

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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Statement of Support for Increasing Truck Parking & Truck Driver Pay

Washington, DC – The lack of available truck parking is a safety hazard that puts truck drivers and all roadway users at risk. The U.S. Department of Transportation's (DOT) 2019 Jason's Law survey assessment found that 98% of truck drivers experience trouble finding parking, often resorting to parking in unsafe locations. This has implications beyond driver safety that extends to all roadway users as truck drivers may violate their Hours-of-Service limits in their effort to seek safe and secure parking. The National Transportation Safety Board (NTSB) regularly cites driver fatigue as a major contributor to truck crashes.

Nearly 5,000 people, including over 800 truck drivers, lose their lives in truck crashes annually. Additionally, another 146,000 are injured. Truck crash deaths have increased 47% in the last eleven years. State and federal policymakers must take advantage of every opportunity to drive down truck crash deaths and injuries, including increasing truck parking capacity. The recently passed Infrastructure Investment and Jobs Act (IIJA) provides historic funding to several grant programs that states can utilize to address truck parking needs. Available programs include the Surface Transportation Block Grant Program, the National Highway Freight Program, National Highway Performance Program, and Highway Safety Improvement Program, among others. Additionally, DOT's recent [Supply Chain Efficiency Report](#) also explicitly commits to helping State DOTs and the private sector expand truck parking availability (*Policy Goal #8*).¹ The Truck Safety Coalition (TSC) supports the need to increase truck parking capacity on the condition that any proposed solution does not re-allocate DOT funding designated for other important priorities that also address safety needs. For example, \$11 billion in federal funding has been allocated to improve

¹ United States. US Department of Transportation. *Supply Chain Assessment of the Transportation Industrial Base: Freight and Logistics: Executive Summary*. US Department of Transportation, 2022

the safety of the transit system, including highways, pedestrians, vehicles, and large trucks, plus enhancing crash avoidance and drunk driving prevention technologies.

The ability to move goods safely and efficiently in our nation is a critical one. Existing federal and state government policy reflects this concern and extends several subsidies to the trucking industry by not requiring the sector to bear the full brunt of its associated costs. A 2015 Congressional Budget Office analysis found that “Although freight transport contributes significantly to the productivity of the U.S. economy, it also involves sizable costs to society. Those costs include wear and tear on roads and bridges; delays caused by traffic congestion; injuries, fatalities, and property damage from accidents; and harmful effects from exhaust emissions. No one pays those external costs directly—neither freight haulers, nor shippers, nor consumers.”²

Despite government policy not requiring the trucking industry to bear the full cost of service provision, truck driver wages are inexplicably low and contribute to the truck driver shortage by leading to sky-high turnover rates that compromise safety. While corporate trucking interests rightly raise awareness regarding the inadequate amount of truck parking, they remain deafeningly silent on the issue of inadequate truck driver wages and negative safety consequences. Similarly, corporate trucking interests litigate against reductions in Hours of Service (HOS) and consistently lobby DOT and Congress for exemptions and expansions to HOS that would allow drivers to drive longer hours despite the extensively documented risks to driver safety and safety of all roadway users. Concern for safety should not be situationally dependent and unlike truck parking, truck driver pay is one that corporate motor carriers can directly address themselves.

Large corporate motor carriers *can do much more* to hold up their end of the bargain. Large carriers with over \$30 million in revenue self-reported a staggeringly high 90% turnover rate, the highest in the industry.³ This is unconscionable and has a highly detrimental effect on safety. A 2020 study indicated that *a truck driver’s first year operating a CMV is the riskiest* and is

² Nelson, J., Phillips, K. “The Economic Effects of Financing a Large and Permanent Increase in Government Spending: Working Paper 2021-03”, Congressional Budget Office Working Papers (2015)

³ “Turnover Remained Unchanged at Large Truckload Fleets in Fourth Quarter”, American Trucking Associations, 29 Mar. 2020, <https://www.trucking.org/news-insights/turnover-remained-unchanged-large-truckload-fleets-fourth-quarter>

associated with elevated crash rates.⁴ TSC calls on motor carriers to pay their fair share and increase truck driver pay.

In addition, truck drivers deserve to be paid by the hour. Truck drivers are exempt from the Fair Labor Standards Act and are paid by the mile and not by the hour like most American workers. Paying drivers by the mile does not honor their actual working time and truck drivers deserve to be fairly compensated for all encumbered time. For example, delays encountered by drivers such as traffic, weather, loading/unloading, and more are all uncompensated. This can lead to an unsafe incentive for drivers to drive as far and fast as possible. TSC fully endorses DOT's policy recommendation to eliminate the Fair Labor Standards Act motor carrier exemption, which would allow truck drivers to qualify for much-deserved overtime pay.⁵

Truck driving is a grueling job. Increasing truck parking capacity to alleviate fatigue must be vigorously pursued. Additional truck parking capacity will improve driver work conditions and the safety of all roadway users. TSC strongly encourages State DOTs to utilize available federal grant funding that is not allocated for other safety improvements and programs to address this critical need. Commercial motor carriers are equally encouraged to demonstrate concern for driver safety by increasing truck driver compensation, paying their workforce by the hour, and supporting efforts in Congress to eliminate the FLSA motor carrier exemption.

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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>

⁴ Dunn, Naomi, Susan Soccolich, and Jeffrey Hickman. "Commercial Motor Vehicle Driver Risk Based on Age and Driving Experience." (2020).

⁵ United States. US Department of Transportation. *Supply Chain Assessment of the Transportation Industrial Base: Freight and Logistics: Executive Summary*. US Department of Transportation, 2022