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Speaker: The Honourable Geoff Regan

Infrastructure

Ms. Dianne L. Watts (South Surrey—White Rock, CPC):

Mr. Speaker, the Conservatives renewed the PPP Canada funding by providing \$1.25 billion over five years as part of the new building Canada plan. Infrastructure projects worth over \$100 million were required to go through a P3 screen to maximize the value of taxpayer dollars. But late last year, the Minister of Infrastructure announced that this screening requirement would be removed. Why are the Liberals getting rid of all the taxpayer safeguards?

Hon. Amarjeet Sohi (Minister of Infrastructure and Communities, Lib.):

Mr. Speaker, the reason we have removed the P3 condition is to allow the local economy and local governments to make their own decisions on how they procure infrastructure. Furthermore, it also allows them to tap into federal resources at a larger amount, at 50% of the project costs. Under the previous government, they only qualified for 25% of the funding because of that particular condition. Our plan will deliver more for all Canadian communities.

Ms. Dianne L. Watts (South Surrey—White Rock, CPC):

Mr. Speaker, first the Liberals removed the requirement for the P3 screen, then they transferred responsibility from the Minister of Finance to the Minister of Infrastructure, and now they introduced Bill C-15, which gives the infrastructure minister the power to sell off shares and assets of PPP Canada.

Something here does not add up. Are the Liberals intending to shut down PPP Canada and sell off its assets in order to pay for their out of control spending?

Hon. Amarjeet Sohi (Minister of Infrastructure and Communities, Lib.):

Mr. Speaker, P3s are a valuable tool that we respect, but we also respect the ability of the local governments to make their own decisions. We trust them to make their own decisions, unlike the previous government which imposed certain procurement processes on municipalities. We heard from municipalities. We heard from the Federation of Canadian Municipalities. We

heard from big city mayors and they all support our decision to remove the P3 condition so that they are allowed to make their own decisions.

Mr. Luc Berthold (Mégantic—L'Érable, CPC):

Mr. Speaker, we often hear the minister say that municipalities should be free to make their own decisions. In Quebec, they have to go through the Government of Quebec. At present, there has been no reply. Not one project has started. There will be no work done this summer.

I completely agree with my colleague: P3s are another example of the government's inability to take action that will create jobs.

Do the Liberals want to sell the assets of PPP Canada to pay for their out-of-control spending? Yes or no?

Hon. Amarjeet Sohi (Minister of Infrastructure and Communities, Lib.):

Mr. Speaker, let me share some information with the House. Despite allocating almost \$2 billion for Quebec in 2014, the previous government delivered zero dollars.

We are committed to delivering that money to Quebec along with new money under public transit, under green infrastructure, and social infrastructure. We are here to support communities. We are here to support—