



CHRISTIAN FARMERS FEDERATION OF ONTARIO

ACCREDITED FARM ORGANIZATION

April 11, 2023

Hon. Marco Mendicino, MP
Eglinton-Lawrence
Minister of Public Safety
511 Lawrence Ave West
Toronto, ON M6A 1A3
Via email: marco.mendicino@parl.gc.ca

Re: Bill C-21 “An Act to amend certain Acts and to make certain consequential amendments (firearms)”

Dear Minister Mendicino,

The Christian Farmers Federation of Ontario (CFFO) is an Accredited Farm Organization representing the interests of over 4,000 farm families in Ontario who are called to the vocation of farming. CFFO policy promotes economically, socially, and environmentally sustainable farming, advocating that farmers receive fair return for their production and stewardship efforts.

We are writing to indicate our concern about the potential implications for farmers of Bill C-21, “An Act to amend certain Acts and to make certain consequential amendments (firearms).” This Bill, originally intended to address handgun violence, has been leveraged to restrict access to guns more broadly, including hunting rifles. Although a proposed amendment to the Bill has been temporarily withdrawn, the far-reaching implications of the amendment have raised significant concern among rural residents, hunters, and farmers.

Importance of Guns as a Tool in Farming

It is especially important for farmers to be able to access and use firearms to protect their animals and crops, and to provide farmers with a tool to ensure they can quickly relieve an animal’s suffering.

Farmers need to be able to protect their livestock from predators. While companion animals can help reduce the risk of depredation, guns are a necessary tool to protect livestock from severe injury and death due to attacks from wild animals. While depredation is primarily a concern for livestock farmers, crop farmers can also experience significant losses from wild animals that damage and destroy crops.

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Livestock farmers also rely on guns as an important tool in case of the need to euthanize an animal. This is especially important in emergency situations, including some situations due to lack of access to timely veterinary care.

Underlying Issue – Violence in Society

Lawful use of guns is highly regulated in Canada. Existing regulations ensure protection for broader society when the rules are correctly followed. Greater attention needs to be paid to the unlawful acquisition and use of firearms.

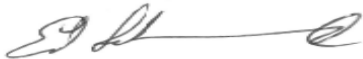
Ultimately, gun control will not solve the underlying problem of violence in society. Those perpetrating violence will find other tools or means to achieve their ends. We strongly urge the government to put greater attention on social problems that exacerbate violence. It is dangerous to assume greater control on guns will be sufficient to reduce or eliminate violent incidents.

Conclusion

Agriculture is an industry vital to our food supply, health, and economic prosperity. Firearms are an important tool for many farmers to allow them to protect livestock and crops, and to quickly relieve an animal's suffering in case of emergency. We hope that MPs in all parties will see the importance of firearms for farmers and proceed cautiously when reviewing proposed increased controls on firearms.

We appreciate your consideration of our concerns.

Sincerely,



Ed Scharringa, President
Christian Farmers Federation of Ontario

CC: Hon. Marie-Claude Bibeau, MP, Minister of Agriculture and Agri-Food Canada
All Ontario MPs

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