



LEGISLATIVE ASSEMBLY

**BOB BAILEY, M.P.P.**  
Sarnia-Lambton

November 2, 2015

Hon. Steven Del Duca  
Minister of Transportation  
3rd Flr  
77 Wellesley St W  
Toronto ON M7A1Z8

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Re: Highway 402 Backups

Minister Del Duca;

Recently I was contacted by a constituent with a unique perspective, and concerns, on the safety of Highway 402 as drivers approach the busy Bluewater Bridge in Point Edward, Ontario. [REDACTED] resides in a unit [REDACTED] of an apartment building [REDACTED] in Sarnia. [REDACTED] balcony overlooks the east and west bound lanes of the 402 near the Christina St. interchange. As drivers approach the Christina St. interchange there is a rise in the elevation of the highway in order to cross the arterial roads below. As such, someone travelling west on the 402 at this point is actually blind to the roadway west of the Christina Street interchange. This is a concern to [REDACTED] because the 402 is prone to backups originating at the Bluewater Bridge. I have enclosed evidence of this point, attached please find a screen capture from Google Maps of the area in question; it shows a long line of trucks backed up on the highway well past [REDACTED] apartment.

In addition, [REDACTED] is concerned with the signage on the West bound lanes of Highway 402 as one approaches the Bluewater Bridge. Currently the MTO has Variable Message Signs at the Indian Road and the Christina St. interchanges. From speaking with various sources, [REDACTED] has determined that the messages on the signs are generic in nature and only change on a predetermined schedule. [REDACTED] believes that these signs should be updated with real time information about traffic backups near the bridge so that approaching traffic is adequately informed and can begin to slow down and, if necessary, be prepared to stop. [REDACTED] concerns are warranted, the Bluewater Bridge is the second busiest border crossing for commercial traffic in Canada, 1.5 million trucks travel through this section of highway annually. Many trucks carry potentially hazardous loads, which if they were involved in a collision could impact the safety of the many thousands of individuals who live and work in close proximity to Highway 402 as it travels through Sarnia, and Point Edward.

Minister, in your continuing efforts to increase safety on Ontario's highways, I respectfully ask that your office conduct a review of the use of the Variable Message Signage in Sarnia and Point Edward, to ensure that they are being optimized for driver safety. [REDACTED] has graciously offered to host anyone from the MTO who may be interested in viewing the highway from [REDACTED] apartment, as this may better inform their understanding of the potential dangers on this road.

Please respond directly to [REDACTED], with a copy to my office, detailing the findings of your review, [REDACTED].

Thank you for your attention to this matter.

Sincerely,

[Original Signed By]

Bob Bailey, MPP  
Sarnia-Lambton

[REDACTED]

Ministry of  
Transportation

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Dear

Thank you for your letter forwarded by Bob Bailey, MPP, Sarnia-Lambton, regarding the variable message signs on Highway 402 in Sarnia and Point Edward. I welcome the opportunity to respond.

During reconstruction of Highway 402 several years ago, two enhancements were included in the contract to help address the potential of truck queuing as the trucks approach the border. The first enhancement is a series of variable message signs to advise vehicles bound for the United States to use assigned lanes, such as NEXUS or FAST vehicles, while keeping regular vehicles such as cars and trucks in their respective designated lane(s). The second enhancement is an "end-of-queue" detection system. This system includes sensors buried in the pavement to detect stopped traffic along the three km section of Highway 402 approaching the border.

These two systems form part of the Highway 402 Lane Management System (LMS). When a queue is detected by the "end-of-queue" detection system, the variable message sign upstream of the queue selects the appropriate warning message for approaching traffic.

I am pleased to advise that to improve the reliability of the system, the ministry has recently replaced a number of the sensors in the road. The new sensors are currently being tested to ensure their proper operation. When the sensor replacement and testing is complete, the LMS will be placed back into full operation.

Thank you again for your interest in highway safety.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Steven Del Duca".

Steven Del Duca  
Minister

c. Bob Bailey, MPP, Sarnia-Lambton