



COALITION AGAINST NO-FAULT IN BC

R 141—757 West Hastings Street, Suite 655, Vancouver BC V6C 1A1

Phone: (604) 682-1441 Fax: (604) 875-9227

Toll-Free: 1 (888) 224-8811

Website: www.canf.bc.ca

For Immediate Release

May 17th 2007

WHY IS THE ATTORNEY GENERAL STEALTHILY PUSHING THROUGH CHANGES TO AUTO INSURANCE COVERAGE FOR CATASTROPHICALLY INJURED PEOPLE?

The Coalition Against No-Fault in BC (CANF) is asking, what's the rush? Without any broad-based stakeholder consultations the Attorney General has introduced legislation to put a cap of \$1 million for individuals catastrophically injured by drivers of leased vehicles.

Coincidentally, the day before the legislation was introduced the Canadian Financing and Leasing Association put out a media release calling for the legislation. This group has been running a well-financed national lobbying campaign for the changes that went through third reading this week. They argue that the owners of leased vehicles should not be paying the full insurance that other automobile owners must pay for comprehensive coverage. "The courts ruled recently that leasing companies are in fact the owners and must pay the appropriate premiums, not drivers of leased vehicles," said Margaret Birrell, CANF's Vice-President.

Under the current law, automobile leasing companies share responsibility with negligent drivers for all harm and losses caused by their vehicles.

If cabinet proclaims this legislation, catastrophically injured people, for example a person who becomes a quadriplegic because of a leased vehicle driver, will receive a maximum \$1 million for a lifetime of care. It is well-documented that the cost for long-term care for people who are seriously injured often reaches the multi-million-dollar range. After the maximum is used up they will be dependent on family or taxpayer funded social assistance.

"The chances of living independently in the community will be very slim," said BC Coalition of People with Disabilities spokesperson Jane Dyson. "We will see young people living in long-term care or even seniors facilities. This is totally unacceptable to our community."

CANF is calling on the Premier to tell British Columbians that this law will not be proclaimed. There must be no discrimination against catastrophically disabled people who are injured by a driver of a leased vehicle.

For more information contact: Margaret Birrell
Jane Dyson

Ph: 604-875-0188/604-329-0456
Ph: 604-872-1278/778-895-6150