

# NATIONAL TRANSPORTATION SAFETY BOARD WASHINGTON, D.C.

ISSUED: February 29, 1980

Forwarded to:

To the Governors and the Presiding  
Officers of the legislative bodies  
of nine selected States

(See Attached List)

SAFETY RECOMMENDATION(S)

H-80-15

The National Transportation Safety Board has just completed an evaluation<sup>1/</sup> of Federal and State efforts to detect and control problem commercial drivers -- drivers whose records of driver license suspensions, traffic convictions, and accidents indicate a flagrant and repeated disregard for the safety of other highway users. As a result of this evaluation, the Board found that many problem commercial drivers, in spite of their records of unsafe driving, continue to be licensed by the States and employed by motor carriers to operate the largest and heaviest vehicles on the highways.

The Board's evaluation was based, in part, on investigations of 44 heavy truck accidents which involved problem commercial drivers. The 44 accidents resulted in 51 fatalities and 95 injuries. Police investigation reports listed improper action of the truckdrivers as a causal factor in every case except one (the exceptional case involved no fatalities or injuries).

In order to determine the driving histories of the 44 drivers, Board investigators made inquiries, in virtually every case, to all or nearly all of the 48 contiguous States. When the responses to these inquiries were compiled, the composite records of the 44 drivers listed a total of 63 driver licenses held, 98 driver license suspensions, 104 traffic accidents (including the 44 accidents investigated by the Board), and 456 traffic convictions.

The Board is particularly concerned about the ability of these commercial drivers to obtain driver licenses from two or more States at the same time. Of the 44 drivers, 11 held multiple licenses, for a total of 30 driver licenses held by these 11 drivers (8 drivers held 3 driver licenses and 3 drivers held 2 licenses). Multiple licenses enable a driver to escape the driver improvement and control programs of the States by "spreading" traffic convictions among two or more States, thereby avoiding discovery of the driver's complete record by any single State.

<sup>1/</sup> See the Board's "Safety Effectiveness Evaluation of Detection and Control of Unsafe Interstate Commercial Drivers Through the National Driver Register, State Driver Licensing Policies, and the Federal Motor Carrier Safety Regulations," NTSB-SEE-80-1, February 15, 1980.

The "one-license" concept is designed to counter the multiple license problem. The primary principle of the one-license concept is that each driver should hold only one driver license at a given time, issued by the driver's State of residence. The one-license concept is expressed in Section 6-101 of the Uniform Vehicle Code, in the Driver License Compact, and in Federal Highway Safety Program Standard No. 5, "Driver Licensing."

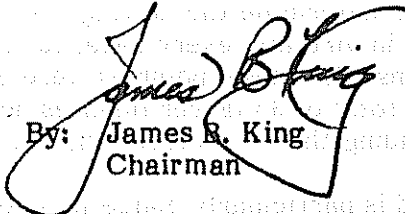
On June 7, 1978, as the result of its investigation of a tractor-semitrailer collision with a schoolbus that was loading elementary school students at Rustburg, Virginia, the Board issued a safety recommendation to the Governors of all of the States, urging them to ensure the conformity of State driver licensing policies with the one-license concept. While some improvements are being made, the degree of adherence to the one-license concept still varies widely from State to State.

A serious problem is that your State and eight other States have laws which require a nonresident commercial driver who is employed by a resident of the State to obtain a driver license issued by the State -- a requirement which is directly contrary to the one-license concept. The Safety Board believes that an adequate, alternate method of controlling nonresident drivers who are employed by a State resident can and should be developed -- a method which will not require a commercial driver to hold a driver license in the State of employment as well as the State of residence.

Therefore, the National Transportation Safety Board recommends that the Governors and the Presiding Officers of the legislative bodies of Arizona, Arkansas, Florida, Idaho, Iowa, Oklahoma, Rhode Island, Tennessee, and West Virginia:

Take the legislative and executive actions necessary to abolish the requirement in your State that a nonresident driver who is employed by a resident of the State obtain a driver license issued by the State. (Class II, Priority Action) (H-80-15)

KING, Chairman, DRIVER, Vice Chairman, McADAMS and BURSLEY, Members, concurred in this recommendation. GOLDMAN, Member, did not participate.

  
By: James R. King  
Chairman

LIST OF ADDRESSEES

<u>STATE</u>	<u>GOVERNOR</u>	<u>PRESIDING OFFICERS OF LEGISLATIVE BODIES</u>
Arizona	Honorable Bruce E. Babbitt Governor of Arizona 1700 W. Washington Phoenix, Arizona 85007	Honorable Leo Corbet President of the Senate Room 204 1700 West Washington Tucson, Arizona 85007  Honorable Frank Kelley Speaker of the House Room 20023 1700 West Washington Tucson, Arizona 85007
Arkansas	Honorable Bill Clinton Governor of Arkansas State Capitol Little Rock, Arkansas 72201	Honorable Joe Purcell President of the Senate State Capitol Little Rock, Arkansas 72201  Honorable John Miller Speaker of the House State Capitol Little Rock, Arkansas 72201
Florida	Honorable D. Robert Graham Governor of Florida State Capitol Tallahassee, Florida 32304	Honorable Philip D. Lewis President of the Senate Suite 409C State Capitol Tallahassee, Florida 32304  Honorable Jay Hyatt Brown Speaker of the House Suite 420 State Capitol Tallahassee, Florida 32304
Idaho	Honorable John V. Evans Governor of Idaho State House Boise, Idaho 83720	Honorable Reed Budge President Pro Tempore Idaho State Senate Room 352 State House Boise, Idaho 83720

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STATE

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Honorable Ralph Olmstead  
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Honorable Terry Branstadt  
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Honorable Floyd Millen  
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Oklahoma

Honorable George Nigh  
Governor of Oklahoma  
Oklahoma City, Oklahoma 73105

Honorable Gene C. Howard  
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State Capitol, Room 422  
Oklahoma City, Oklahoma 73105

Honorable Daniel D. Draper, Jr.  
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Honorable Matthew Smith  
Speaker of the House  
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<u>STATE</u>	<u>GOVERNOR</u>	<u>PRESIDING OFFICERS OF LEGISLATIVE BODIES</u>
Tennessee	Honorable Lamar Alexander Governor of Tennessee State Capitol Nashville, Tennessee 37219	Honorable John S. Wilder President of the Senate State Capitol Nashville, Tennessee 37219  Honorable Ned Ray McWherter Speaker of the House State Capitol Nashville, Tennessee 37219
West Virginia	Honorable John D. Rockefeller, IV Governor of West Virginia Charleston, West Virginia 25305	Honorable William T. Brotherton President of the Senate Room 229 State Capitol Charleston, West Virginia 25305  Honorable Clyde See Speaker of the House Room 228 State Capitol Charleston, West Virginia 25305

