

Poly Remembers

Students and Graduates of Polytechnique for gun control



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NEWS RELEASE

Adoption of Bill C-71 by the Senate: A significant step in the right direction (... and last step before the transfer to the Quebec government of the Quebec data from the former long gun registry)

Montreal, May 28, 2019 - Survivors and victims of Canada's worst mass shootings welcomed today's passage of **Bill C-71** in the **Senate**, the long-awaited reform of the Firearms Act that was **promised in the last election campaign** by the Liberal Party. **Heidi Rathjen, Polytechnique graduate and coordinator of Poly Remembers** says: *"While the measures in Bill C-71 are a direct outcome of the Liberal's election platform, most are weaker than what one would expect from a majority government elected on the basis of a pro-gun control platform, with some measures including obvious concessions to the gun lobby. Overall, Bill C-71 is a significant step in the right direction, but one that follows five steps backward under the previous Harper government.*

"But even though the final package is far from what we had hoped, C-71 contains a number of important measures that are sure to increase public safety. We wish to thank Minister Ralph Goodale for bringing in the only federal legislation in 23 years that strengthens Canada's gun control law, as well as the majority of senators for having prioritized the public interest by rejecting Conservative amendments that would have weakened the bill."

Bill C-71:

- ➔ Requires firearms officers to **extend background checks for gun permit applicants beyond five years** and **expands the criteria to be considered**;
- ➔ **Reinstates the mandatory verification of the validity of the firearms license of a person seeking to acquire a non-restricted firearm**;
- ➔ **Reinstates the obligation of gun stores to maintain inventories and sales records for unrestricted weapons**, with sales records only available to law enforcement officers with "judicial authority" (court mandate), contrary to what was in place from 1977-2012;
- ➔ **Maintains** the automatic authorization brought in by the previous government to transport restricted weapons between the owner's residence and ANY gun club and shooting range in the province, and henceforth only requires specific authorization to **transfer them for other reasons (which represent 4% of all transport purposes)**;
- ➔ **Repeals of the authority of the Governor in Council to downgrade classification of a specific model despite higher criteria prescribed in the Criminal Code**, and prohibits (with grandfather clauses) two groups of firearms that had been downgraded in 2015 (Swiss Arms & CZ-858) in order to realign them with the Criminal Code;
- ➔ Retroactively restores the applicability of certain laws in order to **allow the transfer to the Quebec government of the Quebec records of the former long gun registry**, now kept under seal by the **Federal Court**.

Boufeldja Benabdallah, president of the Centre culturel islamique de Québec, adds: *"The Quebec Mosque community is pleased to see this long-awaited gun control bill finally become law. Families and witnesses that survived the January 2017 tragedy have intervened on numerous occasions to demand tougher controls and to strengthen the proposed bill. We are confident that the new measures will enhance the safety of our communities and society in general, and we need to salute the efforts of Minister Ralph Goodale as well as the solidarity of the majority of MPs and Senators who care about the safety of Canadians and who have supported the minister."*

*"At the same time, it is regrettable that the Trudeau government has still not taken action with respect to legal access to handguns, assault weapons and **modified magazines that can easily be converted to full capacity**, the very objects that make mass killings possible, **including the one** that took place in our own place of prayer on January 29th 2017."*

Polysesouvient est un groupe de citoyens bénévoles, dont de nombreux témoins, survivants et familles des victimes du massacre du 6 décembre 1989, qui oeuvrent pour un meilleur contrôle des armes et dont les objectifs sont endossés par l'Association des Étudiants de Polytechnique, l'Association des étudiants aux cycles supérieurs de Polytechnique, le CA de l'Association des diplômés de Polytechnique, l'Ordre des ingénieurs du Québec, le Réseau des ingénieurs du Québec, l'École Polytechnique, l'École de technologie supérieure et plusieurs associations étudiantes de génie du Québec.

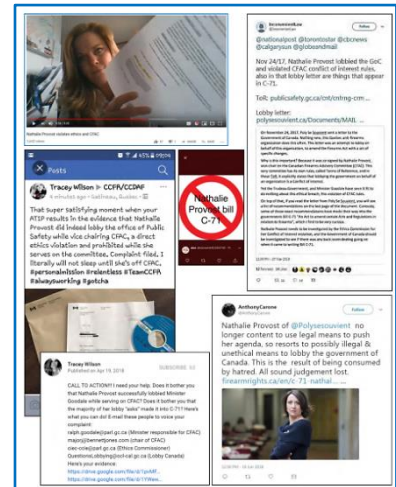
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Some key moments:



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- **November 2017:** Call for tougher controls by Michel LeRoux, father of Thierry who was shot and killed in 2016 by a legal gun owner with a history of domestic violence and suicidal behavior
- **December 2017:** Four delegations of survivors and families of victims come to Ottawa to call on Goodale to table legislation in accordance with the Liberal's election promises
- **March 2018:** Lukewarm reception of newly tabled gun control bill (C-71)
- **April 2018:** Victims (including Michel Leroux and the Quebec Mosque community) call on Trudeau and Goodale to strengthen bill by banning assault weapons
- **Spring and summer 2018:** Months-long smear campaign against survivor Nathalie Provost to get her taken off the Canadian Firearms Advisory Committee (CFAC) and to cancel Bill C-71, based on her advocacy in favor of tougher gun control measures
- **December 2018:** Three delegations of survivors and families of victims return to Ottawa to call on senators to move the bill forward



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