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PRESS RELEASE

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MCK and Peacekeepers address Assault-Style Firearms Compensation Program

For Immediate Release

(Kahnawake – 20 Enniskó:wa/March 2026) The Mohawk Council of Kahnawà:ke (MCK) and the Kahnawà:ke Mohawk Peacekeepers (KMPK) wish to inform the community that the KMPK at this time will not be administering the federal Assault-Style Firearms Compensation Program (ASFCP), commonly referred to as the firearms buyback.

The ASFCP is a result of Canada's rushed passage process of Bill C-21, which now prohibits several firearm categories—including many firearms that, until that point, were lawfully owned by fully licensed Kahnawà:kehró:non for harvesting, sustenance, and food security. Since the Bill was proposed in 2023, the MCK, along with other First Nations across Canada have raised serious concerns with the legislation up until its royal assent on December 15, 2023, when its provisions became Canadian criminal law. This included MCK's representation at both a House of Commons Standing Committee and a presentation to the Senate in 2023.

"While the MCK genuinely supports the enhancement of public safety, it has argued against policies that affect law-abiding Onkwehón:we. Many jurisdictions do not support this program, the Council as well does not support this buyback for many of the same reasons," said Ohén:ton Í:rate ne Ratitsénhahienhs Cody Diabo.

MCK urges Community members to inform themselves on the impacts that the legislation will have on firearm owners and the federal deadlines currently in effect:

- **March 31, 2026 - [Final day to register firearms and opt into the federal compensation program.](#)**
- **October 30, 2026 - [Federal Amnesty Order measures expire for individuals who have not complied.](#)**

"This is not an ideal situation at all, we do not want our community members criminalized," added Diabo. "However, absent internal structures and mechanisms, gun owners are bound to that process. The long-term solution would be for Kahnawà:ke to adopt its own law and regulations in terms of firearms. Meanwhile, MCK continues to advocate for respect for the rights of Kahnawakero:non."

Additionally, many provincial and local police services, including KMP, will not participate in administering the buyback. Citing concerns of inadequate resources to collect, de-activate, or destroy firearms under the new federal legislation. As well, many have stated the focus, and the funding should have been allocated to stronger enforcement of the illegal firearm market.

"We have identified a number of concerns directly related to the buyback, namely the lack of recognition of Indigenous policing as an essential service. We do not have the staffing, storage capacity, or resources required to participate," said Chief Peacekeeper Dwayne Zacharie. "We need to continue to focus on our operational priorities and participation in this program would place undue strain on our core functions."

MCK will continue to provide updates as developments occur.