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Presentation to the  
Standing Senate Committee on Public Safety and  
National Security

***BILL C- 2 - An Act to Amend the Controlled Drugs and  
Substances Act***

Remarks By: Chief Bryan Larkin  
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Canadian Association of Chiefs of Police

October 29, 2014

(Final)

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By way of introduction, my name is Bryan Larkin. I am Chief of the Waterloo Regional Police Service and sit as member of the Canadian Association of Chiefs of Police (CACP) Drug Abuse Committee. On behalf of myself, and CACP President Chief Clive Weighill, we would like to express our sincere appreciation to this committee for allowing us the opportunity to contribute to this important issue of ensuring local community input in decision making of potential safe injection sites within our communities.

I would just like to make the following statement before I begin:

As law enforcement leaders, our focus is always to ensure the safety of our communities, our officers and the most vulnerable among us. We are dedicated to the protection and security of the people of Canada.

Likewise, our colleagues in the Canadian Armed Forces proudly serve Canadians by defending our values, interests and sovereignty both at home and abroad.

We join each of you in mourning their loss.

We have all been shaken by recent tragedies in Saint-Jean-sur-Richelieu and here in Ottawa. It was truly an unprecedented week for all first responders. But as is typical of Canadians, such tragedies bring out the best in our people, our leadership and our collective resiliency.

Parliamentarians and staffers, from all political parties, are to be commended. Through a moment of terror to uniting in resolve, you each provided great leadership to all and demonstrated that we will not be deterred and we will continue to move on – as Canadians do.

We also wish to recognize the House and Senate security staffs, including one of our own CACP members, Sergeant-at-Arms Kevin Vickers and the services of our colleagues from the RCMP and Ottawa Police Service.

Thank-you

The CACP, through its twenty public safety and justice related committees contributes extensively to House and Senate committees. For your own background, the CACP represents in excess of 90% of the police community in Canada which includes federal, First Nations,

provincial, regional and municipal police leaders and services. Our mandate is the “Safety and Security for all Canadians through Innovative Police Leadership.

In 2007 the CACP adopted a Drug Policy that was developed through our Drug Abuse Committee. This policy sets out the position of CACP on this very important national issue that has direct impacts on Canadians on a day-to-day basis.

Let me provide a brief overview of the CACP drug policy

We believe in a balanced approach to the issue of substance use and abuse in Canada, consisting of prevention, education, enforcement, counselling, treatment, rehabilitation, and where appropriate, alternative measures and diversion of offenders in order to counter Canada’s drug problems.

We believe in a balanced continuum of practice distributed across each component. In addition, the policy components must be fundamentally lawful and ethical, must consider the interests of all, and must strive to achieve a balance between societal and individual interests. We believe that to the greatest extent possible, initiatives should be evidence-based.

The CACP supports the principles being established as part of this bill, in particular, the need to balance public safety with public health. The CACP is not making a statement with regards to supervised consumption sites. Our position is that the decision to support or not support supervised consumption sites is a local community issue. We are pleased to see a clear process that will provide criteria for community consultation prior to a decision being made by the Minister of Health.

Bill C-2 establishes 27 criteria that an applicant must meet before a Supervised Consumption Site is granted by the Minister of Health. One of these criteria requires that the applicant makes contact with and obtains the input of the local police service as noted in section 56.3 (e) of the Bill “a letter from the head of the police force that is responsible for providing policing services to the municipality in which the site would be located that outlines his or her opinion on the proposed activities at the site, including any concerns with respect to public safety and security.”

Again, the CACP maintains a neutral position on the actual merits of safe consumption sites. Our focus is on public safety and security and this is why we believe that while law enforcement is part of the decision-making process, the greater community response is required.

Every community is unique.

Thank-you!

## Q & A:

As a local Chief, what criteria would you look at in considering a proposal for a SPS in your jurisdiction?

What is the current crime rate in the proposed area?

What types of residential commercial/mix exists in the area, how will they be impacted? From a criminality perspective, from a homelessness perspective, from a community safety perspective.

Will this bring illicit drugs into the community and or increase the use of these drugs due to greater availability?

Who pays for the additional police resources that will be required?

While a safe consumption site is often referred to as a harm reduction strategy, what methods will be used to educate and assist those to stop abusing drugs?

Are there schools nearby?