

The new Hours of Service regulations which came into effect October 2005 leave a great deal to be desired. The main complaint is the split sleeper rule which maintains that it must be taken in an 8 and 2 hour split with the two hour counting as part of the 14 hour work criteria. Most drivers don't use the split sleeper rule, because it does count against the 14. Most drivers don't understand it and don't even attempt to use it. I understand that some people feel that we all must have 8 hours of uninterrupted sleep and have even done studies to prove their point. I only sleep 8 hours if I've had a very hard day and normally get by with 5 (ever since the Marine Corps showed me that I functioned better and that was 1964). Rich Clemente of Federal Motor Carrier Administration tells me this rule was developed after comprehensive research and studies of sleep and fatigue. Scientific studies always tickle me because according to such a study; bumble bees can't fly. The bumble bee, not being very scientific, just keeps flying. Prior to this change of rules I could drive five hours, take a nap for five and drive again or change up this combination, as long as the breaks always added up to at least 10 hours and my driving periods did not exceed 11 hours. A driver could schedule a break if he happened to be approaching a city or congested area at rush hour, removing a vehicle from traffic and reducing the stress on the driver.

Under the current rule many drivers are pushing themselves to drive 11 hours, even though their bodies and common sense says stop. The rest areas and truck stops are bedlam and crowded at night forcing many drivers to stop on off/on ramps to sleep. DOT officers I've spoken to on this subject can't understand the reasoning and state that it should have been left alone. For it was simple to understand and regulate. I ask that you return to pre-Oct. 2005 regulations. In short the revised regulations puts undo stress on traffic, facilities, DOT and the driver.