

Statement of Daphne Izer
May 18, 2016

Good morning, my name is Daphne Izer and I am from Lisbon, Maine. On October 10, 1993, a Walmart truck driver fell asleep at the wheel of his 80,000 lb. rig and crashed into my son, Jeff, and his friends. As a result of this horrific crash, four beautiful teenagers, Jeff, Angie, Dawn Marie, and Katie were killed. One friend, Linda, survived with serious, permanent injuries. Five families suffered incomparable personal loss as a result of a single tired trucker. After the crash, I founded Parents Against Tired Truckers (PATT) to work with other families of truck crash victims and survivors to secure safety reforms that were so badly needed within the industry.

Unfortunately, PATT has now been in existence for over 20 years and the problem of truck driver fatigue is still a major cause of crashes. I look forward to the day when there are no more crashes, deaths and injuries because truck drivers are being pushed beyond their limits. Unfortunately, one of the champions of corporate trucking interests who are working to repeal and roll back truck safety rules is Senator Susan Collins, my Senator. She is doing everything she can to indulge, aid, and accommodate the trucking industry. She has put the trucking industry in the driver's seat to decide and write the safety rules of the road. For the third consecutive year, she has inserted anti-safety language into an annual government spending bill to promote industry's profits, and the public is paying the price. This is special interest, backdoor politics at its very worst and a major reason the public has lost confidence and trust in our elected officials. I urge Congress to reject the special interest anti-safety riders in the House and Senate transportation appropriations bills.

Truck drivers need fewer, not more, hours behind the wheel, and they deserve a weekend off for rest and recovery. This spending bill should not be loaded down with industry hand-outs. I call on Congress to stop burying special interest favors in spending bills while mothers like me bury our children because of the trucking industry's greed.