

**United States Senate  
Commerce, Science and Transportation  
Subcommittee on Surface Transportation and Merchant Marine Infrastructure, Safety and Security**

**Statement of**

**Jerry Moyes  
Chairman Emeritus,  
Swift Transportation Company**

Chairman Fischer, Ranking Member Booker and distinguished members of the subcommittee, thank you for the opportunity to testify about “Continuing to Improve Safety on our Nation’s Highways.” My name is Jerry Moyes and I am the founder of Swift Transportation. Today I serve on its board of directors and as Chairman Emeritus.

I started Swift 50 years ago driving a single truck. From the beginning safety has been critical to our success and growth. Just one accident is one too many. Today we are the largest truckload carrier in North America. This achievement was possible because of our culture of Safety First. Headquartered in Phoenix, Arizona, Swift operates in 48 states, Mexico and Canada. Safety is the key to our success and a top priority in our operations.

We operate about 18,000 trucks and generate over \$4 billion in annual revenue. The fore-hire and private carriage truckload sector accounts for approximately 75% of all U.S. freight, measured by revenue. The next largest share is rail at about 8.5% followed by the less than truckload, or LTL, share at about 6.3%<sup>1</sup>. Truckload carriers are by far the most common trucks you see on the road. We mostly operate tractors pulling single 53-foot-trailers.

At Swift we believe safety is the responsibility of every level of management, from the Chief Executive Officer to every driver who gets behind the wheel. It is the responsibility of all managers to maintain high standards in employee selection and to provide a safe working environment, including continuous safety training, adhering to Company safety policies and procedures, and complying with federal, state, and local safety, health and environmental laws and regulations.

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<sup>1</sup> American Trucking Associations, US Freight Forecast to 2027, Published 2016

Safety at Swift is no accident. Simply put, safety makes good business sense. We don't wait for the government to pass laws requiring safety improvements. Swift has a long track record of going above and beyond to provide our drivers with the safest equipment available. Here are just a few examples of how we have pioneered safety practices

- In the late 1980's we installed trip recorders to monitor speed compliance at 57mph.
- We established in-house safety lanes where complete safety inspections are performed while a truck is fueled. Think of it like a NASCAR pit stop.
- We shortened our stopping distances by improving our brakes and using ABS braking systems.
- We stopped using double 28-foot-trailers, which were less safe than singles, once single 53-foot-trailers were permitted nationwide. Once again, our experience is double 28s are less safe than single 53 foot trailers which is consistent with national data.<sup>2</sup>
- We put reflective markings on our trailers long before they were required.
- In the 1990s the advent of electronic engines gave us the ability to govern the speed of our trucks at 62 mph.
- We pioneered using satellite communications in our trucks to improve safety and efficiency.
- In 2006 we developed a driver risk analysis system that identifies safe drivers.
- At the same time we deployed driver simulators to improve driving skills and reinforce safe behavior.
- In 2007 we added vehicle stability control to all of our new trucks. We coupled this technology with our Qualcomm on board communication system, which allows us to receive critical event messages in real time. This allows us to quickly review with drivers the behaviors that trigger critical events. Once again, we led the industry in this safety practice.
- We deployed electronic logs in 2010, a full 7 years ahead of the government mandate.
- In 2013 we began ordering all new trucks – known as Smart Trucks – with sophisticated collision avoidance and lane departure systems.

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<sup>2</sup> The 2000 US DOT Comprehensive Truck Size and Weight Study found that multi-trailer trucks, primarily double trailer trucks, experienced an 11% higher overall fatal crash rate than single trailer combinations (vol. 3, pg. VIII -5).

- Less than two years ago we installed windshield-mounted cameras that activate and record when a critical event occurs.

I will repeat, we made these changes to improve safety for our drivers and the public because it made business sense and it was the right thing to do, not because we were required by the government.

The trucking industry, led by groups like the Truckload Carriers Association and the American Trucking Associations, is committed to continually improving safety. For the record, the trucking industry annually invests at least \$9.5 billion in safety. These investments include technologies, training, driver safety incentives, and compliance with safety regulations.<sup>3</sup> Success in trucking is the ability to deliver freight from point A to point B and to do so safely.

There is no place for drug or alcohol use in trucking. Swift supports the use of hair follicle testing, which is the most effective test for identifying a broad spectrum of drugs. The industry's alcohol use violation rate for 2014 was just .08% (i.e. eight-hundredth of one percent).<sup>4</sup> The rate for drugs in 2014 was 0.9% (i.e., less than 1%).<sup>5</sup> In 2015 only 2% of large-truck drivers involved in fatal crashes had a blood alcohol concentration (BAC) of .08 grams per deciliter (g/dl).<sup>6</sup> These results are attributable to the industry's commitment to put safety first, with no tolerance for drugs or alcohol in the cabs of our trucks. Results such as these have placed Swift and like-minded carriers at the forefront of the industry.

Several weeks ago Chris Lofgren from Schneider National appeared before this subcommittee. He did an excellent job describing key safety initiatives and successful results. Swift supports their testimony 100%. While preparing for this meeting I reviewed the Insurance Institute for Highway Safety's website and discovered that Swift is perfectly aligned with their safety initiatives. In fact, some of our fleet of 60,000 trailers are testing bumpers for rear under ride guards that meet the standards specified by the IIHS's Tough Guard Award.

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<sup>3</sup> ATA's Safety Investment Study 2016, <http://www.trucking.org/>

<sup>4</sup> Results from the 2014 Drug and Alcohol Testing Survey, Federal Motor Carrier Safety Administration, October 2016, [https://ntl.bts.gov/lib/60000/60300/60335/16-005\\_b\\_-\\_Drug\\_and\\_Alcohol\\_Survey\\_2014-FINAL-508C.pdf](https://ntl.bts.gov/lib/60000/60300/60335/16-005_b_-_Drug_and_Alcohol_Survey_2014-FINAL-508C.pdf)

<sup>5</sup> Ibid

<sup>6</sup> Quick Facts 2015, National Highway Traffic Safety Administration, December 2016, <https://crashstats.nhtsa.dot.gov/Api/Public/ViewPublication/812348>.

Friends, motorists and public officials often compliment me on our drivers' behavior. Swift trucks stand out because our drivers stay in the slow lane, observe speed limits and are courteous.

At Swift we are always looking for ways to improve highway safety for our drivers and the public. The last thing we want to do is make our operation less safe. I have heard Double 33 foot trailers described as the key to improved productivity, but we are not willing to trade safety for productivity. Based on our experience we have learned that single trailers are safer than doubles. I'm all for improving productivity and, if the committee is interested, I am happy to share my ideas on ways our industry can be more productive without compromising safety or causing further damage to the highway infrastructure.

Chairman Fischer, Ranking Member Booker and other distinguished members of the subcommittee, thank you again for the opportunity to testify and provide Swift Transportation's perspective on increasing safety.