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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

Canadian Police Association Welcomes Introduction of Bill C-16, the Protecting Victims Act

OTTAWA - The Canadian Police Association (CPA) today welcomes the introduction of Bill C-16, the Protecting Victims Act, which strengthens protections for children and proposes important reforms to address delay in the criminal justice system.

Bill C-16 creates a new offence targeting adults who involve children in the commission of crime and expands the aggravating factors for those who recruit or exploit youth. These changes reflect the seriousness of offences that cause lasting harm to victims and communities.

“Police officers see, first-hand, the damage caused when vulnerable young people are drawn into criminal activity,” said Tom Stamatakis, President of the Canadian Police Association. “This legislation sends a clear signal that these cases deserve strong consequences and focused attention.”

The Bill also includes several measures to address unreasonable delay, particularly in cases involving sexual offences against children. These provisions clarify how courts should assess case complexity, require courts to consider remedies other than a stay of proceedings for delay, and make specific procedural adjustments for evidence related applications that often extend timelines.

Mr. Stamatakis added, “It is encouraging to see the federal government respond quickly when concerns arise about how the justice system manages serious public safety issues. Courts must operate independently, but there are times when outcomes naturally raise questions for the public and for front line officers about whether the process reflects the gravity of the offences involved. Legislative action such as Bill C-16 helps reinforce confidence that the system can adapt when needed to protect the most vulnerable.”

“Officers who spend months or years working on complex investigations want to know that their efforts will support victims and lead to accountability,” added Mr. Stamatakis. “When cases collapse because of technical issues or timelines that do not reflect modern policing it is deeply demoralizing for the officers involved. Bill C-16 is another meaningful step toward enhancing confidence in the justice system.”

The CPA looks forward to working with all parties in Parliament to ensure these reforms are implemented in a way that strengthens public safety and supports the victims and communities most affected by these serious crimes.

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