

July 27, 2020

The Honorable Roger Wicker  
Chairman  
Senate Committee on Commerce, Science &  
Transportation  
512 Dirksen Senate Office Building  
Washington, DC 20510

The Honorable Maria Cantwell  
Ranking Member  
Senate Committee on Commerce, Science &  
Transportation  
512 Dirksen Senate Office Building  
Washington, DC 20510

Dear Chairman Wicker and Ranking Member Cantwell,

As the Senate Committee on Commerce, Science & Transportation develops its title of the next surface transportation reauthorization bill, our organizations strongly discourage you from including any increase in the existing minimum liability coverage for motor carriers. An increase in insurance requirements is wholly unnecessary, would do nothing to improve highway safety, and would have a severe negative impact on truckers, farmers, and manufacturers by significantly increasing their operational costs.

Increasing minimum liability coverage would affect all businesses transporting property, not just long-haul trucking operations. As illustrated by the diversity of our coalition, the impact would be felt in many sectors of the economy that are currently working to help our nation recover from the COVID-19 pandemic, including trucking, agriculture and the materials industries. Raising insurance rates for countless businesses engaged in trucking in the midst of an economic downturn would undoubtedly lead to the loss of even more American jobs. This policy does not belong in legislation that is designed to support economic recovery and encourage growth.

Furthermore, such a change is entirely unnecessary. As required by MAP-21, the Federal Motor Carrier Safety Administration (FMCSA) commissioned the John A. Volpe National Transportation Systems Center to research this issue in greater detail. In 2014, Volpe released its report, which explained, “The **vast majority** of CMV-caused crashes have relatively small cost consequences, and the costs are easily covered with the limits of mandatory liability insurance [emphasis added].” Volpe adds, “A small share exceed the mandatory minimum but are often covered by other insurance or assets.” In fact, this study determined today’s minimum insurance level adequately covers damages in all but 0.06% of crashes.

What studies haven’t shown is any improvement to safety associated with increasing insurance requirements. There is no reputable research indicating an increase of any amount would help reduce crash rates. Proposals to raise minimum liability coverage are nothing more than an opportunity for their most ardent supporters - trial lawyers - to receive higher payouts from settlements at the expense of American businesses.

Rejecting calls for increases in insurance coverage will help protect American jobs and businesses, including countless small businesses, from an unnecessary and excessive policy designed to further line the pockets of trial lawyers at the expense of truckers, farmers and

manufacturers. We strongly discourage you from including any such provision in the Committee's title of the next surface transportation reauthorization bill.

Thank you for your consideration.

Sincerely,

Agricultural Retailers Association  
American Beekeeping Federation  
American Concrete Pavement Association  
American Concrete Pipe Association  
American Concrete Pumping Association  
American Dairy Coalition  
American Farm Bureau Federation  
American Forest and Paper Association  
American Pipeline Contractors Association  
American Sheep Industry Association  
Associated Equipment Distributors  
Colorado Motor Carriers Association  
Concrete Foundations Association  
Concrete Reinforcing Steel Institute  
Consumer Brands Association  
Distribution Contractors Association  
Georgia Motor Trucking Association  
Hawaii Transportation Association  
Kansas Motor Carriers Association  
Livestock Marketing Association  
Maine Motor Transport Association  
Mid-West Truckers Association  
Minnesota Trucking Association  
Missouri Trucking Association  
Motor Carriers of Montana  
Motor Transport Association of Connecticut  
National Asphalt Pavement Association  
National Association of Small Trucking Companies  
National Aquaculture Association  
National Cattlemen's Beef Association  
National Grain and Feed Association  
National Precast Concrete Association  
National Ready Mixed Concrete Association  
National Stone Sand and Gravel Association  
National Utility Contractors Association  
Nevada Trucking Association  
New Hampshire Motor Transport Association  
New Jersey Motor Truck Association  
New Mexico Trucking Association

NFIB

North American Miller's Association  
North American Renderers Association  
Owner-Operator Independent Drivers Association  
Petroleum Marketers Association of America  
Pet Food Institute  
Power and Communication Contractors Association  
Precast/Prestressed Concrete Institute  
Rhode Island Trucking Association  
Southwest Movers Association  
South Carolina Trucking Association  
South Dakota Trucking Association  
Tennessee Trucking Association  
Texas Trucking Association  
Tilt-Up Concrete Association  
Towing and Recovery Association of America  
Truck Renting and Leasing Association  
United Dairymen of Arizona  
United Fresh Produce Association  
United States Cattlemen's Association  
Vermont Truck & Bus Association  
Western States Trucking Association  
Wyoming Trucking Association

cc: Members of the Senate Committee on Commerce, Science & Transportation