

# Guest Column: Truckers, especially women, seek federal support for safety

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*Renee Amar, executive director of the Louisiana Motor Transport Association*

The Louisiana Motor Transport Association is advocating for urgent federal funding dedicated to truck parking. We are requesting an annual allocation of \$200 million to ensure adequate truck parking facilities that support our drivers, especially women who face unique safety challenges on the road.

Safe truck parking is essential for all drivers' well-being, particularly for women who often confront safety threats like harassment and unsafe surroundings. Securing

dedicated funding will enhance safety and security, making the trucking profession more appealing to women, a key demographic in our workforce. The lack of reliable parking discourages many women from joining the industry.

Women comprise more than half of the workforce in Louisiana, and their contributions are vital. This year, we established the Women in Motion-Louisiana Council to empower women in transportation and create pathways for their success. By improving parking options, we recognize the critical role women play in our industry and work to ensure they feel secure and valued.

Addressing workforce shortages in trucking requires creating an environment where women feel safe. This truck parking initiative is more than a convenience; it promotes an industry that values the safety and welfare of all its members. It sends a vital message about our commitment to attracting and retaining women in transportation.

One of the main phone calls I receive from state lawmakers concerns truck drivers parked on the shoulder of interstates—a very unsafe situation for both the driver and the motoring public. Drivers often have limited choices, and we must give them more reliable options for parking.

Looking ahead, it's crucial to integrate our focus on truck parking into the broader conversation about reauthorizing surface transportation funding. We urge lawmakers to include this issue in this year's legislation. Sustainable truck parking funding must be part of the infrastructure dialogue, underpinning safety and reliability in our transportation network.

In this regard, we have taken an all-hands-on-deck approach and engaged key state lawmakers as well. We sincerely appreciate State Representative Jason Dewitt for his interest in helping us to address truck parking. His proactive support stands out because he understands the importance of this issue.

As we move forward, we must prioritize truck parking funding to enhance safety and strengthen our workforce. Let's focus on securing the resources needed to support all drivers on our roads, ensuring our industry thrives with a focus on safety. Let us unite in this effort to pave a better path for our drivers and the future of transportation.

Renee Amar is the executive director of the Louisiana Motor Transport Association.

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