



Ottawa, August 28, 2018

The Canadian Coalition for Firearm Rights is the voice of Canadian gun owners across the nation, in the media, in Ottawa and in the general public. The CCFR supports measures with a demonstrable, positive effect on public safety.

In a mandate letter from the Prime Minister's Office today, newly appointed Minister of Border Security & Organized Crime, Bill Blair, was tasked with the following mandate on the firearms file:

“Support the Minister of Public Safety and Emergency Preparedness on the passage of Bill C-71, and work together on additional policy, regulations or legislation that could reduce crime involving the use of firearms and keep Canadians safe. You should lead an examination of a full ban on handguns and assault weapons in Canada, while not impeding the lawful use of firearms by Canadians.”

It is, and has always been, our opinion as experts, that the measures in C-71 do not address the issues facing our Canadian communities that are plagued with increasing gang crime and violence, but instead concentrate solely on legal firearms owners, a demographic that poses no demonstrable risk to public safety, with measures that bear no rational connection to reducing gang crime and violence. This legislation came to the table late into the Liberal majority's term and has not proposed a single measure which will demonstrably increase public safety.

The Minister of Public Safety admits that there is rising gang-related violence in Canada and that new legislation is needed. Bill C-71 does not mention the words “gang” or “organized crime” even once. The bill mentions the word “licence” 35 times. Nothing in this bill is aimed at unlicensed criminals or will provoke a change in criminal behavior. This bill is unacceptable and is a clear indication of poor governance. It will represent a significant financial investment of taxpayer resources and infrastructure with no reasonable prospect of achieving any of its purported goals. The CCFR's view is that those scarce resources, if redirected to law enforcement and support systems aimed at gang crime and violence, would directly result in increased public safety which will not be achieved with Bill C-71.

From that unfortunate misstep, the debate has now turned to restricted firearms in recent weeks, with municipal councils asking the federal government to consider a national ban on handguns and “assault weapons”, in the wake of continued violence in the streets which continues to see a failure of funding from the federal and municipal governments. Toronto Mayor John Tory led this legislative demand, which we note is in direct contradiction to his former statements that such a ban would serve no purpose. National and local police agencies across the country have

agreed that a ban on handguns owned by legal gun owners would have no positive effect on public safety. Assault weapons have been prohibited in this country for decades, something this government should already know.

It is the position of the CCFR that government and police forces across the country should be focusing their efforts and resources on the problem at hand: crime. The Minister of Public Safety held a Summit on Gun & Gang violence last March where over 300 stakeholders outlined their ideas, programs and funding requests to combat this epidemic, yet this process has resulted in no tangible funding or concrete action targeting criminals who use guns illegally. This government also has repeatedly promised and re-announced a financial commitment to combat these issues, yet police services and the CBSA wait without any indication of when help is arriving. Working on crime is a long game, but it is a necessity if we want a safer Canada, and we can all agree that we do. Both C-71 and this examination are politically motivated and will serve no purpose in reducing gang crime and violence. It is with regret that we state the current government has failed Canadians safety and opted for measures directly targeting Canada's most vetted, safe citizens, firearms owners.

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