

Fall 2011



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RSA Continues to Push for Changes in D.C.

Dear Friends:

As many of you know, our efforts to reduce truck/car fatalities on our highways often takes us to Washington, D. C. To affect changes nationwide, we must go through our federal government where safety decisions that control all heavy commercial trucks engaged in interstate commerce are made. Elsewhere in this newsletter is a column describing just how complex this effort can be, and we think it's important to keep you informed of the work involved.

This summer, RSA traveled to our nation's capitol several times, including attending meetings for the Motor Carrier Safety Advisory Committee (of which Steve is a member). These trips gave us opportunities to visit with elected officials and members of the Department of Transportation. In July, longtime RSA Advisory Board member Phil Jacobs joined Steve for visits with the entire Georgia congressional delegation. With RSA headquartered in Georgia, it is encouraging to be welcomed by key politicians from our home state.

We took with us an alarming message for Georgia's leaders. Georgia currently ranks fourth in the country in fatalities involving heavy

commercial vehicles. With the eventual deepening of the Port of Savannah, Georgia roadways will soon see **at least double, if not triple, the truck traffic** we have today. Phil and Steve got the attention of our elected officials, as expected, and we now have additional voices to support our safety initiatives on Capitol Hill.

If you were listening to the radio or watching television this summer, you might have heard or seen the RSA story. We were interviewed by more than thirty media outlets. RSA's message aired more than 2,000 times across the country and reached a potential audience of 28,129,092 people.

We want to thank Road Safe America's loyal supporters—without you we would not be able to continue the work necessary to improve roadway safety for all Americans. The hard but rewarding work of trying to save lives and reduce injuries is made possible by your interest and support.

Our Sincere Gratitude,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Susan & Steve".

Susan and Steve Owings



Steve Owings making a presentation in Austin, Texas to the Commercial Vehicle Safety Alliance which is the national organization of truck safety enforcement officials.

Drive Safer Sunday is November 27, 2011

The Sunday after Thanksgiving is the most heavily traveled day on our highways. It is also the day in 2002 when Cullum Owings, the son of Road Safe America Founders, Susan and Steve Owings, was killed by a speeding tractor-trailer.

Drive Safer Sunday is RSA's national effort to educate passenger car drivers about the hazards of driving, and to be particularly aware on such a congested day.

You can help by reminding your friends and family to buckle up, slow down, and be alert on our highways.

Visit our website at www.roadsafeamerica.org

Rob Abbott is the Vice President of Safety Policy for the American Trucking Associations. RSA Executive Director, Tom Hodgson, sat down with Rob to ask him a few questions.

Tom: What is your role at the American Trucking Associations (ATA)?

Rob: As Vice President for Safety Policy, my primary function is to promote safety among our membership and to defend the trucking industry's safety record.

Tom: What part of the trucking industry makes up the membership in ATA? How does safety equate with good business for ATA's members?

Rob: Our membership ranges from the smallest mom-and-pop trucking company to the largest fleets in the world. We tend to represent more owners and managers than drivers of trucks. Our members recognize the value of safety and consider themselves important parts of their community.

Tom: In the safety arena, what changes or improvements in the trucking industry does ATA want to see?

Rob: ATA has actually identified 18 specific changes that we think will make our highways safer. These range from the use of speed limiters on heavy trucks to support for red light cameras. Many of our priorities include changes to the behavior of all motorists, not just drivers of commercial trucks. We are delighted that Road Safe America came out in support of our safety agenda two years ago.

RSA thanks Rob for sharing his time with us.

The House and Senate in Washington D. C. have extended the existing highway funding legislation (called Public Law 109-59; SAFETEA-LU) until the end of March 2012. **This is the eighth extension of this bill.** RSA and other transportation interest groups hope to use the new SAFETEA (Safe, Accountable, Flexible and Efficient Transportation Equity Act) legislation to include our safety initiatives as laws for the trucking industry.

Renewable only every six years, the current bill "expired" two years ago. The dollar figure to renew this bill could reach \$500 billion. Given that the cost of our highways and bridges is in large part borne by the federal tax on fuel, our elected officials are in gridlock as they choose not to decide on finding new means of funding or making the highly unpopular choice of raising the gas tax to finance the new legislation.

As we wait for the renewal of this critical funding, our country's transportation infrastructure is crumbling. For example, this month, an interstate highway bridge on I-64 crossing the Ohio River between Kentucky and Ohio was closed due to stress fractures in the I-beams. This closure could last for months. Other bridges are certain to fail inspection with more closings to come. Fortunately, no lives have been lost but the loss of commerce in this area is significant as a result of this bridge closing.

Road Safe America, speaking for highway safety advocates nationwide, is frustrated with the politics and posturing that has not only delayed the implementation of our safety initiatives but has placed American drivers in harm's way. It is time for Congress to do its job!

Road Safe America thanks you for your kind generosity and commitment to helping us reduce the number of crashes between heavy commercial vehicles and passenger cars.

Gifts of \$2,500 and more
Mr. & Mrs. Zach Young*

Gifts of \$1,000—\$2,499
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Gifts of \$250—\$499
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**denotes a board member*

Honor & Memorial Gifts
In honor of
Steve and Susan Owings
Mr. & Mrs. Beauchamp Carr

Matching Gifts
The Coca-Cola Foundation

Our Annual Fund Campaign is RSA's primary means of raising money. Please look for your 2011 annual fund letter coming soon in the mail. You can also make a tax-deductible contribution online. Visit our website at www.roadsafeamerica.org.

Complimentary printing is generously provided by RRDannely Financial

Testing Safety Technology Can Be a Thrilling Ride

In mid-September, Road Safe America was an honored guest at a presentation by Meritor WABCO, one of the world's leading manufacturers of safety equipment for heavy commercial vehicles. Following the presentation at Atlanta Motor Speedway, RSA Executive Director, Tom Hodgson, was invited to ride along in a tractor-trailer as three new on-board safety technologies were demonstrated. As he quickly learned, testing new safety technologies can be a thrilling experience.

The first demonstration featured a heavy truck fitted with an OnGuard collision safety system with Active Braking. This system allows the truck to maintain a safe following distance and helps avoid or reduce the impact of rear-end collisions by automatically braking as needed. This technology also uses radar sensibility to "see" around curves. Professional driver



Tom Hodgson, RSA Executive Director, climbs into a tractor-trailer for safety technology demonstrations led by Meritor WABCO.

Paul Koisciolek made several attempts to drive his truck into the back of a slow moving SUV. Once the truck was within an unsafe distance from the car ahead, the technology took over the gas and brake pedals of the truck and stopped it—fortunately before it collided with the car ahead.

Next, the same truck driver and passenger drove at highway speeds using Active Cruise Control with Active Braking. When installed this device provides adaptive cruise control for deceleration and resumes and maintains a 3.1 second following distance from the vehicle ahead. (This 3.1 travel time is considered to be a safe breaking distance.) It also allows the truck to cruise at 65mph but, as the truck approaches the back of slower moving traffic, the throttle automatically disengages until a preset safe distance of 3.1 seconds travel time is established between the two vehicles. The location of the passenger vehicle in front of the truck directly affects the truck's speed since the technology prevents it from being closer than the 3.1 second gap at any speed. Amazing.

The final demonstration was a dramatic show of Roll Stability Control technology which automatically intervenes if a high roll-over risk is detected. After showing a video of how easy it is to tip a loaded tanker in a sharp turn, the driver of the outfitted truck tried to cause a similar catastrophe. Gyroscopes, load levelers, and other computer generated counter measures made sure that the truck remained upright in turns that would have proven disastrous for vehicles without this technology.

Currently, there is a bill in Congress which will provide tax incentives for trucking companies and

independent truck drivers to purchase these innovative technologies for their trucks. Hopefully, these new on-board devices will find their way to most or all heavy commercial vehicles. If so, the result will be fewer crashes between trucks and passenger cars and safer highways for us all.



Back row—Alan Korn, Director, Vehicle Dynamics and Control, Meritor WABCO; Tom Hodgson, Executive Director, RSA. **Front row**—Rob Abbott, Vice President for Safety Policy, American Trucking Associations.

Putting on the Brakes

The FMCSA has initiated a rule requiring all new tractors for semi-trucks to be built with improved braking. The new trucks will stop as much as 30% faster than older models. While this is a significant safety improvement for new tractor-trailers, it does not address braking systems for previously built trucks.

RSA applauds this change but also recognizes that it will take years before the majority of trucks on our highways are equipped with these new brakes. We will continue to endorse other safety initiatives to improve the overall safety of our highways.

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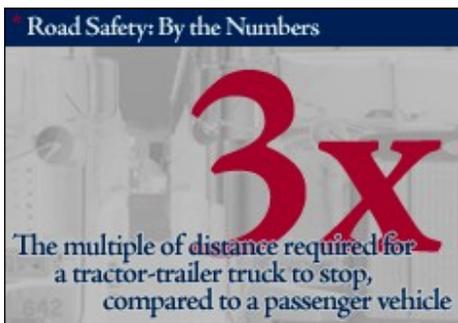
High Driver Turnover

In the trucking industry it's called the "churn" - that's the turnover rate for drivers. Currently this annual rate is 75% or higher.

When we consider the many factors that make a highway safe, having experienced drivers behind the wheel of an 80,000 pound vehicle ranks near the top of the list.

A recent headline states that the help-wanted search for drivers has risen 33%. With millions of Americans unemployed and the need for over-the-road drivers growing, a new generation of inexperienced drivers are entering the workforce. Even though newly hired first-time drivers are given some training before they begin their routes, much of their training is on the job as they navigate unfamiliar roads and attempt to manage and control an unfamiliar vehicle.

Road Safe America supports more extensive driver training for new hires, more rigorous health screenings, and an overhaul of the way in which truck drivers are compensated. Healthier, better trained drivers who earn a reasonable income based on actual hours worked (whether their truck is moving or not) and their proven professional skills are more likely to remain in the trucking industry as productive, safe employees.



Benefits of New Fuel Standards

The Obama Administration launched new cost-saving fuel-efficiency standards for heavy trucks. The new standards require all new heavy commercial vehicles to achieve a 20% improvement in fuel mileage and exhaust pollution by 2014. One way to meet this goal is to reduce the speed at which a truck travels, something which RSA has advocated for years.

With more efficient fuel standards, truck owners and operators will realize savings through reduced fuel costs. Consumers and businesses will also benefit from decreased costs to transport goods. Of course the environmental benefits of these standards will translate into a reduction of harmful air pollutants and greenhouse gas emissions.

RSA applauds the efforts of Ray LaHood, U.S. Secretary of Transportation, for his leadership in this effort.

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