



November 20, 2024

Association of Pedestrian and Bicycle Professionals (APBP)
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The Honorable Doug Ford
Premier of Ontario
Legislative Building
Queen's Park
Toronto, ON M7A 1A1

Dear Premier Ford,

The **Association of Pedestrian and Bicycle Professionals (APBP)** is a community of more than 1,100 practitioners working to create more walkable, bikeable places. Our members work across Canada and the United States in government, consulting firms, and non-profit organizations in the fields of transportation planning and engineering, urban design and planning, public health and active living.

We are writing to express our strong opposition to Bill 212, also known as the Reducing Gridlock, Saving You Time Act. This legislation, which seeks to reduce the number of bike lanes in our cities, is **a regressive step that undermines efforts to create safer, more inclusive, and environmentally friendly communities.**

By providing choice on selected roads, bike lanes are essential for promoting active transportation, reducing traffic congestion, and improving public health. They provide safe spaces for cyclists, encourage more people to choose biking as a mode of transportation, and contribute to the overall reduction of greenhouse gas emissions. **Removing bike lanes will not alleviate traffic congestion¹; instead, it will increase the risk to public safety and move away from evidence-based practices that have proven to be effective in cities around the world.**

¹ [What's Up With That: Building Bigger Roads Actually Makes Traffic Worse | WIRED](#)

Proposed Bill 212 is not only detrimental to cyclist safety, it also negatively impacts the safety of pedestrians (e.g. reducing buffer zones) and motorists (removing traffic calming). However, reducing the number of bike lanes disproportionately impacts those whose most easily accessible mode of transportation would be active modes, such as children, teenagers, newcomers to Canada, and anyone who can't afford a car or is not able to drive. **In any community, at least 30% of people can't drive due to age, ability, or access, and they need real options too.**

The proposed Act also includes many measures to allow Highway 413 construction to bypass environmental and social protection measures, such as making it easier for the project to expropriate people's land, and exempting the project from municipal approvals, which we feel are important to the planning process and strongly disagree with removing.

APBP agrees with the Ontario Professional Planners Institute (OPPI)² statement about the importance of bike lanes in supporting inclusive and complete communities. Bike lanes improve public health and safety, support economic activity, foster social interaction, and enhance community connectivity. The proposed legislative changes will not only jeopardize these benefits but also contradict the policies outlined in the 2024 Provincial Planning Statement, which supports the use of bike lanes to reduce traffic and provide multiple transportation options.

APBP agrees with the Association of Municipalities of Ontario (AMO)³ that requiring provincial approval for bike lanes is a significant overreach into municipal jurisdiction. Municipalities develop transportation plans based on local knowledge and community input, balancing traffic flow with priorities like active transportation, multimodal transportation, and environmental and health protection.

APBP agrees with the group of 120 physicians from the University of Toronto⁴ that has emphasized the importance of bike lanes in preventing traffic-related injuries and fatalities. They argue that protected bike lanes reduce the risk of motor vehicle trauma for pedestrians and cyclists, and that the proposed legislation would limit municipalities' ability to make roads safer for their citizens.

²

<https://ontarioplanners.ca/OPPIAssets/Documents/Policy-Papers/OPPI-Statement-on-Bike-Lanes-from-a-Planning-Perspective.pdf>

³

<https://www.amo.on.ca/policy/finance-infrastructure-and-economy/province-introduce-legislation-governing-bicycle-lanes>

⁴ <https://healthydebate.ca/2024/10/topic/legislation-road-design-safety-travel-times/>

APBP agrees with the Ontario Traffic Council (OTC)⁵ that the proposed legislation would create bureaucratic barriers and negatively impact road user safety. They argue that reducing dedicated cycling facilities will limit transportation options and contribute to municipal traffic problems rather than resolving them.

APBP agrees with Green Communities Canada⁶ who have highlighted the adverse impact of the legislation on children's health and the environment. They argue that high-quality networks of protected bike lanes are critical for providing safe routes to school and supporting higher rates of physical activity.

APBP agrees with Women in Urbanism Canada⁷ who have expressed concern about the negative impacts of the legislation on women, girls, and gender-diverse people. They argue that safety concerns are a significant barrier to cycling for women, and that the proposed legislation would exacerbate this issue.

APBP urges the Ontario government to reconsider Bill 212 and work towards creating roadways that are safe for **all** users, including cyclists, pedestrians, and drivers. By investing in bike lanes and other active transportation infrastructure, we can build a more sustainable, resilient and equitable future for our communities.

Thank you for your attention to this important matter.

Sincerely,



Lauren Santangelo, CAE
Executive Director
Association of Pedestrian and Bicycle Professionals

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https://mcusercontent.com/32994e1c21f524f82af8b2563/files/e87f5879-20f6-14e4-4830-04fecad85df6/Premier_Ford_Letter_Re_Reducing_Gridlock_and_Saving_you_Time_Legislation.pdf

⁶ <https://greencommunitiescanada.org/letter-to-ontario-minister-of-transportation-about-bill-212/>

⁷ <https://www.womeninurbanism.ca/words/open-letter-stop-bill-212>