

October 9, 2018

TO: Chair and All Members of Law Amendments Committee

FROM: Sandra Newton, Manager, Child Safety Link (CSL)

Re: Support for Nova Scotia's Traffic Safety Act (TSA)

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Dear Chair and All Members:

Good morning Honourable Chairman, Committee Members, fellow colleagues and members of the media, I am here on behalf of the IWK Health Centre's Child Safety Link program. Child Safety Link is a Maritime-wide injury prevention program whose goal is to reduce the incidence and severity of unintentional injury in children and youth. On behalf of Child Safety Link, I want to offer our support for the Traffic Safety Act (TSA).

Child Safety Link supports replacing the outdated Motor Vehicle Act with a new Traffic Safety Act. Prioritizing the safe passage of our most vulnerable populations is important. Children are vulnerable road users regardless of whether they are motor vehicle occupants, pedestrians, or pedal cyclists. "On road" incidents place a significant burden of injury on children. In Canada, the leading cause of unintentional injury related deaths were those caused "on the road". In 2012, "on road" injuries contributed to nearly 50% of all unintentional injury-related deaths in Canadian children.

The youngest occupants of vehicles are some of the most vulnerable road users. Child restraint systems can significantly reduce a child's risk of injury as a result of a motor vehicle collision. We appreciate that the TSA will continue to address the proper use of child restraint systems such as car seats, booster seats, and seat belts.

We know that active transportation as a cyclist or pedestrian is an important part of a healthy lifestyle and can be a form of recreation as well as a mode of transportation. For children, walking is their primary mode of independent transportation. In order to reduce the risk of serious injury and death related to active transport, we must create supportive environments for safe active transport, and continue to encourage safe behaviors including wearing appropriate protective equipment such as a helmet to use while biking.

We want to ensure our roads are safe for all and we want to encourage our children and youth to be active and safe on our roads. This updated TSA is a positive step in reducing serious injuries in our province. Child Safety Link wants to thank the NS Department of Transportation and Infrastructure Renewal for taking action to keep our roadways across the province safe for all and this updated TSA is a positive step forward.

Child Safety Link would like to offer our support to the government and work with you to ensure the regulations related to child passenger safety and active transportation continue to support those most vulnerable. As Manager of Child Safety Link, I also look forward to continuing to participate on the NS Road Safety Advisory Committee. Thank you for your time.

Yours sincerely,



Sandra Newton  
Manager, CSL