

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