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October 6<sup>th</sup>, 2025

The Right Honourable Mark Carney, P.C., M.P.  
Prime Minister of Canada  
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## Re: Need to Ban Sales of SKS to Ensure Assault-Weapon Buyback is Effective and Cost-Efficient

Dear Prime Minister Carney,

Thank you for your leadership with respect to the completion of the assault weapons buyback program - in a timely and efficient way. Removing these prohibited firearms from our communities will decrease the risk of mass shootings and help protect Canadians from gun violence.

With these critical public safety goals in mind, we are writing to warn you that the federal government's buyback program will end up being a failure - and a colossal waste of taxpayer dollars - unless it includes a ban on the sale of the semi-automatic SKS rifle (see [this overview](#) of the types and risks of the SKS.)

The Soviet SKS is a firearm designed for military use. It is the weapon [most often used in](#) mass shootings and police killings in Canada. However, we recognize that because of its widespread use, the SKS merits special consideration.

Therefore, in order to ensure that assault-style weapons are truly banned in Canada and that we prevent US-style gun culture from seeping into our country, we call on the federal government to:

- ➔ **Immediately ban all new sales of the SKS.**
- ➔ Remove from circulation modern versions of the SKS that upgrade the SKS's original firing power characteristics with various modifications and accessories.
- ➔ Implement a voluntary buyback of older SKS models and grandfather those that remain in circulation (i.e.: make their registration mandatory and prohibit their transfer).
- ➔ Provide an exemption to Indigenous hunters who use the SKS firearm primarily for sustenance.

The continued sale of the SKS in Canada undermines the new government's core mission to "keep Canadians safe". Without a ban on new sales of the SKS, gun owners will be able to take the money they receive from turning in a prohibited firearm and use it to purchase a new firearm which has the same firepower characteristics as the weapon they just surrendered.

The [modern SKS](#) is not just a model, it is a platform on which other versions are built. The idea is to use the classic SKS "[as stepping stones for innovation](#) while still preserving the core principles that made them iconic in the first place, showing [a promising prospect for the future of firearms development](#)," according to a [pro-gun blog](#).

For example, a "converter" was offered for pre-orders to turn an SKS into an SK-X: "Your SKS now uses AR15 stocks, grips, sights/optics, and even 7.62 x 39 AR15 magazines. And now you have a semi-automatic quasi-AR15 that legally is still an SKS," explains [one gun enthusiast](#).

If the sale of the SKS is not fully prohibited, it will become the starting point for an array of new versions of legal assault weapons. Manufacturers and the Canadian market will adapt to this huge loophole to offer new models of assault weapons to gun buyers. Canada will end up in the same situation as in the aftermath of the 1995 prohibitions of assault weapons: in time, new models of assault weapons will replace those that were made illegal, and we will be back at square one.

In conclusion, leaving the SKS available for purchase will cause the buyback program to be a public safety failure. It would also mean the government was unable to prudently manage hundreds of millions of dollars of public money.

As long as SKS sales remains legal, Canada is not a country that bans assault-style weapons.

Sincerely,

*[Signature removed for publication]*

Heidi Rathjen, Suzanne Edward, Serge St-Arneault, Jim Edward, Sylvie Havienick, Jeff Larivée,

**PolySeSouvient/PolyRemembers**

Suzanne Zaccours, **National Association of Women and the Law**

Ken Price and Claire Smith, **Danforth Families for Safe Communities**

Dr. Alan Drummond, **Canadian Association of Emergency Physicians**

Boufeldja Benabdallah, **Mosquée de Québec**

Gabriel Comby, **Polytechnique Student Association**

Thomas Prévost, **student movement NOT\_HERE / PAS\_ICI**

Dr. Najma Ahmed, **Canadian Doctors for Protection from Guns**

Meaghan Hennegan, Louise De Sousa, and Gaynor Harding **Dawson families for gun control**

Brian Sweeney, **Angie's Angels**

Myrna Dawson, **Canadian Femicide Observatory for Justice and Accountability**

**Alison Irons**, former RCMP officer and mother of gun femicide victim Lindsay Wilson (1986-2013)

**Tara Graham**, daughter of femicide victim Brenda Tatlock-Burke of Nova Scotia (1964-2024)

c.c. The Hon. Gary Anandasangaree, Minister of Public Safety

All Members of Parliament