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Bill C-21 and its Recent Amendments That Will Criminalize Saskatchewan Residents Overnight

Currently, Saskatchewan legal firearm owners, are facing immense ideological pressure from the federal government.

Bill C-21 does nothing to target the illegal use of firearms; instead, it targets lawfully licensed firearms owners and their legally acquired firearms. These actions by the federal government only compound efforts from the May 2020 order in council that banned thousands of firearms and the most recent and surprising freeze on all handgun sales this past October.

“We were told that this wouldn’t affect hunters, ranchers, or sport shooters, but rather that the federal government was taking the weapons off the street.” said SARM President, Ray Orb. “This is a purely ideological idea as Canada already has very strict controls on military-style assault weapons. The most disturbing part is the recent amendments to the bill that ban almost all semi-automatic centrefire rifles and shotguns utilized by hunters, ranchers, and sport shooters in Saskatchewan.”

Overnight, and without any consultation or warning, the federal government will penalize and criminalize around 75,000 legal firearms owners in Saskatchewan. To put that into perspective, it is estimated that Saskatchewan has approximately 115,000 licensed firearms owners in the province.

Around 400 pages worth of firearms and other restrictions are identified in these recent amendments. It is unacceptable that the federal government is planning on spending billions of dollars to criminalize and take away firearms from law-abiding, legally licensed Saskatchewan residents. These dollars could be utilized by municipalities across this province and throughout Canada to fight rising rural crime rates, violent crime, gangs, trafficking, and illegal firearms.

Firearms are a valuable tool in rural Saskatchewan and this bill does nothing to improve safety in our Rural Municipalities. Instead, we see a purely ideological firearms grab that will do nothing but punish those who legally acquire and use firearms for hunting, collecting, and sporting purposes.

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Background: *SARM is the independent association that represents its membership of rural municipal government in Saskatchewan and is the principal advocate in representing them before senior governments.*