

FIREARMS

Respecting Legitimate
Firearms Owners
and Targeting Criminals

Issue

The use of firearms has always been part of Canadian tradition and culture. Today, there are over 2 million hunters, ranchers, trappers, farmers, target shooters, recreational shooters and collectors who possess firearms in our country.

However, despite this group being exceptionally law abiding and the most highly vetted segment in the Canadian population, the existing firearms legislation unfairly targets them, does not respect their property rights, and is highly arbitrary. Since 2019, the Trudeau Liberal government has pursued a course of highly aggressive restrictions that criminalize most responsible and peaceful firearm owners. Firearm owners are currently subject to the most hostile assault on their rights in over a generation.



Facts

In 1995, Bill C-68 created the *Firearms Act*, the strictest gun-control legislation in Canadian history. Its most controversial feature, the creation of a long-gun registry, was repealed in 2012.

The *Act* continues to classify firearms into different categories for reasons which frequently have nothing to do with their function. Firearms can also be assigned new classifications at the whim of a bureaucrat. What is legal one day can become illegal the next.

Under the licensing system of the *Act*, the ownership of firearms has become a privilege that can be revoked or altered at any moment. Legitimate gun owners can lose their property and even have their life ruined by being criminally charged through their inaction (by not keeping their paperwork up to date for example) or due to the moving goalposts of Canadian firearms law.

Our Plan

Canada's firearms legislation must protect society from the criminal misuse of firearms and prioritize the deterrence and punishment of criminals.

Peaceful and responsible firearms owners deserve a legal framework that protects their property rights and treats them with **fairness** and **respect**. We need a common-sense approach to gun control that promotes safety while removing the threat of arbitrary criminal prosecution.

A People's Party government will:

- Replace the *Firearms Act* and supporting legislation with new legislation that will prioritize effective measures to improve public safety and fight crime in Canada.
- Replace the costly and burdensome licensing system with an efficient lifetime certification system for firearms owners following mandatory vetting, safety training and testing. To avoid criminalizing peaceful and responsible gun owners and guarantee their property rights, this system will legalize simple possession of firearms for certified Canadians as long as they use their firearms lawfully and don't commit some other crime that would disqualify them from firearms ownership.
- Require that all firearms categories be based on function, not on looks or arbitrary political whims, and reclassify all firearms based on the Simplified Classification System as proposed by the Canadian Shooting Sports Association. This will remove ineffective restrictions which unfairly target sport shooters, but have no deterrent effect on criminals.
- Repeal Trudeau's 2020 cabinet decision to ban 1500 types of firearms.
- Repeal Trudeau's Bill C-71, which imposes a set of new restrictions on licensed gun owners and businesses that sell firearms, and Bill C-21 (if the latter becomes law), which freezes the sale and transfer of handguns and arbitrarily adds certain types of rifles and shotguns to the list of banned firearms.
- Mandate that all future changes to firearms regulation be completed through Parliament only. This means that neither the RCMP nor cabinet will be able to move the legal goalposts for firearms owners without the approval of Parliament.

(Updated January 2023)