

Minister of Transport



Ministre des Transports

Ottawa, Canada K1A 0N5

~~Communication~~
October 6, 2005
Health + Ens

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Ms. Joyce Frustaglio
Regional Councillor and Chair
York Region Health and Emergency Medical Services Committee
The Regional Municipality of York
17250 Yonge Street
Newmarket ON L3Y 6Z1

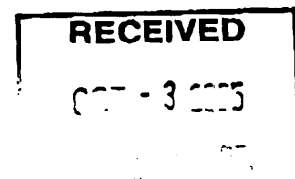
Dear Ms. Frustaglio:

I am writing in response to your correspondence of May 20, 2005, in which you expressed concern regarding the safe installation of child car seats. Please accept my apologies for the delay in replying.

I have noted your views on this matter, and I am pleased to provide the following information in response to your comments. At the outset, I must emphasize that the safety of child passengers in motor vehicles is of paramount importance to Transport Canada and its safety partners. A full list of safety partners can be found in the National Occupational Restraint Program (NORP) annual report, which is available on line at www.ccmta.ca/english/norp/norp.htm. In fact, the department recently contributed to an international document entitled *Keeping Children Safe in Traffic*, which was published by the Organization for Economic Cooperation and Development.

Transport Canada is also very active in the area of child restraint usage and regulation, and conducts biomechanical and usage research, surveys and public awareness campaigns to promote the correct and appropriate use of child restraints. Among other things, the department has researched the ease of use of child restraint systems and their user manuals. The results of this research were used in the development of the *Keep Kids Safe: Car Time 1-2-3-4* video, brochure and website to assist safety partners in educating consumers about the most appropriate seats and how to use them properly. Since that time, the department, in conjunction with Health Canada, has produced separate fact sheets for each of the four stages of child restraint usage. Transport Canada is also working with provincial and territorial governments to promote booster seat legislation and the distribution of public awareness materials on their use.

In response to the increased use of school buses by younger children, Transport Canada recently began developing a regulation to include universal anchorage/tether systems in school buses for the transportation of children in the Stage 1 (up to approximately 1 year old) and Stage 2 (between approximately 1 and 4.5 years old) designations as per the *Car Time* material.



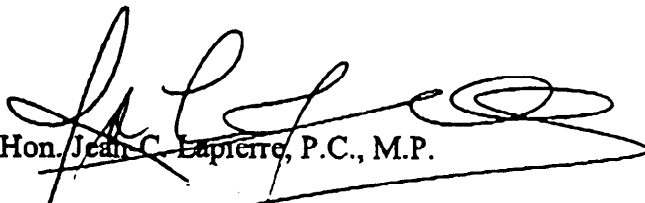
In addition, Transport Canada has worked with the Canadian Coalition on Child Passenger Safety, St. John Ambulance and DaimlerChrysler to complete a standardized training manual for car seat technicians and trainers that was developed through DaimlerChrysler's *Fit for a Kid* program. Furthermore, St. John Ambulance now offers a certification program for trainers. Transport Canada also participates in the NORP of the Canadian Council of Motor Transport Administrators to promote the development and distribution of seat belt and child restraint usage materials. I would also note that the department conducts a national seat belt survey to assess levels of usage. A new survey is being designed that would assess levels of correct usage of child restraints among the general population, rather than among users who have sought further information on the proper use of restraints.

Vehicle owners' manuals contain basic information on child seat installation and the danger of airbags to small children. I should also mention that, since September 2002, all light-duty vehicles feature two universal lower anchorages for the installation of rear-facing and forward-facing child restraints. These anchorages, which Transport Canada helped develop, are intended to help consumers install child restraints correctly and more easily. The anchorages also help improve the safe use of these restraints.

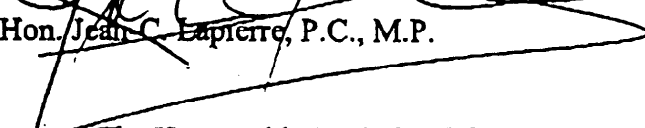
In closing, you may be interested to learn that the department is working with its partners on *Road Safety Vision 2010*, which aims to make Canada's roads the safest in the world by 2010. One goal of this program is to reduce by 40% road fatalities and serious injuries that could have been prevented by appropriate and correct use of restraint systems. The program also aims to increase usage rates for all occupant restraints to 95%. For more information regarding *Road Safety Vision 2010*, general road safety or child restraints, please consult the Transport Canada website at www.tc.gc.ca/roadsafety.

Thank you for writing and for sharing your views on this important safety issue.

Yours sincerely,



Hon. Jean-C. Lapierre, P.C., M.P.



c.c. The Honourable Harinder Takhar, M.P.P.