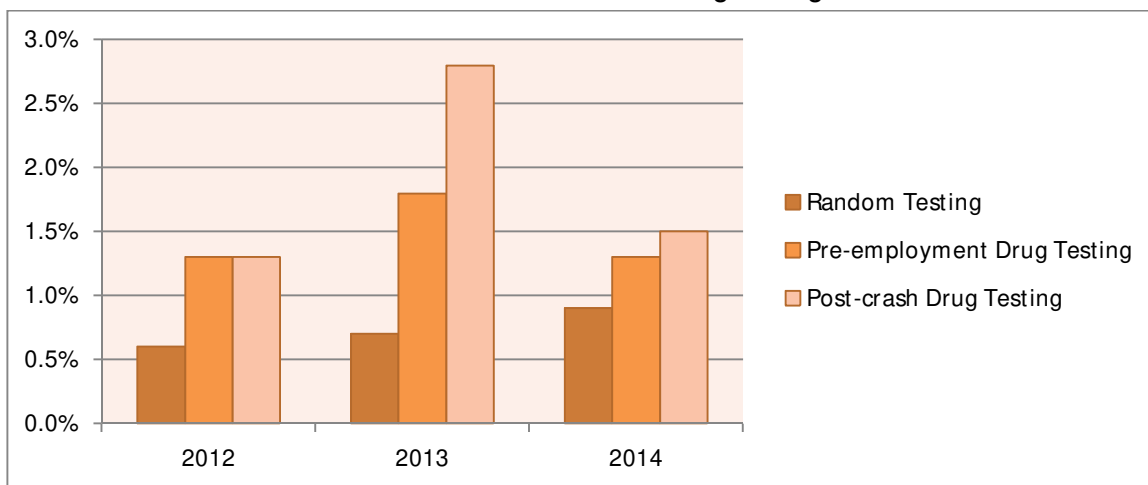


On October 28, 2016, members of the Trucking Alliance petitioned the Federal Motor Carrier Safety Administration to exempt certain large motor carriers to allow hair analysis in lieu of the standardized urine test as required by 49 CFR Part 382.

Although the Trucking Alliance claims that hair testing is a safety issue, the facts clearly demonstrate that their petition is a solution in search of a problem. In 2015, there were 32,166 fatal motor vehicle crashes in the United States. The driver of a large truck, which is defined as a truck with a gross vehicle weight rating greater than 10,000 pounds, was recorded for at least one positive drug test result in 185 of those crashes, or 0.58%, according to data reported by FMCSA.<sup>1</sup> While any fatality is too many, it is doubtful that any alternative testing methodology will reduce that percentage. In addition, because the positive rate for controlled substances random testing fell below 1.0% in FMCSA's Management Information System, the Agency lowered the minimum annual percentage rate for random controlled substance testing from 50% to 25% in 2016.<sup>2</sup>

**Random and Non-Random Drug Testing<sup>3</sup>**



The Trucking Alliance has yet to demonstrate that they have experienced a reduction in crash rate since their voluntary adoption of hair testing, neither have they presented evidence showing that their hair testing labs meet the rigorous standards of scientific methodology for testing or that their hair testing equipment and protocol has been consistent and unbiased. Studies have indicated that hair testing for controlled substances has a bias toward hair color and texture, particularly for those individuals with darker hair. Other issues with hair testing which have yet to be addressed include the problem that different individuals grow hair at different rates and that it takes much longer for metabolites to appear in hair than in urine. Until these issues are more adequately addressed and sufficiently researched by the Substance Abuse and Mental Health Services Administration, any exemption to replace the federally mandated and scientifically validated urine testing is inappropriate at this time.

<sup>1</sup> *Large Truck and Bus Crash Facts 2015*, FMCSA (2017), pg. 102

<sup>2</sup> <https://www.fmcsa.dot.gov/newsroom/fmcsa-announces-controlled-substances-random-testing-rate-calendar-year-2017>

<sup>3</sup> [http://ntl.bts.gov/lib/60000/60300/60335/16-005\\_b\\_-Drug\\_and\\_Alcohol\\_Survey\\_2014-FINAL-508C.pdf](http://ntl.bts.gov/lib/60000/60300/60335/16-005_b_-Drug_and_Alcohol_Survey_2014-FINAL-508C.pdf)