

**Oral Statement for Anne S. Ferro
FMCSA Administrator
U.S. Senate Committee on Commerce, Science, & Transportation**

***Oversight of Motor Carrier Safety Efforts*
April 28, 2010**

Chairman Lautenberg, Ranking Member Thune and members of the Subcommittee:

Thank you for the opportunity to address the range of efforts underway by the Federal Motor Carrier Safety Administration to eliminate severe crashes and fatalities involving large trucks and buses.

During my confirmation hearing last September, Chairman Lautenberg said that “every year for the past decade, nearly 5,000 people have died and 125,000 were injured in crashes involving a large truck.” Fifty thousand individuals who did not get home to their loved ones is a tough reminder of why I am dedicated to a vision where we eliminate severe crashes and fatalities involving commercial vehicles.

Through a strategic focus on research, regulations, enforcement, grants to states and public outreach, FMCSA’s workforce is committed to fulfilling our mandate. It is my job as Administrator to set a strategic framework that places the highest priority on Safety.

And that framework is shaped by three core principles: raise the bar to enter the industry; maintain a high safety standard to remain in the industry; and remove high-risk behaviors and operators from our roads and highways. These principles apply whether to motor carrier, driver, vehicle, household goods operator, and service provider alike.

Let me share some examples of work that is underway in support of this framework:

Raising the bar to enter the motor carrier industry is being addressed by several new and ongoing initiatives.

FMCSA recently strengthened the new entrant safety assurance program to identify start-up truck and bus companies deficient in key areas that must be addressed in order to continue operations.

In addition, 18 months ago we implemented a vetting program to weed out unsafe motor coach and household goods carriers who reincarnate to avoid sanctions. Since its start, about one third of the 2,600 applicants for operating authority have been dismissed, denied or withdrawn. In the future, with system improvements, we plan to expand this vetting program to hazardous materials carriers and eventually to all carriers applying for authority.

Principal Two - *Maintain high safety standards to stay credentialed* - is well-met with CSA 2010, our agency's new safety fitness determination and compliance program. CSA 2010 builds on three components - a new rating system, safety fitness rulemaking and intervention process - to accelerate corrections to safety problems before crashes occur.

This program represents a move from the current one-size fits all compliance review to a dynamic, targeted examination of high risk factors: unsafe driving; fatigued driving; driver fitness; crash history; vehicle maintenance; improper loading and cargo, and drugs and alcohol.

Our work of maintaining high safety standards is just beginning. To accomplish this goal, we have published a final rule that will require carriers with serious patterns of hours of service violations to install electronic on-board recorders. Work is already underway on the next phase of this initiative to develop a broader EOBR rule that will uniformly monitor records of duty status by carriers.

Critical to safety is the hours of service rule. As you know, FMCSA is undertaking a new rulemaking on this vitally important

operating factor. Late last year we set in play a process to collect and receive information and perspective from a broad range of stakeholders through an open docket and listening sessions around the country. The process gives us a wide range of perspectives when examining the research used to develop the rule.

Among initiatives to remove *High risk behavior* are two measures focused on drivers. The first, takes an aggressive stance on distracted driving. Under the leadership of Secretary LaHood, FMCSA has issued a proposed rule to ban texting for commercial motor vehicles drivers. We will soon follow with a proposed rule on cell phone use.

The second is a proposed rule to create a drug and alcohol test clearinghouse to mandate stricter reporting requirements on CDL holders who test positive for drugs or alcohol or otherwise fail to comply with drug and alcohol testing requirements.

On a final note, I look forward to discussing Reauthorization and FMCSA's programs when Congress considers the reauthorization of surface transportation funding. In my travel around the country, I have heard first-hand the budget constraints faced by states and the importance of federal funding to achieve strong commercial vehicle safety enforcement. The work of FMCSA comes together at the

roadside and in our Divisions. Thus we must support our front line staff in the field and provide them with adequate tools and resources.

With all this to report and more, I believe FMCSA is making significant progress on setting the bar high for the motor carrier safety. The employees of this agency share my sense of urgency and commitment to work with you on the many important challenges we face.

Mr. Chairman, this concludes my remarks. I'd be pleased to take your questions.

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