



John Tory
Mayor

December 15, 2016

The Honourable Ralph Goodale, P.C., M.P.
Minister of Public Safety and Emergency Preparedness
House of Commons
Ottawa, Ontario K1A 0A6

Dear Minister Goodale:

While Toronto can proudly call itself one of the safest big cities in the world, you will know that we have recently seen a troubling rise in gun violence that is taking lives and devastating families.

We both agree that no man, woman or child in this city should have to endure the sudden and heartbreaking death of a loved one to gun violence, nor should they have to wake up to the startling sound of gunshots in their neighbourhood.

To put it simply, I want to get the guns out of the hands of those who choose to do harm and are hell-bent on disrupting our peaceful city.

As we have discussed before, about 50 per cent of the illicit guns on Toronto's streets are smuggled across the border from the United States. Your government is stepping up efforts to combat cross-border firearms trafficking and I commend you for that.

You will also know that domestic firearms trafficking is becoming a greater concern for Canadian law enforcement agencies. According to Toronto Police officials, the other 50 per cent of illicit guns in criminals' hands are either stolen from legal owners in Canada or obtained here on the black market.

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What's particularly troubling to me is cases where certain licensed gun owners are able to amass small arsenals of handguns and that there are no red flags despite these purchases being registered on the Canadian Firearms Registry. I was further shocked to learn that there is no limit on the number of firearms any one licensed gun owner can purchase and possess.

This, I'm sure you would agree, is an obvious gap that needs to be addressed particularly given that legally purchased Canadian guns are turning up in criminal investigations with greater frequency.

I hope, at the very least, that our police agencies are sharing intelligence and collaborating closely, and would urge you to make this a federal government priority.

Along with handguns, our police tell me that domestically-sold long guns including rifles and shotguns are also increasingly used by the criminal element. I would urge you to examine some form of tracking for sales of these weapons as well, understanding that a re-instatement of the long-gun registry may not be practical at this time. I know, for instance, that the Bureau of Alcohol Tobacco and Firearms monitors sales of these kinds of weapons in the U.S.

Toronto Police officers put their lives on the line every day to keep our city safe. They have made great strides dismantling the criminal gangs who are the main culprits of the gun violence we have seen, and have seized more than 500 firearms off our streets. But they know there are more illicit guns circulating in our city.

We owe it to them, and to the residents they protect, to do everything in our power as elected officials to support them in this critically important work.

I believe there is more we can and must do together to close some of these gaps to help get these guns off our streets. I look forward to resuming our discussion, together with our provincial counterparts, in the weeks ahead.

Sincerely,



John Tory
Mayor of Toronto

- c. David Oraziotti, M.P.P., Minister of Community Safety and Correctional Services
Yasir Naqvi, M.P.P., Attorney General & Government House Leader