
Bill to scrap long gun registry passes next hurdle
O.F.A.H. applauds M.P.'s for supporting legislation

Bill C-391, An amendment to the Criminal Code (repeal of the long gun registry), passed a major hurdle in the legislative process earlier today when it was approved at Second Reading in the House of Commons. For 14 years, the Ontario Federation of Anglers and Hunters (O.F.A.H.) has been determinedly fighting to scrap the long gun registry through media campaigns, rallies, presentations and meetings with public officials and politicians, and most recently, a national online petition.

The bill, a simple and straightforward piece of legislation was introduced earlier this year by Candice Hoepfner, Conservation M.P. for Portage-Lisgar, Manitoba. Once passed, the bill will provide for the repeal of the ill fated and much maligned long gun registry, created by the former Liberal government as part of Bill C-68 in 1995. The requirement to take firearms safety training, obtain a license and practice safe storage and transportation of legal firearms will not be impacted upon by the legislation.

"This is an important moment for law-abiding firearms owners across Canada. Since 1995, the Ontario Federation of Anglers and Hunters, our provincial and territorial affiliates, recreational shooting organizations, hunters and farmers have been calling on the government to abolish the long gun registry, a paper trail nightmare which has cost Canadian taxpayers almost \$2 billion dollars, a far cry from the promised \$2 million dollar price tag," said O.F.A.H. Manager of Government Relations and Communications, Greg Farrant. "We appreciate the fact that several members of the New Democratic and Liberal opposition in Parliament recognized the importance of this issue to their constituents and voted their conscience. Over the last few years, every major public opinion poll has clearly indicated that Canadians believe that the system has failed the test and hasn't enhanced public safety or saved lives."

The vote was one step in a long process that has seen law-abiding firearms owners across Canada and almost 80,000 signatories on petitions earlier this year urging the government to end the long gun registry. Two major police associations, some police chiefs and many frontline police officers across Canada have also indicated that they support elimination of the long gun registry.

"There is still much work to be done before Bill C-391 is finally passed, however this speaks to one important aspect of the government's larger commitment to scrap Bill C-68. Ms. Hoepfner has shown a great deal of perseverance and has fulfilled a commitment to her constituents. She deserves a great deal of credit for recognizing the problem and tackling the issue head on," said O.F.A.H. Executive Director, Mike Reader. "The bottom line is that criminals don't register firearms. Instead of creating a paper chase for the law-abiding, the system needs to be revamped to focus on law breakers who use illegal firearms, many of them smuggled into Canada from the U.S., to commit crimes in our communities."

With over 100,000 members, subscribers and supporters, and 660 member clubs, the O.F.A.H. is the largest nonprofit, charitable, fishing, hunting and conservation-based organization in Ontario, and the voice of anglers and hunters. For more information, visit www.ofah.org.

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