

Sid Ryan, President
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August 30, 2013

On behalf of Amalgamated Transit Union Local 1624, I would like to offer my sincere thanks to President Sid Ryan and the Ontario Federation of Labour for the opportunity to speak about a monumental, yet oft overlooked, problem affecting thousands of people every year: driver fatigue. Our Brothers and Sisters at ATU Local 1624 have been working diligently for several years to boost public awareness of this issue and to offer potential solutions, including advocating for better legislation, to reduce its terrible impact on society.

I would first like to bring your attention to what driver fatigue is and its repercussions.

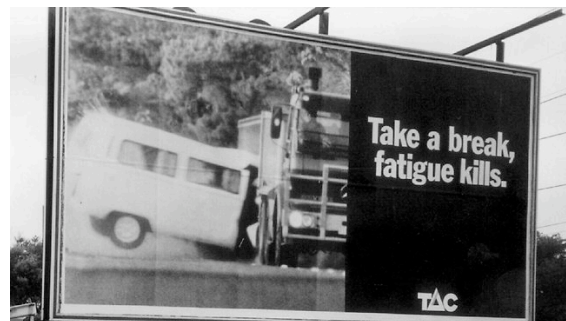
***“Driving while fatigued is comparable to driving drunk,
only there is not the same social stigma attached.”***

– Canadian Safety Council, Vol. III, No. 2

The Canadian Council of Motor Transport Administrators reports that fatigue is the key factor in over 20% of vehicle collisions every year, resulting in over 300 deaths and over 2000 serious injuries. This makes fatigue the highest measurable cause of collisions behind driving drunk and driving aggressively.

The top 10 signs of driver fatigue include:

1. Loss of concentration
2. Yawning
3. Daytime drowsiness
4. Nodding off
5. Slower than usual reaction time
6. Missing road signs
7. Drifting out of your lane
8. Tired, stinging, or red eyes
9. Irritability
10. Boredom



If you are driving tired, you are driving impaired.

We believe that with the support of the OFL—an organization one million voices strong—we can make an even bigger difference and save countless more lives. Working together and pushing for legislative change that will improve the lives of thousands of Canadians every year is something we are passionate about.

Already, the executive and the members of ATU Local1624 have made a difference in combating driver fatigue. From producing driver fatigue awareness videos (www.youtube.com/user/ATU1624), to speaking at transit conferences across North America, to pushing for legislative change via various ministers and MPs, we will not stop until driver fatigue is properly addressed and the unnecessary carnage stops.

To illustrate, over the last six months we have accomplished the following:

- Met with MP Olivia Chow to discuss the seriousness of bus driver fatigue. Olivia Chow committed to introducing a private member's bill to this effect in March 2013
- Spoke at the annual national transit convention in Nunavut in May 2013
- Campaigned via a letter and the following petition—that has garnered over 100,000 hits—to the new Minister of Transport, Lisa Raitt, to change legislation to improve the work standards and quality of life for bus drivers:

"To The Hon. Lisa Raitt, Minister of Transport

Re: Addressing Driver Fatigue to Promote Safer Roadways

I respectfully request the Ministry of Transport to make improvements to legislation surrounding the hours of service for motor coach drivers.

Motor coach drivers are forced to work long hours with minimal compensation and very little time between shifts. As a result, a driver's reaction time decreases and the opportunity for a fatal collision increases. In an attempt to reduce driver fatigue and increase safety on Canadian roadways, I ask for the following amendments to our Federal Legislation:

- *10 hour maximum drive time per day*
- *14 hour maximum on duty per day*
- *10 hour minimum guarantee for rest between shifts*
- *All motor coach vehicles equipped with electronic logging technology*
- *Distinction between motor coach vehicles and trucks*

Over the past decade, 36% of motor coach crash fatalities have been the result of driver fatigue. Our goal is to decrease this statistic while also promoting fair treatment of motor coach drivers, and ultimately addressing the issue of driver fatigue in Canada."

Sadly, until the laws change, we can expect more unnecessary fatalities and serious injuries as a direct result of driver fatigue. But the laws will not change on their own. We need to change them. We need YOUR help to change them.

As the OFL has been instrumental in effecting much-needed change in many areas of people's lives, including addressing employment standards concerns and human rights violations, by way of submissions to the Government of Ontario and by public awareness campaigns, we are honoured to work with such a dynamic organization for such an important cause.

The petition is available online at: <http://atu1624.ca/petition>

In solidarity,

ALLAN MEDD
President and Business Agent
ATU Local 1624