Routine Proceedings

What they are saying is that we have an unfair tax system. We should have a fair tax system based on the ability to pay, where wealthy people pay their fair share and where corporations pay their fair share, not where ordinary citizens of this country pick up the entire burden.

I am very pleased to table, under the provisions of Standing Order 36 and on behalf of these people, the petition in opposition to the goods and services tax.

Ms. Dawn Black (New Westminster—Burnaby): Mr. Speaker, I also rise under Standing Order 36 to present a petition that has been brought to me by small business people in my community.

They are very upset about the goods and services tax. They say that it forces small business to carry a disproportionate share of the tax burden in Canada. They also say that its implementation will be a nightmare for small business in Canada and that the offsetting is not adequate to support them in their businesses when they must change their computer programs and their cash registers. They say that this tax does not address the concerns of small business in this country.

The petitioners call upon this government to reject the goods and services tax and to consult with labour and consumer groups to reach a broad consensus on tax reform.

Mr. Nelson A. Riis (Kamloops): Mr. Speaker, I have a pile of petitions from people from Blue River, Birch Island, Vavenby, Vola, Clearwater, Blackpool, Little Fort, Barrièr, McClure, Hempley Creek and many other centres in the North Thompson Valley.

They point out their concern with the government's decision to pursue the 7 per cent goods and services tax. They basically cannot believe it and point out a whole list of reasons for it adversely affecting the residents of the North Thompson Valley.

The petitioners ask the government to come to its senses, to back away from this tax, to return to the drawing board and come up with real, comprehensive tax reform.

VIA RAIL

Mr. Nelson A. Riis (Kamloops): I have a petition, Mr. Speaker, again on behalf of a number of people from the Kamloops region who point out that they are interested in the government maintaining a national rail network for passenger service.

They are asking the government to consider investing in new equipment as has been done in other western industrialized nations in terms of rail passenger service and to consider introducing a VIA Rail bill that would give the government an opportunity to see proper passenger rail service introduced in Canada and not close that southern route across the country.

[*Translation*]

OPPOSITION TO PROPOSED GOODS AND SERVICES TAX

Mr. Douglas Young (Gloucester): Mr. Speaker, pursuant to Standing Order 36, the following petition is presented to the House by hundreds of residents from the communities of Tracadie, Sheila, Pont–Lafrance, Petite–Rivière–de–l'île, Sainte–Cécile and Rogersville, and your petitioners are very much concerned about the fact that the federal Conservative Government is going to impose on Canadians a new, universal 7 per cent tax on goods and services. They are well aware of the disastrous impact a tax like this will have on the economy of northern New Brunswick, and they ask Parliament to reject the new goods and services tax which has been massively rejected by Canadians across this country.

[*English*]

Ms. Catherine Callbeck (Malpeque): Mr. Speaker, I rise under Standing Order 36 to present a petition regarding the proposed goods and services tax. It is signed by concerned Canadians who strongly oppose this tax. They feel that it will cause serious and unfair hardship on low and middle income Canadians and that it will cause higher taxes, higher inflation, higher interest rates and higher unemployment.

The petitioners humbly pray and call upon Parliament to reject this proposed goods and services tax.

Mr. Cid Samson (Timmins—Chapleau): Mr. Speaker, it is a pleasure for me to rise today under Standing Order 36 to present a petition from quite a number of constituents from Paris, Dunnville, Waterford, Woodstock and Brantford.