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The Official Blog of Ray LaHood, the U.S. Secretary of Transportation

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Healthy trucker movement an important development in an important industry

I can't let this week get away without thanking the [Trucking Solutions Group Driver Health Council](#) and the [Healthy Trucking Association of America](#) for organizing the [61+ Health Awareness Walk](#) at last weekend's 2010 Great American Trucking Show in Dallas.

The walk in Dallas was 1.5 miles and was conducted indoors, away from the heat of the Texas sun. As you can see from the pictures, the turnout was impressive.



These drivers weren't just walking; they even hit the steps! (courtesy Trucking Solutions Group)

According to the Center for Disease Control, the average life expectancy for a commercial truck driver is 61 years. That is 16 years

lower than the national average, and I think you'll agree that gap is startling.

The critical job of moving the goods we need across America is no easy task. For many truckers, their schedules leave very little time to do more than deliver their loads. Carving out time for exercise and proper nutrition must seem like an impossible challenge.



Former driver Gypsy Kolb completed the 1.5 mile route in her wheelchair to support her husband, a driver working hard to get back to a healthier lifestyle. (Courtesy the Trucking Solutions Group)

So, I'm very glad that the HTAA has been putting together, with sponsors like Driver Health, a series of walks like the one in Dallas last Sunday built around the "61+" theme of extending trucker life expectancy. From the first walk at the Mid-America Truck Show in Louisville last March to the second one at the Great West Truck Show in Las Vegas last June to the most recent walk in Dallas, the goal has remained the same: to make personal health and fitness a bigger concern for all truckers.



As Linda Caffee, a driver and chair of the Trucking Solutions Group Health Council, said:

"This is a plea from driver to driver to get outside of your truck and work towards a healthier lifestyle. We're all in this together. This walk provides everyone with the opportunity to receive support from your fellow drivers and get on the road to better health."

According to Lily Williams, also of the Trucking Solutions Group, the next step is to get more trucking companies and other trucking organizations to join the cause. In a country that needs its truckers, that sounds like a good idea to me.

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