

*Automatic Headlight System*

published on July 12, 1986. It would apply to all new passenger cars, trucks, buses and multi-purpose passenger vehicles. The final technical specifications were announced on December 29, 1986, and the regulation is expected to be ready for approval by the first quarter of 1987.

The figures I have given indicate how important this motion is. We should all take them into very serious consideration. I commend not only the Hon. Member but all government and opposition Members who agree with the motion's intent. It is my pleasure to say that we should heartily support the motion and I am looking forward to its speedy passage.

**Mr. Don Ravis (Saskatoon East):** Mr. Speaker, I am also delighted to speak on this motion for a number of reasons. First, and probably most important, I come from Saskatchewan where we have had a voluntary program like this in effect for some time.

I want to begin by saying that Private Members' Hour is a very special time when Members can put forward very worthwhile Bills and motions such as this. It is a time when Members from all Parties can choose to agree or disagree. From what I have heard so far today I gather there are a number of Members who support the motion and I want to assure the House that I feel the same way.

The Hon. Member has been working on this idea for six or seven years. He did not come up with it just a few months ago. He has been pressing very hard on the issue, and I think his constituents should be very proud of a Member who brings this kind of motion to the House.

It may appear to be very obvious, but I can tell you that in Saskatchewan hundreds of lives have been saved because of the program I referred to earlier, and I believe the province is in the process of doing a full evaluation of its effect. The program, called Lights on for Life, has been in place for about five or six years and about 50 per cent of all vehicles on the highway comply with it. I have to admit that my reaction, much like that of the Hon. Member for Edmonton East (Mr. Lesick), was that someone must have forgotten to shut his lights off. However, you soon begin to realize just how much quicker you notice oncoming traffic when cars have their lights on. I believe it is in the neighbourhood of 10 seconds to 12 seconds sooner. Of course, some people even leave their lights on while driving in the cities, and while I believe that has a certain application it is probably not as useful as it is on the highways.

The point I want to make about this motion is that it will save lives and lower insurance rates. The cost of insurance is something a lot of people complain about. It will also keep a lot of people at work rather than at home suffering from the results of an accident and having to ask for assistance from either Government or some other agency.

In conclusion, the Hon. Member for Crowfoot (Mr. Malone) deserves the hearty congratulations of all Members of this House. I urge the Department officials and the Minister of Transport (Mr. Crosbie) to move quickly on this motion.

**Mr. Les Benjamin (Regina West):** Mr. Speaker, I just want to say to my hon. friend that we think this motion is fine, although it is slightly deficient. However, on the assumption that the House will pass the motion, it will be incumbent upon the Government to bring in appropriate legislation.

I also want to say to my friend who just finished speaking, the Hon. Member for Saskatoon East (Mr. Ravis), that as usual Saskatchewan led the way. We are still working on getting Alberta to do something about seat-belts, however.

Let me point out where the motion is slightly deficient. My good friend, the Hon. Member for Edmonton East (Mr. Lesick), pointed out that 20 years ago he flicked his lights on when he drove into Saskatchewan to remind oncoming motorists that their lights were on. It is about that far back that we started a campaign which said at dawn and dusk put your lights on and leave them on. That is when the lights on campaign started. However, while there was no problem in putting the lights on, the towing companies and cab drivers were really happy about boosting batteries because you forgot to shut them off. The motion says, "—would cause headlights to be turned on whenever the motor vehicle is in operation". My hon. friend, the Member for Crowfoot (Mr. Malone), should have added "—and automatically turns them off when a vehicle is no longer in operation". The technology has been available for years to do that. As long as four or five years ago you could order the special equipment to do that. We agree that that should be standard in every vehicle manufactured in Canada or imported into Canada. There is no argument on that score.

• (1740)

The Parliamentary Secretary and I have been working for some time on getting into place a national highway code and a board with representatives from the provinces, the territories and the federal Government. The code and the board would deal with driver training, qualifications, vehicle standards, maintenance and repair. As my good friend, the Member for Winnipeg North (Mr. Orlikow), so aptly pointed out, if a driver who has been on No-Doze pills for eight, 10, or 12 hours finally zonks out, it does not matter a damn whether his lights are on, he will be in the ditch or will have run into somebody else. All these other things must be put in place at the same time.

I hope the Government will agree to withhold proclamation of the legislation currently before the House until all these other measures are in place. We must have the inspectors, the training, the board and everything else in place before we start messing around with other parts of transportation law. It is a given that those things should be in place first, because it is unanimous among all Parties that safety takes priority over everything else, even if it increases the cost of transportation. The public agrees that safety takes priority and that if it increases the cost modestly for every one of us, so be it. This is just one of several dozen steps which must be taken.