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**For Immediate Release**

## **GUN REGISTRY A TESTIMONY TO WASTED OPPORTUNITIES**

Auditor General Sheila Fraser's report into the excessive costs of the longarm registry is a sign of so many wasted opportunities, according to the International Coalition for Women in Shooting and Hunting (WiSH).

"The benefit produced by the registry is the knowledge that legitimate firearms owners are not the ones committing crimes. The cost has been a decade where social wellbeing has taken a poor second place to ideology," said WiSH Chairwoman Ms Samara McPhedran.

Rates of firearm misuse in Canada have fallen steadily for two decades, a trend mirrored in countries such as Australia and New Zealand.

With its billion dollar price-tag, the registry has absorbed funds that would have provided greater social benefits if directed towards support services, education, healthcare, and policing.

"Accessible social services and well resourced policing enable crime reduction, which is something the cumbersome registration system has not delivered."

WiSH have asked Canadians to reflect upon what progress could be achieved if the millions of dollars required annually to maintain the registry in its current form were instead used to address factors underlying violence.

"The registry was sold to the public not as a way to monitor legal firearms ownership, but as a means of keeping firearms out of the wrong hands. How it was ever expected to achieve that remains, quite literally, a billion dollar question," Ms McPhedran stated.

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**WOMEN ON TARGET FOR POSITIVE CHANGE**