

***SM Ball Waste Disposal, Inc***

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Chairman Proehl and the House Transportation Committee:

I have been in the waste disposal business over 27 years covering the Jefferson and Douglas County areas. During these years, I have witnessed many “near misses” regarding inattentive and/or impatient drivers around my trash trucks. Personally, I made a decision on a couple of occasions to discontinue picking up clients in certain areas where my employees were being continually put at risk due to passing drivers inattentiveness or impatience on certain 2 lane highways.

As an employer, I have dressed my employees in all the safety yellow, purchased white visible trucks, kept my trucks extremely lit up with amber lights and basically made them appear to be “rolling Christmas trees”, but there are still times when that is not enough to prevent an accident. I have seen times on 2 lane highways without shoulders such as 40 highway where cars are coming at 70 mph from both directions and neither driver wants to slow down, and one ends up in the ditch or almost hitting my truck or the employee on the back.

This is a very real issue for those of us providing this service for others. I would venture to guess that you could talk to any current or former employee in the waste management business, and they will share a story or two of a time when they felt put at risk of being hit by an inattentive or impatient driver.

Just as we protect our young people by slowing drivers down around buses, we should protect our workers that are trying to provide a necessary service to others by slowing drivers down around trash trucks. Please hear the plea of those of us with “boots on the ground” by passing SB272. You may never know how many lives are saved as a result of this law.

Shawn M. Ball

President