



LONDON POLICE SERVICE LONDON POLICE SERVICES BOARD

February 22, 2023

The Right Honourable Justin Trudeau, P.C., M.P.
Prime Minister of Canada
Office of the Prime Minister
80 Wellington Street
Ottawa, Ontario
K1A 0A2

Dear Prime Minister Trudeau:

RE: Legislative Reform to Bail

On behalf of the London Police Service and the London Police Services Board, we write to you today to add our voice to the growing chorus across our country calling for legislative reform to the *Criminal Code of Canada*. Reasonable and measured revisions to our bail process when dealing with violent repeat offenders and violent firearms crime is an important step that can help to address concerns regarding public safety in our communities.

The City of London is the fastest growing municipality in the Province of Ontario. Like many other major urban centres across the country, we have experienced an increasing incidence of violent offenders released into our communities. Regrettably, some of these repeat offenders charged with violent firearm crimes, aggravated intimate partner violence and hate based crimes, have engaged in similar violent behavior while on pre-trial release for the exact crimes for which they were charged in the first instance. While we are fully cognizant of the fact that we cannot completely eliminate these types of violent repeat offences from occurring, that does not mean that we, as a society, cannot take the requisite steps to mitigate them from happening.

We fully appreciate the fundamentally important Charter rights conferred upon individuals charged with an offence, which include, *inter alia*, the presumption of innocence and the right to reasonable bail for those charged with an offence. These protections are enshrined in our laws and rest at the core of our system of justice. However, that does not mean that certain amendments to the *Criminal Code of Canada*, which serve to further protect the safety and security of the public, cannot be enacted - amendments which would serve to create a higher threshold for bail being granted for those individuals who are chronic, violent offenders who possess convictions for previous violent crimes and firearm offences.

As Chief of Police for the London Police Service and Chair of the London Police Services Board, we are jointly calling for timely legislative reform to amend the *Criminal Code of Canada* to help address these issues. We join the Ontario Association of Chiefs of Police as well as a growing number of Police Boards and Associations across the country calling for bail reform.

Protecting the safety of both the public and our frontline officers is of paramount importance. We are mourning the loss of fellow citizens and officers killed by violent repeat offenders who possessed previous convictions for firearms offences with increased regularity and frequency.

These are preventable.

As such, it is a duty incumbent upon us all to take the requisite steps to do whatever in our power and means to prevent these tragedies from happening.

Bail reform, as advocated by multi-sector partners in government, law enforcement and community stakeholders, is a crucial and timely step that can address these issues while simultaneously protecting victims and protecting the safety of our communities.

Yours very truly,



Chief Steve Williams
London Police Service



Chair Ali A. Chahbar
London Police Services Board

cc: The Hon. Chrystia Freeland, Deputy Prime Minister
The Hon. David Lametti, Minister of Justice and Attorney General of Canada
The Hon. Michael Kerzner, Solicitor General of Ontario
The Hon. Marco Mendicino, Minister of Public Safety
His Worship, Mayor Josh Morgan, City of London
Mr. Peter Fragiskatos, Member of Parliament, London North-Centre
Ms. Arielle Kayabaga, Member of Parliament, London West
Ms. Lindsay Mathyssen, Member of Parliament, London Fanshawe