

JOHN SPIROS

State Representative • 86th Assembly District

TESTIMONY FOR AB 271 – CAMERA MONITOR SYSTEM BILL

Thank you Chairwoman VanderMeer and members of the Assembly Transportation Committee for holding a public hearing on Assembly Bill (AB) 271 and allowing me to provide testimony.

Under current state and federal law, commercial motor vehicles (CMVs) are required to be equipped with mirrors to view the roadway.

In February 2019, the Federal Motor Carrier Safety Administration (FMCSA), within the U.S. Department of Transportation (DoT), approved the *first* 5-year exemption to the federal mirror requirement that allowed the use of a Mirror Eye camera monitoring system for commercial motor vehicles. Due to its impressive safety results, FMCSA renewed the Mirror Eye system exemption and provided a subsequent 5-year extension until 2029.

Today, there are five approved federal exemptions with different systems in place. The exemptions allow CMVs to remove the conventional mirrors and operate with a camera monitoring system. There is a current federal preemption for all *interstate* commerce. States must allow any FMCSA approved camera monitoring system for CMVs traveling across state lines.

AB 271 conforms WI to current federal regulation and extends the allowance of any approved FMCSA camera systems in lieu of mirrors for *intrastate* commerce within WI. I worked with the WI Department of Transportation (WisDOT) and have introduced Assembly Amendment 1 (AA1). AA1 is a technical amendment to clarify that the state exemption would be approved under the current federal exemptions or if US DoT takes action to permanently adopt the policy in US Federal Code or in its safety standards. It ensures seamless state approval to match any federal approval action. The bill is also flexible - if FMCSA would revoke its exemption for interstate commerce, then it would no longer be approved in WI.

The Mirror Eye system and other systems consist of an integrated system of cameras and digital displays. The cameras convey a clear view on high-definition monitors in the cab. These systems provide enhanced, real-time visibility from nearly every angle of a commercial vehicle. The use of high-definition digital cameras also provides for color night vision and assists with night driving. Importantly, the cameras eliminate blind spots and have been shown to significantly reduce the frequency and severity of accidents.

In addition to its important safety benefits, vehicles can achieve a 2-3% increase in fuel savings without the drag of traditional mirrors and a camera system is in place.

Overall, this innovative camera system technology has shown to improve safety and fuel economy on the roads. AB 271 ensures that there is seamless adoption within Wisconsin. Thank you again for allowing me the opportunity to share testimony in support of this bill. I am happy to answer any questions.



STATE SENATOR

Eric Wimberger

DISTRICT 2

Assembly Committee on Transportation

Re: Assembly Bill 271- camera monitor systems as an alternative to mirrors for commercial motor vehicles.

June 25, 2025

Thank you, Representative VanderMeer and committee members, for hearing Assembly Bill 271, which allows for camera monitor systems to be installed on commercial vehicles in lieu of mirrors. Whenever we look at changing the regulation of commercial vehicles, safety must be the top priority, and these camera monitoring systems improve the safety of our roads.

In February 2019, the Federal Motor Carrier Safety Administration (FMCSA) within the U.S. Department of Transportation allowed the use of a camera monitoring system as an alternative to the required mirrors for commercial motor vehicles. These systems provide enhanced, real-time visibility from nearly every angle of a commercial vehicle. The cameras eliminate blind spots and have been shown to significantly reduce the frequency and severity of accidents. The use of high-definition digital cameras also provides for color night vision and assists with night driving.

While the USDOT has allowed for the use of these camera systems, Wisconsin State law still requires traditional mirrors. Assembly Bill 271 conforms Wisconsin to federal rules and allows WI commercial motor vehicles to utilize a camera monitor system that is approved by the FMCSA in lieu of the rear-vision mirrors.

It is important to note that the FMCSA has only extended the exemption to use these devices until 2029, and this bill is meant to directly mirror the decisions of the FMCSA. If the extension on these devices is terminated by the federal government, then they will also not be allowed on Wisconsin roads.

This legislation is important to maintaining a modern, and increasingly safe, fleet of commercial vehicles in the state of Wisconsin. By passing this bill, we are making Wisconsin roads safer for everyone. Thank you again for holding this hearing and I hope you'll join us in support of Assembly Bill 271.

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To: Chairwoman VanderMeer and members of the Committee

From: Kathey Bilek, Legislative Advisor

Date: June 25, 2025

RE: Assembly Bill 271, relating to camera monitor systems as an alternative to mirrors for commercial motor vehicles.

Thank you, Chairwoman VanderMeer, and members of the committee for your consideration of the Wisconsin Department of Transportation (WisDOT)'s input on Assembly Bill 271.

Assembly Bill 271 would allow commercial motor vehicles (CMVs) in Wisconsin to be equipped with a camera monitoring system approved by the Federal Motor Carrier Safety Administration (FMCSA) as an alternative to traditional mirrors currently required under state and federal law. These camera systems allow the driver to have a greater field of vision around their CMV. A driver uses screens located in the cab of the vehicle to see the view from each camera mounted on the vehicle.

WisDOT has no concerns about the use of this technology on CMVs. Replacing side view mirrors with cameras certainly has safety benefits, such as reducing blind spots which can obstruct other vehicles or pedestrians. The camera system provides better visibility down the sides of the vehicle and directly behind it where conventional mirrors do not. These cameras can track trailer turns which can avoid potential collisions with objects. In severe weather or low light conditions, cameras can provide better visibility for the operator.

Commercial motor vehicles currently operating in Wisconsin while equipped with these camera systems are operating in interstate commerce. This bill as currently written would allow CMVs operating in intrastate commerce to also be equipped with these camera systems.

WisDOT appreciates the opportunity to collaborate with the bill authors to introduce an amendment which would allow the use of this innovative safety technology only while it is federally approved for use and recognizes that federal approvals may come from several sources. The bill as amended alleviates the department's concerns that the camera systems could remain authorized for use in Wisconsin even if the federal approval is withdrawn in the future. WisDOT looks forward to continued discussions with bill authors to enable broadest responsible use of this innovative safety technology.

I would be happy to answer any questions from the committee. Thanks again for your consideration of WisDOT's input.



Testimony Before the Wisconsin State Assembly Committee on Transportation

Good afternoon, Assembly Committee members,

My name is Dan Drella, and I am the Safety and Training Director for Schneider National Trucking. I have been with Schneider for 27 years and am one of the lead individuals responsible for testing and evaluating safety technology for the company's tractors and trailers. Schneider strongly supports AB 271 which proposes to update Wisconsin statute to allow federally approved camera monitor systems to be used in place of traditional mirrors on commercial motor vehicles.

Let me start by asking, "Who has a backup camera in their personal vehicle? Who would feel less comfortable if you had to do without it?" The answer is that technologies such as backup cameras, when used properly, have the potential to keep **not just the drivers and passengers** but also **other motorists and pedestrians** safe. In regard to backing up and parking, because the camera uses a wide-angle lens, you can see basically everything that is happening behind your vehicle which, obviously, prevents behind-the-vehicle collisions and injuries.

The same logic applies to mirror replacement systems that use cameras in trucks. These systems provide a superior view all around the truck. Schneider National began testing this technology six years ago. We have worked with our provider to make a series of improvements and enhancements, resulting in a very effective product.

We have accumulated over 50 million miles of hauling freight in local, regional, and long-haul configurations, from winters in Green Bay to summers in Texas, putting these systems through their paces in heat, cold, snow, ice, rain, and all types of conditions. Throughout all those miles, we have not had an accident that we would attribute to the mirror system.

I'll just highlight some of the key features that mirror replacement camera systems offer:

- A wider field of view at all times
- Significantly improved visibility in adverse weather conditions, with monitors inside and cameras remaining clear due to being heated
- Improved visibility at night with adjustable night vision
- Visibility of distance to following vehicles, with distance lines to better gauge space for lane changes or when backing
- Improved visibility to the more difficult areas to see along the right side of the truck
- Solid-state panning to provide visibility to the rear of the trailer when turning, to avoid hitting objects while making corners

- No need to adjust mirrors between different drivers using the same truck, such as team drivers or truck-sharing
- Glare elimination for improved visibility in the morning and evening when the sun is at a low angle, like polarized lenses

As the systems have evolved, they now also include remote, over-the-air monitoring systems, which look for any signs of possible faults, even before the driver may notice, so that the truck may be routed in for maintenance. The systems also have redundant cameras and software that can reboot instantly as needed, reducing the risk of over-the-road downtime. The risk of system outage is minimal and comparable to the risk of a traditional mirror being broken over-the-road due to road debris or impact by another truck. To that point, Schneider purchases about 1,200 replacement mirrors per year.

I will note that the Federal Motor Carrier Safety Administration has approved exemptions for motor carriers to operate with video camera technology, specifically the MirrorEye® Camera Monitor System that Schneider is poised to use on its trucks, in place of rear-view mirrors; so the federal government is comfortable that camera monitoring systems are, at least as safe as or more safe than conventional mirrors. Stoneridge, the manufacturer of the Mirror Eye camera system, told FMCSA that “a leading fleet” found a 65% reduction in accident costs across 24 million miles driven with the Mirror Eye system compared to 134 million miles driven without the system.

In summary, mirrors have been around for over 100 years, and nearly everything else on cars and trucks has changed since then. The bill before you acknowledges that technology has advanced and is able to provide a solution that is clearly as good as, and in many ways much better than, traditional mirrors.

I ask for this Committee’s support of AB 271 to help improve highway safety in Wisconsin. Thank you and I would be happy to answer any questions.



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Assembly Transportation Committee
Support of Assembly Bill 271
Camera Monitor Systems as an Alternative to Mirrors
June 24, 2025

Chair VanderMeer, members of the committee, thank you for the opportunity to testify today.

My name is Dan Johnson, President of the Wisconsin Motor Carriers Association, representing Wisconsin trucking companies and industry suppliers operating across our state.

The WMCA strongly supports AB 271 which updates Wisconsin statute to allow federally approved camera monitor systems to be used in place of traditional mirrors on commercial motor vehicles.

Current law requires mirrors, of course, however, technology has advanced, and the Federal Motor Carrier Safety Administration has approved certain camera monitor systems that meet or exceed the safety performance of mirrors.

These systems:

- Provide wider fields of view with fewer blind spots.
- Are less affected by rain, glare, and nighttime conditions,
- Improve aerodynamics and fuel efficiency, and
- Help drivers make safer lane changes, turns, and backing maneuvers.

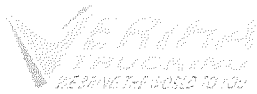
This bill does not eliminate the requirement for rear visibility, but rather aligns state law with FMCSA's federal exemption process, allowing Wisconsin motor carriers to legally adopt these safety technologies without conflicting with outdated mirror requirements.

As the industry moves toward smarter, safer, and more fuel-efficient equipment, this change ensures Wisconsin remains consistent with national standards and continues to support innovation in freight transportation.

We appreciate the Legislature's willingness to keep pace with evolving safety tools and respectfully urge your support of this common-sense, safety-driven update.

Respectfully submitted,

Dan Johnson
President
Wisconsin Motor Carriers Association



**Testimony - Wisconsin State Assembly Transportation Committee
In Support of Mirrorless Commercial Vehicle Technology**

Presented by: Tim Kordula

Safety and Training Development Director

Veriha Trucking, Inc.

6/24/2025.

Chair VanderMeer, and honorable members of the Transportation Committee:

Thank you for the opportunity to provide testimony on **Assembly Bill 271 - Camera Based Systems as an Alternative to Mirrors**. My name is Tim Kordula, and I serve as Safety and Training Development Director at Veriha Trucking, Inc., headquarters in Marinette, Wisconsin. On behalf of my company, I would like to express strong support for Assembly Bill 271 and specifically camera-based systems such as MirrorEye—as a proven advancement that improves safety, efficiency, and environmental performance in the trucking industry.

Veriha Trucking proudly operates a fleet of commercial vehicles dedicated to safe, reliable freight transportation. Safety is at the core of our mission, and we are committed to investing in technologies that protect our drivers and the motoring public. We believe mirrorless camera systems represent a critical step forward.

The Case for Mirrorless Systems

Traditional exterior mirrors, though required by regulation for decades, present well-documented challenges: - **Persistent blind spots** that contribute to sideswipe, merging, and turning incidents; - **Vulnerability to weather conditions**, where snow, ice, or rain obscure visibility; - **Reduced visibility at night** and challenges managing headlight glare; - **Aerodynamic inefficiency** that increases fuel consumption and carbon emissions.

Mirrorless camera systems like MirrorEye address these concerns directly by providing drivers with a wider field of view, real-time imaging that adjusts to light and weather conditions, and cameras that resist fogging and freezing. These systems significantly reduce blind spots and improve overall situational awareness.

In the Event of Failure

In the rare instance of failure, Veriha has plans in place to either re-install a conventional West Coast mirror on the truck that is carried with the truck or, air freight a system to the driver eliminating excessive downtime. This surpasses what would take place if a conventional mirror would be taken off with in a sideswipe accident or a truck stop parking accident where the West Coast mirror would need to come from a dealer possible hundreds of miles away.



Benefits to Safety and Operations

Veriha Trucking has equipped portions of our fleet with this technology. Our experience, echoed by industry studies, demonstrates: - Fewer near-misses during lane changes and turns; - Enhanced driver confidence, especially in challenging conditions; - Measurable fuel savings through reduced aerodynamic drag.

Our drivers report that the system's performance in poor weather and low-light conditions far surpasses traditional mirrors. These technologies do not replace a professional driver's judgment, but they provide critical tools to help our drivers operate more safely.

A Path Forward for Wisconsin

We respectfully urge this committee to: - Support legislation or regulatory guidance that expressly permits mirrorless systems as an alternative to traditional side mirrors. Encourage pilot programs or data-sharing initiatives that can inform Wisconsin-specific policy decisions; - Position Wisconsin as a leader in adopting proven, safety-enhancing transportation technology.

Conclusion

On behalf of Veriha Trucking, I thank you for your consideration and continued dedication to transportation safety in our state. We are committed to partnering with you to make Wisconsin's roads safer for all.

Respectfully submitted,

Tim Kordula
Safety and Training Development Director
Veriha Trucking, Inc.

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