

Summer
2013



Mandate the Use of Speed Limiters Now

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Dear Friends:

One of Road Safe America's most important goals is reaching a critical point. Thanks to our petition to the Department of Transportation in 2006, there is serious discussion in Washington, D. C. about mandating the use of speed limiters on heavy commercial trucks. It is important that we maintain momentum on this as the new Secretary of Transportation takes office.



Speed limits vary greatly from state to state. Proposed speed limiters would affect heavy trucks by limiting their top speed to 65 miles per hour regardless of speed limits.

Currently, the rule entitled Heavy Vehicle Speed Limiters (RIN2127 AK-92) is in the Office of the Secretary of Transportation for final approval. Road Safe America is campaigning to make sure that our friends in D.C. encourage the Secretary to publish this rule as soon as possible.

Once the Secretary signs off on the rule, it goes to the White House where the Office of Management and Budget (OMB) reviews it for fiscal prudence. Road Safe America thinks this will be a simple

process since speed limiter technology is already on every heavy commercial truck on the road that would be affected, making the expense of new equipment zero. Once OMB approves the rule, it will be published as a "proposed regulation". The purpose of this step is to allow public comment on the proposed regulation for a period of sixty days. The rule then returns to the OMB for final approval before becoming law.

Please contact your representatives in D. C. encouraging them to demand this common-sense rule from the U.S. Department of Transportation.

With heartfelt gratitude,

Susan and Steve Owings

At press time we learned that the Secretary of Transportation's office returned the speed limiter rule to NHTSA for further coordination. This is likely a formality. The rule is scheduled to be resubmitted to the Secretary this summer. We will keep you informed.

New Secretary of Transportation is Appointed

The current Mayor of Charlotte, NC, Anthony Foxx (pictured on the right) has been nominated to succeed Ray LaHood as the Secretary of Transportation. We look forward to quickly establishing a good relationship with the new secretary and working together to improve safety within the trucking industry. Please contact us if you know Mayor Foxx and could help introduce our organization in a favorable way.



Visit our website at www.roadsafeamerica.org

Thank You for Your generosity

Each fall, Road Safe America asks its friends for financial support to sustain our efforts for safety. During the past eight months, Road Safe America has raised \$149,000 as a result of your loyal generosity. Thank you—you make it possible for us to continue this mission.

In April, Steve Owings was named one of Northwestern Mutual's "Outstanding Volunteers" and will receive a 2013 Northwestern Mutual Community Service Award. This award bestows a \$10,000 charitable gift from Northwestern Mutual to Road Safe America. RSA has now been awarded over \$40,000 from the life insurance community.

Gifts received between 2/1/13–5/31/13
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We deeply regret the following donors were incorrectly left off our ten year donor list in the previous newsletter.

Mr. & Mrs. Howell Adams*
Dr. & Mrs. O. Anderson Currie*

**denotes a board member*

Time Out! Detention is a Bad Word in the Trucking Industry

For a large majority of truck drivers, time spent at the warehouse or distribution center waiting to load or unload is wasted time—no miles driven, no hourly pay, no payment at all for what could be long delays waiting at the loading docks.

This is referred to as "detention time" in the industry and the driver is totally at the mercy of the shippers and receivers. Detention time occurs for a variety of reasons such as poor management of the warehouse facility including over-scheduling of docking appointments, insufficient loading area or staff, or simply the product not being ready at the scheduled time.

Detention time causes reduced legal driving time available to the trucker, lost pay for drivers, and lost revenue for carriers. It impacts independent drivers more than large carriers because the smaller independent drivers do not have the resources and leverage to handle these issues with their customers.

According to a 2011 Government Accountability Office (GAO) study that conducted interviews with more than 300 truck drivers, 80% of truckers reported that detention time impacts their ability to comply with federal drive time rules. 65% reported lost revenue from detention time by either missing an opportunity to secure another load or paying late fees to the receiver.

This is unfair and RSA supports changes. RSA wants to ensure that those who cause detention time are held accountable, which will have a positive effect on the entire supply chain. RSA is actively working with key stakeholders toward that goal.

Receiver places an order.



Shipper contracts with a carrier to transport product and sets a shipping date.



Carrier receives shipment information, arranges pick up from warehouse and sets a delivery time with receiver.



The **truck driver** proceeds to the shipper's facility/warehouse where the cargo is loaded onto the truck.



Potential detention time!



The **truck driver** transports the cargo from the shipper's facility to the receiver's facility.



The **cargo is delivered** to the receiver's warehouse. Cargo is inspected for damage and unloaded.



Potential detention time!

The Life of a Truck Driver

Every night tens of thousands of Americans sleep in metal boxes smaller than a single bed. They bathe in public facilities and the only food they have access to may be less-than-nutritious. These people are not homeless, but in a way they are. This is the life of the professional long-haul trucker in America.

Followers of Road Safe America know we are not anti-trucker or anti-trucking. RSA is unapologetically pro-safety and communicates that fatalities on our roadways can be reduced by changing the rules of the road. But one thing not likely to change soon are the basic facts of life as a trucker.

Did you Know?

Truckers drive an average of 105,000 miles per year.

Consider the physical aspects of being a professional trucker: It's hard, physically challenging work. Truckers drive an average of 105,000 miles per year. That's more than 400 miles per day if working fifty weeks annually. Imagine driving from Chicago to Kansas City every single day! This in a rig with 15 forward speeds and brakes that need standing strength to stop in an emergency. Many truck drivers frequently load and/or unload their own cargo. These drivers pilot 80,000 pound vehicles and want to make sure the loads do not shift. Bad weather, especially rain and snow, can make the nerves fray and the eleven hour driving day seem awfully long. Boredom is a critical concern especially on wide-open roads. This boredom can turn into terror instantly with a mechanical failure, an incident with another

vehicle or a change of road surface. Many of us have experienced a blow-out in a passenger car. Depending on the tire, a blow-out in a big truck can mean forty tons of rubber and steel heading down an embankment with the driver's cab the first piece of the truck to hit the bottom. Truck driving is one of America's most dangerous jobs with nearly 500 truckers dying each year on the job.

Less acknowledged is the detrimental effect long-haul trucking has on family life. Missed birthdays and holidays become routine. Getting home in an emergency can mean putting cargo or employment in jeopardy to be a good spouse or parent. Single truckers are commonplace, but they did not all start out that way. Marriages are often the first casualty of a trucker's lifestyle. All this, and yet the average pay was \$37,000 in 2012. This trucker lifestyle makes it easy to see why the industry has so much trouble attracting and retaining good drivers. The vast majority of truck drivers are still paid by the mile so their pay is not guaranteed. Sitting at a loading dock waiting for a load or in bumper-to-bumper traffic means hours wasted and no income.

America needs professional truck drivers to keep our economy strong. Road Safe America salutes their hard work. Driving safely should not negatively affect the pay and lifestyle of the trucker. In fact, it should be the other way around.

Distraction is Dangerous

23% of all truck crashes in 2011 involved cell phone use.



More than **30%** of distracted drivers were eating or drinking while speeding.

80,000 pounds at highway speeds is too dangerous for ANY activity except conscientious driving.

These statistics are from a recent study by SmartDrive.

Summertime means vacation and consequently, more drivers on the road.

Please remember to drive safely—
Buckle up, slow down, stay alert and leave plenty of room for large trucks.



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ONE MILE AT A TIME.**

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Changes in the Panama Canal Will Affect Us All



Next year a dramatic enlarging of the Panama Canal is scheduled for completion. This impressive effort was undertaken for one reason—to allow much larger container ships to access America’s east coast ports when sailing from Asia. The Panama Canal can only accommodate relatively small freight ships through its locks today. Asia’s freight titans want to access the USA’s east coast with much bigger ships.

East coast ports from Texas to New England are updating their infrastructure and dredging their channels in anticipation of these larger ships and much more container activity. The Port of Savannah in Georgia plans to dredge its channel to receive these huge ships.

While this is a welcome economic development, Road Safe America is concerned about what will happen when these containers come ashore. Most will be placed on the flat bed of a tractor-trailer and then be traveling on our roadways. The largest “new Panamax” container ships can carry 12,500 containers that will typically be off-loaded two containers to a truck. The potential for big rigs overcrowding interstate highways is

Road Safe America reminds our elected officials that we need well maintained highways as well as enhanced rules of the road to ensure the safety of all drivers. Otherwise, the improvements to our economy from the increased activity and jobs at our ports will come at a price families are not prepared to pay—that is, the probability of increased truck related crashes with more fatalities and injuries. We must keep the entire supply chain in mind. Highway safety must be part of the plan.

