

**STATEMENT OF JOHN H. HILL  
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**BEFORE THE HOUSE COMMITTEE ON APPROPRIATIONS  
SUBCOMMITTEE ON TRANSPORTATION, HOUSING AND URBAN  
DEVELOPMENT, AND RELATED AGENCIES**

**MARCH 29, 2007**

Good morning Chairman Olver, Ranking Member Knollenberg, and Members of the Subcommittee. Thank you for inviting me to discuss the budget priorities of the Federal Motor Carrier Safety Administration (FMCSA) for fiscal year 2008. I am pleased to appear before you to describe how FMCSA's funding request will be used to make the nation's highways safer and more secure.

For fiscal year 2008, FMCSA requests \$528 million of which \$228 million is for motor carrier safety operations and programs and \$300 million is for motor carrier safety grants. These amounts are consistent with Congress' guidance in the Safe, Accountable, Flexible Efficient Transportation Equity Act: A Legacy for Users or "SAFETEA-LU."

At FMCSA safety is our number one priority and is a daunting challenge. Even as we have increased our efforts, the number of trucks and buses on our highways continues to increase rapidly, and commercial vehicle miles traveled are increasing at about 7 percent over the last 5 years. To meet this challenge we are finding innovative ways to carry out our responsibilities. We will increase our effectiveness and efficiency; and we will leverage the talents and resources of our State partners, as well as those of our stakeholders from the trucking and motorcoach industries, and the many committed safety advocate organizations through our newly chartered advisory committees, the Motor Carrier Safety Advisory Committee and the Commercial Driver's License Advisory Committee.

Our fiscal year 2008 funding request will provide the necessary resources to accomplish those goals and implement key priorities including the following: 1) continuing our focus on driver safety in all programs, by conducting even more driver roadside enforcement and inspections in cooperation with our State and local partners; 2) intensifying our focus on motorcoach safety by prioritizing Motor Carrier Safety Assistance Program and Federal activities in this area, while also focusing enforcement efforts on curbside bus operators; 3) testing our Comprehensive Safety Analysis 2010 program which will provide a new approach to the safety fitness rating – and allowing a broader enforcement exposure to the motor carrier industry; and 4) optimizing our organizational structure to increase efficiency and give the American taxpayers the biggest safety increase possible for their investment in FMCSA.

## SAFETY

The largest share – \$489 million or 93 percent – of our budget focuses on reducing large truck and bus crashes. In partnership with the States, FMCSA uses grants to enforce commercial truck and bus safety laws, with special attention to motorcoach companies and carriers registered as hauling hazardous materials. Of this money, \$300 million will go to grant programs, including the Border Enforcement Grants Program and the following programs:

- \$202 million for Motor Carrier Safety Assistance Program (MCSAP) grants enabling States to conduct more than 2 million roadside driver and vehicle inspections and more than 5,000 compliance reviews. This includes \$29 million towards 28,500 State-conducted New Entrant Audits as authorized by SAFETEA-LU;
- \$25 million for improvement of State commercial driver's license (CDL) activities to prevent unqualified drivers from being issued or maintaining a CDL;
- \$5 million for management and operations of the Performance Registration Information Systems and Management (PRISM) program, linking State commercial motor vehicle (CMV) registration systems with carrier safety performance data to identify unsafe commercial motor carriers;
- \$25 million for the Commercial Vehicle Information Systems and Networks (CVISN) grants towards improving the exchange of safety information, electronic screening of trucks and buses at the roadside, and the administration of interstate credentials;
- \$3 million for safety data improvement grants which are vital for the correct identification of high risk carriers; and
- \$8 million for modernization efforts of the Commercial Driver's License Information System (CDLIS).

In addition to these grant programs, the FY 2008 budget request includes \$32 million for the Border Enforcement Grants Program which will support State efforts, along with our own Federal force, to enforce compliance by foreign carriers with the Federal Motor Carrier Safety Regulations, operating authority requirements, and insurance rules. We estimate that the States will conduct approximately 350,000 vehicle and driver inspections at the border as well as an estimated 30,000 driver license/authority/financial responsibility checks at the border. Close cooperation between Federal and State agencies will continue to be necessary to ensure safe and secure cargo, vehicles, drivers, and authorized carriers cross in an efficient manner at international borders.

After a successful initial program in the State of Washington, FMCSA will continue expanding the Ticketing Aggressive Cars and Trucks (TACT) program in selected States with the highest fatality and crash rates to demonstrate the effectiveness of combining high-visibility enforcement with education and communication. FMCSA will print and disseminate the TACT "How to Guide" to State agencies nationwide and encourage all

MCSAP States to adopt this successful program or some form of non-CMV enforcement as specified in SAFETEA-LU.

## DRIVER FOCUS

Recent studies, including FMCSA's Large Truck Crash Causation Study (LTCCS), continue to emphasize the part that drivers play in crash causation and avoidance. In the LTCCS, commercial motor vehicle driver action or inaction was determined to be the "critical reason" for the crash in 87 percent of the crashes where the crash was attributed to the CMV. In FY 2008 FMCSA will address driver safety knowledge "gaps" found by a Technical Working Group of government and private partners. We will hold public listening sessions and a major public conference to define what actions will address these knowledge gaps and obtain stakeholder commitments to partner with FMCSA to implement the action items quickly and efficiently. FMCSA will also work with our State partners to ensure that they conduct more driver inspections at the roadside as specified in their respective Commercial Vehicle Safety Plan (CVSP).

## BUS SAFETY

Several high profile, and tragic, incidents underscored for all of us the importance of bus passenger safety. Even so, we should remember that mile for mile, motorcoaches are the safest form of commercial passenger transportation. Buses account for more passenger traffic in the United States than all other commercial modes of transportation combined. In response to the recent motorcoach incidents, FMCSA has increased its bus safety enforcement activities by prioritizing MCSAP and Federal activities in this area; by improving the method for selecting passenger carriers to inspect; by performing more compliance reviews of bus companies; and by improving training for motorcoach drivers. In 2007 we will conduct a compliance review of every motorcoach operator that has not been rated.

In addition, FMCSA has taken important steps to focus on enforcing regulations that apply to curbside bus operators that provide fixed-route service among major cities in the northeast such as New York, Boston, Philadelphia, and Washington, DC. FMCSA and a coalition of State and local police agencies have formed a strike force performing inspections at the roadside and compliance reviews and enforcement actions against these companies. This initiative will continue into 2008.

## COMPREHENSIVE SAFETY ANALYSIS 2010 and COMPASS

Every organization should continuously strive to improve how it does business, and FMCSA is no exception. In fiscal year 2008, FMCSA will be midway through development of its Comprehensive Safety Analysis (CSA) 2010 program, which will lead our Agency into a more extensive, effective, and efficient approach to carrying out compliance and enforcement programs. The goal of CSA 2010 is to touch more regulated entities through a broader array of enforcement and educational interventions while optimizing FMCSA resources.

While CSA 2010 looks to improve the way that we do business, COMPASS is our program that looks to align and improve our Information Technology (IT) systems. COMPASS will allow FMCSA to take advantage of the opportunities that today's technology has to offer to improve access to information and accelerate data quality improvements to Federal and State roadside inspectors, auditors, and safety investigators. Both of these programs are multi-year efforts designed to bring about better execution of programs, tax dollars savings, and most importantly to save lives by reducing the number of crashes.

## SECURITY and DISASTER PLANNING

FMCSA applies 1.4 percent of its budget to programs that will help ensure that felons and other security-risk individuals are not issued commercial driver's licenses to transport commodities that could become mobile weapons of mass or significant destruction. FMCSA is one of the leading DOT agencies in supporting the Secretarial Priority of Security, Preparedness, and Response. FMCSA personnel participated in the Federal response to a large number of hurricanes in 2005, including Hurricanes Katrina and Rita, as well as in the planning for a response to a potential pandemic influenza outbreak. The Agency's fiscal year 2008 budget request reflects this increased priority, and this issue is also a new element that has been added to the FMCSA Strategic Plan for FY 2006-2011.

## HOUSEHOLD GOODS

Although less than 1 percent of its overall budget, FMCSA expects that fiscal year 2008 funding will allow the Agency and its State partners to seek better ways of educating the American public about how to find and employ reputable household goods (HHG) movers, while also responding to abuses by unscrupulous household carriers.

## CONGESTION

FMCSA is also contributing to the DOT-led National Strategy to Reduce Congestion on America's Transportation Network – a national congestion relief initiative. FMCSA will continue to deploy electronic safety devices and credentials monitoring devices to inspect vehicles and drivers. We expect this to decrease the impact on congestion caused by roadside safety activities, thereby improving productivity and reducing the chances of crashes.

## GLOBAL CONNECTIVITY

The President's second-term priorities include development of International Trade Data Systems to consolidate access to international trade data across the Federal Government. FMCSA is proud to support this priority by being the first Federal Agency to partner with the Department of Homeland Security/Customs and Border Protection on the Automated Commercial Environment/International Trade Data System (ACE/ITDS). This partnership is improving the Agency's ability to identify and inspect higher-risk cargoes

at our border ports of entry to assess the potential risk of cross-border carriers and their drivers. FMCSA is a leading partner in developing and testing these systems for the U.S. northern and southern border operations. This program accounts for less than 0.1 percent of FMCSA's budget.

## ORGANIZATIONAL EXCELLENCE

Although a young Agency, we recognize the importance of continuous improvements brought about through assessing our strengths and weaknesses. In addition to modernizing processes and procedures, another Agency priority is to optimize our organizational structure to increase organizational efficiency. As priorities change, the structure of FMCSA must change as well in order to achieve the maximum safety results. Every facet of the Agency will be re-examined to deliver improved performance within the boundaries of the Agency's resources.

FMCSA dedicates approximately 5.2 percent of its budget to Organizational Excellence which addresses improving the internal workings of the Agency. FMCSA will undertake activities for continuous organizational improvement. Our organizational improvement activities will result in a more highly-trained and motivated workforce, enhanced cost-control measures, and improved decisionmaking processes, leading to more successful completion of our mission objectives. In addition, these activities make the Agency a significant contributor to DOT's achievement of a "green" rating for elements of the President's Management Agenda (PMA).

Mr. Chairman, I wish to express my appreciation for all that this committee has done in supporting FMCSA. In our 7 years as a DOT modal Agency, FMCSA and the dedicated men and women of State and local law enforcement agencies have made great strides toward reducing fatalities and injuries on our nation's highways. Your continued investment in the Agency will result in added safety emphasis on our nation's highways. I look forward to working with you to achieve our mutual goals and would be happy to respond to any questions you may have. Thank you.