

Statement of

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(PMTA)**

To

Senate Transportation Committee

**Chairman, John Rafferty
Minority Chairman, John Wozniak**

And

**Senate Veterans Affairs & Emergency Preparedness
Committee**

Chairman, Randy Vulakovich

**Tuesday, February 16, 2016
North Office Building, Harrisburg, PA**

On

“ Emergency Response to Snow Storm Jonas”

Good morning.

My name is Jim Runk, President & CEO of the Pennsylvania Motor Truck Association, headquartered in Camp Hill, Pennsylvania.

PMTA is the only statewide trade association representing the trucking industry. Our membership, that numbers approximately 1500, includes freight haulers, movers of household goods, construction companies, distributors, tank truck operators, heavy specialized carriers, and hundreds of companies that use trucks in their business and firms that provide goods and services to truck owners. Pennsylvania's trucking industry is the fourth largest in the Commonwealth, employing approximately 283,340, or 1 out of every 17 workers.

Chairman Rafferty and Chairman Vulakovich I'd like to thank you and the your Committees for providing me the opportunity to present our comments regarding the "Emergency Response to Snow Storm Jonas" with emphasis on how the trucking industry prepares for winter storms.

During winter months in regions that experience significant snow storms the trucking industry is acutely aware of the potential hazards that comes with the delivery of freight. Winter driving is also especially difficult for truck drivers as they may also share the highways with automobile drivers that may lack experience in winter driving. Our drivers would rather not be driving during a winter storm but they understand the job they do is necessary and important. As you heard from me before, our industry has a sense of obligation to provide essential service to 89% of the Commonwealth's populated communities that have no other means of receiving deliveries.

Our industry is working 24/7 regardless of the weather. We depend on state DOTs to maintain passable roadways for us to deliver food, water, clothing and other products to sustain lives. Often times those deliveries have to be made in inclement weather and in severe conditions like those created by Jonas. Our industry attempts to pre-plan deliveries (not always possible) during that time after receiving weather forecasts from numerous agencies including PennDOT, the Turnpike and the State Police.

Many storms, as you're aware, are unpredictable, making it nearly impossible to determine when the best time is to attempt a delivery. Thanks to PennDOT, the Turnpike and the State Police we receive timely and up-to-date forecasts, along with roadway restrictions, traffic conditions and accident notifications. We then send out that information to our members so they can plan to implement deliveries. We also will notify surrounding state trucking associations if the weather conditions affect those areas.

Our drivers would rather pull into a rest area and wait out a winter storm. This however can pose a greater risk of getting their truck stuck in a parking lot due to the snow buildup and other vehicles trying to utilize the same lot.

Truck drivers have only so many hours a day they are permitted to drive by Federal Regulations. Not to mention the fact our industry delivers to their customers by appointment times regardless of the weather and if they are late for that appointment for whatever reason, the receiver of the shipment can charge from \$200 to \$500 for being late. In addition, missing an appointment can put you to the end of the line to get your product unloaded causing waiting hours upon hours at the delivery site. At a minimum it takes about 30 minutes to unload one truck and if there are 10 trucks in front of you, that takes 5 hours the driver must wait and could cause the driver to miss his/her next pick-up appointment time.

The trucking industry does a couple of things outside of our daily safety requirements to prepare for upcoming winter storms. Federal law requires a driver to perform a safety inspection on his/her truck before and after each trip regardless of weather. Furthermore, when operating in winter months, companies will stress to drivers to always be prepared by having enough food, water and warm clothing to stay safe in case they would get stranded due to breakdown or impassible road conditions or getting stuck behind an accident that closes the highway. Additionally, drivers are urged to operate their vehicle with extreme caution particularly on ice covered roads and to keep alert for other drivers who may not be experienced operating in such inclement weather.

In closing, we are proud and grateful that the men and women in the trucking industry are willing to perform their duties regardless of weather conditions since we all know, people still want all the necessary items that are only brought to them by truck.

Mr. Chairman, thank you again for the opportunity to participate in this important hearing.