

Bill 117 as you know, has been referred to the Justice Committee after passing 2nd reading on December 4th however it is not written in stone that it will get that far. The Ontario Legislature resumes on February 18, if it prorogues the house all Bills that aren't on their exemption list will be dead including those referred to the Justice Committee and that includes of course, Bill 117.

This will not however, keep MPP Helena Jaczek from presenting it again. I think it's important that we continue to put pressure on our MPPs. It may help too, to let MPP Jaczek know that we have the information below and perhaps we can persuade her to give it up.

What everyone needs to know is that the numbers she has been putting forward to beget fear and rally support for her cause are false. I also believe that she knows it and that is even more damning and infuriating to the motorcycle community.

I have finally been able to get in touch with a research associate from Smartrisk. You may recognize it as the organization where MPP Jaczek claims to have collected her 'alarming statistics'. Driven by her well meaning yet misguided desire to protect our children from injury she has spewed these figures again and again to any who will listen.

What I've discovered first of all is that 'motorcycle related injuries' in the Smartrisk data sheets includes mopeds, motor scooters and motorized bicycles. This explains to some extent, why Jaczek's numbers are so much higher than the statistics from the Ministry of Transportation's Annual Safety Reports on motorcycle injuries.

More importantly is that the data compiled by Smartrisk contains figures of motorcycle-related injuries to *riders* only. The document is in fact titled 'Motorcycle Rider Hospitalizations'. MPP Jaczek must have overlooked that small yet significant piece of information. She clearly stated to the Ontario Legislature that *since* the 2005 MTO figures of 21 children being injured as motorcycle *passengers*, Smartrisk has noted 556 emergency department visits of children 14 and under for the fiscal year 2005/06 and that these numbers seem to indicate that injuries are increasing.

The 46 child *passengers* hospitalized for serious 'motorcycle-related' injuries claimed by MPP Jaczek were in fact not passengers at all, they were riders and they were riders of mopeds, scooters and motorized bicycles as well. MPP Jaczek has put forth a completely dishonest representation of Smartrisk's figures.

Since the law requires you to be 16 years of age to ride a 'motorcycle-related' vehicle on the roadways of Ontario we can only conclude that the 46 hospitalizations and the 556 emergency department visits were children riding *off* the roadways of Ontario. Clearly not what MPP Jaczek implied to anyone.

Smartrisk suggested that I research into police reports for more details yet that would be redundant as that is where the Ministry of Transportation gets their figures for their Annual Safety Reports. They show an average of 17.5 children injured yearly on motorcycles on the roadways of Ontario. These figures include minimal, minor and major injuries, true government statistics we, in the motorcycling community can be very proud of. Especially considering there were more than 140,000 motorcycles on the roads in Ontario last year.

I have below a quote from a letter of support from the Association of Local Public Health Agencies, one of the organizations supporting Bill 117 and of which MPP Jaczek mentioned in her address to the Ontario Legislature.

“The statistics in your letter suggest that the incidence of motorcycle-related injuries to children is increasing significantly. From 1995 to 2005, an average of about 20 injuries per year was reported for this age group, whereas in 2005-2006 alone, there were 46 hospitalizations.”

I read this as proof that MPP Jaczek is using her manipulated and misrepresented statistics to garner support for her cause. Even still, how could anyone believe that practically in the same year child *injuries* increased from 21 to 46 *hospitalizations*? Well we now know that this is a false statement altogether. Simply put, Jaczek did not have the numbers to garner support for her ‘cause’ because children are not being hurt on the back of motorcycles.

All in all it astounds me how she can embellish statistics so significantly without question or further investigation and gain support for a Bill that would essentially make it illegal for a certain percentage of the population to use a legal mode of transportation on the streets of Ontario. She has in truth, convinced many that the average injury to children has, in one year risen from 21 to 556 and has done so by manipulating, or shall I say down right misrepresenting Smartrisk figures.

In the fiscal year of 2002/03 Smartrisk did an actual report on motorcycle injuries alone which claims that 5% of 736 hospitalizations in that year were passengers of *all age groups*. This we can believe. How many of those 36 then, were children under the age of 14? According to that same report, 47% of what MPP Jaczek would interpret as ‘serious hospitalizations’ include broken arms and legs.

In an interview on Show 55 at www.bikerradiomagazine.com MPP Jaczek admitted she does not fully understand, more specifically is ‘not clear’ about what the numbers from Smartrisk represent.

Was she aware then that the figures she used were completely false or did she simply begin a campaign for Bill 117 before doing the proper research? Is it better for her to knowingly spread untrue facts or to be unsure and declare them anyway? Make up your own mind.

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