

**Statement of Michael J. Riley
President**

MICHAEL J. RILEY
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**Motor Transport Association of Connecticut
Before
The Joint Committee on Transportation
March 3, 2010**

Re: House Bill No. 5387 AN ACT CONCERNING THE
REMOVAL OF SNOW AND ICE FROM MOTOR VEHICLES.

I am Michael J. Riley, President of Motor Transport Association of Connecticut (MTAC), a statewide trade association, which represents around 1,000 companies that operate commercial motor vehicles in and through the state of Connecticut. Our membership includes freight haulers, movers of household goods, construction companies, distributors, tank truck operators and hundreds of companies that use trucks in their business and firms that provide goods and services to truck owners.

MTAC OPPOSES THIS BILL

We acknowledge that flying snow and ice is a problem. However, at this point in time, we have no reliable technology, which would help us to clear it off trucks safely. We believe that truck operators should not be fined for not doing something that they cannot safely do.

This problem needs to be addressed on the federal level and uniform standards should be established to ensure that all vehicles are treated the same way in every state. This is a problem which needs to be solved by engineers and automobile, truck and trailer manufacturers.

At the request of several State Trucking Associations, the American Transportation Research Institute (ATRI) initiated research in March 2008 to determine the scope of the problem and document current industry practices and potential solutions for mitigating the safety risks of snow and ice (SNICE) falling off vehicles.



Specifically, the research objectives were to

- Document the extent of the problem
- Review current and proposed legislation targeted toward the problem
- Identify snow and ice removal methods for trucks and trailers and evaluate the efficacy of each
- Recommend potential solutions for the industry

The research team was unable to identify any previous research studies conducted on the issue of snow and ice dislodging from large commercial vehicles in transit. Therefore, this was the first time that the issue has been studied in a comprehensive way.

After a document search, a review of media information, interviews with truckers, truck stop owners, shippers and enforcement officials and a compilation of currently operating technology, the ATRI suggested an Industry Action Plan. This plan included short term, mid term and long term strategies to deal with the issue.

Last session, we presented the Joint Committee on Transportation with copies of this report. This year, I am pleased to report that the process to develop solutions has begun.

- As part of the outreach strategy (short-term action plan), American Trucking Associations' (ATA) Communications and Image Policy Committee is releasing a "safe driving tips" press release. The release offers snow and ice safe driving tips from America's Road Team Captains. Among the recommendations are the following:

Remove ice and snow from your vehicle: Clear your windows and roof of snow to insure you have maximum visibility and avoid creating a hazard for the vehicle behind you. Don't allow ice and snow to create additional blind spots on your vehicle.

Be aware of the vehicle in front of you: Leave extra room between you and the vehicle in front so you can avoid snow and ice blowing onto your windshield or maneuver around patches of ice.

- A discussion on SNICE is on the agenda for the next meeting of ATA's Safety Task Force, scheduled for April 1st at ATA. ATRI will participate in that meeting.
- The issue is going to be on the next agenda of ATA's Technical Advisory Group (TAG) meeting, scheduled for May 5-6. The TAG is the group within ATA charged with interacting with vehicle manufacturers on design issues (part of the long-term action plan)
- ATA staff has reached out to the public affairs staff at AAA's national headquarters to initiate a meeting to discuss the issue.
- The New Jersey Trucking Association has been approached by a manufacturer of a product that may inhibit the accumulation of snow and ice on vehicles. An effort is underway to locate a trucking company willing to test the product.
- A manufacturer of snow removal equipment met with members of the Motor Transport Association of Connecticut at our Annual Meeting in October.
- Through the Commercial Vehicle Information and Systems and Networks program, Motor Transport Association of Connecticut has initiated an effort to obtain federal funding to permit the state to operate a snow removal facility on a pilot program basis, at one of the scale houses.

The ultimate solution to SNICE probably lies with the future design of trucks and trailers. The time horizon on this strategy will be several years and would probably be best mandated by federal authorities.

Therefore, acknowledging the difficulties in developing immediate solutions to SNICE, and recognizing that the process has begun in earnest to deal with the issue, we respectfully request that the committee not proceed with this bill, at this time. Passing a law, which requires truckers to do something that they cannot do safely, is unfair and unnecessary.

Thank you.