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October 15th, 2010

The Honourable Leona Aglukkaq PC, MP
Minister of Health
Health Canada, Brooke Claxton Building,
Tunney's Pasture, Postal Locator: 0906C
Ottawa, Ontario K1A 0K9

Honourable Minister Aglukkaq:

RE: Amendment of Private Members Bill C-289

The *Ontario Public Health Association (OPHA)* is supporting the
Amendment of Private Members Bill C-289.

OPHA is a not-for-profit organization with a unique interdisciplinary and multifaceted structure that provides a unified and independent approach to safeguarding and improving the health of all Ontarians. For over 60 years, OPHA has provided leadership on important issues and has served as a catalyst for strengthening public and community health by supporting key functions such as health protection and promotion, disease and injury prevention, monitoring health status and decreasing disparities. Through strategic collaborations and partnerships, OPHA is increasingly positioning itself as the voice of public health in Ontario.

Bill C-289 was introduced by Dr. Hedy Fry with the aim of including snow sport helmets into the Hazardous Product Act. The addition of snow sport helmets into the Hazardous Product Act would prevent the advertising, import and sale of snow sport helmets that do not meet the Canadian Standards. In 2009, Health Canada announced that the Canadian Standards Association (CSA) developed a new CSA standard for recreational skiing and snow boarding helmets. This approach should be extended to all snow sport helmets so that users will have the protection that helmets afford while they are engaged in sports activities.

Enacting this legislative change will reduce injury and death among snow sport participants as well as reduce the social and economic costs associated with these injuries. According to the Brain Injury Association (2009), sports related injuries alone cost Canadians \$100 million dollars every year. Skiing and snow boarding were the second leading cause of recreational sports related injuries in Canada. Additionally, head injury related to skiing and snowboarding is the most common reason for Emergency visits and admissions to hospitals. However, research has shown that the use of helmets can reduce the risk of head injury by 60%. Please see the attached background paper for further information.

Given the protection that helmets provide users the Hazardous Product Act should be amended to include sport snow helmet and any helmet sold in Canada meets CSA standard. Therefore I am asking for your support to amend Bill C-289.

Thank you in advance for your kind consideration.

Sincerely,



Liz Haugh
President

Enclosure

c.c. Members of Parliament, Federal