



Lake Snell Perry Mermin Meadow Gotoff Ulibarri

MEMORANDUM

Celinda C. Lake
President

To: Interested Parties

Alysia R. Snell
Partner

Fr: Lake Research Partners

Michael J. Perry
Partner

Re: Americans Oppose Relaxing Safety Standards that Allow Larger Trucks on U.S. Highways

David Mermin
Partner

Dt: May 1, 2009

Robert G. Meadow, Ph.D.
Partner

A majority of Americans opposes efforts by the trucking industry to relax safety standards and allow longer and heavier trucks on U.S. Highways. Opposition continues to be driven by their safety concerns as more than eight-in-ten adults believe trucks pulling two or more trailers are more dangerous than trucks pulling a single trailer.

Daniel R. Gotoff
Partner

A Lake Research Partners' national surveyⁱ shows, 57% of Americans oppose the trucking industry's efforts to have Congress change the current law and allow trucks that would carry heavier loads onto U.S. highways – 40% strongly oppose the change. Support for the measure is anemic (only 16% favor the efforts.)ⁱⁱ Opposition is deep and transcends gender, age, political identification, and region. Men are more than twice as likely to oppose rather than favor allowing heavier trucks (26% favor; 56% oppose), and women oppose the change by 50 points (8% favor; 58% oppose). Younger Americans oppose the change by 32 points (20% favor; 52% oppose) and older Americans oppose it by 42 points (12% favor; 64% oppose). There is little partisan difference on this issue as self-identified Democrats are 39 points in opposition (17% favor; 56% oppose), 47 points for Republicans (13% favor; 60% oppose), and 36 points for independents (23% favor; 59% oppose).

Joshua E. Ulibarri
Partner

Rick Johnson
Vice President

Tresa Udem
Vice President

Not only did a strong majority of Americans vote in favor of safety, an overwhelming majority feel longer trucks are less safe.ⁱⁱⁱ An impressive eight-out-of-ten (81%) Americans feel trucks pulling double or triple trailers are more dangerous than those pulling just a single trailer, with 53% feeling this way strongly. Just 9% feel double and triple trailers are as safe as single trailers, and only 2% feel they are safer.

For more information on this issue, please contact Bill Bronrott with The Truck Safety Coalition (bbcomm@aol.com, 202-270-4415) or Joshua Ulibarri in LRP's Washington, DC, office (julibarri@lakeresearch.com, 202-776-9066).

ⁱ **Methodology:** Lake Research Partners designed this telephone survey and it was administered by CARAVAN® Opinion Research Corporation. The Truck Safety Coalition commissioned the questions. The survey was conducted among a national probability sample of 1,000 adults comprised of 482 men and 518 women, 18 years of age and older, living in private households in the continental United States. Interviewing was conducted April 24-27, 2009. The data has a margin of error of +/- 3.1 percentage points.

ⁱⁱ **Question Wording:** As you may know, Congress is debating laws impacting large truck safety on our highways. Each year about 5,000 people are killed as a result of accidents involving large trucks. Right now, there are federal laws which control the size and weight of large trucks allowed on our highways. Currently, trucks can weigh as much as eighty-thousand pounds. The trucking industry would like Congress to change this law to allow larger trucks carrying heavier loads onto our highways.

ⁱⁱⁱ **Question Wording:** Thinking about large trucks driving on American highways, do you think trucks pulling double or triple trailers behind them are more safe, as safe, or not as safe as large trucks pulling only one trailer behind them?