

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE
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**MOOSE CLASS ACTION:
ACT OF GOVERNMENT, NOT ACT OF GOD**

Two drivers who suffered paralyzing injuries in moose vehicle accidents have announced a class action against the Government of Newfoundland and Labrador.

Hugh George suffered a brain injury and remains in intensive rehabilitation after his accident on the Placentia Access Road near St. John's last July. Mr. George attended a press conference in St. John's Tuesday.

Ben Bellows collided with a moose near Clarenville in 2003, and was hospitalized with a broken neck. He is paralyzed from the neck down. Mr. Bellows resides near Corner Brook.

Lawyer Ches Crosbie told reporters the goal of the suit is a 50% or greater reduction in moose vehicle collisions within 5 years. "The government wants us to believe moose vehicle collisions on the highways are an act of God or nature," he said. "They're an act of government."

Mr. Crosbie stated that the government has allowed moose densities to exceed ecological standards by five to ten times, and more moose in the woods means more moose on the roads. Relying on studies conducted together with the provincial government, Parks Canada has decided to reduce the moose population in Gros Morne National Park by 80% or 4,000 animals, but government is doing nothing, he said. "The government also refuses to implement proven safety practices such as moose fencing".

Court papers were served on government yesterday.

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