

Statement of Robert Mills
Press Conference on the Safe Highways and Infrastructure Protection Act (SHIPA)
May 3, 2011
Washington, D.C.

Good morning. My name is Robert Mills and I serve as a Police Officer for the Fort Worth Texas Commercial Vehicle Enforcement program. I see first-hand the dangers of trucks not in compliance with safety regulations and drivers who exceed hours of service limits. Oversize and overweight trucks increase the severity of damage and injury during a crash. Heavier trucks also take longer to stop and are more prone to roll over.

Municipalities absolutely cannot handle the increased weight on their city streets. All trucks have to make deliveries. I have not seen a single delivery made on the highway – they have to get into the cities and towns. Our roads and bridges cannot handle additional weight and any increase would cost our cities money that frankly we don't have. That is why I support the Safe Highways and Infrastructure Preservation Act, also known as SHIPA, which will maintain current truck weight limits on our Interstates and freeze them on the National Highway System.

Another important issue is requiring Electronic On-Board Recorders, or EOBRs, in all trucks. The use of paper log books by truck drivers is like running a business with paper notebooks and no computers. These paper log books are so commonly falsified that they are known as "comic books." EOBRs would allow law enforcement to do our jobs more effectively and efficiently and get overly tired drivers off our roads.

It amazed me when a few weeks ago the nation was stunned when an air traffic controller fell asleep while on duty at Reagan National Airport. Even though the back-up system kicked in and thankfully potential crashes were avoided, people were outraged. Yet, this well-deserved concern for aviation travel safety does not ring the same alarms when it comes to motor carrier travel safety. It is a fact that everyday people die in truck crashes caused by overly tired truck drivers. And, it is past time for our country to "wake up", so to speak, and realize that these truck crashes can and must be prevented.

Thank you.