



ADVOCATES
for Highway & Auto Safety
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Truck Crash Victims and Labor and Safety Groups Urge Congress to Put Public Safety Before Industry Profit

Eliminating Truck Drivers' Weekend Off Will Result in Death, Devastation and Danger on our Roads

WASHINGTON, DC (Monday, December 8, 2014) – Today, families of truck crash victims and labor and safety groups joined U.S. Representative Jim McGovern (D-MA) on Capitol Hill to urge Congress to stop a special interest anti-safety provision being considered in the omnibus spending bill. This provision being pushed by Sen. Susan Collins (R-ME) would be a major change to federal truck safety regulations and dramatically increase the number of working and driving hours for truck drivers as well as repeal their two-day weekend off.

Joan Claybrook, Chair, Citizens for Reliable and Safe Highways (CRASH), said, “Christmas is still a few weeks away but Senator Collins already is working to wrap up and deliver an expensive gift for her trucking industry allies. She is trying to quietly slip language into the omnibus spending bill that will put trucking industry profits ahead of public safety. Her proposal will allow trucking industry executives to force truck drivers to get behind the wheel and work for more than 80 hours a week, double the 40-hour work week of most Americans. Unfortunately, this gift to industry will be paid for by the families across the country and tired truckers who will be put at unreasonable and unacceptable risk of death and injury on our highways.”

Teamsters Director of Federal Legislation and Regulation, Fred P. McLuckie, said, “As our General President Jim Hoffa aptly stated last week, Senator Collins should not be trying to use the Omnibus as a testing ground for policies that denigrate highway safety and put all the traveling public at greater risk.”

A recent survey conducted by Lake Research Partners shows that the public understands this industry-wide problem of fatigue and the dangers it poses to motorists. This survey found overwhelming public opposition (80%) to Congress raising the number of hours a semi-truck driver is allowed to work in a week. The American public convincingly rejects increasing work and driving hours for truck drivers no matter the political affiliation, age, sex or geographic location of the respondent.

Jacqueline Gillan, president of Advocates for Highway and Auto Safety, stated, “The Collins proposal to gut a key truck safety rule has not been the subject of a single House or Senate congressional hearing, undergone any comprehensive safety review or analysis by experts, or been part of an open rulemaking process for the public to provide their views and concerns. In sharp contrast, the deal-making is happening behind closed doors as Congress rushes to finish up legislative business. Let’s be clear. The American public opposes it as well as truck crash victims, safety and labor groups, law enforcement and the Secretary of Transportation doesn’t want it. We urge Congress to stop this assault on safety.”

Daphne Izer, of Maine and a founder of Parents Against Tired Truckers (PATT) stated, "It's outrageous that the Senator from my home state would try to attach this language to a must-pass spending bill. I'm also personally offended by Senator Collins's attack on Secretary Foxx for sending a letter to Congress urging retention of the evidence and research-based current rule. Secretary Foxx's objections are consistent with the DOT's mission to reduce fatalities and injuries and protect the driving public." Izer's 17-year-old son Jeff and three of his friends were killed on October 10, 1993, when a Walmart truck driver fell asleep behind the wheel.

Ron Wood, whose mother Betsy, sister Lisa and her three children, Chance (age 4), Brock (age 2) and Reid (6 weeks old), were killed near Sherman, Texas when a tractor trailer driver fell asleep behind the wheel and crossed a median into oncoming traffic, said, "I urge our Members of Congress to support their constituents, and prevent the dangerous Collins Amendment from progressing any further. A fatigue-related truck crash happens in a second. Grief and loss last a lifetime."

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