



NEWS RELEASE

Electoral platforms on gun control

Families of victims and survivors of gun violence: The Liberal gun control commitments are “the strongest of all the parties” while the Conservatives’ are “the greatest threat to gun control in Canada”

Montreal, October 15 2019 – On the eve of the federal election and nearly 30 years after the December 6, 1989 massacre, victims of gun violence gathered at the École Polytechnique to analyze the actions and commitments of political parties with respect to gun control, and more specifically the prohibition of assault.

The group thought relevant to clarify their approach beforehand:

- *"We took into consideration the actions and commitments of all parties over the past four years*
- *As for election promises, we analysed measures that appear in the platforms, not those that are not included. For example, the cornerstone of effective gun control, the registration of all guns, has been either ignored, dismissed or demonized by all parties, and so we set that measure aside.*
- *Past experience has taught is not to rely on promises that are too general or too vague. We consider to be meaningful only measures that are concrete and specific, that is, that leave little or no room for interpretation, in order to rule out those that may ultimately contribute nothing to public safety.*
- *Based on these criteria, a ban on assault weapons is not only the most concrete measures, but also the most important one. That's why the major focus is on this measure today," explained PolySeSouvient coordinator Heidi Rathjen.*

Based on [their actions and election promises](#), the group is convinced that:

- **The People's Party** would increase access to assault weapons and their accessories, and legislate to protect the interests of gun owners.
- **The Conservative Party** would continue to dismantle our gun control law. They would repeal the only progress for gun control that was achieved over the last 23 years, make assault weapons and high-capacity magazines more accessible and would focus, in sync with the gun lobby, on repression. Given their very concrete and radical actions of the past, we consider the Conservatives commitments to be the greatest threat to gun control in Canada.
- **The Bloc, the New Democratic Party and the Green Party** would support stricter control in general as well as a ban assault weapons.
- **The Liberal Party** would also support general improvements, in addition to a ban on assault weapons. However, the party stands out based on the precision and scope of the proposed measure, by specifying that it would be a total ban (covering all assault weapons), a complete ban (without grandfather clauses), and accompanied by a very substantial financial commitment to buy back existing models, which shows a genuine political will to get it right this time. Together, these elements make the Liberal gun control promises the strongest of all the parties.

Relevant information:

- [Overview of parties' actions and election promises](#)
- [Compilation of polls regarding banning handguns and assault weapons](#)
- [Background on Ruger Mini-14 \(used at Polytechnique\)](#)
- [Weapons used by the Mosque shooter and the availability of "modifiable" large capacity magazines](#)
- [Polytechnique's 1989 petition to ban assault weapons](#)

Were present at the press conference:

- **Nathalie Provost**, graduate of the Polytechnique (1990) and survivor
- **Suzanne Laplante-Edward** and **Jim Edward**, parents of Anne-Marie Edward (1968-1989)
- **Serge Saint-Arneault**, brother of Annie Saint-Arneault (1966-1989)
- **Claire Roberge**, step-mother of Geneviève Bergeron (1968-1989)
- **Meaghan Hennegan**, survivor of the massacre at Dawson College
- **Kathlene Dixon**, witness to the Dawson massacre and Meaghan's mother
- **Boufeldja Benabdallah**, president of the Quebec Mosque
- **Jonathan Landry-Leclerc**, president of the Polytechnique Student Association
- **Alice Périé**, vice-President of Public Affairs, Quebec Confederation of Engineering Students and spokesperson for the Pan-Canadian Student Movement [PAS ICI / NOT HERE](#)
- **Heidi Rathjen**, Polytechnique graduate (1990) and coordinator of PolySeSeSouvient/PolyRemembers

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