Dear Chairman Graves and Ranking Member Norton:

As you prepare for tomorrow’s hearing, FAST Act Implementation: Motor Carrier Provisions, our coalition of consumer, health, and safety groups, families of truck crash victims and survivors, law enforcement, first responders, truck drivers, rail labor, short lines and regional railroads, and railway suppliers and contractors writes to urge you to oppose any attempt to increase federal truck size and weight limits. Congress has rejected these unsafe proposals in the past and should reject them again given the unabated rise in truck crashes and decline in the condition of our Nation’s infrastructure. These efforts include proposals to increase truck lengths, to permit heavier trucks, and to grant industry and state-based exemptions as well as so-called “pilot programs.” Given the state of our infrastructure and truck safety, allowing bigger trucks on the roads will significantly diminish any efforts to rebuild America’s roads and bridges and improve public safety.

**Truck crashes, and the resulting injuries and fatalities, continue to go up.** From 2009 to 2015, truck crashes increased by 45 percent in the U.S. Additionally, 2016 data showed that truck crash fatalities rose 5.4 percent from 2015, totaling 4,317 deaths. In 2015, the most recent year for which crash and injuries figures are available, there were 415,000 truck crashes and more than 300 people were injured each day in crashes involving large trucks. These grim statistics are unacceptable, and they come with a cost. In addition to the trauma and grief that thousands of Americans suffer due to truck crashes, all American taxpayers experience the effects of commercial motor vehicle crashes by footing the $118 billion in costs.

**Permitting the operation of larger trucks would undermine efforts to improve the United States’ infrastructure.** Nearly 40 percent of our 615,000 bridges in the National Bridge Inventory are 50 years or older and one out of 11 is structurally deficient. Our roads do not fare much better. America’s roads continue to receive a grade of “D” from the American Society of Civil Engineers, and 20 percent of highway pavement is in poor condition. To make matters worse, there is a significant and growing backlog of rehabilitation needs. Increasing truck size and weight will exacerbate these problems, dilute potential benefits from investments in infrastructure and divert rail traffic from privately owned freight railroads to our already overburdened public highways.

**The public does not want longer and heavier trucks.** There is overwhelming opposition to any increases to truck size and weight. In a nationwide poll released earlier this year, 7 of 10 respondents opposed longer and heavier trucks. A letter signed by over 1,000 local government officials that was recently sent to Congress urging rejection of any attempts to increase truck size...
and weight echoed the public sentiment. During the last Congress, both the House and Senate voted against attempts to allow bigger trucks in strong bipartisan votes. The U.S. Department of Transportation’s (U.S. DOT) recommendation remains the same: no changes should be made to federal truck size and weight laws. The only thing that has changed is that truck crash deaths went up and the quality of our infrastructure went down.

**Longer and heavier trucks are less safe and more damaging to our infrastructure.** The 2016 U.S. DOT Comprehensive Truck Size and Weight Study found that introducing double 33-foot trailer trucks, known as “Double 33s,” would be projected to result in 2,478 bridges requiring strengthening or replacement at an estimated one-time cost of $1.1 billion. This figure does not even account for the additional, subsequent maintenance costs which will result from longer, heavier trucks. These longer trucks also come with operational difficulties such as requiring more time to pass, having larger blind spots, crossing into adjacent lanes and swinging into opposing lanes on curves and turns, and taking a longer distance to adequately brake. In 2016, violations related to tires and/or brakes accounted for five of the top ten most common vehicle out-of-service violations. Not surprisingly, trucks heavier than 80,000 pounds have a greater number of brake violations, which are a major reason for out-of-service violations. According to a 2016 North Carolina study by the Insurance Institute for Highway Safety (IIHS), trucks with out-of-service violations are 362 percent more likely to be involved in a crash. This is also troubling considering that tractor-trailers moving at 60 mph require 310 feet to stop— the length of a football field – once the brakes are applied. Actual stopping distances are often much longer due to driver response time before braking and the common problem that truck brakes are often not in top working condition. Moreover, increasing the weight of a heavy truck by only 10 percent increases bridge damage by 33 percent. The Federal Highway Administration (FHWA) estimates that the investment backlog for bridges, to address all cost-beneficial bridge needs, is $123.1 billion. The U.S. would need to increase annual funding for bridges by 20 percent over current spending levels to eliminate the bridge backlog by 2032.

**Bigger trucks have never resulted in and will not result in fewer trucks.** Following every past increase to federal truck size and weight, the number of trucks on our roads has gone up. Since 1982, when Congress last increased the gross vehicle weight limit, truck registrations have more than doubled. The U.S. DOT study also addressed this assertion and found that any potential mileage efficiencies from the use of heavier trucks would be offset in just one year. Improving the safety and integrity of our Nation’s infrastructure is a goal that we all share. It should not be hindered and hampered by attempts to increase or circumvent truck size and weight limits. We urge you to reject any and all proposals to put longer and heavier trucks on our roads.

Sincerely,

James P. Hoffa, General President  
International Brotherhood of Teamsters  
Jeff Solheim, 2018 President  
Emergency Nurses Association  
Catherine Chase, President  
Advocates for Highway and Auto Safety
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<tr>
<th>Name</th>
<th>Title/Position</th>
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<tr>
<td>Joan Claybrook</td>
<td>Chair</td>
<td>Citizens for Reliable and Safe Highways (CRASH)</td>
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<td>Georges C. Benjamin, MD</td>
<td>Executive Director</td>
<td>American Public Health Association</td>
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<td>John Risch</td>
<td>National Legislative Director</td>
<td>SMART-TD (UTU)</td>
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<td>Dominick Stokes</td>
<td>Vice President</td>
<td>Federal Law Enforcement Officers Association</td>
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<td>Steve Owings</td>
<td>Co-Founder &amp; President</td>
<td>Road Safe America</td>
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<td>Dawn King</td>
<td>President</td>
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<td>Brad Roseberry</td>
<td>Vice President</td>
<td>Coalition Against Bigger Trucks</td>
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<td>Dave Tennent</td>
<td>Executive Director and CEO</td>
<td>Railway Engineering-Maintenance Suppliers Association</td>
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<td>Daphne Izer</td>
<td>Co-Chair</td>
<td>Parents Against Tired Truckers</td>
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<td>Stephen W. Hargarten, M.D.,</td>
<td>President</td>
<td>Society for the Advancement of Violence and Injury Research</td>
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<td>Jason Levine</td>
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<td>Andrew McGuire</td>
<td>Executive Director</td>
<td>Trauma Foundation</td>
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<td>Janette Fennell</td>
<td>Founder and President</td>
<td>KidsAndCars.org</td>
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Beth Badger
Columbus, GA
Volunteer, Truck Safety Coalition
Daughter of Bill Badger
Killed in truck crash 12/23/04

Marc Johnson
Hartwell, GA
Volunteer, Truck Safety Coalition
Brother of Curt Johnson
Killed in a truck crash 10/1/09

Warren Huffman
Odessa, MI
Volunteer, Truck Safety Coalition
Brother of Tim Huffman
Killed in a truck crash 5/6/13

Bruce King
Davisburg, MI
Volunteer, Truck Safety Coalition
Son-in-law of Bill Badger
Killed in truck crash 12/23/04

Jackie Novak
Hendersonville, NC
Volunteer, Truck Safety Coalition
Mother of Charles “Chuck” Novak
Killed in a truck crash 10/24/10

Alan Dana
Plattsburgh, NY
Volunteer, Truck Safety Coalition
Son of Janet Dana, Uncle of Caitlyn & Lauryn Dana, Brother-in-law of Laurie Dana
Killed in a truck crash 7/19/12

Monica Malarczyk
Hastings-on-Hudson, NY
Volunteer, Truck Safety Coalition
Injured in a truck crash 12/29/15
Daughter of Ryszard and Anita Malarczyk
Killed in a truck crash 12/29/15

Vickie Johnson
Hartwell, GA
Volunteer, Truck Safety Coalition
Wife of Curt Johnson, Step-mother of Crystal Johnson
Killed in a truck crash 10/1/09

Kate Brown
Gurnee, IL
Volunteer, Truck Safety Coalition
Mother of Graham Brown
Injured in a truck crash 5/2/05

Tammy Huffman
Odessa, MI
Volunteer, Truck Safety Coalition
Sister-in-law of Tim Huffman
Killed in a truck crash 5/6/13

Lisa Shrum
Fayette, MO
Volunteer, Truck Safety Coalition
Daughter of Virginia Baker, Step-daughter of Randy Baker
Killed in a truck crash 10/10/06

Paul Badger
Davidson, NC
Volunteer, Truck Safety Coalition
Son of Bill Badger
Killed in truck crash 12/23/04

Peter Malarczyk
Hastings-on-Hudson, NY
Volunteer, Truck Safety Coalition
Injured in a truck crash 12/29/15
Son of Ryszard and Anita Malarczyk
Killed in a truck crash 12/29/15
Amy Fletcher
Perrysburg, OH
Volunteer, Truck Safety Coalition
Wife of John Fletcher
Killed in a truck crash 1/24/12

Michelle Novak
Delevan, NY
Volunteer, Truck Safety Coalition
Aunt of Charles “Chuck” Novak
Killed in a truck crash 10/24/10

Laurie Higginbotham
Memphis, TN
Volunteer, Truck Safety Coalition
Mother of Michael Higginbotham
Killed in a truck crash, 11/18/14

Kim Telep
Harrisburg, PA
Volunteer, Truck Safety Coalition
Wife of Bradley Telep
Killed in a truck crash 8/29/12

Ashley McMillan
Memphis, TN
Volunteer, Truck Safety Coalition
Girlfriend of Michael Higginbotham
Killed in a truck crash 11/18/14

Randall Higginbotham
Memphis, TN
Volunteer, Truck Safety Coalition
Father of Michael Higginbotham
Killed in a truck crash, 11/18/14

Debra Cruz
Harlingen, TX
Volunteer, Truck Safety Coalition
Injured in a truck crash 8/8/08

Cindy Southern
Cleveland, TN
Volunteer, Truck Safety Coalition
Wife of James Whitaker, sister-in-law Anthony Hixon and aunt of Amber Hixon
Killed in a truck crash 9/18/09

Sandra Lance
Chesterfield, VA
Volunteer, Truck Safety Coalition
Mother of Kristen Belair
Killed in a truck crash 8/26/09

Wanda Lindsay
New Braunfels, TX
Volunteer, Truck Safety Coalition
Wife of John Lindsay
Killed in a truck crash 5/7/10

Marchelle Wood
Falls Church, VA
Volunteer, Truck Safety Coalition
Mother of Dana Wood
Killed in a truck crash 10/15/02

Frank Wood
Falls Church, VA
Volunteer, Truck Safety Coalition
Father of Dana Wood
Killed in a truck crash 10/15/02

Jane Mathis
St. Augustine, FL
Vice President, TSC
Board Member, PATT
Mother of David Mathis
Mother-in-Law of Mary Kathryn Mathis
Killed in a truck crash 3/25/04

Morgan Lake
Sunderland, MD
Volunteer, Truck Safety Coalition
Injured in a truck crash 7/19/13
Larry Liberatore  
Severn, MD  
Board Member, PATT  
Father of Nick Liberatore  
Killed in a truck crash 6/9/97

Melissa Gouge  
Washington, D.C.  
Volunteer, Truck Safety Coalition  
Cousin of Amy Corbin  
Killed in a truck crash 8/18/97

Christina Mahaney  
Jackman, ME  
Volunteer, Truck Safety Coalition  
Mother of Liam Mahaney  
Killed in a truck crash 7/19/11

Linda Wilburn  
Weatherford, OK  
Board Member, PATT  
Mother of Orbie Wilburn  
Killed in a truck crash 9/2/02

Julie Branon Magnan  
South Burlington, VT  
Volunteer, Truck Safety Coalition  
Injured in a truck crash 01/31/02  
Wife of David Magnan  
Killed in a truck crash 01/31/02

cc: Members of the Committee on Transportation and Infrastructure