



About the Truck Safety Coalition

The **Truck Safety Coalition** is a partnership between **The Citizens for Reliable and Safe Highways (CRASH) Foundation**, and **Parents Against Tired Truckers (P.A.T.T.)**. Working together through the Truck Safety Coalition, we are dedicated to improving overall truck safety in the U.S. and eliminating the unnecessary deaths and injuries caused by truck crashes every year.

Parents Against Tired Truckers (P.A.T.T.)

Parents Against Tired Truckers (P.A.T.T.) was founded in 1994 when Daphne and Steve Izer's son, Jeff, and three other teenagers were killed by a truck driver who fell asleep behind the wheel of his rig. When the trucking company received no criminal penalty and the truck driver received minimal penalties, the Izers quickly realized common practices of the trucking industry as a whole and lack of adequate enforcement and penalties contributed to Jeff's death. They decided to take action by forming P.A.T.T. which has grown from a Maine grassroots group to a nationally recognized non-profit organization. P.A.T.T. has successfully brought the issue of truck driver fatigue to the forefront of debate on Capitol Hill and in legislatures throughout the United States. P.A.T.T. promotes improving truck safety and enjoys support from many truck drivers for addressing issues that they cannot for fear of losing their jobs.

The mission of Parents Against Tired Truckers is to save lives by reducing heavy truck crashes resulting from truck driver fatigue.

Citizens for Reliable and Safe Highways (CRASH)

Citizens for Reliable and Safe Highways (CRASH) was formed in 1990 to help mitigate the devastating problem of truck crashes. CRASH is a nationwide, grassroots non-profit organization dedicated to improving overall truck safety in the U.S. and eliminating the senseless deaths and injuries caused by truck crashes every year. We represent the millions of Americans who travel the nation's highways every day, including truck drivers, motorists, crash survivors and families of truck crash victims. CRASH and CRASH volunteers work at all levels of government to initiate and promote truck safety legislation on the issues of truck size and weight, truck driver fatigue, and vehicle maintenance.

The mission of Citizens for Reliable and Safe Highways is to make safety as important as productivity in all U.S. trucking operations.

Working together as a grassroots force, The Truck Safety Coalition is dedicated to achieving the following goals:

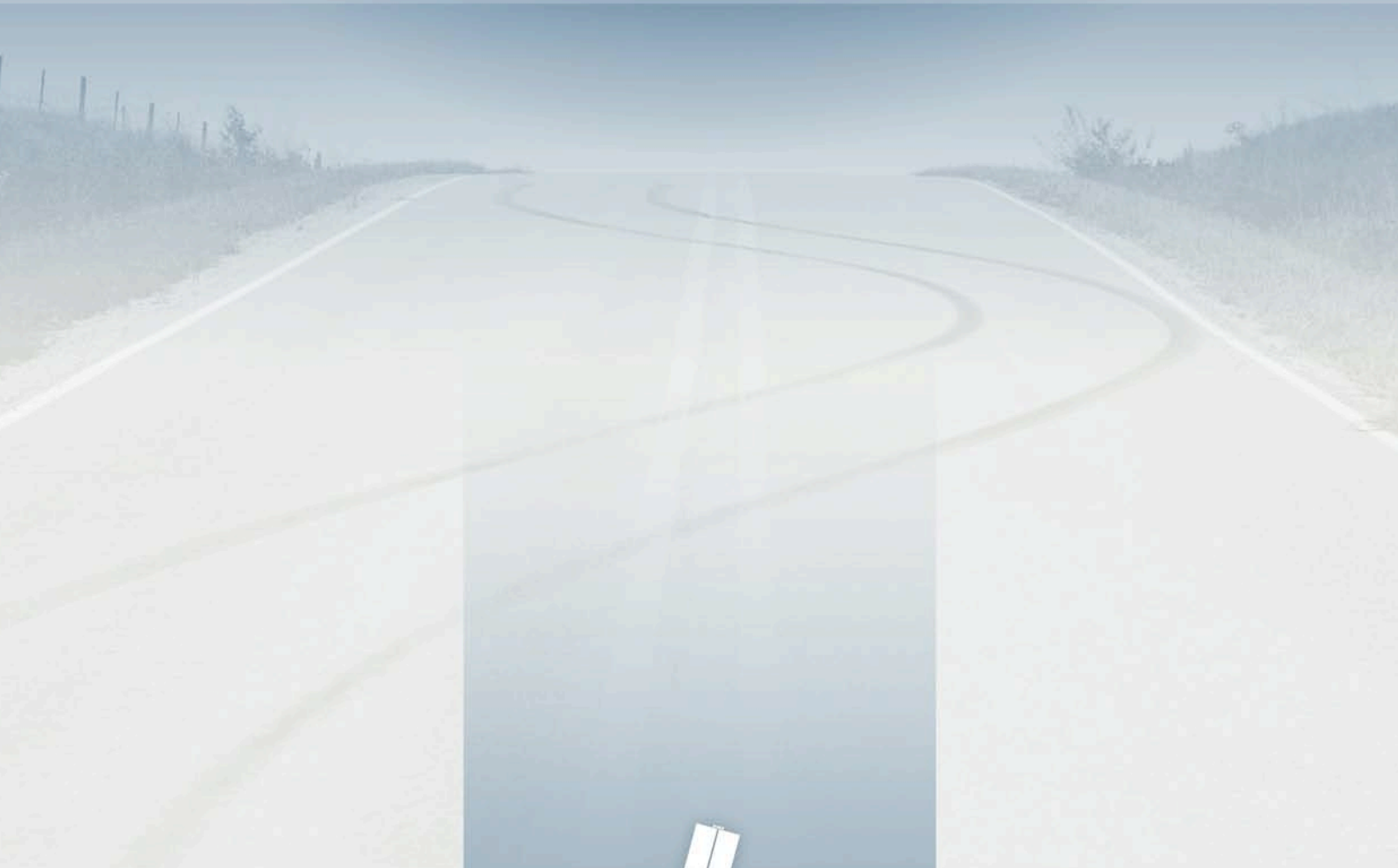
- Reducing the number of fatalities and injuries caused by truck-related crashes.
- Providing compassionate support to truck crash survivors and families of truck crash victims.
- Assisting interested truck crash survivors and surviving families with advocacy efforts with the intention of trying to help make some good come out of tragic situations.
- Raising public awareness of important safety issues.
- Educating legislators on issues related to truck safety regulation.
- Reducing the problem of truck driver fatigue.
- Freezing truck size and weight limits at current levels.
- Increasing compliance with truck safety rules and regulations and improving truck maintenance standards.
- Improving working conditions for truck drivers so they will not be forced to drive in unsafe conditions.

The information contained in the booklet has been compiled by persons whose lives have been changed by truck crashes, and is intended to provide you with general information that they hope will be helpful to you. It should not be considered to be legal or professional advice, and should not be considered to be applicable to all circumstances. If there is information that you believe should be included that is not, or if you find any information to be inaccurate, please let us know at 888.353.4572.



GLOSSARY

Terms and definitions to help you navigate
advocacy and the legal process



Citizens for Highways and Auto Safety



Parents Against Tired Truckers



Accident Reconstructionist

An expert who specializes in determining how an accident took place by examining the vehicles, the accident scene, photographs and other data and applying the laws of physics. They are often utilized in lawsuits by both plaintiffs and defendants. Talk to your attorney before hiring one.

CDL

Commercial driver's license – license which authorizes an individual to operate commercial motor vehicles over 26,000 pounds gross vehicle weight as well as buses.

Commercial Vehicle Enforcement Team

State police unit that specializes in commercial vehicle monitoring and investigation. The officers conduct inspections, investigate crashes, and train local police.

Compensatory Damages

Damages paid to compensate the claimant for loss, injury, or harm caused by the truck driver and/or trucking company. Compensatory damages are sometimes divided into economic damages and non-economic damages. Economic damages consist of loss of wages, medical bills, damage to property, etc. Non-economic damages are damages for pain, suffering, loss of companionship and loss of consortium.

Defendant

The person(s) and/or company(ies) sued in a civil lawsuit or prosecuted in a criminal case.

D.O.T. – Department of Transportation

Cabinet level department of the U.S. government, led by the Secretary of Transportation, appointed by the President of the United States. D.O.T. "Administrations" regulate all modes of transportation in the United States. This includes the Federal Motor Carrier Safety Administration, which regulates the operation of interstate trucking.

ECM

Electronic control module or "black box" which often records a truck's activity in the seconds before and after a crash and may also include more extensive data. An ECM may erase or record over crash data if it is not downloaded and preserved soon after a crash.

EOBRs

Electronic On Board Recording devices are computer-like devices that can be installed on trucks and connected to a variety of sensors to collect information about the truck is doing (speed, engine on or off, etc.), location of the vehicle (from GPS devices), and even communication between the truck company and the driver. They can be used to make sure that drivers log their time correctly and to assist with enforcement of the HOS (Hours of Service) rules, but their use at this time for such purposes is the exception rather than the rule. This is different from the ECM (Electronic Control Module) that controls the workings of almost all diesel engines, which may contain some of the same data about the engine and the truck.



Fatigue

Tired truckers represent one of the most serious and prevalent safety problems in the trucking industry. At the 1995 Truck and Bus Safety Summit, truck industry experts and stakeholders listed driver fatigue as the “Number One Safety Issue” facing the trucking industry.

Financial Responsibility

Safety regulations require interstate trucking companies to maintain at least \$750,000.00 in liability insurance coverage. This amount has not been changed since 1980 and is woefully insufficient. Increasing this minimum amount is one of our priorities.

FMCSA

The Federal Motor Carrier Safety Administration is a separate administration within the U.S. Department of Transportation. The primary mission of the organization is to reduce crashes, injuries, fatalities, and property loss involving large trucks and buses by regulating the workers and businesses involved. They are responsible for developing and enforcing the Federal Motor Carrier Safety Regulations.

FMCSR

Federal Motor Carrier Safety Regulations. Trucking companies operate under authority granted by the federal government and are subject to safety regulations aimed at reducing accidents and saving lives.

Hours of Service

Safety regulations govern how many hours commercial drivers can drive and remain on duty, as well as how long they must rest between tours of duty.

Logbook

Safety regulations require interstate commercial drivers to record their hours of service and duty status for each 24-hour period.

Negligence

The failure to use reasonable care. Negligence can be the commission of an act or acts, or the omission of an act or acts. In a truck crash case, many parties may be determined to have been negligent.

NTSB

National Transportation Safety Board. An autonomous board that does not have regulatory powers, but which investigates problems and accidents involving transportation issues. This board makes recommendations regarding improvements that can save lives and reports back the responses to its recommendations. The FMCSA and the trucking industry have a very poor response record to the recommendations made by the NTSB regarding improvements to truck safety. Information from the NTSB is made available to our nation’s legislators and policy makers.



Plaintiff

In truck crash cases, the plaintiff is the person who was injured. If a person was killed, the plaintiff can be the deceased person's estate or a family member, depending on which state's law applies.

Probate

The legal process in which a will is reviewed to determine whether it is valid and authentic. Probate also refers to the general administering of a deceased person's will or the estate of a deceased person without a will. The court appoints either an executor named in the will (or an administrator or personal representative if there is no will) to administer the process of collecting the assets of the deceased person, paying any liabilities remaining on the person's estate and finally distributing the assets of the estate to beneficiaries as provided by law.

Punitive Damages

Damages not awarded to compensate the plaintiff, but imposed by the court in order to punish defendants for especially egregious misconduct. The hope is that the imposition of these damages will deter the defendants and similar entities from behaving so recklessly in the future.

Rapid Response Team (or "Go Team")

Claims professionals hired by trucking companies and their insurers to immediately investigate a crash, with the goal of determining the cause of the crash and/or minimizing legal responsibility. These teams, working for the trucking company, may include investigators, adjusters, accident reconstructionists, and attorneys who often arrive at the scene of the crash prior to the vehicles being moved. Sometimes they may even try to contact crash victims or their families to obtain statements or medical authorizations. Be sure you speak with a qualified lawyer before allowing any contact by these investigators.

Satellite Tracking Devices

Many trucking companies equip their trucks with satellite tracking or communication devices that may provide data regarding the movement and location of its truck leading up to a collision.

Safety Rating

The Federal Motor Carrier Safety Administration assigns each trucking company a safety rating based on factors such as the truck company's safety management controls, frequency and severity of regulatory violations, roadside inspection results, frequency and severity of accidents, and the number and severity of violations of state safety rules. A new safety assessment system, CSA 2010, is currently being implemented.

Sorrow to Strength

A conference held every two years by the Truck Safety Coalition that provides a welcoming atmosphere for remembrance, compassion and sharing, and also serves as a forum where interested individuals can educate themselves about safety issues in the trucking industry and advocate for improvements.



Spoliation Letter

Correspondence sent to a potential party to a lawsuit that informs him/her of the existence of a claim and the need for him/her to preserve various types of items and data that might be evidence in the case. In a truck crash case, the victim/survivor needs to have his/her attorney send a spoliation letter to the trucking company as soon as possible.

Statute of Limitations

Laws that dictate when a claim must be made. Different states have different statutes of limitations, but typically, wrongful death and other negligence claims have to be filed within 1 - 3 years from the date the claim arose. There are some jurisdictions that require much earlier notice for particular types of defendants.

Survivors Network

Truck crash victims and survivors from all over the country who are available to talk to those who have been injured in truck crashes and who have lost loved ones in truck crashes. Please contact the *Truck Safety Coalition* to be put in contact with one of our members. Remember - you are not alone!

Victim Impact Statement

A statement that victims and their families can provide to the judge to consider at sentencing in a criminal prosecution. These statements allow victims to articulate the pain, anguish, and financial devastation that the crash has caused. Judges have little opportunity to communicate with victims and their families; a victim impact statement can provide essential information that leads to more appropriate sentences and more suitable restitution. Questions about how to prepare a statement or about the time and place of sentencing should be addressed to the prosecutor or victim advocate.

Victim's Advocate

A specialized victim counselor who acts as a liaison between the prosecutor's office and victims of crimes and their families. If criminal charges are pursued in your case, determine if the prosecuting office has a victim's advocate. If so, make contact and stay informed. The victim's advocate should let you know about the developments in the case.

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Jeanine Crawford



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Stacey Lynn Balascio

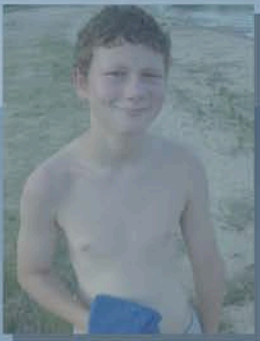


Joseph A. Cerisano IV



Paul Gotch

In Memory of our Loved Ones WE HONOR THEIR LIVES



Casey Hinkle



Jared D. Getty



Ronald Eckert



Ann Kachmar



Pamela A. Rundell



Jennifer & Frank Reina



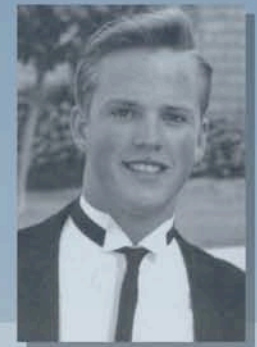
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Robert Stephen Weimann



Katie Leighton



Kevin Mortimer

Working Together We Can Save Lives



Colleen Denise Ewin



Luke Hausmann



Amy Elizabeth Corbin



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Gary Andrew Anderson



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