



THE TRUCK SAFETY BULLETIN

June 2017

The Truck Safety Coalition (TSC) is a partnership between **The Citizens for Reliable and Safe Highways (CRASH) Foundation**, and **Parents Against Tired Truckers (PATT)**. The Truck Safety Coalition is dedicated to reducing the number of deaths and injuries caused by truck-related crashes, providing compassionate support to truck crash survivors and families of truck crash victims, and educating the public, policy-makers and media about truck safety issues.

Families and Survivors from Nearly 20 States Join in D.C. for Sorrow to Strength Conference



The Truck Safety Coalition (TSC) held its biennial Sorrow to Strength Conference from April 29 – May 3. In attendance were over 65 family members and friends of truck crash victims, and truck crash survivors.

The first two days consisted of workshops focused on coping with grief, learning about various truck safety issues, preparing to go to the Hill and advocating, and using social media to educate and communicate to others about truck safety. Old friends had the chance to catch up and to meet new families and survivors who attended Sorrow to Strength for their first time.

Over the next two days, volunteers met with Members of Congress, their staffs, officials at the Department of Transportation, and trucking interest groups.

These meetings went well, with several offices expressing interest in sponsoring truck safety legislation.

We then had a press conference on Tuesday morning where our speakers shared their personal stories of why they were fighting for stronger truck safety. The speakers highlighted the different truck safety regulations that the European Union has implemented compared to the U.S., as well as the drastically different safety trends. TSC also released a ranking comparing the truck crash fatality rates across the 50 states.

Natalie Sanders spoke about automatic emergency braking and losing the love of her life, Brian.

Laurie Higginbotham remembered her son, Michael, and spoke of the need for enhanced underride protections.

Steve Owings discussed the dire need for speed limiters on large trucks, which he has been pushing for more than a decade following the death of his son, Cullum.

Peter and Monica Malarczyk talked about their crash and the consequent loss of their parents as well as the need for entry-level driver training.

Lee Jackson, a retired law enforcement officer and crash reconstructionist, warned about the dangers of longer and heavier trucks.

To watch the press conference, [click here](#).

Our next event is the second Underride Roundtable on Aug 29, which we will be co-sponsoring.



Senate Minority Leader Chuck Schumer (D-NY) speaks with TSC about how a truck crash affected his life



Sen. Tim Scott (R-SC) meets with South Carolina volunteers to discuss their loved ones



Rep. Rick Larsen (D-WA) accepts the Truck Safety award for his dedication to making trucking safer



CRASH and PATT board members thank Rep. Tim Ryan (D-OH) for his leadership on truck safety issues



Sen. Cruz (R-TX) meets with his constituent to talk about her crash



TSC volunteers thank Rep. Eleanor Holmes Norton (D-DC) for her leadership on a wide array of truck safety issues



Rep. Cartwright (D-PA) receives the Truck Safety Legacy Award for his continued efforts on increasing minimum insurance

Side Underride Guard Successfully Prevents Underride Crash

ARLINGTON, VA (May 10, 2017) – The Truck Safety Coalition’s Underride Initiative, consisting of families of truck underride crash victims and survivors, is extremely pleased with the results of a recent crash test conducted by the Insurance Institute for Highway Safety (IIHS) that assessed a side underride guard for the first time ever.

The IIHS conducted two tests of a midsize car traveling at 35 mph colliding with the center of a 53-foot-long dry van at a 90-degree angle – the most difficult type of side underride collision to prevent. In one scenario, the trailer was equipped with a fiberglass side skirt intended only to improve aerodynamics, which did nothing to prevent the car from riding underneath the trailer. The car was decimated, the roof sheared, and any passengers would have been killed.

In the other scenario, the trailer was equipped with an AngelWing Side Underride protection device –manufactured by Airflow Deflector Inc. Instead of riding under the trailer and allowing for passenger compartment intrusion, this innovative side underride guard allowed the car’s airbags to deploy and its crumple zone to help diffuse the kinetic energy transferred upon impact. These safety features have been rendered ineffective in the past due to the lack of crash compatibility between cars and the sides of trailers.

With more than 2,000 passenger vehicle occupants killed in two-vehicle crashes in which the passenger vehicle strikes the side of the tractor-trailer between 2009 and 2015, there is a clear need to address this fatal problem. It should also be noted that the aforementioned fatality figure greatly underestimates the true extent of people killed in side underride crashes as it does not include crashes involving bicyclists and pedestrians, multi-vehicle crashes, and any crash that happened in a jurisdiction that does not record whether underride occurred.

At a time when truck crash injuries and deaths continue to climb, up 57 percent and 20 percent respectively between 2009 and 2015, the industry and regulators should share our sense of urgency to reverse these trends. We need more innovation, action, and collaboration.

When we do work together, like at the first ever Truck Underride Roundtable, we can make real advances in truck safety. In fact, that meeting of industry leaders, government officials, and safety advocates helped lead to the creation of this side underride guard that successfully prevented a side underride crash at 35 mph.

This side underride guard would have made a big difference in many of our lives, and we are proud that our advocacy will help prevent others from sustaining a major injury or losing a loved one in a side underride crash. We call on our Members of Congress and federal regulators to ensure that this technology is fully adopted by the trucking industry by requiring all trailers to be equipped with side underride guards.

Please click here to see a video of the side underride crash test: https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=7xxJr_hApYk

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TSC Needs Your Help to Support the UNDER Act

Too many people are killed or injured in truck underride crashes each year. Yet, the National Highway Traffic Safety Administration (NHTSA) has allowed the problem to continue unabated despite evidence that there are solutions available (see above). Strengthening the woefully weak standard for rear underride guards and requiring side and front underride guards on all truck trailers will prevent injuries and save lives. This is why the Truck Safety Coalition hopes you will join us in fully supporting the **Upgrading National Design for Effective Rear and Side Guards Act (UNDER Act of 2017)**.

Summary of the UNDER Act:

Section 1: Title Upgrading National Design for Effective Rear and Side Guards Act” or the “UNDER Act of 2017.

Section 2: Findings and Purposes Cites previous recommendations from the National Transportation Safety Board on the use of underride guards and honors the victims of underride crashes.

Section 3: Definitions Includes all required definitions.

Section 4: Rear-Underride Guard Rulemaking: Requires final rule within 1 year requiring rear-underride guards, performance standard that meets IIHS testing, a retrofit requirement and a compliance date of 1 year after the publication of the final rule (2 year compliance date for retro-fit requirement).

Section 5: Side-Underride Guard Rulemaking Requires final rule within 2 years requiring side-underride guards, performance standard, a retrofit requirement and a compliance date of 1 year after the publication of the final rule (3 year compliance date for retro-fit requirement).

Section 6: Front-Underride Guard Rulemaking Requires research within 2 years on front-underride guards, final rule 1 year after completion of research, a retrofit requirement and a compliance date of 1 year after the publication of the final rule (3 year compliance date for retro-fit requirement).

Section 7: Maintenance of Underride Guards Requires truck owner or lessor to inspect guards after crash that impacts a guard. Requires that inspection of guards be included in Driver Vehicle Inspection Report

As we continue to work with Advocates for Highway and Auto Safety and our contacts on the Hill, we will update you on our next steps. In the meantime, please let us know if there are any victims or survivors of truck underride crashes whose names should be included in the text of the bill. Also, please let us know if you have any questions or would like to help advocating your Members of Congress to support this important legislation.

Meeting your Members of Congress

Now is more important than ever for as many of you as possible to meet with your Members of Congress to discuss truck safety issues when they are back in the district. There are several periods, usually around holidays and over the summer, when Members of Congress leave Washington, D.C. and return to their state/district.

If you are interested in setting up a meeting during a recess period, please let us know and we can assist you. A Congressional calendar can be found [here](#). To figure out when your Senators and Representative will be back in your community, we suggest signing up for any newsletters or alerts they have or clicking [here](#). You can also click here to see if there are any town halls or events hosted by your Member of Congress. Also, keep an eye out for events open to the public, such as meet and greets and town halls, which can allow you to meet your member without scheduling a formal meeting.

Top Five Reasons to Go to Town Halls

- 1. All Members of Congress Hold Town Halls**
- 2. The Media Covers Town Halls**
- 3. It is Easy**
- 4. You Never Know Who You Will Run Into**
- 5. They Work for You**

Donate

Please consider making a contribution, large or small, to help sustain our important efforts. As you see with the Sorrow to Strength conference and the upcoming Underride Roundtable, we are able to affect positive change and provide much needed support, but it can only happen with your assistance.

To make a donation please go to <http://trucksafety.org/get-involved/donate/>.

Join us on Social Media

If you have not already joined us online, please like us on [Facebook](#) and follow us on [Twitter](#). Social media is a huge part of our outreach strategy and we need all of you to help us.

If we post something on Facebook, please like the post and share it as well. If we tweet something on Twitter, please like and retweet it. Having all of you sharing our social media posts will make a difference in how we can expand the reach of our safety message.

If you would like to learn more about social media or need assistance signing up, please contact Harry Adler (hadler@trucksafety.org).