

RUSTY LUCAS
P.O. Box 422
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October 7, 2005

America's Independent Truckers' Association, Inc.
P.O. Box 1250
Clinton, MS 39060
ATTN: Truck Weigh Station Lobbyists

Dear AITA,

I have a really important request which is a matter of life and death. I really strongly suggest increased staffing or more state and federal funding to the nation's truck weigh stations so that they will remain open and operating 24 hours a day. I am writing to you because your organization is a nationwide truck drivers' association and I think you have some significant lobbying power and influence, plus you have a definite interest in the safety of all drivers on the roads, whether truck drivers or family vacationers. I think you should do whatever it is you need to do to keep those stations open around the clock.

I was recently travelling across heartland America with a very dear friend of mine. I counted no less than five truck weigh stations which were closed during the daytime hours on moderately busy highways. I couldn't believe that so many stations were closed. It really got me thinking about the ramifications. This could have catastrophic consequences of epic (even Biblical) proportions.

Here is the way that I see it all shake down. Because the authorities are no longer policing the weight limits on America's roadways with uniform regularity, many trucks will be overloaded with product in excess of the maximum tonnage permitted on the roads. With so many trucks carrying so much extra weight, it is bound to have detrimental effect on the road substructure and will result in many more potholes and uneven or irregular road surfaces. As more and more vehicles travel on those less than perfect highways, it is only a matter of time before excessive speed and potholes combine to jar loose the hubcaps on our nation's vehicles. Left untreated, it won't be long before we see hubcaps whizzing off of cars left and right like metallic frisbees.

My friends, there are enough people out there who are already afraid of alien life forms and the ulterior motives that these space creatures may have in trying to make contact with us here on Earth. When flying hubcaps become such a common occurrence, people are bound to mistake them for alien spacecraft. We will experience mass hysteria as motorists on a busy highway falsely assume that we are under some form of attack from outer space! I have heard some fanatic groups say that the Apocalypse will come at the hands of extra terrestrials. I have visions

that we will be inundated with these freaks taking to the street corners wearing human sandwich boards declaring that the end is near -- only further adding to the tensions and superstitions of the more feeble minded people in our society.

About two years ago, I was travelling with my sister and brother-in-law, who is a photo journalist. He was documenting the demise of the steel industry and they brought me along for the company and as a source of money. We were travelling through the Ohio Valley and came across a tired old steel town called Steubenville, which apparently used to be booming with steel production in another lifetime. Now the city is apparently trying to attract tourists with their statue of a space man, right at the convergence of the two major highways that run through town. Not 100 yards away from that space man statue, I found a Toyota hubcap on the side of the road. Now I recognized it as a harmless hubcap when I saw it laying stationary along the side of the road, but I don't even want to think what may have been going through the minds of the Steubenville drivers that day when the hubcap came flying off the wheel of some Toyota and landed right next to the space man statue. And on top of that, you can add that the Toyota symbol in the center of the hubcap looks kind of extra-terrestrial in its own right.

Do you remember the havoc that the recent Orson Welles movie *War of the Worlds* caused? I'm telling you that the overweight trucks doing damage to our highways will create far worse havoc! Please use your influence to help keep the weigh stations open 24 hours a day. Our society depends on it!

Now that I have voiced my concerns, I have a question for you that has puzzled me for years. Perhaps you can answer the question for me. If a semi truck is carrying a load of live birds and half of those birds are flying inside the back of the truck while half of the birds are roosting, does the truck and its cargo weigh less at that instant than if they were all roosting?

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in cursive script that reads "Rusty Lucas".

Rusty Lucas

p.s. I know that this may sound like a strange request after outlining my impression of a very grave and serious situation, but I have always admired your organization and I wonder if there is any way that I can get a free AITA baseball cap sent to me at my address where I receive my mail. Please send me a free AITA baseball cap if you have any left over from the company picnic.