

COMMITTEES:

COMMERCE, SCIENCE, AND TRANSPORTATION  
ENERGY AND NATURAL RESOURCES  
HEALTH, EDUCATION, LABOR, AND PENSIONS  
SMALL BUSINESS AND ENTREPRENEURSHIP

September 10, 2024

**Honorable Vinn White**

Deputy Administrator  
Federal Motor Carrier Safety Administration  
1200 New Jersey Avenue, SE  
Washington, D.C. 20590

Dear Deputy Administrator White,

I am writing to express my concerns regarding ongoing safety challenges within the commercial trucking industry which are creating significant risk to innocent roadway motorists. As you are aware, ensuring the safety of our nation's roadways is a priority that affects every American, and the role of the Federal Motor Carrier Safety Administration (FMCSA) is critical in achieving this goal.

The FMCSA is tasked with the responsibility of ensuring that commercial trucks and their drivers adhere to rigorous safety standards. This is achieved through a comprehensive system of safety audits, inspections, and oversight of commercial driver licensure.<sup>1</sup> By enforcing these safety standards, the FMCSA plays a vital role in preventing accidents, reducing fatalities, and maintaining public confidence in the safety of commercial transportation on our roadways.

There is, however, growing concern that FMCSA does not have the resources or capacity to thoroughly audit and oversee the vast number of commercial trucking companies moving goods across U.S. supply chains.<sup>2</sup> For example, financial resource constraints, the sheer volume of commercial vehicles, and the complex logistics involved in conducting safety audits can impede the FMCSA's ability to consistently and comprehensively enforce safety standards. These limitations may allow unsafe practices to go unchecked, as recently occurred when a California-based trucking company employed an unlicensed truck driver who caused a fatal crash in June which tragically took the life of an innocent motorist traveling on U.S. Route 285 through Jefferson County, Colorado.<sup>3</sup>

Inadequate compliance with safety standards by trucking companies that have repeatedly failed to comply, and have faced insufficient audits, poses significant risks to public safety.<sup>4</sup> This lax oversight can lead to an increase in roadway fatalities and crashes, endangering the lives of passengers, drivers, and pedestrians alike. As we continue to see rising concerns about the safety of our highways, it is imperative that the FMCSA's capacity to enforce safety regulations, increase compliance accountability, and conduct thorough audits is strengthened to mitigate these risks. To better understand how to mitigate these issues going forward, we ask for your responses to following questions:

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<sup>1</sup> [49 Code of Federal Regulations Parts 300-399](#), Federal Motor Carrier Safety Administration

<sup>2</sup> In 2022, 11.46 billion tons of freight was transported by commercial trucks, representing 72.6% of total domestic freight shipped in the U.S. [Economics and Industry Data](#), American Trucking Association

<sup>3</sup> [“Trucking Company at Center of Deadly Crash in Jefferson County Called an ‘Imminent Hazard’”](#), 9 News Denver, NBC Denver (KUSA), Jul. 8, 2024

<sup>4</sup> In 2021, 5,158 individuals were killed in crashes involving a large truck crash. [2023 Pocket Guide to Large Truck and Bus Statistics, pg. 38](#). Federal Motor Carrier Safety Administration.

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1. In the last two fiscal years, how many trucking companies has FMCSA found to have violated CDL licensure requirements for drivers employed?
2. In the last two fiscal years, how many trucking companies has FMCSA found to have failed a safety audit? Of this total, how many trucking companies has FMCSA certified to have implemented corrective actions?
3. How many federal safety auditors does FMCSA currently employ? Of this total, how many safety auditors would FMCSA require to enhance its oversight capacity?
  - a. What steps does FMCSA anticipate taking in the near future to strengthen its oversight over CDL licensure and safety standards? Would additional authorities or resources provided by Congress assist with this goal?

I urge the FMCSA to assess its current capabilities and consider potential avenues for bolstering its oversight mechanisms. The safety of our roads depends on the diligent enforcement of safety standards within the commercial trucking industry.

Thank you for your attention to this matter and I look forward to your response to resolve these concerns.

Sincerely,



John Hickenlooper  
United States Senator