



September 1, 2021

***Justin Trudeau, Leader of the Liberal Party of Canada;
Erin O'Toole, Leader of the Conservative Party of Canada;
Jagmeet Singh, Leader of the New Democratic Party;
Annamie Paul, Leader of the Green Party of Canada***

RE: Street Safety in Toronto

August 20, 2021 – the day that 18-year-old Miguel Joshua Escanan lost his life at Avenue Road and Bloor Street in Toronto. He was cycling north on Avenue Road and where the protected bike lane ends he was struck by a cement truck passing him in the curb lane. According to his mother he wasn't an experienced cyclist but he enjoyed getting out on his bike.

Miguel's death adds to the climbing toll of cyclists and pedestrians who are losing their lives on Canada's roads, a direct result of a lack of action to create protected bike lanes on major roads, and to regulate and ensure safer trucks on city streets.

FONTRA, on behalf of the named signatories listed, forwarded a letter to the City of Toronto, the Province of Ontario and the Federal government, two years ago when a pedestrian was struck and killed by a construction truck near Yonge and Eglinton.

We are writing to you as leaders of the major Federal political parties, to request that you urgently make safe active transportation a key priority in each of your 2021 Election platforms, including:

- 1. Funding: Require safe and easy access for active transportation with all infrastructure funding;**
 - All infrastructure funding must require accommodation for active transportation. Any road, bridge, transit project, park, or building that receives federal funding must include designs that allow for safe and easy access for active transportation.

- 2. Zero-emission vehicle incentive: Include cycling in zero-emission vehicle incentive programs;**
 - Bicycles must be included in the Incentives for Zero-Emission Vehicles (iZEV) program which offers up to \$5,000 toward a new vehicle. Canada does not have a zero-emission electricity grid to charge batteries; at this point, bicycles are the only

zero-emission vehicles after production.

3. Active transportation commuting incentive: Create incentives for commuters who use active transportation;

- Tax deductions must be given to people using active transportation in the same way you can deduct public transportation. Walking and biking to work provides a net benefit to the community, and reduces wear on infrastructure while increasing reliability of commute times for others. This should be incentivized and can be a way to make living close to work more affordable.

4. Safer Trucks: Develop safety standards for trucks and mandate safer trucks on Canada's roads.

- An [outsized percentage of street fatalities are caused by heavy vehicles and trucks](#); the most dangerous ones have enormous blind spots, poor handling, and negligible safety technology and equipment. Although many safety features are now mandatory for large vehicles in European jurisdictions, truck design in Canada has barely changed in 50 years; the heaviest and most dangerous vehicles are virtually identical to vehicles from the 1960s.

Fortunately, modern technology exists to dramatically improve safety of these vehicles: side guards to prevent people from being sucked under rear wheels, cameras and sensor systems, and high visibility cabs that eliminate blind spots.

Requiring safer trucks can be implemented federally, provincially and municipally. For example, London UK has banned the least safe heavy trucks from the city, and in coming years will increasingly raise standards so only heavy trucks with moderate or better safety ratings can enter. This video describes what the London system requires: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=i-P20wdrcAQ&t=2s>. Several cities in the US, including Washington DC, [now require side guards on heavy duty trucks](#). And European vehicle standards [require all vehicles to be designed for pedestrian and cyclist safety](#).



Left: 1970s cement truck. Middle: Typical late 2010s low-visibility truck, soon to be banned in London UK. Right: Modern truck with high-visibility cabin, camera sensor systems, & side guards.

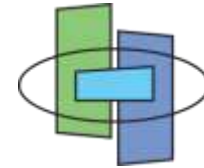
Please let's not let Miguel's death become just another statistic. Let's take this time to not only reflect on his passing but to bring about positive change to the city.

Respectfully submitted by the Federation of North Toronto Residents Associations
(Geoff Kettel and Cathie Macdonald Co-Chairs) with the support and assistance of the below

organizations (which have endorsed this position statement).



Business Improvement Area



**The Republic
Residents Association**



Cycle Toronto Midtown
Ward 8 & 12 Advocacy Group

