

Summary of S. 554, the Motorcoach Enhanced Safety Act of 2009
As passed by the Senate Commerce, Science and Transportation Committee

Regulations that must be issued for new motorcoaches—

- (a) 1 year after enactment:
 - 1) **safety belts** be installed at each seating position;
 - 2) improved **roof crush** safety standard;
 - 3) installation of **anti-ejection advanced glazing** in each portal;
 - 4) equip motorcoaches with **rollover crash avoidance technology**;
 - 5) require **fire extinguishers and other available fire-fighting equipment**.
- (b) 2 years after enactment:
 - 1) **direct tire pressure monitoring systems**;
 - 2) **upgrade tire performance standard**.

Retrofit of Seat Belts on Existing Motorcoaches—

Secretary to determine whether to require retrofit of seat belts on motorcoaches built before the seat belt requirement took effect, based on an assessment of the feasibility, costs/benefits of seat belt retrofit. Feasibility study to be completed 2 years after seat belt final rule issues.

Fire Safety Standards (other than fire equipment):

- (a) Secretary to evaluate the following fire safety issues within 18 months:
 - 1) **flammability standard for exterior components**;
 - 2) **smoke suppression**;
 - 3) **resistance to wheel fires**;
 - 4) **passenger emergency evacuation** (evacuation designs/interior lighting);
 - 5) **automatic fire suppression**.
- (b) Secretary to issue new performance requirements for improved fire safety and passenger evacuation within 3 years after date of enactment.

Occupant Protection Standards (other and safety belts)—

- (a) Within 2 years of enactment the Secretary must complete research on interior occupant protection, compartmentalization safety countermeasures and collision avoidance systems.
- (b) Secretary must issue a standard or regulation within 2 years after the completion of each of the research initiatives on interior occupant protection, compartmentalization safety countermeasures and collision avoidance systems.

New Entrants Motorcoach Carriers—

- (a) Prohibits registration of new entrant motorcoach carriers until the new entrant
 - 1) undergoes a pre-authorization safety audit and demonstrates ability to comply with federal safety regulations,
 - 2) is interviewed to review safety management controls and written safety oversight policy;
 - 3) takes and passes written proficiency examination.
- (b) Requires safety reviews
 - 1) within 18 months (for all commercial vehicle carriers);
 - 2) within 9 months of commencing operations for motorcoach operators.
- (c) Requires pre-authorization safety review on-site within 90 days of the application for registration.

Reincarnated Motorcoach Carriers—

- (a) The Secretary is authorized to deny, suspend, amend or revoke DOT registration for a motor carrier that failed to disclose a material fact regarding its registration; and,
- (b) Employers are prohibited from using common ownership, management, control or family relationship to avoid, mask or conceal non-compliance or a history of non-compliance with motor carrier safety regulations

Oversight of Providers of Motorcoach Services—

- 1) within 3 years after enactment, the Secretary shall determine the safety fitness of all providers of motorcoach services;
- 2) the Secretary shall establish a process to review safety performance of each provider of motorcoach services on a regular basis following the assignment of a safety fitness rating;
- 3) the Secretary may organize special enforcement strike forces targeting providers of motorcoach services;
- 4) the Secretary shall reassess the safety fitness ratings for providers of motorcoach services every 3 years.

Driver Training for Motorcoach Drivers—

Within 18 months of enactment, the Secretary shall require that—

- 1) minimum curriculum requirements for entry-level motorcoach drivers and drivers seeking passenger-carrying endorsements to be adopted by public and private schools and motorcoach operators that provide training;
- 2) drivers must complete training prior to taking test for CDL passenger endorsement; and,
- 3) training schools to issue a certificate of completion of training and provide certificates to drivers seeking CDL passenger carrying endorsement and to state licensing authority;
- 4) state CDL licensing authorities to obtain certificates from training schools and drivers and compare both to prevent fraud;
- 5) state CDL licensing authorities shall refuse to administer the test if the two certificates do not match.

Improved CDL Testing for Drivers with Passenger Carrying Endorsement—

Within 6 months after the date of enactment the Secretary shall issue a final rule in the pending rulemaking on entry-level driver training that improves the stringency of the examination and includes a more stringent examination of driving skills necessary for the safe operation of for-hire passenger-carrying commercial motor vehicles.

Improved Oversight of Driver Physical Fitness/Medical Certificates:

- (a) Within 18 months of enactment the Secretary shall issue a rule requiring medical examiners to submit to the State licensing agency the medical form filled out by the examiner at the examination of the driver; and,
- (b) Require States licensing authorities to compare the forms received from the medical examiner with the form provided by the driver to determine the validity of the information in order to prevent fraud.

Safety and Enforcement Technology on Motorcoaches—

- (a) Electronic On-Board Recorders: Within 1 year of enactment the Secretary is directed to issue a regulation establishing performance requirements for EOBRs new motorcoaches.
- (b) Event Data Recorders: Secretary has one year to evaluate event data recorders and within 1 year after completing the evaluation shall issue a regulation establishing performance requirements for event data recorders on new motorcoaches.

Motorcoach Annual Safety Inspection Program—

The Secretary is to complete a rulemaking in 3 years from date of enactment that considers requiring states to conduct annual inspection of commercial motor vehicles designed to transport passengers, including assessment of the:

- 1) risks associated with improperly maintained or inspected vehicles;
- 2) effectiveness of current federal inspection standards in mitigating those risks; and,
- 3) the costs and benefits of a mandatory State inspection program.

Distracted Driving on Motorcoaches—

Within 1 year the Secretary is directed to issue a rule prescribing regulations on the use of electronic or wireless devices, including cell phones and other distracting devices and prohibits the use of such devices in circumstances that would interfere with the safe operation of a motorcoach but permits the use of such devices in emergencies.

Motorcoaches Rental/Leasing Companies—

Amends federal law to include owners or lessors of motorcoaches (commercial vehicles that transport more than 15 passengers) in the definition of “employer” for the purpose of delineating persons covered within the scope of the safety regulations issued under chapter 311 of title 49, U.S.C.



MOTORCOACH CRASHES & FIRES
December 2009

DATE	LOCATION	CRASH DESCRIPTION
12-06-09	Glen, NY	Motorcoach carrying the rock band Weezer slides on ice, hits the median and some reflective posts, crosses over the median, goes over a guardrail and lands in a ditch – 2 injured.
12-05-09	Casper, WY	Motorcoach crashes into an overturned tractor-trailer blocking Interstate 25 in central Wyoming.- 1 killed/at least 40 injured.
12-04-09	Greenville, SC	Motorcoach carrying South Carolina students home from a field trip runs off the road and into trees – 15 injured.
11-24-09	Oakland, CA	Motorcoach catches fire closing several westbound lanes along the eastern span of the Bay Bridge.
11-20-09	Richmond, VA	Motorcoach carrying Miley Cyrus' crew drifts off the road and overturns – 1 killed/9 injured.
11-18-09	Austin, MN	Motorcoach carrying mostly senior citizens swerves off the freeway and rolls into a ditch after the driver suffered an aneurysm – 2 killed/21 injured.
11-13-09	Warrensburg, NY	Motorcoach carrying more than 30 students from a Montreal College crashes through a guard rail and lands on the median on I-87 after the driver fell asleep at the wheel – 8 injured.
11-11-09	Chatham County, GA	Motorcoach fire begins in rear tire axle, engulfing the motorcoach in flames.
10-31-09	Henry County, GA	Motorcoach carrying Morehouse College marching band students skids off I-75 south near the I-675 merge, flips twice and comes to a rest on its side – over a dozen injured.
10-10-09	McCammon, ID	Motorcoach carrying 54 high school band students crashes. Band instructor grabbed the wheel when she saw the driver slumped forward and the motorcoach veering off the road. The band instructor is fatally injured in the crash and dozens are injured.
9-27-09	Tampa, FL	Motorcoach carrying church group from Sarasota to Gatlinburg, Tennessee involved in chain reaction crash– 14 taken to hospital.
9-21-09	Columbus, OH	Motorcoach carrying incoming college students crashes into a dump truck, severing the driver's right leg.
9-21-09	Cranbury, NJ	Motorcoach crashes into tractor-trailer along the New Jersey turnpike – 6 injured.
9-18-09	Plymouth Twp, MI	Motorcoach catches fire while traveling from Toronto to Chicago along westbound M-14.
9-13-09	Pleasantville, NJ	Motorcoach catches fire while driving along the westbound lanes of the Atlantic City Expressway, near exit 5.
9-06-09	Newburyport, MA	Motorcoach catches fire while traveling northbound from New England to Main along 1-95. The fire is believed to have been caused by a rear tire blowout.
9-02-09	Houston, TX	Motorcoach driver crashes into a concrete barrier on the North Freeway HOV lane, injuring 6.
8-17-09	Houston, TX	Motorcoach traveling from Laredo to Houston catches fire. Driver is ticketed for expired license.
8-04-09	Dodge County, WI	Motorcoach carrying Special Olympics athletes crashes into a guardrail and turns over - 8 injured.
7-30-09	Moberly, MO	Motorcoach carrying high school students catches fire after a tires blows out along Highway 63 - 2 injured.
7-16-09	Toledo, OH	Motorcoach pulls over on I-75 south after catching fire. The driver noticed smoke coming from the rear wheel well.
7-13-09	Riley County, KS	Motorcoach carrying job corps students is hit by a semi truck – at least 20 injured.
7-09-09	Lauderdale County, MS	Motorcoach carrying church youth blows tire, flips 3 times and lands on its side – 2 killed/27 injured.
7-05-09	Lake George, NY	Motorcoach rolls on its side and crashes into sledge rock on the left side of the highway – 1 killed/8 injured.
7-03-09	Madison, WI	Motorcoach carrying 80 passengers crashes along Highway 151 – 17 injured.
6-26-09	Toledo, OH	Motorcoach carrying high school youth orchestra strikes the back of a semi and crashes along I-80 – at least 1 injured.
6-21-09	Indianapolis, IN	Motorcoach carrying Canadian semi-pro football team crashes into SUV – 1 killed/11 injured.
6-06-09	South StrabaneTwp, PA	Motorcoach rear-ends a tractor-trailer - 6 injured.
6-01-09	Trenton, NJ	Motorcoach contracted by Mercer County strikes and kills elderly man.
5-19-09	Fairfax, VA	3 motorcoaches carrying staff and students from Harrisonburg, VA elementary school involved in chain reaction crash - 37 injured.



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5-14-09	Carbon County, PA	Motorcoach is heavily damaged after fire that began in the engine of the vehicle.
5-03-09	Winona County, MN	2 motorcoaches carrying Winona County DARE students from a Minnesota Twins game involved in chain reaction crash - 2 hospitalized and dozens injured.
5-03-09	Montgomery, AL	Motorcoach carrying 29 passengers, mostly children, catches fire after brake defect.
5-02-09	Perris, CA	Motorcoach carrying 28 people aboard crashes returning from Cinco de Mayo activity sponsored by city of Colton - all 28 injured.
4-27-09	Lincoln, AL	Motorcoach crashes after tire blows out - 21 injured.
4-07-09	Near Franksville, WI	Motorcoach catches fire and causes major back-up along I-94.
4-03-09	Round Rock, TX	Motorcoach carrying 42 high school band students crashes - 2 injured.
3-30-09	Millard County, UT	Motorcoach carrying 52 high school choir students crashes - 4 injured.
3-27-09	Franklin County, GA	Motorcoach carrying 40 University of New Hampshire college students catches fire after tire blows out.
3-05-09	Maysville, NC	3 Motorcoaches carrying 59 U.S. Marines in chain-reaction crash - 14 injured.
2-19-09	Beckett, MA	Motorcoach carrying minor league hockey team crashes - 5 injured.
2-15-09	West Haven, CT	Motorcoach rear-ends another motorcoach - 128 minor injuries.
2-07-09	Honolulu, HI	Motorcoach strikes and kills pedestrian standing at a marked crosswalk.
2-04-09	Belleplain, NJ	Motorcoach rear-ends box truck.
1-30-09	Dolan Spring, AZ	Motorcoach carrying Chinese tourists crashes near Hoover Dam - 7 killed/10 injured.
1-23-09	Near Donegal, PA	Motorcoach carrying tourists catches fire after tire blows out along PA turnpike.
12-26-08	Corona, NM	Motorcoach crashes in inclement weather - 2 killed/others injured.
12-19-08	Seattle, WA	Motorcoach carrying 80 young adults crashes through guardrail - minor injuries.
10-05-08	Williams, CA	Motorcoach traveling to casino resort crashes - 9 killed/35 injured.
8-10-08	Primm, NV	Motorcoach crashes after tire failure - 29 injured.
8-10-08	Tunica, MS	Motorcoach crashes and roof collapses during rollover - 3 killed.
8-08-08	Sherman, TX	Motorcoach carrying 55 Vietnamese-American pilgrims crashes after blowing a tire, skidding off of highway, and hitting guardrail - 17 killed/40 injured.
5-11-08	Mount Vernon, MO	Motorcoach tour bus carrying gospel singer crashes – gospel singer killed/7 injured.
4-05-08	Albertville, MN	Motorcoach carrying students and chaperones home from a band trip to Chicago crashes, killing a 16 year-old student and injuring dozens.
1-17-08	Primm, NV	Motorcoach crashes and catches fire - 25 injured.
1-06-08	Mexican Hat, UT	Motorcoach carrying 51 passengers ran off curvy road, rolled several times, roof was split open, and tires were stripped off. Passengers were thrown from the bus. A contributing factor was the driver's negotiation of the turn - 9 killed.
1-02-08	Victoria, TX	Motorcoach crashes probably due to driver fatigue - 1 killed.
1-02-08	Henderson, NC	Motorcoach crashes into tractor-trailer - 50 injured.
11-25-07	Forrest City, AR	Motorcoach crashes – 3 killed/15 injured.
6-25-07	Bowling Green, KY	Motorcoach crashes probably do to driver fatigue - 2 killed/66 injured.
3-02-07	Atlanta, GA	Motorcoach carrying Bluffton University baseball team crashes through an overpass bridge wall and fell onto Interstate 75 landing on its side – 7 killed/21 injured.
5-20-07	Clearfield, PA	Motorcoach crashes - 2 killed/25 injured.
9-06-06	Auburn, MA	Motorcoach rollover crash - 34 injured.
8-28-06	Westport, NY	Motorcoach rollover crash - 4 killed/48 injured.
3-29-06	Houston, TX	Motorcoach carrying girls' soccer team crashes and overturns - 2 killed/more injured.
10-25-05	San Antonio, TX	Motorcoach crashes into two 18-wheelers after tire failure - 1 killed/3 injured.
10-16-05	Osseo, WI	Motorcoach crashes - 4 killed/35 injured.
9-23-05	Wilmer, TX	Motorcoach carrying 44 assisted living facility residents and nursing staff as part of the evacuation in anticipation of Hurricane Rita caught fire. 23 killed/of 21 injured.
7-25-05	Baltimore, MD	Motorcoach crashes - 33 killed.
1-29-05	Geneseo, NY	Motorcoach crashes - 3 killed/20 injured.
11-14-04	Alexandria, VA	Motorcoach carrying 27 high school students crashes - 11 injured.
10-09-04	Turrell, AR	Motorcoach crashes - 14 killed/15 injured.
8-06-04	Jackson, TN	Motorcoach crashes - 2 killed/18 injured.



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6-24-04	Phoenix, AZ	Motorcoach crashes - 1 killed/38 injured.
5-24-04	Anahuac, TX	Motorcoach crashes - 1 killed.
2-22-04	North Hudson, NY	Motorcoach crashes - 47 injured.
11-12-03	Apache Co., AZ	Motorcoach crashes - 44 injured.
10-13-03	Tallulah, LA	Motorcoach crashes into tractor-trailer - 8 killed/7 injured.
2-14-03	Hewitt, TX	Motorcoach crashes - 5 killed/others injured.
10-01-02	Nephi, UT	Motorcoach crashes - 6 killed/20 injured.
6-23-02	Victor, NY	Motorcoach crashes - 5 killed/41 injured.
6-09-02	Loraine, TX	Motorcoach crashes into tractor-trailer - 3 killed/29 injured.
4-24-02	Kinder, LA	Motorcoach crashes - 4 killed and driver medically incapacitated.
10-03-01	Manchester, TN	Motorcoach crashes - 6 passengers killed/unknown injuries.
8-19-01	Pleasant View, TN	Motorcoach crashes - 1 killed/38 injured.
5-28-01	Bay St. Louis, MS	Motorcoach crashes - 16 injured.
1-20-01	Allamuchy, NJ	Motorcoach crashes - 39 injured.
1-02-01	San Miguel, CA	Motorcoach crashes - 2 killed/3 injured
6-30-01	Fairplay, CO	Motorcoach crashes - 45 injured.
8-27-00	Eureka, MO	Motorcoach crashes - 25 injured.
12-21-99	Canon City, CO	Motorcoach crashes - 3 killed/57 injured.
5-09-99	New Orleans, LA	Motorcoach crashes - 22 killed/21 injured.
4-30-99	Braidwood, IL	Motorcoach crashes - 1 killed/23 injured.
3-02-99	Santa Fe, NM	Motorcoach carrying 34 middle school children crashes - 2 killed/35 injured.
12-24-98	Old Bridge, NJ	Motorcoach crashes - 8 killed/14 injured.
6-20-98	Burnt Cabins, PA	Motorcoach crashes - 7 killed/16 injured.
9-12-97	Jonesboro, AR	Motorcoach crashes - 1 killed/6 injured.
7-29-97	Stony Creek, VA	Motorcoach crashes - 1 killed/32 injured.
6-11-97	Normandy, MO	Motorcoach crashes into pedestrians - 4 killed/3 injured.
6-06-97	Albuquerque, NM	Motorcoach crashes - 1 killed/35 injured.
8-02-96	Roanoke Rapids, NC	Motorcoach crashes due, driver was fatigued - 19 injured.
10-14-95	Indianapolis, IN	Motorcoach crashes - 2 killed/38 injured.
7-23-95	Bolton Landing, NY	Motorcoach crashes - 1 killed/30 injured.
4-24-94	Chestertown, NY	Motorcoach crashes and rolls over - 1 killed/20 injured.
1-29-94	Pueblo, CO	Motorcoach crashes and rolls over - 1 killed/8 injured.
9-17-93	Winslow Twp, NJ	Motorcoach crashes because truck drifted into lane - 6 killed/8 injured.
9-10-93	Phoenix, AZ	Motorcoach crashes and rolls over because of driver fatigue - 33 injured.
6-26-93	Springfield, MO	Motorcoach crashes - 1 killed/46 injured.
7-26-92	Vernon, NJ	Motorcoach crashes - 12 passengers ejected/ 6 killed.
1-24-92	South Bend, IN	Motorcoach crashes - 2 killed/34 injured.
6-26-91	Donegal, PA	Motorcoach crashes - 1 killed/14 injured.
8-03-91	Caroline, NY	Motorcoach crashes - 33 injured.
2-02-91	Joliett, PA	Motorcoach crashes - 2 killed/44 injured.
5-18-90	Big Pine, CA	Motorcoach crashes - 2 killed/43 injured.



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**MOTORCOACH SAFETY –
FOR OVER 40-YEARS THE U.S. DEPARTMENT OF TRANSPORTATION HAS FAILED
TO IMPLEMENT LIFE-SAVING MOTORCOACH SAFETY**

Chronology of Major Events

- Nov. 16, 2009:** U.S. Department of Transportation releases “Motorcoach Safety Action Plan” (DOT Plan) to address some motorcoach safety issues, however the DOT Plan is not as comprehensive as the Motorcoach Enhanced Safety Act, S.5554 and H.R. 1396, does not include specific and detailed performance requirements, calls for further research and study on many issues, and allows long lead times for required rules.
- Oct. 27, 2009:** National Transportation Safety Board (NTSB) holds a public hearing on the Sherman, TX motorcoach crash that occurred on August 8, 2008 and that killed 17 and injured 40.
- Oct. 10, 2009:** Motorcoach carrying 54 American Fork High School band students crashes outside McCammon, ID. The Band instructor grabbed the wheel when she saw the driver slumped forward and the motorcoach veering off the road. She is killed in the crash and dozens of students are injured.
- Apr. 21, 2009:** NTSB releases its accident report on a motorcoach crash in Mexican Hat, UT that occurred on January 6, 2008 and that killed 9 and injured 43. The NTSB cites the failure of the National Highway and Traffic Safety Administration (NHTSA) to develop and promulgate motorcoach safety standards as a contributing factor in the severity of the crash. NTSB also makes an unprecedented, mid-year revision of its annual list of Most Wanted Transportation Safety recommendations changing the status of safety recommendations issued to NHTSA for regulatory actions to require improved occupant protection and the installation of sophisticated crash avoidance technologies to avoid crashes. Since NHTSA has taken no action on these safety recommendations, NTSB changed the status of the agency response to the recommendations from “Acceptable Response” (Yellow) to “Unacceptable Response” (Red).
- Mar. 9, 2009:** Motorcoach Enhanced Safety Act of 2009 (111th Congress) is introduced in the Senate, S. 554, by Sen. Sherrod Brown (D-OH) and Sen. Kay Bailey Hutchison (R-TX) and in the House, H.R. 1396, by Rep. John Lewis (D-GA) and Rep. Bob Filner (D-CA).
- Mar. 5, 2009:** Commercial Vehicle Safety Alliance holds 2-day “Bus Safety Summit” and outlines 8 priority areas for enhancing passenger carrier transportation that include an increased focus on new entrants requiring training and minimum standards; the dangers of frequent motorcoach fires; state-mandated annual bus inspection programs; and electronic on-board recorders to monitor bus driver hours of service.
- Jan. 30, 2009:** Motorcoach carrying Chinese tourists overturns on U.S. 93 highway on its way to Las Vegas, killing 7, injuring 10.
- Oct. 5, 2008:** Motorcoach heading from Sacramento to a rural Northern California casino flips and rolls into a ditch, killing 8, and injuring more than 30 others in Colusa County, CA.
- Sept. 18, 2008:** U.S. Senate Commerce, Science, and Transportation, Subcommittee on Surface Transportation and Merchant Marine Infrastructure, Safety, and Security holds hearing to review the safety of over-the-road buses and the effectiveness of current Federal Motor Carrier Safety Administration (FMCSA) regulations governing bus safety.

Motorcoach Safety Chronology Cont'd

- Sept. 16, 2008:** NTSB releases accident report on a truck-tractor semitrailer rollover and motorcoach collision near Osseo, WI that occurred on October 16, 2005 and that killed 5 and injured 35.
- Aug. 22, 2008:** NTSB releases accident brief on a motorcoach that ran-off-the-road and rolled over near Turrell, AR that occurred on October 9, 2004 and that killed 15 and seriously injured 13.
- Aug. 8, 2008:** Motorcoach carrying 55 Vietnamese-American religious pilgrims crashes after tire blow-out, skidding off of highway and hitting guardrail in Sherman, TX, killing 17, injuring 40. Among other findings, NTSB investigators determined that the motorcoach was operating with remanufactured front steer axle tires, a violation of Federal Motor Carrier Safety Regulations.
- July 31, 2008:** Rep. John Lewis (D-GA) introduces the Motorcoach Enhanced Safety Act of 2008, H.R. 6747 (110th Congress) in the House.
- July 8, 2008:** NTSB releases accident report involving the motorcoach carrying the Bluffton University baseball team that crashed through an overpass bridge wall, fell onto Interstate 75 and landed on its side in Atlanta, GA that occurred on March 2, 2007 and that killed 7 and injured 21.
- Nov. 8, 2007:** Sen. Sherrod Brown (D-OH) and Sen. Kay Bailey Hutchison (R-TX) introduce the Motorcoach Enhanced Safety Act of 2007, S. 2326 (110th Congress) in the Senate.
- June 27, 2007:** NTSB issues safety recommendations based on investigation of a motorcoach fire on Interstate 45 during Hurricane Rita evacuation near Wilmer, TX that occurred on September 23, 2005 and that killed 23. NTSB recommends that:
- FMCSA establish a process to continuously gather and evaluate information on the causes, frequency, and severity of bus and motorcoach fires and conduct ongoing analysis of fire data to measure the effectiveness of the fire prevention and mitigation techniques identified and instituted as a result of the Volpe National Transportation Systems Center fire safety analysis study, NTSB Recommendation (NTSB Safety Recommendation (NTSB Rec.) H-07-01).
 - NHTSA evaluate current emergency evacuation designs of motorcoaches and buses by conducting simulation studies and evacuation drills that take into account, at a minimum, acceptable egress times for various post accident environments, including fire and smoke; unavailable exit situations; and the current above-ground height and design of window exits to be used in emergencies by all potential vehicle occupants (NTSB Rec. H-07-08).
- Nov. 21, 2006:** NTSB releases accident report on a motorcoach collision with the Alexandria Avenue bridge overpass on George Washington Memorial Parkway in Alexandria, VA that occurred on November 14, 2004 and that injured 11.
- Feb. 15, 2006:** NTSB issues the following safety recommendations:
- To the 50 States and the District of Columbia, when incorporating the information on commercial motor vehicle automatic slack adjusters from the new edition of the Commercial Driver License Manual produced by American Association of Motor Vehicle Administrators, include a statement that the manual adjustment of automatic slack adjusters is dangerous because it gives the vehicle operator a false sense of security about the effectiveness of the braking system (NTSB Rec. H-06-03).
 - To the District of Columbia and the 24 States that have commercial vehicle inspection programs, include in [State's] commercial motor vehicle inspector training courses a module on automatic slack adjusters that emphasizes that manually adjusting automatic slack adjusters is dangerous and should not be done, except during installation or in an emergency to move the vehicle to a repair facility, because manual adjustment of this brake component

Motorcoach Safety Chronology Cont'd

(1) fails to address the true reason why the brakes are not maintaining adjustment, giving the operator a false sense of security about the effectiveness of the brakes, which are likely to go out of adjustment again soon, and (2) causes abnormal wear to the internal adjusting mechanism for most automatic slack adjusters, which may lead to failure of this brake component (NTSB Rec. H-06-05).

- July 12, 2005:** NTSB releases accident report on a motorcoach that crossed over the median and collided with a sports utility vehicle in Hewitt, TX that occurred on February 14, 2003 and killed 7 and injured dozens.
- Apr. 27, 2005:** NTSB issues safety recommendations to NHTSA based on investigation of a motorcoach that ran off the road in Tallulah, LA that occurred on October 13, 2003 and killed 8 and injured 7. The NTSB recommends that the agency develop performance standards for passenger seat anchorages in motorcoaches (NTSB Rec. H-05-01).
- Aug. 3, 2004:** NTSB releases accident report on a motorcoach that ran off the road in Victor, NY that occurred on June 23, 2002 that killed 5 and injured 41.
- Aug. 4, 2003:** NTSB issues safety recommendations to NHTSA stating that the agency should develop long-term performance requirements for tire pressure monitoring systems, adopt more stringent detection standards than 25 or 30 percent below manufacturer-recommended levels, since pressures at those levels can have an adverse effect on the handling of vehicles, such as 12- and 15-passenger vans (NTSB Rec. H-03-17).
- Feb. 26, 2003:** NTSB releases accident report on the collision of a motorcoach and a truck tractor-semitrailer in Loraine, TX that occurred on June 9, 2002 and killed 3 and seriously injured 6.
- Dec. 17, 2002:** NTSB releases accident brief on a motorcoach that ran off the road near Canon City, CO that occurred on December 21, 1999 and that killed 3 and seriously injured 33.
- Sept. 18, 2002:** NTSB releases accident brief on a single-vehicle motorcoach rollover near Pleasant View, TN that occurred on August 19, 2001 that killed 46 and injured 9.
- Sept. 17, 2001:** NTSB releases accident brief on a motorcoach that lost control and overturned on New Mexico State Route 475 that occurred on March 2, 1999 and that killed 2 and injured 35.
- Sept. 10, 2001:** NTSB issues safety recommendations to FMCSA based on investigation of a motorcoach that ran off the road near New Orleans, LA that occurred on May 9, 1999 and that killed 22 and seriously injured 15. The NTSB recommends that the agency develop a comprehensive medical oversight program that contains the following elements:
- Individuals performing medical examinations for drivers are qualified to do so and are educated about occupational issues for drivers (NTSB Rec. H-01-17).
 - A tracking mechanism is established that ensures that every prior application by an individual for medical certification is recorded and reviewed (NTSB Rec. H-01-18).
 - Medical certification regulations are updated periodically to permit trained examiners to clearly determine whether drivers with common medical conditions should be issued a medical certificate (NTSB Rec. H-01-19).
 - Individuals performing examinations have specific guidance and a readily identifiable source of information for questions on such examinations (NTSB Rec. H-01-20).
 - The review process prevents, or identifies and corrects, the inappropriate issuance of medical certification (NTSB Rec. H-01-21).

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- Enforcement authorities can identify invalid medical certification during safety inspections and routine stops (NTSB Rec. H-01-22).
- Mechanisms for reporting medical conditions to the medical certification and reviewing authority and for evaluating these conditions between medical certification exams are in place; individuals, health care providers, and employers are aware of these mechanisms (NTSB Rec. H-01-24).

Jan. 5, 2000: NTSB releases accident report on a Greyhound motorcoach that ran off the road in Burt Cabins, PA that occurred on June 20, 1998 that killed 17 and injured 18.

Nov. 2, 1999: NTSB issues safety recommendations to NHTSA that the agency take the following actions:

- In 2 years, develop performance standards for motorcoach occupant protection systems that account for frontal impact collisions, side impact collisions, rear impact collisions, and rollovers (NTSB Rec. H-99-47) (An NTSB Most Wanted Safety Recommendation).
- Once pertinent standards have been developed for motorcoach occupant protection systems, require newly manufactured motorcoaches to have an occupant crash protection system that meets the newly developed performance standards and retains passengers, including those in child safety restraint systems, within the seating compartment throughout the accident sequence for all accident scenarios (NTSB Rec. H-99-48).
- Expand research on current advanced glazing to include its applicability to motorcoach occupant ejection prevention, and revise window glazing requirements for newly manufactured motorcoaches based on the results of this research (NTSB Rec. H-99-49).
- In 2 years, develop performance standards for motorcoach roof strength that provide maximum survival space for all seating positions and that take into account current typical motorcoach window dimensions (NTSB Rec. H-99-50) (An NTSB Most Wanted Safety Recommendation).
- Once performance standards have been developed for motorcoach roof strength, require newly manufactured motorcoaches to meet those standards (NTSB Rec. H-99-51).
- Develop and implement standards for on-board recording of bus crash data that address, at a minimum, parameters to be recorded, data sampling rates, duration of recording, interface configurations, data storage format, incorporation of fleet management tools, fluid immersion survivability, impact shock survivability, crush and penetration survivability, fire survivability, independent power supply, and ability to accommodate future requirements and technological advances (NTSB Rec. H-99-54).

Sept. 21, 1999: NTSB releases a comprehensive, detailed evaluation of the multiple safety deficiencies of motorcoaches in providing adequate occupant protection and issues specific recommendations for regulatory safety actions to be taken by NHTSA and the Federal Highway Administration (FHWA), which preceded FMCSA as the agency with regulatory authority over commercial motor vehicles (trucks and buses including motorcoaches), as well as recommendations that should be implemented by the motorcoach industry and by state and local governments.

Aug. 31, 1999: NTSB holds a public hearing to focus on advanced safety technology for trucks and buses in Nashville, TN.

Apr. 14, 1999: NTSB holds a public hearing to review truck and bus safety in Washington, D.C.

Motorcoach Safety Chronology Cont'd

- Feb. 26, 1999:** NTSB issues safety recommendations to the U.S. Department of Transportation (DOT) that the agency change the safety fitness rating methodology so that adverse vehicle or driver performance-based data, and not both, are sufficient to result in an overall unsatisfactory rating for the carrier (NTSB Rec. H-99-06).
- Feb. 11, 1999:** NTSB releases a special investigative report on two motorcoach crashes that leads to several major recommendations to NHTSA, FHWA, and motorcoach industry associations to improve operator management and hours of service to reduce driver fatigue, including avoidance of inverted, non-diurnal working hours and improve bus window emergency exit performance.
- Aug. 5, 1998:** NTSB issues safety recommendations stating that the American Trucking Associations, the International Brotherhood of Teamsters, & the Motor Freight Carrier Association should work together with the FHWA and NHTSA, to encourage the development and use of simulator-based training for commercial operators (NTSB Rec. H-98-19).
- Apr. 4, 1990:** NTSB issues safety recommendations to FHWA that the agency take the following actions:
- Establish and fund a program to train instructors to provide drug recognition expert training to federal agency inspectors/investigators, police, and other public service personnel with commercial truck and truck driver oversight responsibilities (NTSB Rec. H-90-23).
 - Require automated/tamper-proof on-board recording devices such as tachographs or computerized logs to identify commercial truck drivers who exceed hours of service regulations (NTSB Rec. H-90-28).
- Sept. 28, 1989:** NTSB issues safety recommendations to FHWA based on investigation of a motorcoach that went out of control and rolled onto its side in Nashville, TN that occurred on November 19, 1988 and that injured 39. The NTSB recommends that the agency revise the Federal Motor Carrier Safety Regulations to specify the qualifications of the individuals conducting the required annual motor carrier reviews of commercial drivers' performance records (NTSB Rec. H-89-32).
- June 15, 1988:** NTSB issues safety recommendations to FHWA that the agency revise Section 391 of the FMCSR to require a motor carrier to verify the authenticity of a medical examiner's certificate if the certificate has been prepared by a physician who has not been selected by the motor carrier to perform the examination. Information concerning the fact that verification was made should be retained as part of the driver's qualification file (NTSB Rec. H-88-24).
- Aug. 3, 1987:** NTSB issues safety recommendations to U.S. DOT based on investigation of a motorcoach that went out of control, hit a rock, slid on its side, rolled over and came to rest upright in the West Walk River in Walker, CA that occurred on May 30, 1986 and that killed 21, injured 20. NTSB recommends that the agency increase the number of FHWA Office of Motor Carrier Safety (OMCS) agents to enable OMCS to perform an adequate safety audit of all interstate motor carriers and to perform timely follow-up compliance reviews of those carriers that receive a less than satisfactory rating (NTSB Rec. H-87-38).
- Mar. 24, 1981:** NTSB issues safety recommendations to the Bureau of Motor Carrier Safety (BMCS), previously called OMCS, based on investigation of a motorcoach that failed to negotiate a curve, ran off the highway into a drainage channel, impacted a berm at a concrete culvert and vaulted down a steep embankment in Jasper, AR that occurred on June 5, 1980 that killed 20 and injured 13. The NTSB recommends that the agency give appropriate consideration to the identification of violations and enforcement of the Federal Motor Carrier Safety Recommendations pertaining to hours of service of drivers, maintenance of vehicles, and other carrier safety matters in developing the annual BMCS work schedule (NTSB Rec. H-81-15)

Motorcoach Safety Chronology Cont'd

- May 30, 1975:** NTSB issues safety recommendations to FHWA based on investigation of a collision between a motorcoach, tractor-trailer, and a private car on the New Jersey Turnpike that occurred on October 19, 1973 and killing 9 and injured 11. The NTSB recommends that the agency, upon completion of the research dealing with the development of a commercial driver training course, distribute such training course information to all professional commercial driver training schools (NTSB Rec. H-75-09).
- Dec. 18, 1968:** NTSB issues safety recommendations to the FHWA to expedite the proceeding initiated May 27, 1966, "to inquire into the operations of motor carriers of passengers in order to determine whether it is necessary or desirable to adopt regulations and establish standards which would require carriers to install, provide, and maintain seat belts for the use of passengers and drivers" (NTSB Rec. H-68-18).



Motorcoach Enhanced Safety Act

S. 554 and H.R. 1396

Requires DOT Action to Implement NTSB Safety Recommendations-
Recommendations That Have Languished for Decades

Motor Carrier Oversight:

- Systematic safety reviews, ratings, and audits of motorcoach companies

Occupant Protection:

- Advanced window glazing to prevent passenger ejection
- Lap/shoulder seat belts at all seating positions to keep passengers in their seats and in the motorcoach
- Better passenger compartmentalization to protect in a crash
- Improved occupant protection to reduce injuries from impacts with surfaces inside the motorcoach
- Stronger roof standard to prevent crush and intrusion in a crash



Safe Drivers :

- Physical fitness oversight and medical certification of motorcoach drivers
- Stricter CDL testing requirement
- Driver training standard

Fire Safety :

- Built-in automatic fire suppression systems to limit spread of fires
- Improvements to suppress fuel-system fires
- Better equipment to fight fires effectively
- Updated emergency exit designs and interior lighting to expedite passenger evacuation

Safety Technology:

- Added stability technology to prevent motorcoach rollover
- Enhanced conspicuity to make motorcoaches more visible to other highway users
- On-board recorders to enforce federal driving limits and reduce driver fatigue
- Event data recorders to monitor and record vehicle operations, events and incidents
- Adaptive cruise control to provide collision warning and braking

Tire Safety:

- Tire pressure monitoring that performs at all speeds, on all surfaces, and during all weather conditions
- Performance standards for retreaded tires