



**Canadian Association of Chiefs of Police *Leading Progressive change in policing***  
**Association canadienne des chefs de police *À l'avant-garde du progrès policier***

Presentation to the Senate – a

STANDING COMMITTEE ON LEGAL AND CONSTITUTIONAL AFFAIRS

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**BILL C- 19 - An Act to amend the Criminal Code and  
the Firearms Act**

Remarks By:

Canadian Association of Chiefs of Police

Chief Mario Harel – Vice-President, CACP

March 28, 2012

(Final)

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Thank-you for having the Canadian Association of Chiefs of Police present to you today with regards to Bill C-19. My name is Directeur Mario Harel of the Gatineau Police Service and I am a Vice-President of the CACP.

I recently read an article which I believe captures where we are today on this issue:

“Police officials seemed to be taking the bill's passing in stride, despite the fact most major police organizations across the country supported the registry. "I will be sorry to see an end to the long-gun registry," said Shelburne Police Chief Kent Moore. "However, we as police officers will continue to work within the current framework. As always, my focus is on the safety of our community. I would also hope that the data collected to date will not be destroyed without lengthy discussions taking place.”

The Canadian Association of Chiefs of Police has stated it's long-held support for the long-gun registry from the beginning. Let me briefly re-iterate our reasons why:

- We view this as a public safety issue based on our on-going responsibility to ensure the safety of our communities, our officers and the most vulnerable among us.
- It provides preventative and investigational value to law enforcement and the communities we serve

- Not-with-standing the initial set-up costs, today, it operates in a very cost-effective and efficient manner as detailed in an internal audit of the RCMP
- Finally, we believe it promotes further responsibility and accountability by firearm owners

The long-gun registry presents flags to law enforcement which, along with other tools, help us assess a situation we might face or assist during investigations where firearms are involved. We respect the debate that has occurred and the opposition of our views by those who simply want to hunt and engage in the sport of shooting. Like many laws, the LGR required that the far majority of citizens, who are law-abiding, balance their individual privilege with the broader right of society to be safe. We value that many of those citizens have accepted this premise and registered greater than 7 million long-guns. We also recognize that for those who have not, the threat of criminalization is not a proper response.

We acknowledge on the issue of repealing the LGR, the government has been transparent with the Canadian people of their intent to pass this legislation. In our Parliamentary system, we must respect the desires of Canadians who elected this government with the ability to do so. Nothing now is gained by providing further opposition to this Bill.

Therefore, we ask this Committee to help assist law enforcement regarding three areas of concern when this Bill is passed:

- Ensuring controls are there to prevent individuals from stockpiling firearms or access by criminal organizations.
- Ensuring the re-instatement of record-keeping by firearm vendors which existed prior to the implementation of the LGR.
- Ensuring that there is clear responsibility of gun-owners who transfer their long-guns to others to other individuals (and we note that between 2006 and 2009, 1.85 million long guns changed hands).

These concerns stem from the fact that there will no longer be a required record to indicate what firearms were sold to whom or how many.

It is time to heal divisions. We share concerns, as mentioned by Chief Hanson, with regards to the wider issue of gun problems in our communities, those relating to gangs, organized crime and cross-border smuggling of firearms. These are areas requiring greater focus.

It is also important to the CACP that we acknowledge the selfless support of those individuals and organizations who have come before these committees to identify their concerns.

These people bring forward the concerns of the most vulnerable in our society and include victims of domestic abuse, women's groups, students and graduates of Polytechnique and Dawson College, and emergency physicians, just to name a few. As law enforcement our duty is, to the best of our ability, to ensure your safety. We want you to know that we are always committed to doing so.

Thank-you!