

PolyRemembers Applauds Launch of Buyback Program, New OIC Banning Existing Assault Weapons and Other Critical Gun Control Announcements

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MONTREAL, December 5, 2024 – Gun-control advocacy group **PolyRemembers (PolySeSouvient)** applauded the launch of **Phase 1** of the mandatory buyback program [announced today](#) by the **federal government**, which aims to retrieve commercial inventories of prohibited assault weapons (**Phase 2** will cover individual owners). The positive reception was made possible by the concurrent prohibition of hundreds of existing models that fell through the cracks under the [2020 Order in Council](#), including models like the [Kel-Tec Sub2000](#), the [GSG MP40 submachinegun](#) and the [IWI Tavor X95](#) (all of which were [non-restricted](#) up until yesterday). The government specified that further prohibitions would follow.

The **government also announced** the forthcoming tabling of regulations aimed at banning large-capacity magazines (see [our recommendations here](#)), at implementing a preauthorization process before new gun models can be introduced to the market (see [our recommendations here](#)) and the imminent tabling of regulations to enable the implementation of C-21 measures that seek to protect women and children from gun-related intimate violence (see [recommendations from 50 groups here](#)).

“With these decisive actions and concrete timelines, the Liberal government on its way to delivering all of its gun control promises, including a total ban on military-style assault weapons and their complete removal from homes and communities. These are the types of guns typically used in mass shootings, that serve no useful purpose and that [80 per cent of Canadians](#) want to see taken out of circulation,” said **Nathalie Provost, survivor of the shootings at Polytechnique and spokesperson of PolyRemembers**, who [spoke during](#) the news conference.

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FOR THE 35th ANNIVERSARY OF THE FEMICIDES AT POLYTECHNIQUE](#)

Families of victims of mass shootings are breathing a sigh of relief:

“We have waited so long for a comprehensive ban to be implemented!” said **Suzanne Laplante-Edward, mother of Anne-Marie Edward who was shot and killed at Polytechnique**. “I want to personally thank Prime Minister Justin Trudeau for finally coming through with concrete action to address the gap in the incomplete 2020 prohibitions. Now, with time on our side, my son and I may actually see a complete ban on assault weapons and large capacity magazines! This would be a resounding victory for our family’s 35-year-long battle.”

“I want to thank Prime Minister Trudeau and Ministers LeBlanc and Duclos for launching the buyback and adding existing models to the list of assault weapons to be banned,” adds **Boufeldja Benabdallah, Co-founder and spokesperson of the Quebec Mosque**. “This Order in Council is a critical step towards a total ban and merits vigorous applause by all Canadians who care about their family’s and their community’s safety, as well as the safety of future generations. We are finally on the way to becoming a country with sane gun laws that don’t allow ordinary civilians to own killing machines.”

Louise de Sousa, whose daughter Anastasia was murdered during the mass shooting at Dawson College, said “I am so happy that we are finally on the cusp of having a real ban on assault weapons. There is no reason why people should own an AR-15, an IWI Tavor or any similar military-style weapon. We are counting on Minister LeBlanc to complete the removal of all assault weapons and to ban large-capacity magazines - before the next election. We are also thrilled to see progress with respect to the implementation of measures in C-21 that will remove guns from domestic abusers. Bravo Trudeau, LeBlanc and Duclos: You listened to survivors and families of victims of gun violence, the women of Canada as well as the majority of Canadians. Now keep going and get the job done!”

Buyback must be complete before next election

Heidi Rathjen, a witness to the massacre at Polytechnique and coordinator of PolyRemembers, explains that “the list of prohibited weapons needed to be updated with existing models before the buyback was launched, especially Phase 2, and the buyback needs to be fully implemented before a potential election, likely this spring. Pierre Poilievre **vowed to** reverse all Liberal gun prohibitions, and it would be easy for him to do so without both a total ban and a complete buyback in place. Reversing a comprehensive ban will be a lot harder once Canadians can see and appreciate the end of the private ownership of assault weapons in their country. The same applies to banning large-capacity magazines and implementing measures to counter gun-related femicides.”

“While today’s announcements are excellent news, we cannot yet cry victory. We all need to remain vigilant. We expect the gun lobby will tell their members to wait until the very last minute before complying, in the hopes of seeing a change in government before the program ends – a strategy they **have used before,**” cautioned **Rathjen**. The gun lobby has signaled it will once again be **backing the Conservatives** in the next election since **Pierre Poilievre has promised to** reverse all of the **Liberals’** stronger gun control measures, including the ban on assault weapons.

“We can also expect the gun lobby to claim that this Order in Council is banning hunting firearms, like **they did** with respect to amendments G4 and G46 that were supposed to enshrine an assault weapon ban into law via Bill C-21. Yet **none of the hunting models** the gun lobby showcased would have been prohibited, a fact **confirmed by the RCMP**. However this time, such disinformation can be easily debunked, as the Order in Council comes into effect immediately and gun owners — and reporters — can easily verify if specific models are banned or not, through the RCMP’s **Firearms Reference Table** or other **available tools**. Once this ban is in place, hunters will literally still have thousands of models of legal guns to hunt with.”

In the meantime, “we thank Prime Minister Justin Trudeau, Public Safety Minister Dominique LeBlanc, along with Liberal MPs Rachel Bendayan and Pam Damoff who both worked tirelessly on this issue. We are now counting on them to finish the job before the next election,” **Rathjen** concluded.

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