

Media Release

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You can't trust Ed Stelmach on auto insurance PC government willing to go to great lengths to serve the needs of the insurance industry in discriminating against victims

Edmonton – Today it was revealed that the PC government had a secret plan to discriminate against accident victims all the way to the Supreme Court of Canada.

And if the \$4,000 soft-tissue injury cap was struck down there, the tired PC government was just going to continue discriminating, according to [court documents reported in the Edmonton Journal today](#).

“This government seems prepared to put themselves above the law and the constitution,” Alberta Liberal Leader Kevin Taft said. “It is actually frightening to think that any government would ram through legislation knowing that it is probably unconstitutional, and if the court finds it is, they will simply find ways to work around people’s Charter rights.”

In 2006, Alberta’s superintendent of insurance, Dennis Gartner, told the Alberta Insurance Rate Board: “If the court, at whatever level, or even the ultimate level, considers the [soft-tissue cap] to be unconstitutional, that won’t be the final answer.”

Gartner said the government intended to readjust the cap after being struck down in order to “protect the benefits,” The Edmonton Journal reported.

Yesterday, the PC government made an application, side-by-side with the Insurance Bureau of Canada, to reinstate the compensation cap to protect the industry’s massive profit margin. The Court of Queen’s Bench ruled the cap violated the constitutional rights of Albertans two weeks earlier.

“Is this what Ed Stelmach means when he says he represents ‘change from within?’ They aren’t even making a half-hearted attempt to protect the legal rights of victims. They are moving aggressively to deny justice,” said Edmonton-Rutherford Alberta Liberal candidate Rick Miller, and shadow minister of finance in the last Legislature. “This government was told firmly by the courts that they had an obligation to treat all victims fairly and uphold the public interest, and the first thing they do is go back into court with the insurance industry by their side to try to reimpose the cap.”

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It's time.
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PC Leader Ed Stelmach warned the court decision would result in big increases in premiums for Alberta drivers, after the insurance industry initially made the threat.

The Alberta Liberals have an immediate action plan in place that would reform the Automobile Insurance Rate Board to include more consumer representatives, disallow politically connected appointees, and force it to hold more public forums. Out of nine current board members, only one represents consumers. The board's current chairman, Alf Savage, is a former president of the Alberta PC Party.

The Alberta Liberals will force the insurance industry to freeze premiums for a year while it sorts out the PC mess left by its illegal move to cap soft-tissue injury claims.

It's time for a change to get the job done right.

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