

Mayor

DAVID MILLER

March 25, 2008

Right Honourable Stephen Harper
Office of the Prime Minister
80 Wellington Street
Ottawa, ON K1A 0A2

Dear Prime Minister:

I am writing to ask that your government take immediate action to ban handguns in Canada.

Handguns have become more than just a violent threat to the safety and security of Canadians. These deadly weapons have scarred our neighbourhoods with the loss of too many lives and increasingly endanger the health and vitality of proud communities across Canada.

It is time to banish handguns from our nation.

Here, in the City of Toronto, we are committed to making our safe city safer. We have put 450 more police officers on the streets and in our neighbourhoods. The Toronto Antiviolence Interventions Strategy (TAVIS) is producing positive results. And through the Community Safety Plan established in March, 2004, we are balancing enforcement with crime prevention programs. We are investing in youth and building on the strengths in our communities. We are creating partnerships with all sectors of our city to ensure that every young person has a chance to succeed.

Our approach is working. We take pride in the fact crime is down in every major category. Except gun murders.

Torontonians are too often reminded of the threat of handguns. They know too well that the availability of these weapons - even those legally-owned, licensed and registered - can perpetuate incidents of violence. Torontonians want something done to confront and overcome this major obstacle to making their safe city safer. Residents of cities right across Canada are of a like mind.

The Government of Canada must take action to address gun violence and to assure Canadians that individuals and families are safe and our communities are secure. The federal government must also assume the leadership needed to convince the Government of the United States to impose further gun controls within its jurisdiction. The U.S. must also strengthen its border security and anti-smuggling efforts to stop illegal handguns from entering our country and making their way onto our streets.



I am personally working to build partnerships with other governments and key stakeholders in the cause of public safety. These partnerships are necessary if we are to address the complex international and domestic causes of gun violence and better understand the negative impact it has on our communities. With this in mind, I am writing to all federal party leaders to secure their support.

To close, I again ask that you commit yourself and your government to safe streets for all Canadians. With your leadership, handguns can be banned in Canada and our border security can be strengthened to prevent them from being smuggled here. With your leadership, the Government of Canada will show that it stands firm on public safety and security.

Yours truly,

Mayor David Miller
City of Toronto

