

Statement of Anne Ferro
Nominee, Federal Motor Carrier Safety Administrator
before the
U.S. Senate Committee on Commerce, Science, and Transportation
September 23, 2009

Thank you Chairman Rockefeller, Ranking Member Hutchison and Members of the Committee for the chance to appear before you today. I am honored that the President has nominated me to the position of Federal Motor Carrier Safety Administrator and am grateful to Secretary LaHood for his support. Deep thanks to the friends and family who have joined me, in particular my wonderful husband and children – Dan, Finley and Packy Ferro – my sister and brother in law, Didi Schanche and Todd Shields, and in absentia my brother Don Jr. and my late parents Don and Marybelle Schanche.

In appearing before you, I hope to share my goals to achieve significant gains in commercial vehicle safety and to answer any questions you may have.

Beginning with the Peace Corps 30 years ago, I have spent most of my career in state and local government. Six of those years were in the legislative branch and 11 the executive branch, with the last 7 as Maryland's Motor Vehicle Administrator. As Administrator, I led the MVA to significant gains in customer service and safety including a strong graduated licensing program for new drivers.

For the past 6 years, I have served as President of the Maryland Motor Truck Association where I've learned a great deal about the commercial vehicle industry. My professional success along the way has rested on the guiding principles of fairness, integrity, teamwork, respect for others and hard work. I am a public servant at heart with a passion for highway safety and a commitment to good government.

The Federal Motor Carrier Safety Administration's mandate is to reduce the incidence and severity of crashes involving trucks and buses. This has proven to be a daunting challenge in a multi-sector industry where segments of it have such low barriers to entry that competition for business is sometimes characterized as a race to the bottom. But it's a challenge we can and must overcome, and strategies to do so have been recommended by a wide range of stakeholders including agency personnel, the National Transportation Safety Board, the agency's own Inspector General, survivors advocacy groups, law enforcement agencies, the best drivers, owner operators, and motor carrier companies. Measures that work have been demonstrated and the strong safety records of the drivers and carriers who use them give witness to their effectiveness.

Yet, every other hour someone in our country is killed in a crash with a truck or motor coach and hundreds are injured. If it happens to someone close to you it's intolerable – we shouldn't have to wait for that possibility. Whoever leads this agency must foster frank discussions about the fundamentals in the freight supply chain and motor coach

industries that encourage participants to push the limits and put the driving public and other commercial drivers at risk. Uncompensated time, compensation by the mile or load, professional drivers classified as laborers – these are all aspects of a supply-chain model that rewards squeezing transportation costs out of the equation; factors that shift the cost onto the driving public and professional driver.

The Administrator must take the lead in raising questions and opening up the discussion if we are to realize a commercial vehicle industry where the safest drivers and safest motor carriers are the most competitive, not the other way around. Furthermore, the agency must get on with considering a universal electronic on board recorder rule, improving the Hours of Service rule, rolling out tougher standards for entry, implementing effective identification and sanctioning high risk carriers.

Mr. Chairman and Members of the Committee, should I be confirmed, I am committed to working with you and your staff on these difficult and vitally important challenges. Thank you for your consideration. I'll be pleased to answer any questions you may have.