



23rd May 2025

The Rt Hon Heidi Alexander MP
Secretary of State for Transport

Re: Mandatory reporting of medical conditions to the DVLA

Dear Rt Hon Heidi Alexander MP,

We are writing to you today in relation to the case of Mrs Susan Rimaitis.

Mrs Rimaitis's mother, Marie Cunningham, 79, and her 85-year-old friend Grace Foulds were crossing the road in Southport, Merseyside, when they were fatally hit by Glyn Jones, 67, in 2021.

At an inquest at Preston Coroner's Court a few weeks ago, Dr James Adeley, HM senior coroner for Lancashire called for changes to the law and issued a "prevention of future deaths notice" to yourself as Transport Secretary.

Mrs Rimaitis tells us that the driver had been advised on 9 occasions by medical professionals that their visual impairment made them unsafe to drive. It was the driver's responsibility to self-report this to the DVLA and he elected not to. There was no mandatory legal requirement for optometrists to advise the DVLA of this driver's visual impairment unless it is considered to be in the public interest. There was also no facility to share any disclosure with the Police or to add it to the driver database.

Following this incident and the information that had come to light, Mrs Rimaitis has commendably set up a campaign with the objective of making it mandatory for medical professionals to inform the DVLA if their patient has visual impairment that makes it unsafe for that patient to drive, while also creating a facility for the above to be added to the driver database used by the Police to identify disqualified drivers.

Since establishing the campaign it has continued to gain support and momentum, with Mrs Rimaitis leading the way on behalf of other families bereaved in the same circumstances. Having met with Mrs Rimaitis and others whose lives have been impacted by this gap in legislation - a loophole which is allowing many drivers who are unfit to drive remaining on our roads - it is clear that action is required and we would ask that you take steps to strengthen the law in this area, with the aim of preventing further, needless injuries and deaths.

Coroner Adeley also ruled on the inquest of 75-year-old Anne Ferguson, who died when she was struck by a van driven by Vernon Law, 72, in Whitworth, Rochdale, on 11 July 2023.

A month before Law was told he had cataracts in both eyes but he lied to an optometrist that he did not drive. Law, who was jailed for four years, knew he had problems with his eyes for years before the collision but his sight loss could easily have been corrected.

Law also failed to declare his sight issues on multiple licence applications to the DVLA, the inquest heard. This is yet more proof of the need for a change in the law.

We would be very happy to meet with you to discuss this further and offer you our support in delivering the change we need to make our roads safer.

Signed:

David Baines MP
Patrick Hurley MP
Lorraine Beavers MP
Elsie Blundell MP
Paula Barker MP
Lizi Collinge MP
Sarah Russell MP
Kevin McKenna MP
Lillian Jones MP
Stella Creasy MP
Charlotte Nichols MP
Paul Waugh MP
Bill Esterson MP
Connor Rand MP
Chris Webb MP
Maya Ellis MP
Marie Rimmer MP
Cat Smith MP
Peter Dowd MP
Derek Twigg MP
Julia Buckley MP
Will Stone MP
Yasmin Qureshi MP
Irene Campbell MP
Gill German MP

Matt Bishop MP
Rt Hon Valerie Vaz MP
Sarah Hall MP
Tom Hayes MP
Kim Johnson MP
Amanda Hack MP
Ben Goldsborough MP
Dr Peter Prinsley MP
Luke Akehurst MP
Daniel Francis MP
Paul Foster MP
Andrew Cooper MP