

# Memorandum to the Council of Corporation of the Municipality of Temagami

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**Subject:** Support for Northern Highways 11 & 17 Safety Act, 2025

**Memo No:** 2025-M-156

**Date:** June 26, 2025

**Attachment:** Appendix A - Letter from MPP John Vanthof– Support Request Letter (*Northern Highways 11 & 17 Safety Act, 2025*)

**Prepared By:** Laala Jahanshahloo - CAO/Treasurer

## Recommendation

BE IT RESOLVED THAT Council receives Memo 2025-M-156 as presented;

AND FURTHER THAT Council for the Municipality of Temagami supports the *Northern Highways 11 & 17 Safety Act, 2025*, as introduced by MPP John Vanthof and co-sponsored by MPPs Lise Vaugeois and Guy Bourgouin;

AND FURTHER THAT Council directs staff to prepare and send a letter of support to MPP John Vanthof (Timiskaming–Cochrane).

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## 1. Executive Summary

This report recommends that Council issue a formal letter of support for the *Northern Highways 11 & 17 Safety Act, 2025*, a Private Member's Bill introduced by MPP John Vanthof and co-sponsored by MPPs Lise Vaugois and Guy Bourgouin. The Bill outlines four evidence-based measures aimed at improving safety, enforcement, and winter maintenance on Northern Ontario's core transportation corridors.

Given Temagami's total reliance on Highway 11 for all-season access, and the ongoing risks posed by poor enforcement and maintenance, municipal endorsement of this Bill is justified and aligns with past Council priorities regarding transportation safety and reliability in Northern Ontario.

## 2. Background

On June 17, 2025, MPP John Vanthof (Timiskaming–Cochrane) sent correspondence to Northern municipalities requesting support for his Private Member's Bill – the *Northern Highways 11 & 17 Safety Act, 2025*. The Bill was developed through consultation with Northern residents and stakeholders and is scheduled for debate during the Fall 2025 legislative session.

The proposed legislation includes the following four safety measures:

- Mandating that scale and inspection stations operate a minimum of 12 hours daily;
- Ensuring enforcement of the Highway Traffic Act on Highways 11 and 17;
- Requiring truck driver testing for commercial licensing to be conducted by Ministry-certified examiners;
- Restoring provincial management of winter highway maintenance on Highways 11 and 17 to the Ministry of Transportation.

Municipalities that have passed formal endorsements to date include Schreiber, Hearst, McGarry, Englehart, Nipissing, and Coleman Township.

### 3. Justification

- **Critical Dependence on Highway 11** - Temagami is entirely dependent on Highway 11 for travel, emergency response, delivery of goods, and economic connectivity. Winter closures and unsafe driving conditions pose immediate threats to residents and public services.
- **Persistent Safety Risks** - Auditor General reports and multiple Northern news sources have documented the consequences of inadequate highway oversight and privatized winter maintenance delays. Highway 11 and 17 closures have become common during severe weather, leaving communities isolated.
- **Municipal Advocacy Alignment** - The proposed Bill offers realistic and enforceable reforms that re-establish provincial control in areas where municipalities have little authority but experience serious impacts. Supporting this Bill is a constructive step toward long-term improvement in regional safety.

### 4. Conclusion

The *Northern Highways 11 & 17 Safety Act, 2025* provides a clear and actionable path toward improving Northern highway safety through better enforcement, training standards, and winter maintenance oversight. Temagami's support will help advance this community-driven legislative effort without requiring new municipal costs or infrastructure.

# John Vanthof

MPP/député Timiskaming Cochrane



June 17, 2025

Dear Mayor and Council,

I'm reaching out today to request your support for improving the safety of highways 11 and 17. In June, I introduced a new Private Member's Bill, the *Northern Highways 11 and 17 Safety Act, 2025*, that proposes crucial, common-sense measures to improve northern highway safety. This bill will be debated when the legislative session resumes in the fall. To strengthen our efforts, I am requesting the support of your municipality in the form of a resolution, or letter of support, to bring these improvements into law.

The *Northern Highways 11 and 17 Safety Act, 2025* is co-sponsored by MPP Lise Vaugeois (Thunder Bay-Superior North) and MPP Guy Bourgouin (Mushkegowuk-James Bay) and was inspired by the Northern Highway Safety Plan we developed in consultation with Northern residents and stakeholders earlier this year. You will find the legislation included in this correspondence. It proposes four key measures:

- Mandating that scale and inspection stations operate at least 12 hours daily
- Ensuring the sufficient enforcement of the Highway Traffic Act
- Guaranteeing that testing of truck drivers for commercial licensing is conducted by examiners certified by the Ministry of Transportation
- Restoring management of winter highway maintenance on Highways 11 and 17 to the Ministry of Transportation

Unfortunately, accidents and highway closures have become the norm along highways 11 and 17. Some of these accidents are unavoidable, but many of the accidents currently happening in the North are preventable. As a community in the North, we know that your residents share these concerns for highway safety. I continue to communicate these concerns with the Minister of Transportation, during Question Period and through written correspondence. Our caucus has additionally proposed amendments to numerous transportation bills that would advance measures

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# John Vanthof

MPP/député Timiskaming Cochrane



to improve the state of our highways. We are using every legislative tool available to pressure the government to take action, and we need your support.

I am requesting that you review this draft bill among your organization and offer your support to bring it into legislation. Several municipalities across the North have already passed council resolutions formally endorsing our Northern Highway Safety Plan, including the Township of Schreiber, Nipissing, Hearst, McGarry, Englehart, and Coleman Township.

Together, we can take action to address the dangerous state of our roads. Please let me know if you have any questions about the bill, or legislative process.

Yours sincerely,

John Vanthof, MPP  
Timiskaming-Cochrane

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