

June 16, 2020

The Honorable Peter DeFazio  
Chairman  
Committee on Transportation  
and Infrastructure  
U.S. House of Representatives  
Washington, DC 20515

The Honorable Sam Graves  
Ranking Member  
Committee on Transportation  
and Infrastructure  
U.S. House of Representatives  
Washington, DC 20515

Dear Chairman DeFazio and Ranking Member Graves:

As the House Transportation and Infrastructure Committee begins its work on the Invest In America Act, the undersigned organizations write to express our strong support for including the provisions of the DRIVE-Safe Act (HR 1374) in the legislation. This strongly bipartisan bill, which is cosponsored by nearly one-third of the House of Representatives, will provide the opportunity for young Americans to become truck drivers, giving them access to good paying jobs in an industry that needs them, while ensuring and promoting safety.

Though 48 states currently allow individuals to obtain a commercial driver's license at 18, they are prohibited from driving in interstate commerce, crossing state lines, until they are 21. The DRIVE-Safe Act would change this through a two-step apprenticeship program that creates a path for these drivers to enter the industry. As the name implies, however, the legislation's first priority is safety. In order to qualify, candidates must complete at least 400 hours of additional training, more than what is required for any other CDL holder in the nation.

Seventy percent of the nation's freight is carried by commercial trucks, and even though our economy is struggling with the Covid-19 crisis, motor carriers are having difficulty finding the drivers they need. Truck drivers are considered to be essential critical infrastructure workers and remain in strong demand to ensure consumers have the food and other essential items they need during this crisis. With the growth in online ordering and delivery in response to the pandemic, this demand will only grow. When anticipated driver retirement numbers are combined with the expected growth in capacity, over the next decade, the trucking industry will need to hire roughly 1.1 million new drivers, or an average of nearly 110,000 per year.<sup>1</sup> Unless we grow the number of drivers entering the industry, companies in supply chains across the economy will face higher transportation costs leading to increased prices for consumers on everything from electronics to food.

Trucks used in the program established by the DRIVE-Safe Act would be required to be outfitted with the latest safety technology including active braking collision mitigation systems, forward-facing event recording cameras, speed limiters set at 65 miles per hour or less and automatic or automatic manual transmissions. Drivers training within the program will be accompanied by an experienced driver throughout the process.

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<sup>1</sup> Truck Driver Shortage Analysis 2019, American Trucking Associations

The DRIVE-Safe Act will help our nation's freight continue to move while preserving and enhancing the safety of our highway system. It will help fill desperately needed jobs and provide younger Americans with the opportunity to enter a profession where they can earn an average of \$53,000 a year with full benefits.

Thank you for your attention and thoughtful consideration of this important and timely legislation. We urge you to include the provisions of the DRIVE-Safe Act in the Invest in America Act during the Committee's upcoming legislative markup.

Sincerely,

Agricultural Retailers Association  
American Apparel & Footwear Association  
American Bakers Association  
American Beverage Association  
American Chemistry Council  
American Coatings Association  
American Forest and Paper Association  
American Foundry Society  
American Frozen Food Institute  
American Supply Association  
American Trucking Associations  
Associated Grocers of New England  
Associated Equipment Distributors  
Arizona Beverage Association  
Auto Care Association  
Beverage Association of Tennessee  
Brick Industry Association  
Commercial Vehicle Training Association  
Consumer Brands Association  
Convenience Distribution Association  
Florida Beverage Association  
FMI  
Foodservice Equipment Distributors Association  
Forest Resources Association  
Georgia Beverage Association  
HDDA: Heavy Duty  
Heating, Air-Conditioning, & Refrigeration Distributors International  
Hoosier Beverage Association  
Intermodal Association of North America  
International Association of Plastics Distribution  
International Bottled Water Association  
International Dairy Foods Association  
International Foodservice Distributors Association

International Warehouse Logistics Association  
Kansas Beverage Association  
Maine Beverage Association  
Michigan Soft Drink Association  
Minnesota Beverage Association  
National Association of Chemical Distributors  
National Association of Electrical Distributors  
National Association of Manufacturers  
National Association of Truckstop Operators  
National Association of Wholesaler-Distributors  
National Automatic Merchandising Association  
National Beer Wholesalers Association  
National Council of Chain Restaurants  
National Council of Farmer Cooperatives  
National Franchisee Association  
National Grain and Feed Association  
National Grocers Association  
National Lumber and Building Material Dealers Association  
National Milk Producers Federation  
National Oilseed Processors Association  
National Potato Council  
National Private Truck Council  
National Propane Gas Association  
National Ready Mixed Concrete Association  
National Restaurant Association  
National Retail Federation  
National Stone, Sand and Gravel Association  
National Waste and Recycling Association  
New England Fuel Institute  
New Hampshire Beverage Association  
New Hampshire Grocers Association  
North Carolina Beverage Association  
Ohio Beverage Association  
Pet Industry Distributors Association  
Petroleum Marketers Association of America  
Plumbing Manufacturers International  
Portland Cement Association  
Power Transmission Distributors Association  
Printing Industries of America  
Retail Industry Leaders Association  
Service Station Dealers of America and Allied Trades  
SNAC International  
Southeastern Lumber Manufacturers Association  
Textile Care Allied Trade Associations

The Fertilizer Institute  
Tire Industry Association  
Truck Renting and Leasing Association  
Virginia Beverage Association  
Wine and Spirits Wholesalers of America  
Wisconsin Beverage Association  
World Millwork Alliance  
UPS  
U.S. Chamber of Commerce