

Bill C-71

BILL C-71: AN ACT TO AMEND CERTAIN ACTS AND REGULATIONS IN RELATION TO FIREARMS

OFAH supports firearms legislation measures that increase the public safety of Canadians, as long as it doesn't implement further unnecessary restrictions or barriers on law-abiding firearms users.

The government's stated intention of Bill C-71 is to prioritize public safety and respond to increasing trends in gun crime and violence, yet it would seem that the majority of the proposals are focused on lawful firearms users. The government is painting a picture of alarming trends in firearms-related crime and violence to justify the proposed measures and to show action on election platform promises of 2015. Unfortunately, targeting lawful firearms users will not help them achieve their intended goals.

The stats being used to support the need for Bill C-71 reference 2013 (lowest criminal homicides in 50 years) as a baseline to suggest we have a growing problem with firearms in Canada. However, the facts show a long-term decline in firearm-related crime.

For decades, the OFAH has been pushing the federal government to invest in programs and policy that targets illegal firearms and actual criminal activity, rather than policy that has the effect of making criminals out of law-abiding firearms owners. The investments announced by the Government of Canada in 2017 to fight gangs and gun violence are a step in the right direction; however, this 'complementary bill' will do little to achieve the government's stated goals.

KEY POINTS TO BILL C-71:

- This bill directly affects ALL firearms users, in one way or another.
 - The answers to our outstanding questions (coming soon) will determine the extent.
- As stated by the federal government Bill C-71 is intended to:

- Prioritize public safety by keeping firearms out of the wrong hands;
- Strengthen measures for firearms safety and give police tools to ensure public safety and help solve firearms-related crimes; and,
- Respect law-abiding firearms owners
- Bill C-71 appears to do little to improve public safety as is Instead it appears to put further, unnecessary restrictions and burdens on Canada's most vetted population
- The OFAH fully recognizes that Bill C-71 will be defined by the finer details and policy mechanisms required to implement the five key themes highlighted in Bill C-71:
 - Enhanced background checks
 - Licence Verification
 - Record-keeping by vendors
 - Classification or Re-Classification — RCMP
 - ATTs
- The contents of Bill C-71 proposes the remaining aspects of the 2015 Liberal Party's platform related to firearms. The OFAH provided initial comments to the government in anticipation of these proposed changes, and worked with them in an attempt to ensure they fully understand how changes in policy will affect lawful firearms owners in Canada
- The government has stated it will NOT bring back another long gun registry, but...
- What's the deal with the Quebec Long Gun Registry files? Bill C-71 says all files will be given to the Quebec Minister upon request. Canadians have been previously told these records no longer exist. Apparently they do. The government needs to address this issue