

Butler challenges commitment to safety

Opposition government services critic Roland Butler is challenging government's commitment to the national Road Safety Vision 2010 initiative after its refusal to bring forth legislation requiring mandatory winter tires.

Government recently joined the national Road Safety Vision 2010, an initiative designed to improve safety on Canada's highways. One of the sections of the document focuses on the benefits of using winter tires to reduce accidents causing serious injury and death.

Mr. Butler said that while Government Services Minister Kevin O'Brien has stated publicly that he supports this initiative, he has indicated government does not intend to bring forth legislation requiring mandatory winter tires between November and May.

"If government is committed to improving highway safety in our province, why is the minister refusing to bring forth legislation requiring winter tires?" asked Mr. Butler. "It is a proven fact that winter tires improve safety on public roads during the winter months, and that all season tires do not manoeuvre well in snowy conditions. To improve the safety

of everyone on the province's roads, winter tires should be mandatory on all vehicles."

In November, the province of Quebec brought forward legislation requiring vehicle owners to install winter tires in an attempt to reduce preventable accidents and fatalities on that province's highways. The Port de Grave MHA also recommends mandatory deadlines for the installation and removal of the tires to ensure people do not leave them on year-round, and set a mandatory tire tread benchmark so that worn-out tires are not continuously used every year.

The Road Safety Vision 2010 recommends that four winter tires be installed on all vehicles using highways in Canada during winter months.

"To help people adjust to this legislation, options can be developed to help address the costs of purchasing and installing snow tires. Other provinces and countries with similar climates have already implemented such legislation. If the minister is truly committed to improving road safety, I encourage his department to draft this legislation as soon as possible."