



COALITION AGAINST NO-FAULT IN BC

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March 12, 2002

The Honourable Maynard Sonntag
Member of the Legislative Assembly
Room 38, Legislative Building
Regina, Saskatchewan S4S 0B3

Dear Honourable Maynard Sonntag:

I am writing this letter on behalf of the Coalition Against No-Fault in British Columbia. We are the broad coalition of community groups and institutions that successfully stopped the Insurance Corporation of British Columbia and the provincial government from introducing no-fault automobile insurance in BC in 1997 (see 2001 membership list attached).

We understand that in January 2003, the Saskatchewan government is planning to change its no-fault system of automobile insurance by introducing a “choice” system under which residents of Saskatchewan would be permitted to choose between a pure no-fault form of insurance and a tort system.

While our Coalition is strongly opposed to no-fault systems of automobile insurance, our research shows that “choice” systems also create huge problems for the people they are supposed to protect. In our view a full tort system provides the fullest and most cost effective system of protections for innocent victims of automobile collisions while at the same time providing strong deterrents to the dangerous driving habits of bad drivers.

If Saskatchewan does proceed with a “choice” system, it is imperative that British Columbia residents have the benefit of their own insurance protections while travelling in Saskatchewan. We urge the government of Saskatchewan to provide, in its choice program, legislation to ensure that BC residents harmed in Saskatchewan collisions will be permitted to act upon the rights they have in BC based upon the insurance coverage they carry here or, in the case of a BC pedestrian who may not have insurance, that they be covered under your Premier Option. We would find it most unacceptable if residents of Saskatchewan were given a choice of the insurance coverage while BC visitors to your province were relegated to no-fault status, thereby depriving them of the legal protections guaranteed under their own automobile insurance coverage. This would be tantamount to discriminating against the people of British Columbia.

Please advise us as to your intentions regarding your new automobile insurance plan and BC drivers involved in collisions in Saskatchewan.

Sincerely,

Margaret Birrell
Executive Member

cc: Honourable Geoff Plant, Attorney General of BC
Honourable Gary Collins, Minister of Finance and responsible for ICBC
Honourable Rick Thorpe, Minister of Competition, Science and Enterprise