

FOURTH SESSION - TWENTY-SEVENTH LEGISLATURE

of the

Legislative Assembly of Saskatchewan

DEBATES and PROCEEDINGS

(HANSARD) Published under the authority of The Honourable Dan D'Autremont Speaker

N.S. VOL. 57 NO. 26B MONDAY, MARCH 2, 2015, 19:00

Bill No. 176 – *The Traffic Safety Amendment Act*

Mr. Forbes: Thank you very much, Mr. Deputy Speaker. It's a pleasure enter into this debate on No. 176, *An Act to amend The Traffic Safety Act*. And it's a relatively short one and it's one that has caused quite a bit of concern, you know, because clearly there is a priority for safety. And I've talked at some length about fire safety, and now we have traffic safety which also is a huge, huge issue in Saskatchewan. And the minister in his own comments talked about in 2013, Mr. Speaker, excessive speed was a factor in 24 deaths, distracted driving was a factor in 33 deaths. And that's 57 deaths lost needlessly because of high-risk driving behaviours, so clearly we need to do something about that.

Now we did have the Traffic Safety Committee travel around the province to talk about different concerns. We would have liked to go a little bit longer, more in-depth consultations, because clearly when you're dealing with such clear priorities, you know for example, a fire safety one took several years. And the traffic safety one was a response very quickly and probably should have had some more thought into it because the minister does even admit that it was responding. The bill was introduced in December, that he first spoke to in second readings, December 8th actually was a response to a piece of legislation that they had a problem with in June when people, businesses were finding out their vehicles were actually being seized. And it was no fault of the business but that's what the reality of the law was.

And of course this is something that happens with this government. Oops. Another oops. We just heard one just prior about *The Education Amendment Act*. Another oops where they don't really think through their legislation that have these unintended consequences. And I would think, you know, a big number of pieces of legislation that we're dealing with are dealing with fixing up the little mistakes that were made.

And we're concerned about, were there consultations in this case. And here you have a story that was in *The StarPhoenix*, December 4th, 2014, and this is "Kevin Boychuk from K3 Excavating isn't satisfied with the changing laws regarding seizure of a company's

vehicle for offences committed by employee who is driving on December 4th, 2014.”
The story is “Business owner blasts vehicle impound changes.”

So I’ll read parts of the story because I think it’s really instructive to how this government has really failed to properly consult and get to a solution that really meets everyone’s needs. It starts out saying:

Changes to the law allowing police to impound a company vehicle if an employee is caught driving while using a cellphone have failed to satisfy a Saskatoon business owner.

Kevin Boychuk, who owns K3 Excavating Ltd., blasted as insufficient proposed changes introduced Thursday that would punish drivers of company vehicles by pulling their licences and allow for an appeal so companies can retrieve impounded vehicles rather than wait seven days.

And I quote:

“They don’t have any sense of practicality in this program,” Boychuk said Thursday. “When this happened, it was like a baseball bat to the gut. I felt violated and I still feel violated.”

It goes on to say that:

Boychuk also complained that he was not consulted by the provincial government or SGI [Saskatchewan Government Insurance] and would have recommended police be granted the ability to seize and impound a company driver’s personal vehicle if caught.

Now the minister of the day says, “I think it strikes a good balance.” But clearly we need to do better than that. Boychuk says, and I quote:

“I think they’re missing the boat,” said Boychuk, who added he had a safety plan before his company vehicle was impounded in August. [And he goes on, and I quote] “This has got nothing to do with safety.”

So interesting insight. So we have to make sure we understand why SGI and this minister feel so strongly when business on the other hand feels actually the opposite, feels like they needed to have more consultation. So somewhere in between there is the reality that we need to do better particularly when their lives are at risk.

So, Mr. Speaker, I know many of my colleagues will want to speak to this and we’ll have questions in committee. So at this point I’d like move that Bill No. 176, *An Act to amend The Traffic Safety Act* be adjourned.