



Shannon Stubbs, MP
Lakeland

May 28, 2021

Mayor and Council/Reeve and Council,

On February 16, 2021 Bill C-21, a bill that makes changes to the Criminal Code and the Firearms Act, and targets law abiding firearms owners, was introduced and is being debated in the House of Commons. Conservatives constitutently call for cracking down on illegal gun smuggling, trading, gang and crime gun use, but Bill C-21 misses the mark if the aim really is to improve and protect the personal and public safety of Canadians. Bill C-21 focuses on the wrong people and groups, while also creating uncertainty and adding undo pressure on other levels of government.

Bill C-21 includes provision to allow municipalities to create handgun bylaws, which would place conditions on federal firearms licenses relating to handgun use, storage, or transportation within municipalities that have passed such bylaws.

Residents in cities and other places, with ever increasing gang shootings and violence rightfully expect their government ought to be taking action to keep them safe, but a regulation that gives municipalities the ability to pass bylaws does not do that. The municipal provision in Bill C-21 would be a bylaw on licenses, so this measure literally, specifically, and only targets Canadians who have licenses. This does nothing to stop dangerous criminals who certainly would never comply with a municipal bylaw when they do not obtain their guns legally, do not get licenses and who frankly do not care about criminal laws. What this purposed municipal bylaw section would do is lead to yet another layer of confusing, overlapping regulations and a patchwork of rules for already law-abiding Canadians within and between communities, while violations could result in two years imprisonment or permanent license revocations.

I have been hearing from municipalities concerned with being tasked by the Federal government to create these types of bylaws. They are sharing fears about economic and housing impacts by the perception that one community has higher safety standards than others, or that law-abiding firearms citizens will literally be unaware they are in violation just by crossing a municipal boundary that has different bylaws.

Some municipalities are saying that they do not have the expertise to create these bylaws and certainly would not have the resources to enforce such regulations. They are also concerned these bylaws potentially violate their own provinces' jurisdiction. Some provinces in opposition to the federal legislation have already passed or are proposing laws that would prohibit this type of power to shift to individual municipalities. Saskatchewan has already passed such a provincial law, and Alberta's bill received royal assent on April 29, 2021.

Due to these concerns, some municipalities have already opposed Bill C-21 and have taken the steps to pass resolutions in opposition to this potential new power that they neither requested, nor have the resources to impose and enforce.

I have attached a copy of the resolution passed by the council in Kingsville, Ontario. I encourage you to seek feedback from your rate payers, and to discuss this issue in council. You may decide to pass a similar resolution on behalf of your community. Please feel free to advise my office if you do so, and to reach out if you require any additional information on Bill C-21.

Sincerely,

Thank you

A handwritten signature in blue ink that reads "Shannon Stubbs". The signature is written in a cursive style with a large, looping initial 'S'.

Shannon Stubbs, MP
Lakeland