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TRUCK CRASH VICTIMS, ADVOCATES URGE SAFETY AGENDA FOR INFRASTRUCTURE BILL

RANKING OF STATE TRUCK CRASH FATALITIES RELEASED

WASHINGTON, DC (May 2, 2017) Dozens of truck safety victims and their families joined together at the U.S. Capitol today to urge Congress to include truck safety provisions in any infrastructure legislation.

With nearly 4,000 fatalities and more than 100,000 injuries from truck crashes on our nation's highways each year, the [Truck Safety Coalition](#) and their volunteers urge lawmakers to consider truck safety mandates, such as crash avoidance technologies, side underride and front override guards, and speed limiters.

Natalie Sanders of Lexington, SC whose husband Brian was killed in 2015 on his way to work when a truck driver lost control of his rig, crossed the interstate median and collided into Brian's pick up truck said "According to NHTSA, requiring automatic emergency braking on commercial motor vehicles will save 70 lives and prevent nearly 3,500 serious injuries annually. For every year that this rule is delayed, some of those people killed will be folks just going on with their days like Brian."

"My son's death was preventable as are hundreds of deaths and many injuries every year caused by truck underride crashes. In the United States, while most trailers are required to have a rear underride guard, there are no requirements for side underride or front override guards," said Laurie Higginbotham of Memphis, TN. Laurie's son Michael, was killed in a truck side underride crash on November 18, 2014 when a truck driver was making an illegal U-turn across four lanes. Michael, unable to see the truck's trailer, did not slow down in time. His car lodged under the trailer, the airbags did not deploy, and police pronounced him dead at the scene.

Steve and Susan Owings of Atlanta co-founded Road Safe America after their son Cullum was killed in a truck crash returning to college after Thanksgiving. Their car was stopped in a traffic jam when a speeding tractor-trailer, using cruise control, came up behind the vehicle too fast and didn't stop. "Requiring speed limiters on all trucks is a commonsense and cost-effective solution will stop crashes, reduce injuries and save lives."

The Truck Safety Coalition today released a report ranking the states on truck crash fatalities for 2015, the most recent data available. The top ten worst states in order are: North Dakota, Wyoming, Oklahoma, Mississippi, Arkansas, South Carolina, Kansas, New Mexico, Nebraska, Alabama, followed by Texas, Iowa, Montana, Kentucky, Georgia, Indiana, Tennessee, Missouri, Idaho and Louisiana.

“Truck crash deaths and injuries are climbing unabated and the major jump in truck fatalities is especially alarming when compared to what is happening in Europe. While we are experiencing more carnage caused by truck crashes, the European Union has been on a downward trend,” said Joan Claybrook, Chair, Citizens for Reliable and Safe Highways and former Administrator, National Highway Traffic Safety Administration “According to a new report released today by the Truck Safety Coalition, between 2009 and 2014, truck crash deaths in the U.S. went up by 15 percent, while in the European Union they went down by nearly 25 percent.”

The biennial Sorrow to Strength conference brings families to Washington, DC for four days of remembrance, workshops and meetings with Members of Congress and U.S. Department of Transportation officials to advance truck safety.

Peter, and his sisters Monica and Natalie from Hastings-on-Hudson, NY, had their lives changed forever returning from a family ski trip in December 2015 when their parents were killed by an inexperienced truck driver driving against traffic. Peter’s sisters were so severely injured that they will have medical complications for the rest of their lives, but the minimum level of insurance required by trucks per incident has not changed since 1980. “We need our nation’s leaders to listen to what is happening on our roads and implement solutions to end this needless suffering.”

“As a police officer, I have seen many different crashes and those involving trucks are the most destructive and damaging. Increasing truck size and weight will lead to more crashes resulting in even more deaths and injuries,” said Lee Jackson, former Fort Worth, TX Police Officer and crash reconstructionist. “According to a 2013 study conducted by the Multimodal Transportation and Infrastructure Consortium, police officers nearly unanimously indicated that longer and heavier trucks would be more dangerous because the additional length and weight would add new factors to an already complicated chain of events.”

The Truck Safety Coalition is a partnership between Citizens for Reliable and Safe Highways (CRASH) and Parents Against Tired Truckers (PATT). The Truck Safety Coalition is dedicated to reducing the number of deaths and injuries caused by truck-related crashes, providing compassionate support to truck crash survivors and families of truck crash victims, and educating the public policy-makers and media about truck safety issues.

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