

[Letterhead]
Government of Quebec

July 29, 2014

The Hon. Steven Blaney
Minister of Public Safety and Emergency Preparedness
269 Laurier Avenue West
Ottawa, Ontario
K1A 0P8

Dear Minister Blaney:

On July 23, 2014, you announced the coming into force of the Order Declaring an Amnesty Period (2014) and the federal government's intention to table the *Common Sense Firearms Licensing Act*. We are writing to express our reservations and concerns, based on the information available to us.

First, the Government of Quebec's priority in terms of gun control is to protect the public. Consequently, we believe that measures prohibiting persons convicted of offences (especially domestic violence) from possessing firearms, and the requirement to take a safety course, would be a step in the right direction in terms of ensuring public safety.

In terms of the federal government's legislative intent, the Government of Quebec is concerned that the Chief Firearms Officer for Quebec, who reports to the Sûreté du Québec, would no longer have the same authority to take action to protect the public. Current federal firearms legislation allows the provinces that wish to do so to appoint a chief firearms officer to take into account the particularities of that province in the enforcement of that legislation. The Order made by the federal government will unjustifiably limit the discretionary authority of the Chief Firearms Officer for Quebec, who currently effectively fulfils the province's wishes in terms of gun control. The Chief Firearms Officer has always exercised his discretionary authority in a fair, objective and fair manner, to ensure the safety of Quebecers.

The Quebec government also deplores the decision to authorize, effective immediately with the adoption of an order, the use of certain types of CZ 858 and Swiss Arms rifles for target practice or competitions. No shooting club in Quebec is permitted to use these types of firearms on site. Moreover, following the announcement made by your government, the Chief Firearms Officer for Quebec had to issue a press release to remind operators of clubs and shooting ranges and owners of firearms subject to the amnesty of this important point.

In the wake of the abolition of the long gun registry, it is disappointing to see that, based on the measures announced last week, your government seems to want to relax gun control in this country even further.

Furthermore, all of these decisions were made without first consulting Quebec.

Quebec wants to ensure that effective control of firearms is carried out by the appropriate authorities, to ensure the safety of Quebecers. The Quebec government's main concern is public safety; consequently, it finds any measure to limit the authority of the Chief Firearms Officer for Quebec and all measures to relax gun control provisions unacceptable.

Respectfully,

[signed]
Lise Thériault
Deputy Premier of Quebec and
Minister of Public Security

[signed]
Jean-Marc Fournier
Quebec Minister for Canadian
Intergovernmental Affairs