



# RESTORE SENSIBLE HIGHWAY SPEED LIMITS

## A FREEDOM PARTY OF ONTARIO 2011 ELECTION PLANK

In 1973/74, Arab oil-producing countries attempted to change the foreign policy of numerous other countries with respect to their position on the Arab-Israeli conflict. Oil producing nations dramatically increased the price of oil to pro-Israeli countries, and reduced oil-production. In response, the U.S.A. and other countries introduced measures to ration gasoline.

Given the state of technology in the vehicles used in 1974, it was believed that reducing the speed at which vehicles travelled would result in less fuel consumption. So in 1974, as one of the several measures taken to ration gasoline, U.S. President Richard Nixon introduced an emergency maximum U.S. speed limit of 55 miles per hour (M.P.H.).

The U.S. pressured Canada to follow suit. On February 1, 1976, Ontario's Progressive Conservatives obliged: they reduced the speed limit on Ontario's 400-series highways from 70 M.P.H. (approximately 113 kilometres per hour) down to 60 M.P.H. (which was later switched to 100 km/h when the metric system was introduced).

driving 113 km/h or more were suddenly considered traffic violators for doing exactly what they had done lawfully, one day prior. In effect, Ontario drivers began being fined not for driving dangerously, but for undermining a governmental effort to ration gasoline; for undermining a governmental effort to cope with an Arab bid to turn western foreign policy against Israel.

The Arab oil-producing countries eventually discovered that their bid to change western foreign policy using the "oil weapon" had failed. On November 28, 1995, the U.S. national emergency speed limit legislation was repealed. As a result, speed limits on many U.S. highways were raised to their original values. Meanwhile, in Ontario, the old Progressive Conservative speed limit remains in place at 100 km/h.

**A Freedom government will change the speed limit to 120 km/h on Ontario's 400-series highways.**



Top of Toronto Star Front Page, November 18, 1975

Today's reality demonstrates that reducing the speed limit did not cause people to slow down. To this very day, on long stretches of 400 series highways, traffic normally moves along at approximately 120 km/h. The *real* effect of decreasing speed limits was to increase government revenues: within a month after the speed limit was reduced, the Toronto Star reported that the number of speeding tickets issued by police had jumped by 45%. A population used to

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