

Media Release



OFAH FILE: 842
May 17, 2007

To All Media

For Immediate Release

O.F.A.H. supports extension of federal firearms amnesty

The Ontario Federation of Anglers and Hunters (O.F.A.H.) supports yesterday's announcement by the Honourable Stockwell Day, Minister of Public Safety, that will extend the current amnesty for non-restricted firearms until May 16, 2008.

"The amnesty is merely an interim step between the current system and changing the law to repeal the long gun registry entirely, as the O.F.A.H. has always advocated," said Mike Reader, O.F.A.H. Executive Director. "The government assures us that their goal remains the eventual abolition of the long gun registry, and the continued shift in focus away from the legal, law-abiding long gun owner, in favor of increased scrutiny, restrictions and prohibitions against those who engage in the criminal use of firearms. The introduction of stiffer sentences for gun crimes, the creation of a registry to track anyone who is prohibited from owning a firearm and other steps the government is taking, are part of the larger picture."

The extension of the amnesty will provide the owners of non-restricted firearms with an additional period to come into compliance with the current law, and ensure that their firearms are registered. The amnesty may also protect holders of unregistered, non-restricted firearms from criminal liability if they hold an expired license and are taking steps to meet the current licensing and registration requirements.

"It's unfortunate that some opposition members will not support Bill C-21, the government's bill that would scrap the long gun registry. There is no empirical evidence to suggest that the registry saves lives, a point that has been made by many law enforcement officials across the country. What would work, is a rigorous system which would track and effectively enforce prohibition orders against individuals who are not supposed to have access to firearms in the first place, mandatory firearms safety training for all first-time users, stiffer sentences, no plea bargains, and more money for local police forces," said Reader.

The Ontario Federation of Anglers and Hunters, representing 81,000 members and 655 member clubs, is the largest non profit fishing, hunting and conservation organization in Ontario. The O.F.A.H. remains one of the most outspoken adversaries of the federal long gun registry.

-30-

Contact: Robert J. Pye
Communications Coordinator
(705) 748-6324
robert_pye@ofah.org

Greg Farrant
Government Relations Manager
(705) 748-6324
greg_farrant@ofah.org