

Routine Proceedings

pray and call upon Parliament to reject the proposed goods and services tax.

Mr. Jack Whittaker (Okanagan—Similkameen—Merritt): Mr. Speaker, it is my privilege today to present a petition to the House of Commons pursuant to Standing Order 36. There are actually eight petitions signed by 417 people in the riding of Okanagan—Similkameen—Merritt, from the communities of Carmi, Salal, Princeton, Hedly, Merritt and the Lower Nicola.

These people are concerned, as are so many others across this country, with the imposition of a goods and services tax of any nature whatsoever. They have asked the government to ensure, if and when there is a broad public consensus on a sales tax measure to replace the manufacturers' sales tax, that it not be an opportunity for the government to impose a massive tax grab.

They are asking this government to ensure that the tax burden is not shifted to ordinary Canadians but is fairly shifted throughout the whole of Canada.

Ms. Margaret Mitchell (Vancouver East): Mr. Speaker, I also have a petition signed by quite a number of British Columbia residents opposing the goods and services tax. The petitioners state that this is an unfair form of taxation which permits wealthy individuals and corporations to pay little or no tax while forcing lower and middle-income taxpayers to bear the burden of national taxes. The petition also states that the government is now trying to tax reading, haircuts, diapers, coffins and home heating fuels.

The petitioners call upon Parliament to reject the current proposal, to reform the tax system and to cease with a proposal which will shift the tax burden on to ordinary Canadians through a regressive consumption tax instead of through real tax reform.

VIA RAIL

Ms. Margaret Mitchell (Vancouver East): Mr. Speaker, I also have a second petition which opposes cuts to VIA Rail. The petitioners ask Parliament to guarantee VIA sufficient support to carry out its mandate to provide passenger services in Canada.

SOCIAL PROGRAMS

Mr. Len Taylor (The Battlefords—Meadow Lake): Mr. Speaker, I am pleased to rise today to present two petitions. The first petition, certified correct under Standing Order 36 by the clerk of petitions, comes from a

number of people in the Big River community of Saskatchewan in the Battlefords—Meadow Lake constituency. It is a petition circulated by One Voice, the senior's network, that calls upon Parliament to abandon the proposed measures that will clawback the old age security and family allowance benefits undermining the principle of universality in social programs. They state that it is a tax that would discriminate against recipients of old age security and family allowance benefits. They call upon Parliament to abandon this and maintain an old age security and family allowance benefit program that is tied to the level of income.

PROPOSED GOODS AND SERVICES TAX

Mr. Len Taylor (The Battlefords—Meadow Lake): Mr. Speaker, I also want to present petition today signed by residents of the Battlefords—Meadow Lake constituency, primarily from Battleford and Wilkie in the North Battleford area.

The petitioners are indicating that the goods and services tax is a regressive tax. They call upon Parliament to reject the proposal for the goods and services tax, to reform the taxation system so there is an effective minimum tax on wealthy individuals and corporations, to ensure that if and when there is a broad public consensus on sales tax measures to replace the manufacturers' sales tax that this reform not be an opportunity for the federal government to impose a massive tax grab and, finally, for the government to cease with the proposal which will shift the tax burden on to ordinary Canadians through a regressive consumption tax instead of a thorough real tax reform.

Mr. Stan Keyes (Hamilton West): Mr. Speaker, I have the honour and duty, pursuant to Standing Order 36, to present to this house four petitions certified correct by the clerk of petitions. They contain the signatures of Canadians who reside in the communities of Hamilton, Burlington, Stoney Creek, Ancaster, Dundas and Caledonia.

The petitioners state that the Conservative federal government wants to impose on Canadians a new general tax of 9 per cent on all goods and services which will be hidden from Canadians and applied to virtually everything they buy. They say that the imposition of this new general goods and services tax will cause serious and unfair hardship to low and middle income Canadians and that the imposition of this tax will create an onerous burden on small business. They call on Parliament to