

Routine Proceedings

the number of petitions I have received concerning the goods and services tax.

[English]

The petitioners are very concerned and upset that the government has not addressed the unfair taxation system that currently is in place in this country which permits wealthy individuals and corporations to pay little or no federal tax, while forcing lower and middle income taxpayers to bear more of the national tax burden.

They call upon the government to immediately implement a fair taxation system in this country.

• (1600)

[Translation]

Mr. Guy H. Arseneault (Restigouche—Chaleur): Madam Speaker, pursuant to Standing Order 36, I have the honour of tabling a number of petitions signed by Canadians across this country.

[English]

These citizens are against the goods and services tax because they believe that if it is implemented it would create economic disruption, increase taxes on average families, introduce an unprecedented level of complexity in the tax system, and impose further hardship on low-income Canadians.

[Translation]

They ask us to reject this new tax.

[English]

Mr. Ross Harvey (Edmonton East): Madam Speaker, it is said "It ain't over 'til the fat lady sings" and without further reference to the other place I would like to present today under Standing Order 36 a number of petitions signed by a total of 3,341 Edmontonians who continue to call on the government to junk the GST.

[Translation]

Mrs. Shirley Maheu (Saint-Laurent—Cartierville): Madam Speaker, pursuant to Standing Order 36, I have the honour and the privilege of tabling 63 additional petitions bearing 1,837 signatures of citizens throughout the province of Quebec. Your petitioners humbly pray Parliament that the government reject the new goods and services tax which will create incredible hardship for people on low and modest incomes.

VIA RAIL

Mr. Iain Angus (Thunder Bay—Atikokan): Madam Speaker, I have the honour and privilege of presenting a number of petitions. The first group has been signed by hundreds of Canadians from one end of the country to the other. They are still angry and upset by the decision to reduce VIA Rail services by half and they call upon the government to guarantee VIA sufficient support to carry out its mandate to provide passenger services by upgrading the equipment and putting the system back in place.

GOODS AND SERVICES TAX

Mr. Iain Angus (Thunder Bay—Atikokan): The second group of petitions, Madam Speaker, is signed by 389 residents primarily in the riding of Thunder Bay—Atikokan. They all object to the still-proposed goods and services tax which has yet to go through the other place. I just want to thank the United Steel Workers of America, Gary's Esso Service, Consolidated Press, Dr. Vtipil, Venice Grill, Len's RV Sales, and Old Dutch Foods for their help in collecting these petitions.

Ms. Mary Clancy (Halifax): Madam Speaker, I rise pursuant to Standing Order 36 to present a number of petitions signed by many Canadians from Hamilton and Windsor, Ontario, but most particularly from the metropolitan area of Halifax, including the ridings of Halifax and Halifax West. By these petitions with over 3,000 names these people pray to Parliament that the imposition of the goods and services tax will cause serious and unfair hardship to low and middle-income Canadians, and particularly to those Canadians in Atlantic Canada.

Ms. Dawn Black (New Westminster—Burnaby): Madam Speaker, I also rise under Standing Order 36 to present petitions today. The first petition I have is a petition that has been circulated by small business people in my constituency. They ask that this government get rid of the goods and services tax. They say that it forces small business to carry a disproportionate share of the tax burden, and they pray that this government will reject the goods and services tax, consult with business, labour and consumer groups, and reach a consensus on reform of the tax system before implementing the GST. That is