



Improve bus safety by enforcing laws, not adding regulations

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Your editorial about bus safety ("Wheels Off The Bus," Nov. 9) failed to acknowledge that most of the tragic bus crashes cited could have been avoided if federal and state law enforcement officials had been more aggressive in keeping illegal bus operators off the roads. Bus safety begins long before the first passenger ever boards.

The fatal August 2008 crash in Sherman, Texas, is a clear example of the consequences from governmental failure to enforce the law. The bus company in that incident, Angel Tours, had no authority to operate, as safety officials had revoked its privilege to do so. Yet those same officials failed to take action to enforce the law, such as impounding the company's buses. Lax law enforcement will continue to trump every engineering breakthrough our industry offers in safety technology because its effects can always be eclipsed by government inattention.

Motorcoach passenger safety is our top priority, and we're proud that government data show motorcoach travel is the safest form of surface transportation. Indeed, motorcoach deaths made up about 10 percent of the 300 bus deaths you cited. The other 90 percent were on school buses and transit buses. Where is the call for a wider scope of protection for all passengers on all forms of public transportation, including trains and transit?

One fatality aboard any bus is one too many, which is why the American Bus Association wants to make the safest way to travel even safer. Our industry has been calling for a massive government crackdown against criminal operators for more than a decade. Such an effort would keep rogues off the road, safeguard the public and end the tragic but avoidable incidents that cost lives.

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