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STEPHANIE KUSIE, M.P.
CALGARY MIDNAPORE

November 26, 2021

The Speaker of the House of Commons
House of Commons
Ottawa, Ontario
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Dear Mr. Speaker,

I am writing to seek leave for the adjournment of the House for the purpose of discussing an important matter requiring urgent consideration pursuant to Standing Order 52.

There are currently over 1 million job vacancies in Canada. Many industries were already struggling with finding workers prior to the pandemic and now over one third of businesses are reporting labour shortages. This is a crisis that needs to be addressed imminently. The lack of workers will continue to intensify and as a result, limit the productivity potential of our already struggling economy.

Much of the current shortage can be attributed to baby boomers reaching typical retirement age. Up from 20.5% in 2019, 23% of the working age population will be above the age of 64 by 2024. The pandemic has only exacerbated the issue with many Canadians taking part in 'job switching.' According to Statistics Canada, in the last 12 months, **half** of unemployed accommodation and food services workers have found employment in other industries.

Some of the industries hardest-hit by labour shortages include hospitality and food service, healthcare, manufacturing and construction, retail trade, and trucking. For many of these, providing higher wages as an incentive is not an option because only 40% of small businesses are achieving normal sales right now, based on pre-pandemic modelling. Despite the fact that relaxation of public health measures over the past several months has allowed these sectors to increase employment, further gains are being significantly limited by the unavailability of labour.

I would therefore like to request an emergency debate to discuss how we, as legislators, can address and propose immediate solutions to solve the existing labour shortages so that Canada's economic growth does not decline, nor does it compromise the competitiveness of Canadian businesses.

Your attention to this matter is appreciated.

Sincerely,

Stephanie Kusie, M.P.