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To: Interested Parties

From: Celinda Lake and Joshua Ulibarri

Re: Americans Support Efforts to Increase Truck Safety on Our Highways,  
Oppose Efforts to Derail Progress

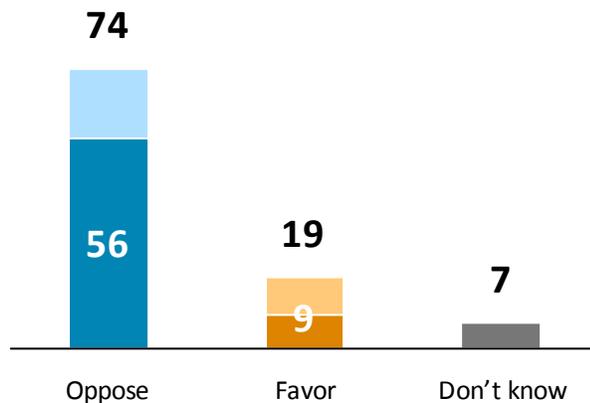
Date: April 28, 2011

***An overwhelming majority of Americans make safety a priority when it comes to driving on American roads and highways. They support revising the limit on driving hours to 10 hours per day for truck drivers and they oppose efforts that would allow heavier trucks on our roads.***

**A recent *Lake Research Partners* national survey<sup>i</sup> shows that 74% of Americans oppose the trucking industry's efforts to have Congress change the current law and allow heavier trucks on our roads<sup>ii</sup>.**

Notably, half of Americans strongly oppose the change. Support for allowing heavier trucks is shallow and weak with only 19% favoring the change overall and only 9% doing so with intensity. Opposition to heavier trucks is both broad and deep. Men oppose heavier trucks by 40 points (26% favor, 67% oppose) while women oppose the change by 67 points (13% favor, 80% oppose). Younger Americans oppose the change by 47 points and older Americans oppose it by 71 points. College graduates and non-graduates have similar feelings on this issue (they oppose by 57 and 55 points, respectively). This is not a partisan issue, with Republicans and Democrats opposing the change by 48 and 66 points, respectively, and independents by 45 points. Opposition does not drop below 50 points in any geographic region (using the 4-way Census split).

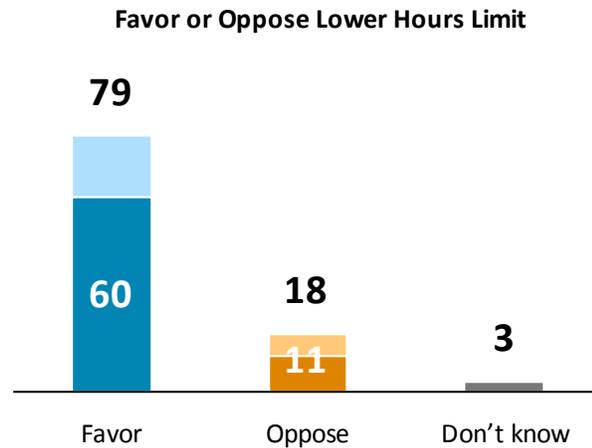
**Favor or Oppose Heavier Trucks**



**Not only do Americans oppose heavier trucks, but they also greatly oppose any suggestion that they should be responsible for paying for the increased damages heavier trucks do to our roads and highways<sup>iii</sup>.** Eighty-five percent of Americans oppose an increase in gas taxes in order to pay for damages that longer and heavier trucks may do to highways and roads, including three in four Americans (75%) who strongly oppose the idea. Only 12% of Americans favor the proposal. Opposition is broad and runs deep with overall opposition never dropping below 74%.

**Safety is a priority for Americans. They strongly support revising the limit on the number of consecutive hours a driver of large trucks can drive to 10 hours<sup>iv</sup>.** Eight in ten Americans (79%) favor the change under consideration, including 60% who strongly favor it. Only 18% of

Americans oppose the move. This is an issue that brings Americans together with women favoring the change by 70 points (83% favor, 14% oppose) and men by 50 points (74% favor, 24% oppose). Older and younger Americans favor the change (by 64 and 60 points, respectively) as do Republicans (53 points), Democrats (65 points) and independents (74 points). Americans in every region support the change including in the Northeast (67 points), the Midwest (57 points), the South (62 points) and the West (53 points).



**In sum, Americans prioritize safety and they oppose heavier trucks (and the costs that come with them), while favoring a revision in the number of consecutive hours a driver of big trucks can legally drive.** For more information on this survey, please contact John Lannen with The Truck Safety Coalition (703-294-6404) or Joshua Ulibarri with Lake Research Partners (202-776-9066).

<sup>i</sup> **Methodology:** Lake Research Partners designed this telephone survey and it was administered by CARAVAN® Opinion Research Corporation. The Truck Safety Coalition commissioned the questions. The survey was conducted among a national probability sample of 1,000 adults 18 years of age and older, living in private households in the continental United States. Interviewing was conducted April 7-10, 2011. The data has a margin of error of +/- 3.1 percentage points.

<sup>ii</sup> **Question Wording:** As you may know, Congress is debating laws impacting large truck safety on our highways. Each year about 4,000 people are killed as a result of crashes involving large trucks, also known as semis or tractor trailers. Right now, Federal law limits the size and weight of large trucks that are allowed on our Interstate highways and bridges to no more than eighty-thousand pounds. The trucking industry is lobbying Congress to change this law so that trucks can weigh up to one-hundred thousand pounds, as much as 20 percent more. Do you favor or oppose Congress changing the law and allowing trucks weighing as much as one-hundred thousand pounds on our Interstate highways and bridges?

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iii **Question Wording:** Currently, some of the gas taxes motorists pay at the pump are used to subsidize repairing the damage to our roads and bridges caused by large trucks. If trucks are allowed to become even longer and heavier, some people have said we may need to increase gas taxes by an additional 10 to 15 cents per gallon to pay for the increased damage that would result. Would you favor or oppose raising the gas taxes everyone pays at the pump in order to pay for the increased damage?

iv **Question Wording:** Government studies have found that driver fatigue is a factor in up to 40 percent of all fatal crashes involving large trucks. Currently drivers of large trucks can drive up to 11 consecutive hours every day, for a total of 77 hours in one week. The Federal government is considering revising the limit on driving hours to 10 hours per day, to reduce fatigue and increase safety. Do you favor or oppose this change?