

**Remarks of Wanda Lindsay**  
**New Braunfels, TX**  
**Press Conference on the Safe Highways and Infrastructure Protection Act (SHIPA)**  
**May 7, 2013**  
**Washington, DC**

Good morning. My name is Wanda Lindsay. Three years ago today, my husband and I were rear-ended by a tractor trailer while we were stopped in a highway construction zone. We were the last car in two mile long line, and a sitting target for the truck that did not brake before it hit us. I lost consciousness and didn't see the complete destruction until I saw photos of the crash site. I was seriously injured, but I've recovered from some of my injuries. But I will never fully recover from losing John. My husband of nearly 46 years died from his extensive injuries two days after the crash.

Later, I learned that the truck driver had been diagnosed with severe, uncontrolled sleep apnea, a medical condition that causes chronic, debilitating fatigue, among other serious health issues. Yet, he was still allowed to get behind the wheel of an 80,000 pound weapon which plowed over our car, and five more, like an oversized bowling ball taking down pins.

Our crash was my introduction to sleep apnea, truck driver fatigue, and the many inherent dangers we encounter when we travel our nation's highways alongside large trucks. Truck drivers are allowed 11 hours a day behind the wheel, in a 14 hour work day. With such a physically punishing schedule, it's no wonder that that 65% of truck drivers report that they often or sometimes feel drowsy while driving and nearly half of truck drivers admit that they had actually fallen asleep while driving in the previous year.

We must take steps immediately to reduce the epidemic of truck driver fatigue. Nearly a year ago, my family and I celebrated the enactment of a law requiring electronic logging devices in trucks. Yet, the Department of Transportation has yet to issue a rule to actually get these lifesaving devices in trucks. Every day that passes, lives are being unnecessarily lost. We urge DOT to do its job and issue this final rule for electronic logging devices.

Congress must also reject special interest exemptions to Hours of Service regulations. They compromise safety, erode uniformity and weaken enforcement efforts. Not only are exemptions dangerous, but they also encourage the next industry to come knocking on the door to ask for theirs. Industry by industry, the exemptions will swallow the rule, imperiling all on the roads.

MAP-21 also requires an alcohol and controlled substances clearinghouse Expedited creation and careful oversight of this clearinghouse is essential, and we urge that it be expanded to include prescription drugs, particularly those that list drowsiness and fatigue as a side effect. To address the cause of my own crash, as well as many others, I urge the DOT to begin rulemaking for sleep apnea screening to ensure medical examiners are testing for and monitoring this widespread fatigue producing condition.

There is no way to bring back our loved ones, but there are ways to prevent others from dying and suffering debilitating injuries in truck crashes. Today, on the third anniversary of the crash that took my husband John, I urge Congress to require DOT to begin rulemaking for sleep apnea screening, and I urge all our elected officials to put safety before industry profit.

Thank you.