



Fall 2023 Newsletter

Dear Friends,

We are happy to announce some very significant news about Road Safe America. When we began this journey over twenty years ago, we had specific goals in mind regarding meaningful changes in the safe operation of large trucks on our nation's highways. For a number of years, Road Safe America has worked hand in hand with a similar safety advocacy group, the Institute for Safer Trucking, a non-profit organization located in Washington, D.C. The Institute for Safer Trucking shares our goals for highway truck safety in the United States. Accordingly, we believe this is the time for Road Safe America to take the next step and formally merge with the Institute for Safer Trucking. This merger, effective October 1st, will allow us to continue the mission of achieving safer trucking and highways, while maximizing resources, efforts and expertise.

As we make this organizational change, we want to reflect on the past twenty years, including the pro-safety policies we helped enact, the anti-safety measures we helped defeat, and the ongoing efforts we will continue to work on with the Institute for Safer Trucking.

Accomplishments

Electronic stability control (ESC) mandate

Our advocacy efforts helped to get this crucial regulation put into effect, making ESC technology mandatory in large trucks. ESC helps prevent rollovers and loss of control, improving overall vehicle stability and safety. Since its implementation, countless lives have been saved, and rollover crashes have been significantly reduced.

Electronic logging device (ELD) mandate

By requiring the use of ELDs, there has been a vast improvement of compliance with hours-of-service regulations and there has been a significant reduction in driver fatigue. ELDs have replaced traditional paper logbooks, providing accurate and easily accessible records of hours driven and worked by truck drivers each day.

Improvements to Rear Underride Guard Requirements

Rear underride crashes occur when passenger vehicles collide with trucks and trailers from behind, resulting in devastating consequences. Through our advocacy efforts and those of our colleagues, there are stronger rear underride guard standards and the trailer manufacturers are developing even more effective technologies to reduce the injuries in this type of crash.

Automatic Emergency Braking (AEB) in Large Trucks

This proposed rule, released this summer, will have a profound impact on preventing rear-end collisions. It also addresses the preventable factors that cause them, such as distraction, impairment, and fatigue. AEB technology uses sensors and automated braking to detect potential collisions and apply brakes if necessary. As one of the first to initiate the rule making process for AEB, Road Safe America played a pivotal role in advocating for this requirement in large trucks and we are proud to see it come to fruition.

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Dangerous Policies Defeated

Federal Truck Size and Weight Increases

Over the last twenty years, RSA has successfully helped to defeat several attempts to increase federal truck size and weight limits despite well-funded efforts by proponents of such measures. Working with other safety advocacy groups, trucking interests, and other stakeholders, we helped educate lawmakers about the dangers of longer and heavier trucks.

Efforts to Shield Shippers and Brokers from Unsafe Hiring Consequences

We have been actively involved in efforts to stop attempts to shield shippers and brokers from liability for hiring unsafe motor carriers. In almost every session of Congress, bills have been introduced that purport to improve safety but are really intended to indemnify shippers and brokers. This would ultimately diminish safety throughout the entire supply chain. Thankfully, our education campaigns have been effective and such legislation has never been enacted.

The Road Ahead

Heavy Vehicle Speed Limiters

Since our inception, requiring the use of already-built-in speed limiters in large trucks has been a major goal. Speeding is a leading factor in truck crashes and poses significant road safety risks. Susan and I learned this the hard way after our beloved son, Cullum, was tragically killed by a speeding big rig. With the Federal Motor Carrier Safety Administration on the cusp of releasing a proposed rule to finally require the use of speed limiters, we look forward to updating you with some great news on this very soon.

Increasing the minimum insurance requirements for interstate motor carriers

RSA remains committed to updating the minimum insurance requirements from 1980-levels to reflect current costs. By raising these standards, we aim to ensure that victims of truck crashes receive fair compensation and that carriers have adequate resources to cover any damages they cause.

When we tragically lost our precious son Cullum, we never imagined we would spend the next twenty years working to address the tragedy's cause. With your generous support, we have made significant strides in truck safety, saving lives and preventing countless families from experiencing the immense loss that befell ours. You helped to turn the tragedy into purpose, and we are forever grateful and humbled by your faithful support.

In another milestone, Steve no longer has any office keys and is looking forward to more family time as well as weekday golf and travel. We are fortunate to have our colleagues at IST to team with going forward. Not only are they located in Washington, but they are also younger than we are and full of passion and energy for safer trucking! We are both joining the IST Board along with our son Pierce, providing continuity.

As we embark on the next chapter of our journey, we ask for your continued support of Road Safe America in partnership with the Institute for Safer Trucking, to sustain our important efforts to improve truck safety in the U.S.

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Susan & Steve", written in a cursive style.

Steve and Susan Owings
Co-founders

THANK YOU FOR HELPING US PUT SAFETY FIRST

Gifts received between February 1, 2023 and August 31, 2023

Each year we appeal to you, our loyal donors and friends, to make a charitable gift to support our mission. Each year you respond with overwhelming generosity. We are deeply appreciative of your kindness and your confidence in our efforts to make our roads safer for our families and loved ones — Steve and Susan Owings

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*indicates a Road Safe America board member

If you would like to make a tax-deductible gift, please visit roadsafeamerica.org

If you have any questions or need assistance, please contact Louise Monti at:

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or
770.490.5398

What is the Institute for Safer Trucking?



The Institute for Safer Trucking (IST) is a nonprofit organization committed to educating the public about truck safety issues and the data-driven solutions that can make a meaningful impact to improve safety. IST is well-respected both on Capitol Hill and at the Department of Transportation, and they have been a leading voice on automatic emergency braking, stronger override protections, and minimum insurance requirements. They have been a strong ally in pursuit of requiring the use of speed limiters on large trucks.



The Institute for Safer Trucking's Team and RSA Co-Founders (L to R): Jennifer Walsh, Harry Adler, Susan Owings, Steve Owings, and John Lannen

IST is a valuable resource for families of truck crash victims and truck crash survivors in need of support after their crash. They host monthly meetups for survivors and families of victims as well as roundtable discussions in D.C. to educate people about proven safety solutions.

IST has worked closely with Road Safe America to improve truck safety and, together, we have made great strides. We are excited to merge our organizations and look forward to an even greater impact we will have in making our roads safer.

To learn more about the Institute for Safer Trucking, please visit their website, www.safertrucking.org.

SAFER TRUCKING = SAFER FAMILIES

Breaking News:

Road Safe America and the Institute for Safer Trucking are Joining Efforts to Combat the Increasing Number of Truck Crash Fatalities.

See inside for the exciting details ...

Slow Down Big Trucks

Speeding is a leading factor in the severity and fatalities of truck crashes. This is why our number one priority remains the required use of speed limiters, which are standard equipment, on all heavy trucks. We are working with the Institute for Safer Trucking on this initiative and hope to announce positive news on this issue in the coming months.



Steve and Susan Owings with Cullum's friends in Washington D.C. to advocate for speed limiters in large trucks