

## **The Debate Over Automatic Brakes: Are They Ready for Heavy-Duty Trucks?**

*Trucks.com Opinion: Two trucking industry leaders offer their opposing views on a recent petition to mandate Automatic Emergency Brakes*

Tampa, FL ([PRWEB](#)) June 23, 2016 -- Just days after [IHS Automotive estimated](#) that annual sales of autonomous, or self-driving, heavy-duty trucks could reach 60,000 annually by 2035, the safety of a major component of the autonomous system, automatic emergency braking (AEB), is being debated on [Trucks.com](#), the trucking news and analysis site.

In a column published today, Jacqueline Gillan, president of Advocates for Highway and Auto Safety, contests a recent opinion piece by Shelley Uvanile-Hesch, chief executive of Women's Trucking Federation of Canada, whose near collision while driving a semi-truck with AEB has led her to believe the technology, while right for consumer cars, is not ready for commercial haulers. Gillan's organization is one of four signatories to a petition filed this year asking the National Highway Traffic Safety Administration to make AEB mandatory for all new large trucks and buses with a minimum gross vehicle weight rating of 10,000 pounds.

While acknowledging that federal regulators need to establish performance requirements, Gillan said the move to mandate automatic braking on all new trucks sold is necessary to prevent some of the 4,000 deaths per year attributed to large truck crashes.

"Fortunately, we already have solutions to significantly improve safety and prevent needless crashes," Gillan said. "One common-sense safety measure that would curb frequent and fatal truck crashes is the use of automatic emergency braking, or AEB, systems. Yet, in a column published by Trucks.com, truck driver Shelley Uvanile-Hesch argued that AEB technology needs more research before it is required for new trucks. We respectfully disagree."

Gillan cites NHTSA findings that in more than 3 million miles of testing crash avoidance systems, no rear end crashes of the type those systems are designed to prevent occurred. Gillan's response to Uvanile-Hesch's piece is available here [https://www.trucks.com/2016/06/23/automatic-emergency-braking-ready/?utm\\_source=wire&utm\\_medium=pubrel&utm\\_campaign=AEBReady\\_June16](https://www.trucks.com/2016/06/23/automatic-emergency-braking-ready/?utm_source=wire&utm_medium=pubrel&utm_campaign=AEBReady_June16).

"Safety advocates need to better understand that developing automated safety systems for trucks is more difficult [than for much lighter consumer vehicles]," Uvanile-Hesch said in her op-ed published earlier this month and available here [https://www.trucks.com/2016/06/02/automatic-braking-trucks-not-ready/?utm\\_source=wire&utm\\_medium=pubrel&utm\\_campaign=AEBoped\\_June16](https://www.trucks.com/2016/06/02/automatic-braking-trucks-not-ready/?utm_source=wire&utm_medium=pubrel&utm_campaign=AEBoped_June16). "The huge weight and size of a big rig makes stability paramount. That means any collision-prevention system must make sure that rapid braking won't cause the vehicle to tip over or the driver to lose control. That nearly happened to me."

Both pieces are part of a series of periodic guest columns by industry thought leaders, posted to Trucks.com Opinion. Opinion is part of the publication's goal to provide a platform for reasoned debate, and focuses on topics being discussed in the boardrooms and truck stops across the country.

About Trucks.com



Technological change, increased regulatory requirements and escalating cost pressures are combining to reshape transportation and shipping at a pace not seen in a century. This will lead to new ways of thinking and revolutionary breakthroughs in the industry. Trucks.com will chronicle this change, reporting on developments and providing insights from widely recognized leaders in the trucking world. We plan to fuel your mind for the exciting road ahead.

Trucks.com announced its [public preview](#) in March and has since served up insightful news content and thought-provoking commentary from the trucking industry's thought leaders through its website, Facebook, Twitter, LinkedIn Group and its content distribution agreement with Forbes.com.



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