

NEWS & INSIGHTS

DOT Targets “CDL Mills” in Safety Crackdown

BY: [DOUGLAS B. MARCELLO](#) | [INSIGHTS](#) | [ARTICLE](#)

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U.S. Department of Transportation Secretary Sean Duffy is launching a federal enforcement push against substandard commercial driver training operations, marking the administration’s most aggressive move yet to improve trucking safety standards.

Why It Matters

Safe driving starts with quality training. With over 1.14 million new CDL applicants since 2022, eliminating fraudulent and inadequate training programs – often called “CDL mills” – could save lives and protect the industry’s workforce.

What They’re Saying

The crackdown earned rare unanimous support from trucking’s often-fractious stakeholder groups.

- **Commercial Vehicle Training Association:** “This renewed federal commitment to enforcement aligns closely with [our] long-standing advocacy... CVTA applauds Secretary Duffy and Administrator Barrs for taking decisive action that mirrors what CVTA members have been demanding for over three years.”
- **American Trucking Associations:** Called the announcement a win for their “longstanding priority to keep roads safe by enhancing training, testing, and licensing standards.”
- **Owner-Operator Independent Drivers Association:** “Secretary Duffy and FMCSA Administrator Barrs are right to crack down on CDL mills and the trucking companies that rely on unqualified drivers,” said OOIDA President Todd Spencer.

By the Numbers

The scope of commercial driver training reveals why oversight matters:

- 21,368 training providers registered across 37,743 locations
- 40% are motor carriers training their own drivers
- 38% are governmental institutions
- 10% are dedicated training schools
- 1.14 million drivers have sought CDLs or endorsements since Feb. 2022
- 63% of new drivers are between ages 21 and 40

The Bottom Line

After years of industry complaints about diploma-mill operations churning out unprepared drivers, federal regulators are finally wielding their enforcement hammer, and it’s a move that could reshape entry-level training and make America’s highways safer. If you have any questions about driver regulations or whether the crackdown may impact

your driver training, [please contact me at any time.](#)

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