

Notes on the Meeting of the ATA Insurance Task Force
October 15, 2005
Washington, DC

The ATA Insurance Task Force met for more an hour and a half on Sunday afternoon at the Hynes Convention Center in Boston. Fred Burns of West Virginia chaired the meeting, which was very well attended.

Mr. Burns encouraged Task Force members to continue to make contributions to the tort reform efforts of ATA, and to urge others to do so as well. The ITF has raised \$610,000 over its 4-year life, and has contributed to thirteen state associations and a number of national tort-reform organizations. Rick Holcomb gave a quick report on current Task Force finances.

Representatives from a number of states followed with reports of tort reform successes in 2005: Ed Crowell of the Georgia Motor Trucking Association reported on his state's broad tort reform legislation, which eliminated joint and several liability, amended unfavorable venue laws, and achieved other important reforms in one stroke. In the absence of a representative of the Missouri Motor Carriers Association, Bob Pitcher of ATA reported on that state's dual actions in both the tort reform and workers comp areas. Dan Case of the Oklahoma Trucking Association reported that his state's tort reform effort was largely unsuccessful this year, but that broad workers compensation reform was passed. Rick Todd of the South Carolina Trucking Association reported that the South Carolina reform coalition achieved some success this year, especially in amending venue rules and in cutting back joint and several liability. Bob Blankenship of the West Virginia Motor Truck Association stated that the possibility of reforms is increasing in his state and he noted several legislative actions this year.

Matt Fullenbaum, Director of Legislation for the American Tort Reform Association, spoke on the prospects for state and especially federal action on tort reform in 2006. He mentioned the following areas at the federal level: tightening the federal rules on frivolous lawsuits and forum-shopping, asbestos liability reform, the establishment of caps on medical malpractice liability, and obesity and firearms legislation. ATRA thanks the Task Force for its continued participation with ATRA.

The Task Force next heard from six state trucking associations requesting ITF funding for tort reform for legislative campaigns in 2006: Colorado, Oklahoma, Oregon, South Carolina, West Virginia, and Wisconsin.