



## Owner-Operator Independent Drivers Association

National Headquarters: 1 NW OOIDA Drive, Grain Valley, MO 64029  
Tel: (816) 229-5791 Fax: (816) 427-4468

Washington Office: 1100 New Jersey Ave. SE, Washington, DC 20003  
Tel: (202) 347-2007 Fax: (202) 347-2008

September 10, 2019

The Honorable Peter DeFazio  
Chairman  
Committee on Transportation and Infrastructure  
2165 Rayburn House Office Building  
Washington, DC 20515

The Honorable Sam Graves  
Ranking Member  
Committee on Transportation and Infrastructure  
2165 Rayburn House Office Building  
Washington, DC 20515

The Honorable Eleanor Holmes Norton  
Chairwoman  
Subcommittee on Highways and Transit  
2165 Rayburn House Office Building  
Washington, DC 20515

The Honorable Rodney Davis  
Ranking Member  
Subcommittee on Highways and Transit  
2165 Rayburn House Office Building  
Washington, DC 20515

**RE: Subcommittee on Highways and Transit Hearing: “Pricing and Technology Strategies to Address Congestion on and Financing of America’s Roads”**

Dear Chairman DeFazio, Chairwoman Norton and Ranking Members Graves and Davis:

The Owner-Operator Independent Drivers Association (OOIDA) represents over 160,000 small-business truckers and professional drivers. Because truckers make their living on the road, OOIDA members rely on Congress to ensure our highways receive the federal investment necessary to keep them efficient and safe for all users.

We greatly appreciate your efforts to craft a robust surface transportation reauthorization bill that meets these needs, and understand one of your greatest challenges will be developing policies that generate reliable and sustainable revenue for the Highway Trust Fund (HTF). We also commend your commitment to address the growing problem of congestion, which studies reveal is disproportionately more costly to truckers than other highway users. However, we have serious concerns about proposals to introduce congestion pricing in communities across the country.

Small-business truckers have long favored traditional user fees as a means of funding infrastructure development and support reasonable increases to the federal gasoline and diesel fuel taxes. These user fees are the most equitable and efficient means for addressing our nation’s highway funding needs and should remain the primary source of revenue for the HTF under the next surface transportation reauthorization. Nevertheless, we understand that a lack of political support for increasing revenue through these traditional means has forced Congress to explore new funding mechanisms, including congestion pricing.

Our greatest concern with congestion pricing is the resulting introduction of tolling on vital segments of the Interstate system. OOIDA has consistently opposed any federal expansion of tolling policies, including Section 1404 of S. 2302, which would allow up to 10 urbanized areas to utilize tolling as a part of their congestion reduction strategies. Research has shown that tolling of any variety is an extremely wasteful method of funding compared to fuel taxes. Additionally, tolled roads consistently fail to meet revenue projections, creating unanticipated funding shortfalls and inevitable rate increases. Furthermore, congestion pricing would simply impose yet another fee on truckers, who already pay more than their fair share for infrastructure investment through federal and state fuel taxes, International Registration Plan taxes, federal excise taxes on new trucks, trailers, and tires, existing toll road taxes and numerous other state and local levies.

Because they often have very little control over their schedules, congestion pricing is particularly problematic for owner-operators and independent drivers. Due to the unnecessary rigidity of current hours-of-service requirements, truckers routinely have no other choice than to drive through metropolitan areas during periods of high congestion. Shippers and receivers also have little regard for a driver's schedule, frequently requiring loading and unloading to occur at times when nearby roads are most congested. Additionally, unlike other highway users, truckers often lack the ability to choose alternate routes to avoid congestion due to size and weight restrictions, heavy vehicle prohibitions and other limitations on ancillary roads.

Again, we appreciate your efforts to provide ample funding for infrastructure investment and advance policies that will reduce the growing problem of congestion. However, we remain skeptical that congestion pricing will achieve these goals without negatively impacting our members. We encourage you to instead pursue funding solutions that are more efficient and fair to all highway users.

Thank you,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Todd Spencer". The signature is fluid and cursive, with a long, sweeping underline that extends to the right.

Todd Spencer  
President & CEO  
Owner-Operator Independent Drivers Association, Inc.