LEGISLATIVE ASSEMBLY
FOR THE AUSTRALIAN CAPITAL TERRITORY

STANDING COMMITTEE ON PLANNING, TRANSPORT AND CITY SERVICES
Jo Clay MLA (Chair), Suzanne Orr MLA (Deputy), Mark Parton MLA

Submission No 6 - Ms Sharyn Foo

Inquiry into the Road Transport (Safety and Traffic

Management) Amendment Bill 2021 (No 2)

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Sharyn Foo

To whom it may concern,

I would like to indicate my support for the Road Transport (Safety and Traffic Management) Amendment Bill 2021 (No 2).

As a frequent cyclist along Canberra's beautiful roads and streets, I would like to raise a point of concern regarding distracted drivers on the roads. I love commuting on my bicycle where possible as the ACT offers many perks with its well-maintained build paths and lovely greenspaces spanning across the region.

However, I have yet to become equally encouraged to cycle on the main roads, especially during the busier times of day.

My concern stems largely from a lack of confidence in navigating around car drivers here while travelling at speed. In particular, drivers that do not signal in time (if at all) and drivers that are distracted by hand-held mobile devices. I have often encountered situations where these two issues are interrelated. For example, I had a near miss at a roundabout in a local suburb when a driver, distracted on their phone, failed to signal into a turn. I have already been through one traumatic cycling incident that resulted in a broken arm. I do not need another.

Distracted drivers are a significant hazard to all road users. Negligence can and has already caused great harm in the past. While modern cars now have more in-built road-safety functions (e.g., such as proximity warnings), the driver still maintains agency and control over the vehicle. Prevention of harm is still better than reparation.

I believe that increasing the fines for negligent/distracted driving is warranted for more effective deterrence and penalty, one that would make roads safer for vulnerable road users in the ACT. Therefore, I support the amendment in question.

Yours sincerely,
Sharyn Foo