

Routine Proceedings

Mrs. Beryl Gaffney (Nepean): Mr. Speaker, I am pleased to present two petitions from people in Alberta and the city of Toronto with regard the government's plan to impose a tax on magazines, books and newspapers.

These people feel that we should reaffirm the historic principles embodied in tax free status for the printed word by retaining a zero rate in the GST legislation and regulations.

Mr. Dennis Mills (Broadview—Greenwood): Mr. Speaker, I would like to present to the House further petitions supporting the previous petitioners who are saying that since Confederation the government has not applied taxes to magazines, books and newspapers.

They humbly ask the government to go back to the drawing board and withdraw the GST tax from such items.

Mr. Fred J. Mifflin (Bonavista—Trinity—Conception): Mr. Speaker, I rise on behalf of my colleague, the hon. member for Mount Royal. She has put together a petition with 37 signatures from people in Fredericton, Wainwright, Alberta and Toronto, Ontario. The concern of those who have signed the petition is that since Confederation the governments of Canada, whichever party, has not seen fit to apply any taxes to magazines, books and newspapers—the printed word—until now. It has been decided that the GST will apply to the printed word.

The petitioners see this as a tax on reading and they humbly call upon Parliament to reject this and to retain the zero rate in GST legislation regulations.

Mr. Rey Pagtakhan (Winnipeg North): Mr. Speaker, I too would like to present a petition, pursuant to Standing Order 36. This petition of 50 signatures has been obtained on the initiative of my colleague from Mount Royal. They pray to Parliament that the GST be withdrawn, particularly because a tax on books and the printed matter is a tax on literacy and therefore unconscionable in the history of Canada.

Mrs. Diane Marleau (Sudbury): Mr. Speaker, I am presenting a petition today signed by a number of residents from Vancouver, British Columbia. They are opposed to the goods and services tax and they ask, please, that the government open its heart and mind and

go back to the drawing board because they are opposed to this tax, especially as it applies to reading material.

Mr. Jesse Flis (Parkdale—High Park): Mr. Speaker, I rise pursuant to Standing Order 36. I too have the honour of presenting petitions from residents across Canada. They are objecting to the government placing a tax on reading materials.

As a former educator for almost 30 years, I find it horrifying that at a time when we wanted to increase literacy, here is a government that wants to tax the printed word.

Hon. Ralph Ferguson (Lambton—Middlesex): Mr. Speaker, I rise today to present a petition in the House of Commons signed by citizens of Mississauga, Scarborough, Aurora, Oakville, North York, Toronto, Brampton, and so on.

These people are sending a very clear message to the Minister of Finance who made that decision to tax books. They want to reaffirm the historic principles embodied in free tax status for the printed word by retaining a zero rate in the GST legislation and regulations.

Mr. Maurice Foster (Algoma): Mr. Speaker, I have the honour to present a petition with some 50 signatures. These citizens of Canada call for the maintenance of the historic principle embodied in the tax free status of the printed word by retaining the zero rate in the GST legislation and regulation. The petitioners call for the uninhibited dissemination of the printed word as a cornerstone of democracy, culture, education, and a literate and productive society. And they point out it will be negatively impacted by the GST.

• (1650)

Mr. Speaker, I have the honour to present these petitions.

Mr. Derek Lee (Scarborough—Rouge River): Mr. Speaker, I am pleased to present a petition on behalf of residents of Camrose and Stettler, Alberta, calling upon the government to recognize the integral role of the printed word in literacy education and free speech. The petitioners call upon the government to zero rate magazines, books, and newspapers in the GST legislation.

Mr. Rex Crawford (Kent): Mr. Speaker, I am honoured once again to rise in the House, pursuant to Standing Order 36, and to present five petitions from Canadians from across this beautiful country who are against the