

stop smoking buy other products and other services. They go to the movies and to restaurants, they buy clothes, and so forth. I think rising demand in these sectors will create more employment.

[English]

This Bill in action would give employees in the federal workplace the right to a smoke-free work-place for the first time. Employees have been demanding it but without success. Health and Welfare voluntary guidelines have not worked. Putting a sign up to stop the tobacco smoke from circulating does not do it. Specific cases have been taken, but they have not been very successful. They have taken years, as in the case of Mr. Timpauer, or they have been turned down on appeal by the Federal Court of Appeal. It is expensive, time consuming and it is not the way to do it. This is a serious problem and it needs legislation.

I note that in the field of transportation the transportation companies have welcomed regulation from the Government. They find it difficult to adjudicate between smokers and non-smokers. They want this legislation. My private Members' Bill includes common carriers, the airlines, railway companies, marine transportation and interprovincial buses. They want this regulation as well.

There is a great deal of support for this Bill, Mr. Speaker, from the Canadian Cancer Society, Physicians for a Smoke Free Canada, Non-Smoker's Rights, Nova Scotia Medical Associations, the Canadian Council on Smoking and Health, the Public Service Alliance of Canada, and I expect we will be seeing lots more support come in as Canadians see what are the possibilities.

This Bill could be landmark legislation. It could be the first Bill passed under the new reformed House rules, and it certainly could be the first comprehensive law dealing with Canada's preventable health problems. I call on all Members of the House on both sides to give employees under federal jurisdiction the right to a clean, safe, disease-free working environment. I call Hon. Members in all three Parties to promote the health of children, to stop the sophisticated marketeers, these pushers in pin-stripes, as the doctors have called them, from using the allures of their trade to attract children into a habit that they will regret. I call on all Hon. Members to put aside all partisan considerations and support a Bill that will give employees the right to a clean environment and will give children the protection that they need to grow up safely.

• (1710)

[Translation]

Mr. Gabriel Fontaine (Lévis): Mr. Speaker, I am pleased today to comment on Bill C-204 introduced by my colleague from Broadview—Greenwood (Ms. McDonald). This measure is aimed at several objectives, including restricted smoking in the workplace, a ban on tobacco advertising, and restricted sales of tobacco products. My intention today is not to deal

with every single sector which might be affected by this piece of legislation. Instead I will concentrate my remarks on its consequences in the workplace.

Mr. Speaker, there is already in place a mechanism to deal with the problem of workers' health and safety, and I am referring to the joint committees on health and safety.

At the local level, health and safety committees are the ideal means to tackle the complex issues related to the safety and health of workers, so we should not take any initiative likely to undermine their efforts. As it happens, that would be the ultimate result of Bill C-204. An explanation is in order, Mr. Speaker.

As all my colleagues already know, employers and employees under federal jurisdiction are governed by the provisions of the Canada Labour Code and its attendant regulations. Labour Code Part IV covers employment health and safety. It applies to every workplace referred to in the legislation now before us, including the federal Public Service, the airlines, the banks, the postal service, radio and TV stations, the railways, the grain elevators and some Crown corporations.

The primary purpose of Part IV of the Code is to prevent employment accidents, injuries and illnesses in the carrying out of duties covered by the Code or arising from or connected to them. To that end, it requires employers to protect adequately the safety and health of their employees. Part IV of the Code also empowers the Governor in Council to enact regulations for the safety and health of workers. It is within that mandate that the Canada Regulations on safety and health in the workplace have been established.

Those 18-part regulations establish the standards for everything that concerns the safety and health of workers, from hygiene measures to boilers. Part X of the Regulations deals with dangerous substances and is of particular significance to the debate. It sets up the procedure for investigations, even when there is only a possibility that the safety and health of workers might be endangered. Limits are indicated for the permissible exposure to dangerous substances. It is recognized that the exposure to dangerous substances must be limited as much as possible by technical means.

Mr. Speaker, Labour Canada is responsible for recommending safety and health regulations to the Governor in Council and for enforcing the regulations as authorized by the Governor in Council. However, the Code recognizes the very important role played by employers and employees alike in eliminating as much as possible the existing hazards in the workplace.

The Code makes it mandatory for employers with twenty employees or more to establish a safety and health committee made up of an equal number of management and labour representatives. Small businesses with fewer than five employees may select one worker as a safety and health representative, instead of setting up a committee. It is Labour Canada's sincere hope that those safety and health committees