disincentive, based on pricing, so that would be my main concern," Field added.

As for how tariffs could impact the prices of medicines, Lawson said she has heard that the manufacturers of patented medicines might be able to "observe the tariffs for a relatively short period of time but for the generic industry—which has very, very narrow margins—any sort of tariffs, would be very hard on that sector."

A research letter co-written by Tadrous indicates that Canada's generics industry would be the hardest hit from American tariffs. Published on March 31, 2025, in the *Journal of the American Medical Association*, the letter states that of the 22,082 drug products sold between the fourth quarter of 2022 and the third quarter of 2023, only 411 (1.9 per cent) were manufactured in Canada. But of those 411 products, 323 (79 per cent) were generic medicines.

Still, Tadrous told *The Hill Times* that the figure of 1.9 per cent is probably a low estimate

since the research focused on the end product coming from Canada, and not the possibility that one or more ingredients were developed in Canada.

Another issue to consider is that Canada is the sole supplier of 52 of the 3,099 unique drugs exported to the U.S.

What Canada's next steps should be

Tadrous and Field argued that counter-tariffs should not be a part of any Canadian response if Trump goes ahead with his plan. They both noted that some pharmaceuticals were included in an early list from the federal government of proposed tariff targets, but that the Liberals never included those products on their final list.

Health innovations "should be kept off limits, and [the government should use] whatever diplomatic means ... that they can use to get that message across and ensure that Canadian patients are protected from tariffs on any medical innovation whether it's pharmaceutical or medical devices," Field said.

Tadrous said he would like to see more strategic support for the domestic generic pharmaceutical industry—which has a "really rich history" in Canada but hasn't seen as much support in recent years—as a way to protect the supply chain.

"I don't want you to just say, 'I'm going to dump money into the generic market' or give them tax breaks. I want you to say, 'There's certain drugs I care about. Can you help me protect our supply chain and produce domestic production in this space?'" Tadrous said.

There are also opportunities to export generic drugs to other markets outside of the U.S., according to Tadrous.

Dawson said that Canada could benefit from the fact that the U.S. is looking to reduce its dependency on other countries, including China, for its pharmaceuticals.

"I think that's a productive line of action for Canada to reach back to the United States and say, 'How can we do this together? What are areas where we can collaborate to create more synergies?'" she said.

Dawson added there is also an opportunity for the patented medicine industry in Canada to work with its partners in the U.S. to educate American lawmakers on the synergies in this industry between the two countries and how that contributes to jobs and investment in the U.S.

A statement on July 22 from Innovative Medicines Canada, which represents the domestic patented medicines industry, said that it is "closely monitoring the threats of tariffs from the Trump administration and their potential implications for the Canadian pharmaceutical industry and life sciences ecosystem" and that it will continue to "advocate for policies that support access to affordable health care for all Canadians, while also seeking longer-term solutions to build a stronger, more self-sufficient Canadian life sciences sector."

tsanci@hilltimes.com
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NEWS

Wildfire response needs national park burns, says

A review of the Municipality of Jasper's 2024 wildfire response is causing tension between the provincial and local governments. Alberta Senator Paula Simons says she doesn't blame people for pointing fingers, as 'hearts were broken' by the blaze that burned more than 32,000 hectares of the national park.

BY ELEANOR WAND

A review of the Jasper Wildfire response says a number of factors, including jurisdictional issues, such as the Alberta government trying to step in as a decision-maker, hampered the response to the flames that burned through one-third of the national park, resulting in the second-costliest wildfire in Canadian history.

The Municipality of Jasper released the independent After-Action Review (AAR) on July 18, just days shy of the one-year anniversary of when flames first raged through the mountain town on July 22, 2024. It lays out 23 recommendations, such as having clearer evacuation protocols, more training, making sure

equipment is compatible with local resources, and updating building codes to require builds with materials that reduce fire spread.

NDP MP Heather McPherson (Edmonton Strathcona, Alta.), who grew up and got married in Jasper, said that the "horrific" fire led to some "deep trauma" for many Albertans who see the park as "the heart of our province."

The wildfire was one of the most devastating in the nation's history, resulting in 32 per cent of Jasper's structures burned down and over 32,000 hectares destroyed.

McPherson emphasized the importance of the report, as it was commissioned "so that Albertans and Canadians could learn better on how to deal with natural disasters like this in national parks."

She said that as wildfires and climate events become more frequent, there is a corresponding need to improve responses, she said.

This is a reality that McPherson said she recently spoke about in Banff, Alta., a beloved national park on Alberta's southwestern border.

"The question is not, 'Will there be a large-scale forest fire in Banff?'" she said. "It is, 'When will there be a large-scale forest fire in Banff?'"

McPherson called for more co-operation between the provincial and federal governments, with an eye to controlling future blazes in the province.

"Many of the biggest disasters that have happened recently in Canadian history have happened in the province of Alberta. And so we need a provincial government that's willing to work with the federal government, and a federal government that's willing to work with the provincial government to provide responses to Albertans," she said.



"Just because someone lives in a national park doesn't mean they should get less support or less co-ordinated support than any other Canadian."

Over five million hectares of land have already burned this summer, mostly in northern Saskatchewan and Manitoba, according to Natural Resources Canada's weekly National Wildland Fire Situation Report. While the number of forest fires is average for this time of year, the area burned to date is more than double the 10-year average, the July 16 report reads.

Two of Jasper's AAR recommendations seek to address inefficiencies that arose because of jurisdictional issues, with the province stepping in and trying to "exercise decision-making authority," despite the national park being a federal responsibility. The review writes that the Alberta government's involvement added "complexity to the response."

The "Province of Alberta, though not jurisdictionally responsible to lead the incident, regularly requested information and sought to exercise decision-making authority," the report reads.

National parks are a federal responsibility

Being a national park, the wildfire response in Jasper was under the jurisdiction of the federal government, not the provincial government. This is unusual—province and territories are typically responsible for their own wildfire responses, with the federal government only stepping in when those governments request their aid.

This is something Mike Flannigan, a natural resources professor at Thompson Rivers University in Kamloops, B.C., said made the Jasper response "more complicated than your normal case," and could have contributed to jurisdictional confusion.

Flannigan, also a B.C. innovation research chair in predictive services, emergency management, and fire science, stressed that in emergency situations, things move rapidly.

"Whenever an emergency happens, yes, people have plans, and sometimes they have decent plans ... and sometimes they're followed, and sometimes they're not," he said. "It's a high-stress chaotic environment, and you have to make decisions quickly."

Flannigan said that ensuring "unified command" in emergencies with overlapping jurisdictions can be "challenging," as there are often different "personalities" alongside "ignorance of what the rules are."



NDP MP Heather McPherson said the Jasper wildfire resulted in 'deep trauma' for many Albertans. *The Hill Times* photograph by Andrew Meade

to improve before another Alberta MP McPherson



The Municipality of Jasper is evaluating its response to the wildfire, now one year on from 2024's devastation, as wildfire seasons continue to worsen. Photograph courtesy of Jasper National Park

Still, he said the issue isn't fighting the fire itself. Issues arise when there are evacuations and other processes added into the mix, he said, as it adds to confusion and disagreements between jurisdictions about who is autho-

ORIZED to do what—and when—and what procedures are.

"We need to be better co-ordinated," he emphasized. "There should be a guide, kind of like a standard operating procedure. 'This is what we do, and we

follow it.' We do it, and we stop arguing about who's the boss."

'Unfortunate' politicization of 'very solid' report, says Sen. Simons

Alberta Senator Paula Simons said it's "unfortunate" the report has been politicized, calling it "a very solid" review as a result of "an incredible amount of community engagement."

On the day of the report's release, Alberta Premier Danielle Smith called it a "shot out of the blue."

"It's unfair, it's untrue, and I would like them to withdraw it," Smith told reporters, asking for an "apology" from the municipality.

In a statement released July 21, Jasper emphasized the review "is not a political document"—an assessment later echoed by Jasper Mayor Richard Ireland. The municipality wrote it takes "exception to the politicization of the After-Action Review and its observations, especially in the media."

"Unfortunately, much of the recent media coverage has narrowly focused on a single

sentence within a 50-page report," the release reads.

Ireland told reporters during a press conference on July 21 that the review "was not intended to ascribe blame, and it does not ascribe blame"—words that were also included in the report, which explained its scope was the municipality, not the provincial or federal government, only addressing overlaps when they occurred.

In an email statement to *The Hill Times*, Smith's office said they "appreciate" the municipality's clarification and acknowledgement that they "never intended to be critical of the province's contributions."

The statement reads the office "share[s] their concerns about how some media outlets chose to misrepresent and politicize the content and tone of the report."

Like Flannigan, Simons noted that with Jasper being a national park, "there were always going to be challenges with jurisdiction," but that "tensions" between the provincial and federal governments are high in Alberta, especially amid recent calls for separation—which could be behind some of the politicization.

Simons also said Jasper is a special location for many Albertans.

"I don't blame people for wanting to cast blame because people's hearts were broken by the fire in Jasper, because it is such an iconic place that many Albertans and many Canadians have a special affection for," said Simons, who is a member of the Independent Senators Group (ISG).

Still, she said "it's really important that as we cope with the trauma and deal with our feelings that we're not ... pointing fingers and blaming after the fact."

But McPherson said she thinks the issues with jurisdiction come down to Smith's government.

"Danielle Smith and the [United Conservative Party] have such a focus on attacking Ottawa regardless of what's being done," she said.

Jen Beverly, associate professor of wildland fire at the University of Alberta, called the narrative of blame "very unfortunate," adding that it may be the result of some "misunderstanding" or "miscommunication," as the scope of the report was on the municipality's response, not the provincial government's.

But Beverly said that due to the "explosive" situation in Jasper, which had firefighters battling flames going in two different directions, jurisdictional clarity likely would not have stopped the fires from spreading at the rate they did.

"These were explosive burning conditions. The intensities that these fires were burning under on July 22 when they first started far

exceeded anything anybody could have done," said Beverly, who has also worked as a wildland firefighter, agreeing with a number of the AAR's recommendations, like more scenario training.

Overall, she said the response in Jasper was good, noting that in her conversations with those involved, she found it "incredible how well this was ... planned for and anticipated."

Opinions split on need for a Canadian FEMA

On June 10, ISG Senator David Arnot (Saskatchewan) called for the creation of a national emergency response agency to improve wildfire responses, saying it "makes common sense," and is needed to bolster wildfire responses across the country.

Some still think a national agency is the answer, including Flannigan. McPherson also expressed support of the idea, noting that the NDP has been calling for a "federal wildfire fighting force for some time."

In June 2024, former NDP MP Richard Cannings sent a letter to then-prime minister Justin Trudeau urging him to create a "national wildfire task force."

But some remain unconvinced a national agency is the answer. Simons, who served as the Senate Agriculture and Forestry Committee's deputy chair during the last Parliament when it studied wildfires last year, said witnesses on the whole weren't proposing that as the solution.

"What people said wasn't that they wanted a national group sweeping in," she said, referring to testimony heard in the Senate. "They wanted better co-ordination, so that people on the ground in local communities ... got the training to do wildfire fighting, that they got the resources they needed, and that they didn't feel pushed out."

Parliament was prorogued in January before the Senate committee finalized the study.

What's needed is "better co-ordination for local firefighting," she said, adding that though she couldn't divulge what recommendations may have been in the committee's report, she did not see a national agency "as a logical consequence of the evidence" heard.

Likewise, Beverly said the narrative is being "advocated without any evidence or ... logic," saying the report "reinforces" there is no evidence of co-ordination failure. She added that, based on the AAR, a national firefighting agency would only have "made the response and the operations more complex and more difficult."

ewand@hilltimes.com
The Hill Times



The Jasper wildfire was the second-costliest wildfire in Canadian history. Photograph courtesy of Jasper National Park



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DELIVERY INQUIRIES

circulation@hilltimes.com
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Editorial

Buckle up, federal public service cuts expected to be deep

David Macdonald, a senior economist with the left-leaning think tank, the Canadian Centre for Policy Alternatives, released a report, *A Stiff Price to Pay: Predicting Federal Job Losses Due to Carney's Cuts*, on July 24, and it hit the National Capital Region like a hurricane. According to his analysis, the cuts are expected to be deep.

"The Trudeau-era cuts have already generated substantial layoffs, but they are only the beginning. The Carney cuts are the second axe to fall, and the pain will be deep. High quality service from a federal program will suffer. There will be fewer staff on the tax, EI and CPP call lines. Passport offices will lengthen wait times, which had been improving," Macdonald wrote in his report.

The public service ballooned during the pandemic, increasing by about 35,000, before and after the pandemic, and was at about 445,000 by the end of 2024-2025.

To pay for the extra \$8.6-billion in military spending announced in June, the government has plans to cut 15 per cent across departments over the next three years, except the Department of National Defence, RCMP, Canada Border Services Agency, Supreme Court, and Parliamentary Budget Office. The report predicts 57,000 full-time job losses between 2024 and 2028. It predicts the Canada Revenue Agency, which has already lost 7,000 full-time employees, to double to 14,277. It estimates Employment and Social Development Canada to cut 2,000 next year, followed by 4,000 cuts by 2028. At Citizenship and Immigration, already

victim to 1,944 jobs losses this year, it's expected to lose 3,847 more by 2028.

The report shows the cuts will be a particular blow to the cities of Ottawa and Gatineau, the National Capital Region. Both cities could lose 24,421 full-time federal public servants by 2028, which is 45 per cent of all the public servants' job losses across the country.

The total cuts across the country are forecast to reach 7.5 per cent in 2026, 10 per cent in 2027, and 15 per cent in 2028-29.

"The Canada Revenue Agency was hit particularly hard by the Trudeau cuts in 2025: employment fell by almost 7,000 positions. Staffing makes up 83 per cent of what's on the line at CRA, so it will have little choice but to cut staff further as the transfers that it administers, like to seniors or the Canada child benefit, are off the chopping block. There is little the department can do to shift these cuts elsewhere," Macdonald writes.

Prime Minister Mark Carney promised to save \$25-billion and significantly boost military spending, but he and his government better make sure the cuts don't affect vital services to Canadians, including services at the Canada Revenue Agency, as well as at Employment and Social Development Canada and Immigration, Refugees, and Citizenship—two departments that serve vulnerable populations. Carney's emphasis on defence, policing, and nation-building projects can't come at the expense of services Canadians rely on every day. The government is also setting itself up for another showdown with the public service unions.

The Hill Times



Letters to the Editor



Government can do more to help youth find jobs: letter writer

Re: "What to do about youth unemployment?" (*The Hill Times*, June 30, 2025). Our young people wish to earn income, gain work experience, and contribute to their communities, so why do we tolerate so much unnecessary waste of their talents?

The energy and talent of our young people can be mobilized quickly, not by abandoning their future to the vagaries of the market, but by direct job creation that also benefits local communities.

Lower levels of government, non-profits, and social

enterprise groups could administer jobs such as assistance to health-care providers and seniors, educational and recreational activities for youth, public arts and culture, and environmental remediation and conservation.

These federally-funded programs can be up and running within months, useful tasks can be performed by citizens at every skill level, and the additional wage base of more working people would stimulate the economy, spreading benefits to all.

Larry Kazdan
Vancouver, B.C.

Questioning the safe disposal of spent enriched uranium fuel: letter writer

Re: "Remember, enriched uranium can do good: letter writer" (*The Hill Times*, July 21, letter to the editor from Jeremy Whitlock). The letter writer fails to mention at least three negative issues concerning the enrichment of uranium.

The process of uranium enrichment has resulted in the generation of well over one million tonnes of toxic depleted uranium waste, most of which is stored as volatile, extremely corrosive and toxic uranium hexafluoride in open air storage yards close to enrichment plants.

Depleted uranium, in the form of high-density metallic uranium, is used by the U.S., U.K., Russia, China, France and Pakistan to produce depleted uranium weapons. This use continues in spite of the fact that research has shown an increase in birth defects near battlefields in Iraq where depleted uranium weaponry was deployed from 2003 to 2011.

Enriched uranium fuel, which is slated for use in small modular reactors

(SMRs), is far more radioactive per irradiated fuel assembly than CANDU fuel. This is because, SMR fuel assemblies, such as the GNF2 fuel bundle to be used in Darlington's BWRX-300 SMR, are about 10 times larger and heavier than CANDU fuel assemblies. This raises many questions about the safe disposal of spent enriched uranium fuel.

If we abandon CANDU technology, we will become reliant on imported nuclear fuel because Canada does not make enriched uranium. Does Mr. Whitlock not realize that Russia presently controls nearly half of the world's uranium enrichment capacity and is a major exporter of enriched uranium to countries including China, South Korea, and France? Which would Mr. Whitlock prefer: that we buy enriched uranium from the U.S., (undoubtedly with high tariffs), or from Russia, who could impose sanctions at a whim?

Dr. F.R. Greening
Hamilton, Ont.

COMMENT

Trump named in Epstein files, lies his way into a corner again



U.S. President Donald Trump, pictured July 18, 2025, after signing The Genius Act, in the White House. The Jeffrey Epstein sex-trafficking scandal is rocking not just the presidency, it has opened an unprecedented split in the MAGA movement itself, writes Michael Harris. Photograph courtesy of White House photographer by Daniel Torok

CNN just published a poll that found Trump is ‘under water’ on every file, including immigration, the economy, tariffs, foreign affairs and, yes, the Epstein scandal. On that file, CNN reports that Trump registers a minus-37 per cent with voters.

Michael Harris

Harris



HALIFAX—Has Donald Trump lied his way into a corner he can’t lie his way out of?

The Jeffrey Epstein sex-trafficking scandal is rocking not just the presidency, it has opened an unprecedented split in the MAGA movement itself. In political terms, it is a scandal that has morphed into a crisis. It is Monica Lewinsky’s blue dress in spades.

For the first time, Trump’s vaunted and often vacuous base

is at odds with the president over his flip-flop on the promise to release the all the Epstein files should he be returned to the White House.

But after he was elected, his administration declined to release the promised information, claiming that there was nothing there to see. The guy who campaigned on not trusting the government and promoting conspiracy theories had become the deep state he had so effectively pilloried.

Trump’s reversal flopped. It was more than a little hard to believe, given that Trump had been told that his name came up several times in the Epstein files last May.

When recently asked about that, Trump denied to a reporter that he had been so briefed by his AG Pam Bondi. It was after that briefing, confirmed now by several news agencies, that the DOJ announced that it would not be releasing more files on Epstein.

Nor did it help that Bondi once claimed this about Epstein’s so-called client list: “It’s sitting on my desk right now for review.”

In the lead-up to the last presidential election, Trump, the GOP, and several conservative podcasters with huge right-wing audiences, pushed a deadly conspiracy theory, making millions from their sordid story.

They claimed that the Democrats were suppressing the Epstein files to protect powerful figures who allegedly played a part in the sexual abuse of underage, young women and girls. Now

it was Trump himself who was continuing the cover-up with the help of the ever pliable Bondi.

Up until now, all Trump had to do to get out of tight spots was direct MAGA World to support his version of events. Everything he didn’t like was a hoax or witch-hunt engineered by the Democrats. That approach appealed to his conspiracy-soaked base.

That’s how Trump survived the damning *Access Hollywood* tape, his dalliance with a paid off porn-star, 34 felony convictions for fraud, and even an attempted coup at the Capitol Building, after he lost the presidential election to Joe Biden.

MAGA even backed the president when he used his powers to pardon all the people convicted of assaulting police officers defending the People’s House on Jan. 6, 2021.

Trump tried the same tactic this time, but MAGA and some members of the GOP weren’t buying. The hypocrisy was too great and the potential crimes too sordid to be knocked down by duplicitous partisan appeals and factual back-flips.

Instead, the Oversight Committee of Congress, with the help of some Republican votes, drafted legislation demanding that the DOJ release all of the Epstein files. Ghislaine Maxwell, Epstein’s partner in sex-trafficking that earned her 20 years in prison, has also been subpoenaed by a House panel.

Trump’s reaction to this revolt in his own ranks? He viciously

attacked GOP members who publicly asked for the entire Epstein file to be released. And he called those MAGA members “stupid” who continued to clamour for full disclosure of all documents related to the scandal.

Unable to change the subject by bullying or browbeating his own party and base, Trump turned to his other tried and true method of controlling the conversation: offering up bizarre diversions to eclipse the story he wanted to go away. Some of those diversions have been as comical as they are desperate.

Trump launched a \$10-billion lawsuit against Rupert Murdoch and others. The suit was brought after *The Wall Street Journal* reported that Trump had sent a salacious greeting card to Epstein on his 50th birthday.

Trump alleges that the newspaper had “defamed” him by referring to him as Epstein’s “friend.” Don’t hold your breath waiting for Trump to be deposed in this case. That will never happen. This is simply another example of “lawfare,” according to Trump’s defensive playbook.

How utterly silly. Dozens of pictures have since been produced by multiple news outlets showing the two men socializing together.

Epstein’s former girlfriend described the two men as “best friends.”

And MSNBC came up with footage of Epstein attending Trump’s wedding to Marla Maples. It was, apparently, a

hard invitation to get. Trump’s attempts to distance himself from Epstein are plainly ludicrous and oddly curious.

Instead of releasing the Epstein files, which is what the public is interested in, Trump instead declassified hundreds of thousands of pages on Martin Luther King—against the wishes of the King family. Why would he do that? To show transparency? Really?

And in the most bizarre example of trying to change the news cycle, Trump had his director of national intelligence, the hapless Tulsi Gabbard, open an investigation into Barack Obama, for, of all things, treason.

Gabbard, largely without any qualifications for the job she now holds, contends that Obama and his team faked an intelligence report in order to interfere in the 2016 election to assist Hillary Clinton.

It must be said that no one knows the context in which Trump’s name, or anyone else’s, came up in the Epstein files. But if Trump really believes there is nothing in the documents the DOJ still holds, why not just release them and clear the air? Releasing the grand jury testimony from Epstein’s trial won’t help.

That’s not going to answer the burning question at hand: is the Trump administration breaking its promise to release the full Epstein file in order to protect powerful people who might have been Epstein’s clients?

It does not inspire confidence in how Trump is managing this crisis that the deputy attorney general set up a meeting with Ghislaine Maxwell in a Florida prison. The number two person in the DOJ would never normally be chosen to conduct such an usual interview. That would be the work of line lawyers. And guess who that deputy AG happens to be? Todd Blanche, Trump’s former personal lawyer.

Is this a prelude to having Maxwell say that Trump had nothing to do with Epstein’s dark enterprises? Like New York Mayor Eric Adams, will Maxwell get a pardon down the line for doing Trump’s bidding?

The answers to those questions will come somewhere down the line when Congress comes back from its summer recess and either gets or doesn’t get the entire Epstein file.

But this much is pretty clear. With the midterms inching ever closer, the public demand for clarity in this atrocious case will not go away.

The impact on Trump’s presidency is already showing. CNN just published a poll that found that Trump is “under water” on every file, including immigration, the economy, tariffs, foreign affairs and yes, the Epstein scandal. On that file, CNN reports that Trump registers a minus-37 per cent with voters.

That is as close to an obituary as a poll can get.

Michael Harris is an award-winning author and journalist.

The Hill Times

COMMENT

If Trump thinks we're mean and nasty, he ain't seen nothing yet

If we can exert monetary influence simply by using our won purchasing power, there is nothing mean or nasty about that.

Sheila Copps

Copps' Corner



OTTAWA—Canadians are mean, nasty people, according to the new American ambassador to Canada.

Why does he say we are nasty? Because we insist on exercising what little personal power we have to send a message to the government of Donald Trump.

If we can exert monetary influence simply by using our won purchasing power, there is nothing mean or nasty about that.

The fact the American liquor purchases to Canada are down by 66 per cent is a result of individual decisions by Canadian consumers to purchase from countries that support us, not those that punish us.

According to a June report by Statistics Canada, Canadian travel to the United States was down in May by 38.1 per cent compared to a year earlier.

British Columbia Premier David Eby countered the ambassadorial attack last week, saying that the efforts made by individual Canadians are having an effect.

"If you're a mean and nasty Canadian for standing up for our sovereignty and our jobs, well, I think most Canadians would be proud to be considered mean and nasty."

American ambassador Pete Hoekstra was speaking to a group of Americans gathered at the Pacific Northwest Economic Summit. He told them President Trump shared the view of Canadians being nasty for not stocking American alcohol and refusing to travel to the states.

The ambassador then joked that he had no trouble getting

personal alcohol into Canada as long as his car was not checked at the border.

Normally, an ambassador is supposed to be someone who smooths differences between his home country and his ambassadorial posting. The ambassador isn't usually the one tossing insults about Canadians.

But these are not ordinary times and Hoekstra is no ordinary ambassador.

As the country edges closer to a date on the imposition of more tariffs from the United States, we can certainly not count on the American ambassador to be promoting a reconciliation with Canadians. Instead, he is making things worse, and Canadians will continue to dig in with their own personal boycott of American goods and travel.

The prime minister and premiers are working together to soften the deadline and broaden the benefits of the outcome. Prime Minister Mark Carney has had to back down from his self-imposed aggressive time frame for completion of the tariff negotiations.

He is learning quickly that sometimes a political compromise

is the only solution. Elbows up can be a good hockey metaphor. But in politics, elbows in may sometimes be required.

And given the mixed messages emanating from Washington, the Canadian government will have to count on the continued support of individual Canadians to put pressure on the United States.

We know the citizen boycott is working because multiple governors from American states are reaching out to try and convince us to change our minds.

Their argument is that they are not the enemy. And they are right. But in the absence of any logical negotiation by the Trump team, Canadians have no choice but to continue with our personal elbows up.

That means refusing to allow American alcohol to be sold in Canadian liquor outlets and continuing to travel anywhere in Canada or elsewhere in the world. But not America.

Carney's decision to reach out to other jurisdictions, including Europe and Mexico, with agreements that may simply bypass the United States is definitely the way to go.

And businesses looking for opportunities to repurpose their supply chains or secure raw materials from new markets must continue doing so.

But if Canadian individual decisions to stop buying American piqued the ire of the White House, we know that now is not the time to stop.

Will we succeed in negotiating the tariff agreement with the United States that will meet our needs? Only time will tell.

The good news is that for the first time in my lifetime, the federal and provincial leaders seem committed to work together in securing long-term solutions.

The country is also working quickly to break down trade barriers between provinces, which will generate economic growth and more inter-provincial commerce.

We do not have the geopolitical heft of our neighbours to the south. But if we stick together, our efforts can shake things up in Washington.

In the past, Canada was always seen as the friendly neighbour to the North. The most prominent word in our vocabulary was sorry.

The attack on our country by President Trump has changed all that. If Trump thinks that we are mean and nasty now, he ain't seen nothing yet.

Sheila Copps is a former Jean Chrétien-era cabinet minister and a former deputy prime minister.

The Hill Times

Musk versus Goliath

Musk's America Party lacks a regional base, it doesn't represent a defined demographic group, and its ideology is vague. But new parties in the United States can sometimes make electoral waves if they become political vehicles for charismatic and powerful people. The jury's still out on Musk's America Party.

Gerry Nicholls

Post Partisan Pundit



OAKVILLE, ONT.—Whenever a new political party emerges in our democratic ecosystem, it's basically like a biblical David, an underdog entering the electoral fray determined to slay Goliaths.

After all, just as David used his slingshot to overcome massive odds, newly formed political parties hope the power of their ideas can help them score unlikely victories against their more established rivals.

Indeed, this is likely the hope of billionaire and entrepreneur Elon Musk, who recently announced he is starting a new moderate, fiscally conservative party, called the America Party, which he hopes will compete in the next U.S. midterm elections and beyond.

As he put it on X/Twitter, "When it comes to bankrupting our country with waste & graft, we live in a one-party system, not a democracy. Today, the America Party is formed to give you back your freedom."

And who knows, considering the agitated state of America's current political environment, perhaps Musk's new political party will make a difference.

In fact, many journalists and pundits think it is possible Musk's

party could draw voters away from the Republicans.

As *Globe and Mail* columnist Lawrence Martin recently put it, "It's a long shot, but given the tightness of the race between Democrats and Republicans, even if the new party only gets a few percentage points in support, it could well have a major impact in the midterm elections next year."

Yet, before anyone gets too excited about Musk's party, it's important to keep in mind that new political parties that achieve success typically do so only under certain conditions.

For instance, when a new party is formed to address regional grievances, it can sometimes punch above its weight.

Think of the Reform Party, which emerged in the late 1980s to promote the needs of Western Canada, or consider the Bloc Québécois, which pushes for Quebec sovereignty.

At other times, new parties can quickly gain traction if they champion the cause of a particular sector of the population that feels unrepresented or exploited.

The Labour Party in the United Kingdom, for example, was created in 1900 to represent Britain's working class; here in



Elon Musk, pictured at the Kennedy Space Centre on May 30, 2020, was born in South Africa, meaning, according to the U.S. Constitution, he can't run for president.

Photograph courtesy of NASA HQ PHOTO/Flickr

Canada, the Canadian Co-operative Federation (later the New Democratic Party) was formed for a similar purpose.

On some occasions, new parties can work if they create an ideological niche for themselves.

The Green Party, for example, has branded itself first and foremost as champions for the environment.

My point is, Musk's America Party lacks a regional base, it doesn't represent a defined demographic group, and its ideology is vague.

All this works against him.

On the other hand, it should be noted that in the United States, new parties can sometimes make electoral waves if they become political vehicles for charismatic and powerful people.

Here are some noted examples:

- In 1912, after former president Theodore Roosevelt lost the Republican presidential nomination, he formed the Progressive Party (also known as the Bull

Moose Party) and ran for president as its leader.

- In 1967, the American Independent Party nominated Alabama Governor George Wallace for US President.

- In 1995, American millionaire businessman Ross Perot created the Reform Party as a platform for his presidential run in 1996.

- In 2000, consumer advocate and activist Ralph Nader ran for President as the leader of the Green Party of the United States.

Certainly, the flamboyant and wealthy Musk possesses the larger-than-life personality needed to infuse a political party with energy.

But keep in mind, he was born in South Africa, meaning, according to the U.S. Constitution, he can't run for president.

So, all things considered, the jury is out on whether Musk's America Party will be an electoral David.

Gerry Nicholls is a communications consultant.

The Hill Times

COMMENT

Carney has three more months to make his mark on Ottawa before Ottawa changes him

Mark Carney deserves time. He needs time in order to get up to speed, fair enough. But time is not his friend.

Matt Gurney

Opinion



TORONTO—Every prime minister should get a chance. No matter who I may have preferred, or who I may have cast a ballot for, once the Canadian people have spoken, a duly elected prime minister and their government have the right to govern as

they see fit (within all the usual safeguards). Mark Carney has already brought a change of tone to Ottawa. He has brought a different—one could even say renewed—sense of decorum and professionalism to the office. And he has certainly said many of the right things about the challenges facing Canada, and what Canadians must do to face them.

Unfortunately, that's the easy part. It will get harder from here.

It doesn't seem like it, but Mark Carney is now three months into his post-election tenure. And that is not counting the time he spent as prime minister after becoming Liberal leader in the winter. We're a few days off from the precise three-month mark—let's round up for the sake of simplicity. How much time does Carney have to leave his imprint on Ottawa before Ottawa changes him? More to the point, how much time does he have left?

After the election in April, I told my colleague, Jen Gerson, that I thought Carney needed six months. But also that we *all* needed six months, too. With everyone exhausted after the campaign, and with summer looming, it was understandable that things would start a bit slowly. But as all the politicians seemed to agree back when they were on the campaign trail, time is of the essence. Canadian sovereignty is in danger. Our economic prosperity, on which our quality of life rests, is imperilled. The world is changing fast—and not for the better.

Right? We still think that's true? Has that changed? No? Okay. Well then. Carney was elected to fix that problem. What's happening so far?

Like I said above, the tone has changed. For the better. And tone matters. You'll never hear me suggesting otherwise. But eventually, tone must translate into

action. I'm prepared to give the prime minister the balance of the six months I said we owed him. It is very possible that he is using the summer to get his new staff in place and dialled in. To rest. To have his key advisers and leaders rest. And that he will come out swinging hard after Labour Day.

I'm not being snarky. It's really possible that's exactly what's going to happen. And if so, I'll have the good grace to say so.

But I am worried. Every newly elected leader is in a race against the inertia of the blob of government. Carney is not only trying to turn around the Canadian ship of state, but also the Liberal Party of Canada — which seemed functionally hunky-dory with how the last guy was running things right up until the moment Chrystia Freeland hit her breaking point. Carney is already three months into his standoff with the forces of the status quo, and it's a two-front war for the PM. Delay helps

them more than him. He'll be into his fifth month by the time we're all getting back to real life after the summer.

All is not lost. He does have time. I will give him the benefit of the doubt during this period. But I'm not sure he has as much time as he might think. Events keep on keeping on. American trade policies coming out of the White House have changed several times since Carney was elected, and recent attention on the president's links to child sex trafficker Jeffrey Epstein certainly raise the possibility of further disruptive announcements coming from a White House looking for a channel changer. Meanwhile, a series of global conflicts continue. And none of us know from where the next great crisis will come—or when it will arrive.

Carney deserves time. He *needs* time in order to get up to speed. Fair enough.

But time is not his friend. He may not have as much time as he wants—or that any of us would wish for him. I hope to start seeing some of the changed tone translate into concrete action. And I hope I will not have to wait much longer.

Matt Gurney is a Toronto-based journalist. He is co-editor of The Line (ReadTheLine.ca), an online magazine. He can be reached at matt@readtheline.ca. The Hill Times

OPINION

Bill C-5 revealing itself as a Trojan horse designed to appease Alberta's fossil fuel interests

If Bill C-5 is to have any credibility in a climate-constrained world, it must confront the deeper issue: Alberta's entrenched dependence on oil royalties.

Johanne Whitmore & François Delorme

Opinion



Prime Minister Mark Carney is courting First Nations leaders to rally support for Bill C-5, a sweeping piece of legislation that fast-tracks federal approvals

for so-called “nation-building projects” like pipelines, mines, and ports. Framed as a tool for economic resilience amid trade tensions with the United States, the bill is rapidly revealing itself as a Trojan horse designed to appease Alberta's fossil interests while sidelining climate boundaries set by science and Indigenous rights.

If Bill C-5 is to have any credibility in a climate-constrained world, it must confront the deeper issue: Alberta's entrenched dependence on oil royalties.

The trap of oil royalties

Alberta's public services are funded largely through oil and gas royalties, creating a fiscal dependency that distorts national policy. To maintain these revenues, the province must continually expand its fossil sector—locking Canada into a carbon-intensive economic model. In 2025, oil and gas revenues still account for nearly 28 per cent of Alberta's budget meaning one

in every four dollars spent on healthcare, education, and social services depends on a volatile global market.

Despite its wealth, largely derived from the exploitation of fossil resources in a favourable fiscal framework, Alberta often criticizes the equalization program—while overlooking the fact that the province's privileged position is why its taxpayers contribute a significant share of federal revenues used to fund the program. This structure makes Alberta's public services highly vulnerable to energy price swings and undermines long-term fiscal stability.

Time to rewrite the rules

To appease Alberta, Carney has rolled back environmental policies, scrapping the carbon tax, reviving pipeline projects under legislative gag orders, and retreating from climate commitments. This shift contradicts his earlier calls for an economy guided by human values rather than market forces. For consis-

tency, he should acknowledge the sacrifices Canadians have made over the past 25 years, notably by financing the \$34-billion Trans Mountain pipeline, subsidizing carbon capture, and absorbing the costs of climate disasters.

It is now Alberta's turn to show goodwill. Carney should stop conceding and instead make any new energy megaprojects conditional on economic diversification. This would break the province's dependence on oil royalties and end the dynamic where Alberta holds the rest of Canada hostage in the fight against the climate crisis.

Bill C-5: a step backward on democracy

Bill C-5 allows the federal government to override environmental laws and Indigenous rights in the name of “national interest.” It does not require decision-makers to consider a project's climate impact before approval—a glaring omission as Canada faces escalat-

ing wildfires, floods, and heat-waves The bill's rushed passage, with limited public consultation, has triggered widespread opposition. Indigenous leaders walked out of recent meetings with Carney, calling the process a “facade” and warning of legal challenges.

A vision for fiscal reform

Canada needs a new economic model—one that respects scientific limits and prioritizes the public good. That means reforming Alberta's tax system to reduce dependence on volatile oil royalties and investing in clean energy, tech, and sustainable industries. Diversification isn't just smart economics—it's essential for long-term stability.

Public services must be funded equitably across Canada, regardless of a province's resource wealth. Escaping fossil dependency—which distorts policy and forces science to serve outdated economic models—requires bold leadership and climate-aligned fiscal reform. Only then can Canada build a future-ready economy grounded in the biophysical limits defined by science—and not the reverse.

Johanne Whitmore is a senior researcher and chair in energy sector management at HEC Montréal. François Delorme is an associate professor in the department of economics at the school of management at the Université de Sherbrooke, and CEO of Delorme Lajoie Consulting Inc. The Hill Times

COMMENT

The One Canadian Economy Act: a new governance framework

Time will tell how durable the first ministers' solidarity is and whether it can have a positive effect on Canada's relationship with Indigenous Peoples.

Lori Turnbull

Opinion



The One Canadian Economy Act, or Bill C-5, is no ordinary piece of legislation. At a time of economic and geopolitical uncertainty, it is a critical component of Prime Minister Mark Carney's plan for Canada with respect to economic growth and prosperity, energy security, and sovereignty. The bill does not guarantee any

specific project or policy outcome. Instead, the legislation is really about governance—the *how* more so than the *what*. It's about doing things differently (read: more quickly, with fewer hurdles and layers of red tape). The success of the legislation will depend on a steady supply of political will, good faith among the players involved, and clear communication with the broader public.

The One Canadian Economy Act has two distinct parts. The first, and perhaps the least controversial, is the Free Trade and Labour Mobility in Canada Act. The legislation removes federal barriers to inter-provincial trade and labour movement and encourages the provinces to do the same. The idea is to avoid duplication and redundancy in approvals processes, certifications, and regulations, thereby enabling goods and services to flow through the country with as few encumbrances as possible. The legislation puts an emphasis on interprovincial cooperation that we have never seen before and recognizes a pivotal role for provincial premiers in the economic growth and stewardship of the country. Former prime minister Justin Trudeau, and others

before him, incentivized provincial action in social policy by signing cost-sharing agreements, but Prime Minister Carney is taking a different approach by setting the tone for premiers to be entrepreneurial and to play their own spaces. We have already seen evidence of this shift as several memoranda of understanding have been signed between provincial premiers so far this summer, including between Ontario Premier Doug Ford, Alberta Premier Danielle Smith, and Saskatchewan Premier Scott Moe on building new pipelines using Ontario steel that will connect western oil and gas to refineries in southern Ontario.

The second part of the legislation, the Building Canada Act, has gotten the most attention from the media and the public. This piece sets up a fast-tracked approvals process for projects deemed in the national interest. The idea here is that increased regulatory certainty and shorter time frames for approvals will be attractive to private investors, which will lead to growth. Cabinet decides which projects qualify for expedited approval according to a set of criteria spelled out in the legislation, including the

project's potential contribution to Canada's economic growth and security, its likelihood for success, and its alignment with Indigenous interests and clean growth.

Many applaud the initiative and its not-too-subtle acknowledgement that lengthy and uncertain approvals processes have discouraged private investment in Canada's economy. However, there are serious concerns that the proposed governance framework—and the permission to bypass typical requirements such as environmental impact assessments—puts too much power in the hands of the prime minister and cabinet without appropriate checks and balances. Also, Indigenous leaders and communities have been very vocal about their concerns that Indigenous rights and interests will suffer with this new approach. The legislation acknowledges the responsibility to “consult” Indigenous Peoples whose Sec. 35 rights might be adversely affected by a nation-building project. It's not clear what “consultation” will mean. Justice Minister Sean Fraser said back in June that the duty to consult does not give Indigenous leaders a “blanket veto”

on proposed projects. He walked the comment back the next day, acknowledging that his words could undermine trust, but that doesn't mean that he didn't mean what he said when he said it.

There are mixed reactions to the bill within the Indigenous population. While nine First Nations in Ontario filed a court injunction to stop the legislation, premiers met in Huntsville, Ont., with leadership from the Assembly of First Nations, the Métis National Council, and the Native Women's Association of Canada in July to discuss the legislation and its implications. Premier Ford called the meeting “productive,” citing an opportunity for partnership, and AFN national chief Cindy Woodhouse Nepinak said she considered the meeting “progress.” However, other First Nations leaders felt disappointed.

Governance is about relationships as much as it is about rules and structures. The legislation is only the framework; it is up to political actors to give it all meaning. So far, there has been much unity around the first ministers' table, as premiers have solidly backed Prime Minister Carney's approach to economic growth and nation-building. Time will tell how durable this solidarity is and whether it can have a positive effect on Canada's relationship with Indigenous Peoples.

Lori Turnbull is a senior adviser at the Institute on Governance.

The Hill Times

OPINION

Food is a right, not a weapon: Canada must act for Gaza

There must be immediate action. For Canada, that starts with a full arms embargo, cancelling our free trade deal with Israel, and imposing biting sanctions.

Alex Neve & Dorotea Gucciardo

Opinion



On July 21, Canada joined 24 other countries and the European Union in a joint statement with a remarkably clear message: “The war in Gaza must end now.”

Among many concerns, the signatories unequivocally criticize

Israel's obstruction of humanitarian aid in Gaza. They insist that restrictions on the flow of aid be lifted “immediately” and call out the Israeli government's approach to aid delivery for what it is: dangerous and a source of instability. They powerfully condemn the “drip feeding of aid” and note that it “deprives Gazans of human dignity.”

The statement acknowledged what Palestinian organizations, UN agencies, and human rights experts have been documenting for months, which is that Palestinians are being starved by deliberate political design.

Since March, Israel's total siege on Gaza has blocked Palestinians from importing or growing food. After making Palestinians in Gaza wholly dependent on recognized humanitarian actors like the UN, Israel began sustained and severe attacks against aid organizations such as the UN Relief and Works Agency, killing at least 408 aid workers (including more than 280 staff from the Relief and Works Agency).

Most recently, Israel has put aid delivery in the hands of the Gaza Humanitarian Foun-

dation (GHF) — an Israeli and U.S.-backed operation that has become a façade for staggering levels of death. Desperate to access life-sustaining necessities, Palestinians arrive at GHF distribution points where they are attacked by Israeli tanks, drones, snipers, and machine-gun fire. The Palestinian Ministry of Health reports that to date, over 1,000 Palestinian men, women, and children have been killed; over 6,000 have been injured; and 45 remain missing as a result of going to these aid sites.

One's heart shatters thinking of the cruel and painful consequences for the children of Gaza who go without food and whose parents are killed when they set out to try to feed them.

It is impossible to fathom how any state could deliberately embark on conduct of this nature.

International law, however, recognizes that despicable acts of this nature are possible and do happen, even though they are the essence of inhumanity. Starvation as a tactic of war, as a means of punishing a civilian population, or as a strategy to destroy a people, is

therefore unconditionally prohibited under binding treaties such as the Convention on the Prevention and Punishment of the Crime of Genocide and the Geneva Convention Relative to the Protection of Civilian Persons in the Time of War.

Using starvation to punish and destroy constitutes genocide, war crimes, and crimes against humanity. That is why the International Court of Justice ordered Israel on Jan. 26, 2024, to “take immediate and effective measures to enable the provision of urgently needed basic services and humanitarian assistance to address the adverse conditions of life faced by Palestinians in the Gaza Strip.”

But that has been brazenly flouted by Israel.

This brings us back to the statement from Canada and its allies. States declared that they “are prepared to take further action to support an immediate ceasefire and a political pathway to security and peace for Israelis, Palestinians and the entire region.”

Does the prospect of “further action” represent an encouraging turning point? We hope so. But we have been here before.

On May 19, 2025, Prime Minister Mark Carney joined French President Emmanuel Macron and U.K. Prime Minister Keir Starmer in declaring that “the level of human suffering in Gaza is intolerable.” The three leaders made it clear that if Israel did not “lift its restrictions on humanitarian aid,” they would “take further concrete actions in response.”

But restrictions were not lifted. Further concrete actions were not taken. Instead, starvation and the dystopian spectacle of people being killed while queuing for food deepened without consequence of any kind.

This time, there must be immediate action. For Canada, that starts with a full arms embargo, cancelling our free trade deal with Israel, imposing biting sanctions on Israeli Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu and other Israeli political and military leaders, and actively pursuing criminal prosecutions for those who have blatantly orchestrated this campaign of death.

Our legal, political and moral credibility hangs in the balance. Prime Minister Carney cannot wait a single moment more to act.

Alex Neve is a professor of international human rights law at the University of Ottawa. Dorotea Gucciardo is director of development for Glia, a Canadian medical solidarity organization with operations in the Gaza Strip since 2012.

The Hill Times

COMMENT

If we want a prosperous and sovereign nation, big, disruptive change is needed right now



Prime Minister Mark Carney, pictured July 17, 2025, in Gatineau, Que. The credibility of the upcoming budget will be test number one for building an economy for the future. Implementation will be test number two. Success is urgent. And some early deliverables are vital for ongoing public support. It's all about our future, writes David Crane. *The Hill Times* photograph by Andrew Meade

Building an economy for the future poses huge challenges that will require strong leadership and a focus on clearly set targets and timelines, co-operation from provinces, and cities, as well as the private sector, and an earned buy-in from the public.

David Crane

Canada & the 21st Century



TORONTO—Prime Minister Mark Carney has got it right. We are going to have to live with a United States that seeks to impose a zero-sum relationship and one that bolsters the U.S. economy at our expense, including the jobs of Canadian workers. Our trade negotiators are doing their best to negotiate a new trade deal, but, as Carney

has acknowledged, it will come with a price.

So what to do? This is where Carney is right: Canada should focus on what it can control, and there is much that we can do. Much of this is set out in the Liberal platform: reduce interprovincial trade barriers; diversify trade; build needed infrastructure; improve the speed of regulatory approvals, from energy projects to new drugs; invest in skills; accelerate housing construction; identify and support major nation-building projects; buy Canadian in government procurement; reform the tax system; transition to a green energy; build a defence industrial base to meet our defence needs; pursue an Arctic strategy; and invest in the needed infrastructure for the AI and quantum economy for the future.

If we want to be a prosperous and sovereign nation then big change is needed. It will be disruptive, but unavoidable.

Many changes are long overdue, even without U.S. President Donald Trump. For some time, Canada has been falling behind. As other nations innovate and grow, and new economic and technological powers emerge with sweeping changes to the geopolitical and technological landscapes, Canada has failed to keep up—too focused on debt to sustain consumption while neglecting innovation and investment in new industries and companies. While productivity is the critical source of rising living

“
SUCCESS IS URGENT. AND SOME EARLY DELIVERABLES ARE VITAL FOR ONGOING PUBLIC SUPPORT. IT'S ALL ABOUT OUR FUTURE.”

standards and generation of wealth to support needed public programs, such as health and education, Canada has had one of the worst records in innovation and productivity among the advanced economies while newcomers, such as China and India, are making huge leaps in technology and innovation.

Our economy has been transitioning. But not in the right way. Between 2001 and 2024, the number of employees, paid payroll workers, in Canada rose by 5.2 million to 18.2 million. But out of that growth, almost 40 per cent—just over two million paid positions—came from increased employment in health, education, and public administration, sectors heavily dependent on government spending and support. In 2001, these three sectors accounted for about 16.1 per cent of all paid jobs in Canada and by 2024, their share had nearly doubled, to just over 28 per cent.

With our dismal performance in innovation, productivity growth and gains in GDP per capita, we are already too dependent on debt to keep these programs functioning. And we are not creating enough wealth to sustain them at the high levels of accessibility that Canadians expect.

In a service economy, service jobs accounted for almost 90 per cent of the gains in employment in this period, with professional, scientific, and technical services, including lawyers and account-

ants, adding 586,321 paid jobs, trade (retail and wholesale) 563,754 jobs, and accommodation and food 355,505 paid jobs. In the goods-producing industries, mining and oil and gas extraction added just 74,155 jobs, bringing the total to 213,102 paid jobs or little over one per cent of paid employment in Canada, while manufacturing jobs fell by just over 20 per cent or 418,518 jobs to just 1.6 million.

These changes in employment reflected changes in the production side of the economy. The share of goods-producing sectors fell from 33 per cent in 2001's \$1.1-trillion economy to 29 per cent in 2021's \$2.4-trillion economy, while the services sector rose from 67 per cent to 71 per cent. Industrial production fell from 25 per cent of the economy to 19 per cent, while the public sector share rose from 18 per cent to 20 per cent. At the micro-level, tech—represented by information and communications technology services—rose from \$40-billion or four per cent of the economy in 2001, to \$116-billion, or five per cent of the economy, in 2021.

Three features of the changing Canadian economy explain important job shifts. One is the increased role of construction and real estate. Their combined share of the economy rose from 17 per cent in 2001 to 21 per cent in 2024. Second is the growing role of largely public-funded activities, including education, health, and public administration. Their combined share rose from 17.8 per cent to 20.4 per cent. Third is the decline in manufacturing, whose share fell from 17 per cent of the economy in 2001 to just 10 per cent in 2021. To be sure, mining, and oil and gas extraction did see its size of the economy rise, from five per cent in 2001 to seven per cent in 2021, with export gains.

Canada has had some success in trade diversification, mainly due to increased exports to China and India. Between 2001 and 2024, overall exports of goods and services more than doubled, from \$481.2-billion in 2001 to \$996.8-billion in 2024. And the U.S. share of Canadian exports of goods and services fell from 80.7 per cent in 2001 to 70.3 per cent in 2024 while that of China and India together increased from 1.5 per cent in 2001 to 6.1 per cent in 2024, from a combined \$7.5-billion in 2001 to \$61-billion in 2024. Trade with major European countries have seen only modest growth. Likewise Japan: in 2001, Japan was Canada's second largest market for goods and services; by 2024, it had fallen to fifth place.

So building an economy for the future poses huge challenges that will require strong leadership and a focus on clearly set targets and timelines, co-operation from provinces, and cities as well as the private sector, and an earned buy-in from the public. The credibility of the upcoming budget is test number one. Implementation will be test number two. Success is urgent. And some early deliverables are vital for ongoing public support. It's all about our future.

David Crane can be reached at crane@interlog.com.

The Hill Times

OPINION

Forest management is the quiet crisis behind today's news

Forests are more than just wood. They are complex ecosystems. They are sources of life. They are home to thousands of species. They provide a place for many people to rest, reconnect and engage in recreation. They provide sustenance and support the cultures of many Indigenous communities.

Rachel Plotkin & Julee Boan

Opinion



As Prime Minister Mark Carney proceeds with his plans for nation-building, he must remember what defines us as



A wildfire burns through a Canadian boreal forest in 2016. A new study has found that wildfire carbon emissions in the world's boreal forests have almost tripled since 2001. Photograph courtesy of Stefan Doerr

a nation. According to a recent poll, it's not hockey, the Canadian flag or even maple syrup ... it's nature. At the heart of Canada's natural assets are forest ecosystems. Canadians depend on them for jobs, medicines, health, food, and respite from an increasingly stressful world. Yet, recent studies have shown that industrial activities, including logging and mining, have degraded this natural capital. Last week, Ottawa released its annual "State of Canada's Forests" report, a glossy and carefully curated publication that ignores biodiversity loss, sidesteps Indigenous rights and paints an increasingly degraded system as "sustainably managed."

In response, a coalition of environmental organizations will release a report, "Accountability... or Advertising? A Critical Review of Canada's State of

the Forests Report." It reveals a disturbing disconnect between the federal government's forest reporting and the state of forest ecosystems on the ground.

The counter report illustrates how forests are shaping current events: how provincial failures to effectively protect critical caribou habitat have led to recommendations for federal intervention; how the lack of free, prior and informed consent in logging approvals has led to Indigenous resistance; how clearcutting, conifer planting and glyphosate spraying practices might be contributing to wildfire risk in some areas and how industrial logging contributes to carbon being released from trees and forest soils.

The federal report is quick to highlight the number of trees planted and the percentage of forests under third-party certification

schemes. But try to find any discussion of more important issues—such as logging of critical caribou habitat, the significant loss of old-growth and primary forests and the ongoing weakening of laws to protect endangered species—and you will come up empty-handed.

It's not just what's said; it's also what's omitted.

Despite claiming to uphold the internationally recognized Montreal Process framework for sustainable forest management, the federal report routinely skips key reporting indicators. There's little or no mention of biodiversity loss, pollution from mills or how the cumulative impact of industrial development continues to fragment vast tracks of forest. There is also no transparent accounting of Canada's ongoing failure to meet its international and domestic forest-related climate goals.

Instead of offering an unbiased overview of forest health, the government report reads like a promotional brochure for the forestry industry. It frames sustainability in terms of the amount of wood that can be extracted, how efficiently logs become products and how quickly trees are replanted.

But planting seedlings in the wake of clearcutting is not the same as maintaining a healthy and diverse forest ecosystem. A replanted forest does not support

the same wildlife, carbon functions or cultural relationships as natural forests. The federal reporting system largely ignores these distinctions. It focuses on quantity, not quality.

The consequences of this narrow approach are visible in forests throughout the country. Caribou populations are steadily declining as industry fragments their habitat. Carbon stored in forest soils is being released into the atmosphere at alarming rates. Indigenous nations trying to protect their ancestral lands and establish Indigenous protected and conserved areas are routinely sidelined by systems that prioritize Crown-forest management approaches over Indigenous law and governance.

Forest degradation also has global consequences. As Canada seeks reliable trading partners, it must, for example, reckon with the European Union's commitment to ban forest product imports from degraded forests—a policy set to take effect in December 2025.

When the public doesn't know what's at stake, it can't demand better.

The Canadian public deserves more transparency, not more greenwashing. Indigenous nations deserve to have their inherent and treaty rights upheld. And our forests deserve more than public relations spin.

The government of Canada should stop treating its annual report as advertising and instead focus on accountability.

Rachel Plotkin is a wildlife campaigner at the David Suzuki Foundation. Julee Boan is partnership director of global nature at the Natural Resources Defence Council. The Hill Times

Was repealing the digital services tax a missed opportunity for Canada or the right call?

If repealing the DST opens the door to a more constructive dialogue with U.S. firms about investing in Canada and if it pushes us to focus on enabling Canadian companies to scale, then it was the right move.

Adam Froman

Opinion



As a Canadian entrepreneur who has spent decades building technology businesses and advocating for our innovation ecosystem, I'm deeply conflicted about Prime Minister Mark Carney's decision to repeal the digital services tax (DST). On the surface, it appears that Canada is capitulating to pressure from the U.S., particularly given U.S. President Donald Trump's threats of retaliatory tariffs. But the truth is more nuanced and, more importantly, deserves a closer look.

The DST was introduced to address a significant imbalance: large U.S.-based digital giants like Google, Amazon, and Meta generate substantial revenue from Canadian businesses and consumers, but pay little or no tax here. Meanwhile, Canadian companies who employ Canadians, pay Canadian taxes, and invest in local communities face a heavier burden.

The Parliamentary Budget Office estimated that the DST would have

generated approximately \$7.2-billion (about USD\$5.3-billion) in revenue over five years. This revenue would have come primarily from U.S. tech firms, with initial retroactive payments totaling around USD\$2-billion due by June 30, 2025. Ongoing annual costs to these companies were projected between USD\$900-million and USD\$2.3-billion, potentially leading to up to 3,000 job losses in the U.S.

At first glance, the DST seems like a step toward tax fairness. However, as the founder and CEO of a Canadian technology company, I've experienced the flip side.

More than half of our revenues came from U.S. clients, yet we didn't pay U.S. taxes because our business operations, employees, and value creation were based in Canada. By the same logic, why should U.S. digital firms pay Canadian taxes if their operations and employment are largely in the U.S.? The U.S. argues that the

DST violates the principle of taxing profits where value is created.

Moreover, the DST risked escalating trade tensions. President Trump's administration viewed the tax as a "direct and blatant attack" on U.S. firms, leading to the suspension of trade negotiations and threats of new tariffs on Canadian goods.

Focusing on taxing these firms misses the real opportunity. The DST is a Band-Aid, not a solution. It does nothing to fix Canada's underlying economic challenge. We don't just need global firms to sell to Canadians; we need them to invest in Canada by building offices, hiring Canadians, partnering with Canadian companies, and supporting our innovation ecosystem.

More importantly, we need policies that help Canadian technology firms scale globally while remaining Canadian-owned and based. Creating these policies will have a much greater economic impact on the long-term economic growth of

Canada. The real priority should be creating conditions where Canadian scale-ups can compete, grow, and lead internationally, thereby ensuring we keep our intellectual property, our talent, and our economic value here. That's how we generate sustainable and long-term economic growth.

We've seen too many Canadian start-ups become branch plants of American or global firms because we haven't built an environment that supports domestic companies transitioning from start-up to scale-up. Taxing successful U.S. digital companies may feel good politically, but it doesn't build the foundation Canada needs for the future.

So, could repealing the DST be considered giving in to Trump? Perhaps. But if it opens the door to a more constructive dialogue with U.S. firms about investing in Canada and if it pushes us to focus on enabling Canadian companies to scale, then it's the right move.

Economic growth doesn't come from punishing success; it comes from nurturing our own. Let's stop the distraction of the DST and get serious about helping Canadian companies thrive in the digital economy.

Adam Froman is the founder and CEO of Delvinia, an innovation company transforming digital businesses. The Hill Times

OPINION

Global finance is broken: will Canada help fix it?

The rise in global military spending proves this isn't about scarcity. Development cooperation is about shared security, including ours. Canada helped shape consensus in Seville—no small feat in a fractured world. But consensus is no excuse for complacency.

Paul Farran

Opinion



Last month, in Seville, Spain, global leaders, including Cooperation Canada, gathered at the Fourth International Confer-

ence on Financing for Development (FfD4) to rethink the future of global finance.

With overlapping crises—climate collapse, inequality, conflict and democratic erosion—this once-in-a-decade gathering was pivotal, especially for Canadians who value fairness and multilateralism.

Canada's UN ambassador Bob Rae joined global leaders as the conference concluded with the *Compromiso de Sevilla*—a joint commitment to reform the way we finance development. The U.S. absence from the final agreement was notable—but it allowed others to salvage ambition and reshape the narrative.

Rae opened the plenary with a quote from Leonard Cohen: "Ring the bells that still can ring. Forget your perfect offering. There is a crack in everything. That's how the light gets in." The *Compromiso* may be far from perfect, but it represents one of those cracks—an opening to rethink the foundations of global finance.

But will Canada step into that light?

FfD4 revealed a strong global appetite for change but also resistance, particularly from wealthier nations. Civil society participation was restricted. Proposals for structural reform were diluted.

Canada hesitated to address the roots of inequality.

Yet, glimmers of progress emerged. Civil society demands like tax justice, debt cancellation, and financial reform are gaining momentum. Brazil, South Africa and Spain announced plans to tax the world's wealthiest, signalling the Global South are increasingly coordinated and vocal.

Still, the structural barriers are enormous. Many low- and middle-income countries pay interest rates up to 12 times higher than wealthier peers. Approximately 3.4 billion people reside in countries that allocate more funds to debt payments than to education or healthcare. The IMF's favoured term, "fiscal consolidation," is just a rebrand of failed austerity and structural adjustment policies.

For Canada, these developments demand a shift in strategy. A reliance on innovative finance and private capital mobilization is no longer enough. Canada has contributed to financial innovation—but without justice, that's not leadership.

We must ask tougher questions: How will Canada tackle tax abuse, unsustainable debt, and unfair trade? How do we build a system that prioritizes people over markets?



Canada's UN Ambassador Bob Rae joined global leaders as the conference concluded and opened the plenary with a quote from Leonard Cohen: "Ring the bells that still can ring. Forget your perfect offering. There is a crack in everything. That's how the light gets in." *The Hill Times* photograph by Andrew Meade

As one delegate aptly pointed out, these are not just elephants in the room—they are mammoths.

What must Canada do next?

Canada should support the democratic global finance by advancing real tax and debt reform and amplifying the voices of those most affected by inequality.

We must realign our international assistance with its original purpose: tackling poverty and reducing inequality. This isn't about the value of aid—it's about living our values and leaving no one behind. While Canada deserves credit for resisting the global trend of aid cuts, our commitments must be protected and strengthened.

We must restore trust in multilateralism and uphold international humanitarian law. Double standards on human rights, like Canada's inaction on atrocities in Palestine, fuel suffering, deepen insecurity and damage global credibility.

We must reassess our global role, not just as donors, but as partners. "Aid" is outdated—paper-

ing over colonial wounds. What's needed is a new model of cooperation based on shared responsibility.

Seville offers that opportunity. The rise in global military spending proves this isn't about scarcity. Development cooperation is about shared security, including ours.

Canada helped shape consensus in Seville—no small feat in a fractured world. But consensus is no excuse for complacency.

With COP30 in Brazil, the G20 in South Africa and Canada chairing the G7, we have a choice: lead or lose our seat at the table.

If we want to belong, we must act accordingly. That means investing in cooperation, championing fairness and standing with the majority of the world burdened by crises they didn't create.

As Prime Minister Mark Carney asserts, Canada must step up as others step back. This is one of those moments. Let's not miss it.

Paul Farran is the director of policy at Cooperation Canada. *The Hill Times*

Space: the critical link to Canada's defence, sovereignty, and economic growth

At this moment of geopolitical transition and economic uncertainty, the Canadian government must lead boldly. We cannot afford to miss this moment, and Canada's space ecosystem is ready to build and deliver.

Brian Gallant

Opinion



This view of Earth's horizon as the sun sets over the Pacific Ocean was taken by an Expedition 7 crew member onboard the International Space Station (ISS). A radically shifting geopolitical environment makes Canada's sovereign defence capabilities and contributions to allied efforts an overriding priority, writes Brian Gallant. *Image courtesy of NASA*

Prime Minister Mark Carney's recent speech on defence and security makes clear that the federal government is focused on protecting and enhancing Canada's sovereignty and economic

prosperity. It also demonstrates that the government understands Canada is in a moment. The extent to which this pivotal moment offers massive upside for Canada, but equally significant

downside if we fail to seize it, cannot be overstated. The stakes are high.

The Canadian space ecosystem is on the cutting edge of innovation. Canada's space innovators stand ready to tackle Canada's most challenging issues from bolstering national defence, preserving our sovereignty, driving economic growth, protecting our environment, and building the dual-use digital infrastructure required to provide enhanced connectivity to our nation and monitor our vast territory.

A radically shifting geopolitical environment makes Canada's sovereign defence capabilities and contributions to allied efforts an overriding priority. An intensified focus on the Arctic—accelerated by climate change and the increased accessibility of northern waterways—has drawn heightened attention from Canada's allies and adversaries. Our new government has committed

to addressing the threats to our sovereignty posed by the latest geopolitical shifts through a proposed multibillion dollar defence investment where Canada will finally meet the NATO commitment of spending at least two per cent of GDP on defence this year.

Canada's space industry supports the government's renewed focus on national and allied security. Space-based capabilities underpin and enable all military operations and are the linchpin of a modern Armed Forces and essential to NORAD and NATO modernization.

The Carney government's commitments to defence, and more importantly its future execution, are key in ensuring Canada's sovereignty and security moving forward. Importantly, there is hope for bipartisan collaboration on this pressing issue. During the Spring election campaign, the Conservative platform outlined several significant commitments regarding defence and security.

Bolstering our national security does more than safeguard Canada, it directly accelerates our economic prosperity by spurring advanced infrastructure, innovation, and highvalue jobs. The Canadian space sector today ranks among the best in the world and currently contributes nearly \$3-billion annually to

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OPINION

To build a better housing market, stop taxing housing like cigarettes

The first thing governments need to do, collectively, is address the fact that housing is taxed at double the rate of the rest of the economy. Sin-taxing housing drives down the rate of homebuilding, just as cigarette taxes have driven down smoking rates.

Mark
Kenney

Opinion



Canadian leaders in the purpose-built rental market were pleased by the ambition of the Liberals' 2025 election platform, but with trepidation that the government is missing the forest for the trees when it comes to getting the housing we need built at prices Canadians and their treasury can afford. Today, more than 96 per cent of the housing in Canada is provided through the private sector (the forest), with the remaining about 3.5 per cent representing social and other non-profit housing (the tree).

The Liberal government has pledged \$35-billion to finance



Grand old row houses pictured along Queen Elizabeth Drive in Ottawa. Canada's new housing minister has an opportunity to challenge the provinces to get tough on housing taxes, and make lowering them a condition for federal funding of local infrastructure, writes Mark Kenney. *The Hill Times* photograph by Kate Malloy

new affordable and middle income housing projects. That's welcome, but we need an order of magnitude more capital—\$2-trillion to \$3-trillion—to build the millions of new homes required to close the housing gap. But instead, we're seeing capital move away from new construction, putting 170,000 jobs at risk at a time when Canada can least afford it.

How can we possibly achieve that? We need a full-court press to drive down the cost of new housing to make more projects viable, alongside a taxation policy that catalyzes—the prime minister's favourite word, rather than discourages, global capital to finance the housing we need.

Don't get me wrong, the type of housing that gets built matters, and there will always be a need for the government and the non-profit sector to help those in the greatest need to access housing. REITs are contributing by selling

existing affordable buildings to non-profits to lock in long-term affordability, through programs like the Canada Rental Protection Fund. But most Canadians aspire to either own their own home or rent a home on their own in the private housing market, where the vast majority of housing is created. Currently, that is unaffordable for many, especially young people, and that, as the PM has acknowledged, holds people back from opportunity, both economic and social.

The first thing governments need to do, collectively, is address the fact that housing is taxed at double the rate of the rest of the economy. Sin-taxing housing drives down the rate of homebuilding, just as cigarette taxes have driven down smoking rates.

When a new home is built, the full impact of government taxes and fees can now total a third of the overall cost, more than the

cost of land or more than 50 per cent of the hard costs of construction! Even just streamlining the way these taxes are administered could save tens of thousands of dollars, without governments losing a penny of revenue.

These added costs have hit a wall, with the cost of new construction—including fees—adding up against Canadians' ability to pay a rent that would cover the costs. This is driving down housing starts at a time when the government and Canadians—need them to double.

The government's intention to halve development charges for multi-family housing by supporting municipalities on hard infrastructure like water, sewer and electrical costs is welcome, but will mean nothing if the provinces allow municipalities to keep adding more charges for soft infrastructure that should instead be funded through general revenues.

While the minister is passionate about building the affordable housing needed by those in most acute housing need, he must also build a better housing market for the 96 per cent of Canadians who just want to find a place that they can afford and be proud to call home.

Canada's new housing minister has an opportunity to challenge the provinces to get tough on housing taxes, and make lowering them a condition for federal funding of local infrastructure.

My business, Canadian Apartment Properties REIT, alongside Canada's four other largest publicly-traded apartment REITs (Boardwalk REIT, InterRent REIT, Killam Apartment REIT and Minto Apartment REIT), which collectively comprise less than three per cent of the rental market, formed Canadian rental housing providers for affordable housing and have advocated since 2022 for policies to drive rental housing abundance and affordability.

The Canadian rental housing market of five million homes is large, diverse and highly competitive. The government should leverage this professional capacity to grow the housing supply, and reduce taxes on housing in half-in-line with the rest of the economy, or lower still, to drive more capital to provide more housing to more Canadians. Only the private market can provide the capital required for Canada to meet its housing goals. Shouldn't the government's priority be to ensure housing providers representing 96 per cent of the sector secure the capital to reach that goal?

Canada's professional housing providers can and will deliver more housing at affordable prices, but to do so we need to stop taxing homes like cigarettes, and start lowering housing costs for all Canadians.

Mark Kenney is CEO of Canadian Apartment Properties REIT (CAPREIT).

The Hill Times

Space: the critical link to Canada's defence, sovereignty, and economic growth

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Canada's GDP. With the global space economy projected to reach \$2-trillion over the next decade or two, Canada should aim to be among the leading contributors to that growth. According to Deloitte Canada, with enhanced investment and strategic policies, our nation's space sector could grow to \$40-billion by 2040.

To meet this moment, the government will need to be a key partner to industry and will require focused investment in innovations being developed

here at home, such as sovereign Canadian low Earth orbit satellite communications, Earth and space observation, robotics, and even launch capabilities. Experience shows that every dollar invested in space generates a multiple return in economic output, strategic capability, and highskill employment.

While Canada leads in space technology, our country's procurement mechanisms have not kept pace. The government has been unable to access breakthrough commercial space innovations due to the long

procurement cycles that make government space programs outdated by the time of deployment. Both established firms and emerging ventures need a streamlined, accelerated pathway from lab to launchpad. As outlined in a recent Novaspace whitepaper; "Canadian space companies are at a clear disadvantage in the global market, where international competitors benefit from far greater and more favourable forms of government support."

We are hopeful that the government's proposed Defence Procurement Agency, Defence

Industrial Strategy, and made-in-Canada procurement strategy will close this gap and convert Canadian ingenuity into deployable capability at the speed of relevance. We agree with the Liberal Party's recent platform; "leveraging the government's purchasing power to drive Canadian innovation, solving Canadian problems in new ways" is exactly what we need at this moment. Prime Minister Carney laid out the challenge even more bluntly; "We should no longer send three-quarters of our defence capital spending to America."

Moreover, Space Canada strongly believes that the previously announced commitment to create a National Space Council will ensure a whole-of-government approach to prioritize space-related investments in solving our biggest challenges. The time to create this internal body in order to move nimble on the opportunities space represents is now.

Looking ahead, the outlook for Canada's space sector is exceptionally bright. Canadian firms are ready to deliver advanced capabilities to the Government of Canada and to export them to the world—all while creating good-paying jobs for Canadians.

At this moment of geopolitical transition and economic uncertainty, the Canadian government must lead boldly. We cannot afford to miss this moment, and Canada's space ecosystem is ready to build, deliver, and make Canada Strong.

Brian Gallant is CEO of Space Canada.

The Hill Times

IRCC forecasts 30 per cent spending cut by 2028 amid lower immigration targets

A director of a non-profit supporting refugees says the proposed cuts, alongside legislation proposed in Bill C-2, could result in ‘life and death decisions’ being made by an ‘incredibly overburdened’ department.

BY MARLO GLASS

Immigration, Refugees, and Citizenship Canada plans to cut spending by 30 per cent by 2027-28 compared to this fiscal year, and drop more than 10 per cent of the department’s jobs.

IRCC’s 2025-26 departmental plan says total planned expenditures are forecast to decrease by \$1.6-billion, with cuts across all the department’s functions. It outlines \$5.1-billion earmarked this fiscal year, already a drop from \$6.58-billion the year prior. The department plans to further reduce its expenses to \$3.59-billion by 2027-28.

In the report, released June 17, the department says the cuts are due to lower levels of immigration expected in the upcoming years. In 2025, Canada aims to bring in 395,000 permanent residents, a 21 per cent drop from the year prior; 305,900 new students, a 10 per cent drop from 2024; and 367,750 temporary workers, a 16 per cent drop from 2024.

The department breaks down its work into four core responsibilities: visitors, international students and temporary workers; citizenship and passports; and immigrant and refugee selection and integration.

Of these, the fourth category is expected to see the deepest cut, with more than 30 per cent of its spending slashed from \$3.9-billion in 2025-26 to \$2.7-billion in 2027-28. The Liberals opted against tabling a post-election spring budget, which can set out billions in new departmental programs. This departmental plan was also developed before Finance Minister François-Philippe Champagne (Saint-Maurice—Champlain, Que.) announced a cross government effort to find 15 per cent in savings over the next three years.



Minister Lena Metlege Diab oversees Immigration, Refugees, and Citizenship Canada, which is forecasting a 30 per cent cut in spending over the next three years. *The Hill Times* photograph by Sam Garcia

The plan says the department’s decrease in spending comes after the government’s decision to reduce the number of immigrants to Canada between now and 2027, along with the end of temporary funding for health care and housing programs for asylum seekers.

Similarly, the expected 11 per cent cut to full-time equivalents is partially due to the decrease in personnel funding that was put in place to stabilize an overburdened asylum system “and further streamline the processing of asylum claims to allow the system to function more effectively and efficiently in the face of increased volumes, while supporting enhanced program integrity.”

The department’s work related to immigration and refugee selection will also see the deepest cuts to jobs, with nearly 14 per cent

of full-time equivalent positions forecast to be cut by 2027-28.

But a non-profit for refugees settling in Canada said the cuts will overburden an already taxed non-profit system that supports newcomers already in Canada.

Gauri Sreenivasan, co-executive director of the Canadian Council for Refugees, said the organization is “extremely concerned” about the impact of the cuts.

“These cuts have immediate, debilitating effects on programs that Canada has committed to publicly,” she said, citing slow and ineffective humanitarian pathways for people fleeing deadly violence in Sudan and Gaza.

“These cuts can only make a bad situation worse.”

What’s more, Canada has an obligation to step up on the global stage, at a time when the United States is “really pulling back in a

shocking way from their international obligations,” she said.

“The ability for Canada to respond to obligations, to address those we have committed to resettle and provide fair process for, for protection at the border, is directly impacted by the ability of IRCC to do their work.”

The cuts will have “a significant knock-on effect” to the non-profit sector, she said, with agencies serving critical roles in helping newcomers develop English or French language skills, employment opportunities, and helping children in schools.

“The cuts you have identified are not just to IRCC staff, they then directly affect supports to the incredibly important network of non profits organizations throughout civil society,” Sreenivasan said, adding the sector has established Canada’s “world-class reputation” for refugee resettlement.

While the budget for IRCC is based on future projections for immigration levels, “they’re affecting people who are here now, and who are arriving now,” she said. “That’s the main concern.”

Strong Borders Act could add to IRCC’s workload

Sreenivasan also said the forecasted cuts are happening alongside proposed legislation that could increase the burden on the IRCC. Proposed legislation in Bill C-2, or the Strong Borders Act, would restrict access of asylum seekers to have a hearing at the Immigra-

tion Refugee Board (IRB). Some asylum seekers would instead be given a pre-removal risk assessment process administered by the IRCC.

“This alternative being offered does not, in our view, meet at all the requirements of due process and not what Canadians expect, which is that refugees would have an oral hearing before they would be deported to danger,” Sreenivasan said. “Instead, we are offering them a process that is a paper-based assessment done by IRCC.”

The IRB routed a request for comment to the IRCC, which did not immediately respond to a request for comment.

Its departmental plan, though, strikes an optimistic tone, despite the forecasted drop in spending.

“Even though the planned expenditures are decreasing over three years, the department will continue to enhance efficiency and boost productivity,” the plan reads. “The department is modernizing its operations, implementing new policies and infrastructure to improve services and transform the way it does business. This transformation will support IRCC’s ability to successfully achieve departmental results, now and in the future.”

Sreenivasan, though, said the cuts, alongside legislation proposed in Bill C-2, could result in “life and death decisions that will be made by an incredibly overburdened IRCC.”

‘It’s a giant mess,’ says MP Kwan

Earlier this year, IRCC announced its plans to cut 3,300 jobs from its workforce, citing Canada’s reduced immigration targets.

In November 2024, then-immigration minister Marc Miller (Ville-Marie—Le Sud-Ouest—Îles-des-Soeurs, Que.) announced drastic cuts to the targeted number of permanent residents admitted to Canada in the next two years, and tighter rules around temporary worker permits.

NDP MP Jenny Kwan (Vancouver East, B.C.) said the Liberals are “plowing ahead” with cuts despite persistent and prolonged delays in processing immigration cases.

“As it stands in the system, the backlog is unbelievable,” said Kwan, the NDP’s immigration critic. “Families are separated, people are being persecuted, and it can’t be processed in an expeditious way. It’s a giant mess.”

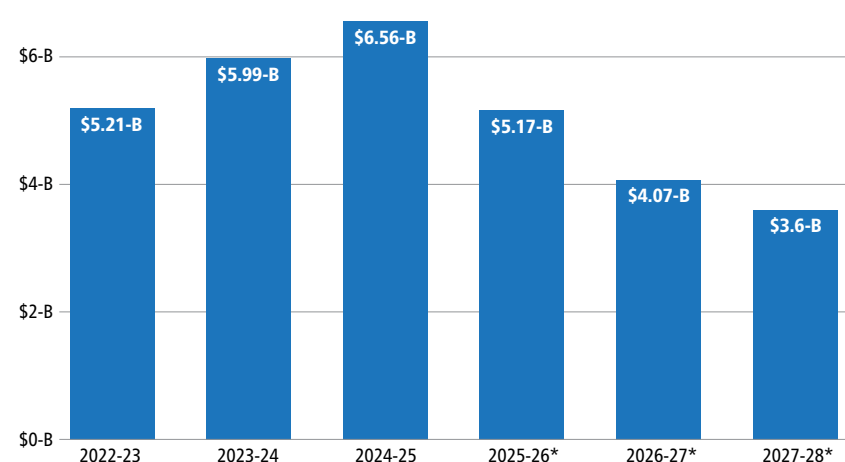
Wait times for spousal sponsorship applications outside Quebec have jumped from 12 to 24 months, she said, and applications for parents and grandparents have been frozen for two years.

Refugees who are fleeing persecution, who are “in dire straits” and are privately sponsored by Canadian citizens, can face wait times of over three years.

“This is just a snapshot of some of the problems that exist within our system,” she said. “Cuts to IRCC staff will only further delay the processing, and create greater pain and anguish for the people stuck in the system.”

mglass@hilltimes.com
The Hill Times

Immigration, Refugees, and Citizenship Canada annual spending



*Reflects planned spending
Source: Immigration, Refugees and Citizenship Canada's Departmental Plan

NEWS

Tighter registration threshold for lobbying means more transparency, but also more administrative work for businesses in challenging times, say lobbyists

The ‘significant part of duties’ registration threshold will be lowered from 32 hours to eight, starting in January 2026.

Continued from page 1

register under the Lobbying Act are intended by the federal lobbying commissioner to improve transparency, although some argue the increased administrative burden will be significant, particularly for smaller groups.

“These changes ... are going to increase the number of companies and organization subject to registration—particularly smaller players, local small businesses, non-profits—who have never engaged with Canada’s lobbying regime, [who] are now, all of a sudden, going to find themselves, I think, caught in this new regime,” said Hunter Doubt, president of the Government Relations Institute of Canada, who is also Expedia Group’s head of government and corporate affairs. “The bigger burden is going to be for those smaller organizations ... that have never considered themselves lobbyists—who do very little of that work—now having to track and pay close attention to everyone within their organization on just how much work they are actually doing on a consecutive four-week basis.”

On July 16, the Office of the Commissioner of Lobbying issued an interpretation bulletin announcing an amendment that will greatly lower the threshold for when organizations or corporations are required to register their lobbying activities with designated public office holders (DPOHs).

Under the current regime, registration is required if the government-relations activities of in-house lobbyists represents 20 per cent or more of the duties of a single, full-time employee—which is known as the “20 per cent rule.” Estimates provided on the lobbying commissioner’s website have put “20 per cent” of one employee’s time over a four-week period as representing a registration threshold of between 30 to 32 hours spent lobbying, based on a 40-hour work week.



Canada’s Lobbying Commissioner Nancy Bélanger told *The Hill Times*: ‘I just decided that eight hours, in other words, a full day of meetings with decision-makers, makes it notable, and I believe that it requires registration.’ *The Hill Times* photograph by Andrew Meade

The new interpretation bulletin lowers that threshold to only eight hours in a rolling four-week period.

A corresponding interpretation bulletin also prohibits former designated public office holders from engaging in lobbying for eight or more hours in any four-week period during the five-year restriction that applies to all former designated public office holders after they leave office.

The changes won’t affect consultant lobbyists, who already must register any undertaking to lobby on behalf of a client.

The new interpretation bulletins will take effect on Jan. 19, 2026.

Doubt called this lower threshold a major shift in Canada’s lobbying regime. He argued that anything beyond “a truly one-off conversation” with federal officials in 2026 will require registration.

Lobbying Commissioner Nancy Bélanger told *The Hill Times* that the current 32-hour threshold allowed for considerable lobbying to occur without needing to be reported, which she called a hinderance to transparency. She said the new threshold was chosen after reviewing other jurisdictions, and because eight hours represents a full work day.

“I set out to interpret what does the word ‘significant’ mean? And it means noteworthy or notable,” said Bélanger. “I just decided that eight hours, in other words, a full day of meetings with decision-makers, makes it notable, and I believe that it requires registration.”

In response to concerns about the increased administration burden, Bélanger said it should be expected that anyone who lobbies, as well as the heads of organizations and corporations

that hires people to communicate with officials, should be subject to a regime that ensures transparency and ethical conduct.

“The requirement to register is truly a minimal effort to ensure that the regime works as it should. In other words, so that Canadians know who’s lobbying their decision-makers and about what,” she said. “The purpose of this bulletin is really to enhance transparency, and in my view, registration is not difficult. It does not take much time.”

Besides interpretation bulletins issued by the lobbying commissioner, changes to Canada’s lobbying regime can be implemented through a review of the Lobbying Act. The last review of the act was conducted in 2012, which did not result in any changes. Although a review of the act is mandated to occur every five years, reviews were not conducted on schedule in 2017 or 2022. A review of the Lobbying Act can be initiated through an order of reference to do so from the House, or as a result of a motion from a member of the House Ethics Committee.

Bélanger said she’s been asking for a review of the act since she was appointed to her role as lobbying commissioner in 2017.

“I have wanted a review of the act, [and] I’m a perpetual[ly], positive, hopeful person that someday it will happen, but because there is no sign of a review of the act, I decided that it’s been too long that transparency has been hindered, and therefore I issued this bulletin. I had said that I was going to do it, so I’m moving forward with it,” she said.

Doubt said that lobbyists knew that a change to the registration threshold was coming. Bélanger

has talked before about her desire to lower the registration threshold, including during an appearance before the House Ethics Committee in November 2024. Even so, Doubt said that the threshold being reduced as low as eight hours came as a surprise to many.

“We support compliance and transparency. Those are foundational, obviously, to our work and we respect that,” he said. “But if Parliament isn’t prioritizing changes to the Lobbying Act, and as far as we know there was no public push for these new interpretations, it raises some questions on if there’s really a need to make a significant change through interpretation alone.”

Another important change relates to how organizations are expected to calculate if an employee’s lobbying activities constitutes a significant part of their duties. Currently, that calculation includes not only the time spent actually communicating with designated public office holders, but also the time spent in preparation, which includes researching, drafting, and travelling.

Under the new interpretation, travel time will no longer be required in the calculation for significant part of duties, according to Bélanger.

Jasmin Guenette, vice-president of national affairs with the Canadian Federation of Independent Business (CFIB), agreed that the lower registration threshold means increased administration burden for smaller businesses.

“Businesses in Canada at the moment are facing many different challenges with the tariff situation between Canada and the U.S. The cost of doing business has increased tremendously in the last couple of years. There are many challenges, and obviously adding more red tape means adding more cost on business operation [and] is always a challenge,” he said. “That’s why we feel it is really important that the Office of the Commissioner take proactive measure to reach out to the business community, to reach out to stakeholders, so that businesses are aware of the newer requirements, but obviously, if they have to report more often ... this can add to the administrative burden and cost businesses will be having to deal with.”

Bélanger said her office will be conducting outreach during the coming months to help inform people about the changes. She also encouraged corporations and

organizations to call the Lobbying Commissioner’s Office and ask for clarification, saying, “it costs nothing to call us.”

She told *The Hill Times* that, at this time, she doesn’t expect her office to require any additional staff or an increased budget to deal with the increase of registrations once the changes come into force.

“Once organizations and corporations start registering, my team is going to have to approve these registrations and help them. For sure, we’re all expecting a surge at the beginning, but I think it’s work that we can handle right now,” she said.

Alan Fraser, a principal at Lobium Law, called the lower registration threshold a wake-up call for anyone dealing with public office holders.

“A lot of it comes down to training, and I find that when you’re dealing with public or private companies, the employees don’t actually know what lobbying is or what the requirements are. So, the first thing is training,” he said. “The second item is a compliance program in place to ensure that it’s monitored and tracked, and allows that entity to ensure their registration is up to date with the lobbying commissioner and the lobbying registry.”

Fraser argued that the lower threshold will almost require a default registration, arguing it would be impossible for companies to monitor whether or not they are lobbying “without a really rigorous compliance protocol in place.”

In response to the interpretation bulletin, lawyers from Blake, Cassels & Graydon LLP issued a bulletin of their own, which included a recommendation that businesses and other entities with employees who may be engaged in lobbying should implement practices to track the time spent lobbying by all employees, and consider whether they will be required to register under the new interpretation.

Suzanne Sabourin, a counsel in the advocacy group of Gowlings WLG’s Ottawa office, told *The Hill Times* that the increased administrative burden could be felt by even the larger businesses.

“Of course everybody believes in the principles of the law, but it does require more effort, more administrative effort, to comply,” she said. “You have to have a keen understanding of the law and of its implications to make sure that you get a full grasp of what’s expected of you.”

Sabourin said, when it comes to lobbying, the issues can be complex when you “start looking at it from a very granular level of detail.”

“When you start looking at different circumstances that companies deal with, that’s where the ... practicalities of how that translates in your registration and your monthly reports comes into play, and therefore the importance of training and protocols to make sure that you’re staying within the parameters of the law,” she said. “Personally, I’ve given training to employees of our clients ... but we can expect now that we’ll need to fine tune.”

Jcnockaert@hilltimes.com
The Hill Times

If ‘you haven’t flipped pancakes by now, you’re probably not doing it right’: MPs on summer schmoozing in their ridings

Rookie MPs are busy setting up their offices and meeting with constituents, while others are training for charity rides and retreating to the mountains.

BY ELEANOR WAND

It’s barbecue season, and many MPs are back in their ridings, taking advantage of the House’s recess to connect with their communities—some are cycling for charity, others are attending rugby tournaments—but mostly, the parliamentarians are spending the warm months away from Ottawa, engaging with the constituents who voted them into office just a few months ago.

First-time Liberal MP Jessica Fancy-Landry, whose rural riding of South Shore-St. Margarets encompasses a large swathe of Nova Scotia’s southern shore, said she’s been spending the summer engaging with her community, emphasizing to *The Hill Times* that she wants to be a “constituency MP.”

“I want to be in my constituency, helping out everybody, more than I am in Ottawa,” she said. “Ottawa—it’s great, but people sometimes get locked into the glamour ... but the real work happens in the constituency.”

Fancy-Landry, who was reached midway through a five-hour drive to her daughter’s rugby tournament in Fredericton, N.B., said her first summer as an elected official of the riding with a population of just over 79,000 has involved setting up her new constituency office in Bridgewater, the largest town in the region, as well as two other satellite offices in the riding.

She said she’s “absolutely loving it,” but stressed it’s been “a lot of hard work,” which some have described to her as “drinking from a fire hose.” But she explained that her focus has been on meeting with local and provincial government representatives.

“One of my goals as a first-time MP was, in the first six months, to have meetings with all three levels of government,” she said. “And I’m really proud to say that all of those meetings are booked, and I’m well over halfway through engaging with other representation.”



Green Leader Elizabeth May, clockwise top left, and Conservative MPs Andrew Lawton and Marilyn Gladu, Liberal MPs Jennifer McKelvie and Jessica Fancy-Landry, and NDP MP Heather McPherson are spending their summers putting in ‘face time’ with their constituents and attending local riding events. *The Hill Times* photographs by Andrew Meade, courtesy of Facebook

Fancy-Landry, who won her riding with 54.9 per cent of the vote, also said she’s been doing “lots of barbecuing” this summer. The MP took part in a “tub race” as part of the Dock Street Days festivities held in her riding, besting a local MLA in the contest, and calling the win a “huge highlight” of the season.

But Fancy-Landry stressed the summer is “all about balance” between work and family time—and is not a break. That’s something many MPs also made clear.

For four-time Conservative MP Marilyn Gladu (Sarnia-Lambton-Bkejwanong, Ont.), who won her riding with 53.2 per cent of the vote in April, the summer is a mix of family time and work. The grandmother of four said these months constitute “beach time,” and an opportunity for her to “beach, pool, and barbecue with family and friends.”

The days are also filled with work and charity fundraising, she said. Gladu said she has spent time raising cash for the Huron House Boys Home this summer, a mental health centre for teenage boys that’s located in her southern Ontario riding that hosts a population of about 128,000 and borders Lake Huron. The 63-year old, who underwent a knee replacement in December, completed a seven-kilometre bike ride to raise funds for the charity last month.

Gladu is set to more than quadruple that distance in an upcoming Aug. 3 ride for the Gran Fondo Lake Huron, which raises money for the Saugeen Memorial Hospital Foundation, with funds being used to purchase medical equipment for the hospital.

“I started slow,” she said, explaining how she got back in the cycling seat, joking that she’s “gotta keep practicing” to prepare for her upcoming 30-km ride.

Like many MPs, Gladu also attended local Canada Day festivities, calling the Sarnia event

a “heartwarming” day filled with food and pride. The MP also took part in the Sarnia Senior Cruise, a boat cruise for senior residents of the area that travels along the St. Clair River in June.

Green Leader Elizabeth May said she’s working “more than full time” both as an MP for her B.C. riding of Saanich-Gulf Islands but also as party leader.

“There’s a lot to be done in the aftermath of the election,” said the five-time MP, who secured her seat with 39.1 per cent of the vote, pointing to the party being dropped from the leadership debates as a sore spot, which she said cost the Greens visibility and support. “Obviously, the election results were very poor for us.”

Stampede, Pride top ‘barbecue circuit’ events for MPs

May said she makes a point to attend a number of events over the summer, like the Calgary Stampede and various Pride events held across the country. The leader made appearances at the Sidney event in her riding, which had a population of over 107,000 as of 2016, as well as at the Victoria celebration nearby. She also attended the larger Toronto festival, marching in the city’s June parade. She is also set to attend attend Vancouver’s Aug. 3 celebration.

When asked why she prioritizes Pride, May said the events are “celebratory” and “an expression of the progress Canada’s made ... towards LGBTQ+ rights, which are under assault everywhere right now, even as we see corporate sponsorship withdraw.”

“I really want to be in solidarity with the LGBTQ+ community,” she said, explaining that she also devotes much of her summertime to her constituents and working to resolve their issues with federal departments.

Like May, NDP MP Heather McPherson (Edmonton Strathcona, Alta.) attended Toronto Pride and the Calgary Stampede to take part in what she dubbed the “quote unquote barbecue circuit.” The three-time MP who took home 46.8 per cent of the vote in her 111,556 population riding, explained she’s also been spending her time in Edmonton tossing flapjacks, including as part of the Alberta NDP pancake breakfast.

“If you’re a politician in Canada and you haven’t flipped pancakes by now, you’re probably not doing it right,” she quipped.

McPherson also spent a few days visiting Alberta’s mountains, camping out in Lake Louise and visiting Upper Kananaskis Lake with her family. She is set to attend a number of upcoming festivals in Edmonton, noting that the summer in Canada is “pretty special,” and a time to enjoy given “what we endure during the other months of the year.”

Summer a ‘baptism by fire’ for rookie MPs

Conservative MP Andrew Lawton has also been spending his summer frequenting local events in Elgin-St. Thomas-London South, Ont., where he took the seat with 50.1 per cent of the vote. The rookie MP has been hopping around events held in the nine municipalities within his southern Ontario riding, which spans some of London and large areas south of the city.

“I’ve been spending the summer trying to meet as many people as I can,” he said. “It’s a great opportunity to connect with the people I’m representing.”

Lawton kicked off his July “racing” across his riding and trying to attend as many Canada Day events as he could in his 112,448 person riding, starting with a parade in the small beach municipality of Port Burwell, which he said was “great fun.”

Lawton, who only spent a few weeks in the House as a rookie MP, said returning to the riding at the end of June was “like a baptism by fire in a lot of ways,” noting he was focused on setting up his constituency office but also putting in “face time” with residents.

Still, he said he was glad his new role gives him the opportunity to frequent local events, like the Pawsitively Elgin Dog Festival, which took place on July 19 and 20.

“I love what I do and I love the community I represent,” he said. “There’s so much going on, and it’s actually great that it’s my job to be a part of it, and to go to all of these festivals.”

But the summer hasn’t been just festivals and interacting with constituents for the first-time MP. Lawton has also been “working to support” Conservative MP Tamara Jansen’s (Cloverdale-Langley City, B.C.) private member’s bill, C-218, that he is co-sponsoring. The legislation seeks to amend the Criminal Code to disallow people with “mental disorder[s]” from accessing medical assistance in dying—something Lawton explained he has a personal stake in.

“That’s something that’s near and dear to my heart as someone who’s dealt with mental illness and someone who survived a rather serious suicide attempt 15 years ago,” he said. “I’ve had a lot of people reach out to me with their own stories, very interested in that issue.”

Liberal MP Jennifer McKelvie, who is also a first-time MP representing Ajax, Ont., is taking a similar approach to her summer with a local focus on events and stakeholders. The former city councillor who secured her win with 56.3 per cent of the vote recently attended the Durham Pride Parade, and spent her Canada Day alongside Liberal MPs Ryan Turnbull (Whitby, Ont.) and Juanita Nathan (Pickering—Brooklin, Ont.), with Turnbull holding a Canada Day barbecue at a park in Whitby. She also attended one of the Royal Canadian Legion’s Canada Day events.

She explained how a local councillor “tipped” her off that Ajax’s previous MP always brought a cake—a tradition she made sure to follow.

McKelvie also said her riding, which had a population of 126,666 as of the 2021 census, is home to a “really vibrant Indian and Tamil community,” explaining she’s attended several cultural events with music and dancing—two skills she confessed are not her strong suit.

“I usually joke that I can’t cook, I can’t dance, and I can’t sing, but I am always happy to enjoy the talents of others,” she joked in an interview.

Still, McKelvie said she’s “looking forward to getting back to work,” noting the government has made some “big promises,” which she said will require a lot of work in the coming months. The geoscientist turned politician will be on the House’s science and research committee, so she said she’ll be spending time “catching up” on the committee’s mandate and work before MPs are back on the Hill in September.

ewand@hilltimes.com
The Hill Times

NEWS

Steel industry players say retaliatory tariffs for Canadian steel need ‘real teeth’ as lobbying efforts heat up

The U.S. market is closed off to Canadian steel-makers because of the 50-per-cent tariff on steel and aluminum, according to Algoma Steel CEO Mike Garcia.

Continued from page 1

agreement isn't forthcoming, then ... we're advocating very strongly for [the federal government] to put real teeth behind the retaliatory tariffs."

U.S. tariffs on all imports of aluminum and steel have stood at 50 per cent since June 4, when they increased from the previous levy of 25 per cent. The 50-per-cent tariff rate renders the U.S. market, which historically makes up about half of Algoma Steel's sales "pretty much inaccessible for the Canadian steel industry," said Garcia.

During the trade war, Garcia said Algoma's advocacy has focused on the importance of the free trade of steel between the U.S. and Canada, and the argument that the steel industry is strategically important to both countries. However, if the U.S. tariffs remain in place, Algoma is pushing the message that Canada needs to work very quickly and aggressively to create an environment where the domestic steel industry can become the majority supplier of the steel sold in Canada, according to Garcia.

"We advocate for very strong anti-dumping measures, for [tariff-rate quotas] on foreign steel. We advocate for very strong buy-Canadian preferences in infrastructure projects and any defence project. That's the type of advocacy we're having with the government, as well as just helping them understand the urgency of the situation," he said.

Prime Minister Mark Carney (Nepean, Ont.) announced a number of measures on July 16 intended to help Canada's steel industry. Among those, Carney announced that Canada will tighten the tariff-rate quota levels—as in the level of imports that can be brought into Canada at a lower duty rate—for steel products from non-free trade agreement countries from 100 per cent to 50 per cent of 2024 volumes. Above those levels, a 50-per-cent tariff will apply.

Carney also announced that, for non-U.S. partners with whom Canada has a free trade agreement, a tariff-rate quota level for steel products at 100 per cent of



Prime Minister Mark Carney said in a press release on July 16 that the Liberal government 'is taking a series of major measures to support, reinforce, and transform' the steel industry in order 'to be more resilient in the face of profound shifts in global trade and supply chains.' *The Hill Times* photograph by Andrew Meade

2024 volumes will be introduced, along with a 50-per-cent tariff on steel imports above those levels.

Garcia called this a good start that shows the federal government is taking the steel industry seriously, but also called these measures insufficient.

"You shouldn't grant blanket exceptions for a steel company to buy U.S. steel if that steel is available in the Canadian market," said Garcia. "If it's [a] product that is made by the domestic Canadian steel industry, then our argument is that it should have a retaliatory tariff with no exceptions at all. That would give the Canadian steel industry a real chance ... to be the supplier for all this steel that's consumed in Canada. Right now, we're competing against so many foreign steel producers, including the U.S. steel producers that are able to ship their steel into Canada."

On July 24, Algoma announced it has applied for a \$500-million loan from the federal government because of concerns about the "significant impact" of the U.S.' current 50-per-cent tariffs. In a press release, Algoma stated the company has sufficient resources to manage its liquidity over the near term, but ongoing uncertainty caused by the U.S. tariffs is resulting in a "structural imbalance in the Canadian market," which is leaving the company to consider various alternatives.

Algoma, an independent, publicly-traded steel producer based in Sault Ste. Marie, Ont., applied for the loan under the Large Enterprise Tariff Loan program announced by Ottawa in March to support Canadian companies affected by tariffs and countermeasures.

"Algoma anticipates that such support would be used to support the company's continuing operations while exploring diversification of the company's customer base to facilitate long-term competitiveness. The amount of additional financing that Algoma will seek will depend, in part, on the duration and severity of the trade dispute and the extent to which

the Canadian steel market remains exposed to unfairly priced imports," reads the press release.

The Hill Times reached out to the Canadian Steel Producers Association (CSPA) to ask about its advocacy with the federal government, but Eddie Hutchinson, CSPA's manager of public affairs, responded in an email on July 22 that the CSPA would be unable to accommodate an interview.

In response to the measures announced by Carney on July 16, CSPA president and CEO Catherine Cobden said in a press release that same day that her organization welcomes the federal government's support "as the consequences are devastating from the unjustified trade action" by the U.S.

"Reducing quota levels on non-free trade partners to 50 per cent of 2024 levels and imposing quotas on free trade partners at 2024 levels with a 50-per-cent over-quota tariff rate are steps in the right direction. We are grateful that the government has acted swiftly and taken this first response to improve these measures to support our industry in Canada and strengthen our domestic market," said Cobden in the press release. "By also imposing 25-per-cent tariffs on steel products melted and poured in China, Canada is a global leader in taking real action to combat the fundamental and disruptive challenge of steel overcapacity."

The CSPA filed 72 communication reports for lobbying activity between January and June in 2025, based on a search of the federal lobbyists' registry on July 22. In that time frame, the majority of its lobbying activity was concentrated in June, with 30 reports filed, followed by February, with 15.

On June 27, the CSPA communicated with Carney, Industry Minister Mélanie Joly (Ahuntsic-Cartierville, Que.) Finance Minister François-Philippe Champagne (Saint-Maurice—Champlain, Que.), International Trade Minister Dominic LeBlanc (Beauséjour, N.B.), and Kirsten

Hillman, ambassador of Canada to the U.S.

The previous day, the CSPA released a statement on their website, in which Cobden argued that the U.S. tariffs had resulted in "a significant blow" to Canada's steel industry, and that measures announced by the federal government up to that point—while appreciated—failed to adequately address the crisis.

Last month, representatives of the CSPA also communicated on June 5 with Minister of Foreign Affairs Anita Anand (Oakville East, Ont.), Joly, Champagne and LeBlanc, as well as with Minister of Jobs and Families Patty Hajdu (Thunder Bay—Superior North, Ont.) on June 13.

Other federal government actions related to supporting the domestic steel industry include an announcement on June 19 by Champagne, who said the government would create two government-stakeholder task forces, one for steel and one for aluminum, to closely monitor trade and market trends.

Canada's steel and aluminum task forces were jointly assembled in the days following the June announcement, and meet on a biweekly basis to support government decision-making with the primary objective of better supporting Canadian industry and workers, according to an emailed statement on July 23 to *The Hill Times* from John Fragos, press secretary in Champagne's office.

"Their shared input helps inform decision-making and ensures that ongoing assessments of trade measures are informed by data and evidence—and are made without undue harm to the Canadian economy," said Fragos in the statement. "The groups are comprised of dozens of representatives from the steel and aluminum industry associations and their members (including representation from all parts of the value chain), organized labour,

the provinces and territories, and multiple government departments and agencies. Industry and union representatives were responsible for identifying their respective participants for the task force."

Rita Rahmati, director of communications and public affairs for the Canadian Institute of Steel Construction (CISC), told *The Hill Times* that the trade war is "very serious." She noted that the current U.S. tariff on steel includes steel-derivative products, unlike the previous U.S. tariffs on steel in 2018.

She said in the past six months, the CISC has been engaging with federal government officials on almost a weekly basis. Her organization's message to the federal government is for a "strategic approach" in response to the tariff. As an example, she pointed out that wide flange beams, which are commonly used for structural support in construction projects, are not produced in Canada at all.

"There's zero domestic capabilities for that product specifically, and we're very largely reliant upon the U.S. for imports of that product. So, we've been echoing to the government that, while we're supportive of putting retaliatory tariffs on the U.S., it has to be done strategically. It can't just be a one-for-one, because our domestic capabilities are not the same as the U.S., as that will disproportionately impact us in Canada," she said. "Another important advocacy point for us has been, while we're essentially now being cut off from the U.S. market ... we need to make sure that government taxpayer dollars for infrastructure projects are going to support Canadian steel fabricators and producers, so that we're able to have work in Canada while we're cut off from the U.S. market."

Rahmati said that a major concern is the uncertainty of how long the tariffs will persist.

"The impacts right now are one thing, but the longer this goes on, the less there's confidence in being able to supply steel and build with steel," she said. "That means contracted projects being lost down the line, and we can see those impacts one year from now, two years from now, [or] three years from now. Infrastructure projects are not projects that are built in just a few months."

Jcnockaert@hilltimes.com
The Hill Times

Canada Trade Statistics (May, 2025)

- In May 2025, Canada exported \$58.5-billion and imported \$65.7-billion, resulting in a negative trade balance of \$7.24-billion.
- The top exports from Canada were crude petroleum (\$11.1-billion), gold (\$5.23-billion), cars (\$3.29-billion), motor vehicle parts and accessories (\$1.4-billion), and petroleum gas (\$1.26-billion).
- In May 2025, the exports of Canada were mainly from Ontario (\$22.6-billion), Alberta (\$13.8-billion), Quebec (\$8.96-billion), British Columbia (\$4.42-billion), and Saskatchewan (\$3.49-billion), while imports destinations were mainly Ontario (\$40.2-billion), Quebec (\$9.49-billion), and British Columbia (\$6.28-billion).
- Canada exported mostly to the United States (\$40.5-billion), United Kingdom (\$5.17-billion), China (\$2.3-billion), Japan (\$1.27-billion), and the Netherlands (\$780-million), and imported mostly from the United States (\$28.7-billion), China (\$8.38-billion), Mexico (\$4.24-billion), Germany (\$1.86-billion), and Vietnam (\$1.72-billion).



Image courtesy pixabay.com

Source: The Observatory of Economic Complexity (OEC)

Health Canada plan forecasts a \$1-billion spending drop by 2027-28

The department could also see a staff reduction of nearly 2,000 bureaucrats by 2028.

Continued from page 1

in 2025-26. That will increase to \$10.567-billion in 2026-27, but the department is forecasting a drop to \$9.251-billion in 2027-28.

The Hill Times asked Health Canada if there were plans to renew the funding for the rare disease strategy and the Emergency Treatment Fund, which provides support for substance use initiatives directly to municipalities and Indigenous communities.

An email on July 24 from Mark Johnson, Health Canada's media relations manager, states that funding for the "first phase" of the national rare disease strategy is being made available between April 1, 2024, and March 31, 2027. In March 2027, "program authorities will expire and the government will assess the funding," the email reads.

The government's decision to develop a strategy was announced in Budget 2019, which came with a spending promise of \$1-billion over two years, starting in 2022-23, and \$500-million ongoing. The strategy itself, launched in March 2023, includes \$1.4-billion for three-year bilateral agreements with provinces and territories that will provide coverage for specific medicines for rare diseases. All 13 provinces and territories have signed the agreements.

As for possible ongoing federal money for the Emergency Treatment Fund, Johnson wrote that the fund "was designed to provide time-limited funding to respond to the high demand for urgent needs as a result of the overdose crisis."

Funding for the fund, announced in Budget 2024 with \$150-million over three years, is meant to end in 2026-27.

Although time-limited, the Liberal Party, now led by Prime Minister Mark Carney (Nepean, Ont.), promised during the 2025 election that it would add \$500-million to the fund, which was introduced by the previous Justin Trudeau government.

The Emergency Treatment Fund was also the subject of Marjorie Michel's (Papineau, Que.) first public announcement as health minister on July 21, when she was in Fredericton to



Health Minister Marjorie Michel inherits a portfolio under which major programs were initiated by former prime minister Justin Trudeau's government. Those include the early stages of national pharmacare and an income-based national dental care program. *The Hill Times* photograph by Andrew Meade

announce \$2.8-million to support four projects in Atlantic Canada.

Like the already-released Throne Speech and mandate letter, the 2025-26 departmental plans—published in mid-June—provide formal insight into what stakeholders can expect from a government that holds the same Liberal name of the previous government but is led by Carney, who has aimed to distinguish himself from Trudeau.

The plans were developed and released prior to the tabling of the 2025 budget, which is expected this fall. However, departmental plans don't typically reflect annual budget funding as they are often pulled together before the government releases its spending plan.

Since being sworn in as prime minister on March 14, and then formally elected in the April 28 general election, Carney has signalled that he will have a more restrained spending approach than Trudeau. That approach is already being felt through Finance Minister François-Philippe Champagne's (Saint-Maurice—Champlain, Que.) move on July 7 to write to his cabinet colleagues, asking them to find "ambitious savings proposals."

As for what seems to be off the table for these upcoming

cuts, Transport Minister Chrystia Freeland (University-Rosedale, Ont.) said in a July 7 interview on CBC News' *Power & Politics* that programs connected to national dental care and early learning and child care, as well as transfers to provinces and territories "would not be touched."

Kevin Den Heijer, a senior consultant with EnterpriseHealth and a former Liberal staffer, told *The Hill Times* by email on July 24 that "the 2025-26 plans are useful documents to understand what a department is doing as a baseline. In a year following an election, the platform, Speech from the Throne, mandate letter, and the upcoming budget are the real signs of how health policy in Prime Minister Carney's government will shake out."

Most of those items, with the exception of the budget, are all public.

The platform included promises that are meant to add medical professionals to Canada's understaffed health care systems, improve resources to help with mental health and substance use problems, and modernize the public health care system.

The single mandate letter that was provided to all cabinet ministers on May 21 did not include any direct references to health policy. The Throne Speech, read

by King Charles III on May 27, focused on protecting pre-existing programs such as pharmacare and dental care, and repeated the Liberals' promise to reduce labour mobility.

As for what Den Heijer sees as health priorities for the current government, he cited expanding access to mental health care, broader access to care across the country, and "a push on digital innovation in health care," which are all broad themes that are included in the 2025-26 plan.

Plan forecasts a loss of nearly 2,000 bureaucrats by 2027-28

In addition to a possible decrease in funding, Health Canada's plan states that it expects to be employing nearly 2,000 fewer full-time equivalents (FTE) between 2024-25 and 2027-28. In 2024-25, the forecasted number of FTEs was 9,808. The 2025-26 fiscal year could see a slight drop to 9,129 but the more significant reductions are being planned for 2026-27, when the plan forecasts 7,937 FTEs, and 2027-28 at 7,881 FTEs.

"The decrease in FTEs in 2026-27 is primarily due to the expiry of budget authorities for the renewal of the federal framework

for the legalization and regulation of cannabis in Canada, the Chemicals Management Plan, and strengthening the capacity and transparency of the pesticide review process," the plan states.

In response to a question about the circumstances connected to the planned staffing cuts, Health Canada's Johnson pointed to the time-limited nature of the above programs and said by email, "Programs with time-limited or 'sunsetting' funding are excluded from future budgets until they receive policy and/or spending approval."

What is missing from the 2025-26 plan are any references to regulating vaping flavours, a proposal published in *Canada Gazette, Part I*, by the Trudeau Liberals in June 2021. The goal of this plan was meant to make vaping less appealing to youth.

However, although put forward by the Trudeau government, the proposal actually has not been included as a priority within the departmental plan since the 2022-23 document. Still, the promise lives on in Health Canada's Forward Regulatory Plan: 2024-2026, which *The Hill Times* reviewed online on July 24.

The regulatory plan states the department is "amending the Tobacco and Vaping Products Act and introducing new regulations to establish new restrictions for vaping products," including to "prohibit the use of all sugars and sweeteners as well as most flavouring ingredients, with limited exceptions for tobacco and mint/menthol flavours."

On the subject of vaping, Johnson's email also noted that the proposal remains in the department's current regulatory plan and states, "Timing for publication of the proposed vaping flavour regulations in *Canada Gazette II* is to be determined."

Also excluded from the 2025-26 plan is any reference to the creation of a safe long-term care act, another Trudeau era promise. That proposal, for which a consultation took place in 2023, was a response to the tragically high number of deaths that occurred in long-term care homes during the first wave of the COVID-19 pandemic. *The Hill Times* previously reported on the absence of the promise from the plan on July 21.

The Hill Times asked Michel's office if her government would move ahead with legislation, and whether the Liberals have plans for any actions to ensure that living in long-term care is a safe way to age.

An emailed response to those questions on July 15 from Emilie Gauduchon-Campbell, Michel's senior communications advisor, makes no mention of the legislation.

"Every senior in Canada deserves to live in dignity, safety and comfort, regardless of where they live. Our new government will work in partnership with provinces, territories, Indigenous peoples and all stakeholders to make sure we do right by Canadian seniors, their families and care workers," wrote Gauduchon-Campbell in an emailed response on July 15.

tsanci@hilltimes.com
The Hill Times

Hill Climbers



By Laura Ryckewaert



Prime Minister Mark Carney had a 15-member senior team in his office as of July 18. *The Hill Times* photograph by Andrew Meade

A look at PM Mark Carney's current senior PMO staff lineup

A slate of former cabinet chiefs of staff are now filling senior roles in Mark Carney's office, including deputy directors of policy Shaili Patel and Katharine Heus.

With **Marc-André Blanchard** now fully installed as chief of staff to Liberal Prime Minister **Mark Carney**, long-awaited news of finalized staffing decisions is beginning to trickle out.

Blanchard, whose hiring was first announced at the beginning of June, started in the top job earlier this month, and is being supported by two deputy chiefs of staff: **Andrée-Lyne Hallé** and **Braeden Caley**.

Hallé and Caley were both co-campaign directors for the recent national Liberal campaign alongside fellow co-director



Andrée-Lyne Hallé is a deputy chief of staff to Carney. Photograph courtesy of LinkedIn



Marc-André Blanchard is Prime Minister Mark Carney's chief of staff. Photograph courtesy of United Nations/Manuel Elias

Andrew Bevan and executive campaign director **Tom Pitfield**.

As part of her campaign role, Hallé, who until recently had been working off of the Hill since 2022, had also offered Quebec advice. Hallé previously worked in then-prime minister **Justin Trudeau's** office from 2015 to 2022, minus a year—the uneventful

year that was 2020—spent as deputy chief of staff and director of operations to then-deputy prime minister **Chrystia Freeland**.

Starting out as press secretary to Trudeau in 2015, Hallé worked her way up to deputy director of communications, then director of outreach. After returning from her stint working for Freeland, Hallé took on the title of director of issues management before being named a strategic adviser to the PM at the start of 2022. She left the Hill that fall and has spent the last roughly two years working for Alstom in Quebec, most recently as director of Quebec public

affairs, media relations, and communications. Hallé is also a former Quebec Liberal staffer.

Prior to this year's general election campaign, Caley ran Carney's successful Liberal leadership campaign. A former senior director of communications for the Liberal Party from 2016 to 2022, up until this past January, Caley had been president and CEO of Canada 2020.

Caley is a past assistant to then-British Columbia Liberal MPs **Raymond Chan** and **Ujjal Dosanjh**, and is a former aide to then-Vancouver mayor **Gregor Robertson**, who is now minister of housing and infrastructure and the MP for Vancouver Fraserview-South Burnaby, B.C. Caley started out as a press secretary in Robertson's office as mayor in 2011, and exited in 2016 as director of policy and communications.

As already reported in this paper, former justice minister **David Lametti** joined Carney's PMO as principal secretary as of July 14.

Lametti represented the riding of LaSalle-Émard-Verdun, Que., in the House from 2015 until his resignation in February 2024, and served as federal justice minister from January 2019 until a July 2023 cabinet shuffle that saw Lametti unexpectedly dropped from the front bench. A former McGill University law professor, Lametti joined Fasken in Montreal soon after his resignation last year, but has exited as counsel there to join Carney's office.

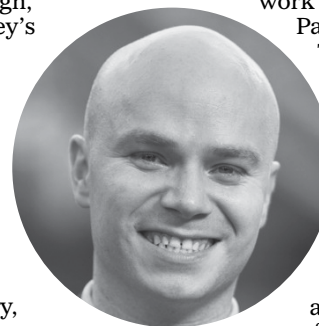
Currently sharing a title with Lametti is Pitfield, who continues as a principal secretary in the top office, as he's been since Carney's early transition into the PM's seat.

Prior to his role advising Carney this year, Pitfield was busy as CEO and Founder of Data Sciences, a firm that's done work for the federal Liberal

Party. A longtime friend of Trudeau's, Pitfield tackled digital operations for the Liberals during the 2021, 2019, and 2015 elections, and is husband to Quebec Liberal MP **Anna Gainey**, a former party president. Among other things, Pitfield is also a former chairman and co-founder of Canada 2020.

Tim Krupa is director of policy to Carney. He's understood to have been penning policy for the PM for months, from Carney's leadership campaign, to his first transition into 80 Wellington St., the general election, and beyond.

Krupa previously worked on the Hill between 2014 and 2017, starting as a special assistant for outreach and operations in Trudeau's office as then-third party Liberal leader, and continuing as a special assistant for policy in Trudeau's PMO after the Liberals formed government in 2015. Krupa went on to work as an investment associate with Bridgewater associates, and



PMO deputy chief of staff Braeden Caley. Photograph courtesy of LinkedIn

HILL CLIMBERS

Continued from page 22

more recently as an economist with Goldman Sachs.

Supporting Krupa are two deputy directors of policy who both served as cabinet chiefs of staff during the previous Parliament: **Shaili Patel** and **Katharine Heus**. Both are understood to have worked on policy during the recent campaign.

Patel was previously chief of staff to then-Crown-Indigenous relations minister **Gary Anandasangaree**. Prior to taking the helm of his office in 2023, Patel was director of policy to **Carolyn Bennett** during both Bennett's time as then-mental health and addictions minister, and as Crown-Indigenous relations minister before that. Patel is also a former long-time aide to then-Saskatchewan Senator **Lillian Eva Dyck**.

For her part, Heus is an ex-chief of staff to then-Indigenous services minister **Patty Hajdu**. Heus started with the Indigenous services file back in 2019, first as an operations director to then-Indigenous services minister **Seamus O'Regan**. She was kept on as a policy director after Liberal MP **Marc Miller** took over the portfolio following the 2019 election. Hajdu took over the file following the subsequent, 2021 election, and soon after promoted Heus to chief of staff. Heus is also a former legislative assistant to then-veterans affairs minister **Kent Hehr**, and a past senior policy adviser to O'Regan as then-veterans minister.

Prior to coming to the Hill to work for the Trudeau government, Heus was most recently a research program co-ordinator with the Pamoja Tunaweza Health and Research Centre in Tanzania. She's also a former project manager with Toronto East General Hospital, among other past jobs. Speaking of ex-chiefs of staff, **Lisa Jørgensen**, who previously ran the offices of then-public safety minister **David McGuinty** and then-justice minister **Arif Virani**, is now director of global affairs in Carney's PMO.

A former criminal and regulatory lawyer most recently practicing with the then-named firm Ruby Shiller Enenajor DiGiuseppe Barristers, in Toronto, Jørgensen has been working on the Hill since 2020, beginning as a policy adviser to Lametti as then-justice minister.



Tim Krupa is director of policy to PM Carney. Photograph courtesy of LinkedIn



Katharine Heus is a deputy director of policy. Photograph courtesy of LinkedIn



Lisa Jørgensen is director of global affairs. Photograph courtesy of LinkedIn

Jørgensen was promoted to director of policy to Lametti after the 2021 election, and became chief of staff to Virani after he was shuffled into the justice portfolio in July 2023.

Jørgensen has been working for Carney since he took over as Liberal leader in March, and until earlier this month, had been working under the title of senior adviser to the PM on Canada-United States relations. In her new role, she's leading global affairs work in Carney's office, including Canada-U.S. relations,

trade, national security, and defence, as noted on her LinkedIn profile. She's also a past litigation associate with McCarthy Tétrault, and an ex-associate with Lockyer Campbell Posner, among other things.

Working closely with Jørgensen is **Scott Gilmore** as senior adviser for foreign affairs, defence, and security policy. Gilmore has been advising Carney since the early months of this year. In a LinkedIn post on his decision to join Carney's first PMO transition team, Gilmore wrote that while he was "initially hesitant to go back into government," there are "few people" he respects more than Carney. "I have been hoping for well over a decade that he would enter politics," said Gilmore, noting he had agreed, "at least during the initial period," to take on the role of senior adviser. Some five months later, Gilmore remains in place.

Gilmore spent the last 12 years as president of Anchor Chain, an advisory and management services firm, and between 2014 and 2022 was also editor-at-large of *Maclean's Magazine*. Gilmore worked as a diplomat with Global Affairs Canada from 1996 to 2004, with postings in Indonesia and Afghanistan, and as deputy director for South Asia, over which time he also spent roughly a year as a deputy national security adviser for the United Nations peacekeeping mission in East Timor. Among other things, Gilmore is also a past governor of the International Development Research Centre.



Now-PMO principal secretary David Lametti speaks with reporters outside the West Block back in September 2023 during his time as a Liberal MP. The Hill Times photograph by Andrew Meade

Also currently working as a senior adviser in Carney's PMO is **Alexandre Boulé**, who was previously chief of staff to then-foreign affairs minister **Mélanie Joly**.

Boulé started in Joly's office in July 2023 as a deputy chief of staff, and was promoted to lead the office outright in last fall. Before then, Boulé had been director of regional affairs to then-Quebec lieutenant **Pablo Rodriguez**. He's also a former policy adviser to then-foreign affairs minister **Marc Garneau**, and a former tour advance to Trudeau.

Outside of federal politics, Boulé has worked as a senior adviser for media relations and public affairs for CN Rail, as an adviser to then-Quebec municipal affairs minister **Martin Coiteux**, and as an associate with McCarthy Tétrault.

Angad Dhillon is once again in 80 Wellington, this time as director of operations to Carney. Dhillon first worked in the office as an Ontario regional affairs adviser between 2018 and 2021, and has since been director of operations and later chief of staff to then-transport minister **Omar Alghabra**, and more recently chief of staff to then-small business minister **Rechie Valdez**.

A former field organizer for the federal party, Dhillon has been working on the Hill since the end of 2015, beginning as a special assistant for operations and outreach in the Liberal research bureau (LRB). He's since also been a special assistant for policy to Joly as then-heritage minister, and director of outreach in the LRB.



Angad Dhillon is director of operations in the PMO. Photograph courtesy of LinkedIn

Mike Maka is director of tour and strategic planning. Maka confirmed his official hiring on LinkedIn earlier this month, but he's been supporting Team Carney for a number of months, including as a deputy campaign manager responsible for tour organization during the recent federal election.

Maka is another former cabinet chief of staff; in his case, he most recently ran the office of then-international development minister **Ahmed Hussen**. Maka is also a past chief to then-immigration minister **Sean Fraser**, to Alghabra as then-transport minister, and to Hussen as then-families minister.

A longtime political staffer, Maka's CV includes years spent working at Queen's Park, including as an assistant to then-Liberal MPPs **Alghabra** and **Laurel Broten**, and to the province's government services and municipal and housing affairs ministers.

Maka worked as an adviser in Trudeau's office as Liberal opposition leader for a little more than a year leading into the 2015 election, after which Maka joined the PMO as a communications officer, working there until early 2018 when he exited as senior communications planning manager. Maka has since also been director of communications and strategic planning to **Jean-Yves Duclos** as then-families minister.

Overseeing communications for Carney is director **Jane Deeks**, who was a deputy



Mike Maka is director of tour and strategic planning. Photograph courtesy of LinkedIn

campaign manager for digital communications during this year's election, and similarly led digital strategy work on Carney's successful leadership campaign. Deeks is a carryover from the former Trudeau PMO, having been director of digital strategy there since April 2024. Before then, Deeks was director of communications to O'Regan as then-labour and seniors minister.

A former assistant to Bennett as the then-MP for Toronto-St. Paul's, Ont., Deeks' first ministerial job came in 2018 when she was hired as press secretary to Bennett as then-Crown-



Jane Deeks is director of communications to Carney. Photograph courtesy of LinkedIn

Indigenous relations minister. Deeks has since also been press secretary and later communications director to then-fisheries minister **Bernadette Jordan**, and director of communications to then-employment minister **Carla Qualtrough**.

Finally, rounding out the list of senior staff currently at work at 80 Wellington is **Sylvie Peterson**, who is manager of the PM's executive office. Peterson is a longtime aide to Carney, and previously filled a similar role while working for him at Brookfield Asset Management.

Stay tuned to **Hill Climbers** for more staffing updates.

tryckewaert@hilltimes.com
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Parliamentary Calendar

The Parliamentary Calendar is a free events listing. Send in your political, cultural, diplomatic, or governmental event in a paragraph with all the relevant details under the subject line 'Parliamentary Calendar' to news@hilltimes.com by Wednesday at noon before the Monday paper or by Friday at noon for the Wednesday paper.

Canadian Health Coalition to host a webinar on July 28, 'Continuing the fight for pharmacare, breaking the grip of big pharma'



The Canadian Health Coalition hosts a webinar, 'Continuing the fight for pharmacare, breaking the grip of big pharma,' featuring Dr. Joel Lexchin and Sharon Batt. Monday, July 28, at 12 p.m. ET. happening online: healthcoalition.ca. Image courtesy of Pixabay

MONDAY, JULY 28

Webinar: 'Continuing the Fight for Pharmacare'—The Canadian Health Coalition hosts a webinar, "Continuing the fight for pharmacare, breaking the grip of big pharma," featuring Dr. Joel Lexchin and Sharon Batt. Monday, July 28, at 12 p.m. ET. happening online: healthcoalition.ca.

WEDNESDAY, JULY 30

Panel: 'Telecommunications in Canada'—As part of its CIPPIC Summer Speaker Series 2025, the University of Ottawa's Canadian Internet Policy and Public Interest Clinic hosts a discussion on "Telecommunications in Canada," featuring Vicky Eatrides, chair and CEO of the CRTC; and Rachelle Frenette, general counsel and deputy executive director, CRTC. Wednesday, July 30, at 1 p.m. ET at uOttawa, Fauteux Hall, 57 Louis-Pasteur Private. Register via Eventbrite.

MONDAY, AUG. 18

Byelection in Battle River—Crowfoot—Conservative Leader Pierre Poilievre will be running in the byelection in Battle River—Crowfoot, Alta., which will be held today. Former Conservative MP Damien Kurek resigned his seat so that Poilievre could run here and get a seat in the House.

MONDAY, SEPT. 1

Senator Seidman's Retirement—Today is Quebec Conservative Senator Judith Seidman's 75th birthday, which means her mandatory retirement from the Senate.

WEDNESDAY, SEPT. 3—FRIDAY, SEPT. 5

Assembly of First Nations' AGA—The Assembly of First Nations hosts its

annual general assembly. Wednesday, Sept. 3, to Friday, Sept. 5, at the RBC Convention Centre, 375 York Ave., Winnipeg. Details: afn.ca/events.

FRIDAY, SEPT. 5—SATURDAY, SEPT. 6

CSFN Regional Conference—The Canada Strong and Free Network hosts its 2025 Regional Conference. Conservatives will gather to discuss the unique needs and aspirations of Western Canadians within the Canadian federation. Friday, Sept. 5, to Saturday, Sept. 6, at the Westin Airport Calgary Hotel. Details: canadastrongandfree.network.

TUESDAY SEPT. 9—THURSDAY, SEPT. 12

Liberal National Caucus Meeting—The federal Liberals will meet from Tuesday, Sept. 9 to Thursday, Sept. 12, for their national caucus meeting in Edmonton to set their fall strategy.

MONDAY, SEPT. 15

House Returns—The House of Commons returns on Monday, Sept. 15, and it's expected to be a busy fall session. It will sit Sept. 15-19; Sept. 22-26; Oct. 1-Oct. 3; Oct. 6-Oct. 10; Oct. 20-Oct. 24; Oct. 27-Oct. 31; Nov. 3-Nov. 7; Nov. 17-Nov. 21; Nov. 24-Nov. 28; Dec. 1-Dec. 5; and Dec. 8-Dec. 12. That's 11 weeks left before it breaks for the year 2025. In total, the House sat only 73 days this year. Last year, it sat 122 days, and in 2023, it sat 121 days. In 2022, it sat 129 days, and in 2021, it sat 95 days.

Ottawa Centre September Trivia Night—The Ontario Liberal Party hosts an evening of trivia and fun downtown with fellow Liberals. Each ticket includes snacks and a drink

cover, and new Future Fund sign-ups will be accepted at the door. Monday, Sept. 15, at 5:30 p.m. ET at 3 Brewers Restaurant, 240 Sparks St., Ottawa. Details: ontarioliberal.ca.

TUESDAY, SEPT. 16

Conference: 'Canada's Next Economic Transformation'—The Institute for Research on Public Policy hosts a day-long conference, "Canada's Next Economic Transformation: Industrial Policy in Tumultuous Times." Participants include Steve Verheul (former assistant deputy minister of the Trade Policy and Negotiations branch of Global Affairs Canada); Matthew Holmes (Canadian Chamber of Commerce); Emna Braham (L'Institut du Québec); Jim Stanford (Centre for Future Work); Jesse McCormick (First Nations Major Project Coalition); Chris Bataille (Centre on Global Energy Policy); and Tim Hudak (Counsel Public Affairs). Tuesday, Sept. 16, at the Lord Elgin Hotel, 100 Elgin St., Ottawa. Details: irpp.org.

WEDNESDAY, SEPT. 17

CUTA 2025 Policy Forum—The Canadian Urban Transit Association hosts its 2025 Policy Forum, bringing together some of North America's leading transit and urban mobility experts to discuss the industry's future. Wednesday, Sept. 17, at 8 a.m. ET the Lord Elgin Hotel, 100 Elgin St., Ottawa. Register via Eventbrite.

FRIDAY, SEPT. 19

First of 2025 CBC Massey Lectures—Former Amnesty International Canada secretary-general Alex Neve will deliver this year's CBC Massey Lectures, titled "Universal: Renewing

Human Rights in a Fractured World." The next lectures will take place in Vancouver (Sept. 25), Edmonton (Oct. 1), Happy Valley/Goose Bay, Labrador (Oct. 15), and Ottawa (Oct. 30). Friday, Sept. 19, Koerner Hall, 273 Bloor St. W., Toronto. Details to follow: masseycollege.ca.

SUNDAY, SEPT. 21

Senator Mégie's Retirement—Today is Quebec ISG Senator Marie-Françoise Mégie's 75th birthday, which means her mandatory retirement from the Senate.

TUESDAY, SEPT. 23

Senate Returns—The Senate will return on Tuesday, Sept. 23, at 2 p.m., and is scheduled to sit Sept. 23-25, but could also sit on Sept. 26. It's scheduled to sit Oct. 1-2 (possibly Oct. 30); Oct. 7-Oct. 9 (possibly Oct. 6 and Oct. 10); Oct. 7-9, (possibly Oct. 6, Oct. 10); Oct. 21-23 (possibly Oct. 20, Oct. 24); Oct. 28-30 (possibly Oct. 27, Oct. 31); Nov. 4-6 (possibly will sit Nov. 3, Nov. 7); Nov. 18-20 (possibly Nov. 17, Nov. 21); Nov. 25-27 (possibly sit Nov. 24, Nov. 28); Dec. 2-4 (possibly Dec. 1, Dec. 5); Dec. 9-11 (possibly Dec. 1, Dec. 5); dec. 9-11 (possibly Dec. 8, Dec. 12); and finally Dec. 16-18 (possibly Dec. 15, Dec. 19). And that will be it for 2025.

Future Forward Summit—Canada 2020 hosts its annual policy summit on the topic "Future Forward: Shaping Public Policy in Canada." At a time when the world is shifting fast, this summit asks the question: how can Canada shape—not just react to—the forces defining our future? Tuesday, Sept. 23, at The Westin Ottawa. Details: canada2020.ca.

WEDNESDAY, SEPT. 24

Politics and the Pen Gala—The Writers' Trust of Canada hosts the Politics and the Pen Gala, its annual fundraiser where the \$25,000 Shaughnessy Cohen Prize for Political Writing will also be presented. Location to be announced. Details: writerstrust.com.

MONDAY, OCT. 6

An Evening with David Peterson—The Pearson Centre hosts an evening with David Peterson, celebrating the 40th anniversary of his becoming premier of Ontario in 1985. Monday, Oct. 6, at 6:30 p.m. ET at One King West, Toronto. Details: thepearsoncentre.ca.

FRIDAY, OCT. 17

Senator Richards' Retirement—Today is New Brunswick Senator David Adams Richards' 75th birthday, which means his mandatory retirement from the Senate.

TUESDAY, OCT. 21

The Regent Debate—The C.D. Howe Institute host the seventh Regent Debate, a marquee platform for serious discussion on policy issues essential to Canada's future. Speakers to be announced. Tuesday, Oct. 21, at 5 p.m. ET at the Fairmont Royal York, Toronto. Register: cdhowe.org.

WEDNESDAY, OCT. 22—SUNDAY, OCT. 26

Ottawa International Writers' Festival—The Ottawa International Writers' Festival fall edition takes place from Wednesday, Oct. 22, to Sunday, Oct. 26. Details to come: writersfestival.org.

THURSDAY, OCT. 23

Douglas Roche to be Awarded—Douglas Roche will receive the Canadian Leadership for Nuclear Disarmament 2025 Distinguished Achievement Award on Thursday, Oct. 23, 2025, at 4 p.m. at the Centre for International Policy Studies at the University of Ottawa, in Room 4007 of the Faculty of Social Sciences Building, 120 University Private, Ottawa. Roche will also deliver a lecture, "Creative Dissent: A Politician's Struggle for Peace." The lecture will be followed by a reception and will conclude at 6 p.m. For more information, contact the CLND Secretariat at clnd@pugwashgroup.ca

THURSDAY, OCT. 30

Final CBC Massey Lecture—Former Amnesty International Canada secretary-general Alex Neve will deliver the final instalment of this year's CBC Massey Lectures, titled "Universal: Renewing Human Rights in a Fractured World." Thursday, Oct. 30, at the National Arts Centre, 1 Elgin St., Ottawa. Details to follow: masseycollege.ca

WEDNESDAY, NOV. 5

Vimy Gala—The Conference of Defence Associations Institute hosts its 33rd annual Vimy Gala. This prestigious black-tie event honours Canada's fallen heroes and celebrate exceptional Canadians who have shaped the nation's defence and security landscape. The 2025 Vimy Award Laureate will also be honoured. Wednesday, Nov. 5, at the Canadian War Museum, 1 Vimy Pl. Register: cdainstitute.ca.

SATURDAY, NOV. 22

Press Gallery Dinner—The Parliamentary Press Gallery will host its annual gala dinner. Saturday, Nov. 22, at the Sir John A. Macdonald Building, Ottawa. Details: collin.lafrance@parl.gc.ca.

THURSDAY, JAN. 29—SATURDAY, JAN. 31, 2026

Conservative National Convention—The Conservative Party of Canada will hold its the National Convention. Thursday, Jan. 29, to Saturday, Jan. 31, 2026, at the Telus Convention Centre, Calgary.