

STOP UnderRides!: A DIFFERENT STRATEGY TO ACHIEVE UNDERRIDE PROTECTION For Such A Time As This

Why, you might ask, would we write a piece of legislation calling for a **comprehensive** underride protection rule? Why not have separate bills for side underride and rear underride and front underride and Single Unit Trucks (SUTs), et cetera?

I am convinced of the importance of this strategy and want to share some of my thoughts here: [Why COMPREHENSIVE Underride Protection Legislation?](#) and below.

What can we discover from past attitudes or strategies to address underride deaths?

1. Fragmented
2. Various aspects of underride protection were treated as separate, unrelated issues
3. Various stakeholders worked in isolation rather than collaboratively
4. Waited for industry to take initiative (or express approval)
5. Not addressed with a sense of urgency
6. Statistical and cost/benefit analysis was flawed and inaccurate and inappropriately undervalued human life and health by putting expenses of providing improved safety on a par with lost lives.
7. Conspiracy of silence regarding deaths due to preventable vehicle violence with the result that too often too little was done too late to save lives.
8. Solutions did not always take into account all aspects of the system, including the crashworthiness of the passenger vehicle or the potential of energy absorption on the large truck.
9. A blaming the victim attitude too often overshadowed the responsibility of the industry to take action and find ways to make trucks safer to be on the road in order to protect vulnerable road users.
10. Confusion about how to solve the problem, along with other factors, may have contributed to inertia to do anything about it.
11. Multiple layers of responsibility has too easily led to No One taking responsibility. (GM Nod)
12. For whatever reason, there have been few R & D resources devoted to this issue.
13. Data has been limited or hidden, partially due to misunderstanding of the problem and lack of training for enforcement officials to identify the role of underride in truck crashes.
14. Isolated incidents of underride may have hidden the immensity of this obscure tragedy.
15. Skepticism about the possibility of technologically and practically feasible solutions has been an obstacle to wholehearted commitment to necessary R & D.
16. Concerns about potential liability may have caused resistance to acknowledge the issue.
17. The competitive nature of the industry may have contributed to a lack of cooperative effort to deal with a deadly design.

I wrote that while sitting outside the Duke Integrative Medicine Center. When I finished, I went inside and picked up a book called, [Hippocrates' Shadow](#) , which talks about what happens in the medical field when the problems of ineffective treatments are not openly discussed. This phrase jumped out at me: "With full knowledge and ample evidence that it doesn't work, we do it anyway." (by David H. Newman, MD, p. 25) And the author referred to one of the reasons that the problems don't get addressed being, "a culture of conformity, inertia, and malpractice paranoia." Well said. . .

In fact, the development of a **COMPREHENSIVE** approach to taking care of the truck underride problem was probably first planted in my mind at the Underride Roundtable on May 5, 2016, with **the suggestion of a member of the trucking industry.**

Read about that here, including the subsequent actions that resulted in a Comprehensive Underride Consensus Petition which a group of us submitted to Secretary Foxx at DOT on September 23, 2016, and upon which the [Roya, AnnaLeah & Mary Comprehensive Underride Protection Act of 2017](#) is based.

- [Avoid an impasse: Follow-up Underride Roundtable with Negotiated Rulemaking Meeting](#) , May 21, 2016 It is my hope that we can pursue **a recommendation, made by a participant** of the [Underride Roundtable](#) during the afternoon [panel discussion](#) , and organize a group of affected individuals and [organizations/companies](#) to meet together and develop a proposal to take to NHTSA in order to bring about **a comprehensive negotiated rulemaking** . I am willing to do the organizing necessary to bring this meeting about. First of all, we need a location for the meeting and therefore I am asking if anyone would like to **step forward and host this Negotiated Rulemaking Underride Roundtable**. Once that is arranged, then we can proceed with selecting a date, developing an agenda, and sending out the notice.

- [Underride Roundtable Phase 2: Crafting Recommendations to Present to NHTSA For Final Rule](#), May 23, 2016

- [Knights of the Underride Roundtable: Finding Some Common Ground to Protect Travelers!](#), June 27, 2016

- [Underride Roundtable led to Consensus Underride Recommendations for Submission to NHTSA](#), July 27, 2016

- [Underride Roundtable Led to Recommendations Submitted as a Consensus Public Comment to NHTSA](#), August 9, 2016

- [Underride Rulemaking: Will we get it right this time?!](#), February 9, 2016

- [Comprehensive Underride Consensus Petition Letter to DOT 20160923_1212](#), September 23, 2016

- [Clarification of the Requests in the Comprehensive Underride Consensus Petition](#)

It is not necessarily the initial collision in a truck/passenger vehicle crash which kills but the [Second Collision](#) which occurs. In fact, it is quite possible that, of the over 4,000 truck crash deaths which occur every year, many of them could be prevented if adequate comprehensive underride protection were on every single truck.

Underride protection does not prevent a collision but it can prevent the violent injuries and deaths which occur from the Second Collision of the truck into the Passenger Compartment.