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## Statement on NHTSA's Rear Impact Guard Petition Denial

Washington, DC – Today, the National Highway Traffic Safety Administration (NHTSA) [denied](#) the Truck Safety Coalition (TSC) and Advocates for Highway and Auto Safety's [petition](#) to improve its Rear Impact Guard Final Rule. Underride crashes involve a passenger vehicle passing under the front, side, or rear of a large truck. These crashes are nearly always fatal or result in lifelong, debilitating injuries because standard safety features of a passenger vehicle frequently do not deploy as the vehicle passes underneath the trailer. Strong rear-impact guards prevent passenger vehicles from sliding under the rear of tractor-trailers, allowing a vehicle's safety features to protect its occupants accordingly.

TSC Board Member Jennifer Tierney has been advocating for underride protection improvements for over 40 years, since the loss of her father, James Mooney in an underride crash. She was appalled, saying, "NHTSA's decision is abhorrent and indefensible. The one agency with the authority to protect the motoring public from these violent and gruesome crashes refuses to be proactive in the name of safety. **At NHTSA's current pace, I may well be dead and buried before adequate underride protections are ever required.**"

NHTSA's denial comes on the heels of the same agency reporting that truck crash fatalities increased (again) for another consecutive year, with large truck crash deaths surpassing 5,900 lives lost. TSC Executive Director, Zach Cahalan, lamented the decision, "**If this isn't tone deaf, I don't know what is. I look forward to seeing what the Federal Advisory Committee on Underride Protection recommends to NHTSA on this issue.**"

NHTSA reports that 5,936 people, including truck drivers, perished in truck crashes in 2022 and over 160,000 were injured. This represents an unfathomable

75% increase in truck crash fatalities since 2009. Despite passenger vehicles being safer than ever, 97% of fatalities occur to passenger vehicle occupants in large truck crashes. Despite this reality, NHTSA opted not to fulfill Congress' request to require rear underride guards to withstand 30% overlap crashes with passenger vehicles.

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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>*