



DURHAM REGIONAL POLICE SERVICE BOARD

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December 17, 2024

The Honourable Dominic Leblanc
Minister of Public Safety, Democratic Institutions and Intergovernmental Affairs

By email: dominic.leblanc@parl.gc.ca

Dear Minister Leblanc,

I am writing to you regarding concerns related to firearms crime.

In January of 2024, Statistics Canada reported that firearm-related violent crime increased by 8.9% increase in 2022 across the country, reaching the highest rate recorded since comparable data was first collected in 2009. The Statistics Canada report also stated that the increase is mainly attributable to fairly significant increases in Ontario.

The prevalence of guns in our community, and their use in crime, is increasingly causing fear and anxiety in our community. In August of this year, the Durham Regional Police Service (DRPS) concluded a nearly eight-month long investigation into the illegal possession and trafficking of firearms in our municipality. This investigation resulted in 32 people being arrested, 184 criminal charges and the seizure of 16 firearms. We would also draw your attention to the following statistics for Durham Region:

- 237 shootings/firearms discharges since 2018 (39 so far in 2024), with 119 people injured or killed
- 439 guns seized since 2022
- 200 offenders currently accused of, on probation or on parole for offences involving firearms that reside in Durham or have committed a firearm offence in Durham

I am sure you would agree that these results are alarming and unacceptable.

The vast majority of guns involved in crime in Durham Region have entered the country illegally from the United States. It is essential that measures be taken at the border to reduce the importation of these weapons that are causing harm in communities across Ontario and all of

Canada. The federal handgun freeze does not address the surge of illegal firearms being transported across our borders and ending up in the hands of violent criminals. We would request that additional controls be implemented at the border and that additional support be provided to police services at the local level to address the proliferation of illegal firearms.

Sincerely,



Shaun Collier
Chair

c.c.: Chief Moreira, DRPS
Durham Regional Chair, John Henry
The Honourable Michael Kerzner, Solicitor General of Ontario
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Local MPPs