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May 18, 2010

Mr. Charlie Angus  
Member of Parliament  
Timmins – James Bay

Dear Mr. Angus:

This correspondence is in regards to the impending vote in the House of Commons concerning the private member's bill to dispose of the long gun registry.

The Board of Directors and Executive of the Ontario Association of Chiefs of Police (OACP) have passed a resolution supporting the long gun registry and calling upon Parliament to reject the private members bill. The OACP has long supported the continuance of the firearms registry.

I am sure that you will agree with me that public safety must always supercede partisan politics. I am well aware of the opposition to the registry by many; however this opposition is based upon inaccurate information. The registry has been operated effectively since the Royal Canadian Mounted Police took over administration of the system in 2005. The cost of maintaining the registry has been reduced to approximately \$4 million dollars annually.

Police officers in Canada access the registry over 11,500 times daily. It has become an effective and essential tool for front line officers. The police in Canada have no interest in criminalizing persons who do not register their firearms.

The registry is an integral component of a regime for controlling and keeping track of privately owned firearms of which Canada can be justly proud. It is based upon a very Canadian principle that ownership of firearms by anyone other than law enforcement personnel is a privilege, not a right. The vast majority of Canadians have come to accept that the restrictions that this regime imposes are reasonable and in the interests of the public.

Knowing what firearms a person possesses can mean the difference between the ability of the police to legally obtain authorization to search for and seize guns in potentially dangerous situations. There are numerous examples in which the registry has been instrumental in effectively achieving what I have stated above.

It is my understanding that the N.D.P. caucus has received a briefing by representatives of the Canadian Association of Chiefs of Police and others that clear many misconceptions regarding the registry. The vast majority of police leaders in Canada, including Associations and Police Services Boards are united in their position that disposing the registry would be a mistake and would remove an important community safety initiative.

As Chief of Police for the Timmins Police Service, I implore that you do not support the private member's bill to dispose of the long gun registry. I would be pleased to meet with you at your convenience to discuss this issue in an informed manner.

Yours truly,



Richard Laperrière, M.O.M.  
CHIEF OF POLICE

C. Chief William Blair, President, CACP  
Ron Bain, Executive Director, OACP

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