



Parents Against Tired Truckers and Citizens for Reliable and Safe Highways

Dangerous Driving: Speeding and Truck Driver Fatigue

Speeding:

- On average, more than 1,000 lives are lost annually to speeding Commercial Motor Vehicles (CMVs).
- Speeding (i.e., exceeding the speed limit or driving too fast for conditions) was a contributing factor in 7.5 percent of all reported large truck crashes in 2015.
- The Large Truck Crash Causation Study (LTCCS) reported that 22.9 percent of large trucks involved in all types of crashes, and 15.2 percent of large trucks involved in a two vehicle crash with a passenger car, were coded as traveling/driving too fast for conditions.

Fatigue:

- Truck driver fatigue has been recognized as a major safety concern and a contributing factor to fatal truck crashes for over 70 years.
- A study sponsored by the Federal Motor Carrier Safety Administration (FMCSA) found 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.
- In spite of the industry wide safety issue of truck driver fatigue, in 2003, the truck driver hours of service rule (HOS) was changed, increasing the number of hours a driver can be behind the wheel from 10 to 11 consecutive hours in a 14-hour work window.

Requiring Speed Limiters be Set on All Large Trucks –The Truck Safety Coalition (TSC) supports a rule requiring all large trucks with existing speed limiting technology to be capped at a maximum speed of 60 mph. This regulation is long overdue as speed limiters have been installed in most trucks since the 1990s. By limiting the speed of heavy vehicles to 60mph, the National Highway Traffic Safety Administration (NHTSA) estimates that 162 to 498 lives could be saved. Additionally, the FMCSA compared fleets that had speed limiters to fleets that did not, and they found that “trucks equipped with speed limiting devices had a statistically significant lower speed-limited-relevant crash rate compared to trucks without speed limiting devices.”

Implementation of Electronic Logging Devices (ELDs) –The Moving Ahead for Progress in the 21st Century Law, MAP-21 (P.L. 112-141) required FMCSA to issue a rule mandating ELDs in all commercial vehicles within one year, by July 2013. The final rule for ELDs was issued on December 16, 2015 and requires compliance starting on December 18, 2017. TSC looks forward to the full implementation of this rule and opposes any calls for delays or exemptions.

Preventing Exemptions to HOS Regulations – Exemptions to federal motor carrier safety regulations compromise safety, erode uniformity and weaken enforcement efforts. Safety is not unique to certain types of commercial motor vehicles, carriers, cargo or routes. Allowing industry-specific exemptions to safety regulations is not only dangerous, but it also sets an unsafe precedent for other industries to request similar exemptions. TSC opposes exemptions to HOS regulations through the legislative process for these reasons.

Assuring Truck Driver Fitness – TSC supports rulemaking for sleep apnea screening to ensure medical examiners are testing for and monitoring this fatigue related condition. We urge the review and regulation of legal Schedule II prescription drugs and/or use of any substance that impairs cognitive or motor ability.

Supporting Changes to Truck Driver Compensation – A large portion of the trucking industry is paid by the mile rather than by the hour. Truck drivers work nearly twice the hours in a normal workweek, for less pay than similar industries. As a result of their pay structure and because they are not paid for all hours worked, there is an incentive to drive longer and faster in order to increase their earnings. Paying truck drivers for every hour worked will promote safer trucking by removing incentives to dangerous driving behaviors.