

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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Statement on Governor Polis' Commutation of Rogel Aguilera-Mederos' s 110-year Sentence

Washington, DC – The Truck Safety Coalition (TSC) is surprised Governor Polis' commutation order is preceding the re-sentencing hearing that had already been scheduled for Jan. 13, 2022. Regardless, this commutation is not a reflection of Aguilera-Mederos' innocence. He was found guilty on 27 counts and responsible for the deaths of four people and severe injuries to many more. TSC would like to remind the public that the true victims of his actions irrevocably received life sentences the moment they lost their lives in this preventable incident.

The unfortunate reality is that the other people and companies responsible for this crash have not been held accountable. Neither this driver nor his company should have been hired to perform any trucking work, especially given the company's inexperience, lack of qualifications, and poor safety record.

Aguilera-Mederos' initial sentence sparked a national conversation regarding the equity and justice of mandatory minimum sentencing. Noticeably absent is any meaningful discussion regarding the urgent need to improve truck safety and the experience that the true victims have endured over the past two years. Consider that Castellano 03 Trucking carried the DOT minimum required insurance of \$750,000 (which has not been raised for 40 years). Some victims of this crash who lost loved ones and sustained severe injuries received nothing. There is no effective underwriting performed by insurance carriers at this low amount. This enables unsafe and poorly administered motor carriers to thrive, *putting all roadway users at risk.*

According to DOT statistics, there are nearly 5,000 fatalities and 159,000 injuries from truck crashes annually. The US Department of Transportation needs to

take swift action to raise the commercial motor carrier minimum insurance requirement and make the trucking industry finally start paying its fair share. Increasing the minimum will improve safety and better support the needs of truck crash victims.

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The Truck Safety Coalition (TSC) is a partnership between Citizens for Reliable and Safe Highways (CRASH), also known as The CRASH Foundation, and Parents Against Tired Truckers (P.A.T.T.). 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, policymakers, and the media about truck safety issues. Visit our website at <https://trucksafety.org>