

UPDATE -- MEDIA ADVISORY

BREAKING NEWS - Transportation Research Board (TRB) Peer Review Committee Issues Report Condemning Methods Used in U.S. DOT Comprehensive Truck Size and Weight Study

Serious Concerns Raised by Safety Groups Validated – Report Exposes Significant Weaknesses which Will Render Study Results Inaccurate and Unreliable

WHAT: **NEWS CONFERENCE** – Serious concerns raised by safety groups and others about potential bias and data shortcuts in the conduct of the Comprehensive Truck Size and Weight Study (Study) required by MAP-21, the Moving Ahead for Progress in the 21st Century (Pub. L. 112-141), have been confirmed today by a newly-released report by the Transportation Research Board (TRB) Peer Review Committee. The report, *TRB First Report: Review of Desk Scans*, found that there are significant shortcomings in the study methodology which means the Study will not be able to predict the impact of large truck size and weight policy changes on safety, the environment and enforcement with a high degree of accuracy.

The purpose of the Truck Size and Weight Study was to gather objective data on the impact of longer, heavier trucks on safety and the infrastructure. The results of the Study will likely influence Congress about future policy on truck size and weight limits. Today's TRB Report reveals a short-circuiting of the Study process and critical flaws with the Study.

Tomorrow (Wednesday), a broad coalition of law enforcement, labor, victims and health and safety groups will join with U.S. Congressman Jim McGovern (D-MA) to oppose bigger, heavier trucks and discuss the on-going problems plaguing the U.S. DOT study. This comes at a critical time as Congress debates reauthorization of the multi-billion dollar bill that funds surface transportation programs.

Additionally, findings from a recently released report, *An Analysis of Truck Size and Weight Issues, Phase I – Safety*, will be publicly introduced for the first time. Conducted at Marshall University by the Multimodal Transportation and Infrastructure Consortium (MTIC), a University Transportation Center recognized by the U.S. Department of Transportation (DOT) Research and Innovative Technology Administration (RITA), this report found a higher fatal crash rate when double trailer trucks are involved in a crash as compared to single trailer trucks, and a significantly higher fatal crash rate for trucks with six or more axles, presumably the heaviest of trucks, as compared to those with five axles.

WHEN: **Wednesday, April 9, 2014 at 10 a.m.**

WHERE: **Cannon House Office Building, Room 421**

WHO: **U.S. Representative Jim McGovern (D-MA)**
Jacqueline Gillan, President, Advocates for Highway and Auto Safety (Emcee)
Georges Benjamin, MD Executive Director, American Public Health Association
James P. Hoffa, General President, International Brotherhood of Teamsters
Bruce Gower (Clyde, OH) Chief of Police
Mark Burton (Knoxville, TN) Director, Transportation Economics for the Center for Transportation Research, University of Tennessee
Joan Claybrook, Chair, Citizens for Reliable and Safe Highways and Former Administrator, NHTSA
Jennifer Tierney (Kernersville, NC) Board Member, Truck Safety Coalition and Safe Highways, and Member, Motor Carrier Safety Advisory Committee - Her father was killed in 1983 in a truck crash in North Carolina.

BACKGROUND: Truck crash fatalities and injuries have increased three years in a row. The number of fatalities has increased by 16 percent since 2009 from 3,380 to 3,921. The annual number of injured has increased by 40 percent during this time, from 74,000 to 104,000. In fatal crashes involving a large truck and a passenger vehicle, 98 percent of the deaths occur to car occupants.

Polls show a majority of the public does not want bigger trucks, nor do they want to pay for them. Overweight trucks accelerate the destruction of roads and bridges. One third of America's roads are in poor or mediocre condition and one fourth of our

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nation's bridges are structurally deficient or functionally obsolete. Increasing truck weights will make our roads more deadly and create an unfunded mandate of infrastructure repair and maintenance needs paid by taxpayers.

More information is available at www.trucksafety.org.

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