In August, Susan and Steve Owings accepted the Safety Hero Award from the Federal Motor Carrier Safety Administration. Steve was an invited guest speaker at its southeastern regional conference in Atlanta.

Steve empathized with FMCSA’s challenge to advance safety policies within a framework of weak regulatory capabilities. He also noted the difficulty faced in identifying safety violators and removing them from the roads. RSA and FMCSA are working together to address these concerns.

Transportation Bill is Signed!

Dear Friends:

Advocating for new laws and regulations is an important part of our work. Since 2002, RSA has petitioned the U.S. Department of Transportation and carried our agenda to the U.S. House and Senate. Through two Administrations and numerous changes in legislative leadership we have promoted a consistent message: America needs common-sense safety rules for heavy commercial vehicles. To this end, RSA has been invited to serve on a Congressional Advisory Committee and has met with DOT Administrators and the Transportation Secretary on numerous occasions.

Now, with the signing of the Transportation Bill (MAP-21), we have significant results to show for these efforts. The headlines about the Bill focused on the creation of jobs and the new highways and bridges likely to be built, but buried within the 1,676 pages are numerous truck safety changes that are certain to reduce truck crashes, save lives, and prevent injuries. Soon, when MAP-21 is fully implemented, our highways will be measurably safer.

Even though MAP-21 is signed, it is only a two year bill. The good news is that we won’t have to wait long for another opportunity to include even more safety improvements in the next bill.

We want to thank you and the many other supporters of Road Safe America for making these safety advances possible. There is much more to do and we will continue to work, energized by these successes.

Best Regards,

Susan and Steve Owings

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Susan and Steve Owings Honored with FMCSA Safety Hero Award

Susan and Steve Owings accept the FMCSA Safety Hero Award. They are pictured here with some of the southeastern regional staff members of the FMCSA.
You helped get these checked items accomplished! RSA is diligently working on the remaining goals.

**Speed Governor Settings Required**
RSA wants speed governors (standard equipment on almost all big trucks) “turned on” so that trucks cannot drive faster than 65 mph.

**Electronic Logging of Drive-Time Required**
Paper log books have been an industry standard forever. However, they are easily manipulated to allow a trucker to drive beyond the Federal Hours of Service regulations. The new Transportation Bill (MAP-21) mandates the use of electronic logging which means information about when a truck is being driven will be recorded automatically and can be accessed during safety inspections to ensure Federal Hours of Service rules are followed.

**Level of Minimum Insurance Reviewed/Raised**
Minimum insurance coverage for commercial trucks had not been raised in more than 30 years. MAP-21 requires a long overdue review of this level. If done properly, this will help to get dangerous trucks off our roads.

**Sleep Disorder Screening for Truck Drivers Required**
Sleep apnea among truckers is very common, causing fatigued driving by commercial truck drivers.

**Hair Follicle Testing Required for Truck Drivers**
Requiring the testing of hair follicles will make it much harder for drivers to hide their drug use from their employers.

**Revoke Dangerous Drug Use Exceptions for Truck Drivers**
Some prescription narcotics are allowed for use by commercial truck drivers. This must be stopped.

**Truck Driver Education Improved**
It has been possible to obtain a commercial driver’s license without spending any time training behind the wheel of a big rig. MAP-21 adds significant on-the-road training requirements prior to earning a commercial driver’s license.

**Only Allow Adaptive-Type Cruise Control on Trucks**
RSA wants traditional cruise control systems updated which will slow trucks down automatically as they approach slower traffic.

**Shippers and Receivers Liable for Safety Too**
In addition to trucking companies, shippers and receivers should also be held accountable for safety.

**Video Cameras on the Truck Driver and Facing Forward Towards Traffic**
It is often impossible to tell who is at fault when crashes occur. These short-loop cameras would record what happens in the cab and ahead of the truck just prior to a crash.

**Additional Truck Parking/Rest Opportunities Established**
Truckers who obey the Hours of Service rules should have a safe place to rest and sometimes there is no viable option. MAP-21 adds money for more safe rest areas to be built.

**Safer Pay Methodology for Truck Drivers**
Most truckers are currently paid by the mile which provides incentive to drive faster and longer for more pay. RSA wants truckers compensated for every hour on the job including time when their truck is not moving.

**Drug and Alcohol Test Results Clearinghouse Created**
Drivers with substance abuse issues can move to other states and work. MAP-21 will create a national database to track driver test results, which will now “follow” drivers who relocate.

**Comprehensive Collision Avoidance Systems Required**
Technology exists to help truckers avoid collisions by taking over the brakes and engine when a crash is anticipated.

**National Registry of Certified Medical Examiners**
Every trucker must pass a routine physical to be allowed to drive. Before MAP-21, unscrupulous healthcare providers were available to pass anyone willing to pay. Now all medical examiners for truck drivers must be certified by the DOT.
Road Safe America donors were invited to join the Owingses and RSA Board of Directors to celebrate the passing of the recent Transportation Bill and the inclusion of a number of RSA safety provisions in the bill. It is clear that RSA’s perseverance and presence in Washington, DC is paying off.

More than 175 donors were welcomed on September 5 at the Piedmont Driving Club in Atlanta, Georgia. Tom Hodgson, Executive Director, made opening remarks and was followed by Susan Owings who reiterated how hard Steve has worked, the sacrifices he has made, and the hours he has dedicated to preventing tragedies on our highways. Susan then proudly introduced her husband Steve who shared the checklist on the previous page with guests—reviewing what has been accomplished and what challenges remain. Guests responded with rousing applause and enjoyed sharing this celebration with friends.

The 2012 Annual Fund Campaign will launch in October. This campaign raises 95% of the income needed to manage our operating budget. Your donation enables RSA to continue our work to reduce crashes involving heavy trucks and improve highway safety for everyone. All gifts are 100% tax-deductible. Please visit our website, www.roadsafeamerica.org, to make a gift online.

Thank you for your generosity!
Gifts received 6/1/12-9/30/12

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RSA Celebrates a Victory!

Becky Bender, Frank Bazzel, and board member John MacNaughton
Board member Mary Yates, Donna Barwick and Jack Head

Co-Founder Steve Owings making remarks at the celebration
Pierce Owings, Scott Goodman and Carol Goodman
Executive Director Tom Hodgson and board member Dave Fitzgerald
Board member Sammy Harmon and his wife, Patty
Marianne Craft, Beverly Hanson and Steve Owings
Tom Hodgson makes a point during the small group discussion at the DOT Roundtable.

The Federal Motor Carrier Safety Administration announced it was “sharpening its focus” on truck and bus safety with several improvements to its Compliance Safety Accountability (CSA) enforcement program. Steve Owings was asked to testify before the U.S. House of Representatives on “Evaluating the Effectiveness of DOT’s Truck and Bus Safety Program” on September 13th.

Steve reported that RSA is pleased with the CSA progress thus far. Of particular concern is the stipulation in the CSA safety program that any crash involving a truck is counted in the owner’s safety score at the DOT. Some truckers argue that they should not be penalized for involvement in a crash where they are not at fault. However, determining fault can be difficult especially in the case where the passenger(s) in the car do not survive the crash. More importantly, studies show that the crash history of drivers, regardless of fault, is a prime indicator for the likelihood for future crashes. For these reasons, RSA and other safety advocate groups support this provision in the CSA safety program that every crash is counted in the DOT safety record.

Steve made a case to keep this part of the CSA system as it is. He also reinforced how important public access is to the CSA system. Finally, he asked for more resources for the FMCSA so they can upgrade their efforts toward safer trucks and buses on our roads.

More than two-hundred stakeholders from the public and private sectors were invited to attend a Department of Transportation workshop in Washington D.C. led by Secretary LaHood. RSA Executive Director Tom Hodgson was invited to attend this workshop which addressed issues concerning the newly created Freight Council. Panelists and guests represented rail, shipping, trucking, warehousing, and other interested groups.

Visit our website at www.roadsafeamerica.org

Steve Owings Testifies before U.S. House

Steve Owings testifying at the U.S. House of Representatives’ Committee on Transportation and Infrastructure, Subcommittee on Highways and Transit.