



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

March 20, 2020

President Donald J. Trump
The White House
1600 Pennsylvania Avenue NW
Washington, DC 20500

Dear President Trump;

The Owner-Operator Independent Drivers Association (OOIDA) represents over 160,000 professional drivers and small-business truckers, many of whom are working tirelessly to keep essential freight moving during the ongoing national emergency. Truckers are a vital component of the supply chain, hauling loads that help keep hospitals prepared, manufacturers productive and grocery stores stocked. Unfortunately, our members are encountering many challenges that unnecessarily slow the movement of goods, limit the effectiveness of response efforts and jeopardize their personal health and safety. The federal government can take steps to immediately alleviate many of these problems, and coordination with state and local governments, as well as the business community, will help address many more.

Based on the concerns our members are reporting, the federal government can help improve conditions within our industry and the supply chain by addressing the following issues.

Parking:

The top concern among our members is unquestionably the lack of adequate parking for commercial motor vehicles (CMVs). The federal government must discourage states from closing rest areas and other truck parking facilities, while encouraging them to reopen any locations shuttered during the emergency. States must also be encouraged to open weigh stations, inspection facilities and other sites for truck parking to ensure the safety of professional drivers and motorists.

Hours-of-service (HOS) Requirements:

While we appreciate the waiving of HOS requirements for the shipment of emergency supplies, a lack of clarity involving qualified freight has caused confusion among drivers. We are concerned this confusion will only grow as more commodities are deemed essential. With the exception of the 10-hour mandatory rest period between loads, the federal government should lift HOS requirements for all freight.

Enforcement:

To expedite the delivery of critical freight, motor carriers with satisfactory safety ratings must be allowed to bypass weigh stations if they are hauling or en-route to pick-up emergency supplies. Additionally, except in the case of imminent safety concerns or obvious defects, Level 1 and all roadside inspections must immediately be suspended. Delays in the delivery of critical freight due to matters unrelated to safety needlessly hamper preparedness, response and mitigation. States must be encouraged to take further steps to avoid additional unnecessary delays.

Compliance:

Drivers need to be certain they are operating under compliance at all times, but the suspension of many federal and state operations and closure of important facilities has made this extremely difficult, if not impossible, for many truckers. The federal government must implement at least a 90-day extension of expiring medical cards and commercial driver's licenses (CDL) that are in good standing. Random drug and alcohol testing of drivers must also be suspended for at least 90 days or until truckers again have the means to fully comply.

Basic Decency:

Truckers are reporting many shippers and receivers are forbidding them from using on-site restroom facilities. This is unconscionable and those enforcing the policy lack basic decency. The federal government must work with the logistics community to ensure truckers have access to restrooms. Some businesses are claiming to limit access as a means to control the spread of the virus to their employees. These claims are both counterproductive and insulting. As the most transient community in America, truckers must have the capacity to wash their hands after handling freight, paperwork and business equipment to help contain the spread of the virus. Furthermore, because truckers are continuously hauling supplies across the country, they often lack access to health care providers. Steps should be taken to ensure they have access to virus testing while on the road, which will also help contain the spread of COVID-19.

Like your administration, truckers are working extremely hard to help the nation persevere through this unprecedented emergency. The U.S. Department of Transportation has already taken significant steps to facilitate the efficient movement of essential freight across the country, but additional steps are now necessary. We hope you will address these concerns and, as conditions continue to change, any future problems our members encounter.

Sincerely,



Todd Spencer
President and CEO
OOIDA

cc: Elaine Chao, Secretary, U.S. Department of Transportation
Alex Azar, Secretary, U.S. Department of the Health & Human Services
Jim Mullen, Acting Administrator, Federal Motor Carrier Safety Administration
Nicole R. Nason, Administrator, Federal Highway Administration