

May 9, 2023

Dear Member of the House Committee on Transportation & Infrastructure:

The Federal Motor Carrier Safety Administration (FMCSA) is working to implement a speed limiter mandate that would restrict all heavy-duty commercial motor vehicles (CMVs) to a single top speed across the country, as low as 60 miles per hour. This mandate will be bad for road safety, crash rates, driver retention, and supply chain performance. As the Subcommittee on Highways & Transit convenes a hearing this week to examine policies that will help overcome supply chain challenges, we urge you to prevent FMCSA from moving forward with this controversial mandate.

While a speed limiter mandate may be thought of as something affecting only the “trucking” industry, FMCSA’s proposal would apply to every commercial truck weighing over 26,000 pounds. Our coalition represents the numerous industries that would be subject to compliance and enforcement of this mandate, including agriculture, construction, and materials, as well as small, medium, and large trucking companies and state trucking associations.

By establishing a one-size-fits-all federal mandate restricting heavy-duty CMVs to a speed that is separate from passenger vehicles, this regulation would create dangerous speed differentials between trucks and other cars. Decades of highway research shows greater speed differentials increase interactions between truck drivers and other road users, and studies have consistently demonstrated that increasing interactions between vehicles directly increases the likelihood of crashes.^{1,2,3}

This mandate would create split speed limits on two-lane rural roads in many states, which are particularly hazardous. In these conditions, passenger vehicles that want to travel at the posted limit get stuck behind slower-moving trucks, increasing the number of passes they must make. Recently, states have taken steps to reduce split speeds on their roads. For example, Montana has enacted legislation to reduce speed differentials between trucks and passenger vehicles, but FMCSA’s mandate would effectively roll back changes the state determined were necessary to improve safety on their roads.

Aside from safety concerns, a speed limiter mandate would exacerbate supply chain challenges. By prohibiting trucks from traveling at the posted speed limit in certain areas, this mandate will literally slow down freight movement across the country. If the regulation is implemented, more trucks will be needed to carry the same amount of freight in the same amount of time, which also increases road congestion.

And as a secondary supply chain problem, a speed limiter mandate will make it more difficult for businesses to attract and retain truckers. Upon reviewing the nearly 16,000 public comments already submitted to the agency by stakeholders, it is clear the majority of drivers oppose the federal government forcing them to operate speed-limited trucks, as it takes control of the vehicle out of their

¹ David Solomon, *Accidents on Main Rural Highways Related to Speed, Driver, and Vehicle*, Bureau of Public Roads (1964)

² Johnson and Pawar, *Cost-Benefit Evaluation of Large Truck-Automobile Speed Limits Differentials on rural Interstate Highways*, Mack-Blackwell Rural Transportation Center (2005)

hands. Speed limiting trucks also increases pressure and stress on drivers to complete their work. Truckers required to operate below the posted speed limit must drive longer hours to cover the same distance, which increases their fatigue and places even greater stress on them to comply with burdensome hours-of-service regulations. By making trucking less attractive, this mandate would make it more difficult to find and retain the men and women who are necessary to keep the supply chain moving.

There is already a mechanism in place to address vehicle speeds: speed limits set and enforced by the states. In 1995, Congress repealed the national speed limit and gave states the power to establish speed limits for their roads. Since then, states have been able to design their roadways and set top speeds according to what they have determined to be safest for their specific needs and conditions. FMCSA's ongoing rulemaking ignores this long-standing authority.

We ask that you act today to stop this dangerous mandate and overreach by the federal government, which will negatively impact highway safety, supply chain efficiency, and driver recruitment and retention. We encourage members to support H.R. 3039, the Deregulating Restrictions on Interstate Vehicles and Eighteen Wheelers Act, introduced earlier this month by Rep. Josh Brecheen (OK-2), which would prevent FMCSA from moving forward with this dangerous and counterproductive rulemaking.

Thank you,

Agricultural Retailers Association
American Farm Bureau Federation
American Pipeline Contractors Association
Associated Equipment Distributors
Customized Logistics and Delivery Association
Distribution Contractors Association
Livestock Marketing Association
Mid-West Truckers Association
Montana Trucking Association
National Asphalt Pavement Association
National Association of Small Trucking Companies
National Cattlemen's Beef Association
National Hay Association
National Ready Mixed Concrete Association
National Stone Sand and Gravel Association
National Utility Contractors Association
Nevada Trucking Association
North American Punjabi Trucking Association
Power and Communication Contractors Association
Texas Trucking Association
Towing and Recovery Association of America
United States Cattlemen's Association
Western States Trucking Association