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Association



Land Transport (Vehicle User Safety) Amendment Bill

NZAA submission

The New Zealand Automobile Association Incorporated

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NEW ZEALAND

31 May 2017

SUBMISSION TO: Transport and Industrial Relations Select Committee

REGARDING: **Land Transport (Vehicle User Safety) Amendment Bill**

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ATTENTION: Committee Secretariat

ADDRESS: Transport and Industrial Relations
Select Committee Services
Parliament Buildings
Wellington 6160

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NOTE TO REQUESTOR

The NZ Automobile Association does not wish to present this submission orally.

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Background on the New Zealand Automobile Association

The NZ Automobile Association (NZAA) is an incorporated society with 1.5 million Members. Originally founded in 1903 as an automobile users advocacy group today it represents the interests of road users who collectively pay over \$2 billion in taxes each year through fuel excise, road user charges, registration fees, ACC levies, and GST. The NZAA's advocacy and policy work mainly focuses on protecting the freedom of choice and rights of motorists, keeping the cost of motoring fair and reasonable, and enhancing the safety of all road users.

AA submission

The NZAA fully supports the proposed Bill.

The NZAA believes that vehicle window washers can be intimidating to motorists when soliciting for money, create a nuisance to road users and can obstruct traffic. They also pose a safety hazard by typically operating at busy, often multi-lane, controlled intersections, and will often be on the road when traffic signals change. This obstructive behaviour may delay vehicles moving off, which has a flow-on negative impact on smooth traffic flows and congestion, but also risks injury to themselves if they are not fully aware of the traffic around them. This is unsafe behaviour and should be discouraged.

The NZAA believes these are good grounds to introduce an offence for such behaviour, and therefore we endorse the intent of the proposed Bill and urge that it be adopted.

Regarding the alleged service that window washers provide, the NZAA says there is no need, nor market demand, for such services.

Virtually all cars, except vintage cars, have their own inbuilt windscreen washers (a mandatory requirement in NZ since 1992, but commonly fitted for decades prior), the operation of which is checked at the mandatory Warrant of Fitness. If a windscreen is dirty or if visibility is compromised by dirt or other contaminants, the driver can clean it themselves while in motion.

If for some reason this is inadequate, or non-functional, or the windscreen is smeared, then the driver can manually clean the windscreen at a service station with a brush and detergent. These are commonplace and will be known to drivers in the city centres within which window washers solicit. Window washing equipment at service stations is free to use and does not oblige drivers to purchase fuel or any other products.

Given these free options, the NZAA contends that vehicle window washers provide no service that motorists require or that cannot be readily supplied by other means at no cost.

However, the NZAA is conscious that such offending could tie up the justice system for repeat offenders and those that do not pay their infringements, and that in some cases the Bill would simply be providing a pathway into the criminal justice system for low-level offenders. The design and implementation of the Bill needs to take this into account to ensure that it does not create more problems than it solves, for example by providing an alternative punishment to fines such as a community justice panel or educational diversion.