



COLLEGE of OCCUPATIONAL
THERAPISTS of NOVA SCOTIA

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October 5, 2018

Law Amendments Committee
c/o Office of the Legislative Counsel
CIBC Building, Suite 802
1809 Barrington St. PO Box 1116
Halifax, NS B3J 2X1

Dear Law Amendments Committee,

I write today to speak to Bill 80, the *Traffic Safety Act*, and the role of occupational therapy. Occupational therapists assess a client's ability to choose, organize, and effectively and safely perform everyday activities. The ability to safely operate a motor vehicle is an important determination and occupational therapists can provide this service, including the Driver Evaluation Program offered by Nova Scotia Health Authority. This important service provides assessments of driving ability, assists with ascertaining adaptive aids that may enable safe driving, identifies areas for further rehabilitation, or determining those who may not be able to drive safely.

The College of Occupational Therapists of Nova Scotia regulates the profession in the public's interest. As the Registrar for the College, I firmly believe it is in the public's interest to allow occupational therapists to directly report to the Registry of Motor Vehicles clients that demonstrate functional impairments that may make it unsafe for them to operate a motor vehicle. Consistent with this opinion, the Legislature amended the Motor Vehicle Act on December 18, 2015 under Bill 133 to allow occupational therapists to report to the Registry of Motor Vehicles; this amendment was proclaimed on June 5, 2018.

In reviewing Bill 80, the *Traffic Safety Act*, I noticed that occupational therapists are not included in the definition of regulated health professional that allows reporting. While I understand that occupational therapists may be included in regulations, given their important role in assessing functional abilities and their inclusion in the Motor Vehicle Act, I firmly believe that occupational therapists should be included in the *Traffic Safety Act* to protect all Nova Scotians.

Thank you for your consideration,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'J. Belbin', is written above the typed name.

Jonathan Belbin, OT Reg(NS)
Registrar