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Premier Dalton McGuinty
Legislative Building
Queen's Park
Toronto ON M7A 1A1

December 13, 2006

RE: Amending the Off-Road Vehicle Act

Dear Premier McGuinty:

At its Annual General Meeting of October 26, 2006, the Ontario Public Health Association (OPHA) passed the attached resolution regarding amending the Off-Road Vehicle Act. The resolution looks to the Government of Ontario to strike a multi-stakeholder All-Terrain Vehicle (ATV) Task Group to develop a comprehensive, evidence-based approach, including amendments to the Off-Road Vehicle Legislation to promote ATV Safety to prevent ATV injuries, particularly in children.

According to the Canadian All-Terrain Distributors Council (CATV), retail sales of ATVs in Canada have increased from 32,607 in 1997 to 89,452 in 2004. During this same period, sales in Ontario have increased from 5,704 to 21,188 (CATV, 2004). With the increase in sales there has been an increase in ATV-related injuries, despite manufacturers' voluntary safety measures. The Canadian Institute for Health Information (CIHI) reported an approximate 50% increase in the number of ATV-related hospitalizations, even while there has been a decrease in the number of hospitalizations from other types of injuries (CIHI, 2003).

Other evidence indicates that children and youth lack the knowledge, physical size and strength, cognitive and motor skills to safely operate an ATV (Canadian Paediatric Society, 2004; Levinson, 2003; Hospital for Sick Children, 2004; Murphy & Yanchar, 2004). It is therefore necessary to make legislative changes that reflect safety practices similar to those governing the

operation of motor vehicles, snowmobiles and boats. These changes should include a comprehensive approach to ATV use, including legislation and enforcement, as well as trails systems with a focus on decreased environmental impact similar to the approach adopted in New Brunswick.

The OPHA suggests that an ATV Task Group could be established under the proposed Injury Prevention Strategy being developed by the Ontario Ministry of Health Promotion. We look forward to collaborating with you on this venture.

Sincerely,

Dr. Garry Aslanyan
President