

More Changes

RIGHT SIDE OF THE LAW

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Yes, the government is proposing changing the auto insurance law again. Don't be shocked, but those changes will benefit insurance companies again.

Now that you are over the initial shock, I will tell you how this will affect you. I know most of you do not care about the changes and will kick and scream that I am a self-interested ambulance chaser against insurance companies. For these particular changes, you would be wrong. I will still get paid; it is the victim who will suffer.

Without further ado, here are some of the proposed changes that will adversely affect you if you are in a car accident:

1. The prejudgment interest rate for pain and suffering will change from the current 5% to 1.3%. Why is this bad? Simple -- this will give the insurance company incentive to delay matters further. With the backlog in the system, it is now two to four years to resolve a case. Insurance companies will keep your money longer and earn more interest on your money. So settling early will

provide no advantage for the insurers.

2. They are not allowing you to sue your own insurer anymore. If your insurer arbitrarily and unfairly cuts off your benefits, you can only go through an administrative panel. No more jury or judge, and no more claims for punitive damages. Basically, you can't penalize them for acting badly.

Adam Wagman, chairman of the Access to Justice Committee for the Ontario Trial Lawyers Association, states: "People need to know that this government is taking away the rights of accident victims in order to put more money in the pockets of insurance companies. With all the rights and benefits they have taken away from people for the last four years, enough is enough."

Can we vote for someone, anyone, who doesn't pander to big insurance? ■

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