

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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DOT's National Roadway Safety Strategy Fails to Assure Vehicle Safety

Washington, DC – CRASH (Citizens for Reliable and Safe Highways) Board Chair and Former NHTSA (National Highway Traffic Safety Administration Administrator) Joan Claybrook released the following strongly-worded statement in reaction to DOT's National Roadway Safety Strategy Release.

The long-awaited plan released by the U.S. Department of Transportation (DOT) falls dangerously short of stemming the mounting carnage on our roads and highways. The Infrastructure Investment and Jobs Act (IIJA) (Pub. L. 117-58) that passed Congress with bipartisan support and was signed into law by President Joe Biden on November 15, 2021 mandates the department complete several critical and overdue regulatory actions that have languished for years. In particular, provisions in the infrastructure law explicitly directs DOT with firm statutory deadlines to require technology in all new vehicles to reduce impaired driving, to prevent truck crashes with automatic emergency braking (AEB) systems for heavy trucks, and to stop horrific truck rear underride deaths and injuries by upgrading the current weak standard.

Unfortunately, the DOT's National Roadway Safety Strategy undermines these safety mandates by stating that the department will only "consider" issuing standards for the drunk driving technology and truck rear underride standard or "initiate" rulemaking for AEB on large trucks. In fact, the law is unequivocally clear. Issuing final safety standards to prevent drunk driving and truck crash deaths and injuries is a legal obligation for Secretary Buttigieg, and not an option. On average, every year about 10,000 people are killed in crashes involving a drunk driver and 5,000 die in truck crashes. Too many people are needlessly dying in too many impaired driving and truck crashes to allow DOT to interpret the law as they want and not as legally required.

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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>