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Docket no. FMCSA-97-23650
Docket Clerk
Room PI-401
400 Seventh Street, SW
Washington, D.C. 20590-0001

FMCSA-97-2350-21554

To Whom It May Concern:

I would like to take a moment of your time to voice my opinion on an issue of great importance to me. I am a professional truck driver and I am very concerned about the Proposed Rule Changes for Hours of service FMCSA-97-2350. As an owner-operator employed by a company of about 100 trucks, I foresee this rule having a devastating effect on my livelihood.

The reason I say this is because some of the specific requirements of the proposal are an unwarranted violation of my right to privacy. The black box for instance, is totally unwanted and unnecessary. There is no justification for it. Considering that in all fatal accidents involving a truck, only 25-28% of them were the truck drivers fault. The rest a vast majority, were caused by a smaller vehicle. Why not mandate black boxed for those drivers instead?

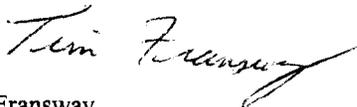
Another problem I have with this proposal is the total hours I am allowed to work. Currently I can work 70 hours in eight days. The proposal would have me only working 60 hours in seven days. The laws we are currently using were written 65 years ago. Written when there was no interstate. When there was no power steering. When there was no air-conditioning. When there were no anti-lock brakes. Sixty-five years ago, the trucks were not near as safe as they are today, but instead of being rewarded for this improvement in safety, we are being punished.

Ten continuous hours off duty is unrealistic. Say for instance that I rest for eight hours and then need to drive again, I would get no credit for the eight hours of sleep, a full nights sleep. I would then have to take another 10-hour break later on. Being able to break up my break in more than one session would solve this problem. This would also help alleviate the shortage of parking spaces in America. The more time we have to sit around, the more parking spots that will be in use.

Possibly the worse part of the new proposal is the mandatory weekend. Unless my workweek is perfectly timed, I will have to take 56 consecutive hours off, over two and third days off. No other profession is forced to take half of their Fridays off. And even worse, if I am a few hours away from home, I would not be allowed an exception to get home,. I would be forced to park where I am and sit there for a whole weekend, unless I could get a ride to my home. This isn't right.

If this proposal is left as it is, it will take money out of the driver's pocket and not allow me to make a decent living. This will force a lot of truck drivers to find a new job. Many drivers, such as myself will be forced to find new occupations, unless we saw a vast increase in freight charges. This would not be good for our economy. This will be a major problem since the majority of freight in this country is moved by truck, I see major problems happening in the near future. The trucking industry is safer today than it has ever been, and we are only improving. Please don't punish us for doing a good job.

Sincerely,



Tim Fransway
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