

# PolySeSouvient / PolyRemembers

Étudiants et diplômés de Polytechnique pour le contrôle des armes

Students and Graduates of Polytechnique for gun control

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## News release

### Will the Conservative Platform Be Transparent with Canadians Regarding the Party's Intentions to Keep or Repeal the Ban on Assault Weapons?

After spending the last two years telling hunters he will [reverse](#) Trudeau's "hunting rifle ban," Poilievre has been silent on the issue on the campaign trail

**MONTREAL, April 22, 2025:** As the **Conservative Party** prepares to release its election platform today, gun control advocates are asking **Pierre Poilievre** to be transparent with voters on whether or not he will reverse the last government's ban on assault-style weapons. He should also let Canadians know if he plans to cancel the freeze on new handgun purchases and repeal new measures in (former) **Bill C-21** that automatically remove guns from perpetrators of intimate-partner violence or those subject to a protection order related to domestic violence or stalking – should his party form the new federal government.

The **Conservative Party** did not respond to **PolyRemember's** [all-party survey](#) on gun control. The **Liberals, NDP, Bloc** and **Green** parties all completed the survey. Based on the survey answers and the records of each party over the past four years, **PolyRemembers** release this [detailed analysis](#) of the actions and policy positions on gun control for each party. Contrary to the other parties who shared their intentions through the survey in addition to various announcements on the campaign trail, the **Conservatives** have not yet shared any such information so far.

*"Voters deserve a clear understanding of each parties' position on gun control," said Heidi Rathjen, coordinator of PolyRemembers. Indeed, "Canadians have a right to know what Mr. Poilievre has been promising to groups of gun owners and gun-rights advocates across the country over the past two years. Repealing key gun control measures is a serious government policy that will directly affect public safety and increase the risk of gun violence for all Canadians."*

Publicly available information shows that **Mr. Poilievre** has travelled the country [talking](#) to numerous hunters and gun rights groups. During these events, he called the ban on some 2,500 models of assault weapons the 'liberal hunting rifle ban' and [promised to repeal](#) these prohibitions along with all other gun control measures [passed by](#) the **Trudeau government**, including **Bill C-21** (which automatically removes firearms from domestic abusers and freezes handgun sales), **Bill C-71** (which reinstated commercial sales records and requires the verification of a potential buyer's licence).

Prohibited models are weapons of “[tactical or military design](#)” that are unsuitable for civilian uses like hunting, and unarguably a serious threat to public safety. Hunters still have close to [20,000 models](#) of legal non-restricted rifles and shotguns to choose from for hunting and recreation in Canada.

While the problem of smuggled guns from the **US** is often cited by **Conservatives** as the main gun problem in Canada, evidence shows that, across the country, [most guns](#) seized by police and [up to half of firearms](#) used in homicides were legally obtained in this country.

“**There were over 30,000 firearms seized [...] in 2020.** We received tracing requests for 2,094 and were able to successfully trace 1,472. **Seventy-three per cent of those were deemed to be imported legally or manufactured in Canada,** and 27%, as mentioned, were smuggled or possibly smuggled. Of that 1,472, **71% were long guns** and, **of these, 85% were domestically sourced,** while **29% were handguns,** and **58% of those handguns were identified as smuggled** or possibly smuggled.”

- Stephen White, RCMP Deputy Commissioner for Specialized Policing Services

SECU, 16 December 2021, <https://www.ourcommons.ca/Content/Committee/441/SECU/Reports/RP11706338/securp03/securp03-e.pdf>

As is the case for most mass shootings, the gunmen at **Polytechnique, Concordia, Dawson**, as well as the two massacres [that Mr. Poilievre referenced](#) during last Thursday leader’s debate (to justify his use of the notwithstanding clause with respect to consecutive sentencing) - the **Quebec Mosque** and the murders of **three Moncton RCMP officers** - were the legal owners of the guns they used.

In 2021, **Conservative leader Erin O’Toole** initially told reporters he was in favour of banning assault weapons, but his definition of assault weapons was limited to fully automatic machine guns, excluding semi-automatic versions of military weapons like the infamous **AR-15**. He eventually promised to uphold the 2020 Orders In Council (banning an initial 1,500 models of assault weapons) but then *also* committed to introducing a “[Simplified Classification System](#).” This concept was [drafted and proposed by a gun lobby group](#) and would essentially render all guns that are not handguns or machine guns non-restricted (e.g. the **AR-15** would become non-restricted).

A year and a half ago, the **Conservative party** included in its [2023 Policy Declaration](#) a commitment to adopt the Simplified Classification System, which would ensure semi-automatic assault weapons are legal.

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