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**Official Report
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(Hansard)**

Monday 9 March 2015

**Journal
des débats
(Hansard)**

Lundi 9 mars 2015

**Standing Committee on
General Government**

Transportation Statute Law
Amendment Act (Making
Ontario's Roads Safer), 2015

**Comité permanent des
affaires gouvernementales**

Loi de 2015 modifiant des lois
en ce qui concerne
le transport (accroître la
sécurité routière en Ontario)

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LEGISLATIVE ASSEMBLY OF ONTARIO

ASSEMBLÉE LÉGISLATIVE DE L'ONTARIO

**STANDING COMMITTEE ON
GENERAL GOVERNMENT**

**COMITÉ PERMANENT DES
AFFAIRES GOUVERNEMENTALES**

Monday 9 March 2015

Lundi 9 mars 2015

The committee met at 1400 in committee room 2.

**TRANSPORTATION STATUTE LAW
AMENDMENT ACT (MAKING
ONTARIO'S ROADS SAFER), 2015
LOI DE 2015 MODIFIANT DES LOIS
EN CE QUI CONCERNE
LE TRANSPORT (ACCROÎTRE LA
SÉCURITÉ ROUTIÈRE EN ONTARIO)**

Consideration of the following bill:

Bill 31, An Act to amend the Highway 407 East Act, 2012 and the Highway Traffic Act in respect of various matters and to make a consequential amendment to the Provincial Offences Act / Projet de loi 31, Loi modifiant la Loi de 2012 sur l'autoroute 407 Est et le Code de la route en ce qui concerne diverses questions et apportant une modification corrélative à la Loi sur les infractions provinciales.

The Chair (Mr. Grant Crack): Good afternoon, everyone. Bon après-midi, tout le monde. We're here at the Standing Committee on General Government. I'd like to welcome members of the committee and members of the public who are going to be making presentations to us this afternoon. We're here to discuss Bill 31, An Act to amend the Highway 407 East Act, 2012 and the Highway Traffic Act in respect of various matters and to make a consequential amendment to the Provincial Offences Act. I believe we're going to hear from nine deputants this afternoon.

ONTARIO TRAFFIC COUNCIL

The Chair (Mr. Grant Crack): We can get under way immediately as I believe the first presenter is here from the Ontario Traffic Council.

I'd like to welcome Marco D'Angelo, who is the executive director. You have five minutes to make your presentation, followed by three minutes of questioning from each of the three parties. The floor is yours.

Mr. Marco D'Angelo: Thank you very much, Chair. I'm Marco D'Angelo, executive director of the Ontario Traffic Council.

The OTC, established in 1950, is the voice for municipal traffic engineering, planning, parking and enforcement across Ontario. We've worked over the last several years to develop consensus positions among municipal-

ities in the development of pedestrian crossings and bike facilities. We are pleased to see bills like Bill 31.

We're also pleased that Bill 31 has enjoyed positive feedback from all three parties, and for the incorporation of four private members' bills that have dealt with road safety in recent years.

The OTC has been a leader in promoting active transportation infrastructure and developing best practices with our municipal membership in collaboration with MTO in recent years. The OTC managed the development of what is now the province's standard for pedestrian crossings. That book is called Book 15. It's part of the Ontario Traffic Manual series of books. It recognizes the trend towards increasing emphasis on active transportation and the accompanying necessity of managing conflicting movements between pedestrians and other traffic at crossings to protect the most vulnerable road user group.

Following the release of Book 15, the OTC wrote to then-Transportation Minister Wynne. At that time, we requested changes to the HTA to support our work in developing improved pedestrian crossings. We asked the minister in 2011 to "require drivers to come to a full stop and yield the right of way to a pedestrian who is within a crossover or using a school crossing, rather than the current requirement for drivers to yield to pedestrians within the nearest half of the crossing." We are pleased to see this measure in Bill 31.

OTC member municipalities have also called upon the province to allow for a new signed and marked control crossing to be implemented with rules of the road comparable to the existing pedestrian crossover. This new device is needed to enable crossings at mid-block locations, right-turn slots as well as at roundabouts. The OTC wrote to the minister on this issue in 2011 as well, and we're pleased to see the proposed section 140(8), which will give the minister authority to approve new forms of crossings. Our membership looks forward to working with the ministry on this topic if Bill 31 becomes law.

Turning to Bill 31's measures dealing with cycling, the OTC and our members have been working for the last several years in developing Book 18 of the Ontario Traffic Manual series, entitled Cycling Facilities. Just as with the pedestrian manual that I was referring to, Book 18 brought together municipalities and MTO to collaborate on developing a provincial document for best

practices as the need for bicycle infrastructure grows across the province.

Coming out of the development of that manual, which was released in December 2013, we included a series of recommended changes to the Highway Traffic Act. I'll take a moment to list a few and we're pleased to see that they are contained in Bill 31.

We're pleased to see the cross-rides, which had been under a pilot project in the city of Mississauga, would become legal for use by other municipalities.

Cities such as Toronto have been calling for contra-flow bike lanes, where a one-way street would be able to accommodate a bike lane with traffic travelling in the opposite direction.

Many of our suburban and rural municipal members have long requested the ability for cyclists to ride on the paved shoulder and are supportive of the measure to permit this on unrestricted provincial highways.

In anticipation of provincial action in the area of bike signals, the OTC released in January a bike signals guide, which is on our website, otc.org. We hope that the ministry will incorporate the information we gathered in our bike signals guide and incorporate those into the eventual regulations. The OTC guide also calls for traffic signal heads with lenses containing the silhouette outline of a bicycle, which is used in many other jurisdictions.

In addition to engineering and planning, the OTC represents enforcement and parking officials, so we, to that end, support changes to the HTA in terms of fines for dooring, impaired driving and other offences. The proposed changes to the POA in terms of fines and collections are also welcomed, as defaults are a problem for many of our municipal members.

This morning I was in Vaughan to launch our annual intersection safety course, and of course the problem of distracted driving is always on the mind of safety professionals.

In closing, I'd like to thank the staff of our municipal transportation departments across Ontario, and MTO's traffic office. They are on the front line of keeping Ontario's economy moving and our roads safe.

Thank you for the opportunity to present. I look forward to your questions.

The Chair (Mr. Grant Crack): Thank you very much, Mr. D'Angelo. We'll start with the official opposition, Mr. Harris.

Mr. Michael Harris: Thanks for coming in today. One quick question I had—you just mentioned briefly the uncollected fines. No doubt municipalities are eager for that to happen.

Mr. Marco D'Angelo: Yes.

Mr. Michael Harris: I guess there's a bit of vagueness in terms of how far back we would go to start—you know, a date backwards. I don't know if you have any perspective or thought on that.

Mr. Marco D'Angelo: I don't, because the details of the program aren't known. But default POA fines are a big issue for municipalities, so it's very welcomed from them to see the possibility of plate denial and other measures to try to enforce defaulted fines.

Mr. Michael Harris: Right. Jeff, do you have anything?

Mr. Jeff Yurek: No.

Mr. Michael Harris: We're good. I don't know if there are any other comments that you would have had—I know your time is brief. Is there anything else you'd like to add that you would have added if you had more time?

Mr. Marco D'Angelo: No.

Mr. Michael Harris: All right. Thank you.

The Chair (Mr. Grant Crack): Thank you, Mr. Harris. Mr. Mantha?

Mr. Michael Mantha: Thank you. Welcome to the hearings.

Many kids are taught to stand beside the crosswalk at a point and start crossing only when the cars are stopped. But as written, the law doesn't actually require cars to stop for a pedestrian waiting beside an uncontrolled pedestrian crossing, only for a pedestrian that is actually in the roadway. If there is a steady flow of traffic with no breaks, a pedestrian could wait for a very long time. What if cars were obliged to slow down or stop if a pedestrian clearly signaled an intention to cross?

Mr. Marco D'Angelo: Yes—and thank you for the question. We did consider that when we were developing Book 15 on pedestrian facilities about what would constitute entering the crossing. We believe that there needs to be more clarity about intention to cross. We think that the new pedestrian crossovers will encourage drivers to slow down and stop when it's clear that a pedestrian is intending to enter the crossing. Based on some of the designs that we've proposed to the ministry and that the ministry has been also developing, we feel that having overhead signs and signs in advance of crossings will help to rectify that problem.

Mr. Michael Mantha: So that's how kids are taught to conduct themselves when they get to a crosswalk. Are you saying that that should be a regulation or that it should be legislated?

Mr. Marco D'Angelo: I think that teaching caution is always good, because it is difficult sometimes to find the balance between pedestrians waiting for a gap and then ultimately entering the crossing, but I don't have more to say than that.

Mr. Michael Mantha: Last year, the Ontario Public Health Association criticized the draft guidelines of Book 15 of the Ontario Traffic Manual dealing with pedestrian crossings, saying that the primary principle of Book 15 appears to be to not interrupt motor vehicle flow unless necessary. What has to be done in order to address these concerns?

1410

Mr. Marco D'Angelo: Well, that's a pretty general concern, but I can tell you that as the project manager of Book 15, it was with the intention of improving pedestrian crossings and enabling active transportation in our cities. We took great note of the coroner's report as well that gave a lot of detail about pedestrian fatalities. That really led the research that we had. So our intention was

to improve the balance between pedestrians and motor vehicle traffic.

Mr. Michael Mantha: One last question.

The Chair (Mr. Grant Crack): Twenty seconds.

Mr. Michael Mantha: Just last week, we were debating roundabouts. We heard clearly evidence in regard to the design, the signage, the inconsistencies throughout. What needs to happen to address these concerns so that individuals are safe?

Mr. Marco D'Angelo: Well, in books like 15 and 18 we tried to—we've actually put forward best practices for roundabouts, so we hope that municipalities will take those under advisement. Some of this legislation as well clarifies the ability for the minister to prescribe how pedestrian crossings should be designed at roundabouts and right-turn channels.

The Chair (Mr. Grant Crack): Thank you very much. We shall move to the government side. Ms. Hoggarth.

Ms. Ann Hoggarth: Thank you very much for your presentation, Mr. D'Angelo, and thank you very much for the work you do to keep drivers, pedestrians and cyclists safe. We all want that to happen, particularly in light of the number of pedestrians that have been hit or killed lately. We want to curtail those numbers very much.

We're aware that the OTC runs a series of safety sessions for mitigating accidents and helping to improve safety at intersections all across this province. Could you please provide the committee with a bit more information about what these sessions entail?

Mr. Marco D'Angelo: Happy to do that. We run a number of different workshops through the year. It ranges from training on bicycle facilities, and we've done about a dozen of those in the past year, to teaching courses in Book 7 dealing with temporary work zones. It can be obviously a real conflict point on our roads when you have workers exposed in traffic at times.

Also, as I mentioned, we have an intersection safety course that deals with liability issues that municipalities may have, and how to design better intersections. That includes crossings. It includes bike lanes. It includes the range of transportation options.

We've really undertaken to incorporate education and elevating the municipal traffic and transportation sector so that we continue to have the safest possible roads in our province.

Ms. Ann Hoggarth: Just one supplementary question: As a former educator, I know that in the health and physical curriculum we have sections that we need to teach about safety, and that's bicycle safety, fire safety, pedestrian safety, those kinds of things. Do you go into schools and do sessions with our students?

Mr. Marco D'Angelo: We do not. There are many other groups that do that, but we are involved in schools in the sense that OTC created the school crossing guard guide, which is used by municipalities to design warrants and to determine the role of school crossing guards. So we're involved in that way in keeping children safe.

Bills like this will help to improve pedestrian and active transportation infrastructure, so that more kids can walk to school or bike to school, and do so safely. So we're very pleased to see this legislation.

Ms. Ann Hoggarth: Thank you very much.

Mr. Marco D'Angelo: Thank you very much.

The Chair (Mr. Grant Crack): Thank you to the members, and thank you, Mr. D'Angelo, for your presentation and answering the questions. We appreciate your presence.

PARACHUTE

The Chair (Mr. Grant Crack): We shall move to Parachute Canada. I believe Mr. Scott Watson is with us, who's the manager of government relations. Welcome, Mr. Watson.

Mr. Scott Watson: Thank you.

The Chair (Mr. Grant Crack): You have five minutes.

Mr. Scott Watson: Thanks a lot for having me today. My name is Scott Watson. I'm the manager of government relations for an organization called Parachute. Thank you very much for letting me go second, so I can steal all the good stats and leave everybody else out to dry.

Just a quick background on Parachute: We're a relatively new organization. We're a national charity focused on injury prevention, the hidden epidemic that's going on in Canada right now. We were formed in 2012, an amalgamation of four previous organizations: ThinkFirst Canada, Safe Kids Canada, SmartRisk and Safe Communities Canada.

As I said, IP, injury prevention, is a hidden epidemic, costing the Canadian economy \$20 billion a year. We get that number from our Economic Burden of Injury report, which we put out every five years. The next one's coming out in a couple of months. But we know from that report that the economic burden of motor vehicle collisions in Ontario is approximately \$599 million per year. And that's just the direct and indirect costs of motor vehicle collisions, the direct costs being health care costs, including treatment and drugs, and the indirect costs, where the societal productivity loss is.

Obviously, motor vehicle collisions are a huge concern for Parachute and we try to provide our expertise, practical solutions and programs, and public policy and social awareness initiatives designed to overcome this burden.

Some key statistics from Ontario specifically: We know that in 2011, which is the most up-to-date figures, there were 498 traffic fatalities, which is the lowest in Ontario since 1944. It's been steadily decreasing since 1992. The number of drinking-and-driving fatalities has decreased significantly over the most recent year, which has led to a fatality rate that's very low, the second lowest in North America, second only to the Northwest Territories.

That said, there are a lot of growing problems, and distracted driving is definitely one of them. It seems like

it's constantly in the news and there are a couple of studies that have highlighted this gap. CAMH came out and said that 46% of grade 12 students say they text and drive. This is confirmed by PHO's report that younger drivers are more frequently engaged in distracted driving, and then it's backed up further by the OPP, who report that 78 people died from distracted driving, 57 died from impaired driving and 44 people died from speed-related crashes. So we know that distracted driving is on the rise.

This is kind of the shocker that drives everything home: The OPP cites that distracted driving is the causal factor in 30% to 50% of traffic collisions, and it's probably much higher due to under-reporting. If you were to take the 177,000 motor vehicle collisions that happened in Ontario in 2011 and divide that in half, that's 88,000 motor vehicle collisions from distracted driving. So we definitely commend this bill as a great way to overcome motor vehicle collisions.

Just looking at the analysis of its implications, just as Bill 203, the Safer Roads for a Safer Ontario Act, 2007, had a lasting impact on speeding and aggressive driving, Bill 31, Making Ontario's Roads Safer, will have similar effects on distracted driving and pedestrian safety.

We know that distracted driving is a growing issue and the passage of this bill will make Ontario's some of the strongest penalties in Canada. As part of the package, there's a provincial scan of all the different distracted driving bans across Canada, and you'll see that Ontario will now be the largest.

The inclusion of the chief coroner's report on the ability for cyclists to ride on paved shoulders and the introduction of dooring legislation is an asset to this bill, and we strongly support it.

I just want to stress that enforcement is only one piece of the injury prevention puzzle. Obviously, environment and education are the other two important aspects that this bill includes, which is great to see. So it's a whole, well-rounded piece of legislation.

In closing, I just want to say that there are very few accidents. In fact, 93% of motor vehicle collisions involve human error, and we can stop the clock on preventable injuries if we act now. This bill is a great step forward, and we're happy to support it.

Thank you very much.

The Chair (Mr. Grant Crack): Thank you very much, Mr. Watson. We shall move to the third party. Mr. Mantha.

Mr. Michael Mantha: You're right: There are some good initiatives through this bill. There seems to be a little piece for everyone that we can actually claim as a win.

The one thing that I'm concerned about is actual oversight and accountability in this particular bill, which is missing and which will permit the government to do some outsourcing of the administration of the motor vehicle inspection centre to a third-party provider. The provider would not be an agent of the crown, which means it may not be subject to the usual oversight of the Ombudsman or the Auditor General. Safety is important;

oversight and accountability are also important. Can I get your thoughts on that, please?

Mr. Scott Watson: Definitely. While it's not my field of expertise, I would assert that obviously the outsourcing of inspectors would have rigorous monitoring and certain qualifications that they would have to meet to be official. I'd hope that that takes public safety into account and that they're not sacrificing that in the name of outsourcing.

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Mr. Michael Mantha: Okay.

The Chair (Mr. Grant Crack): Thank you very much, Mr. Mantha. We shall move to the government side. Ms. McGarry.

Mrs. Kathryn McGarry: Thank you very much for your presentation. As a former nurse, preventing injuries is key; a lot of the folks that I used to see in emergency actually were from one side or the other of a motor vehicle crash, whether they be a cyclist, a pedestrian or in a vehicle itself. So this is very, very important.

Regarding distracted driving, that seems to be the topic that has been picked up in Ontario and by a lot of my constituents in Cambridge. A lot are finally recognizing that distracted driving is probably coming up to the same level as impaired driving has been. As I said, we've seen impaired driving start to go down, but in the meantime, distracted driving offences are going up.

Do you think that distracted driving will become more prevalent over time with the influx of newer technologies?

Mr. Scott Watson: It's a great question. I think, first of all, distracted driving is relatively new. Ten years ago it didn't really exist in the same sense—

Interjection.

Mr. Scott Watson: Yes, new-ish, for introduction of technology at least. So I think, while there's always going to be more technology, they are also taking more proactive steps in terms of design of cars to decrease distracted driving. I know that has become an issue. Then, on the enforcement side, with heavy fines like this, I think we'll see a marked decrease in distracted driving over time if we keep up with the enforcement, education and environmental design.

Mrs. Kathryn McGarry: That's great. I do see it as not just one piece of the legislation—the law itself—but education is a strong component.

Interestingly, last week I was presenting at the Ontario Mutual round table, and they were very, very worried about distracted driving and very complimentary of the fact that on their jurisdictional scan, much like you've put in the chart here, Ontario has already got some of the highest fines regarding distracted driving. With the new law, should it pass into legislation—that and the demerit points—certainly Ontario will have the stiffest fines for distracted driving across Canada.

So do you see it as a new standard that the rest of Canada can adopt?

Mr. Scott Watson: I certainly hope so, for sure. I think only with strong penalties will they realize the true

implications of driving with distraction. I think it's going to be relative to the introduction of seat belts back in the 1970s. It's going to be unheard of, and now it's unheard of not to use a seat belt. So hopefully distracted driving can follow that route.

Mrs. Kathryn McGarry: One of the key pieces is that amongst new drivers, it looks like this will be extending the prohibition for a distracted driving fine for new young drivers. Do you think that will assist our younger drivers in getting the message that distracted driving is about the same as impaired and drunk driving is today?

Mr. Scott Watson: Definitely. I think including it in the graduated licensing program, in that if they were to be convicted it would have implications—that way is a great way to do an over-represented population in terms of motor vehicle accidents. We know that teenagers make up 13% of the driving population and represent roughly a quarter of all those who end up in hospital from motor vehicle collisions. So you're targeting the right audience at the right time, and I think it's great.

The Chair (Mr. Grant Crack): Okay. Thank you very much. Time is up.

Mrs. Kathryn McGarry: Okay. Thank you.

The Chair (Mr. Grant Crack): We'll move to the official opposition. Mr. Yurek.

Mr. Jeff Yurek: Thanks for coming out today. Just a few questions, if I have time for them. With regards to preventing injuries, has your organization come out about any ideas or solutions for the roundabouts that are currently being built throughout Ontario? They now seem to be a wide-open Wild West in terms of being a pedestrian trying to cross the roundabouts. Have you any thoughts that maybe you could add?

Mr. Scott Watson: Parachute hasn't traditionally focused on the implementation of roundabouts. We had a couple of awareness campaigns around National Teen Driver Safety Week and Safe Kids Week, so cycling and pedestrians, but we haven't looked at roundabouts yet. But we'd be happy to be involved in that discussion going forward.

Mr. Jeff Yurek: That would be great. There's a great private member's bill that was passed a week or two ago. Michael Harris here put it through. I think you should probably take a look and maybe provide some feedback on that. It would be really essential as it goes through committee.

My other question is in regard to impaired driving. We seem to tackle the drinking aspect of impaired driving, yet we seem to be a bit behind on prescription medication and/or marijuana use with regard to impaired driving. What can we add to this bill to actually beef that side up? Because I can see that being a potential problem going down, increasing again.

Mr. Scott Watson: I think that next frontier, in terms of impaired driving and drugs, is roadside testing. I know working with our partners at MTO, there are a couple of things in the pipeline that will help our officers administer roadside tests for drug-impaired driving. I hope

there's an emphasis on that going forward, in terms of something that will stand up harder in court. Right now, this bill gives a little more discretion, in terms of determining impairedness, but I think that's the way to go, in terms of quantifying an impaired drugged driver.

Mr. Jeff Yurek: I've got one more question.

The Chair (Mr. Grant Crack): Go ahead.

Mr. Jeff Yurek: Thanks. Just in regard to the interlock system, I have quite a few constituents who break the law and are put on the interlock system. However, getting service to those devices is extremely hard, especially in the rural part of Ontario. Have you done a review of the interlock system and maybe some guidelines for the government to actually improve the system so that people who have interlock are able to get it into the car and get it serviced without really affecting their work life per se?

Mr. Scott Watson: Definitely. Parachute, as a national organization, has done scans on interlock programs from province to province, but we haven't looked at the implementation of interlock programs from a service delivery point, so no comments on that one.

Mr. Jeff Yurek: Okay. Thanks.

The Chair (Mr. Grant Crack): Okay. Well, thank you very much. I appreciate you coming this afternoon and sharing your comments with us. Have a good afternoon.

Mr. Scott Watson: Thank you.

ONTARIO GOOD ROADS ASSOCIATION

The Chair (Mr. Grant Crack): We have, from the Ontario Good Roads Association, Mr. Scott Butler. He's the manager of policy and research. Welcome, Mr. Butler.

Mr. Scott Butler: Thank you, Mr. Chair. My name is Scott Butler. I'm the manager of policy and research for the Ontario Good Roads Association, also known as OGRA. Since 1894, OGRA has represented the transportation and infrastructure interests of Ontario's municipalities.

OGRA and its member municipalities are pleased to lend their support to Bill 31. On the one hand, OGRA believes road authorities are obligated to find ways to make roads safer. On the other hand, OGRA is determined to find ways to place Ontario's municipalities on better fiscal footing. We believe that Bill 31 does both.

With regard to road safety, the government of Ontario has proudly boasted that Ontario is home to the safest road network in North America. Ontario's municipalities control just more than 301,000 lane kilometres of roads and have been instrumental in establishing and maintaining this record. To this end, the provisions within the bill that further enhance pedestrian safety and the safety of cyclists were especially welcomed by OGRA's board of directors.

If there is one amendment that OGRA would like to propose, it would be this: Currently, first responders are given a blanket exemption on the use of handheld devices

in the course of their duties. OGRA would like to see the same exemption extended to public works officials. We believe, for instance, that snow plow operators can make a fairly compelling case that they have, and should have, the right to use such devices in the course of their duties.

As supportive as we've been of Bill 31's safety objectives, we are equally welcoming of the aspects of this bill that improve a municipality's ability to collect outstanding fines under the POA. The notion that money owed to local governments simply could not be collected was a double standard. Some lawbreakers paid; some didn't. The Municipal Finance Officers' Association of Ontario calculated that by 2010, Ontario municipalities had accumulated more than \$950 million in uncollected POA fines. More than two thirds of these fines were imposed under either the Highway Traffic Act or under the Compulsory Automobile Insurance Act.

A number of municipalities, notably the city of Ottawa, have expressed similar frustration with their inability to collect out-of-province fines that were incurred under the red-light camera programs. Any effort to remedy these situations is obviously welcome.

As I'm sure everyone here knows and can appreciate, the current fiscal framework disadvantages municipalities. Only nine cents of every tax dollar collected finds its way back to local governments. Bill 31, we believe, will take a small step towards fixing this.

Ontario's municipalities have been waiting a long time for action on this issue. When I started in this role in 2009, we were assured that progress was being made. In 2010, Premier McGuinty stated, "It's going to be very important to look for ways to ensure that any money owing to us is in fact being paid." That's for all levels of government.

In 2012, the budget proposed a mechanism whereby the issuance or renewal of a vehicle licence plate would be refused for unpaid POA fines relating to the operation of vehicles.

In 2013, at the ROMA/OGRA combined conference, then-Minister of Transportation Glen Murray promised action on what he called a "no-brainer."

In 2015, municipalities don't need any more talk. We simply need action. We need the government to take the action to enhance municipal collection on defaulted POA fines, and we need legislation that promotes the administration of justice and enhances road safety. In short, we need the prescriptions of this bill adopted as soon as possible. Thank you.

1430

The Chair (Mr. Grant Crack): Thank you very much, Mr. Butler. We'll start on the government side. I will turn it over to Ms. McMahon.

Ms. Eleanor McMahon: Hi, Scott. How are you?

Mr. Scott Butler: I'm doing fine. How are you?

Ms. Eleanor McMahon: It's nice to see you.

Mr. Scott Butler: Likewise.

Ms. Eleanor McMahon: Thanks for being here. You're such a valued partner, OGRA/ROMA and the work that you do, especially the road safety work. It

won't surprise you that I'm going to ask you some questions about cycling.

Mr. Scott Butler: By all means.

Ms. Eleanor McMahon: As you know, in the last three years, we've seen two coroner's reviews, one into cycling deaths in Ontario and the other into pedestrian deaths. Just from a trend perspective, with 5% of Ontarians, or 600,000 people, riding their bike every day in this province now, can you talk a little bit about the paved shoulder piece to the legislation, Scott, and how that captures the growing trend of cyclists, particularly in a rural environment, as municipalities try to seize economic development opportunities?

Mr. Scott Butler: Sure. I think it captures it quite well, and it captures it in the way that you anticipate and certainly can appreciate, having been the head of Share the Road. I think the ancillary component that we hear about here is twofold. On the one hand, people recognize the very opportunities you alluded to in terms of economic development in smaller communities. In the six years I've been with OGRA, we've actually seen that swing wildly, where there was a real aversion on the part of rural communities to embrace this to where they've become the most ardent champions. At the same time, what we see is this sort of habitual reflex, where municipalities are concerned about how they're going to be able to finance the prescriptions contained within the legislation. I think there's a willingness there, and if we can begin looking at a conversation that comes up with a framework that can accelerate implementation, it'll be smooth sailing.

Ms. Eleanor McMahon: As you probably know, there was a fund announced, \$25 million, for cycling infrastructure and passed in the budget. Hopefully that will help as a growing number of municipalities apply to that fund. We'd love your thoughts on other things that we could be doing.

Of course, the paved shoulder piece is an added enhancement for safety, which will be very important. We're changing the legislation, because most people aren't aware of the fact that up until now, or before this legislation was brought to the forefront, it was illegal to ride on a paved shoulder in Ontario. That's welcome change, I hope, from your point of view.

Mr. Scott Butler: Yes. I mean, certainly it seems to be in line with where more and more municipalities are headed. So we were supportive entirely of that.

Ms. Eleanor McMahon: I appreciate that. Thank you.

The Chair (Mr. Grant Crack): Thank you very much. To the official opposition: Mr. Yurek.

Mr. Jeff Yurek: Thanks for coming in today. I just have a couple of questions. You talk about taking the fines and helping the municipalities collect the fines, and that may help finance some of the changes ongoing in here. What are your thoughts on, perhaps—we do have room in this legislation to add an amendment that we can expand the gas tax portion and pay out to every municipality, whether or not they have a transit system, which they could possibly use to fix their roads, bridges and/or add the paved shoulders.

Mr. Scott Butler: We've debated this. I know that the opposition parties have brought forward a number of bills over the last few sessions addressing this.

Our concern is twofold. On the one hand, I think anything that opens up more opportunities for more municipalities to access funding would be welcome. Our concern is that none of the proposed bills have actually proposed increasing the pool of revenue that would be accessed. We're very reluctant to pit one group of our members or one constituency within our membership against another. I think that those who currently access provincial gas tax funding for their transit systems would be really reluctant to see that watered down.

Mr. Jeff Yurek: Well, actually, our last bill that our party put forward would not have decreased any of the funding that municipalities currently have and would actually expand it to cover the municipalities that are lacking. That you would be supportive of?

Mr. Scott Butler: Certainly. If we're talking about financing municipalities, however, there are more attractive options in terms of revenue tools and revenue generation that they'd be looking for.

Mr. Jeff Yurek: Sure. You could put that argument towards that. However, with what the government currently does provide, the majority of my municipalities, of which I have 10, never qualify for any infrastructure funding for one reason or another, whereas this would open the door for them immediately. I'm sure that would expand quite a bit throughout northern Ontario and eastern Ontario, where they are lacking in the funding part.

Mr. Scott Butler: Yes. The infrastructure funding challenge isn't just localized for rural communities. We know from experience and from fact that every municipality struggles with this.

Mr. Jeff Yurek: Great. Thanks.

The Chair (Mr. Grant Crack): Thank you very much. We'll move to Mr. Mantha from the third party.

Mr. Michael Mantha: Good afternoon. How are you doing?

Mr. Scott Butler: I'm doing fine. How are you?

Mr. Michael Mantha: Good. So we talked about a no-brainer earlier, and I just want to—

Mr. Scott Butler: I was quoting that. I should clarify.

Mr. Michael Mantha: Yes. How should the provincial government work with municipalities to ensure that traffic fines are paid? I know it's a no-brainer. So how and what needs to happen in order to get that in place?

Mr. Scott Butler: Well, I think they need to be given the authority to extract that. I know when we're looking at out-of-province fines, there's an agreement—and I can't remember the nuts and bolts behind the agreement that needs to be entered into. As a province, we did extend that same opportunity to the operators of the 407. They're able to collect out-of-province fees that are incurred for use of the 407. We didn't extend that to municipalities to be able to get their infractions incurred through things like red-light programs.

I think the ability to address the situation resides here at Queen's Park. We're just waiting for action.

Mr. Michael Mantha: Okay. How should the province ensure that municipalities and ministries are sharing appropriate information and not letting scofflaws slip through the cracks? For example, do you agree that municipalities should have at least as much information from MTO records as, say, the private operators of the tolled highways?

Mr. Scott Butler: I would like to think so. We know from experience that even trying to get unredacted motor vehicle accident reports from the OPP has proven difficult. Various pieces of privacy legislation have prevented us from doing that.

We're in a situation now where a municipality can incur damage to an asset that they may own and have no way of actually finding out who caused the accident in order to go back on them or their insurer to recoup those costs. I think what we need to look at is a fairly comprehensive and earnest conversation about how we can come up with something collaboratively.

Mr. Michael Mantha: In that earnest conversation—I'll ask you this one last question, particularly from an OGRA perspective. Accountability, transparency—all of that is important to make sure things actually work. In this particular bill, because there's a lot of good little nuggets in here all over the place, there's the one big problem: There's a possibility of having this outsourced to a third party, without that party being a crown agency.

Oversight is very important in order for programs to work. Your thoughts about that potential oversight not being seen by the Ombudsman or the Auditor General?

Mr. Scott Butler: It's something that we haven't given a terrible amount of thought or consideration to. I think that municipal governments are, by nature, the most open and most transparent and closest to the constituents of any order of government. We understand the tensions that come between outsourcing or the private sector providing services that traditionally have been provided by the public sector, but as I said, it's not something that's been top of mind for us. I think the broader thrust around safety and around affording municipalities the opportunity to access revenue that they currently can't is the motivation for our support.

Mr. Michael Mantha: Thank you very much, Mr. Butler.

Mr. Scott Butler: Thank you.

The Chair (Mr. Grant Crack): Thank you very much, Mr. Butler, for coming before us this afternoon. We appreciate it.

ASSOCIATION OF MUNICIPALITIES OF ONTARIO

The Chair (Mr. Grant Crack): Next, we have the Association of Municipalities of Ontario, AMO, and the president, Mr. McNamara. Welcome, sir. I believe you have someone with you as well.

Mr. Gary McNamara: Thank you, Mr. Chair, and thank you to the committee.

Bill 31, the Transportation Statute Law Amendment Act, 2015, is omnibus legislation, and I understand there

has been a thorough debate, with 68 MPPs speaking on it for nearly 14 hours. That is encouraging. I know that the ideas in the bill came from all of the parties, and I appreciate the time and consideration that you have all put into it.

While the bill is broad, including vehicle inspections, distracted driving, pedestrian crossings and other worthy subjects, I intend to address my comments to two aspects—I am limited to five minutes—and they are the importance of the Provincial Offences Act amendments and cycling safety considerations.

The Provincial Offences Act: Regarding the changes to the act, I want to tell you why AMO and our members support them and why they are so important. You may have heard that municipal governments have uncollected POA fines in the order of \$1 billion. That is a significant number, and it took a long time—decades—to accumulate. Municipalities have been waiting almost as long for the solution. Think for a moment about all the things municipal governments do, from roads and transit, clean water, recreation, social housing and emergency services, to name a few. Over the years, things might have been a little bit easier on property taxpayers if these uncollected fines had been available.

1440

Let me be clear, though: These uncollected fines will not solve our infrastructure gap, and if better fine collection deters people from breaking the rules, then the revenues will decline. So this is not a discussion about more money, in our mind; this discussion is actually about equity and the administration of justice. The rules are set and apply to everyone, but our current compliance tools mean that some are able to ignore them without penalty. The ability to hold these people to account by denying their licence plates and pursuing out-of-province drivers sets a level playing field and ensures fairness to all residents, and that is the important thing.

But let us also recall that these rules are just the start. If this legislation is passed, there will then be much work to be done to implement the changes through procedures and changes to IT systems. If there is one thing local governments have learned, it is that good implementation is just as important as good public policy.

On behalf of municipalities' governments, I urge you to approve these changes and I urge the province to work with municipalities immediately to work on the implementation plan so we do not lose any more time.

Next, I would like to address the bill's focus on cycling. As I'm sure you know, cycling is a growing mode of transportation in many communities. Some residents do it for fun, others for health, the environment and transportation. Whatever the reasons, we should applaud them all. Communities where residents can choose to safely drive or bike or even walk enjoy the quality of life many people look for when they choose a home or hometown. Communities where kids can safely ride and walk are those in which parents can rest a little bit easier. But these changes—safe passing distances, bicycle lighting, paved shoulders for cycling, bicycle

signals and contra-flow bike lanes—not only help to make cyclists safer, they make drivers safer as well by reducing road conflicts and interaction. In turn, this helps to optimize transportation systems to promote health and recreation.

However, much remains to be done. We also need investment in cycling tracks, trails and facilities. The government has announced a cycling infrastructure fund. Our communities look forward to accessing this, and we hope it will be the first installment to support cycling projects.

I'd like to conclude. I have spoken about two specific aspects of this legislation that affect municipalities. I know there are many more that deserve attention, but my time is short. Municipal governments are looking to you to get this right so that we can continue to offer safe roads—vital links to our social and economic life.

I'm pleased to see the debate and the co-operation in the Legislature on this bill to date, and I urge you to continue to work together to send this bill back to the Legislature for approval as soon as possible.

Thank you.

The Chair (Mr. Grant Crack): Thank you very much, Mr. McNamara. We shall start with the official opposition. Mr. Yurek.

Mr. Jeff Yurek: My turn again.

The Chair (Mr. Grant Crack): Yes, sir.

Mr. Jeff Yurek: Thank you.

The Chair (Mr. Grant Crack): You're welcome.

Mr. Jeff Yurek: Thanks for coming in, gentlemen. Just a few questions: How far back do you think you should be allowed to collect these fines? I know you probably want to go right back to the beginning, but what's a reasonable—

Mr. Gary McNamara: Well, realistically, we can't go—I mean, there are obviously deaths; there have been people that have moved out of province, out of country and so forth. But I do believe, when we look at the \$1 billion, in real terms it's probably more in the \$300 million to \$400 million—somewhere in that general area. But obviously, to roll the time back 25, 30 or 40 years, that basically doesn't make sense.

Mr. Jeff Yurek: Okay. You were here when I was speaking earlier with regard to expansion of the gas tax to help fund some of these changes. What are your thoughts on going forward with that? There's room in here for an amendment, easily, that we could slip in here. Would you be supportive of an amendment of such?

Mr. Gary McNamara: Well, when it was first introduced—obviously, when we look at communities, our small rural and northern communities in particular, where their transit systems are roads and bridges and so forth—we were always compelled to say to find some equity throughout the gas tax. Certainly we'd be amenable to having a share—a greater piece.

Mr. Jeff Yurek: You won't be protesting out front.

Mr. Gary McNamara: No, we wouldn't.

Mr. Jeff Yurek: Perfect. Just one more question: I know in my area, my municipalities are concerned with

regard—it goes back to funding—to provincially mandating the program but no funding to follow through with it, and then they have to scramble around their own municipality and take from other services in order to fulfill the provincial mandate. Is there a concern out there with regard to your northern and rural municipalities? I have London, but I don't hear much from them. The rural and northern municipalities: Is there a concern that the funding won't be there after these are provincially mandated on them?

Mr. Gary McNamara: On the POA?

Mr. Jeff Yurek: On this bill going forward.

Mr. Gary McNamara: Obviously, it's always a concern for us to make sure that programs that are brought forward become sustainable and are not dependent, again, on the municipal sector to fund above and beyond.

Mr. Jeff Yurek: Okay. Thanks for your time.

The Chair (Mr. Grant Crack): Thank you very much. Mr. Mantha.

Mr. Michael Mantha: Good afternoon, gentlemen. How should the provincial government work with municipalities to ensure that these traffic fines are actually paid? You referred earlier that you're looking at how this gets implemented. How do you see it being implemented?

Mr. Gary McNamara: First of all, we're going to have to have an ability to share the information. I know that there was mention from our friends from OGRA as well, the privacy issues and so forth that have to be dealt with. But I think the sharing of information is critically important to be able to deal with it. I can tell you that AMO and the provincial government, on many other bills, have worked well together in terms of helping develop some of the programs where there's a benefit to the municipalities. But I think the key here is to make sure that we're able to share information so that we can work collectively together in making this work.

Mr. Michael Mantha: That ties in to my next question: How should the province ensure that municipalities and ministries are sharing appropriate information and not letting scofflaws slip through the cracks? For example, do you agree that municipalities should have at least the same access to the MTO records as, say, the private operators of toll highways?

Mr. Gary McNamara: Obviously, it's the total integration of the IT system that will help mitigate some of those concerns.

Mr. Michael Mantha: In regard to cycling, which is a big, big tourist and family activity across Algoma-Manitoulin, my riding—particularly MICA, which is on Manitoulin Island, and I have a large group on St. Joseph. Bill 31 includes a one-metre rule for cyclists, but is limited to “as may be practicable.” How do you think this limited legislation might have an effect on the enforcement and the compliance of it?

Mr. Gary McNamara: Obviously, there's an educational component that will have to take part. When you look at implementation of the one metre or look at the implementation of paved shoulders and so forth, it's very

easy to deal with new construction or when you're reconstructing. It's the adaptability of existing roadways that might be the most difficult. But I can tell you, even on personal experience looking at my own community, where we've adopted cycling as a primary mode of transportation—the whole county. We have active transportation where the county has committed \$70 million over the next 20 years, and a lot of it is educating the general public.

We all have some responsibility, obviously, to the whole share-the-road, and we need to continue to not only look at cycling, as I stated earlier in my comments, as strictly a recreational tool, but also as a transportation and health tool as well.

Again, it's a matter of continuing to educate the public. This type of legislation being brought forward—again, it's like the implementation of seat belts and other things that we've done in the past. It's about educating the public.

Mr. Michael Mantha: Thank you.

The Chair (Mr. Grant Crack): Thank you very much. We shall move to the government side. Ms. Kiwala, I believe.

Ms. Sophie Kiwala: I wanted to thank you very much for being here today. I'm delighted to be here as well, especially to have the honour of asking this question, because it is an area that does interest me.

I was first elected this year and went to my first AMO conference, and I was delighted to hear about so much buzz on this bill. There's a lot of positive discussion amongst the members at AMO. Even being a new MPP, I was able to detect that there was a quite a lot that was positive about the bill. So I'm going to highlight a couple of things that I feel are quite positive and then ask you a question on that.

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I'm very pleased to see the expanding vehicle plate denial to all offences that currently result in the driver's suspension: applying plate denial to all plates owned by a defaulter and providing flexibility in supporting these regulations, if deemed necessary, to limit the extent of retrospective application and exemptions in limited circumstances.

As you're aware, the passage of this bill provides municipalities with more teeth. I think that's really what the excitement was about at AMO this past year—to collect unpaid fines for provincial offences. Do you think that this legislation will encourage more provinces to follow suit?

Mr. Gary McNamara: That's a very good question. I believe so. There's no question. Again, what we're trying to do is to create a system that's equitable and adds responsibility to each and every driver. This legislation, we feel, by giving the municipalities more teeth, gives us that ability.

Let's not make a mistake; this is not strictly a monetary tool. This is a tool, again, that will certainly get the drivers to be more responsible for their actions. I can see this legislation also making individuals more com-

pliant. Will it eliminate it all? No, but I firmly believe that the other provinces are going to follow suit. They've done that on many other occasions. They've followed suit on Ontario's case on many other pieces of legislation. I certainly see this as potentially far-reaching.

Ms. Sophie Kiwala: That's excellent.

The Chair (Mr. Grant Crack): One second.

Ms. Sophie Kiwala: The second part pertains to how it will help the municipalities, and I'm just really pleased that we're going forward with this legislation.

Mr. Gary McNamara: Thank you.

The Chair (Mr. Grant Crack): Okay, thank you very much. Thank you, Mr. President, and the gentleman with you as well. For the record, your name, sir?

Mr. Craig Reid: Craig Reid.

The Chair (Mr. Grant Crack): Nice to have you here. Thank you very much. We appreciate it.

Mr. Craig Reid: Thank you, Mr. Chair.

Mr. Gary McNamara: And thank you to the committee.

ONTARIO TRUCKING ASSOCIATION

The Chair (Mr. Grant Crack): Next on the agenda—we're a few minutes ahead of schedule. We have, from the Ontario Trucking Association, Mr. David Bradley and Stephen Laskowski, I believe, with us. Mr. Bradley is the president and CEO?

Mr. David Bradley: Yes. Good afternoon.

The Chair (Mr. Grant Crack): Welcome, sir.

Mr. David Bradley: I'm flying solo.

Mr. Stephen Laskowski: I'm here now.

Mr. David Bradley: Oh, he's here now. Sorry. Nice to see you.

The Chair (Mr. Grant Crack): Welcome.

Mr. David Bradley: Thank you very much, Chairman, and members of the committee. It's my pleasure to be here today. You've talked about a lot of aspects of Bill 31. There are a lot of good things in Bill 31. We're going to focus on just one element of it that pertains to the trucking industry specifically and is somewhat technical.

In section 38 of the bill, it's proposed that the overall combination length of a B-train, which is a way of coupling two trailers together in a tractor double trailer combination—to extend that maximum overall length from 25 metres to 27.5 metres.

The sole purpose of the recommendation is not to increase the amount of payload or to increase the length of the trailers; it's simply to increase the length of a tractor that can fit within that combination and, in so doing, allow our industry to keep pace with changes in both regulations and technologies pertaining to the environment and to safety—things like being able to fit what are called particulate traps on a tractor. Particulate traps are the things that collect soot. It's being allowed to put a more comfortable sleeper berth on a tractor so that we can provide our drivers with some additional comfort and combat driver fatigue.

This proposal has gone through the engineering and dynamic performance analysis by MTO. It has come out with flying colours. In fact, it's the safest standard combination vehicle on the highways, and there's no denigration of that from adding to the length of the wheelbase.

This is also part of a national harmonization effort. All of the Ministers of Transportation from across Canada—the provinces and territories—have signed a memorandum of understanding that they will all move in this direction. Ontario will be first out of the gates, but this will allow us to be able to move this equipment across the country, which is consistent with the internal trade agreement that the Premier is very actively involved in.

I've provided you with a short briefing note and with some technical drawings. If there are any questions, we're pleased to answer them.

The Chair (Mr. Grant Crack): Thank you very much. We shall start with the third party: Mr. Mantha.

Mr. Michael Mantha: Good afternoon, gentlemen. Bill 31 proposes legislation that could allow the ministry to outsource the administration of the motor vehicle inspection centre system to a third-party service provider. This service provider would not be an agent of the crown, which means it may not be subject to the usual oversight of the Ombudsman or the Auditor General. I know the industry is concerned about “lick and stick” operators who will give someone a pass in exchange for a bribe, and the 2008 report of the Auditor General was very critical of the existing system.

Are you concerned that outsourcing the entire system could reduce accountability even further?

Mr. David Bradley: In an answer, no, we're not concerned. I think there will have to be controls and safeguards on a third-party body as well, but there are lots of good examples—the TSSA and groups like that—where we think things have worked better, in fact, than under direct crown control there.

We do have a serious issue in our industry that we're concerned about, as you mentioned—the “lick and stick”—and so we see these measures as directionally potentially helping with that issue.

Mr. Michael Mantha: Do you think truck drivers should be tested on highways as part of their driver examination?

Mr. David Bradley: Yes.

Mr. Michael Mantha: What sort of oversight is required to ensure driver examination centres are fulfilling their obligation to test new tractor-trailer drivers on our highways?

Mr. David Bradley: I think we've seen an improvement in that area. Oversight is really pretty simple. You have to have people out monitoring what's happening.

What we're most interested in, though, and the issue of most concern to us in that area, is mandatory entry-level training for new truck drivers. We're pleased that the government is moving in that direction now.

Mr. Michael Mantha: What sort of oversight is required to make sure truck drivers receive proper training from career colleges and driving schools?

Mr. David Bradley: Again, firstly, we have to have mandatory entry-level training, which we do not have in the industry, and the government has committed to doing that.

The other things we need are proper standards, standards developed by the industry. My members are the customers of what comes out of the driving schools, so we want to set the standard and have the industry have much more control about what's coming out of the pipe at the end.

Mr. Michael Mantha: Right now, Bill 31 has no accountability or transparency requirement for the outsourcing of the OMVIC system. Do you think the bill should at least specify some minimal accountability and transparency requirement, and if so, what should they be?

Mr. David Bradley: I am not sure about that. I think the devil will be in the details when we see the regulations that accompany the legislation.

Mr. Michael Mantha: Thank you, Chair.

The Chair (Mr. Grant Crack): Eleven seconds: Thank you very much.

We shall move to the government side: Ms. Hoggarth.

Ms. Ann Hoggarth: Just in relation to what was just said, the government very clearly has been having consultations recently to move forward with mandatory training. I think that's important. I think that answers part of the former speaker's questions.

Thank you very much for your presentation. As a new MPP, I learn something every day.

Extending the length of the B-train from 25 to 27.5 metres is something the industry has been asking for, for quite a while. Can you let the committee know or tell the committee an overview of how this will help the carriers and the industry as a whole?

1500

Mr. David Bradley: What has happened is that the current standards were developed in 1993, and they have served the industry, the province and the country very well. The B-train is Canada's great gift to the world, frankly. But there have been a lot of developments since 1993, particularly on the safety and environmental front, as I mentioned in my remarks. The fact of the matter is, we just can't cram all of the stuff we need to be emissions-free, to reduce GHGs and to provide a safe environment for our drivers onto a 6.2-metre tractor, which is what they were limited to. So that's the big benefit.

The other benefit is going to be that longer tractors are allowed on virtually all other tractor single-trailer configurations in the province. What this will mean is that you won't have to go out and buy a tractor for your B-train now and a tractor for a tractor single trailer. In that sense, it also provides some economy for the industry as well.

Ms. Ann Hoggarth: Great. Can you tell us also how this will help with our issues with air quality and climate issues?

Mr. David Bradley: Yes. The tractors today: There is federal regulation, both in the United States and Canada, that focuses on air contaminants and on GHG reductions,

and the best way to resolve those issues now is through add-on devices that are either part of the drivetrain and the engine or are aerodynamic devices. As I've said, we've had difficulty trying to include all of that within the current envelope of a 6.2-metre tractor. Being able to go to 6.8 metres, we'll be able to add more of those devices onto the trucks.

Our industry's economic goals are more aligned with society's goals in terms of reducing GHGs now than they ever have been. How do you reduce GHGs? You improve fuel economy. So we're in sync with that. The problem is that we have not been able to fit all of that stuff within the current limitations.

We're not adding any payload capacity. We're not going to make any more money out of having these longer tractors. It simply allows us to be able to incorporate those technologies into the equipment.

Ms. Ann Hoggarth: So your group is very supportive of this?

Mr. David Bradley: Yes.

The Chair (Mr. Grant Crack): Thank you very much. Mr. Yurek from the opposition.

Mr. Jeff Yurek: It's good to see you again.

Mr. David Bradley: Likewise.

Mr. Jeff Yurek: Thanks for coming in. This bill deals a lot with safety for the industry, which we're happy to see. What can be added to this bill to help spur the economy, using the trucking association? We're desperately in need of some investment or some growth in our economy in the province. What can we add to this that would help out?

Mr. David Bradley: This is essentially a safety bill. I think that on this particular measure, for example, the fact that it's going to lead to increased harmonization of one of the most popular truck configurations across the country—that, in and of itself, is going to help in terms of internal trade in Canada, which is a big issue. I think, in that regard, we shouldn't underestimate what this can do.

In terms of other things that can be done, I'm not sure that that's within the context necessarily of this bill. I think that investment in infrastructure is important. In Canada—and in Ontario—we have to be better than other jurisdictions, not only in terms of being able to compete and move within the North American supply chain efficiently and predictably, and I think Ontario has done a good job in that regard. If you look at Windsor, for example, with the new expressway, I think that's a very important measure. So that's important to us.

Obviously, we would like to see some things that would involve the federal government, as well as the provincial government, in terms of accelerated capital cost allowances and those sorts of things so that we could move in to newer equipment more quickly than we're able to do right now.

There's no shortage of desire on the part of the industry to move into the safer, more environmentally friendly equipment, but the pace at which that happens is essentially a tax matter in terms of how much we can write off and how quickly, compared to, say, the United States or compared to other sectors of the economy, for example

the manufacturing sector, which gets super-accelerated rates for investing in environmentally friendly technology. We don't see what the difference is between our technology and their technology.

Mr. Jeff Yurek: Great.

The Chair (Mr. Grant Crack): Thank you very much. Mr. Bradley.

Mr. David Bradley: Thanks.

The Chair (Mr. Grant Crack): I believe Mr. Laskowski is also with us. Thank you for coming. I appreciate your comments.

MR. JAMES SMITH

The Chair (Mr. Grant Crack): Next we have Mr. James Smith. Welcome, Mr. Smith. You have five minutes for your presentation, followed by three minutes of questioning from each party.

Mr. James Smith: Thank you very much, Mr. Chair. My name is James Smith. I live in Burlington, Ontario. I am speaking on behalf of myself although I have been involved in many advocacy groups in terms of advocating in our part of the world for active transportation issues.

I wanted to take a moment of your time today to speak as a cyclist and say that I'm very encouraged by what I'm seeing in the proposed legislation, in Bill 31, that is going to do some positive things for the cycling community in the province.

My comments are twofold. One, I think that there are elements within the bill that will put certain responsibilities on cyclists. It will help the cycling community live up to those responsibilities, and that will help break the ice, if you will, with the general public, who may be a little bit grumpy at some of the changes that are coming vis-à-vis cycling improvements in the province.

The really big thing I'd like to talk about is the issue of allowing one metre between a cyclist and vehicular traffic. I think that's really crucial, and I think it shows real leadership on the part of the committee to put that forward because any of you who have cycled in any sort of traffic recognize that perception is a big thing. Going along with that—and I encourage you to pass these recommendations and make this legislation—if this becomes legislation, I think part of that should be some useful public relations so that the average motorist understands that they have to share the road with those of us who choose to cycle from time to time. I'm a motorist as well, and I have to be conscious of that. I have worked with my children over the years to make sure that when they get behind the wheel of the car, or if they're bicyclists, they understand that there's an inherent danger. I think this goes a long way.

That, in a sense, is my comment. I really thank you for the opportunity, and encourage you to pass the legislation that you see before you.

The Chair (Mr. Grant Crack): Thank you, Mr. Smith. We shall move to the government side. Ms. McMahon?

Ms. Eleanor McMahon: Hi, James. Nice to see you.

Mr. James Smith: Nice to see you, Ms. McMahon.

Ms. Eleanor McMahon: For the record, Mr. Chair, he's one of my constituents, I just have to say.

The Chair (Mr. Grant Crack): Thank you.

Ms. Eleanor McMahon: Tell me, James: As a lifelong cyclist, someone who cycles, really, year-round, two questions for you.

Mr. James Smith: Not February. I didn't cycle in February.

Ms. Eleanor McMahon: No. Perhaps people in Russia weren't cycling either. I'm just saying.

From the perspective of education and safety—and I'm glad you touched on it—two questions for you. By the way, a shout-out to my colleagues on all sides of the House, because this bill is an amalgam of private members' bills, and I give shout-outs to both sides, both opposition parties, for their work in this regard.

Once the bill has passed, which we hope will happen soon, what do you think we should be looking at in terms of safety and education awareness programs for the public? Second, how would you see, going forward, the province playing a role in an education program for cyclists?

Mr. James Smith: I think there are a couple of ways that that can help. The first thing would be in our secondary schools, perhaps even in our primary schools as well, a cycling education cavalcade that went around the province and demonstrated the dos and the don'ts. I think it's important in both levels of school—in the early years so kids understand what's expected of them as cyclists. Then as kids get into high school and they start getting behind the wheel of a car, they understand that there are things expected of them as a motorist as well.

I think that kind of thing is important as well as the standard social media and media campaigns that you see from time to time from the province.

1510

Ms. Eleanor McMahon: What about, again, once the legislation is passed, educating motorists about things like the one-metre safe passing that you've pointed out?

Mr. James Smith: Yes, I think that's crucial. Even social media has a big role to play in that. I remember a few years ago when—I don't know if there was a change in legislation or a change in enforcement, but it was well understood that you had to give way and stop for emergency vehicles. That became a meme across the Internet. I've noticed, over the last few years, that even on busy roadways you see this more and more. So I think that social media aspect to it should be pushed vigorously.

Ms. Eleanor McMahon: Is there anything else you think we should or could be doing? You know about infrastructure funding; I'm hoping Burlington will take advantage of that. But is there anything you think we should be doing or could be doing in terms of next steps with regard to cycling? Example: In Copenhagen they allow traffic lights to be timed to allow cyclists to clear the intersection before motorists do. Are there any other innovative approaches to safety that you can think of?

Mr. James Smith: Certainly one of the things I noticed in the bill is allowing cyclists on one-way streets—

Ms. Eleanor McMahon: —contraflow lanes.

Mr. James Smith: Yes, and I think that's really important. Where we are in Burlington, I often cycle to the GO station. If you can make a direct path to goals like that, it's that sort of infrastructure improvement that I think is crucial to active transportation so that people will get out of their cars and onto their bikes and transit, etc.

Ms. Eleanor McMahon: Hear, hear. Thanks, James.

Mr. James Smith: You're welcome.

The Chair (Mr. Grant Crack): Thank you very much. Mr. Yurek.

Mr. Jeff Yurek: Thank you, Chair. Thanks for coming in, Mr. Smith.

Mr. James Smith: You're very welcome.

Mr. Jeff Yurek: I don't have too many questions. Mine is just a question; maybe we can pick your brain while we're at it since you're a cyclist and obviously have to be on guard every time you're out cycling, because not everybody sees a cyclist on the bike. My question deals with—maybe if you have some ideas with motorcyclists. I can tell you that every year in my riding somebody gets killed because they don't see the motorcyclists on the road, probably because it's going a little faster on the highways and such. What are your thoughts on making cyclists and motorcyclists more visible? What tips do you think we should be going forward with?

Mr. James Smith: I guess it's two-fold. Is it legislative or is it just presentation to the public of best practice? For example, when I go to the store I have a blaze orange vest that I wear. I've got lights. I'm kitted out pretty good. I think you see that in some European countries as well with motorcyclists. Often they wear an X, just a vest, to help identify them in traffic.

It's really difficult; you're right. As a motorist I've had close calls where you check your blind spot and go, "Oh my gosh, there's a motorcyclist."

That really touches home with me because my wife has mobility issues as a result of a motorcycle crash at very low speeds. For months, she was on a Stryker frame. It's all about visibility; it's just a quick-second thing. Anything that we can encourage cyclists and motorcyclists to do to increase their visibility, I think, is really positive.

Mr. Jeff Yurek: Yes, it's hard. I've talked to many motorcyclists, and I'm attending a conference this weekend. They like to wear the black leather, of course. That's the outfit they wear. I'm just trying to think what out there could make them more visible. I can't see them putting on the orange stripe or whatever; it doesn't fit their mode. I was just wondering, out of general curiosity.

Mr. James Smith: Perhaps if they encouraged St. Andrew's crosses in fluorescent orange as part of their heraldic gear, their colours might make them more visible.

Mr. Jeff Yurek: Very good. Thanks.

The Chair (Mr. Grant Crack): Thank you very much. We shall move to Mr. Mantha from the NDP.

Mr. Michael Mantha: I like that suggestion. Orange is good. That's a good suggestion; that's a very good suggestion.

You talked about the responsibilities of the cycling community and education, on both sides. Everybody needs to learn how to share the road. That's going to take some time. There are certainly some poor students out there who choose not to share the road. Hopefully we can correct that.

My question—because you talked about the one-metre rule—is: The one-metre rule for cyclists is limited and it refers to "as may be practicable." How do you think this limitation might affect enforceability and compliance?

Mr. James Smith: Wow. Not being an OPP officer, I'm not really sure if I can answer that. I think it's as much a common-sense rule as anything else. In Burlington, for example, on Lakeshore Road, we have a left turn—it's two lanes of traffic east and west and we have a centre lane for traffic to turn. We also have share-the-road chevrons on that road. In most cases, it makes it relatively easy for motorists to get into that left-turn lane and avoid cyclists, but I don't know that motorists always do that because I've been a cyclist and had people honk at me even though they've got a lane and a half dedicated to traffic. As a result, I tend to avoid that road.

I'm not sure how you actually go about enforcing that, other than in cases like that—let me give that as an example. Perhaps that's a thing that police could use as an example and say to motorists, "Look, I'm letting you off with a warning, but you had a lane and a half or two lanes to get around that cyclist and you were within the one-metre line." I think examples might help.

Mr. Michael Mantha: Something that's been highlighted throughout the day is that there's going to be a lot of education for everyone in sharing our roads.

The one last question I have for you is, should Bill 31 include mandatory truck side guards?

Mr. James Smith: I'd love to see that. I don't know if that's something that you're entertaining or not. It's something I hadn't thought about, but I know that they do have them in Europe and they're certainly saving lives there.

Mr. Michael Mantha: They are saving lives in Europe?

Mr. James Smith: That's my understanding. I think they are mandatory in Europe.

Mr. Michael Mantha: Okay. Thank you very much.

Mr. James Smith: You're very welcome.

The Chair (Mr. Grant Crack): Thank you very much. Mr. Smith, for—

Mr. James Smith: Thank you for your time. I appreciate it.

The Chair (Mr. Grant Crack): —sharing your insight. I appreciate it.

CAA SOUTH CENTRAL ONTARIO

The Chair (Mr. Grant Crack): I'd like to welcome Mr. Elliott Silverstein. He's from CAA. He's the manager of government relations. Welcome, sir.

Mr. Elliott Silverstein: Good afternoon. Thank you very much.

Good afternoon, Mr. Chair, members of the committee. My name is Elliott Silverstein, and I'm pleased to speak to you today regarding Bill 31. On behalf of CAA, I'm pleased to speak in support of it.

CAA was founded in 1903 as an advocacy organization. We engage on numerous issues each year that are of interest to and directly impact our members and drivers across Ontario, from traffic safety to consumer protection, road infrastructure to towing. CAA continues to draw on its century-old foundation of advocating for its members. The breadth and depth of our advocacy work, products and services have demonstrated that no other organization is more in touch with Ontario's road users.

We're a trusted source of information regarding traffic safety and transportation to the public and stakeholders. There are many elements within Bill 31 that help strengthen road safety. We are pleased that this bill incorporates a number of different pieces of legislation that originated from private members' bills from all three parties, including distracted driving, paved shoulders and "Slow Down, Move Over," just to name a few.

For distracted driving: For over 10 years, CAA has been at the forefront of addressing the growing challenge of distracted driving. In 2005, we partnered with the Traffic Injury Research Foundation and hosted the first International Conference on Distracted Driving. A year later, we supported a private member's bill that would ban novice drivers from using cellphones until they obtain their full G licence. We're pleased Bill 31 revisits this issue as it relates to those currently in the graduated licensing system.

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While the provincial ban on handheld devices became law in 2009, there continue to be challenges. CAA and its Traffic Safety Coalition partners launched an annual distracted driving awareness campaign in 2012. Known as Promise to Focus on the Road, the campaign aims to educate drivers about the range of distractions that lead to collisions and what can be done to minimize these distractions.

In recent years, we've heard about numerous tragedies on our roads resulting in legislation being drafted to strengthen penalties for distracted driving, first through Bill 116 and now through the Making Ontario's Roads Safer act. We're seeing the likelihood of raising fines up to \$1,000 and adding three demerit points.

Concerns about distracted driving are at an all-time high. A recent CAA online panel told us that 91% support increased distracted driving penalties, and 86% agree that increasing distracted driving penalties would help deter distracted driving, and it is one of the top three transportation issues on their minds these days.

Currently, the fine in Ontario for distracted driving is relatively minor in comparison to other enforcement tools used across Canada. Despite the efforts, distracted driving has become more prevalent on Ontario's roads, putting motorists, passengers, cyclists and pedestrians at risk.

CAA continues to advocate for increased safety for all road users, and will support changes that balance the desires of consumers with the need to ensure safety for those on the road.

We are pleased that alongside the proposed introduction of demerit points and increased fines, Bill 31 addresses the issues of drivers who drive distracted while in the graduated licensing system. Those in that system are the least experienced in their first five years as a new driver, and they adjust to handling, in that time, different scenarios they may encounter, thus making them vulnerable to being in a collision. Tackling those in the graduated system sends a clear message that their sole priority should be to focus on the road and gain the experience needed to drive on Ontario's roads.

Through "Slow Down, Move Over"—this has been a long-standing advocacy effort by CAA, not just in Ontario, but across Canada and in the United States with our counterparts at the American Automobile Association. Currently, "Slow Down, Move Over" laws apply to tow truck or road-side assistance vehicles in five Canadian provinces and almost every American state. CAA has worked with MPP Garfield Dunlop on two previous private members' bills, and we've collected in excess of 8,000 signatures through a petition on this issue.

Motorists and tow-truck workers risk injury and death during tow-truck service calls because passing vehicles are currently not required under the Highway Traffic Act to slow down and move over on approach.

Everyone deserves a safe place to work, even in non-traditional environments, such as the side of the road. There have been deaths and many near-death experiences, as well as injuries of workers and motorists when they're stopped due to mechanical failure, damage or collisions on our roads and highways.

In a recent survey, 83% of our members responded that they support the provision to extend it to tow-truck vehicles.

In terms of cycling, CAA has made significant efforts through our member benefit offerings and our road safety programs and partnerships to encourage cycling and promote safety among all road users.

We estimate nearly 750,000 of CAA's Ontario members and their families cycle for leisure, fitness and commuting purposes. In recent years, CAA has worked extensively on advocacy issues related to cycling, including ongoing efforts with the Share the Road Cycling Coalition. We've been pleased to participate in the cycling strategy working group that led to the release of the #CycleON strategy.

We support legislation in making it safe for cyclists and drivers to share the road, including measures listed in Bill 31, such as permitting cyclists to ride on paved shoulders on unrestricted highways.

In addition, an issue like dooring is a subject that CAA has addressed through our Watch for Bikes safety campaign, a decade-long campaign that reminds drivers to be cautious of the presence of cyclists as they open their doors or change lanes.

Lastly, Bill 31 also addresses a number of emerging issues, including impaired driving through drugs. This is a complex and serious issue impacting road safety, and including it in legislation helps raise awareness and dialogue.

Altogether, CAA has been pleased to work with the Ministry of Transportation, numerous MPPs and other key stakeholders to discuss a number of road safety issues that are reflected in the bill being discussed today.

The bill, if passed, will provide additional safety measures for road users, regardless of their mode of transportation. We're excited to see a number of these initiatives become law and look forward to engaging with our members about the changes to Ontario's roads in the very near future. Thank you.

The Chair (Mr. Grant Crack): Thank you very much, sir. I appreciate it. Mr. Mantha, from the third party.

Mr. Michael Mantha: Good afternoon.

Mr. Elliott Silverstein: Good afternoon.

Mr. Michael Mantha: Bill 31 proposes legislation that could allow the ministry to outsource the administration of the motor vehicle inspection centre system to a third-party service provider. This service provider would not be an agent of the crown, which means it may not be subject to the usual oversight of the Ombudsman or the Auditor General.

This bill will also allow the government to appoint a director of vehicle inspection standards who would not be a public servant, as is currently the case. In addition, this director would have broad new authority to issue directives concerning safety standards, inspections and certificates.

Is this a power that you would wish to outsource to an unknown third party?

Mr. Elliott Silverstein: In terms of the bill, from CAA's perspective, it would address a lot of the safety issues related to the members. The issue in regard to the inspections is a particular area that we have not concentrated on, specifically, through these discussions. So I really don't have a specific answer for you on this particular item, as I really don't have enough information on that topic.

Mr. Michael Mantha: Okay. Right now, the bill has no accountability or transparency requirements for the outsourcing of the MVIC. Do you think the bill should, at least, specify some minimum accountability and transparency requirements, and, if so, what would those be?

Mr. Elliott Silverstein: Through all pieces of work that we've done with the Ministry of Transportation, we certainly provide feedback. I think, as we hear from our members when they have a concern, we certainly want to make sure that there is accountability for any type of issue. We want to make sure that there are opportunities for feedback, opportunities for discussion, if there's an issue. What I've seen through Bill 31, through a lot of the elements, there's been a lot of dialogue. If there are concerns that do come about, I think there's an opportunity for us to raise these issues, if there are things that come about down the road.

Mr. Michael Mantha: Okay. The Highway 407 East Act currently requires the Registrar of Motor Vehicles to formally notify plate owners, by registered mail or courier, that their plate is about to be denied because the highway operator claims that they didn't pay the toll bill. Bill 31 would remove that consumer protection. Is this a fair action?

Mr. Elliott Silverstein: You're saying in regard to removing the restriction to—

Mr. Michael Mantha: To notify the plate owner.

Mr. Elliott Silverstein: Again, I'm not very well-versed on the specifics of what the changes would be related to the changes for the 407 and the registered mail content, unfortunately.

Mr. Michael Mantha: Okay. Thank you. Those are my questions.

The Chair (Mr. Grant Crack): Thank you very much, Mr. Mantha. We shall move to the government side: Ms. McMahan.

Ms. Eleanor McMahan: Thank you, Mr. Chair. Thanks for coming, Elliott, and thank you to CAA and all your member clubs for all the work that you do in cycling across the country. I know it's been a real game-changer for people to see that CAA is part of the conversation and leading the conversation in so many communities.

I could talk ad nauseam, but I do want to acknowledge the gold-medal-award-winning campaign that CAA led and helped us develop while I was at Share the Road, which really has been all about sharing the road and getting the message out to drivers and cyclists at the same time, as colleagues across have mentioned.

I want to talk a little bit about education and awareness, because CAA has worked very hard. You had your Watch for Bikes campaign that has been provincially led and community-driven, which has been so important.

How do you see the next steps of this legislation rolling out? If you wouldn't mind just elucidating on that in terms of other campaigns that might be to come and how CAA might play a role in that, given the size of your membership and all the polling work that you've done, and the number of people in your membership who have indicated they are cyclists.

Mr. Elliott Silverstein: Certainly. In Bill 31, with the scope of changes that are coming about in terms of the changes for road users, there's a great opportunity in all aspects to focus on education. I think it's important for all the changes coming about to help educate motorists, and all road users at large, to really understand the changes to the road. I think that there are some great outreach opportunities.

With the scope of our membership, which is in excess of 2.3 million across Ontario—that's a significant number, and they're a very engaged group. Certainly, we are eager to work with all parties on all sides to help highlight a lot of the changes, a lot of the benefits, that will be coming out of this particular bill. As I mentioned in my comments, this is a bill that really came from all three political parties. It's fantastic to see that the initiatives that are designed to help road safety across the province are all coming to fruition through this.

Ms. Eleanor McMahon: Excellent. Yes, it's been a tremendous piece of non-partisan work on all sides of the house. It has been terrific.

In regard to the one-metre safe passing law, I'm hoping that we'll see CAA take a role in helping to, again, work with the motoring public. I wondered—I'm not sure of this, actually—since the law has been in place in Nova Scotia now for some time, if your club there has had any expertise that they can offer in terms of education and awareness? As you know, over 20 US states, and growing now, have the three-foot passing law. Anecdotally, do you have any evidence of what's happening in Nova Scotia, or has CAA played a role there? Do you know?

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Mr. Elliott Silverstein: Specifically I don't have any examples from Nova Scotia. Certainly we do have our colleagues out in the Atlantic region that we can reach out to and get a better understanding of how the changes were impacting motorists out there. I think it's a great anecdote to highlight that there are some best practices potentially to draw from.

From our perspective, we have an opportunity, through a lot of our successful campaigns, to really try and move the needle forward for all road users, to really try and understand what the changes mean.

For safety measures, no matter how you're using the roads, whether it be as a pedestrian, a cyclist, a motorist, whatnot, I think really there's a great opportunity here, and we are certainly glad to be part of the process and look forward to really seeing a number of the issues in Bill 31 come forward, including "Slow Down, Move Over," which has been a huge issue for CAA.

Ms. Eleanor McMahon: Finally—

The Chair (Mr. Grant Crack): Thank you very much; appreciate it. Mr. Yurek.

Mr. Jeff Yurek: Thanks, Chair. Hey, Elliott.

Mr. Elliott Silverstein: How are you doing?

Mr. Jeff Yurek: Good. I don't have too much to add. I'm grateful to the CAA and what they do for our province, for their being great advocates and occasionally picking up my truck at the side of the road when I get a flat tire, but that's another discussion.

It's great to see the changes to distracted driving in this bill, but it's concerning that this could have been done through an order in council over a year ago when we first brought it up to the minister then—Glen Murray, at the time. Then we could have moved on and maybe added some other changes to legislation that would have improved road safety.

Do you have anything that you think is missing from this bill that maybe we could add in as an amendment to make it a stronger bill?

Mr. Elliott Silverstein: When we look at the contents of Bill 31 you're looking at, I think, at least four or five, at a minimum, different private members' bills that were consolidated into this. At the end of the day, this is a really significant change to the Highway Traffic Act.

From CAA's perspective, our three issues over the last few years have been distracted driving, cycling and

"Slow Down, Move Over." So from our perspective, really the issues that we have been addressing at Queen's Park since about 2011 or 2012 are contained in here.

As an actual evolution, additional issues will come to fruition, and certainly we'll be back at the table having discussions with everybody as we start seeing new issues coming forward. I think that as we talk about the evolution of some of the newer issues like impaired driving through drugs—that's an ever-evolving issue that we may have to revisit in six months, 12 months, or 24 months.

Mr. Jeff Yurek: Does CAA have any comments or discussion papers—if I can ask this on behalf of Michael Harris—on roundabouts? We're quite concerned with the explosive growth of roundabouts, particularly in the Kitchener–Waterloo area. Your thoughts as we move forward?

Mr. Elliott Silverstein: Sure. CAA has been supportive of Mr. Harris's initiatives, private member's bills, on both occasions on roundabouts. We think that it's important to really highlight the understanding and the education component around roundabouts but also address some of the issues around the standardization and the usage for various types of vehicles, and people with accessibility trying to access it effectively.

I think that when his bill was addressed last week we certainly highlighted our support for that and really want to see that bill come to this committee for future discussion. We support him today and we continue to support his initiatives on that. It's a great bill that we believe is helpful for all Ontarians.

Mr. Jeff Yurek: Great. I've got one more question.

The Chair (Mr. Grant Crack): Sure.

Mr. Jeff Yurek: This is a quick and easy one and it has nothing to do with this bill at all.

In your magazine, CAA, I notice that CAA members get discounts on certain items, except the Tilley hat. Is there any reason why there's no discount on the Tilley hat?

Mr. Elliott Silverstein: I can honestly tell you that my day-to-day work does not involve anything related to the marketing or the magazine so I really couldn't comment on that specifically, unfortunately.

The Chair (Mr. Grant Crack): Thank you very much, Mr. Silverstein, for coming before the committee. We appreciate it.

ARRIVE ALIVE DRIVE SOBER

The Chair (Mr. Grant Crack): Next we have Arrive Alive Drive Sober. We have Ms. Anne Leonard, who is the executive director.

We welcome you this afternoon. You have five minutes for your presentation, followed by three minutes of questioning from each party.

Ms. Anne Leonard: And no clock?

The Chair (Mr. Grant Crack): I'll help you out.

Ms. Anne Leonard: All right; thanks for that.

I know some of the people around the table today. I don't know all of you, though. Our charity: I describe it

as the meeting ground for impaired driving in Ontario. Our messages and materials do go beyond Ontario—not on our dime but by broadcasters and other partners if they choose to.

We don't have chapters; we have members. We meet several times a year. We host an annual conference and we share information and exchange ideas and best practices. That's who I'm representing today. Some of our own members may have represented themselves. CAA comes to some of our meetings. I'll just leave it at that.

In regard to Bill 31, I just wanted to comment briefly about distracted driving. We have a policy and legislative review committee. We have several committees; that's one of them. Our membership, as well, has discussed distracted driving because it seems to be maybe eclipsing drunk driving, maybe not. Our charity right now is not working on distracted driving, so I'm not going to comment too much about it, except to say we're not fully convinced yet that it's worse than drunk driving. We agree that it's bad, and it's probably on the rise, so it's certainly something to be of concern.

We also agree that fines alone aren't going to deter people. We've seen with impaired driving that fines alone won't deter you from committing the offence, so it's probably time for demerit points because that seems to get people's attention more. I can tell you from impaired driving that when you do pass this bill, and assuming that demerit points are part of it, you'll want to make sure people are educated about it. We find with impaired driving, sometimes people don't know what all the penalties are. Some of the work we've done is to educate people around that.

With regard to other aspects of the bill, we're mostly concerned about the drug-impaired driving parts of it. I'll read you what I've written, just in case I run out of time. The suspensions related to standard field sobriety test and drug recognition evaluation are welcome. There is a lengthy history in the drugs and driving area to do with detecting, measuring etc. I'm sure you've already heard a lot about all those different statistics and the processes— one-legged stand, walk and turn, and all those things.

We think the ministry has carried out a healthy amount of collaborative discussions. I see some of my colleagues here, and we've had a number of meetings. They've hosted meetings over the last year or two. Federally, they've had meetings too about drug-impaired driving. I think everybody agrees it's a concern. The standard field sobriety tests will allow an officer to form an opinion around if someone is impaired. I know that they have been historically frustrated, because they'll pull me over, for example, and they can tell that I'm too high to drive, but they may not be able to detain me from leaving with my car because of the way the legislation rolls out. I understand that there are parts of Bill 31 that would change this so that police would be allowed to keep me from driving for three days, seven days, 30 days etc. That would be a good thing and a welcome thing. I think it must break their hearts to have drivers who they

know are high on something, but they can't stop them legally from driving. So we welcome that.

The SFST and DRE testing, of course, has been going on for decades. We hosted a conference in 1996, and there was an officer talking then about drug recognition testing. There's a lot of science and a lot of history to it. There will be more technology coming forward, I'm sure, that will be more accurate, maybe easier, maybe cheaper—who knows?—as the issue evolves and as testing continues. In the future, there will be other measures, but for now, SFST and DREs are what we have, so we'd like to see you working with them and getting drivers off the road with that information.

The other thing I'd like to tell you is that drug-impaired driving remains a concern. Some people think that people will choose to drive high instead of drunk because they think they can't be caught. There is a culture out there that actually thinks it's okay to drive high. Some young people think they drive better stoned. We get messages from people saying, "Oh yes, I took my driving test stoned," or "I had my picture taken stoned."

Interjection.

Ms. Anne Leonard: Yes, we get emails from people.

Anyway, you should be concerned about it. We're glad that there's something being done to change how it's addressed. We'd like to support anything you do in that regard. If there's messaging or whatever that needs to be done to share information, we'd be happy to be a partner, or not—whatever works.

We have done our own messaging over the years for drug-impaired driving. We've got a video called iDRIVE that talks about drug-impaired driving as one of the seven major concerns on the roads. We have a public service announcement that addresses standard field sobriety tests and that the consequences are the same.

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We have a campaign we've partnered on over the last two years called on Eggs on Weed. I've included samples of a lot of our stuff in this bag. Drug-impaired drivers are not the same as drunk drivers. They're a different breed. They're a different animal and you need a different response for them.

The Chair (Mr. Grant Crack): Okay. Thank you very much. We appreciate it. I kind of jumped the gun before and let Mr. Mantha go previously, so we'll go with the official opposition first on questioning.

Mr. Jeff Yurek: Thank you, Chair. It was okay. The last sequence worked out, so that's good—no worries.

The Chair (Mr. Grant Crack): I'm glad.

Mr. Jeff Yurek: Thanks for coming out today. I appreciate you really focusing on the drug-impaired driving, which I think is the next large topic that we'll probably be dealing with down the road. Has your group or maybe the government—I have no idea what the government does—spoken to the pharmacists' association, per se? Because when you talk about drug-impaired driving, we're thinking illegal drugs. There's a whole lot of people out there who get regular prescription medications who shouldn't be driving their vehicles, even

though they have counsel. But I think there's an education strategy out there that you could utilize pharmacists, per se, for decreasing that risk because they're the ones handing out the prescriptions.

Ms. Anne Leonard: We actually had a member on our council for several years from the OPA. They're not a member today, but that's only because of priorities, I guess. It doesn't cost to be a member of our group. It was just that they were busy with other things.

Certainly improper use of prescription drugs is a concern, and I know anecdotally from different police services that that's what they're seeing to some extent. So absolutely, there's an opportunity for messaging there.

I think pharmacists are pretty good about telling you, "Don't drive" or "Don't operate heavy equipment," so it's probably more about misuse of prescription drugs than proper use of prescription drugs.

Mr. Jeff Yurek: I'm a pharmacist, so I think they're the best profession in the world.

Ms. Anne Leonard: I used to be a pharmacy assistant.

Mr. Jeff Yurek: There you go.

My other point is, your thoughts as a group—there's been a lot of talk about decriminalizing marijuana nationally. What effect do you think that's going to have with regard to impaired driving?

Ms. Anne Leonard: Well, I'll say we were sorry that there wasn't some kind of yardstick in Colorado when they decriminalized pot there. It would have been nice if they had had a measuring point to see if it increased drug-impaired driving or not. If there were decriminalization, you would assume that it might result in an increase in pot-impaired driving.

Mr. Jeff Yurek: Do you think we'd have to come back and balance out the penalties and fines? Should we tackle it now and maybe really increase the fines and penalties further than what they are?

Ms. Anne Leonard: I think Bill 31—that's exactly what it does is balance the SFSTs with the warn range and DRE with an ADLS, etc., and all of our other consequences are already very similar. It's really complicated to discuss.

For example, one of the consequences for impaired driving that's different is that if you do me for drug-impaired driving and I have all those consequences, one of them is an ignition interlock device, but it won't stop me from driving high; it'll only stop me from driving drunk. But aside from that, most of our consequences are very similar.

Mr. Jeff Yurek: Okay. Thank you.

The Chair (Mr. Grant Crack): We shall move to Mr. Mantha.

Mr. Michael Mantha: Good afternoon. Is there anything that you wanted to highlight that you didn't get a chance in your deputation?

Ms. Anne Leonard: Thank you for that. No, I think mostly that the chemical solutions where someday there'll be a Diastix or something for testing drug-impaired driving, but those solutions are a long ways off.

I think the standard field sobriety tests and the DREs are the tools we have right now and we should be using them to the extent that we can.

Mr. Michael Mantha: Okay. Under Bill 31 they currently rely on physical coordination tests conducted in the field. There have only been a few successful convictions for drugged driving under such circumstances. How might the province ensure that the laws against drugged driving are enforceable?

Ms. Anne Leonard: How will they ensure that they are enforceable? I think what you'll see is that it will be like the battle we had with drunk driving, going back 30 or 40 years. You're going to see challenges, and hopefully we'll get good case law and not bad case law to bring some validity and credence to the drug-impaired driving testing process.

But it's almost too soon. I don't know that we've had enough—the federal changes came in July 1, 2008, for making the demand for a test. It's still really relatively new legislation and a new field of concern. You're going to have 10 years of battling, I think, with any legislation.

Mr. Michael Mantha: I'm granting you one wish and one wish only. You can improve this. You can suggest an amendment to this bill. What would that amendment look like?

Ms. Anne Leonard: An amendment to the bill? I don't know. It's a big bill. Make some education about the new legislation part of it. I guess that's predictable; of course that's what I would say. Anyway, legislation that people don't know about doesn't stand as a deterrent, right? We don't really want to catch drunk drivers. We want them to not drive drunk. That's the goal. We don't want to catch you after the fact; we actually want to prevent you from doing it. So just make sure people know. For 15 years, we've been finding that people are unaware of the fulsomeness of many of our consequences for impaired driving.

The Chair (Mr. Grant Crack): We'll move to the government side. Ms. Kiwala.

Ms. Sophie Kiwala: Thank you very much, Anne, for coming today and for presenting to the committee. The costs of preventable accidents from drugs or alcohol, as you know and everyone who is here knows, no matter the party, cannot be underestimated. I had the unfortunate opportunity to learn that just this past weekend when I went to my constituency office and discovered that an old classmate of mine when I was a teenager had been in a terrible accident; his friend was killed and was right beside him. I signed his birthday certificate in a long-term-care home, not because of his physical condition but because of his mental condition. The costs of drunk and drugged driving cannot be underestimated, and I can't expand on that enough.

In this bill, expanding requirements to complete remedial measures and an ignition interlock program for repeatedly driving with a blood alcohol content exceeding any combination of a blood alcohol threshold is one good feature. Another one is extending the current reduced suspension with ignition interlock. Conducting

review programs for repeat offenders is also extremely important.

My question to you—I understand that you and your team had an opportunity to speak with the minister at the end of last year. I believe you spoke about Arrive Alive's Drive Sober campaign, and I was wondering if you could share with the committee some of those details about how Bill 31 will help to push some of those initiatives forward.

Ms. Anne Leonard: From our perspective—and I realize there's biking stuff in here and school buses and other issues—our primary concern or interest in the bill is around the drug-impaired driving parts. There have been some challenges in trying to get that message out there, for a number of reasons. We've had a tremendous amount of success and support for Arrive Alive Drive Sober because of the nature of the campaign and the willingness of the public to admit that they used to drive drunk but they don't now. So most people are very good.

Traffic Injury Research Foundation stats tell us that most of us, 80% of us, never drink and drive, and 93% of our drunk driving trips are made by 4.4% of drivers. So most of us get it. In Ontario, of course, 4.4% of drivers is something like 400,000 drivers, so it's a pretty big problem still.

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It has been almost easy to educate about impaired driving by alcohol. Impaired driving by drugs is not as welcome a conversation. Broadcasters don't want to hear about it. There's no obligation from alcohol retailers or manufacturers, distillers, brewers to educate on it. They don't sell the drugs; they're not making money on the drugs; there's no tax on the drugs—the illicit ones, anyway. So that message is difficult to get out there. So we're glad to see the changes.

I assume you've had the police present, but I can tell you, from the police colleagues we have and from conversations going back many years—maybe 10 years—with one of them about the frustration of not being able to take a driver off the road when you know that they're affected by something. They will be a risk to everyone on the road.

The Chair (Mr. Grant Crack): Okay; thank you very much. Thank you to all the members and thank you, Ms. Leonard, for coming forward and speaking to us today.

Ms. Anne Leonard: I left some stuff behind that you can take home and share with your teens.

The Chair (Mr. Grant Crack): Yes; thank you very much. I appreciate that.

ONTARIO PUBLIC SERVICE
EMPLOYEES UNION

The Chair (Mr. Grant Crack): Next we have, from the Ontario Public Service Employees Union, the president, Mr. Warren Thomas. We welcome you, and I believe you have an executive board member with you. Feel free to introduce her as well.

You have five minutes, sir, followed by three minutes of questioning from each of the three parties.

Mr. Smokey Thomas: Good afternoon. My name is Warren Thomas and I'm the president of the Ontario Public Service Employees Union.

Edie Strachan is with me. Edie is an executive board member of OPSEU, a member of the Ministry of Transportation Employee Relations committee, and a transportation enforcement officer based in Halton. We're here today representing both our MTO members and the 125,000 OPSEU members across the province.

I want to comment today on planned amendments to the Highway Traffic Act that will privatize the motor vehicle inspection station program, known as MVIS. We represent the 31 transportation enforcement officers, also known as vehicle inspectors, who deliver the program across the province.

The TEOs who enforce the MVIS program have grave concerns about handing the program over to private interests who may have ties to the trucking and commercial vehicle industry. MVIS enforces the issuing of provincial certificates of safety and compliance, commonly known as "safeties," by about 13,000 motor vehicle inspection stations. These are mostly private garages and dealerships.

There are about 30,000 registered mechanics across the province who do the safeties. Licensed garages are empowered to conduct safety inspections on vehicles being transferred to new owners and on commercial motor vehicles travelling our highways with other road users. Vehicle inspectors screen the garages and dealerships that want to issue safeties to cars and commercial vehicles. They provide orientation to the successful applicants to make sure that they have the required tools and equipment, they employ mechanics that are registered with the MTO, and they maintain vehicle records and documents.

Vehicle inspectors investigate complaints of false or fraudulent safety inspections, poor-quality safety inspections, the theft of safety books and the failure to return crown assets when stations are closed. Vehicle inspectors also provide information to licence stations, the general public, potential complainants and other enforcement agencies.

Vehicle inspectors ensure that the program operates in a fair, transparent and equitable manner. All applicants are treated the same during the application process, whether they are a single-owner garage or a multi-million-dollar car dealership. There is no favouritism and no preferential treatment. All applicants must meet the same criteria.

Our vehicle inspectors are concerned that once the program is privatized, garages and dealerships with more money and influence will receive preferential treatment. Investigations into cases of false or fraudulent safety inspections are a core component of the MVIS program's mandate. Each and every investigation is taken seriously. Investigations are conducted in an impartial and transparent manner. Fact-finding and hard evidence are what

matters. This ensures the fair treatment of both the complainant and the garage. The government of Ontario does not run the MVIS program to make a profit but rather to enforce a minimum level of public safety. There's no profit motive. As much time is spent on investigations as is required to come to a factual conclusion.

Our vehicle inspectors strongly believe that privatization will completely change the scope of the investigations into false or fraudulent safety inspections. Our members, transportation enforcement officers in MTO's road safety division, have observed an alarming trend at the MTO in recent years. They are concerned that industry associations advocating for commercial vehicles are being given an ever greater hearing by senior government officials. Our union believes that investigations carried out by a private contractor will give far more weight to factors relating to the garage or dealership's business concerns than an impartial investigation carried out by public sector inspectors. Professional standards will fall as the private contractor will employ people who will work at the lowest possible cost.

My members certainly care about earning a wage that reflects their knowledge, experience and professional qualifications, but what also matters to them is how they earn that wage. They are proud to keep our roads safe through fair, transparent and ethical enforcement. They want to work for an employer that has public safety, not profit-making, as its number one priority.

Our vehicle inspectors believe that a private contractor will not carry out key responsibilities of the program because of the time and care required. These include:

- a full history check of the applicant to ensure there is no straw ownership;
- providing sufficient orientation to the applicant prior to the garage being able to issue safety certificates;
- carrying out audits of garages to ensure tools and equipment are in working order, mechanics are registered with the MTO and the garages are keeping records of vehicles that have been issued safeties; and
- monitoring garages for the levels of issued certificates and analyzing the location of the garage versus the location of inspected vehicles.

In closing, my union calls on the committee to delete all amendments to Bill 31 that will replace the MVIS program with a privatized system. We believe the privatization of the Motor Vehicle Inspection Station program represents a significant risk to road safety and public safety in this province.

I'll just close by giving you one example. Our members don't have whistle-blowing protection, but I had a member who works in this program come to me and say, "We used to have eight inspectors. Over the last few years they haven't replaced vacancies, laid a couple of people off and we now have two inspectors to service an area that eight used to cover." This person went to their boss and said, "We have a garage here that used to go through one book of safety checks a year. They're now going through 10." So, obviously, they're just selling them in the bar without doing the safety checks. "You

know what the manager told me? 'Oh, don't worry about it. We don't have enough staff to follow up on it.'" That person has no whistle-blowing protection to blow the whistle on that manager, so I'm trying to find another way to get it out in the public domain.

We'd be happy to answer questions.

The Chair (Mr. Grant Crack): Thank you very much. I appreciate that. We'll move to the government side. Ms. McGarry.

Mrs. Kathryn McGarry: Thank you very much. It's nice to see you again, Mr. Thomas.

I just wanted to reiterate that the safety of our roads in Ontario is still this government's top priority, and although we are one of the safest road users in North America, that's still one of our key priorities.

In terms of the standards when we're looking at truck inspection stations, certainly the standards are not going to be changing with this bill. Indeed, the government is moving forward to create efficiencies.

One of the questions that I did have for you, Mr. Thomas, was, how was OPSEU involved during the consultation on Bill 31?

Mr. Smokey Thomas: We found out that you were doing this Friday morning.

Mrs. Kathryn McGarry: Okay.

Mr. Smokey Thomas: I'll answer your question with a question. I'll just refer you back to Sunrise Propane, when you privatized the inspection of that industry and gave it out to the people who run it. Look at how that worked out. Some 31 people and efficiencies? Come on; this has got to be an ideology.

Somewhere there's a manager who's going to bid on this and get it as soon as he retires, and that's what we believe is going to happen, because it's happening in IT every day of the week. I write to your Premier—your boss—and Deb Matthews probably about twice a month with this kind of stuff. I never get a response, other than, "Go to hell."

Mrs. Kathryn McGarry: In October, in the last session, this road safety bill was brought forward, and we actually had a very big splash down at the Metro Toronto Convention Centre with a number of our road safety issues. It was certainly well publicized. So we have been consulting on this bill since then, and we have had many hours of legislation before it has been able to come to committee.

So another couple of questions: What would OPSEU's position be then on a pedestrian safety component of Bill 31?

Mr. Smokey Thomas: It should all stay in the public domain, not be privatized. Public services should be for people, should not be for profit. Whenever you introduce a profit motive into it—which is what you will do if you privatize it; somebody has got to make some money doing it—

Mrs. Kathryn McGarry: Does that have something to do with pedestrian safety?

Mr. Smokey Thomas: —you're going to have trouble. Keep it public.

Mrs. Kathryn McGarry: Okay. How about safe-lane cycling? Does OPSEU have any commentary on the many different aspects in this bill regarding cycling safety, like the one-metre rule, the paved shoulders, a number of different cycling safety concerns?

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Mr. Smokey Thomas: Have you got any comment on that?

Ms. Edie Strachan: No, we're here specifically to address the road user safety component of this, and the MVIS and the problems that currently exist, and how that will be exacerbated with this new legislation.

Mrs. Kathryn McGarry: Okay. I have one more question for you, then. What would OPSEU's position be on the provisions of the bill that increase fines for distracted driving in Ontario?

Mr. Smokey Thomas: I don't have any opinion on that. We're here today to represent our members, not distracted drivers. Whatever you want to do on the fine part is fine with me.

Ms. Edie Strachan: Actually, our officers now do those fines. Distracted driving is a very large problem in Ontario, and the definition of "distraction" could use some work, in my honest opinion.

The Chair (Mr. Grant Crack): Okay, thank you very much. I appreciate it.

Mr. Smokey Thomas: Could I just close by asking a question? How long did it take all of you to get to top pay?

The Chair (Mr. Grant Crack): Excuse me—

Mr. Smokey Thomas: Did it take you 12 years to get to top pay, like the Premier wants our people to do?

The Chair (Mr. Grant Crack): Mr. Thomas—

Mr. Smokey Thomas: Have a good day there, fella.

The Chair (Mr. Grant Crack): Well, we still—

Mr. Smokey Thomas: Oh, we've got more questions. All right.

Interjections.

The Chair (Mr. Grant Crack): Order. Order.

Mr. Smokey Thomas: Oh, give me a break. Kathleen Wynne went to top pay the day she got elected.

Interjections.

The Chair (Mr. Grant Crack): Order. Mr. Yurek has the floor. If I could have some calm, please.

Mr. Jeff Yurek: Thanks, Smokey. I do have to comment. You've given some valid questions to this government that they're not answering, and they instead pummel you with questions they didn't ask anybody else who was focused on one issue. I thank you. We might not agree on what you're talking about, but we do respect that you are here for that single issue. They should have answered your questions. Thanks.

Anyway, I just want your comment on the fact that the government isn't listening to you. We do have a problem in the correctional system, where they're building places for an impending strike, instead of replacing refrigerators and thermometers so that your correctional officers can actually test for TB in the Elgin-Middlesex Detention Centre, which they've ignored as well.

Is there anything else you wanted to add that you weren't able to—

Mr. Smokey Thomas: Edie wants to add a couple of things, and I do too.

Ms. Edie Strachan: Yes, I definitely do. I don't think a thorough look at this program has taken place. It has not identified anything in our branding unit. It doesn't discuss that at all. If you want legislation that keeps Ontarians safe, how about including something like wheel-offs having to be reported, instead of people hiding them, so that we look like the safest jurisdiction in the world because we're not actually reporting it? Who is going to report that, if they're going to get a \$50,000 fine?

Mr. Jeff Yurek: Mike?

Mr. Michael Harris: I was just wondering: I know they mentioned the important safety announcement that happened down at the convention centre. As a valued partner of Ontario's safety program, were you invited to that announcement?

Mr. Smokey Thomas: I wasn't.

Ms. Edie Strachan: I wasn't.

Mr. Michael Harris: Second question I have for you: We've been hearing in the news a lot about the truck licensing outfit in Vaughan. I'm not sure if you can comment on that, as it's now operated through a sole-sourced contract by a private outfit. We've been hearing examples of them not properly testing folks to gain their DZ or AZ licence. I don't know if you want to comment, perhaps, from your perspective on that issue.

Ms. Edie Strachan: Welcome to privatization.

Mr. Smokey Thomas: Yes, that's just a classic example of privatizing stuff that should be made public. We might disagree or have a different philosophical bent on privatization, but there are some things that, even when the Tories were in power before, were off limits to privatize. Enforcement and inspection and a lot of those things were off limits. You tried a jail; it failed, and it came back. This is driven by some kind of ideology that I have yet to figure out.

I asked Deb Matthews and Premier Kathleen Wynne last August to show me the evidence that privatization saves the public money, and that their process is fair and transparent, and that the service level stays the same. Deb Matthews promised to have that to me in two weeks. She said, "You'll have that, Smokey, in two weeks, and I'll finally shut you up."

Well, I don't know: This is March whatever-the-hell date it is, and I still haven't gotten that evidence and proof of a process from Kathleen Wynne to demonstrate that I'm crazy or off my rocker.

Mr. Michael Harris: And how long ago—

The Chair (Mr. Grant Crack): Okay, thank you very much.

We'll move to the NDP: Mr. Mantha.

Mr. Michael Mantha: Welcome this afternoon, Mr. Thomas. Answers are not something that we've been getting around this place very much lately.

Anyway, Bill 31 proposes legislation that could allow the ministry to outsource the administration of motor vehicle inspection centres to a third-party service provider. This bill will allow the government to appoint a director of vehicle inspection standards who would not be a public servant and who would have a broad new authority to issue directives concerning safety standards inspection certificates. Now, this is a Trojan that is hiding in this bill. Should Ontarians be concerned about this source of outsourcing?

Ms. Edie Strachan: I'm going to take the privilege of answering this question. Thank you.

The records show 31 TEOs—transportation enforcement officers—with a licence, but the reality is the other 250 of us back that team up on a regular basis. So you're not looking at replacing 31 people, you're looking at replacing the work of 300, potentially.

Mr. Michael Mantha: Okay. I want to amend my last comment to "the Trojan horse within this bill."

In addition to that, right now Bill 31 has no accountability or transparency requirements for the outsourcing of the motor vehicle inspection system. Do you think the bill should at least specify some minimal accountability and transparency required, and if so, what would they look like?

Ms. Edie Strachan: Absolutely. This program is currently underfunded. We have a lick-and-stick game going on in our Peel region, where people show up and get these PMCVI stickers, and there is no way to track that. This is already going on, and the ministry doesn't have the resources to send our officers out there to investigate and lay the appropriate charges. And you want to hive that off to a private company? That is scary business. Make no mistake: People can bring their trailers—you can bring 100 trailers from Florida here tomorrow and have all of them get an inspection and their PMCVI sticker and leave this province and be dangerous and killing somebody somewhere else. You need to look at this big picture.

Mr. Michael Mantha: How would you describe Ontario's experience with outsourcing driver examination?

Ms. Edie Strachan: Driver examination outsourcing happened before I came to this ministry, but I was on board for the privatization of the winter maintenance program.

Mr. Smokey Thomas: Both disasters.

Mr. Michael Mantha: And on that point, my last question: Your experience in regards to privatization of essential services, which I'm looking at—road maintenance being one—could you elaborate on some of your experiences from your members?

Mr. Smokey Thomas: The greatest failure of public policy in our lifetime has been the privatization of public services. We have a thing here called Epic Fail, which I'll leave for—I think the Liberals can read with no pictures. I'll leave it for them to have a look at.

Interjection: We don't need that. That's not necessary.

Mr. Smokey Thomas: Really? Well let me ask you a question—

The Chair (Mr. Grant Crack): Thank you very much. Your time is up. I appreciate it—

Mr. Smokey Thomas: You're going to lay off 31 people and you think we're rude.

The Chair (Mr. Grant Crack): Order. Mr. Thomas.

Mr. Smokey Thomas: It's only going to get worse for you. See you on the streets, in front of your constituency offices. Have a good day.

The Chair (Mr. Grant Crack): Okay. Mr. Harris.

Mr. Michael Harris: I don't know if it's a question or a comment—more of a request. Typically, when we start to review a bill of this nature, the ministry provides a binder with a compendium of information—the bill, and any and all relevant press releases attached to it—and I was hoping that the committee would agree with me that we ask for that to be in place for our next meeting, Wednesday.

The Chair (Mr. Grant Crack): Okay, so—

Mr. Michael Harris: You know, the compendium: the bill and everything else.

Mr. Mike Colle: We usually get that.

Mr. Michael Harris: We usually do, yes. I'm just asking if we could get that for all members, for Wednesday. I think that's enough time.

The Chair (Mr. Grant Crack): Okay, so is it the consensus of the committee that that request is deemed fair? All right. You have the consensus of the committee, so we'll be putting the ministry to work.

Mr. Michael Harris: Good. Thank you very much.

The Chair (Mr. Grant Crack): Thank you. This meeting is adjourned.

The committee adjourned at 1609.

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