



Parents Against Tired Truckers and Citizens for Reliable and Safe Highways

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Loggers and Truckers Protesting in Minnesota Mislead the Public Maine and Vermont Overweight Truck Pilot Programs Confirm Bigger and Heavier Trucks Are More Deadly, Destructive and Costly

*More People Were Needlessly Killed and Injured
Vermont's Fatal Large Truck Crash Rate Tripled*

Arlington, VA (September 26, 2012): The Associated Contract Loggers & Truckers of Minnesota will be conducting a truck convoy protest and rally through downtown Duluth Thursday, September 27 at 8:00 am to push for a special interest exemption from the federal 80,000 lb. truck weight limit on Interstate roads. The Truck Safety Coalition (TSC) is outraged by the misinformation being disseminated by this organization regarding the results of a similar special interest exemption in Maine and Vermont.

Daphne Izer, founder of Parents Against Tired Truckers (P.A.T.T.) after her son Jeff and three of his friends were killed in a truck crash, stated, "I urge all Minnesotans to fight these special interest attacks on truck size and weight limits. They are putting their financial greed before the safety of all families traveling on Minnesota's roads. The Pilot Program in my home state of Maine as well as in neighboring Vermont proved that bigger, heavier trucks are more deadly, more damaging to the infrastructure, and more destructive to the environment." Izer continued, "The Maine Trucking Association made the same false promise as this organization that allowing overly heavy trucks on the Interstates will get them off our local roads. Nothing could be further from the truth. Now we have these behemoth trucks on our local roads AND our Interstates. Not only do our families have to drive alongside these huge, dangerous trucks, but we also have to pick up the tab for the excessive damage they're inflicting on our roadways and bridges."

The Associated Contract Loggers & Truckers of Minnesota claim that the Maine and Vermont studies document a reduction in crashes when, in fact, the study results show that Maine and Vermont's roadways were more dangerous during the pilot programs.

- **During the Vermont pilot project**, when trucks weight limits were increased on the Interstate to 99,000 pounds for a one year period, the final report found that:
 - "On Vermont's non-Interstate highways, where significant safety gains were expected with the shift of trucks to the Interstates, the number of crashes increased by 24 percent."
 - "...the number of injury-related crashes rose from 39 in 2009 to 50 in 2010 for commercial trucks traveling on Vermont non-Interstate highways, an increase of 28 percent."
 - "...the total number of truck crashes on Vermont's Interstate highways increased by 10 percent between 2009 and 2010." (Vermont Pilot Program Final Report)

Minnesota Volunteer Coordinator for the TSC, and truck crash survivor, Nancy Meuleners, commented, "Truck weight increases have always resulted in more, not fewer, trucks. We need to learn from the I-35W bridge collapse and understand that our infrastructure cannot handle more, heavier trucks." Meuleners added, "Trucks will always need to use non-Interstate roadways to complete their hauls because there are no pick-up or delivery points on the Interstate. The outcome will be that, we'll have more, bigger, heavier trucks on all of our roadways, Minnesota's crumbling infrastructure will deteriorate faster, and our roadways will be much more dangerous."

The Vermont Pilot Program Final Report showed **the real costs of heavier trucks** would radically increase damage to highway pavement and bridges:

- “Damage attributed to 6-or-more-axle single trailer combination trucks (FHWA Class 10) increased by 59 percent...”
- “Applying Vermont truck weight data to the national average costs, it was determined that a fully loaded, 80,000-pound 5-axle combination truck incurs 21.5 cents of pavement costs per-mile on the Interstate System and 32.9 cents per mile on other highways. **A typical 99,000-pound 6-axle Pilot vehicle requires pavement expenditures of 34.5 cents per mile of travel on the Interstate System and about 53.6 cents per mile of travel on non-Interstate roads. This is about 63 percent more per vehicle mile and about 32 percent more per ton-mile than a fully loaded 5-axle vehicle.**” (bold added)

TSC Executive Director John Lannen stated, “We urge Minnesota to protect its motorists, truck drivers, infrastructure and environment and say ‘no’ to heavier trucks. Innocent lives should not fall victim to corporate greed.”

Facts about Minnesota Roadway and Bridge Infrastructure

- Thirty-two percent (32%) of Minnesota's major roads are in poor or mediocre condition. (ASCE 2009)
- Driving on roads in need of repair costs Minnesota motorists \$1.1 billion a year in extra vehicle repairs and operating costs -- \$347 per motorist. (TRIP 2009)
- Minnesota faces a significant shortfall over the next 20 years in funding needed repairs and improvements of its roads, highways and bridges. Minnesota's 2009-2028 Minnesota Statewide Transportation Policy Plan found that the state faces a \$50 billion shortfall during the period in needed projects to achieve state priorities for safety, mobility and infrastructure preservation. (MN DOT)
- Minnesota needs to spend \$65 billion maintaining and improving its roadway system from 2009 to 2028, but currently only anticipates being able to spend \$15 billion. (TRIP 2009)
- Thirteen percent (13%) of Minnesota's bridges are structurally deficient or functionally obsolete. (ASCE 2009)

The Truck Safety Coalition (www.trucksafety.org), a partnership between the Citizens for Reliable and Safe Highways (CRASH) Foundation and Parents Against Tired Truckers (P.A.T.T.), 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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