



May 22, 2023

The Honorable Sam Graves (R-MO-06)
Chairman
House Transportation & Infrastructure
Committee
2165 Rayburn House Office Building
Washington, D.C. 20515

The Honorable Rick Larsen (D-WA-02)
Ranking Member
House Transportation & Infrastructure
Committee
2165 Rayburn House Office Building
Washington, D.C. 20515

Dear Chairman Graves and Ranking Member Larsen:

On behalf of FMI – The Food Industry Association, I write with our support for bipartisan bills pertaining to trucking that the House Transportation and Infrastructure Committee will consider tomorrow. We appreciate your leadership in addressing the ongoing supply chain challenges experienced by our industry and grocery customers across the country.

As a critical infrastructure industry, FMI's food retailers, wholesalers, and product suppliers/manufacturers take seriously their responsibility for ensuring food security to communities in every corner of the country. FMI works with and on behalf of the entire industry to advance a safer, healthier, and more efficient consumer food supply chain. Our members collectively operate and supply almost 33,000 food retail outlets and 12,000 pharmacies, ultimately touching the lives of more than 100 million U.S. households per week and employing millions of individuals in a diversity of professions throughout the country.

Building long-term capacity and resilience in the food industry supply chain is an imperative issue to FMI and our members. Trucks are responsible for moving every product found on grocery store shelves. With the average supermarket carrying between 30,000-50,000 unique items, grocers are constantly receiving goods throughout the day. Efficient and safe interstate trucking is a critical component of ensuring those items make it into customers' shopping carts.

FMI has endorsed H.R. 3372, legislation sponsored by Representatives Dusty Johnson (R-SD-AL) and Jim Costa (D-CA-21) to collect safety data on and establish a pilot program to increase the gross vehicle weight (GVW) on federal interstates. While truck safety and technology has improved vastly since the current federal interstate GVW was established in 1982, the standard has not kept pace with road advances, packaging efficiencies and consumer needs. Trucks often leave facilities partially empty due to the current restrictions. H.R. 3372 takes the judicious step to study and evaluate the current federal interstate GVW by establishing a state opt-in, 10-year pilot program to enable trucks of up to 91,000 pounds on 6-axels on federal interstates, a standard which is federal bridge compliant. The pilot would allow extra freight on a truck that has an additional axel and additional set of brakes, enabling the movement of food and consumer goods more efficiently and helping to ease the ongoing truck driver shortage.





Additionally, FMI supports H.R. 2367, the "*Truck Parking Safety Improvement Act*," sponsored by Representatives Mike Bost (R-IL-12) and Angie Craig (D-MN-02), to authorize funding for the creation of thousands of new truck parking spaces. The safety of the dedicated women and men in the trucking profession is of great importance to FMI and our members. Too many drivers are forced to park on roadsides or in areas not designated for their rigs due to the lack of available parking spaces to rest and comply with hours-of-service requirements. This lack of safe, available parking is a deterrent to women and men entering or remaining in the trucking profession. H.R. 2367 is an important measure in keeping truckers safe and encouraging others to enter the profession.

Further, FMI supports H.R. 3013, the "*Licensing Individual Commercial Exam-Takers Now Safely and Efficiently (LICENSE) Act*," sponsored by Representatives Darin LaHood (R-IL-06) and Henry Cuellar (D-TX-28), to modernize and streamline the commercial driver's license (CDL) process. H.R. 3013 will provide prospective trucking professionals with a more sensible avenue for obtaining testing and certification for the CDL process. A streamlined CDL process will attract more individuals to this worthy and rewarding trade.

Finally, FMI supports the "*Developing Responsible Individuals for a Vibrant Economy (DRIVE) Safe Integrity Act*," H.R. 3408, to improve upon the current pilot enabling 18–20-year-olds to obtain a CDL for interstate trucking and to direct the Department of Transportation, within one year of the pilot ending, to move forward with federal regulations for permanent authorization. This bipartisan legislation is sponsored by Representatives Rick Crawford (R-AR-01) and Henry Cuellar (D-TX-28). FMI is a strong supporter of the current pilot and permanent designation, a sponsor of the registered apprenticeship trucking standard for the program, and was [recognized](#) by President Biden as industry leader in this [endeavor](#).

These four measures seek to improve the efficiency and effectiveness of trucking and the trucking profession, and are imperative to addressing the ongoing, nearly 80,000 truck driver shortage in our country. Thank you again for the Committee's consideration of these bills and its further actions to improve all modalities of our nation's transit supply chain utilized by the food industry – trucking, rail, and waterways.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads 'Christine Pollack'.

Christine Pollack
Vice President, Government Relations

Cc: Members of the House Transportation and Infrastructure Committee

