
Speed Limiter Proposal Close to Being Released

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According to United States Transportation Secretary Anthony Foxx, a speed limiter proposal for tractor-trailers is scheduled to be released on April 22, 2016. The rule, originally announced by the Department of Transportation (DOT) in March 2014, would apply to trucks weighing over 27,000 pounds and traveling on roads with a speed limit of at least 55 miles per hour. While the DOT has not indicated at what speed the trucks would be limited, previous proposals have limited speeds to 68 mph.

Media outlets report that a speed limiter would be relatively easy for trucking companies to implement within their fleets as the capability for such a limitation already exists on the current electronic control modules contained in the trucks. However, given the number of different makes, models, and years of trucks and engines on the road today, it is unclear what additional parts, labor, or expense may be required once the rule is finalized.

Senator Susan Collins (R, Maine), the force behind the recent legislation suspending the 1 a.m. to 5 a.m. restart provision, is also pressing the National Highway Traffic Safety Administration and the Federal Motor Carrier Safety Administration to move forward with the speed limiter rule given the extended delay. Proponents of the rule argue that it will reduce highway fatalities by eliminating approximately 1,115 fatal crashes. Importantly, the rule has the support of the American Trucking Association and Road Safe America, as well as a number of national motor carriers.

When the rule is finally released, there will likely be a number of logistical and training issues for motor carriers surrounding its implementation. For more information regarding the proposed speed limiter rule, and to discuss its potential impact on motor carriers, please contact David Senter or another of our Transportation attorneys.

Sources:

Transport Topics

Claims Journal

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