

Mr. Speaker, I am pleased to rise in my place today to speak to the Third Reading of the Amendments to the Patent Act. I appreciate this opportunity to set the record straight and bring this debate back to reality.

In my long association with this House, Mr. Speaker, I have rarely seen such a display of misrepresentation and erroneous statements made by opponents as we have witnessed in the past couple of weeks.

The government announced its intention to update the Patent Act a year ago. The honourable members opposite have had plenty of time to get their facts straight.

But instead, Mr. Speaker, we hear the same phoney charges, the same hysteria, the same unfounded allegations as we heard over Bill C-22 in 1987.

Opponents of C-91 and, I regret to say, at least one prominent Canadian newspaper have said recently that the innovative companies failed to keep their 1987 promises to increase research and development (R&D) spending.

The truth is, Mr. Speaker, that these companies doubled their R&D percentage from 4.9 per cent in 1987 to 9.6 per cent in 1991, essentially achieving their 10 per cent target five years ahead of schedule and investing \$1.1 billion in the process. At the same time, they increased basic research from 17 per cent to 26.5 per cent of total R&D.

Opponents said that the industry would never create the expected 3,000 jobs. They were wrong, Mr. Speaker. Two thousand, four hundred jobs were created in the first four years alone. The industry is on track for 3,000 new jobs by 1996. What is more, Canada has bucked an international trend: these increases have come at a time when the industry worldwide is downsizing.

Opponents said that C-22 would destroy Canada's thriving generic drug industry. What has happened since then? Sales by the generic companies in Canada have grown by 180 per cent.

Critics of Bill C-22 also claimed that prices of patented medicines would skyrocket. Again they were wrong. In fact, the Patented Medicines Prices Review Board has been successful in keeping drug price increases to 2.9 per cent -- well below the rate of inflation. What other sector can claim that, Mr. Speaker?

Bill C-22 was successful. It delivered on its promise to improve the climate for R&D and job creation while still ensuring reasonable drug prices and a competitive generic drug industry. But the world is changing. The global environment in which the international pharmaceutical industry operates is evolving