

OPENING REMARKS OF U.S. REP. NICK J. RAHALL, II
Ranking Member, Committee on Transportation & Infrastructure
Before the Subcommittee on Highways and Transit
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Mr. Chairman, thank you for conducting this oversight hearing on the Federal Motor Carrier Safety Administration's motor carrier safety program. Certainly, advancing safety on our highways is a paramount concern of all involved, from those who get behind the wheel to local law enforcement to federal regulators.

In this regard, a decision was made during the George W. Bush Administration to move away from the resource intensive and ultimately inadequate strategy of relying on Compliance Reviews to the development of the Compliance, Safety and Accountability system. In essence, a technological leap similar to the move away from the corded wall phone to the Smartphone.

Today, however, eight years after CSA started to emerge as a new enforcement and compliance model, the question remains: Just how smart is CSA?

While the old adage of 'garbage in garbage out' does not completely apply here, there are questions about the reliability and integrity of the data utilized under CSA's Safety Management System, and the effect of the scores it assigns to trucking companies and independent truckers with respect to their relationship with freight brokers, shippers and insurers.

I would also note that this entire system has been and continues to be developed without formal rulemakings. Collaborative efforts are to be applauded, certainly. But there are some issues which more properly lend themselves to a rulemaking process so that the public has the opportunity to formally comment.

Again, Mr. Chairman, thank you and I look forward to hearing some of the testimony today.