



May 29, 2023

Pete Buttigieg, Secretary of Transportation
U.S. Department of Transportation
1200 New Jersey Ave., S.E.
Washington, DC 20590

Dear Secretary Buttigieg:

I am writing to you to petition the U.S. Department of Transportation to establish the Office of National Roadway Safety Ombudsman. I am convinced that a National Roadway Safety Ombudsman is the missing piece of the puzzle in the Department's mission to reduce roadway fatalities and injuries. It will provide an accessible means for victims and victim advocates to participate in timely Departmental action.

I am a truck crash survivor and mother of two daughters, AnnaLeah and her sister Mary, who died due to a truck underride crash. Since May 4, 2013, I have been advocating for comprehensive underride protection on large trucks in order to make truck crashes more survivable. In the process, I have learned that research and rulemaking activities are not transparent and that, despite my relentless efforts for ten years, people are still dying from preventable underride. Not only this, but there are many more traffic safety countermeasures that gather dust on the shelves as people continue to die on the roads.

The mission of this Office will be to address these shortcomings. The National Roadway Safety Ombudsman will ensure that the Department's National Roadway Safety Strategy policies and goals are implemented with a sense of urgency. The Ombudsman will provide a vigilant voice for victims of vehicle violence and act to harness the passion, energy, and knowledge of victim advocates to bring about the Department's safety mission in a more timely, effective, and efficient manner.

By granting this petition, you will be ensuring that the Department's National Roadway Safety Strategy is not empty rhetoric but marching orders for a collaborative team of dedicated federal servants and passionate victim advocates.

Respectfully,

Marianne Karth
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