

North Carolina families want better commercial truck safety regulations

Written by Australian Business

September 20, 2013 /**24-7PressRelease**/ -- According to the latest Department of Transportation data, [trucking accidents](#) that cause injury are becoming increasingly common. In 2009, there were approximately 51,000 large truck crashes that resulted in injury. By 2010, that number had crept up to 56,000, and it reached 60,000 in 2011. Final numbers have not yet been compiled for 2012 or 2013, but initial estimates indicate that the trend is likely to continue.

For three North Carolina families who have been impacted by trucking accidents, the time has come to do something about the rising tide of tractor-trailer crashes. With support from the Truck Safety Coalition, these families recently traveled to Piedmont to petition Senator Richard Burr for his support in getting new trucking safety regulations on the books.

Freeze on maximum truck size, more insurance, and underride guards

All three North Carolina families involved in the truck safety initiative lost loved ones in tractor-trailer crashes.

Jennifer Tierney, whose father was killed in a trucking accident, told Fox 8 News, "It was a completely preventable crash...[t]here is a constant battle with the industry to make the trucks heavier and larger and we don't want to see trucks get any bigger."

Indeed, larger truckers are not only less maneuverable than their smaller counterparts; if they are involved in a crash, they have a greater potential for causing serious injury. According to the Truck Safety Coalition, compared to single trailer trucks, multi-trailer trucks are over 30 percent more likely to be in a crash that results in a fatality. Specifically, the families asked Senator Burr to consider a freeze on maximum truck size and weight limitations.

An increase in the minimum amount of liability insurance truckers need to carry was another of the regulatory modifications the families advocated for. Liability insurance provides payouts to the victims of trucking accidents; it ensures that there is a pool of resources available to pay those who are injured or the families of those who are killed, accounting for things like medical bills and lost wages. While more insurance for truckers might not prevent accidents and injuries, it would help victims of truck crashes get their lives back together.

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Finally, the families requested that Senator Burr support mandatory installation of underride guards on tractor-trailers. Underride guards help prevent passenger cars from winding up underneath the truck in a tractor-trailer accident.

Accidents in which passenger vehicles get beneath a tractor-trailer are particularly dangerous because the passenger vehicle safety features like crush absorption zones, seat belts and airbags are ineffective in preventing serious [head injury](#) or neck injury when the roof of the vehicle is crushed. Underride guards are already installed on many large trucks, but mandating and standardizing installation could save lives.

Injured in a truck crash, or lost a loved one? Call a North Carolina attorney

If you have been injured in a trucking accident, or if a family member has been killed in a tractor-trailer crash, you can likely relate to the desires of these North Carolina families to make the roadways safer for everyone. Of course, it is too late for new trucking regulations to keep a crash from impacting your life, but you may have after-the-fact legal remedies.

A legal claim for a trucking accident can help secure compensation to pay the costs associated with your injury or the death of a loved one. Compensation can help account for both direct costs, like medical bills, and more intangible ones, like pain and suffering. If a trucking accident has harmed you or a family member, get in touch with a North Carolina attorney today to discuss your legal options.

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