

JACKIE COHRAN-FURBERT “ON BEHALF OF MY SON” JAMES PARKER COHRAN TESTIMONY HRSB JAMES LAW

My name is Jackie Cohran-Furbert, a resident of Prince George County Maryland for 29 years. I’m here today in **support** of HB 1036/ SB 0844. I am the **mother** of James Parker Cohran. I’m here as an **Advocate** for ALL Commercial Motor Vehicle Drivers. On Sept 29, 2019, my only son James Parker Cohran died in a fiery crash on the NJ Turnpike. James was 30 years old and a loving father of four children. James was a licensed Commercial Motor Vehicle Driver.

The impact of James death on my life is profound, I believed I have PTSD post realizing that he burned up in the truck with no skin remaining except on the right foot. The remainder of the body was charred to the muscle with areas of charring through to the internal organs the medical examiner wrote. After his death, we learned that the company he worked for has a documented history of **safety violations, recurrent insurance cancellations**, and should have been **out-of-service**. The company is **out-of-service** as I plead to you. Regardless of your profession, everyone is entitled to work in a safe environment or at least be provided knowledge if conditions are **not** safe.

HB 1036/SB 0844 “Vehicle Laws - Commercial Motor Carriers - Safety, Maintenance, and Insurance Information (James's Cohran Law)” This bill requires **EMPLOYERS** of commercial motor vehicle drivers to provide **PROSPECTIVE** employees with:

1. A copy of the employer’s safety record maintained by the Federal Motor Carrier Safety Administration (FMCSA)
 - This **bill** will promote transparency so that drivers can make informed decisions about whether they want to work for said employers.
 - Prior to my son death, his employer was in violation of “396.17 Critical Violation” on 8/05/2018 which requires periodic inspections and fined.
 - After my son death, his employer was in violation of “382.11 Acute Violation” on 11/05/2019 which requires alcohol and drug testing and fined.
2. Proof of insurance, including information on policy coverage. Likewise, a contract between an employer and a subcontractor must require periodic updates by the subcontractor to the employer.
3. Provide USDOT Number of any entity owned or operated by the employer. Also provide the FMCSA URL with an explanation of how to access the prospective employer safety performance records on the FMCSA website which includes the company operational status, inspection reports, fatality reports, crash reports, monetary fines, program violations, insurance coverage and cancellations records.

In 2017, there were 34,247 fatal motor vehicle crashes. Fatalities increased 8% from 2016. Large truck occupants comprised 17% of all large truck and bus fatalities. This **bill** is important to ensure that my son death is not just another statistic and to hold employers accountable for their failure to implement safety laws. This is an educational opportunity for the 16 CDL schools in Maryland.

In the State of Maryland, we must better serve the CDL Drivers. The FMCSA rules must be enforced at the state level. Maryland has 17,020 trucking companies according to the Maryland Trucking Association Fast Facts. Self-regulation historically has never worked. We cannot save James; but maybe we can save someone else’s child. The drivers can’t speak for themselves. Because, they will lose their job. I speak for them today. I’m asking for your support today of this **bill**.