



## **Nationwide Ban On Cell Phone Use By Commercial Truckers Would Save Lives, Virginia Trucking Accident Attorney Says**

*A federal proposal to outlaw truck drivers' cell phone use after an 11-fatality wreck deserves support, as do Virginia's stalled efforts to curb distracted driving, according to Petersburg personal injury lawyer Charles Cuthbert of Cuthbert Law Offices.*

Petersburg, VA ([PRWEB](#)) September 26, 2011 -- Many tragic tractor-trailer crashes could be avoided on Virginia's highways if the U.S. Department of Transportation adopts a proposal to bar commercial drivers from using cell phones while driving, [Petersburg personal injury attorney](#) Charles H. Cuthbert, Jr., said today.

The National Transportation Safety Board (NTSB) recently recommended a complete cell phone ban for commercial truck drivers following a 2010 accident in Kentucky that killed 11 people, according to the [New York Times](#).

The deadly wreck happened when a trucker lost control of his rig, crossed the median and collided with an oncoming van. Records showed that the trucker was talking on the phone at the time of the wreck, the newspaper said.

"Driving an 80,000-pound tractor-trailer requires a truck driver's full attention at all times, and distractions from cell phones or other wireless telecommunication devices simply pose too great a threat to the safety of other motorists," said Cuthbert, who practices [truck accident](#) law with Cuthbert Law Offices in Petersburg and Richmond.

The NTSB's proposed ban would include both handheld and hands-free cell phones.

Virginia statutes currently outlaw texting while driving for all motorists and prevent drivers under the age of 18 from using cell phones behind the wheel. School bus drivers are also forbidden to use cell phones while driving.

Bills that would have extended a handheld cell phone ban to all Virginia drivers died in the General Assembly during the last legislative session.

Cuthbert encouraged Virginia's lawmakers to make progress on those bills in the next session regardless of what the federal government does about cell phone use by commercial truck drivers.

However, he pointed out that commercial trucks pose a unique threat on Virginia's roads due to their weight and size when compared to other motor vehicles.

"When a distracted or otherwise negligent truck driver makes a mistake behind the wheel, the outcome frequently results in far more serious injuries and deaths than if the driver of a passenger car had made the same error," Cuthbert said. "That's why our laws already set tougher requirements for commercial truck drivers — and those rules need to be strengthened by a ban on all cell phone use by truckers."

Cuthbert Law Offices has established a solid reputation for helping people who have suffered severe injuries because of a truck driver's negligence, including securing a [\\$1.7 million verdict](#) for the estate of a woman who



died after a collision with an illegally parked tractor-trailer in the case of Shepard v. Capitol Foundry of Virginia, Inc., 262 Va. 715, 554 S.E.2d 72.

When the verdict came down in 2001, it was the second largest award ever obtained in Petersburg Circuit Court, and the firm's lawyers saw the case through to the Virginia Supreme Court, which affirmed the verdict.

(Cuthbert's law firm also obtained the largest verdict ever obtained in Petersburg Circuit Court – a \$2.045 million amount, plus interest, in the 1999 [medical malpractice](#) case of Pulliam v. Coastal Emergency Services, 257 Va. 1, 509 S.E.2d 307.)

Cuthbert stressed that anyone who has been involved in a serious accident with an 18-wheeler or other commercial truck should talk to a qualified [Virginia motor vehicle accident attorney](#).

“Trucking accidents are often more complex because of truck-driving regulations and the various parties who could be liable, including the truck driver, the trucking company, the leasing agency and the cargo's owner,” Cuthbert said.

He also said that law firms such as [Cuthbert Law Offices](#) have the means to fully investigate a Virginia tractor-trailer accident and can discover evidence, including records or other indications of distracted driving, that shows who was really to blame.

#### About Cuthbert Law Offices

For more than 30 years, Cuthbert Law Offices has successfully litigated cases for clients and their families throughout Virginia. The firm handles personal injury claims, including car and truck accidents, medical malpractice and wrongful deaths. The firm also helps clients obtain disability benefits that the Social Security Administration has denied. Charles H. Cuthbert, Jr., firm partner, focuses his practice on representing victims of serious injuries. He is a graduate of Harvard College. He earned a joint J.D./M.B.A. degree from the University of Virginia School of Law. He is a member of the bars in Virginia and North Carolina as well as the U.S. Court of Appeals Fourth Circuit and the U.S. Supreme Court. To contact Cuthbert Law Offices, call the Petersburg office at (804) 733-3100 or the Richmond office at (804) 643-3100 or use the firm's [online form](#).

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