



**Owner-Operator Independent Drivers Association, Inc.**

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February 13, 2018

The Honorable Elaine Chao  
Secretary  
U.S. Department of Transportation  
1200 New Jersey Avenue SE  
Washington, DC 20590

The Honorable Cathy Gautreaux  
Deputy Administrator  
Federal Motor Carrier Safety Administration  
1200 New Jersey Avenue SE  
Washington, DC 20590

Dear Secretary Chao and Deputy Administrator Gautreaux:

The Owner-Operator Independent Drivers Association (OOIDA) hereby petitions the U.S. Department of Transportation (DOT) to initiate a rulemaking to amend the federal hours-of-service (HOS) regulations in §49 CFR 395.3.

OOIDA is the largest trade association representing the views of small-business truckers and professional truck drivers. We have more than 160,000 members nationwide who collectively own and operate more than 240,000 individual heavy-duty trucks and trailers. An overwhelming majority of our members are subject to the HOS regulations in §49 CFR 395.3.

OOIDA is involved in all aspects of highway safety on a local, state, and federal level. Our mission is to promote and protect the interests of all truck drivers on any issue that might impact highway safety or their working conditions and economic well-being.

Trucking is heavily regulated and many of the regulations are strictly enforced. Yet, highway safety is getting worse, not better. Perhaps it's time for a new approach, one that involves more input from truckers with millions of miles of safe driving experience, and less input from those with little to no experience behind the wheel of a truck.

Over the years, DOT has significantly changed the HOS regulations. The current regulations are overly complex, provide no flexibility, and in no way reflect the physical capabilities or limitations of individual drivers. They force drivers to be on the road when they are tired or fatigued, during busy travel times and adverse weather and road conditions, or when they simply aren't feeling well. In short, the current HOS regulations force truckers to comply with a regulatory framework that jeopardizes their safety and the safety of the traveling public.

If DOT truly wants to improve highway safety, it should consider amending the existing HOS regulations as follows:

1. Allow drivers to take a rest break once per 14-hour duty period for up to 3 consecutive hours as long as the driver is off-duty. This rest break would effectively stop the 14-hour clock. However, drivers would still need to log ten consecutive hours off duty before the start of their next work shift.
2. Eliminate the 30-minute rest break requirement. There are many operational situations where the 30-minute rest break requires drivers to stop when they simply do not need to. In addition, if drivers are allowed to stop the 14-hour clock for up to 3 consecutive hours, the 30-minute rest break is redundant and unnecessary.

Providing drivers with more flexible hours-of-service regulations will improve highway safety, contrary to what anti-trucking advocates might believe. The federal HOS should foster safe driving habits, not prevent them. We believe DOT has regulatory authority to docket our petition, initiate a rulemaking, and amend the federal HOS. On behalf of our members, we urge you to do the right thing.

Thank you for your consideration of our petition. Please contact me directly at (816) 229-5791 should you have any questions.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Todd Spencer". The signature is fluid and cursive, with a large, sweeping "T" and a long, trailing "c" at the end.

Todd Spencer  
Acting President, OOIDA