

March 15, 2007

WORKERS COMPENSATION ACT AMENDMENT ACT

The New Democrat Opposition has introduced a Private Members' Bill, the *Workers Compensation Act Amendment Act*, to close critical loopholes in legislation and enforcement of safety standards for farm workers and others transported to and from work by their employer.

The Bill amends the *Workers Compensation Act* as follows:

- Requires all vehicles transporting workers to have seatbelts for each worker
- Requires all workers to wear seatbelts while being transported
- Requires both WorkSafe and the Motor Vehicle Branch to establish maximum occupancy for transport vehicles
- Requires all worker transport vehicles to be clearly labelled as such
- Requires all worker transport vehicles to identify maximum occupancy on all sides
- Limits modification of seats or seatbelts to qualified technicians, in compliance with safety standards and maximum occupancy rules
- Requires worker transport vehicles to have transparent passenger windows

The Bill amends the *Motor Vehicle Act* as follows:

- Requires seatbelts and proper seats for each worker being transported to work in a vehicle
- Requires an operator to give notice of any changes to the seat belts or seats of a vehicle, under penalty of the *Offence Act*
- Empowers Worksafe inspectors to conduct vehicle inspections
- Empowers the RCMP and other inspectors to enforce the *Workers Compensation Act* and its regulations
- Empowers inspectors to fine or impound vehicles operating over capacity or without proper seat belts
- Empowers ICBC to refuse to issue permits or licences to vehicles and drivers involved in violations involving over capacity vehicles and seatbelt violations