

October 10, 2007

The Honorable James Nussle
The Office of Management and Budget
725 17th Street, NW
Washington, DC 20503

Dear Director Nussle:

As the Office of Management and Budget begins to formulate the Administration's fiscal year 2009 budget proposal, we urge your favorable consideration of setting aside at least \$2.5 million within the Federal Motor Carrier Safety Administration (FMCSA) to initiate a research program to assist the FMCSA in meeting its published goals for reducing large truck fatalities.

In April of this year, the FMCSA Administrator presented testimony to the Congress on rising highway fatalities. While there was a slight decrease in large truck fatalities in 2005 after several years of increases, FMCSA has been unable for the last several years to achieve the decreases in fatalities necessary to meet the large truck fatality targets articulated in the agency's performance goals. From 1992 to 2001 highway transportation incidents were the leading cause of workplace death with more than 13,500 workers killed, an average of 3 worker deaths per day. Occupants of trucks counted for nearly 60% of these fatalities; almost half of these were semi-truck occupants.

As you may know, the Transportation Research Board, which is established under the National Academy of Sciences, has identified health and wellness programs for commercial vehicle drivers as a much needed and promising way to assist in the reduction of commercial driver accidents and fatalities. Transportation companies interested in developing their own health and wellness programs are very much in need of guidance and resources to initiate best practices. Research is needed to develop a commercial driver health and wellness program template that would contain all of the elements of a well designed program that could be easily adapted to each company's circumstances and driver operations. This research will leverage the finding that accentuating driver health and wellness is probably the best way to encourage drivers to maintain driving alertness and attentiveness on the highway.

As the number of trucks and buses on our highways continues to increase rapidly, and commercial vehicle miles traveled increase by about 7% each year, the already significant problem of motor carrier safety is projected to worsen. We concur in the Transportation Research Board findings that the most promising way to address this

national crisis is with the development and implementation of programs to improve the overall health and wellness of commercial drivers.

Thank you for your consideration of this matter.

Sincerely,
Norm Anderson
CEO