

April 27, 2010

Mr. Michael Ignatieff, M.P., P.C.
Leader of the Official Opposition
House of Commons
Ottawa, Canada
K1A 0A6

Dear Mr. Ignatieff:

The Canadian Outdoors Network is a coalition of the major hunting, fishing, trapping and shooting sports organizations in Canada, representing 500,000 members and supporters across the country. Our organizations, chapters, groups, clubs and supporters are active in every province, and are organized to the local level to defend and support our outdoor culture and heritage. But more importantly, through our own prolific media, we are the guide and voice of Canada's 10 million hunters, anglers, trappers and shooting sports enthusiasts, who look to our organizations for leadership.

We are writing in response to the recent 'compromise' position on the long gun registry that you released after meeting with the Canadian Association of Chiefs of Police. We also wish to comment on recent statements by Liberal M.P. Wayne Easter, who suggested to the Globe & Mail on April 23, 2010, that "the gunners like it; they got it".

Please be advised notwithstanding Mr. Easter's glib assertions, all of the signatories to this letter, who represent members of the outdoor community across the country, not only don't like it, they don't get it!

The 'compromise' suggestion proposed by the Liberal party does not speak to the flaws of the long gun registry; it does not resolve the myriad of mistakes that have plagued the system; it does not acknowledge the fact that virtually every public opinion poll over the past eight years has shown that Canadians don't believe that the registry works and should be scrapped; it does not speak to the fact that the Auditor General found that the registry does not enhance public safety nor save lives; it does not accurately reflect the facts as laid out in the attached briefing by Dr. Gary Mauser, Professor Emeritus, Simon Fraser University, which was sent to all Members of Parliament several weeks ago; furthermore, the suggested compromise is likely unconstitutional, since the Firearms Act is part of the Criminal Code and an offence under the act must be a criminal offence in order for it to be within the powers of Parliament; it does not reflect the views of front line officers across Canada who, unlike the CACP, do not believe that the registry helps them to do their job; and finally, it is redundant as the government already has a list of firearms owners, along with their addresses, under the current licensing system.

What's worse, is we have a situation where on one hand, the Leader of the Official Opposition is proposing what you refer to as a compromise position, while at the same time, the Liberal members of the Standing Committee on Public Safety and National Security, led by Mr. Holland, are trying to hijack the Committee by ensuring that witnesses in support of Bill C-391 will not have the opportunity to appear and be heard. In our view, this action not only undermines the democratic process, but makes a mockery of the suggestion that the Liberal party is looking for a compromise. Mr. Iqantieff, we are concerned that under your leadership, the Liberal Party of Canada is using misleading information, questionable tactics in regard to committee procedures and uniformed policy positions to attack the lifestyle and culture of Canada's legitimate gun owners and outdoor enthusiasts.

Again we, the undersigned say, the outdoor community of legitimate gun owners in Canada does not support, nor 'get' the purported compromise, and will continue to argue in favour of Bill C-391 to repeal the long gun registry based on facts, not emotional rhetoric.

Yours sincerely,

Alberta Fish and Game Association
Alberta Outdoors Coalition
BC Wildlife Federation
BCWF Political Action Alliance
Canadian Institute for Legislative Action
Canadian Section of the Wildlife Society
Canadian Shooting Sports Association
Canadian Sporting Arms and Ammunition Association
Delta Waterfowl Foundation
Fédération Québécoise des Chasseurs et Pêcheurs
Fur Institute of Canada
Friends of Fur
Hunting for Tomorrow Foundation
Long Point Waterfowl
Manitoba Wildlife Federation
National Wild Turkey Federation
New Brunswick Wildlife Federation
Newfoundland and Labrador Wildlife Federation
Nova Scotia Federation of Anglers and Hunters
Ontario Federation of Anglers and Hunters
Prince Edward Island Chapter Delta Waterfowl
Prince Edward Island Trappers Association
Prince Edward Island Wildlife Federation
Ruffed Grouse Society
Saskatchewan Wildlife Federation

Yukon Fish and Game Association
Wildlife Habitat Canada

Please respond to:

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cc.

Rt. Honourable Stephen Harper, Prime Minister
Liberal Members of Parliament
New Democratic Members of Parliament
Members of the Standing Committee on Public Safety and National Security
Ms. Candice Hoepfner
Mr. Wayne Easter