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Good Start to New Legislative Session: POA Tools Re-introduced Road Safety Bill

AMO is very pleased to see the road safety legislation introduced today. It combines two previous Bills (34 and 179) and adds a few additional matters. Amendments to the Highway Traffic Act will offer municipal governments and enforcement bodies new road safety tools.

Provincial Offences:

The legislation would deny license plates for unpaid fines for violations such as speeding tickets, careless driving and driving with no insurance. It would also make it easier for municipal governments to pursue out-of-province drivers for offences.

AMO President Gary McNamara said, “We have long pressed for these POA powers, which will help recoup millions of dollars for municipalities and most importantly, will ensure that individuals are held responsible for their actions and that justice is served. AMO is pleased to see this Bill introduced at the start of the new legislative session and we look forward to support from all three parties so that this important legislation can be enacted quickly.”

Responsibility for the *Provincial Offences Act* administration, including courts and fine collection, was transferred to municipalities in 1997. This system is used to prosecute non-criminal charges such as traffic offences, trespassing charges and liquor licensing violations. Since the transfer, municipalities have had difficulty collecting many outstanding fines and lacked key enforcement and collection tools. AMO’s long standing call for new tools to collect POA fines received the support of all parties.

Road Safety Improvements: Other changes include:

- Increased fines for impaired and drug impaired driving and distracted driving;
- Strengthening the medically unfit drivers program;
- Requiring drivers to slow down and move over when approaching a stopped tow truck;
- Removing the definition of low pressure tires for Off Road Vehicles to give municipalities flexibility in by-laws;
- Requiring drivers to stop at all crosswalks until pedestrians have completely crossed;
- Allowing municipalities to use new pedestrian crossing devices on low volume roads;
- Modernizing the Motor Vehicle Inspection Station program to improve compliance;
- Improving school bus identification by restricting the colour yellow to school bus use;
- A number of provisions to improve cycling safety which include increased fines for “dooring” of cyclists by drivers; requiring passing vehicles to maintain one meter of distance from cyclists when practicable; allowing municipalities to install contra-flow bicycle lanes and cycle traffic signals; and increased penalties for cyclists that do not comply with lighting requirements.

Next Steps: AMO urges MPPs to pass the Bill quickly and will be seeking their support. We will also continue to work with the Province to complete the provincial-municipal action plan to implement the new tools for POA fine collection.

Link to [MTO announcement](#)

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