

Hon. George Smitherman
Minister of Health and Long-Term Care
10th Flr, Hepburn Block
80 Grosvenor St
Toronto, ON M7A 2C4

2/19/2008

Honourable Minister,

Re. Bill 11, Protecting Children and Youth from Second-Hand Smoke in Automobiles Act, 2007.

On behalf of member Medical Officers of Health, Boards of Health and Affiliate organizations of the Association of Local Public Health Agencies (alPHa), I am writing today to make you aware of alPHa's support for Bill 11 and its call for a ban on smoking in cars containing children under the age of 16 years.

On December 6, 2007, alPHa's Board of Directors endorsed the following motion:

"That the alPHa Board of Directors endorse the private members' bill that would amend the Smoke Free Ontario Act by banning smoking in cars containing children under the age of 16 years."

It was further agreed that all Ontario Boards of Health be informed of the Board's motion and encouraged to support the bill in their local areas.

Since that time, new research has been published that demonstrates that the concentration of second-hand smoke (SHS) particles in a car can be up to 60 times higher than concentrations in other enclosed spaces. The passage of the Smoke Free Ontario Act was a clear message that the government understood the significant dangers of second-hand smoke, and is committed to minimizing unwanted exposure to it. We believe that this Bill is a worthy amendment to the Act, as it will protect children from involuntary exposure to it while in any vehicle.

The Smoke Free Ontario Act established this province as a leader in protecting its citizens from the many dangers of tobacco, a product that kills 16,000 of them each year. We hope that Ontario will continue to lead by banning smoking in cars containing children under the age of 16, to protect their health and reinforce the message that second-hand smoke is a serious health risk in any environment.

Yours truly,

ORIGINAL SIGNED

Linda Stewart,
Executive Director

Copy: Mr. David Oraziotti, Minister of Provincial Parliament
Dr. David Williams, Chief Medical Officer of Health (Acting)
Hon. Margaret Best, Minister of Health Promotion