



## **MEDIA ADVISORY - CANADIAN ASSOCIATION OF POLICE BOARDS**

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For Immediate Release

The Canadian Association of Police Boards (CAPB), the national association representing civilian oversight of policing in Canada, has written to all members of parliament asking them to reconsider dismantling of the gun control system when private member's Bill C-391 receives second reading on November 4, 2009.

CAPB's members provide governance and oversight of more than 35,000 municipal police officers and chiefs in Canada. In their role as civilian oversight bodies, police boards appoint and manage the performance of chiefs and deputy chiefs, set policing objectives, establish policies, and generally represent the public interest. The effective governance and oversight of policing in Canada is an important means to ensure that Canada's police services are fully accountable, transparent and enjoy public confidence as they tackle important issues of public safety, social stability and international terror. It is one of the foundations of our democracy.

It is from this critical and unique vantage point that CAPB advocates for strong firearms laws. CAPB believes such laws to be essential for the safety and security of individuals, families, communities and police officers and accordingly it vigorously opposes any ideologically motivated effort to weaken existing provisions as being inimical to the public interest.

As civilian oversight bodies of municipal policing, CAPB cannot support any attempt to weaken police ability to deal with gun violence, as this bill will surely do, if passed. At a time when gun crime is a serious concern in communities across the country, such an act will be irresponsible and a disservice to the cause of building safe communities.

If passed, Bill C-391 will not only eliminate the need to register more than 8 million rifles and shotguns but it will also require that the existing registration records on long guns be destroyed. The federal firearms program is a vital tool for effective policing. The registry is consulted thousands of times on a daily basis by police services across the country.

CAPB is proud of Canada's international reputation as a country with effective gun-control legislation and strenuously opposes any legislation that weakens Canada's current firearms registry.

CAPB rejects the notion promoted by certain special interest groups that the gun registry is somehow an intrusion on the rights and freedoms of law abiding Canadians. Like innumerable other laws, regulations and practices that Canadians readily accept, the gun registry provides a reasonable balance between the exercise of an individual privilege and the broader right of the society to be safe.

CAPB is, therefore, asking members of parliament to vote against this bill.

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