



TRUCK RENTING AND LEASING ASSOCIATION

May 17, 2010

Honorable Tim Pawlenty
Office of the Governor
130 State Capitol
75 Rev. Dr. Martin Luther King Jr. Blvd.
St. Paul, MN 55155

Dear Governor Pawlenty:

I am writing to you on behalf of the members of the Truck Renting and Leasing Association (TRALA) owning trucks and trailers operated in the State of Minnesota to respectfully ask for you to veto Senate File 251 when it reaches your desk. This legislation would change the definition of motor vehicle and consequently hold the non-negligent owner of a trailer responsible for the actions of the driver of a truck-trailer combination.

In many cases, truck trailers are not owned by the same entity that owns the tractor that pulls it or trains the driver that operates that tractor. As such, it is unreasonable to hold that trailer owner liable for the results of a situation over which they have no control. Of course, if there is some negligence in the maintenance or safety of the trailer, current law already allows a plaintiff to seek damages on the basis of that negligence. However S.F. 251 actually extends liability to non-negligent trailer owners, solely on the basis of their ownership of the equipment.

The United States Congress recognized the inherent unfairness of holding non-negligent vehicle owners liable for the actions of vehicle operators when it enacted into law the federal statute known as the Graves Amendment (49 USC 30106). This federal law prohibits states from holding non-negligent owners of rented and leased vehicles and trailers liable for the actions of vehicle operators solely on the basis of ownership. The very same logic behind the passage of that legislation drives TRALA's opposition to S.F. 251. A non-negligent owner of a compliant trailer should not be held liable for the actions of a driver with whom they may have no interaction or influence.

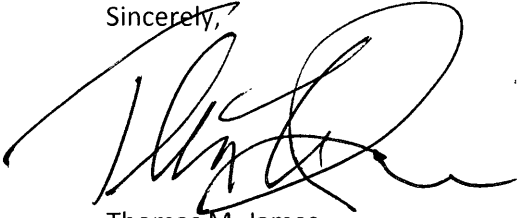
As Minnesota and the whole country struggle to recover from a crippling economy, passing legislation that extends liability to non-negligent parties is the wrong idea at the wrong time. Please consider TRALA's arguments and hold vehicle operators liable for their own actions by vetoing S.F. 251.

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Thank you for your consideration. Please do not hesitate to contact me if you have any questions about TRALA or its opposition to S.F. 251.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Thomas M. James', written in a cursive style.

Thomas M. James
President and CEO