

June 18, 2018

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

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

Dear Chairman Shuster and Ranking Member DeFazio:

On behalf of the undersigned organizations, we urge you to support the bipartisan DRIVE-Safe Act (HR 5358). This important legislation would help to alleviate the nationwide shortage of commercial drivers by providing younger drivers with the opportunity to enter the industry.

Seventy percent of the nation's freight is carried by commercial trucks yet as our economy strengthens, motor carriers are having difficulty finding the drivers they need to handle growing capacity. According to a recent estimate, the nation needs an additional 50,000 truck drivers immediately, a shortage that is expected to grow to more than 174,000 by 2026. In many supply chains, companies are being forced to increase prices to account for higher transportation costs. This will ultimately result in higher prices for consumers on everything from electronics to food.

While 48 states currently allow drivers to obtain a commercial driver's license at 18, they are prohibited from driving in interstate commerce until they are 21. The DRIVE-Safe Act would create a two-step apprenticeship program to allow these younger drivers to enter the industry safely. Candidates would be accompanied in the cab by experienced drivers for a total of 400 hours of on-duty time with at least 240 hours of driving time. Trucks 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.

The DRIVE-Safe Act will help our nation's freight continue to move while preserving the safety of our highway system. It will also provide the opportunity for younger individuals to enter a profession where they can earn an average of \$53,000 with full benefits. Congress should support this effort to help fill desperately needed jobs while providing younger Americans with the chance to get the training they need. We urge you to support the DRIVE-Safe Act and move the bill quickly through the Committee.

Sincerely,

Agricultural Retailers Association
American Bakers Association
American Beverage Association
American Supply Association
American Trucking Associations

Associated Grocers of New England
Associated Equipment Distributors
Auto Care Association
Commercial Vehicle Training Association
Convenience Distribution Association
Food Marketing Institute
Foodservice Equipment Distributors Association
HDDA: Heavy Duty
Heating, Air-Conditioning, & Refrigeration Distributors International
Intermodal Association of North America
International Association of Plastics Distribution
International Foodservice Distributors Association
International Warehouse Logistics Association
National Association of Chemical Distributors
National Association of Electrical Distributors
National Association of Manufacturers
National Association of Wholesaler-Distributors
National Council of Chain Restaurants
National Council of Farmer Cooperatives
National Grain and Feed Association
National Grocers Association
National Milk Producers Federation
National Oilseed Processors Association
National Potato Council
National Propane Gas Association
National Restaurant Association
National Retail Federation
New England Fuel Institute
New Hampshire Grocers Association
Pet Industry Distributors Association
Power Transmission Distributors Association
Retail Industry Leaders Association
SNAC International
Textile Care Allied Trade Associations
The Fertilizer Institute
Wine and Spirits Wholesalers of America
UPS