



Sample Letter Templates

(Please feel free to use)

To Whom it May Concern

Please be advised that I DO NOT AGREE with your proposed legislation.

I am not aware of any great number of incidents where children have been hurt by being a passenger on a motorcycle. If you have stats to support the contrary, I would like to see them.

Looking at this logically, I don't know of one parent that would not put their child in harms way on purpose. Consequently, I think it is safe to say that riding on a motorcycle is similar to riding a bicycle. The government has legislated that children have to wear helmets when riding a bike. Will being a pedestrian be the next proposal for wearing head protection?

Do you realize that you are trying to chip away from a child's basic sense of fun? I don't mind anyone saying motorcycles are dangerous, and we should take great care when operating them. I'm sure all parents or guardians do just that when they have a child on the back of their motorcycle. I know I Do!! You can hit your head falling in the bathtub? Do we need to wear a helmet in the shower as well? Crossing the street can be deadly! Maybe we should ban children from crossing the road for fear of injury? What will be next??? How far do you want to go??

If you are so concerned about people getting hurt, then why not tape all politicians' mouths shut? We all know that they have put forth legislation, and/or said things to hurt or offend the voting taxpayer!!!

Give your head a shake, and let kids be kids. Ask your children, if you have any, what they would think about being brought up in a bubble? This is almost the level of stupidity the government has achieved so far.

Hoping you will reconsider, and let kids enjoy life.

A registered voter.

YOUR NAME WOULD GO HERE

P.S. maybe you should put your efforts into something that would have a much farther reach when it comes to protecting not only children, but the whole general population as well.
Eliminate the young offenders act!!!

Sent: Wednesday, October 29, 2008 1:17 PM
To: 'hjaczek.mpp.co@liberal.ola.org'
Cc: 'speters.mpp.co@liberal.ola.org'
Subject: Bill 117

Madam (cc Steve Peters):

I was recently horrified to read the bill you put forward in the legislative assembly regarding banning children under the age of 14 from being passengers on motorcycles.

If I may ask, what is your reasoning for putting this forward? What statistics are there to indicate risk factors significant enough to warrant this kind of restriction to freedoms?

As a 43 year old manager of a 25 million dollar a year business, I believe I am intelligent, competent, and responsible enough to determine if a child can be carried in safety on my motorcycle. In fact, I am pretty sure that child is safer on my bike than he/she would be in the back seat of a subcompact on the 401 in a snowstorm. Would you consider banning that too?

I can see motorcycle accident statistics all day, and I am in fact, trained in accident investigation and preventability determination. In a large percentage of these accidents, an existing law was broken either by the motorcycle operator or the third party. There are existing laws in the highway traffic act already designed to prevent accidents, more regulation is neither required or desired.

I respect your good intentions, and your desire to save "even one child", but you know as well as I do which path to where is paved with good intentions. I'm sure you can mutually respect the fact that I did not vote for you to speak for me.

I am confident you will receive lots of resistance from the general public, far more than you will receive support. I noticed you are a liberal...didn't the federal liberal party recently run on an environmentally 'green' platform? Do you have any idea the relative fuel efficiency of motorcycles over cars? Yet you are putting forth a bill to discourage fuel economy.

As I said, if you have concrete facts to validate the reasons for this bill...please, convince me. Otherwise, please rescind it.

I hope you have both the time and respect for a taxpayer to respond to this email.

Kindest regards

Dear Helena,

I have just heard of your proposed bill to ban children from being passengers on motorcycles.

As a grandfather of three boys, I can tell you I am not at all pleased. Motorcycling is not a dangerous undertaking in the hands of careful and intelligent people, however, the explanation accompanying the reason for the bill makes it seem that danger lurks around every corner. Nothing could be further from the truth.

A colleague of mine, Katherine MacDonald, has checked the ORSAR statistics for the 10 years prior to the latest published numbers and has found no fatalities for passengers 15 years and younger, listed.

What is the motivation for this bill? Did it get proposed because some one individual thought it was a good idea?

If you really want to make motorcycling safer in the Province of Ontario, would you please consider supporting the Bikers Rights Organization in its endeavors to amend the highway traffic act and create stiffer penalties for errant drivers who kill others as the result of a traffic infraction? Please see the attached copy of our petition supporting document with our proposed amendment.

I would like to know the reason this bill was proposed and by whom.

Regards,

PROPOSED AMENDMENTS TO THE HIGHWAY TRAFFIC ACT

THE PROBLEM:

There currently exists an injustice in Ontario. A driver stopped at a RIDE program and found to be over the limit, loses their license for an immediate 60 days, without a trial or conviction, and then upon a conviction, loses their license for a further year, pays a minimum of a \$500 fine and after reinstatement of licence must pay to have a breathalyser device installed and maintained in their vehicle for a further year.

Compare those penalties to a driver who makes an unsafe turn in front of a motorcycle and kills both riders. That driver will receive a \$500 fine only.

The first person pays a comparatively large penalty because they have the potential to do harm, but a person who actually kills cannot receive anything more substantial than a \$500 fine.

This is wrong.

In July of 2002, William James Duff turned left in between three motorcycles on Highway 17 near Batchewana, Ontario. The resultant collision immediately claimed the lives of David and Wanda Harrison. Mr Duff was convicted of unsafe turn and received the maximum penalty allowed under the Highway Traffic Act, that is, a \$500 fine.

We feel this was unjust, but it was all that was permitted under law. There are some who believe the highway traffic act is just fine the way it is, including current and previous Ministers of Transportation. When viewed in the above light, however, this is obviously not the case.

Many of the charges under the HTA do not have a specific penalty applied. This is true for left turn charges among others. Instead, the HTA has section 214, which is referred to as general penalties. It is the catchall clause for the penalty for any charge under the act that does not already have a specific penalty applied.

THE PROPOSED SOLUTION:

We wish to change the Highway Traffic Act in a couple of ways. First, we wish to separate the act of unsafe turn to make it a separate section and penalty for unsafe turns involving the vulnerable segments of traffic. Second, we wish to amend section 214, which is the general penalty clause to provide for a more stringent penalty when a death occurs.

First we need to add a separate offence to identify the left turn contravention, which violates the right of way for the most vulnerable segment of the motoring public.

We need to add the following:

Safe turns

141.1 The driver or operator of a vehicle upon a highway who makes or attempts a turn at an intersection, into a private road or driveway, from one lane of traffic to another, or to leave the roadway, is subject to the following rules:

1. The driver or operator shall, before attempting to turn, check to see that the turn shall not interfere with the movement of any pedestrian, motorcycle, bicycle, motor assisted bicycle or wheelchair.
2. The driver or operator shall not attempt or make the turn if to do so will interfere with the movement of a pedestrian, motorcycle, bicycle, motor assisted bicycle or wheelchair.
3. The driver or operator shall make a signal of his or her intention to turn that is clearly visible to all pedestrians and operators of motorcycles, bicycles, motor assisted bicycles or wheelchairs whose movement may be affected by the making of the turn.

We then need to add a specific penalty for the above clause:

Every person who contravenes section 141.1 of this Act is guilty of an offence and on conviction, is liable to a fine of not less than \$500 and not more than \$5000.

We finally need to amend section 214, which is the general penalty clause.

It now reads, 214. (1) Every person who contravenes this Act or any regulation is guilty of an offence and on conviction, where a penalty for the contravention is not otherwise provided for herein, is liable to a fine of not less than \$60 and not more than \$500. R.S.O. 1990, c. H.8, s. 214 (1).

We wish to amend that clause to read:

214. (1) Every person who contravenes this Act or any regulation is guilty of an offence and on conviction, where a penalty for the contravention is not otherwise provided for herein,

- (a) is liable to a fine of not less than \$60 and not more than \$500 or,

(b) is liable to a fine of not less than \$500 and not more than \$5000, and incarceration not less than 3 months and not more than 12 months, and suspension of drivers license for 12 months, said suspension to start upon release from incarceration and not be concurrent with incarceration, where it has been determined that the contravention resulted in a fatality either immediate or within 6 months of the contravention.

With these amendments in place, there should be a more just penalty for those who violate the right of way of the more vulnerable segments of the motoring public, and for those who by their actions, cause accidents which claim lives. Note that the amendment to section 214 does not just apply to motorcyclists being killed but anyone!

To: hjaczek.mpp@liberal.ola.org
Sent: Wednesday, October 29, 2008 8:57 PM
Subject: Child Motorcycle Passenger Legislation

Dear Ms. Jaczek,

I am writing to voice my concerns on Bill 117 regarding child passengers on motorcycles.

I feel that this bill is too all-encompassing. As a grandparent and a motorcyclist I agree that our youth must be protected but I also feel that with a responsible driver and a properly protected passenger, this is not an unsafe practice. With our grandchildren, they are not allowed to be a passenger until their feet can firmly reach the passenger floorboards/foot pegs. They have been given strict instructions on how to sit and the dangers of moving around or distracting the driver. Of course they are always protected with helmets, heavy jackets, gloves, long pants and sturdy boots. When the rider is conscientious and the passenger is well-informed, it makes for a safe ride.

In our particular case, our granddaughter is 11 years old. I would hate to see this bill passed and take this quality time away from her and her grandfather for another 3 years. She has a dirt bike of her own and is well-schooled in safety. We have many friends where the husband and wife are both riders and this is their means of transportation for family vacations. As parents and grandparents, of course we would never do anything that we thought would jeopardize the safety of our children.

In my opinion, education should be the priority with taking children on motorcycles.

Thank you for giving me the opportunity to address this issue.