



DE16-44

## Regina City Council Delegation – Monday, April 25, 2016

### RE: Motion for School Zone Speed Reduction & Committee Creation

Good evening ladies and gentlemen, my name is Chad Novak, and I am here representing the **Saskatchewan Taxpayers Advocacy Group**, which is a grassroots organization proudly standing up for the rights of individual taxpayers. I am here to address the motion proposed by Councillor O'Donnell on the desire to create a committee to review current speed, signage, parking and crosswalks in School Zones. If there is more to this motion, I cannot speak to it, as the City Clerk's office refused to provide any further background on this proposed motion until Friday afternoon.

I think the general idea of forming a committee can be a very good thing for our community, as long as it has a clear mandate and involves a wide variety of perspectives. With that being said, I feel it is essential that representatives from Community Associations, Parents, and the general public are invited and strongly encouraged to be a part of this proposed committee. Having the limited perspective from the City, Police and School Boards doesn't really help the average taxpayer because it doesn't give them an opportunity to have their voices heard at the table, on these very important social issues that can impact them on a daily basis.

In regards to the concerns for speeding in School Zones in particular, I think it's very misleading to only go on the broad statistics of the number of tickets issued by photo radar. Without seeing the detailed reports, we can only go off of what's been published in the media, and direct commentary from citizens that have been impacted personally. I have heard several complaints of people receiving photo radar tickets for going only 3-5 km/h over the 40km/h speed limit in School Zones. To me, this is a prime example of photo radar being a money grab and nothing more.

We need to revisit the whole concept of School Zones, and their ultimate goal. What is more important, that drivers slow down and pay attention to their surroundings, and more importantly our children, or that they make sure they are strictly staying below that magical 40km/h mark? My money is on the former. I would also go so far as to suggest that the majority of residents feel the same way.

In regards to reducing the speed limit in School Zones to 30km/h, I would like to see solid proof that this has any measurable impact on the safety of children, before it is even considered as an option. A collision at 30km/h and 40km/h result in similar severity of injuries, and it is more to the point that we are trying to prevent drivers going through these zones at 50km/h or above. After all, ***it's distracted drivers and drivers dramatically exceeding the posted speed limit that are a danger to us all on the road***, not just children in School Zones. Believe it or not, there are actually studies that even suggest lowering the speed limits dramatically can increase the danger to pedestrians.

I think in the end, the ultimate goal is pedestrian safety. We must keep this in mind when imposing any kind of new bylaws, legislation or enforcement action. I have found, personally, the most effective form of speed control has been used on Dewdney Avenue by Luther College, and on Albert Street by the Regina Christian School, where the School Zones are only in effect when the lights are flashing, which is when the students are expected to be crossing the street. Having zones in effect up to 24 hours a day only helps to make drivers less cognisant of the dangers that they pose by not slowing down and paying attention to their surroundings, even moreso than usual.

Finally, on the topic of photo radar – I am fine with the use of these enforcement tools as long as they are used appropriately. However, I don't see any benefit to fining people for doing *anything under 50km/h*, as if they are doing under 50km/h, it should be obvious that they are at least making an attempt at slowing down and paying attention to their surroundings, which is the ultimate goal of School Zones in the first place.

Thank you for your time this evening, and I will gladly answer any questions you may have.