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**LEGISLATIVE ASSEMBLY****Jonah Schein**

**Member of Provincial Parliament/Député**  
**DAVENPORT**

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May 15, 2012

Minister Chiarelli  
Ministry of Transportation  
3rd Floor, Ferguson Block  
77 Wellesley Street West  
Toronto, Ontario M7A 1Z8

Dear Minister Chiarelli,

**Re. Contraflow bike lanes**

It has come to my attention that the installation of 13 contraflow bike lanes approved by the City of Toronto in 2009 is on hold because City legal department is concerned that allowing reverse-flow bike traffic on a street signed as a one-way street may contravene the Highway Traffic Act.

Contraflow bike lanes are a cost effective way to support safe cycling in towns and cities. Indeed, your Ministry's "Transit-Supportive Guidelines" (2011) endorse contra-flow lanes, stating that "using contra-flow bike lanes on one way streets, indicated by pavement marking and clear signs, can be an effective strategy to connect gaps in the bike network".

Unfortunately there is confusion about the legality of contraflow bike lanes.

The Ottawa Cycling Plan (2008) states that "Highway Traffic Act section 154(1)(c) permits a municipality to designate a contraflow bike lane". However, Lukasz Pawlowski, Senior Engineer at the City of Toronto's Cycling Infrastructure and Programs Department states in an email dated May 9, 2012 that "section 153 of the HTA...is absolute, in that it compels all vehicle classes to travel in the designated direction....With a contra-flow bicycle lane, this creates traffic lanes in opposing directions which then is effectively a two-way street. As a two-way street, we can't post one-way regulatory signs, and would have to control motor vehicle traffic flow via entry and turn restrictions."

I urge you as Minister of Transportation to put an end to this confusion, and the now three-year delay in the implementation of 13 contra-flow bike lanes in Toronto, by clarifying that Section 154 of the Highway Traffic Act applies to contra-flow bike lanes, and allows municipalities to install contraflow bike lanes on streets that are designated one-way streets.

I hope very much that you can take action to resolve this issue by the end of May, so that the installation of bike lanes can proceed for the summer cycling season.

Thank you for your attention to this issue.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in dark ink, appearing to be 'JS' followed by a long horizontal stroke.

Jonah Schein  
MPP Davenport  
NDP Critic Environment and Urban Transportation