



NOV 25 2003

Chuck Blanaru
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Dear Mr. Blanaru:

Thank you for your August 7, 2003 letter and the update on the issue of bodychecking in hockey. I apologize for the delay in responding.

This issue is certainly a contentious one for Hockey Canada and its provincial association, particularly when, as you have indicated in your letter, existing scientific data is brought up against highly-charged emotions and traditions in hockey.

While self-governing bodies do have the right to set their own regulations and thresholds, I agree that governments have a responsibility to consider the impact of these decisions on public safety, particularly with respect to children and youth. To this end, I will follow up with my provincial counterparts on the appropriate next steps to take in this matter. As well, I have instructed staff in the Sport and Physical Activity Branch to meet with the British Columbia Injury Research and Prevention Unit to discuss this issue in more depth.

Thank you again for taking the time to share your work in this area with me.

Sincerely,

George Abbott
Minister