

## **Houston attorneys discuss lack of commercial truck law enforcement**

Large commercial trucks are an absolute necessity to the economy in Texas, but they can be dangerous when sharing the road with drivers of smaller vehicles or other road users. With a fully-loaded trailer, a commercial truck can weigh as much as 80,000 pounds and can take up to the [length of two football fields](#) to stop when traveling at 65 mph.

### **Dangers of limited enforcement**

A booming economy in Houston and other Texas communities is good for business and residents, but brings in more heavy commercial vehicles, which means more potential accidents.

Commercial trucks are causing damage to Houston's roads, crashing on highways and injuring motorists, and creating traffic problems and noise concerns for Texas residents.

Some roadways lack the infrastructural capacity to handle large commercial trucks. When these massive vehicles use these roads, they often leave behind large potholes, cracked concrete, and damaged shoulders – all of which put everyday road users at risk of being injured in a crash.

Compliance is the answer, according to experts and lawmakers who are working to bring change when it comes to heavy-truck inspections and enforcement.

In Austin, legislators filed eight bills related to commercial vehicle inspections granting specific police or sheriff's departments the authority to enforce trucking rules.

The Houston Police Department's Truck Enforcement Unit offers a free program to commercial businesses that employ commercial vehicle drivers. Police also perform safety inspections throughout Houston but not every community can enforce these laws yet.

According to the [Houston Chronicle](#), a bill filed last week by State Rep. Gina Calanni would allow local law enforcement to apply for a "certification to enforce commercial vehicle standards for overweight trucks" that pass through their city limits. Similar legislation has passed in previous sessions.

The Texas Department of Public Safety is currently the only law enforcement agency authorized to enforce overweight commercial vehicle safety standards. Calanni's bill includes several conditions for communities that apply.

Fewer police safety troopers on the streets have contributed to truck accidents as well, said State Rep. Terry Canales, chairman of the State House Transportation Committee.

According to the [Chronicle](#), lawmakers are lined up to approve the requests, but remain skittish. Granting cities commercial truck oversight could, some fear, make some municipalities speed traps for trucks. So, they are taking the enforcement requests on a case-by-case basis.

### **What you can do in the event of a truck crash**

Victims of Houston truck accidents caused by commercial vehicles have recourse. If you've been injured in a crash, you need an experienced attorney on your side fighting for you every step of the way. Truck accidents can be complex and overwhelming but the legal team at [Smith & Hassler](#), Attorneys at Law,

have a wealth of legal knowledge and the competitive edge to take on trucking companies and their insurers. Don't wait. [Contact us](#) today to schedule your free consultation.