

## Call Your MP

Do you know what the national highways system (NHS) is? Essentially, it is the Trans-Canada Highway coast to coast, to which other highways considered significant to Canada's economic and recreational priorities, are linked.

In Manitoba's case, the NHS components consist of the Trans-Canada Highway #1, the Yellowhead Highway #16, Highway # 75 to Emerson and the perimeter highway around Winnipeg. Although Manitoba's provincial highways system consists of some 18,000 kilometres, the NHS represents a very small fraction of the total but carries the substantial majority of all commercial and recreational traffic.

Did you know that the federal and provincial governments have agreed to all aspects of the NHS? They agree it needs an investment of \$17.4 billion – government statistics not mine. They know that the investment would save millions of litres of gas annually and therefore help minimize greenhouse gas emissions. They know it would save thousands of lives annually and hundreds of millions of dollars in healthcare costs and property losses. The federal government acknowledges these facts, but is it doing anything about it? You be the judge.

The NHS needs \$17.4 billion. Ottawa collects \$5 billion in gas taxes from us annually – that's 5000 million dollars! Yet the federal government plans to invest only \$150 million of that \$5 billion on an annual basis and only over the next four years. Do I hear the word "pathetic" from all of you? I hope so, because 4 million Canadian jobs and billions in trade depend on the NHS being efficient. More importantly an unsafe highway puts you and your family's lives at risk.

Angry? Call your Member of Parliament and let them know the national highways system needs their attention and needs national investment - now.