

# Oppose Efforts to Allow Teenagers to Drive Trucks Across the Country

## Truck Crash Trends are Getting Worse

- Truck crash fatalities have **increased 41 percent** from 2009 to 2017<sup>i</sup>
- Truck occupant fatalities are at their **highest levels since 1989**

## Teenage Truckers will Not Make Our Roads Safer

- **Teenage Commercial Motor Vehicle (CMV) Drivers are Less Safe:**
  - CMV drivers under the age of 19 are four times more likely to be involved in fatal crashes, and
  - CMV drivers between the ages of 19-20 are six times more likely to be involved in fatal crashes than all truck drivers<sup>ii</sup>
- **Compared to Older Drivers (20-84), Teen Drivers (18-19) are:**
  - 2.3 times more likely to be in a fatal crash, and
  - 3.5 times more likely to be in any police reported crash<sup>iii</sup>
- **The Governors Highway Safety Association Issued a Report that Analyzed 10 years of Fatal Crash Data Involving Teen Drivers:**
  - 19-year-olds accounted for the greatest number of teen drivers killed during this 10-year period, followed by 20- and 18-year olds
  - Older teens (18- 20-years-old) were twice as likely as their younger counterparts to be involved in a fatal crash between midnight and 6 a.m.<sup>iv</sup>

**Lowering the Interstate Truck Driving Age Will Not Address the Issues that Cause Truck Safety to Get Worse, Driver Turnover to Remain High, and Driver Pay to Remain Low**

*\*Flip Over to Get the Facts, Not the Fiction on Teen Truckers\**

# Fact vs. Fiction on Teen Truckers

## Fiction

## Fact

*Allowing teen truckers to operate interstate will help address the truck driver shortage.*

**There is no truck driver shortage.** According to the Bureau of Labor Statistics Report from September 2018:

*“The occupation of truck driving is often portrayed by the industry and in the popular press as beset by high levels of turnover and persistent “labor shortages”... [But] a deeper look does not find evidence of a secular shortage.”*

Additionally, an investigative report by Barron’s found that the *Truck Driver Shortage Analysis* from which this myth derives was “vague about its methodology, simply asserting that a shortage exists and will get worse over time as demand rises and existing truck drivers retire.”<sup>v</sup>

*Legislation, like the DRIVE-Safe Act, include requirements for teen truckers to operate in trucks with automatic emergency braking (AEB) and speed limiters, so they will be as safe or safer than older drivers.*

There are two issues with this fiction:

1. There is no requirement that these younger drivers continue to operate with trucks using speed limiters or AEB given neither technology is currently mandated. So while they learn to drive with these technologies, they may then go on to operate trucks without them.
2. If supporters of these bills recognize the potential safety benefits of requiring AEB and speed limiters to be used, they should support requiring these technologies regardless of the truck driver’s age. They can by sponsoring the Safe Roads Act (H.R. 3773) and the Cullum Owings Large Truck Safe Operating Speed Act (S. 2033).

*“If a teenager can drive from one side of Texas to the other, why shouldn’t they be able to drive from Kansas City, MO to Kansas City, KS”*

The turnover rate for truckload carriers – who are more likely to have long-haul routes (~200+ driving radius) - hovers above 90 percent most quarters, whereas the turnover rate for less-than-truckload carriers – who are more likely to have local routes - is roughly 15 percent.

Teen truckers will be new hires. They will not be getting the local routes, such as the 5 miles from Kansas, MO to Kansas, KS. They are going to get the less desirable routes at companies that have 90 percent or more turnover, routes like the East Coast to Los Angeles, CA.

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**Citations:**

<sup>i</sup> National Highway Traffic Safety Administration (NHTSA). Trends Table 4. Large Truck Fatal Crash Statistics, 1975-2017. Large Truck and Bus Crash Facts 2017. <https://cms.fmcsa.dot.gov/safety/data-and-statistics/large-truck-and-bus-crash-facts-2017>

<sup>ii</sup> Campbell, K. L., Fatal Accident Involvement Rates By Driver Age For Large Trucks, *Accid. Anal. & Prev.* Vol 23, No. 4, pp. 287-295 (1991).

<sup>iii</sup> 2017 FARS Data analyzed by the Insurance Institute for Highway Safety. See data analysis at <https://www.iihs.org/topics/teenagers>

<sup>iv</sup> Governors Highway Safety Association. 2017. Mission Not Accomplished: Teen Safe Driving, the Next Chapter [https://www.ghsa.org/sites/default/files/2016-12/FINAL\\_TeenReport16.pdf](https://www.ghsa.org/sites/default/files/2016-12/FINAL_TeenReport16.pdf)

<sup>v</sup> <https://www.barrons.com/articles/jpmorgan-expects-the-fed-to-cut-interest-rates-2-times-this-year-51559574858>