

Statement of

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To

Senate Transportation Committee

**Chairman, John Rafferty
Minority Chairman, John Wozniak**

**Wednesday, January 27, 2016
North Office Building, Harrisburg, PA**

On

“ Clearing Snow & Ice from Vehicles”

Senate Transportation Committee
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Mr. Chairman and Members of the Senate Transportation Committee, thank you for inviting the Pennsylvania Motor Truck Association to provide testimony today on this important subject.

My name is Joe Butzer and I am President and CEO of Advantage Nationallease in Lititz, PA. My Company leases and rents straight trucks and tractor trailers to a number of local businesses in Central PA. We currently maintain over 180 units in our fleet.

Mr. Lambert, on behalf of all of us at PMTA, we are sorry for the loss of your wife and I applaud your efforts to prevent this type of accident from happening again. I just wish we could provide a solution. The trucking industry does everything it can to promote safe operations. Our industry is safer now than it has ever been in the past however a solution to ice removal eludes our industry.

I would venture a guess that I am the only person in this room that has climbed a ladder with the feet set in the snow to clean snow off the top of a 53' trailer. I did this a couple of years ago when a customer had called and asked to rent one of our refrigerated trailers. It was winter and had snowed the day before. Most trailers roofs cannot be walked on but you can walk on a refrigerated trailer roof due to the insulation so I had asked one of my employees to climb the ladder and perform this task. My employee refused due to safety reasons which he had every right to do per the OSHA Guidelines. I will say this again. OSHA regulations permit any employee the right to refuse to perform a task that they deem to be unsafe.

I respected my employees' right and never being one to ask someone to do something that I wouldn't

do myself, shovel in hand, I went up to do it myself. After carefully climbing the ladder to the roof of a 13'6" high trailer, I stepped into about a foot of snow from the storm the day before and began to shovel the snow off the roof. While beginning to remove the snow I noticed that there was about 1" of solid ice frozen to the roof. After shoveling about 5' of snow exposing the ice, I began trying to remove the ice but while trying to remove the ice I slipped and fell onto the roof of the trailer. Fortunately I fell onto the roof. Realizing that I could not remove the ice, I promptly went to the ladder and climbed down before falling again.

The storm that caused the ice was not unlike many storms we get in PA. It had begun to snow mid-afternoon the day before and stopped snowing sometime overnight. The sun was hot the day prior to the snow beginning and temperatures were above freezing. When it snowed on top of the warm trailer roof, the snow melted upon contact and when temperatures dropped over night, the bottom layer of snow had turned to ice and was frozen solid to the top of the trailer.

I subsequently researched systems to remove snow from the top of trucks and trailers. I found many viable options to remove snow that I am certain others here today will testify to, but NONE to remove ice. These systems for snow removal are fine at one's place of business. But how does a truck driver out on the road for a week, clear the snow from his or her trailer after sleeping for 10 hours in their truck as required by Federal Law ??? Or this scenario- I have a customer that is a trucking company. They drop trailers off at food warehouses to be loaded in the future which may sit there a few days. What if it snowed while the trailer was parked at a warehouse? How is a truck driver to remove snow that may have accumulated when they go to pick up that trailer?? Oh they make extendable snow rakes for a driver to attempt to remove the snow from the ground but again this would be an OSHA Violation due to the driver pulling the snow down on top of them self. And these rakes do not remove ice.

Even if PennDot installs and maintains free snow removal systems on every highway entering our state and every rest area throughout our State or every truck stop, I cannot fathom a way to safely remove ice from the top of trucks.

The ice on the trailer roof in my story was caused by an "Act of God". Nothing I could have done to prevent it and nothing I could do to remove it. I sincerely hope that this committee wouldn't create a law making a truck driver subject to a fine for not removing snow or ice from the roof of a 13'6" high trailer that he or she cannot safely reach to remove??

With sincere empathy to Mr. Lambert for the loss of his wife, Ice frozen to the top of a trailer is truly an "Act of God". With no practical way to remove the ice, I implore you – Do Not to pass this Bill.

Thank you.