Dear Friends:

While we hope all of you have enjoyed a fun and safe summer, sadly, we still hear reports every day confirming that our highways continue to be the scene of unnecessary big-rig crashes and the resulting tragic casualties. In Georgia, where we are based, thirteen people died and many more were injured in three separate crashes this summer. Each of these crashes involved a tractor-trailer truck plowing into the back of slow moving or stopped vehicles. All three of these fatal incidences occurred on I-16, the busy highway that connects to Georgia’s largest port city, Savannah. They are somber reminders of Georgia’s standing among the five states that experience the most fatalities involving big-rigs in crashes each year.

While we are excited about the expansion of Savannah’s port from a business standpoint, truck traffic will increase significantly as a result. Consequently, if requirements are not changed to improve the safety of big-rigs, the number of Georgia fatalities is likely to increase.

Therefore, we are very pleased that the U.S. Conference of Mayors issued a resolution at their June meeting in San Francisco calling for the following:

• Strict collision avoidance technology requirements for heavy commercial vehicles
• Elimination of the legal use of schedule II opioid drugs, such as valium, by commercial truck drivers, while driving
• A firm deadline for raising the minimum liability insurance requirements for the trucking industry.

We want to particularly thank Atlanta Mayor Kasim Reed for leading the effort to achieve this resolution. We also challenge the Georgia delegation in Washington, D. C. to take the lead in making these changes on a national level.

Along with the U.S. Conference of Mayors, we will continue to monitor our legislators’ attention to this important issue and to advocate for improved safety requirements.

Sincerely,

Susan and Steve Owings
Co-Founders, Road Safe America
We Asked our Donors: Why Do You Give to Road Safe America?

“We are very selective in the organizations we support financially. We have known the founders of RSA for many years and we were moved by their determination to turn a personal tragedy into a campaign of road safety for all Americans. We also appreciate their approach to balance the need for overland commerce with common-sense laws governing the trucking industry.”

Katie and Mid Ramsey

“We will continue to support this very important cause to make our highways safer through new laws for tractor-trailers. The Owings family has worked tirelessly for RSA and has made a remarkable impact on an industry and danger that has previously been accepted as it was. We all benefit from their work to protect others from Cullum’s tragic fate.”

Carolyn and Lem Hewes

“We support Road Safe America because Steve and Susan Owings are so passionate about their commitment to the cause, along with the constant follow up that is required to assure that change occurs in how the trucking industry operates in the U.S. The task is monumental, and they along with many others, should be commended on their dedication and persistence.”

Lee and Steve Olsen

Please consider giving a tax-deductible gift and help RSA improve safety on the highways for all U.S. motorists.

The generosity of our donors allows RSA to stay informed of trucking industry issues, proposed policy changes and their potential impact on the safety of big trucks.
Another Step Made Toward a Speed Governor Rule!

The speed governor rule finally made it to the Office of Management and Budget (OMB)! This is the last step prior to being formally proposed. There will be a time for public comments, which will be followed with another review by OMB. Once this is done, the final rule will be published. Transportation Secretary Anthony Foxx told the U.S. Senate the proposed rule should be accomplished by late fall. Stay tuned!

DELAYS, DELAYS ...
• March 2013: The rule goes to Secretary of Transportation
• April 2013: Rule returned for further refinement
• August 2014: Rule resubmitted to Secretary of Transportation

THE BEGINNING
• 2006: The U.S. DOT receives the RSA petition
• 2007: The DOT requests and receives 4,000 public comments on the petition - 75% were in favor of mandating the use speed governors in big rigs.
• 2011: The petition is formally granted and the rule-making process begins (with the anticipated final rule to be completed in 2012).

CURRENT STATUS
(per the USDOT calendar)
• UPDATED (one month delay) OMB clearance date 9/17/15 (pending)
• Rule Publication Date 9/21/15
• Comment Period 9/21/15 – 11/20/15

May 2015
Rule sent to OMB

May 2011
Regulation Identifier Number assigned

October 2006
Petition received by NHTSA

Safety is Compromised in 2015 Senate Transportation Bill

Each Transportation Reauthorization Bill provides an opportunity for the House and Senate to direct the USDOT in making specific changes to rules they think are important. This is a critical time to get things right. In their most recent version of the next Transportation Reauthorization, the U.S. Senate misses the opportunity to improve truck safety. Even more alarming, RSA believes the proposed changes will be detrimental to safety.

The good news about this bill is that it allows trucking companies to use hair samples rather than urine as a means of testing for drug use among their drivers. Evidence of drug use stays in hair much longer and RSA supports this improved accuracy. Our concerns are that this bill also permits 18 year olds to be licensed to drive tractor-trailers cross country, limits public access to trucking companies’ safety ratings, and allows for increased size and weight of big-rigs.

Essentially, the Senate Transportation Bill is a step backward for highway safety. The House is currently working on its version. Once this is completed, both the House and Senate versions must be reviewed, combined and voted on again. Road Safe America is working to make sure that the final bill will increase safety on our highways, not reduce it.
Safer Trucking = Safer Families

Final Electronic Logging Rule Set for September!

Trucking is the only means of moving freight in America that does not already require electronic monitoring. With a majority of truckers still paid by the mile, there is temptation to falsify paper logbooks and drive while fatigued, resulting in crashes such as the one involving Tracy Morgan. Electronic logging devices (ELD) accurately track truck-driving hours and will significantly reduce fatigued big-rig driving.

Shortly after the founding of Road Safe America, we began advocating for the Federal Government to mandate the use of ELDs to monitor commercial truck driver hours. At last, the final rule is scheduled to be published in the Federal Register this month and become a law.

Help us GO GREEN!
Simply send “e-news” in the subject line to tmhodgson@roadsafeamerica.org to get our newsletter and updates electronically. We will not send emails more than 3 times a month.

Owings Discusses RSA Priorities During Senator’s Visit

RSA Co-Founder Steve Owings had an opportunity to meet Senator David Perdue during his recent visit to Atlanta and discuss big-rig safety issues.
Pictured above are Mike Campbell, Senator David Perdue, Steve Owings, and John Wright II.