

[Letterhead]

Montreal, February 6, 2012

Dear Senators, guardians of the public interest:

The Centre des femmes d'ici et d'ailleurs is a not-for-profit agency helping women from all backgrounds. In our work, we meet many women who have survived various forms of violence. For this reason, we implore you to **reject Bill C-19 in its entirety** because it jeopardizes the safety of all Canadians. Experts, law enforcement agencies and community groups are concerned about the proposed abolition of the gun control measures that were implemented in the wake of the École Polytechnique de Montréal massacre. Although these measures are not perfect, they play a vital role in preventing crimes, suicides and accidents, and greatly facilitate criminal investigations and police work.

According to figures from Statistics Canada, the introduction of these measures in 1995 **has resulted in 382 fewer firearm-related deaths a year** (compared with 1,125 deaths annually before 1995), thus reducing the number of firearm homicides from 61 to 36 (a 64% decrease in gun-related spousal homicides, a 56% decrease in robberies with a firearm, and a 48% decrease in suicides involving firearms).

We know that the Public Safety Minister has said that the gun registry is expensive (\$68.5 million a year, including operating costs such as buildings, staff and lawsuits involving the gun control lobby, with total expenditures amounting to \$250 billion). Nonetheless, we can't even begin to imagine how much taxpayers would be paying for criminal investigations if the long-gun registry did not exist. We also know that, under Harper, the government has foregone \$22 million in revenues as a result of waived license renewal fees over the past few years and has incurred expenses as a result of the 2006 firearms licenses remissions order decree, which is retroactive over a seven-year period.

Canadians won't be fooled. We know that this move is ideological and influenced primarily by the gun lobbies, who have a great interest in seeing Bill C-19 pass. They are not nearly as concerned about the safety and lives of our relatives as we are. That is why we are calling on you to act in the name of love of neighbour and the common good.

We hope that you will vote against Bill C-19.

[signed]

Catherine Fortin

Community worker

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