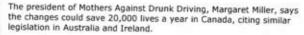
## Government proposes random breathalyzer tests

CTV.ca News Staff

The federal government is considering tough new legislation that would allow police to perform random breathalyzer

police to perform random breathalyzer tests on drivers, whether they suspect the person has been drinking or not.



Currently, police officers must have reasonable suspicion, such as seeing reckless driving or smelling alcohol on a driver's breath, before administering a breathalyzer. The new legislation would bypass those requirements.

"The real reason (for the law) . . . is to reduce impaired driving. We know that only one in a thousand people out there is apprehended by the police," Conservative MP Rick Norlock said.

The legislation appears to have all-party support, but there are concerns that the law might not survive a court challenge.

David Eby, the executive cirector of the B.C. Civil Liberties Association, expressed worry about automatic testing from police.

"Canadians generally have a feeling that the Charter of Rights and Freedoms is a good thing, that being free from arbitrary search and detention at the whim of a police officer is a good thing," he said.

And the Canadian Bar Association warns of overcrowding Canada's already crowded courts,

"I think that (this) is a major concern as impaired driving cases right now take up a disproportionate amount of court time (and) they are difficult to prosecute," Eric Gottardi, of the CBA's National Criminal Justice Section, said.

But politicians aren't buying that argument.

