Beat: Politics

Canadian Taxpayers Federation

Taking The Federal Government To Court

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USPA NEWS - The Canadian Taxpayers Federation has announced, on Thursday, the initiation of a legal challenge intended to disclose the true cost of Canada's gun buyback program, commencing with a request for the court to rule on a long-delayed access-to-information request

The Liberal government has incurred significant administrative costs, totaling $103,000, for confiscating between 10-22 firearms from law-abiding owners in Cape Breton. This expenditure translates to approximately $6,437 per firearm. As the program is rolled out across the country, costs are anticipated to escalate to nearly $1 billion. Notably, these funds could have been allocated to support law enforcement efforts and prevent the smuggling of firearms across the border. However, the government is currently directing police resources towards confiscating property from licensed firearm owners, whereas individuals possessing illegal firearms are being released back into the community due to the Liberal government's bail laws.

An unnammed source close to the CTF told USPA 24 News, "The move aims to impose transparency and accountability on a contentious policy.Too often, the complaint investigation process at the information commissioner’s office becomes an additional obstacle to accessing information, rather than the safeguard Parliament intended.

According to Devin Drover, CTF general counsel; “The Access to Information Act establishes clear legal duties on federal institutions and the commissioner to provide timely, independent oversight. When a complaint about the costs of a major federal program remains unresolved for more than a year, it is clear that the system is not working as expected.”

The release of partial records in the following January showed estimated costs for the RCMP's Pacific region to be over $12.6 million, but further attempts to reveal costs for other RCMP divisions were blocked. Consequently, the federation submitted a complaint to the information commissioner last April, and the process appears to have stalled thereafter.

Devin Drover, explained;
Our court application is about enforcing those legal obligations and setting a precedent that the commissioner must act promptly to ensure Canadians can access the information they are entitled to.

Taxpayers have a legal right to know what this gun ban and confiscation program will cost and government delay can’t be allowed to stand in the way of that."

Police chiefs say smuggling is the problem, while the Mark Carney Liberals maintain confiscating property from Canada’s licensed and legal firearms owners is key to enhancing public safety, advocates, athletes and even Canada’s police chiefs continue to assert that Canada’s gun crime problem lies in illegal weapons smuggled into Canada from the United States. Upwards of $70 million has so far been spent to develop the gun grab, with the Parliamentary Budget Officer indicating in 2021 the compensation aspects could cost as much as $746 million. Budget 2025 realigned the financial impact of the so-called “assault-style firearms compensation program” to $38.7 million over three years, starting in fiscal year 2025-26.

Gage Haubrich, the federation’s Prairies director, told media outlets, “Government shouldn’t be allowed to hide the program’s cost from taxpayers.

When politicians and government bureaucrats spend taxpayers’ money, they owe taxpayers full transparency and that’s why we’re pushing the government to release this information,” he continued to say,

“The gun ban and confiscation is a huge waste of taxpayers’ money and it won’t make Canadians safer. Instead of doubling down on a bad policy and hiding information, the government should scrap this boondoggle all together.”

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