NATURAL HEALTH PRODUCT PROTECTION ASSOCIATION
nhppa.org

Legal Opinion by Shawn Buckley on Alberta Bill 24 - *Alberta Bill of Rights Amendment Act, 2024*

Copies of this Opinion can be found at https://nhppa.org/alberta-bill24/.

Summary Point 1 - Bill 24 makes the Bill of Rights weaker, not stronger

The public messaging is that Bill 24 will strengthen the Bill of Rights by:

(1) strengthening the protection of private property;

(2) adding the right of freedom of expression;

(3) adding the right not to be coerced into taking a medical treatment, including a vaccine, and

(4) adding the right to possess and use firearms.

The Government had the option of very simply strengthening the protection of private property and adding the three new additional rights. This was not done. Rather the entire Bill of Rights was re-written so as to make the new rights meaningless and reduce our ability to enforce the rights that were already in the Bill of Rights. In other words, if Bill 24 passes we are worse off than before.

The most troubling aspect of Bill 24 *is that it introduces a limit on our existing right to refuse medical treatments*. Albertans should be very concerned about a new legislative limit on their existing right to refuse medical treatments.

Summary Point 2 - It is easy to craft a Bill of Rights that would actually confer enforceable rights. This can be fixed.

Bill 24 should be scrapped and proper amendments drafted. This can be fixed. This is an opportunity for Albertans to create a meaningful Bill of Rights.

The five obstacles to meaningful rights that can be overcome

A "right" that can easily be taken away from you is not a "right". It is a privilege. Rights belong to the individual and cannot be taken away except in very exceptional circumstances. Privileges belong to the state and are granted to the citizen. If you are told you have a right but it can easily be taken away, it is not a right, it is a privilege.

Rights are meaningless if you cannot be easily and fully compensated for any violation. If your "right" can be violated and you cannot get a remedy, or if the remedy is difficult to get, your right is meaningless.

There are five main ways that governments make our "rights" meaningless. They are:

1. justification of the violation of our rights;
2. providing no remedy for the violation of our rights;
3. shielding government employees from personal accountability for violating our rights;
4. ensuring there is no reasonable access to justice to enforce our rights, and
5. employing a professional Department of Justice to erode our rights.

It is important to understand these mechanisms for there to be a meaningful analysis of Bill 24.

First mechanism to make rights meaningless - Justification of the violation of our rights

Rights are vested in the citizen. They belong to the individual. Because rights belong to the individual, only the individual can consent to the right being given up, even temporarily. Rights only exist if there is meaningful and accessible compensation for any violation.

One of the most effective mechanisms available to governments to ensure we only have privileges, not rights, is to put justification clauses into our rights documents such as the *Canadian Charter of Rights and Freedoms* (the "*Charter of Rights and Freedoms*") and provincial bills of rights. A justification clause enables the government to justify its violation of your rights and thereby to avoid liability for violating your rights. The best example of a justification clause that has rendered rights meaningless is found in section 1 of the *Charter of Rights and Freedoms*. Section 1 reads:

> The *Canadian Charter of Rights and Freedoms* guarantees the rights and freedoms set out in it, subject only to such reasonable limits prescribed by law as can be demonstrably justified in a free and democratic society.

If you prove to a Court that one of your Charter Rights has been violated, section 1 enables the government to argue that the violation was justified. If justified, you have no remedy. When lawyer James Kitchen testified at the National Citizens Inquiry he explained that section 1 has rendered our Charter Rights meaningless. I agree. For example, regardless of your opinion on the Covid-19 experience, we all experienced the largest ever intrusion of government into our lives. Even in wartime the populace was not under house arrest or having to show identity papers to access non-essential services. Although this was the largest loss of our rights in history, with the exception of the case of *Jost v. Canada (Governor in Council)*, 2024 FC 32, I cannot point you to a single case in any province that will in any way restrain any level of government from encroaching on your rights in the same way if there is a similar pandemic. This complete trampling of our rights is in large part because of section 1.

I have been a constitutional lawyer for almost 30 years. In my opinion section 1 of the *Charter of Rights and Freedoms* has been the single most effective mechanism for making our Charter Rights meaningless.

If you wanted to make the rights in the Alberta Bill of Rights meaningless, the most effective way would be to insert the wording from section 1 of the Charter of Rights and Freedoms into the Alberta Bill of Rights. And that is what Bill 24 does.

There was no "justification" clause in the Alberta Bill of Rights prior to Bill 24. Bill 24 adds a justification clause using the same wording as section 1 of the *Charter of Rights and Freedoms*. Bill 24 adds to the Bill of Rights:

> 1(2) The rights and freedoms recognized and declared by this Act are *subject only to such reasonable limits prescribed by law as can be demonstrably justified in a free and democratic Alberta.*

Compare this to section 1 of the *Charter* which has rendered Charter Rights meaningless:

> The *Canadian Charter of Rights and Freedoms* guarantees the rights and freedoms set out in it, *subject only to such reasonable limits prescribed by law as can be demonstrably justified in a free and democratic society*.

Bill 24 goes farther than the *Charter* to limit our rights. Bill 24 adds:

> 1(3) For greater certainty, a reasonable limit on the rights and freedoms recognized and declared by this Act that is prescribed by law and demonstrably justified under subsection (2) ***is not an infringement or denial of those rights and freedoms***.
>
> (emphasis added).

Subsection 1(3) makes it clear that if the violation of your rights is "justified" under the justification clause in subsection 1(2) that there "is not an infringement or denial of those rights and freedoms". In other words, although you will have proven your right was violated, at law there is no violation and hence no remedy for you. A right without a remedy is not a right.

The addition of subsections 1(2) and 1(3) make the rights that were already in the Bill of Rights now subject to this justification clause. They are no longer rights, but privileges. ***Bill 24 deliberately weakens our Bill of Rights***.

For the rights in the Bill of Rights to be meaningful, the justification clauses found in subsections 1(2) and 1(3) should be removed from Bill 24.

Second mechanism to make rights meaningless - Providing no remedy for the violation of our rights

Penalties for bad behaviour are necessary to deter the bad behaviour. All of us would speed more than we do if we did not have to worry about speeding tickets. The penalties deter us from the bad behaviour.

The Government of Alberta knows this well. In law after law they impose penalties for bad behaviour because they know *the best way to deter bad behaviour is to penalize it.*

The worst behaviour in a free and democratic society is the violation of fundamental rights. *It should be our first priority to penalize the violation of fundamental rights*, so as to deter the

behaviour. We have no rights if governments and government employees can violate our rights without meaningful penalties.

Bill 24 bans damages for violating our rights. Bill 24 adds to the Bill of Rights:

> **Enforcement of rights and freedoms**
>
> 3.1(1) Anyone whose rights or freedoms, as recognized and declared by this Act, have been infringed or denied may apply to a court of competent jurisdiction to obtain, subject to subsection (2), such remedy as the court considers appropriate and just in the circumstances.
>
> (2) An application under subsection (1) *may not include a claim for damages in respect of an infringement or denial of rights and freedoms* caused by the enactment of an Act, including this Act.
>
> (emphasis added).

The wording in subsection 3.1(2) is opaque. We cannot seek damages for rights violations caused by "the enactment of an Act [law]". The passage of a law through the Legislature and the signature by the Lieutenant Governor is not going to cause us damages (which is the "enactment of an Act"), so it must mean by the operation of laws passed by the Legislature. The Bill of Rights only applies to the Alberta Government. All of our rights violations covered by the Bill of Rights will be done under the operation of laws passed by the Legislature. So we are banned from pursuing damages for any rights violations.

The addition of subsection 3.1(2) ensures:

(1) there is no deterrence to violating our rights, and

(2) our rights are meaningless as we cannot be meaningfully compensated for violations of them.

If the Government abolished fines for speeding, the speeding laws would be ignored because there would be no meaningful penalty. It would not deter the speeders that the Government could go to Court and get a declaration that the speeders were speeding. That would be useless.

It is more than madness in the context of fundamental rights to prohibit penalties for violating rights. The addition of subsection 3.1(2) is a green light for the Government and government employees to violate our rights without any concern of consequences.

If we wanted actual rights to be guaranteed by the Bill of Rights, section 3.1 should read:

> **Enforcement of rights and freedoms**
>
> 3.1(1) Anyone whose rights or freedoms, as recognized and declared by this Act, have been infringed or denied may apply to a court of competent jurisdiction to obtain such remedy as the court considers appropriate and just in the circumstances.
>
> (2) the infringement or denial of rights and freedoms as recognized and declared by this Act constitutes a tort.

(3) damages for the infringement or denial of rights and freedoms as recognized and declared by this Act are presumed. This presumption of damages can only be rebutted in exceptional circumstances.

Other Alberta laws require compensation for the taking of property, such as for expropriation. Because of this, Bill 24 does include compensation for the taking of property.

Third mechanism to make rights meaningless - shielding government employees from personal accountability for violating our rights

If there are civil proceedings against the Government, government employee(s) named as parties are often not facing consequences. The Government often covers both their legal fees and any penalties. This creates the first problem with government employees: no deterrence for violating our rights.

Most of us would speed if somebody else was going to pay for all our tickets. We would not be deterred. In fact, we would be encouraged to speed. The same applies to government employees. It will almost always be a government employee or agent who violates our rights. They currently are encouraged to do so because there are no personal consequences to them. They are protected by their employer, the Government. The only way to deter them is for them to be personally liable for violating our rights.

This would place government employees on the same footing as private individuals. Private individuals are personally liable for rights violations under the *Alberta Human Rights Act*. Government employees and agents should be personally liable under the Bill of Rights.

The other difficulty with government employees is the compulsion to follow orders. There is a well known psychological principle that people will do awful things to others if they are following orders. This is strengthened when the authority giving the orders takes responsibility for the actions. The employee is just following orders. The employee follows the orders, and injures others, because the employee is not responsible. He or she is simply following orders. It is because of this phenomenon that at the Nuremberg Trials the legal principle had to be established that following orders is not a justification for harming others.

To protect our rights, there must be deterrence to the people violating our rights. A meaningful Bill of Rights needs to impose personal responsibility on the individuals who violate our rights. This could be easily added to the Bill of Rights.

The Bill of Rights could include:

Definitions

0.1 In this Act,

(c) “public officer” includes any person in the public service of the Province

(i) who is authorized by or under an enactment to do or enforce the doing of an act or thing or to exercise a power, or

(ii) on whom a duty is imposed by or under an enactment,

and includes an independent contractor employed by the Crown or paid by the Crown for the delivery of services, such as medical services;

Personal Responsibility

3.2(1) Every public officer is personally liable for infringing or denying a right or freedom as recognized and declared by this Act.

(2) Subject to subsection (3), every public officer is personally liable for the legal costs of defending a claim.

(3) Public officers are not to be denied a proper defence because of their inability to pay for reasonable legal representation.

Fourth mechanism to make rights meaningless - Ensuring there is no reasonable access to justice to enforce our rights

The fourth mechanism to make our rights meaningless is to ensure that we have no reasonable access to justice to enforce our rights.

The costs of legal proceedings is the largest barrier for most Albertans. Most of us cannot afford to go to Court. By structuring the Bill of Rights so that there are only remedies for those well-off enough to be able to afford Court proceedings, the Government has ensured that most of us do not have rights. A right we cannot enforce is not a right.

There are other ways that the Government prevents us from enforcing our rights. These include the justification clauses discussed earlier. Even if you prove to a Court that your rights have been violated, the Government often succeeds in having their actions "justified" under the justification clause. This denies you any remedy.

Another mechanism used to prevent your access to justice is to have the Court declare your action moot. This happened time and time again in Covid litigation. For example, there were a number of lawsuits alleging rights violations for the travel bans during the Covid-19 experience. The parties filed pleadings and affidavits. There was discovery of documents and cross-examinations. Arguments were prepared. But before the cases were argued, the Government of Canada asked the Court to throw the cases out for being moot. The travel bans had been dropped by the time the case was to be heard. The Government argued the case was "moot" because the Court could not grant a remedy. The Court could not remove the non-existent travel bans. Time and resources were spent without being able to get a decision.

Another mechanism to prevent you access to justice is to argue that you don't have the right to come to Court: that you don't have "standing". Unless you can show that you are impacted by a government action in a meaningful way, you are not allowed to ask Courts to find that the Government violated the law by violating rights. Similarly your are denied standing because our administrative law does not allow you to challenge "administrative" decisions that affect your rights.

Another mechanism to deny you access to justice is unequal representation. This is covered in the next heading.

The Bill of Rights could ensure we have meaningful rights by solving these access to justice issues. For example, the Bill of Rights could include:

> **Access to Justice**
>
> 3.3(1) Individuals are not to be denied access to the Courts for relief under this Act because of their inability to pay for reasonable legal representation.
>
> (2) There is a strong presumption that it is in the public interest to have alleged past rights violations determined as precedents for the future and for the granting of relief. The doctrine of mootness only applies if the proceedings would amount to an abuse of process;
>
> (3) Whenever there is an adequate record before the Court, there is a strong presumption that it is in the public interest to have alleged rights violations adjudicated on regardless of standing.
>
> (4) Except in the case of an abuse of process there are to be no costs awarded in favour of the Crown.

Fifth mechanism to make rights meaningless - employing a professional Department of Justice to slowly erode our rights

The fifth mechanism to make our rights meaningless is establishing a professional Department of Justice to slowly erode our rights.

There was a time when we did not have Department of Justice lawyers. Private lawyers were hired, as needed, to represent the Crown.

I have come to understand that long-term, Departments of Justice are inconsistent with the rule of law (which depends on access to justice) and to the protection of our rights. We have an adversarial Court system. The Departments of Justice in Canada have developed the mind-set that they are there to represent the King, the Crown, not the Citizens of Canada. So unless it is the clearest of cases, the Department of Justice Lawyers always argue that it was okay for the State to violate our rights. This is their policy. This is their mind-set. I have run over 1000 criminal trials. I have always experienced the Crown lawyers arguing to restrict our rights. Arguing that it was okay for our rights to be violated. That the violations were justified.

Our Departments of Justice are a machine compared to the Defence Bar. They seem to have endless resources. In my experience they are the most aggressive in their defence of the King in constitutional challenges. Although I am a constitutional lawyer. I dreaded the constitutional cases. I would face motion after motion to exhaust my clients both financially and spiritually. I would face a team of lawyers, sometimes over 10 against one, many on "constitutional units" with expertise in arguing to restrict our rights. And slowly over my 30 year career I have seen constitutional challenges become so complicated and costly that few can pursue them. Slowly I have watched our rights being restricted. Slowly I came to the understanding that Departments of Justice are not consistent long-term with the rule of law and the preservation of our rights.

This is not a Bill of Rights issue. It needs to be corrected as part of a broader correction of our justice system.

Other issues with Bill 24 - the right to refuse treatment - *this amendment introduces a new restriction to our existing right to refuse treatment*

This is the issue that has interested the Natural Health Product Protection Association (nhppa.org) which is dedicated to protecting the right of individuals to make their own health decisions. The author is concerned that Bill 24 will operate to introduce a new restriction on our existing right to refuse medical treatment.

Our common law rights include the right to refuse a medical treatment. Imposing an unwanted treatment is both a civil assault and a criminal assault.

Courts have also read the right to refuse a treatment into our right to "life, liberty, and security of the person" found in section 7 of the *Charter of Rights and Freedoms*.

Bill 24 introduces a new legislative restriction on our existing right to refuse medical treatment. Bill 24 adds the following:

> (h) the right of the individual with capacity not to be subjected to, or coerced into receiving, medical care, medical treatment or a medical procedure without the consent of that individual, ***unless that individual is likely to cause substantial harm to that individual or to others***;
>
> (i) notwithstanding clause (h), the right of the individual with capacity not to be subjected to, or coerced into receiving, a vaccine without the consent of that individual;
>
> (emphasis added).

The last part of (h) is troubling as it creates a limitation that is not in our common law right to refuse a treatment. Nor is the limitation in our right to refuse treatment in section 7 of the *Charter of Rights and Freedoms*. It is also troubling in light of the Covid-19 experience where governments and the mainstream media were saying that not getting vaccinated posed a substantial risk to oneself and to others. The limitation in (h) is that you do not have the right to refuse a treatment if you are likely to cause substantial harm to yourself or to others.

Under the common law you have the right to refuse treatment even if that will lead to your death. So for example, my grandmother who was a nurse came down with ovarian cancer and refused all treatment. She died as quickly as she could. She chose to forgo treatments she had watched others take. She would not have that right under Bill 24. Under Bill 24 she could be forced to take cancer treatments she believed would simply prolong her suffering. This is a curious limitation that should be removed. We should have absolute right over our bodies. If there is some pressing crisis to justify over-ruling our existing right to refuse treatment, the Legislature can do it under clause 2.1 (below).

Another problem with the state's right to force a treatment on you if you are likely to cause yourself harm or to harm another is that the section does not require Court supervision. It does not require any supervision. If the state is ever to be allowed to force medical treatments on us against our will, which should never happen, surely it should be only allowed with a Court order and with pre-determined criteria. Likely a law allowing this would violate section 7 of the *Charter of Rights and Freedoms* and be struck down. And yet here we are with worse in our Bill of Rights.

The Government will answer and say the Bill of Rights does not create a Government right to restrict your existing right to medical treatment. Then take it out. Do not put into a Bill of Rights a legislative restriction on our existing right to refuse medical treatment.

Other clear problems with the limitation on our right to refuse a treatment are:

(1) who is it that determines you are "likely" to cause substantial harm? Who is it that in effect has control over your body;

(2) what does "likely" mean? Is it a 1% chance? Is it a .001% chance? What criteria are used to determine "likely"?

(3) what is "substantial harm"? Who determines what the substantial harm is? What are the criteria?

(4) why is there no balancing of the potential risk of the forced treatment? Even under the *Mental Health Act* for committed persons there is a balancing requirement. Here there is no balancing. The danger of the treatment can outweigh the harm sought to be avoided;

(5) does this apply to experimental treatments such as the Covid-19 vaccines which were exempted from the requirements for safety and efficacy to be proven?

(6) what does "capacity" mean? Who determines whether you have "capacity"?

The qualification on our right to refuse treatment in Bill 24 is so alarming that as an Albertan I would feel safer without the right at all. The qualification puts into our Bill of Rights that ***we can be subjected to or coerced into unwanted medical treatments if someone believes we are likely to cause substantial harm to ourselves or to others. Right now competent adults in Alberta cannot be subjected to unwanted treatments.*** This has no place in any law in Alberta. It certainly does not belong in the Bill of Rights. This goes further than the *Mental Health Act* which does not apply to competent adults.

Another concern is that the "right" to refuse medical treatment is limited to people with capacity. Those without capacity, our most vulnerable, do not have this right. Their guardians are not given the right to refuse treatments. Not meaning to use hyperbole but was it not the incapacitated that were murdered first by the National Socialists in Germany? Under the *Mental Health Act* guardians have the right to make medical decisions for mentally incompetent persons. Why are similar rights not afforded to the incompetent under the Bill of Rights?

I am also concerned that "consent" is not defined. It should be expanded to mean full and informed consent of the risks, benefits and alternatives to a treatment.

These are extremely poorly drafted and ill-defined rights. As a minimum I would suggest the following wording and additions:

Definitions

0.1 In this Act

(a) "consent" means consent to a treatment after being fully informed of: (a) the benefits of a treatment; (b) the risks of a treatment; (c) the likely consequence of avoiding the treatment; (d) other treatment options, and (e) the right to refuse the treatment;

(b) "mentally competent" means able to understand the subject-matter in respect of which consent is requested and able to appreciate the consequences of giving or refusing consent.

[the following rights are also added]

(h) the right of the individual not to be subjected to, or coerced into receiving, medical care, medical treatment or a medical procedure without the consent of that individual if the individual is mentally competent, or without the consent of the legal guardian of that individual if the individual is not mentally competent;

(i) notwithstanding clause (h), the right of the individual not to be subjected to, or coerced into receiving, a vaccine without the consent of that individual if the individual is mentally competent, or without the consent of the legal guardian of that individual if the individual is not mentally competent.

Other issues with Bill 24 - the protection of private property should be strengthened

The old Bill of Rights protected private property. Section 1(a) included as one of the listed rights:

(a) the right of the individual to liberty, security of the person *and enjoyment of property*, and the right not to be deprived thereof except by due process of law;

(emphasis added).

As discussed above, all of the rights are weakened by the addition of the justification clause.

On its face, Bill 24 strengthens the protection of property. The protection is still weak and needs some improvement. Bill 24 strengthens the protection of property by adding the following:

Definitions

In this Act

(d) "taking of property" means, in respect of real or personal property,

(i) a transfer of ownership of the property without the consent of the owner, or

(ii) an owner of property being deprived ***of all*** reasonable uses of that property.

(emphasis added).

[the following rights are also added]

(a.1) the right to the enjoyment of property and the right not to be deprived thereof except to the extent authorized by law and except by due process of law;

(a.2) the right not to be subject to a taking of property except to the extent authorized by law and where just compensation is provided;

These provisions could be strengthened as follows:

(1) the word "all" in (b)(ii) is too restrictive. It would enable the Government to take substantial control over your property without violating your property rights. It gives the Government the right to argue that although you lost almost all use of your property, your property was not taken because you did not lose "all use", you only lost 90% use. The word "all" should be removed from (b)(ii);

(2) there should be compensation for being deprived of the enjoyment of your property. If the Government uses a law to infringe on your enjoyment of property, you should be compensated. Clause (a.1) should read:

> (a.1) the right to the enjoyment of property and the right not to be deprived thereof except to the extent authorized by law; except by due process of law, and where just compensation is provided;

Other issues with Bill 24 - should there be restrictions on the ability of the Legislature to circumvent the Bill of Rights

The old Bill of Rights enabled the Legislature to circumvent the Bill of Rights. This was because of section 2 which read:

> 2 Every law of Alberta shall, *unless it is expressly declared by an Act of the Legislature that it operates notwithstanding the Alberta Bill of Rights*, be so construed and applied as not to abrogate, abridge or infringe or to authorize the abrogation, abridgment or infringement of any of the rights or freedoms herein recognized and declared.
>
> (emphasis added).

Bill 24 replaces section 2 with two provisions which follow the language found in the *Constitution Act, 1982*, but without the protections in the *Constitution Act, 1982*. Bill 24 includes:

> 2 Any law of Alberta that is inconsistent with the provisions of this Act is, to the extent of the inconsistency, of no force or effect.

This wording is borrowed from s. 52 of the *Constitution Act, 1982*. Bill 24 also includes:

> **Parliamentary supremacy**
>
> 2.1 The Legislature may expressly declare in an Act that a law of Alberta operates notwithstanding this Act.

This language is borrowed from section 33 of the *Constitution Act, 1982*. But section 33 has a safeguard that is left out of 2.1. Section 33 puts a five year limit on a declaration in an Act that over-rides our rights. We should include that limit in the Bill of Rights. We should include:

> 2.3 A declaration made under section 2.1 shall cease to have effect five years after it comes into force or on such earlier date as may be specified in the declaration.

Other issues with Bill 24 - is the Application Clause broad enough?

The old Bill of Rights applied to every action of the Alberta Government. It applied to laws. It applied to the actions of government employees and contractors. It applied to laws because subsection 3(2) defined what laws were and section 2 subjected every law to the Bill of Rights.

The old Bill of Rights applied to Government of Alberta actions because of subsection 3(3) which read:

> 3(3) The provisions of this Act shall be construed as extending only to matters coming within the legislative authority of the Legislature of Alberta.

Bill 24 replaces subsection 3(3) with the following application clause:

> **Application**
>
> 0.2 This Act applies to the Legislature and government of Alberta in respect of all matters within the authority of the Legislature of Alberta.

The *Interpretation Act* has the following definitions which apply:

> (bb) "Legislature" means the Lieutenant Governor acting by and with the advice and consent of the Legislative Assembly;
>
> (r) "Government" or "Government of Alberta" means His Majesty in right of Alberta;

Plugging the definitions from the *Interpretation Act* into clause 0.2, the clause reads and means:

> 0.2 This Act applies to the Lieutenant Governor and His Majesty in respect of all matters within the authority of the Legislature of Alberta.

I prefer the old Bill of Rights subsection 3(3) which applies the Bill of Rights to "matters coming within the legislative authority of the Legislature of Alberta". It was clear that the Bill of Rights covered all things government such as municipalities, health authorities, police, crown corporations, etc.

The new section 0.2 may not be as broad. It only applies to:

> (1) the Legislature and
>
> (2) Government of Alberta.

With this wording it is not clear that the Bill of Rights applies to municipalities, health authorities, police, crown corporations, etc.

Much of our health care is delivered by private persons, like doctors, who are paid by Alberta Health Services. For our right to refuse medical treatments to be meaningful, doctors must be liable for a breach of this right. In many cases it will be the doctors who are responsible for ensuring that there is proper consent.

The liability clause should be expanded to read:

> 0.2(1) This Act applies to the Legislature, the Government of Alberta, and all matters coming within the legislative authority of the Legislature of Alberta.

There is no guesswork with this suggested reading. Why is the wording in Bill 24 so unclear?

Other issues with Bill 24 - understanding the firearm "right"

Bill 24 adds the following right concerning firearms:

> (j) the right to acquire, keep and use firearms ***in accordance with the law***.
>
> (emphasis added).

Bill 24 limits our right to acquire, keep and use firearms to "in accordance with the law".

It is important to understand that the Alberta Government has no control over the Federal Government which had progressively banned various firearms. If the Federal Government banned all firearms as some other countries have done, the right in the Alberta Bill of Rights will not protect us.

Direct enquiries to the NHPPA

This Opinion is the opinion of the author, Mr. Shawn Buckley. As with all opinions and discussion papers posted by the Natural Health Product Protection Association (the "NHPPA"), we invite comments. Please direct your comments to info@nhppa.org.

The NHPPA is a not-for-profit organization dedicated to protecting your health rights. Visit us at https://nhppa.org.