

Ontario Livestock Transporters' Alliance

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September 25, 2020

Mayor Marianne Meed Ward
and City of Burlington Council
426 Brant Street
PO Box 5013
Burlington, ON L7R 3Z6

RE: September 28, 2020 Council Meeting - Security from Trespass and Protecting Food Safety Act

The Ontario Livestock Transporters' Alliance membership is comprised of commercial livestock transporters and associated agriculture businesses such as transport equipment manufacturers and insurance providers. Our transporter members represent approximately 85% of the commercial hog transport in Ontario and most members also transport cattle.

Transporters have faced escalating animal activist protests for several years. The level of aggressiveness increased following Royal Assent of Bill 156, the Security from Trespass and Protecting Food Safety Act in June. Shortly thereafter, during a protest outside the Sofina facility, a woman died. This further focused the attention of activist groups on animal transporters including threats of violence against trucks, drivers and animal transport companies. Transport company owners received complaints of harassment in the workplace from drivers due to the protestors.

We have repeatedly stressed to government and police that we are extremely concerned about the safety of the protestors, our drivers, and the animals they transport. The Burlington protests site has been of particular concern, due to heavy traffic and aggressive behaviour by activists which often went unchecked.

On behalf of the members of the Ontario Livestock Transporters' Alliance who deliver 80% of the livestock to the Sofina, Burlington plant, I would like to raise some safety concerns regarding the on-going animal rights vigils held outside that facility.

- Section 6(1) of Bill 156, the Security from Trespass and Protecting Food Safety Act came into effect on September 2, 2020. This portion of the Bill essentially prohibits the stopping, hindering, obstructing or otherwise interfering with a motor vehicle transporting farm animals. This legislation is the first meaningful legislative tool we have seen toward addressing the harassment and blocking of livestock transport to the Sofina plant.
- Following September 2, 2020, the protestors moved to the median on Appleby Line so they could still touch, film and give water to the pigs inside the trailer when trucks are stopped at a red light.
- This is a very unsafe situation as protestors could be injured by the truck or the animals on the load if they are sticking their hands inside to give water or take pictures. As well, the activists enter the vehicle's blind spots when they come up along the trailer creating another safety issue as the driver cannot always see if all protestors are clear when they start driving again. Protestors could also easily slip off the median, especially in wet or icy weather, and be struck by the moving trailer or other vehicles.

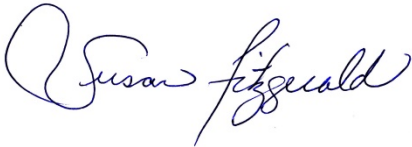
- Transporters have found debris inside trailers such as parts of water bottles and cell phones. This is an animal welfare and food safety concern as the animals on the load could ingest these items.
- The police feel they cannot currently charge protestors for reaching inside trailers to touch, film and give water to the pigs until Section 6(2) is proclaimed with the remainder of the Bill. Section 6(2) specifically references the animals being transported. It states that no person shall interfere or interact with a farm animal being transported by a motor vehicle without the prior consent of the driver of the motor vehicle.

Therefore, we are quite anxious for the remainder of Bill 156 to be proclaimed especially Section 6(2) and hope that you will support the resolution before you today.

We also encourage Council to advocate for increased public safety measures for the corner of Appleby Line and Harvester Road by either removing or reducing access to the median and through enforcement of existing laws by Halton Police to prevent protestors from accessing trucks and trailers.

While we understand and respect the right to peaceful protest, protestors must remain on the sidewalk or shoulder of the roadway and not be allowed to touch the vehicles, reach inside trailers or harass the drivers.

Respectively submitted,



Susan Fitzgerald
Executive Director