



May 15<sup>th</sup>, 2008

**Clerk of Committees**

249 Legislative Building  
Winnipeg MB R3C 0V8

Re: Bill 13: The Highways Traffic Amendment Act

The AMM is pleased to provide support for Bill 13: The Highways Traffic Amendment Act (Damage to Infrastructure). Infrastructure is one of the most pressing needs in Manitoba and is increasingly becoming a financial burden for communities. As such, the AMM supports Bill 13 and its effort to recover costs as a result of damage.

Municipalities across Canada are struggling as a result of years of infrastructure neglect by all orders of government. Recently the Federation of Canadian Municipalities hired Professor Saeed Mirza from McGill University's Department of Civil Engineering and Applied Mechanics to get a handle on the state of municipal infrastructure in Canada. Professor Mirza was able to encapsulate the current state of affairs in his report "Danger Ahead: The Coming Collapse of Canadian's Municipal Infrastructure", which among other things quantifies the current municipal infrastructure deficit. The report indicates that a \$123 billion deficit existing on current infrastructure, with a \$115 billion deficit for what is needed for the future. What is perhaps most alarming about the findings of the report is the rate at which the deficit is growing, having double in the past five years.

While Bill 13 does not provide the funding necessary to deal with the growing municipal infrastructure deficit, it does provide new tools to prevent municipalities from having to pay to fix damaged infrastructure caused by vehicles or vehicle loads. The new tools will allow municipalities to recover costs, which will at least prevent such instances from adding to the growing infrastructure deficit. In many smaller communities, the cost of replacing a structure such as a bridge would have a major impact on their municipal budget. Bill 13 will allow these communities to recover the replacement costs from those responsible.

The AMM is pleased to see Bill 13 before this committee and looks forward to it passing in the House.

Sincerely,

Ron Bell  
President