

# 5.7

Jan. 15 /13

Dear Mayor and Members of Council:

Subject: Correspondence for Jan. 23 /13 Council Meeting  
Regarding: Accessibility for Ontarians Disability Act (AODA)  
Part IV – Transportation Standards

I am pleased that during the council meeting of Dec. 12 /12 a motion was carried to defer the previous decision to eliminate the current “voluntary pay” policy of the Hamilton Street Railway (HSR).

As council is now aware, Item 46. (1) of the AODA states that “no conventional service provider shall charge a higher fare to a person with a disability than the fare that is charged to a person without a disability where the person with a disability uses conventional transportation services, but a conventional transportation service provider may charge a lesser fare for a person with a disability”.

For many disabled persons living in Hamilton their sole means of support is through the Ontario Disability Support Program (ODSP). The proposed elimination of the “voluntary pay” policy of the HSR means that for a person on ODSP, the cost to ride the HSR over the course of a year, if they are unable to afford all or part of the fare, can exceed a single month’s income. This added financial stress means that many disabled persons living in Hamilton will be further marginalized by their inability to be part of their community whether it be vocationally, socially, or recreationally. Furthermore, in the Recreational Needs Assessment for Persons with Disabilities prepared in Oct. /12, more accessible and affordable transportation was identified as a strategy or solution to mitigate gaps and barriers in the participation in recreational programs and activities for persons with disabilities.

Moving forward, I ask that Council seriously consider the effect that the elimination of the “voluntary pay” policy on the HSR would have on its disabled persons living in Hamilton.

Respectfully,

Cathy Ivanski