



Owner-Operator Independent Drivers Association

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CONTACT YOUR LAWMAKERS ABOUT THE UPCOMING HIGHWAY BILL

As Congress prepares this year's Highway Bill legislation, OOIDA has compiled helpful messages you can tell your Representatives. Keep in mind that no legislation has been introduced and these issues are currently being discussed in Washington. Your lawmakers need to hear from the men and women they represent about how these trucking policies will actually impact their constituents.

Call your U.S. Representative today! [You can find contact information for your Representative by clicking HERE and typing in your ZIP code.](#) You can also **call the U.S. Capitol Switchboard at (202)-224-3121.** An operator will connect you directly with your Representative.

Minimum Insurance Requirements

There is no reason to raise current minimum levels because existing levels already cover 99.4% of all truck accidents according to an FMCSA study required by Congress. And increasing insurance rates will do nothing to improve highway safety. This could have a detrimental effect on my business by causing my rates to double. I am already paying _____!

Truck Parking

Co-sponsor HR 2187, the Truck Parking Safety Improvement Act, which set asides \$755 million in dedicated funding for parking from taxes I pay. I struggle most every night trying to find a safe place to park. Some nights I am forced to park in unsafe locations, such as an exit ramp. I need a good night's sleep to be safe the next day. I also need a place to rest when my regulated hours expire. I deserve a safe place to do both.

Tolling and Congestion Pricing

Tolling in no way is a fair system of generating revenue for infrastructure. Toll rates are often excessive and revenue is routinely diverted to non-highway assets. Look at the unfair costs on trucks just to cross bridges. Some cost as much as \$100 per truck to cross. Or take the Pennsylvania Turnpike, which costs over a dollar a mile if you pay cash. These are just two of many examples of how I get fleeced by tolls. Congestion Pricing is nothing but a completely slanted attack on me as a trucker. I cannot put my cargo on public transportation. Nor can I deliver at off peak hours. Commuters have many different options on how to travel to their work place. Truckers do not. We are forced to deliver when companies are open or while they are shipping or receiving goods. The fuel tax is still the most fair and equitable way to collect highway tax dollars from commercial trucks.

Automatic Emergency Braking (AEB)

Mandating AEB could cause a complete reversal in safety. This technology is far from proven on heavy vehicles. These systems can actually cause you to lose control of the vehicle in inclement weather, cause freight or cargo - especially in the tanker industry - to shift and force me to lose control. They also often feature distracting warnings and false alarms. As a driver, I need to be trained first and foremost to operate the truck and then be allowed to use technology when I know it is helpful to me and not a hindrance.

Underride Protection

Side underride guards remain a completely unproven technology. Not to mention they present operational challenges on the road and at shipping locations. They'll also increase my equipment costs, while adding weight to my truck, which will lessen my payload. These factors would likely increase the amount of trucks on the highway. It's no surprise the folks pushing for side underride guards to be mandated have no experience in our industry and have never been behind the wheel of a truck.

Compliance, Safety, Accountability (CSA)

As a small carrier, this broken system can put me out of business with one erroneous inspection or violation. These scores in no way reflect any relationship with crashes. They are nothing more than another tool carriers use to hire and fire drivers. Also, many small business carriers don't even have a score due to lack of violations. With the rating system so flawed, my scores should never be made public.

Screening for Obstructive Sleep Apnea

There is a complete lack of evidence that moderate sleep apnea causes accidents in commercial motor vehicles. But I am forced by a medical examiner, who is not my personal physician and has no knowledge of my medical history, to take a costly sleep test, which I must pay for out of my own pocket. This should not be required for all drivers.

Hours of Service

Congress should not do anything to roll back last year's hours of service improvements. As a trucker, I need the flexibility to control my day, which will make me a safer driver. I also need FMCSA to advance the proposed split-duty and split sleeper berth pilot programs announced in August of 2020 and January 2021. These programs would give me more options to rest when I need to.

National Surface Transportation System Funding Pilot (VMT)

Before ever approving a national VMT, Congress first needs to have the discussion on what fees this would replace. Or is this going to be in addition to what I currently pay? We are already taxed in multiple ways and, as a small business trucker, my business cannot afford another tax on top of HVUT, IFTA, IRP, and UCR.

Entry Level Driver Training

Drivers need to be properly trained if you want to improve safety on the highways. This is not done with all types of fancy technical gadgets, classroom learning or observation. This is achieved by mandatory behind-the-wheel training for all new drivers, period. Congress must require behind-the-wheel training for all new drivers.

Driver Detention Time

My time as a driver seems to never be worth anything to anyone but me. This can't continue. Congress must start with removing the motor carrier exemption on overtime in the Fair Labor Standard Act. Trucking has become a 70 hour a week job. So why, as a trucker, should I be paid differently than any other skilled laborer.

Driver Recruitment

Unfortunately, we are seeing far too many U.S. carriers hiring Canadian and Mexican drivers with a temporary B-1 Visa. These folks are under qualified and allow carriers to drive down wages and jobs for American drivers like myself. Congress should keep taking steps to crack down on this practice.

Motor Carrier Safety Grants

If Congress is increasing funding for oversight of CMVs, then they need to end the UCR program. This obsolete program is completely unfair to small businesses. I have to pay way more per truck than a larger carrier. Many of the states that receive this money cannot show any evidence that this is being used for highway safety, which is required.

Motor Carrier Safety Operations and Programs

Congress needs to improve the National Consumer Complaint Data Base (NCCDB). This is the only way I have to alert FMCSA of violations of federal safety requirements, coercion, unscrupulous brokers, or just unsafe practices of a motor carrier. Currently, drivers file claims, but they are never addressed. NEVER. It has gotten to the point most truckers have just stopped using the system because it is so ineffective. Congress needs to prioritize improvements to NCCDB and other technology systems that are meant to help drivers.

Automated Commercial Vehicle Reporting

I have a huge concern with the safety of autonomous vehicles (AV) on the roads that are my workplace. There are many more issues that need to be addressed to make sure AVs aren't posing threats to me and other drivers. They pose a huge risk to all highway users if we continue to rush this technology.

Truck Size and Weights

Congress should exclude any language for longer or heavier trucks. These increases would do nothing but hurt small business truckers and would accelerate the deterioration of our nation's infrastructure.

Broker Reform

According to federal regulations, brokers are required to show all parties all information of a transaction. Brokers make me sign away this right away in their one sided contracts or make it impossible for me to access information. To make matters worse, there is no enforcement of this regulation by FMCSA. I am required to follow all federal regulations, why aren't brokers? They should be required to show me this information electronically. I should not have to go to their place of business. I never go there for any other reason.

Speed Limiters

This is far from a regulation that would increase safety. As a trucker, I need complete control of my vehicle so I am able to travel with traffic and also have the ability to get out of harm's way. Most states have long recognized the safety issue with split speed limits and that is why there are only 8 states left with split speeds. Mandating such a rule will only increase congestion and add more truck/car interactions, which leads to more crashes.

Under-21 Drivers

What can I say other than how can anyone that is concerned at all with highway safety think that this is a good idea? It has been proven that younger drivers crash more. They lack the necessary experience and judgment. This is also just one more way for large carriers to continue to manipulate drivers along with the low wages that they continue to pay to truckers.

Thank you for your continued support and advocacy on behalf of
small-business truckers!