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www.house.gov/shuster

Contact: Jeff Urbanchuk, Press Secretary
(202) 225-2431
(202) 593-1040 cell
(202) 225-2486 fax
jg.urbanchuk@mail.house.gov

Shuster Introduces Legislation to Strengthen Bus and Motorcoach Safety

Washington, D.C. –**Congressman Bill Shuster**, a member of the House Transportation and Infrastructure Committee, is pleased to announce that he has introduced legislation to improve bus and motorcoach safety. Shuster’s landmark legislation is the first of its kind to call for a comprehensive National Highway Traffic Safety Administration (NHTSA) study to determine what motorcoach safety requirements should be improved.

“Every day, thousands of people from across the country travel on buses and motorcoaches. These vehicles carry commuters, families and pleasure travelers across our roads, highways, and interstates,” Shuster said. “It is essential that safety requirements be based on science under timelines that the industry can actually achieve.”

Motorcoach and charter bus transportation is one of the safest means of transportation available. Over the last ten years, the industry has had an average of 22.7 deaths – far below passenger cars or the airline industry. However, Congressman Shuster believes that one death is too many and applauds the industries efforts to make their fleets as safe as possible. Efforts to make the industry safer must be grounded on good, sound science; not by bureaucratic mandate.

Shuster’s legislation was prompted by the late Congressman Paul Gillmor of Ohio who began drafting bus and motorcoach safety legislation. He was drawn to this issue after a bus carrying Ohio Bluffington University baseball team was involved in an accident resulting in the deaths of 7 people. Unfortunately, he passed away before introducing the legislation.

“Paul Gillmor was a great representative for the people of Ohio,” Shuster said. “I am proud to have been able to pick up where he left off on this important issue.”

“We welcome Congressman Shuster’s bill because it calls for the most sweeping research and data collection in motorcoach industry history,” said American Bus Association President and CEO Peter J. Pantuso. “Much of the data to guide engineers on occupant protection issues and many other safety issues simple doesn’t yet exist. This bill will ensure that the research needed to guide policy-makers is conducted, and that sound science rather than politics shapes government safety policies.”

The key provisions of Shuster’s legislation include:

- The bill stipulates that 30 months after DoT concludes a safety study of the industry.

- The Agency shall prescribe federal standard for a motorcoach occupant protection system that accounts for frontal impact collisions, side impact collisions, rear collisions and rollovers.
- Additionally the Secretary shall provide standards for: roof strength, window glazing, ways to prevent fires on motorcoaches, and ways to improve emergency evacuation.
- The bill allows for the retrofitting of any safety provisions that are issued by NHTSA. Thus allowing the industry to adjust to the new regulations as they update their bus fleets.

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