

Poilievre's Reckless Demand that Government Cancel the Assault Weapons Ban and Buyback Program in Spring Economic Update Puts Canadians at Greater Risk of Gun Violence

“Conservative leader’s demand to cut gun control measure would return banned assault-style firearms to Canadian communities, ignoring the lessons of mass shootings at École Polytechnique, the Quebec City Mosque, and in Nova Scotia.”

MONTREAL, April 28, 2026 - PolySeSouvient issued the following statement in response to **Conservative Leader Pierre Poilievre’s** call to cancel the ban and buyback program of assault weapons [in a recent letter](#) and during last Friday’s [pro-gun rally in Waterloo](#):

“PolySeSouvient condemns Conservative Leader Pierre Poilievre’s demand that Prime Minister Carney ‘[scrap](#)’ the ‘[Liberal gun grab](#)’, meaning the prohibition of 2,500 models of assault-style weapons and their removal from circulation through the Firearms Compensation Program, in today’s Spring Economic Update. The demand was also conveyed last Friday by Poilievre at a pro-gun lobby rally organized by the Canadian Coalition for Firearms Rights and is consistent with the Conservative Party’s long-time promises to gun owners and pro-gun groups to [weaken Canada’s gun control framework](#), including [reversing](#) the assault weapons ban.

Pierre Poilievre is demanding Prime Minister Carney abandon the ban on assault weapons and the program designed to remove thousands of assault weapons from Canadian communities — the same type of weapons used in the worst mass shootings in Canadian history. These are not hunting rifles. They are weapons designed for the battlefield, and Mr. Poilievre wants to leave them in Canadian communities to score political points with the gun lobby.

A position built on disinformation

Mr. Poilievre’s central justification for scrapping the buyback — that gun violence in Canada is committed by people who acquired their firearms ‘[almost exclusively by smuggling them over our border](#)’ rather than a mix of both smuggled AND domestically sourced firearms — is directly contradicted by the evidence:

- **RCMP statistics show that the majority (68% to 73%) of firearms seized by police across Canada are domestically sourced** — either manufactured in Canada or legally imported.
- With respect to long guns — the category most affected by the assault-style firearms ban — **85% are domestically sourced** [p.7].
- **Mass shootings in Canada are typically committed with legally acquired firearms**, not smuggled guns — including the 1989 Polytechnique massacre, the 2017 Quebec City Mosque attack, and the 2014 murder of three Moncton police officers. The 2020 Portapique (NS) mass-murder involved one domestically sourced firearm (through an inheritance from a legal

Canadian owner): a Ruger mini-14, the same model used at Polytechnique to kill 14 young women.

- **Most police killed in the line of duty are shot and mostly with long guns**, as the public was reminded once again with [yesterday's CTV's news report](#) on the March 2023 murder of two Edmonton police officers (and another victim). **The non-restricted (now prohibited) long gun was domestically sourced**, having been initially purchased from a legal store in south Edmonton. The model was reclassified in 2024 as a prohibited weapon and is set to be removed from circulation by the end of October (under the “gun grab”).
- **The Mass Casualty Commission, in its 2023 final report, explicitly recommended that Ottawa** “prohibit ... all semi-automatic rifles and shotguns that discharge centre-fire ammunition and that are designed to accept detachable magazines with capacities of more than five rounds” and **take steps to ‘rapidly reduce the number of prohibited semi-automatic firearms in circulation’** [[Recommendation C.38\(e\)](#)] — precisely what the buyback program is designed to do.

Mr. Poilievre has become the champion of gun control opponents and a mouthpiece for the gun lobby’s lies and disinformation. He is repeating, almost word for word, [the talking points](#) of Canada’s gun lobby, whose [explicit goal](#) is to roll back every meaningful firearm restriction in this country.

The ‘it’s all smuggled handguns’ line is plain wrong — it has been refuted by [the RCMP](#), by [Statistics Canada](#), and by [the public inquiry](#) into the deadliest mass shooting in Canadian history. This is not evidence-based policy. It is alt-right ideology which strongly opposes gun control, and it is dangerous.

Politics over public safety

PolySeSouvient notes that Poilievre’s extreme positions on gun control — and his decision to personally headline last Friday’s anti-assault weapon ban and buyback rally in Cambridge — appears designed to shore up his leadership among hardline gun control opponents in his party, rather than respond to the priorities of the vast majority of Canadians who [consistently and overwhelmingly support](#) a ban on assault-style firearms. These include 77% of gun owners according to both a [2022 Ekos poll](#) and a [2022 Environics poll](#), as well as 68% of Conservative voters according to a [2023 Abacus Data poll](#).

Pierre Poilievre is putting his job as leader of the Conservative Party ahead of the lives of Canadians. Survivors and victims’ families have spent more than three decades fighting to ban assault weapons. Prime Minister Carney should not allow such measures to be diminished or destroyed in order to satisfy a small but well-financed and vocal pro-gun lobby. We are calling on the Prime Minister to reject Poilievre’s reckless demand and stay the course on [completing](#) the ban on assault weapons as well as the implementation of other common sense gun violence prevention measures to keep Canadians safe from gun violence, including mass shootings."