



CANADA

# House of Commons Debates

---

VOLUME 144 | NUMBER 076 | 2nd SESSION | 40th PARLIAMENT

---

**OFFICIAL REPORT (HANSARD)**

**Tuesday, June 15, 2009**

**Speaker: The Honourable Peter Milliken**

Oral Questions

**Medical Isotopes**

**Hon. Geoff Regan (Halifax West, Lib.):**

Mr. Speaker, the isotope crisis is putting the health of thousands of Canadians in jeopardy. It is affecting the quality of care they are receiving. The president of the Society of Nuclear Medicine said today that he is extremely alarmed by the situation and that he expects it to get worse.

Why is the government incapable of providing a detailed plan to deal with this crisis?

**Hon. Leona Aglukkaq (Minister of Health, CPC):**

Mr. Speaker, I continue to work with the experts on medical isotopes. In fact, this past weekend I had a meeting with the Society of Nuclear Medicine in Toronto. One of the things we did was assess how we were handling the contingency measures. We are on track and we will continue to do that.

I am very pleased to announce to the House that Canada has been given regulatory approval today for isotopes at the Australia facility. This means that an additional supply of isotopes will be coming to Canada in the very near future.

**Hon. Geoff Regan (Halifax West, Lib.):**

Mr. Speaker, if the government is concerned about the health and safety of Canadians, it has a strange way of showing it.

The Minister of Natural Resources talks about an increase in isotope production at various reactors around the world but she cannot tell us what action she has taken to actually secure an alternative supply.

Where is the plan to manage this medical crisis and why is the minister not doing her job?

**Hon. Lisa Raitt (Minister of Natural Resources, CPC):**

Mr. Speaker, in conjunction with the Minister of Health, I too am pleased to announce that it is over 75% of medical isotope supply that is available to Canada this week. That is a direct result of the leadership that Canada has shown with respect to working with the Netherlands and South Africa to have them increase their production of medical isotopes and the Minister of Health working with her counterparts to ensure there are ways and means for those reactors to produce the isotopes to come into the country.