

November 4, 2022

The Honorable Rob Flemming, Minister of Transportation and Infrastructure and The Honorable Bowinn Ma, Minister of State for Infrastructure

PO Box 9055
Stn Prov Govt
Victoria, BC
V8W 9E2
Canada

Dear Ministers,

Re: Road Safety Law Reform Group position paper “Modernizing the BC Motor Vehicle Act”

We are writing to endorse the Road Safety Law Reform Group of BC’s position paper, “Modernizing the BC Motor Vehicle Act.”¹ and recommend that the proposed reforms be adopted into the BC Motor Vehicle Act.

This position paper proposes legislative changes that will protect the lives and wellbeing of vulnerable road users, those not protected by a vehicle, in the north and across the province. It is our responsibility to protect the people in our communities from serious injury and harm and the recommendations offered in this paper provide leadership on this important issue.

In Northern Health, motor vehicle crashes, involving vulnerable road users, represent a significant burden of serious injuries and fatalities in our region. It is our obligation to support changes that will protect the most vulnerable on our roadways and reduce the burden of injury that is carried by our communities.

These changes have the potential to reduce serious injury for all. Recommendation # 7 in this position paper, advocates for reducing the default neighborhood speed limit to 30 km/hr. Leadership in supporting this change will protect vulnerable road users as 90% of pedestrians hit by a vehicle travelling 30km/hr. will survive the crash, compared to 30% of pedestrians will survive if colliding with a vehicle travelling 50 km / hr.² Changing legislation will have the benefit of reducing the burden on municipalities to make their neighborhoods safer. Furthermore, the Road Safety Law Reform Group position paper aligns with the road safety recommendations put forth by the Provincial Health Officer’s (PHO’s) 2016 report “Where the Rubber Meets the Road,” calling for action to protect vulnerable road users by reducing neighborhood speed limits to 30 km/hr.³

¹ Available at https://bikehub.ca/sites/default/files/modernizing_the_bc_motor_vehicle_act.pdf

² Gagnon F. A 30-km/h Speed Limit on Local Streets. Montreal, Quebec: National Collaborating Centre for Healthy Public Policy; 2014

³ Office of the Provincial Health Officer. Where the Rubber Meets the Road: Reducing the Impact of Motor Vehicle Crashes on Health and Well-being in BC. Victoria, BC:2016

Living in the north, we have unique opportunities and a culture that supports outdoor recreation. Active transport on our roads promotes a healthy lifestyle, supports action on climate change, and decreases the economic burden driving a vehicle has on families. Protecting vulnerable road users is key to supporting our northern way of living.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to read 'Jong Kim', written in a cursive style.

Dr. Jong Kim, MD, MSc, FRCPC
Chief Medical Health Officer
On behalf of the Northern Health Medical Health Officers
Northern Health