

Proposed Legislation would mandate EOBRs

Senate Bill still needs Congressional approval

Proposed legislation being debated in the U.S. Senate would require that electronic on-board recorders (EOBRs) be used on all trucks and buses engaged in interstate commerce, in addition to strengthening other safety mandates.

U.S. Senators Frank R. Lautenberg, Chairman of the Senate Commerce Subcommittee on Surface Transportation, and John D. Rockefeller IV (D-WV), Chairman of the Senate Commerce Committee, introduced the Commercial Motor Vehicle Safety Enhancement Act, a bill that reauthorizes the Federal Motor Carrier Safety Administration (FMCSA) and toughens federal truck and bus safety standards.

The authors claim that the Commercial Motor Vehicle Safety Enhancement Act takes critical steps to ensure only the safest motor carriers and drivers are able to enter the industry, improve the safety laws governing current carriers and drivers, and increase FMCSA's enforcement tools to remove unsafe and unfit drivers and carriers from the industry.

If passed, the bill would:

- Require EOBRs used on all trucks and buses used in interstate commerce in order to improve driver's compliance with hours-of-service rules;
- Improve the FMCSA's registration process by requiring applicants to pass a safety examination and submit a safety management plan as a precondition for operating authority;
- Bolster the FMCSA's ability to crack down on "reincarnated" carriers – those that attempt to resume operations after being put out of service – by increasing the agency's ability to revoke carriers' operating authority and by requiring new operators to disclose all relationships with other motor carriers over the past five years as a condition of receiving operating authority; and
- Direct the Department of Transportation to support the FMCSA's implementation of its Compliance, Safety, Accountability enforcement program, which will increase its oversight of the truck and bus industry and give it the authority to assess the safety fitness of drivers to further identify safe drivers.