

VIA RAIL

Mr. Nelson A. Riis (Kamloops): Mr. Speaker, these petitioners are asking the government to reconsider the decision to curtail VIA Rail service and point out a variety of concerns, namely, that it is a very environmentally unsound decision to curtail passenger rail service in the country, as the government proposes to do. They are asking the government to reconsider and actually invest in an enhanced passenger train service so that we can move people efficiently in an environmentally sound way.

PROPOSED GOODS AND SERVICES TAX

Mr. Jack Whittaker (Okanagan—Similkameen—Meritt): Mr. Speaker, today it is my pleasure to present two petitions, both certified under Standing Order 36. The first one is, as were others presented before the House today, a petition pointing out that the government has not addressed the unfair taxation system presently in place in Canada, and asking it to stop the present proposed goods and service tax and instead look at real tax reform.

FORESTRY

Mr. Jack Whittaker (Okanagan—Similkameen—Meritt): Mr. Speaker, the second petition is a petition in which the petitioners from various parts of Canada encourage the Parliament of Canada to renew the FRDA agreement with British Columbia and thereby provide for renewed commitment to restocking our forest land, advancing forestry research, promoting silviculture and assisting the forest industry in developing the new products and markets that will provide us with forestry jobs for the future.

Mr. Brian L. Gardiner (Prince George—Bulkley Valley): Mr. Speaker, I too have petitions from residents in the ridings of Prince George—Peace River and Cariboo—Chilcotin in the Province of British Columbia urging this government to renew the forestry resource development agreement right away with the Province of British Columbia to ensure that we can get on with the proper management of our forests.

Routine Proceedings

QUESTIONS ON THE ORDER PAPER

(Questions answered orally are indicated by an asterisk.)

Mr. Albert Cooper (Parliamentary Secretary to Government House Leader): Mr. Speaker, the following questions will be answered today: Nos. 139 and 140.

[Text]

BANK OF NOVA SCOTIA—SURPLUS PENSION FUNDS' WITHDRAWAL

Question No. 139—**Mr. Skelly (North Island—Powell River):**

Has the Bank of Nova Scotia withdrawn surplus pension funds pursuant to the terms of the *Pension Benefits Standards Act, 1985* at any time since 1969 and, if so (a) on what dates (b) in what amounts?

Mr. Gilles Loiseau (Minister of State (Finance)): I am informed by the Office of the Superintendent of Financial Institutions as follows:

The Pension Benefits Standards Act, 1985 and the predecessor Act, the Pension Benefits Standards Act, require that a pension plan sponsor receive authorization from the Superintendent before withdrawing surplus funds from its pension plan.

Under the current legislation, the plan sponsor must follow a detailed procedure, as prescribed in the Regulations under the Act, and must demonstrate its entitlement to the surplus funds before the Superintendent will consider authorizing any withdrawal from the pension fund.

Neither the Superintendent of Financial Institutions nor his predecessor, the Superintendent of Insurance, has authorized the Bank of Nova Scotia to withdraw surplus funds from its pension plan in the period between 1972 and the current date. Government records prior to 1972, in this regard, have not been retained.

BANK OF NOVA SCOTIA—SHORTFALL PAYMENTS

Question No. 140—**Mr. Skelly (North Island—Powell River):**

Has the Bank of Nova Scotia ever been obliged to make shortfall payments pursuant to the terms of the *Pension Benefits Standards Act, 1985* at any time since 1969 and, if so (a) on what dates (b) in what amounts?