



# THE SAFER TRUCKING REPORT

December 2023





# ABOUT THE INSTITUTE FOR SAFER TRUCKING

The Institute for Safer Trucking is a nonprofit organization located in Washington, D.C. We are committed to educating the public about truck safety trends and data-driven solutions that reduce truck crashes, injuries, and deaths.

## ABOUT THE REPORT

The Safer Trucking Report is a resource that includes data analyses and policy insights to help the public have a better understanding of truck safety in the United States.

The Institute for Safer Trucking analyzed fatal truck crash data from the National Highway Traffic Safety Administration's (NHTSA) Fatality Analysis Reporting System (FARS).

## **BOARD OF DIRECTORS**

### **Harry Adler**

Co-Chair

### **John Lannen**

Co-Chair

### **Laurie Higginbotham**

Mother of Michael Higginbotham  
Killed in a truck crash, 11/18/14

### **Peter Malarczyk**

Injured in a truck crash, 12/29/2015  
Son of Ryszard and Anita Malarczyk  
Killed in a truck crash, 12/29/15

### **Tracy Quinichett Whitehead**

Mother of Channing Quinichett  
Killed in truck crash, 1/21/09

### **Kate Brown**

Mother of Graham Brown  
Injured in a truck crash, 5/2/05

### **Eric Hein**

Father of Riley Hein  
Killed in a truck crash, 11/13/15

### **Dexter Culclager**

Husband of Yakel Culclager  
Father of Tre'Quis and Tra'Desia  
Woods-Sims, and Tra'Veion Woods-  
Franklin  
Killed in a truck crash, 3/2/15

### **Steve Owings**

Father of Cullum Owings  
Killed in a truck crash, 12/1/02

### **Baabi Das**

Director

### **Susan Owings**

Mother of Cullum Owings  
Killed in a truck crash, 12/1/02

### **Jennifer Walsh**

Director

### **Pierce Owings**

Brother of Cullum Owings  
Killed in a truck crash, 12/1/02

# TABLE OF CONTENTS

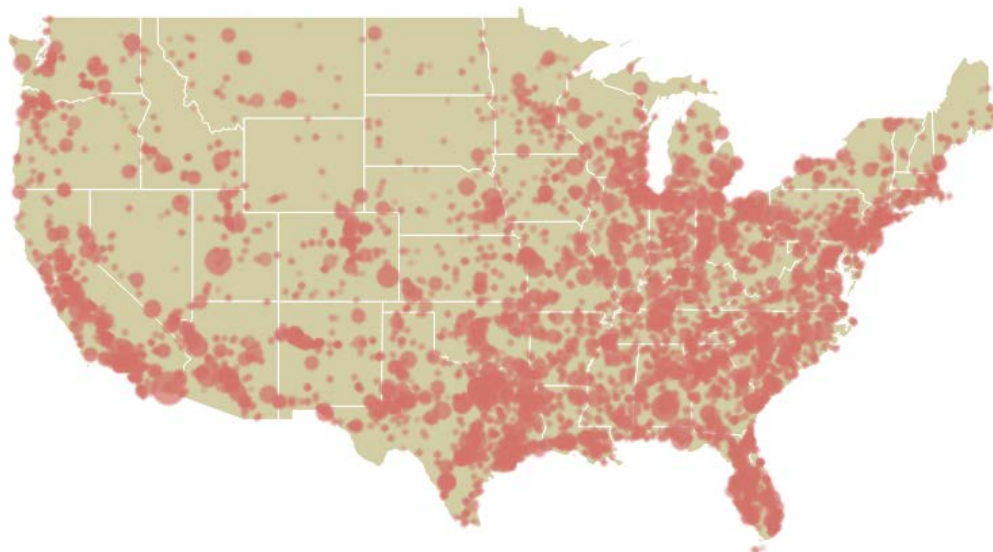
2021 Truck Crash Statistics	5
Memorial: Alex Wolf	9
Increase Minimum Level of Insurance	11
Reduce Truck Speeding	13
Memorial: Nate Clark	14
Address Underride Crashes	16
Calls to Action	20

# 2021 TRUCK CRASH STATISTICS

## 5,788

**Truck Crash Fatalities across all 50 states**

The map below, which can be accessed through our [data visualization tool](#), includes dots that show the location of fatal truck crashes. The dot size represents the number of deaths in the crash.



Note: 2021 is the most recent year of available data.

## 154,993

**Truck Injury Crashes**

## 378,589

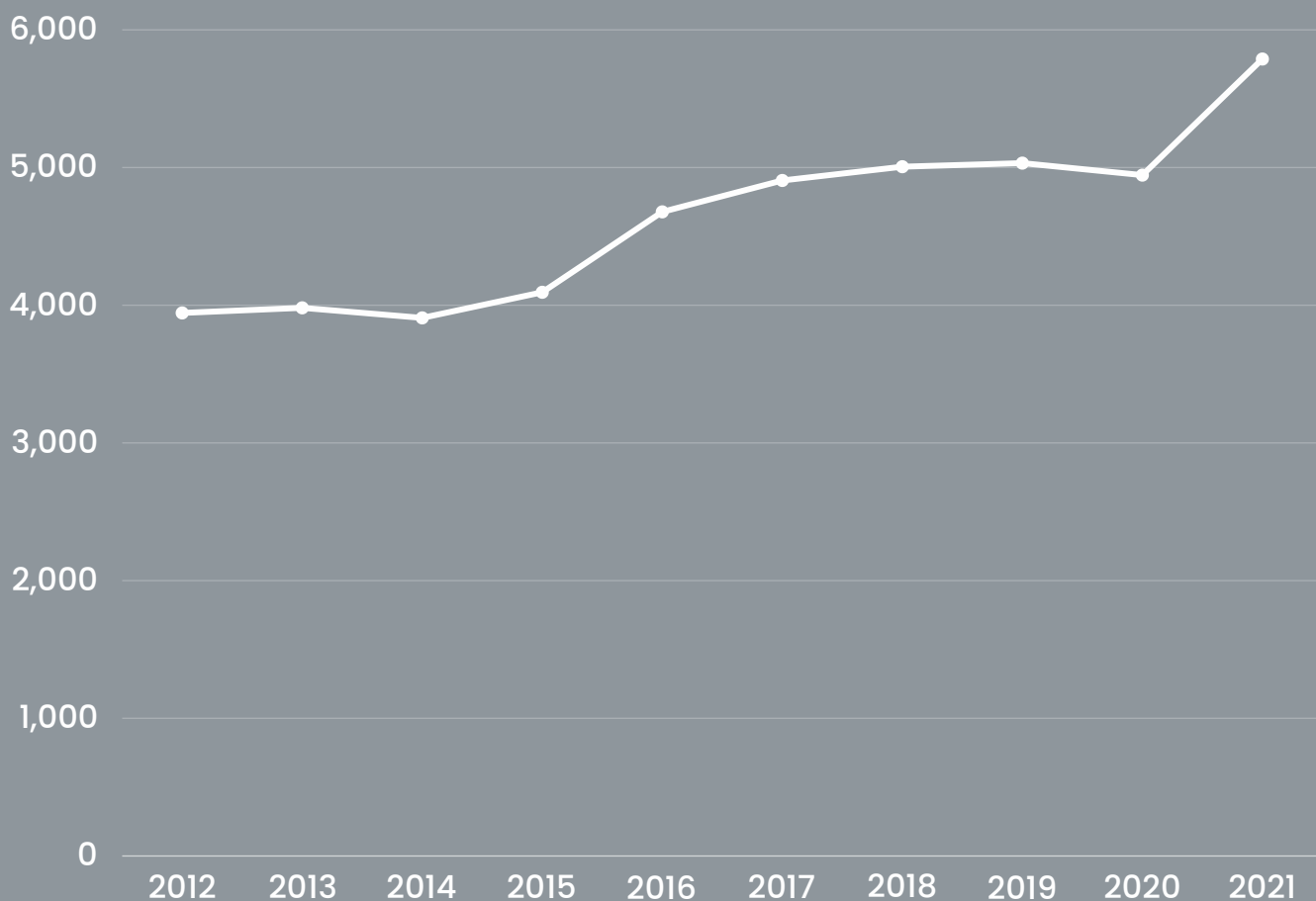
**Property Damage Only (PDO)  
Truck Crashes**

# 2021 TRUCK CRASH STATISTICS

## Trucking Has Gotten Deadlier!

**47%**

Increase in Truck Crash Fatalities



While Truck Vehicle Miles Traveled Only Increased

**21%**

# 2021 TRUCK CRASH STATISTICS

## TOP 10 WORST STATES

### Truck Crash Fatalities

1. **Texas - 806**
2. **California - 437**
3. **Florida - 373**
4. **Georgia - 244**
5. **Ohio - 220**
6. **Illinois - 180**
7. **Tennessee - 179**
8. **North Carolina - 172**
9. **Indiana - 167**
10. **Pennsylvania - 162**

### Truck Crash Fatalities per 100,000 population

1. **New Mexico - 4.2**
2. **Arkansas - 3.8**
3. **Mississippi - 3.6**
4. **Montana - 3.4**
5. **Oklahoma - 3.4**
6. **Wyoming - 3.3**
7. **Alabama - 3.0**
8. **Louisiana - 2.9**
9. **Nebraska - 2.9**
10. **Kentucky - 2.8**

To learn more about your state, see our state fact sheets available on our [website](#).

## Call to Action

The Department of Transportation should finalize a rulemaking requiring automatic emergency braking to be equipped in and used on all trucks.

# 2021 TRUCK CRASH STATISTICS

**33%** of fatal work zone crashes involved at least one large truck

## TOP 10 WORST STATES

- |                         |                      |
|-------------------------|----------------------|
| 1. Maine - 100%         | 6. Washington - 80%  |
| 2. Montana - 100%       | 7. Wyoming - 80%     |
| 3. New Hampshire - 100% | 8. Indiana - 70%     |
| 4. West Virginia - 100% | 9. Iowa - 60%        |
| 5. Maryland - 80%       | 10. New Mexico - 60% |

## Call to Action

The Department of Transportation should study the use and safety benefits of dual-facing cameras and telematics in large trucks.

### Deadliest Month (2019-2021)

**October** **468**  
Fatalities

**Other Months** **384**  
Fatalities

### Deadliest Day (2019-2021)

**Wednesday** **796**  
Fatalities

**Other Days** **649**  
Fatalities



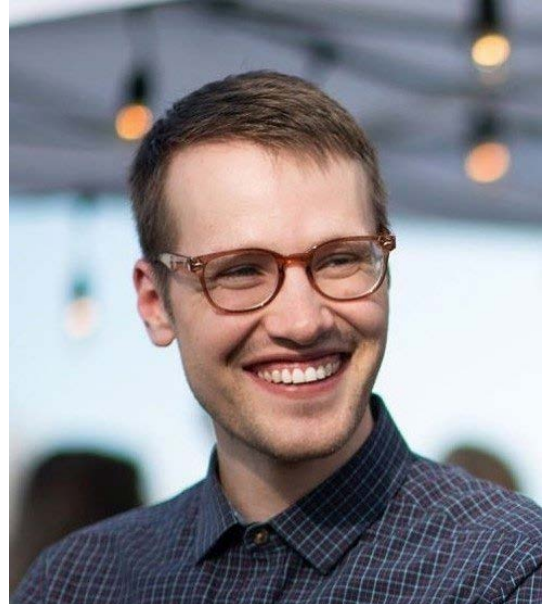
# ALEX WOLF

**Date of Crash: November 20, 2019**

Alex was born on January 2nd, 1989. Alex had a quiet and genuine concern for others and the world he lived in. He was a minimalist and environmentalist; concerned with reducing his carbon footprint, Alex biked everywhere he could, bought primarily from second hand stores, and was a regular shopper at his local food cooperative.

His family loves his unique, independent, fun loving spirit. Alex's father, Keith, recounted a time when Alex had gotten into an argument with one of his three sisters, and reprogrammed all the radio stations in her car to play NPR.

Although a newcomer to Minneapolis, Alex had established himself as part of the local quidditch team, biking community, knitters guild, film club, and indie DJ . Alex was never one to put limits on the things he could learn or try. He accepted others and encouraged them to be their best selves. He lived his life with passion; and he was a truly positive, life-changing influence for those who knew him.



"Welcoming is not just something that happens as people cross the threshold. It is an attitude; it is the constant openness of the heart; it is saying to people every morning and at every moment, 'come in'; it is giving them space; it is listening to them attentively.

To welcome means listening a great deal to people and then discerning the truth with them. In order to welcome there must be a peaceful space in the hearts of those welcoming ... for the person to find a place of rest and growth." ~ Jean Vanier

# ALEX WOLF

## Crash Description

Alex was struck down at approximately 3:45 pm on November 20th, 2019, while commuting from work on his bicycle in Minneapolis, MN at 12th Street and Linden Avenue by a box truck towing a heavy equipment trailer.



## Life After the Crash

With Alex gone, the Wolf family dynamic is very different. His sisters, Amanda and Rebecca, mourn the loss of their brother.

And Alex's father, Keith, is working through his grief in his own way. Keith has sought out different forms of grief counseling and is working to transition his grief from Alex's death to advocacy for safer trucking regulations and urban biking infrastructure.

Alex's memory is kept alive by the stories his family tells, the music he created, and even the knitted caterpillar he made for his goddaughter. Alex's family hopes that by telling his story, they can spread some of the joy and fearlessness Alex had, as well as show others the importance of increased safety for trucking and bikers on our roads.



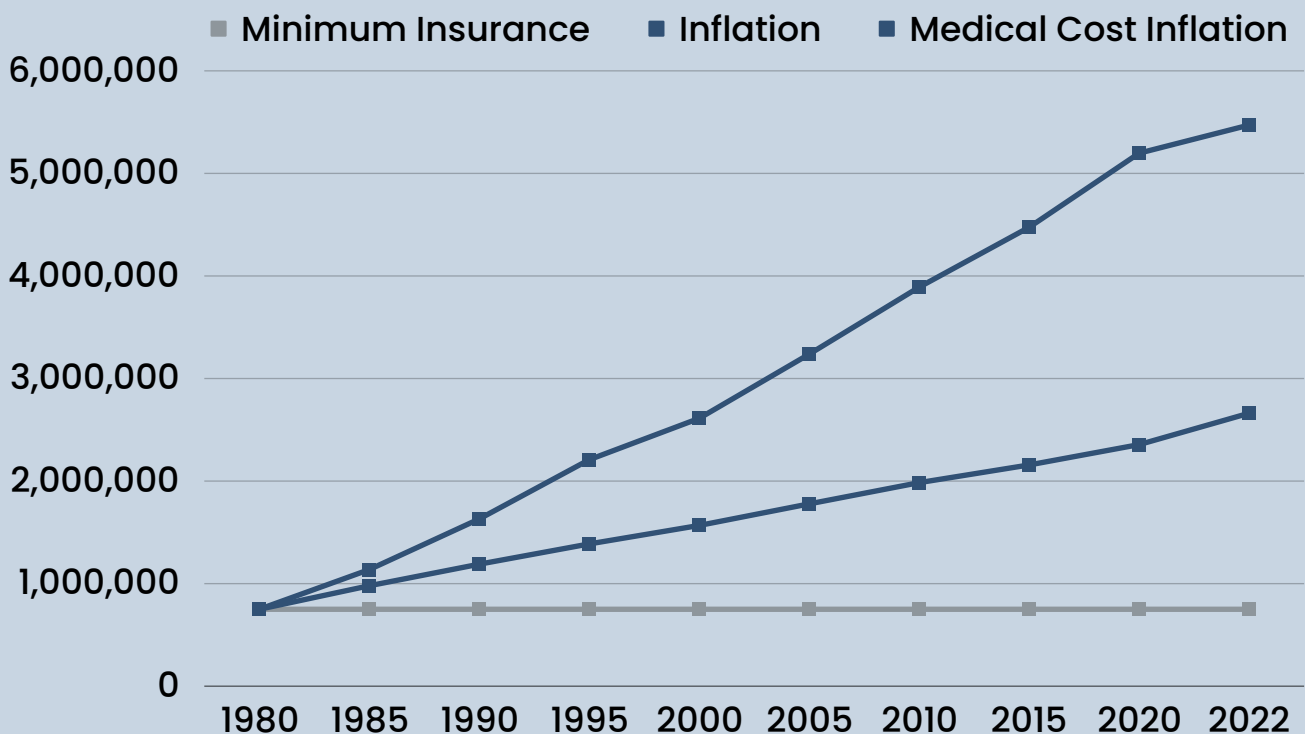
# INCREASE MINIMUM LEVEL OF INSURANCE

Congress set the minimum insurance requirements for interstate motor carriers back in 1980. It has never been raised, not even to account for inflation or rising costs.

Maintaining this inadequate minimum amount results in families of victims and survivors experiencing financial devastation and allows unsafe trucking companies to operate on our roads. The uncovered costs of crashes are ultimately passed onto the taxpayers.

**If the required minimum insurance of \$750,000 was adjusted over the past 40 years:**

	<u>2021 Value</u>
<b>Inflation</b>	<b>\$2,661,595</b>
<b>Medical Cost Inflation</b>	<b>\$5,471,485</b>

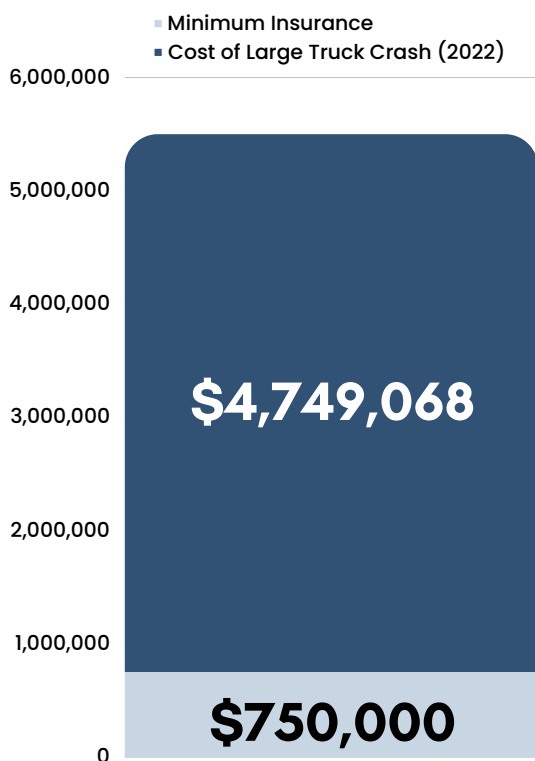


# INCREASE MINIMUM LEVEL OF INSURANCE

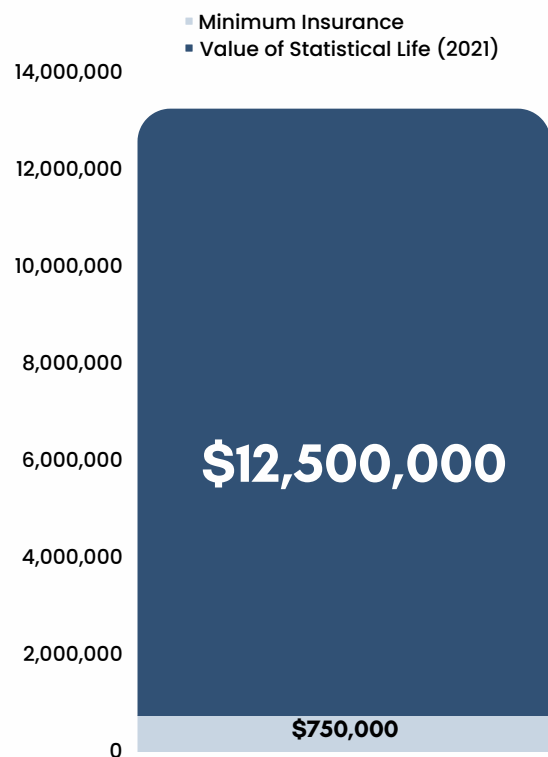
By maintaining 1980-level requirements for insurance, motor carriers that operate with \$750,000 or \$1,000,000 policies are effectively privatizing profits while socializing costs.

The current minimum falls short of the cost of a fatal large truck crash in the U.S. in 2022. It is also much lower than the value of statistical life (VSL) used by the U.S. Department of Transportation, which is the "estimated benefit of preventing a fatality... defined as the additional cost that individuals would be willing to bear for improvements in safety (that is, reductions in risks) that, in the aggregate, reduce the expected number of fatalities by one."

**Cost of a Fatal Truck Crash in 2022**



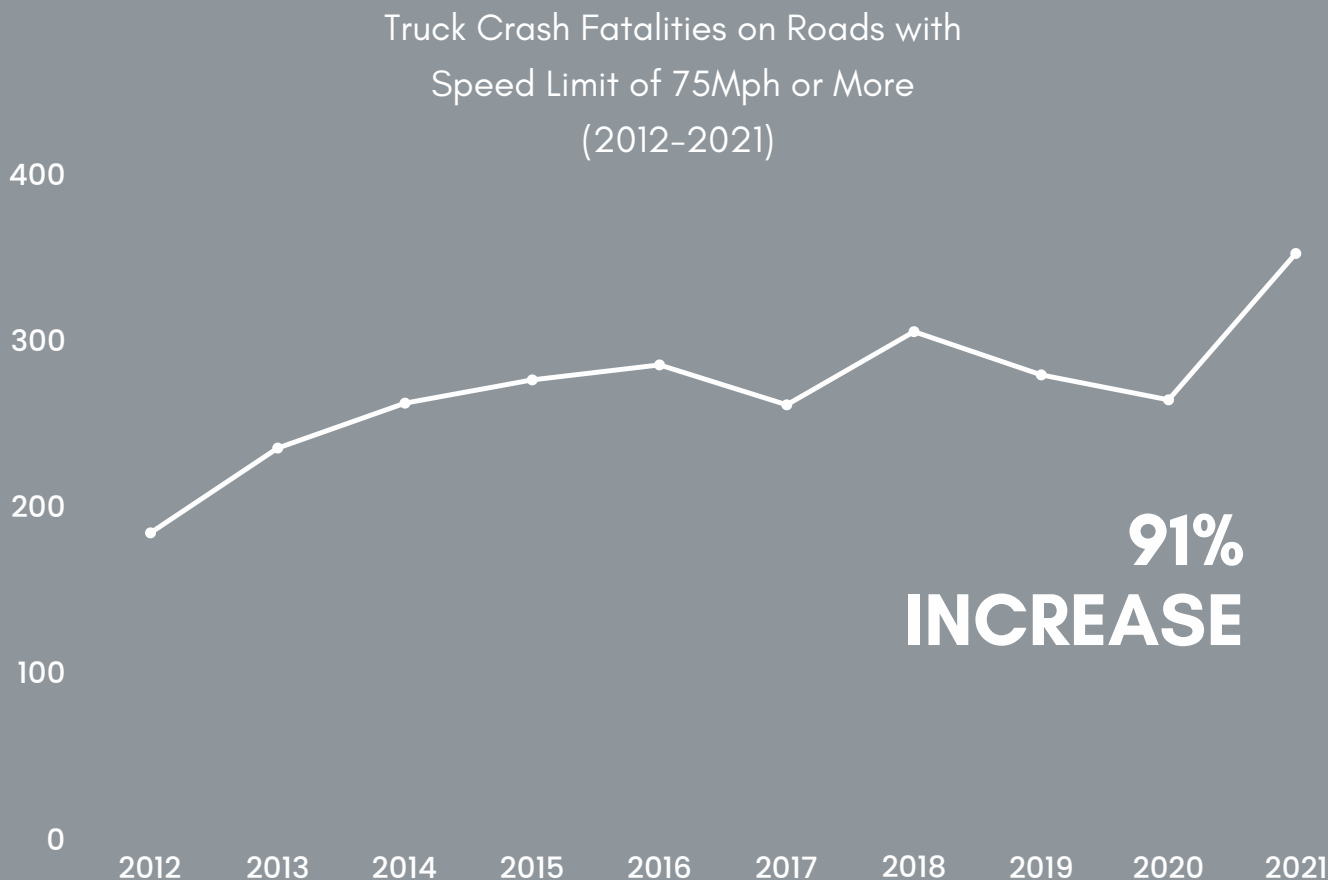
**USDOT Value of Statistical Life**



## Call to Action

The Secretary of Transportation should increase the minimum insurance requirements for motor carriers to account for inflation since 1980 (when it was set by Congress) and index the new amount to inflation.

# REDUCE TRUCK SPEEDING



**There were more than 115,000  
Truck Driver Violations for Speeding in 2021!**

## Call to Action

The Department of Transportation should finalize a rulemaking to require that large trucks be equipped with and use speed limiter technology set to a maximum speed of either 65mph or 70mph with the use of automatic emergency braking and adaptive cruise control.

# NATE CLARK

**Date of Crash: December 7, 2021**

Nate was born April 28th, 1994. He lived with his dad, Todd, mom, Heather and younger sister, Halle, in Canton, OH until the family moved to North Carolina when Nate and Halle were in middle school.

Nate was an old soul from childhood. In more than one parent/teacher conference the teacher mentioned he was like a little old man. He was an easy-going, awesome kid. He was a rule follower and loved a schedule and sticking to it. He was a well-rounded student that enjoyed participating in activities as well. Nate played many sports as a child, but golf became his passion from an early age when he became involved at First Tee.



Nate graduated from Clemson University in 2016 with a dual degree in Pro Golf Management and Business Administration. Throughout his time at Clemson, Nate held internships at various golf courses around the country, all of which he loved and appreciated. His last semester led to an opportunity to connect with Evolve Golf in Wilmington, NC. This internship would lead to his full-time job, doing what he loved. Nate was able to combine his love of golf and the business side of course management to grow the company significantly during his time there.

Nate remained in Wilmington, NC after graduation and had an incredible group of friends. He loved his weekends at Wrightsville Beach on a boat and of course, on a golf course.

With Nate and Halle both graduating college and settling into their careers, Todd and Heather decided to take a coaching opportunity presented to Todd in Buffalo, NY. Heather took a break from teaching, and they settled in. But it didn't take too long, just 4 short years, when in March of 2020 they decided that they had been away from the kids long enough and decided to move back to North Carolina to be closer to their family.

# NATE CLARK

## Crash Description

On December 7, 2021, Nate was driving a rented 2021 Toyota Camry home from a work trip in Georgia. While traveling on I 95 through Florence County, South Carolina, traffic began to slow down ahead of Nate until he came to a complete stop behind a passenger van and a tractor trailer. While waiting for the congestion to clear, another tractor-trailer failed to realize that traffic was stopped ahead and slammed into the rear of Nate's vehicle. Nate's vehicle was pushed into the passenger vehicle in front of him and then both Nate and the other driver were then slammed into the rear of the tractor-trailer in front of them.

Both Nate and the driver of the other passenger vehicle died at the scene as a result of injuries suffered in the crash.

## Life After the Crash

Nate's family did not learn about the crash until the next day. The connection was finally made through the rental car company of the car that Nate was driving. Nate's loss is felt deeply by his friends, golf community, and his family. There were over 300 people in attendance at Nates memorial service, an incredible testament to how many lives he had touched.



The Nate Clark Memorial Golf Tournament was set up by Evolve Golf and others to raise money for scholarships for young people interested in pursuing a career like Nate's. The first tournament raised over \$50,000 in honor of Nate and all the work that he did. It was an amazing day for his family to volunteer and see so many support Nate and share stories of their time spent with him.

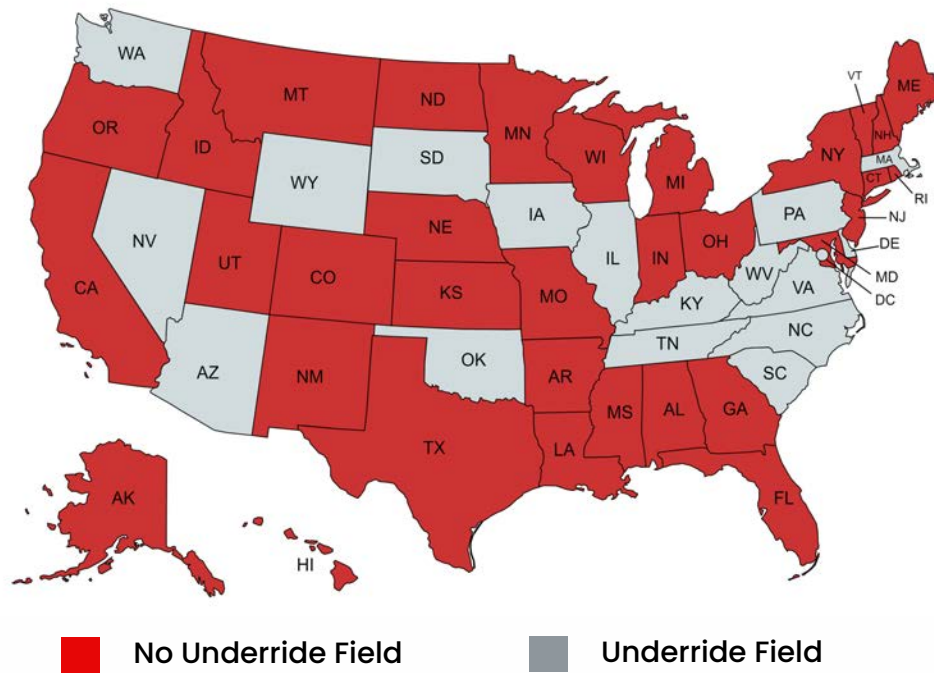
Nate combined his love of golf and people and was a mentor with First Tee of Greater Wilmington. Most importantly, Nate loved the Lord and had a relationship with Jesus. All that Nate was on Earth was wonderful and his family feels his absence on Earth so heavily.

The trucking company that caused Nate's crash only had only \$1 Million in coverage. That \$1 million had to be divided by both wrongful death claimants as well as 3 property damage claimants.

# ADDRESS UNDERRIDE CRASHES

The Institute for Safer Trucking defines an underride collision as a crash in which a vehicle or a vulnerable road user (such as a pedestrian, bicyclist, person on a personal conveyance, or motorcyclist) travels underneath a truck and/or trailer.

## Only 17 States Have Underride Field on their Police Accident Report



## DOT Report Undercounts Side Underride Deaths

The Institute for Safer Trucking is disappointed in NHTSA’s research on the number of lives saved and injuries prevented due to side guards. We urge the NHTSA to recalculate the benefits of side guards to address the:

- Underreporting of underride crashes in states with no underride field,
- Exclusion of vulnerable road users who are harmed in side underride crashes, and
- Exclusion of various crash types that result in side underride injuries and deaths.



# ADDRESS UNDERRIDE CRASHES

## Underride Undercount - 2021

### States with Underride Field on PAR

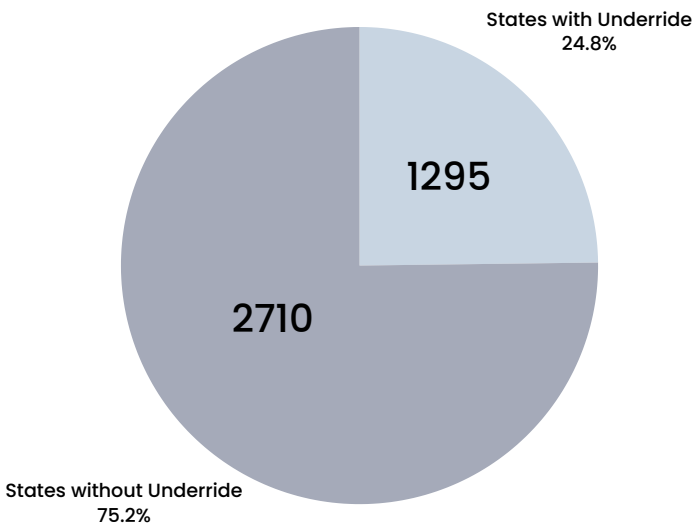
- ARIZONA
- DELAWARE
- IOWA
- KENTUCKY
- MASSACHUSETTS
- NORTH CAROLINA
- PENNSYLVANIA
- SOUTH DAKOTA
- WEST VIRGINIA
- WYOMING

### States without Underride Field on PAR

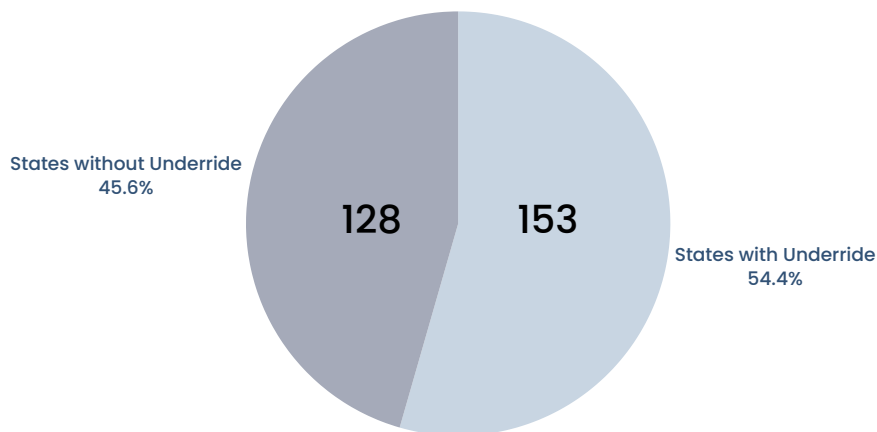
- ALABAMA
- ARKANSAS
- COLORADO
- FLORIDA
- GEORGIA
- INDIANA
- MISSOURI
- NEW YORK
- OHIO
- TEXAS

We compared the number of reported underride deaths in 10 states with an underride field on their Police Accident Report (PAR) against 10 states without such a field. States with underride fields reported much higher numbers of underride fatalities than states without a field for underride on their PAR.

2021 Total Fatalities



2021 Underride Fatalities



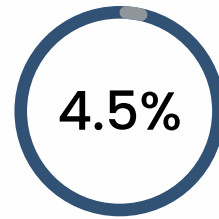
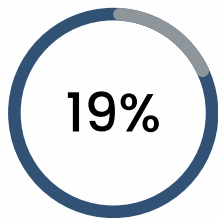
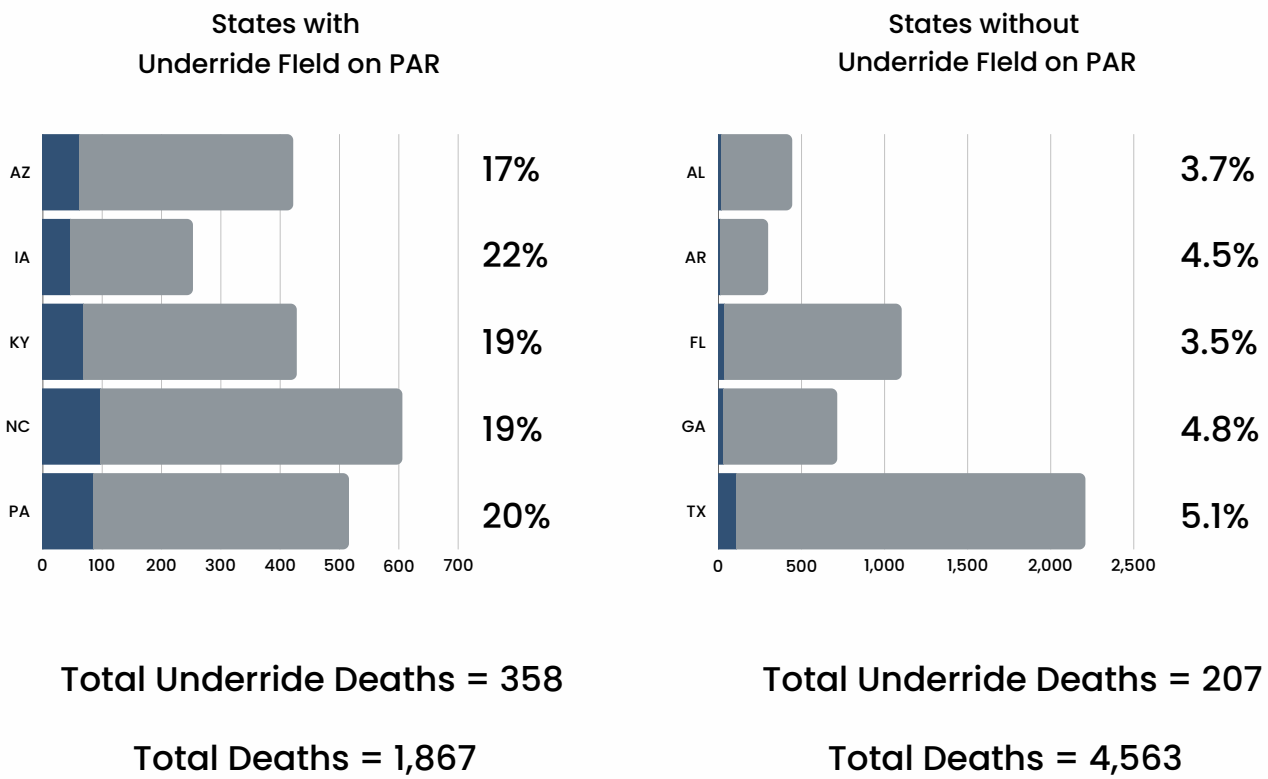
# ADDRESS UNDERRIDE CRASHES

## Underride Fatalities Undercount 2019 - 2021

Over the last 3 years, five states with underride fields on their PAR reported

# 4.2X

as many underride fatalities as five states without an underride field.



In just these five state without an underride field reported, underreporting could have resulted in approximately

# 660

underride deaths being undercounted from 2019 to 2021

# ADDRESS UNDERRIDE CRASHES

## 2021 VULNERABLE ROAD USER DEATHS

**66**

**Bicyclists Killed**

**549**

**Pedestrians Killed**

**Change from 2012**

**6%**

**Increase**

**80%**

**Increase**

No bicyclist and pedestrian deaths were coded as involving underride!

While a 2018 report from the Government Accountability Office (GAO) determined that federal crash data undercounted underride crashes involving passenger vehicles, it did not analyze fatal truck crashes involving vulnerable road users (cyclists and pedestrians). None of the pedestrian or bicyclist deaths in truck crashes in 2021 were coded as involving "underride."

### Call to Action

The Department of Transportation should reevaluate the safety benefits of side underride guards

American cities should adopt side underride guard standards for their fleets and contracted trucks that meet or exceed the European Union Standard

The Department of Transportation should adopt the IST definition of "underride" and review data from the Fatality Analysis Reporting System (FARS) to accurately reflect the number of vulnerable road users who were killed in truck underride crashes.

All states should include a specific field for underride on their police-accident report.

# CALLS TO ACTION

## Federal Recommendations

Finalize a rulemaking requiring automatic emergency braking to be equipped in and used on all trucks (FMCSA/NHTSA)

Initiate a study on the safety benefits of forward-facing and driver-facing cameras and telematics in large trucks (FMCSA)

Increase the minimum insurance required by motor carriers to account for inflation over the past 40 years (FMCSA)

Study the safety benefits of side underride guards (FMCSA/NHTSA)

Finalize a rulemaking to require that large trucks be equipped with and use speed limiter technology (FMCSA)

Adopt the IST definition of "underride" and review data from the Fatality Analysis Reporting System (FARS) to accurately reflect the number of vulnerable road users that are killed in truck underride crashes (FMCSA/NHTSA)

## State and Local Recommendations

All states and territories should include a specific field for underride on their police-accident report.

American cities should adopt a side guard standard equal to or exceeding the European Union Standard