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## REQUEST FOR DECISION

### DATE:

June 12, 2018

### TOPIC:

Tax Credit for Citizens on Patrol

### RECOMMENDATION:

That AUMA and its members sign the enclosed petition calling on the Government of Canada to extend a tax credit to Citizens on Patrol similar to that already given to volunteer firefighters and search and rescue volunteers.

### BACKGROUND:

Citizens on Patrol (COP) is a provincial program sponsored and administered by the Alberta Citizens on Patrol Association. The program schedules COP volunteers into daytime or nighttime patrols that are intended to help prevent crime by observing and reporting possible criminal activity. COP is a voluntary program involving community residents who work with the local RCMP detachment to develop a suitable patrolling program. COP is not meant to replace police, but operates under the direction of the RCMP to be an extra set of "eyes and ears" to assist and allow police to direct their focus to other areas of potential crime.

The Honourable Martin Shields, Conservative MP for Bow River, is sponsoring an electronic petition (see Attachment 1) that calls for the Government of Canada to grant a tax credit of \$3,000 to COP volunteers who perform at least 200 hours of patrol services. This tax credit would be the same as that offered to volunteer firefighters and search and rescue volunteers. The petition notes that "Citizens on Patrol, acting as the eyes and ears of the RCMP, have proven to be highly effective in reducing the incidents of crime" and that "a Citizen on Patrol is an unarmed, unpaid, volunteer who often requires the use of a personal vehicle."

Once they close, electronic petitions that reach at least 500 signatures are certified by the Clerk of Petitions, then presented to the House of Commons where they may garner a formal government response. As of April 24, 2018, there were 507 signatures on Mr. Shields' petition, which will remain open until July 12, 2018.

### ANALYSIS:

On average, crime rates increased in Alberta from 2013 to 2014, and 2014 to 2015. While the overall crime rate went down in Alberta from 2015 to 2016, Edmonton, Lethbridge, Medicine Hat, and Red



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Deer all saw increased crime rates within their municipalities, mainly due to increased property crime. Statistics Canada data also shows that in some rural Alberta communities, property crime rates jumped as much as 80 per cent between 2015 and 2016<sup>1</sup>.

The few studies conducted on the effectiveness of volunteer street patrols in large urban areas report that while the volunteer patrols had no statistically significant impact on crime within the patrolled areas, benefits included increased community engagement, increased sense of community ownership, and increased understanding of local policing.

Rural Municipalities of Alberta (RMA) has not signed the petition as an organization, but has encouraged their members to sign through their weekly newsletter.

**ENCLOSURES:**

1. Electronic petition to extend tax credit to Citizens on Patrol volunteers

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<sup>1</sup> Data from Statistics Canada CANSIM Table 252-0080.



## Attachment 1



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Please note that e-mail addresses from the Government of Canada may not be used to create, support, or sign an e-petition.

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## E-1581 (TAX SYSTEM)

Sign the petition

42ND PARLIAMENT

Initiated by Guss Nash from Carbon, Alberta, on March 14, 2018, at 1:47 p.m. (EDT)

Keywords: [Citizens on Patrol](#) [Crime prevention](#) [Tax credits](#) [Volunteering and volunteers](#)

The Petition is open for signature until July 12, 2018, at 1:47 p.m. (EDT)

### Petition details

## PETITION TO THE GOVERNMENT OF CANADA

Whereas:

- The previous government instituted a tax credit for Volunteer Firemen in 2011 and a similar tax treatment for Volunteer Search and Rescue in 2014;
- Property Crime and Criminal Code Offences have spiked in Rural Alberta;
- Citizens on Patrol, acting as the eyes and ears of the RCMP have proven to be highly effective in reducing the incidents of crime; and
- A Citizen on Patrol is an unarmed, unpaid, volunteer who often requires the use of a personal vehicle.

We, the undersigned, **citizens of Canada**, call upon the **Government of Canada** to extend a tax credit to Citizens on Patrol similar to that already given to Volunteer FireFighters and Search and Rescue volunteers.

### Sponsor

#### Martin Shields

Bow River  
Conservative  
Alberta

### History

**Open for signature** : March 14, 2018, at 1:47 p.m. (EDT)

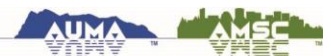
**Closed for signature** : July 12, 2018, at 1:47 p.m. (EDT)

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economies  
OF SCALE

WE ARE THE  
support  
YOU NEED

WE ARE THE  
experts  
IN MUNICIPALITIES

WE ARE YOUR  
advocate





 Signatures (507) 



Province / Territory	Signatures
Alberta	406
British Columbia	16
Manitoba	43
New Brunswick	1
Newfoundland and Labrador	7
Northwest Territories	1
Nova Scotia	11
Ontario	9
Prince Edward Island	1
Quebec	1
Saskatchewan	11

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