AORS

PROMOTING **KNOWLEDGE**. PURSUING **EXCELLENCE**.

Date: December 19, 2024

To: Ministry of Transportation, Road Safety Program Development Office,

Subject: Submission Regarding the Expansion of the Slow Down, Move Over (SDMO) Law – Working for Workers Six Act, 2024

To Whom It May Concern,

On behalf of the Association of Ontario Road Supervisors (AORS) and our President, Joe Reid, we are writing to express our support for the proposed expansion of Section 159 of the Highway Traffic Act under the Working for Workers Six Act, 2024. The safety of all road users, particularly those working on or near roadways, is of paramount importance, and we commend the Ministry for taking steps to enhance protections for roadside workers.

AORS strongly supports the inclusion of municipal public works employees under this expanded legislation. Municipal public works employees play a critical role in maintaining the safety and functionality of our roadways year-round, often working in hazardous conditions and close proximity to moving traffic. Ensuring that these workers are covered under the Slow Down, Move Over law is essential to safeguarding their well-being while they perform their vital duties.

We also recommend that the definition of vehicles covered by the legislation be broadened to explicitly include any vehicle identifiable as a municipal vehicle. Municipal vehicles are often equipped with distinctive markings and lights that indicate their role in road maintenance, repair, and other public works activities. This inclusive approach will provide clarity and ensure comprehensive protection for municipal workers.

Additionally, we have a specific concern regarding the proposed requirement for "flashing amber lights activated" as a condition for the protections under this law. Many municipalities in Ontario use blue flashing lights on snow plows and other vehicles engaged in winter maintenance. For example, a municipal employee could be pulled over to the side of the road with blue flashing lights activated while addressing an issue, such as cleaning ice from the conveyor of a snow plow. It is crucial that these scenarios be encompassed within the scope of the legislation to avoid any gaps in worker protection.

In conclusion, AORS fully supports the expansion of the Slow Down, Move Over law and urges the Ministry of Transportation to ensure that municipal public works employees and

their vehicles are explicitly included in the updated legislation. We also recommend that the requirement for specific light colors be reviewed to ensure it aligns with the practical realities of municipal operations across the province. These measures will significantly enhance the safety and protection of those who work tirelessly to keep our roads safe and operational.

Thank you for considering our input on this important matter. AORS remains committed to advocating for the safety of municipal workers and is available to provide further input or clarification if needed.

Sincerely,

Kelly Elliott

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