**I-81 Crash Reduction Initiative**

**Talking Points for Safety Partners**

## What is THE I-81 Crash Reduction INITIATIVE?

* The I-81 crash reduction initiative is a multi-state high-visibility traffic enforcement and education effort to discourage unsafe driving behaviors which can cause passenger and commercial vehicle crashes.
* The effort complements the national [Our Roads, Our Safety®](https://www.fmcsa.dot.gov/ourroads) public awareness campaign which educates road users on how to share the roads safely with large trucks and buses.
* The theme of this effort is “Together, make I-81 safer.”
* We are working with the U.S. Department of Transportation’s Federal Motor Carrier Safety Administration, local law enforcement, state, and federal agencies as part of this effort to prevent crashes by conducting periods of concentrated high visibility traffic enforcement and education efforts along busy sections of the I-81 corridor in New York, Pennsylvania, Maryland, Virginia, West Virginia, and Tennessee.
* These efforts focus on safe driving for commercial motor vehicles as well as the passenger vehicles operating around large vehicles.
* The crash reduction initiative will occur during the summer months of June, July, and August 2023.

## Why is this effort important?

* I-81 is an 855-mile stretch of highway extending from the Canadian border in New York to Tennessee, and runs through Virginia, West Virginia, Maryland, and Pennsylvania.
* I-81 is one of the most heavily traveled corridors in the eastern United States.
* In 2018-2022, there were over 5,000 collisions on I-81 involving commercial motor vehicles in the key states of New York, Pennsylvania, Maryland, Virginia, West Virginia, and Tennessee.
* The goal for this effort is to prevent highway fatalities due to commercial motor vehicle collisions.
* The effort complements FMCSA’s [Our Roads, Our Safety®](https://www.fmcsa.dot.gov/ourroads) public awareness campaign, which helps improve safety on America’s roadways by providing safety tips to passenger vehicle drivers, CMV drivers, cyclists, and pedestrians.

## Key messages and calls to action

We want drivers to be aware of the increased enforcement during the crash reduction effort and to remember:

### For commercial motor vehicle drivers:

* The crash reduction strategies along the I-81 corridor emphasize the need for all vehicles to share the road safely.
* Always obey all traffic laws: Wear your seatbelt, obey the speed limit, slow for work zones, and don’t drive distracted. Unsafe driving behaviors can lead to crashes and fatalities.
* Make sure your vehicle is in safe working order, and follow all regulations regarding hours of service, medical certification, and CMV credentialing and driver licensing.
* Additional tips for commercial motor vehicle drivers can be found at FMCSA’s website [here](https://www.fmcsa.dot.gov/ourroads/tips-truck-and-bus-drivers).

### For passenger vehicle drivers:

* Obey the speed limit on I-81 and wear your seatbelt.
* Never drive distracted or impaired.
* When driving around large trucks and buses, be patient and leave more space.
* Drivers of large trucks and buses have natural blind spots: Don’t cut off commercial motor vehicles or drive on the left or right side of them for a long period of time.
* Big trucks take 40% more space to stop: Don’t follow commercial motor vehicles too closely or merge or make sudden stops directly in front of them.
* Additional tips for motorists can be found at FMCSA’s *Our Roads, Our Safety* website.

## State Data and other Facts & Figures

* In 2018-2022, there were over 5,000 crashes on I-81 involving commercial motor vehicles in the key states of New York, Pennsylvania, Maryland, Virginia, West Virginia, and Tennessee.
	+ Virginia had the most with over 2,300 crashes. Crashes on the I-81 corridor typically spike in June, July, and August.
	+ Pennsylvania had the second-most crashes with over 1,605. The most crashes occurred from Scranton south to Hazleton and around the Harrisburg area.
	+ New York had over 390 crashes. The areas with higher crash density included Syracuse and Binghamton.
	+ West Virginia had over 300 crashes.
	+ Maryland had nearly 150 crashes, most focused south of Hagerstown and in the Williamsport area.
	+ Tennessee had over 300 crashes