



Canadian Association of Chiefs of Police
Association canadienne des chefs de police

Submission for the Standing Senate Committee on
Legal and Constitutional Affairs

**Bill C-14: An Act to amend the Criminal Code, the Youth
Criminal Justice Act and the National Defence Act (bail and
sentencing)**

Presented by:
Commissioner Thomas Carrique
President

On behalf of:

Canadian Association of Chiefs of Police

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Good morning and thank you for the opportunity to address this committee.

The enactment of Bill C-48, was an important milestone towards bail reform, but it is evident that our work to ensure the safety of our communities is not done.

There have been many egregious examples of repeat and violent offenders out on bail who commit additional offences. As Commissioner of the Ontario Provincial Police (OPP), I can provide the following statistics.

Between 2023 and 2025, 9,710 offenders were charged by the OPP with an offence while they were on bail.

Of the 9,710 offenders who re-offended while out on bail, there were over 54,000 charges laid by OPP members. Of those, 7,540 were violent crime charges.

To break this down even further, there were 4,277 charges laid for assault, 879 sexual assault charges, 146 robbery charges, 7 charges laid for attempted murder, and even, 10 homicide charges laid against offenders who were out on bail for other offences. And, this is just in OPP jurisdiction.

Once we factor in similar occurrences from major cities and communities across the country, it is clear that violent offenders continue to victimize Canadians while released on bail.

When the public sees individuals who have been released on bail or who have prior related convictions continuing to commit new offences, we see public confidence in the justice system diminish and concerns over public safety intensify.

For context, currently, in Ontario, there are more than 2,700 violent offenders charged with firearms-related offences who are on bail and being monitored by 32 police services via the Province's Bail Compliance Dashboard.

Combined with stronger sentencing that prioritizes denunciation and deterrence to combat violent and organized crime, legislative changes regarding stricter bail conditions for specific violent crimes and repeat offenders are necessary to mitigate serious crime and maintain public trust.

The CACP welcomes the amendments providing guidance to the application of the principle of restraint, closer scrutiny of release plans, and the addition of consideration of random or unprovoked violence when determining release.

The amendments to the reverse onus provision of the Criminal Code recognise the serious harms to society perpetrated by those involved in organized crime, extortion, trafficking, and certain serious, repeat violent crime.

The Bill must introduce clarity on the burden of proof for certain reverse onus bail hearings and provide direction on how to apply the reverse onus provisions.

It is the CACP's position that the burden of proof in these cases should require "clear and convincing evidence" before the accused person may be released. This standard falls between a balance of probabilities and proof beyond a reasonable doubt.

The CACP is also requesting the strengthening of the estreatment process to require specific information from a proposed surety, and a limit to the judicial discretion to order the forfeiture of a lesser amount than the amount pledged.

A more rigid forfeiture process compels accused persons to comply with their conditions. A surety is only effective if the consequence of a breach is meaningful.

In addition to the proposed amendments to bail and sentencing in Bill C-14, the CACP also supports the proposed amendment to the Youth Criminal Justice Act (YCJA), which would permit police to publish identifying information about a young person without a court order in urgent situations when the individual is at large and poses an imminent risk to public safety.

This measured, time-limited authority will save critical time and enhance public safety during rapidly evolving investigations. Notwithstanding this support, the CACP has concerns regarding other proposed amendments to the YCJA.

Specifically, the amendments seeking to create and restrict access to non-charge investigative records.

Bill C-14 subjects these records to much stricter treatment than any other category of record and fails to properly account for the nature of police investigations or the important uses of certain police records and information.

These amendments would hinder investigations, restrict the ability to meet disclosure obligations in criminal proceedings, and prevent information-sharing with courts, child protection agencies, and other key partners.

We therefore recommend that these amendments be withdrawn and replaced with a more balanced approach.

Finally, the CACP welcomes the sentencing amendments to the Criminal Code that requires the court to consider repeat violent offences, organized crime, and whether the offence was committed against a first responder or health care provider.

In closing, the CACP applauds the government for recognising the serious impact of organized crime, chronic, and violent offenders within our communities, and for advancing legislative change that prioritizes public safety and protects Canadians from preventable harm.

I welcome any questions the Committee may have.