Dear Editor,

Today is World Blood Donor Day, a day to celebrate those who donate blood and blood products. International health organizations like the World Health Organization have set the goal to have 100% of blood products collected from volunteer donors. However, Canada currently relies on 70% of its plasma supply for medicines from paid US donors. We only have 7 public plasma collection centres in Canada.

Our Federal government and some provinces have allowed a private, for-profit company to open its doors and pay people for their plasma. Canada is only the third country in the world to pay people for their plasma. This for-profit route jeopardizes Canada’s supply of plasma as clinics will sell Canadian plasma on the international market.

To increase our supply of plasma, Canadian Blood Services has an expansion planned. We need provincial and federal parties to support CBS in their expansion efforts and we need every eligible person to roll up a sleeve and help save a life. In honor or World Blood Donor Day and Canada’s 150th, we need Canadians to recommit to saving the lives of strangers and sign up to become blood and plasma donors. It’s in us all to give.