

CANADIAN SHOOTING SPORTS ASSOCIATION / CANADIAN INSTITUTE FOR LEGISLATIVE ACTION

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Bill C-42 is granted Royal Assent

The "Common Sense Firearms Licensing Act" is now the Law of the Land

The Harper government's legislation to rid Canada of some bureaucratic burdens inherent in the Firearms Act is a welcome step in the right direction for responsible firearms owners.

The Canadian Shooting Sports Association (CSSA) has been working with the Conservative party for many years to achieve increasing degrees of firearms fairness. Tony Bernardo, executive director of the CSSA, says the new legislation has been a long time coming.

"This is another significant step forward and a cause for celebration among all responsible firearms owners," says Bernardo. "We have spent many long hours on Parliament Hill and C-42 addresses several irritating stones in the shoes of lawful gun owners. When this government stands to reject legislation designed only to harass the law-abiding, every Canadian should rejoice in the new-found fairness and freedom for sports shooters and hunters."

Bernardo, a long-time adviser to the federal government, said while the firearms community stands to win from the new bill, the bill is a progressive move for all Canadians. He notes that taxpayers have long paid for two almost identical licensing systems and hundreds of thousands of handwritten transport permits that did nothing. Bernardo states, " Even the Chief Firearms Officers acknowledge that the Authorization to Transport permit is very rarely refused and almost never revoked. That begs the question, why issue it at all?"

"This government promised to pass this bill before the end of the session and they have fulfilled that commitment," explains Bernardo. "Like the ending of the long gun registry, the sky will not fall. Public safety will be just as intact as before. Just as Canadians came to realize that the registry was a waste of time and money, we believe they will come to accept additional cuts in red tape in the spirit of fairness to responsible firearms owners. These are changes that the general public would never even notice, but responsible Canadian sport shooters will be much better off."

The CSSA has long advocated changes that would lighten the legislative burden sports shooters and hunters face every day.

"Getting rid of the Authorization to Transport and merging Possession-Only Licenses with Possession and Acquisition Licenses is an important step that demonstrates the government has been listening to the people," says Bernardo. "This legislation shows us, once again, that this administration can be trusted. This is further proof that the government is making good on its intentions to overhaul the onerous *Firearms Act* that the former Liberal government created. Their reams of red tape failed to improve public safety one iota, but they did succeed in demonstrating their contempt for trustworthy Canadian firearms owners."

Bernardo says while the Harper government has acted in good faith so far, he is looking forward to additional legislative progress to roll back the damage done to sport shooters from previous governments. He says the \$6+ billion that changes hands in the Canadian firearms industry annually is an important source of revenue, jobs and taxes. The government's willingness to treat responsible gun owners with the respect they deserve will be a boon for the Canadian economy as a whole.