

## Trucker Reality

By OOFI • Apr 12, 2023

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Here we go again. Speed limiters for commercial vehicles: Myth and Facts.

### Speed Limiters: The Snake Oil Cure



In the old westerns, I remember the snake oil salesmen who would travel around selling magic elixirs that would cure just about any illness and/or drive out evil spirits.

It seems to me that FMCSA and NHTSA have tried to convince the trucking industry that speed limiters will cure the rise in crashes and fatalities involving large trucks, saying, “Not only will speed limiters reduce crashes, but it will also:

- Improve congestion on the highways,
- Lessen our dependence on foreign oil,
- Help the environment, and
- Level the playing field for all trucking companies

**In the words** of the country western song, “...if you'll buy that, I'll throw in the golden gate bridge in free.”

**The bottom line:** we'll give a number of facts surrounding each of these “supposed” benefits in the corresponding sections below.

### Congestion Facts



1. Speed limiters will slow down traffic and create a situation where people entering the highway or exiting will try and beat the truck as it is going slower.
2. The traffic in at least one of the lanes will only be going as fast as the slowest truck in that lane, which create a “leap-frog” situation increasing the likelihood of a crash and increasing congestion.
3. On all highways, vehicles traveling 10 mph below the posted speed limit will increase the frequency of interactions 227% (University of Arkansas study).
4. As the speed of the individual vehicle deviates from the mean traffic speed, the number of interactions increases (FMCSA study).

### Lessen our dependence on foreign oil fact:



1. Speed variance in traffic flow has an effect on fuel efficiency when both trucks and automobiles decelerate and accelerate to maneuver around slower traffic.
2. Cummins found that the most important recommendation for improving fuel economy of heavy trucks was aerodynamics after 50 mph.
3. Deierlien in his study found that the most important fuel economy variable was the driver, who controls the idle time, vehicle speed, braking, etc.

### Green house gas reduction facts



1. It's partially true that going slower will increase mpg, but the fact the truck will be on the road longer helps negate that advantage.
2. As any truck driver will tell you, automobiles will accelerate at a much faster rate to pass a speed limited truck going slower than the posted speed limit.
3. Trucks will be using lower gears much more in order to climb hills, which uses more fuel and produces more greenhouse gases.

### Level the playing field for all trucking companies facts



1. This is like David and Goliath, with Goliath wanting to restrict David from using his slingshot as this gives him an undue advantage.
2. If we are going to level the playing field, will the large carriers give up their fuel, maintenance, and buying discounts? Will they give up their tax write-offs all for the sake of leveling the playing field?
3. There of course will be less pay for the drivers if they get paid by the mile or by the load.

Since we know that it is more likely that the 4-wheelers are to blame for a crash involving a large truck wouldn't it seem more logical to step up enforcement on the 4-wheelers and their interaction with large trucks?

When a crash does occur, the severity of a crash is greater for a higher truck speed due to simple physics. The important objective is to reduce the potential exposure to crashes by minimizing the interactions among vehicles with smooth traffic flow.

If you want to comment to FMCSA contact OOIDA for who to contact in D.C to express your concerns.

#### Feedback

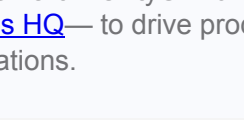
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