



Owner-Operator Independent Drivers Association

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November 29, 2021

The Honorable Pete Buttigieg
Secretary
U.S. Department of Transportation
1200 New Jersey Avenue, SE
Washington, DC 20590

Dear Secretary Buttigieg,

The enactment of the *Infrastructure Investment and Jobs Act* (IIJA) presents an opportunity for you to address a safety crisis that America's truckers have faced for decades – the national shortage of truck parking. Truckers need a safe place to rest when they're tired and to comply with mandatory breaks required by federal regulations. If truck drivers can't find a safe and legal parking space, they are forced to park in unsafe locations, such as road shoulders or vacant lots, or continue driving when they may want to take a break or are in violation of hours-of-service requirements. This creates safety issues not only for truckers, but for the motoring public as well.

With the significant new infrastructure investment provided by the IIJA, we ask that you dedicate \$1 billion in discretionary funding to address this long-running shortage.

The U.S. Department of Transportation (USDOT) and numerous states have been studying this issue for decades and have all concluded that there is a shortage of parking. Most recently, USDOT released the results of its updated 2019 Jason's Law Survey in December 2020. The survey found that truck parking shortages are a major problem in every state and region, and that the problem continues to worsen. As part of the IIJA, the White House highlighted that states will conduct additional assessments of the issue. But we are well past the time for more studies and observations. Instead, it is time to take meaningful steps to expand truck parking capacity, and that begins with significant federal investment.

We are extremely disappointed that the IIJA does not dedicate any funding exclusively to truck parking, despite the broad bipartisan and industry support for federal investment. With the significant amount of new discretionary funding your department will be responsible for allocating under the IIJA, we believe that you have the ability to direct funding to critical truck parking projects across the country.

We believe \$1 billion is an appropriate level of funding to build out truck parking capacity. As you know, there is significant bipartisan support in Congress and from across industry for this amount. The bipartisan Truck Parking Safety Improvement Act (H.R. 2187) would dedicate hundreds of millions of dollars for the expansion of truck parking capacity. House Transportation and Infrastructure Committee Chairman Peter DeFazio included \$1 billion for truck parking construction in the House-passed highway bill, the INVEST in America Act. Ranking Member Sam Graves also addressed truck parking in Republicans' reauthorization proposal and pushed for the inclusion of funding in the Build Back Better

bill. There is also broad support for this level of commitment from industry, law enforcement, and safety groups. There are very few trucking issues where you will find this type of comprehensive stakeholder agreement on a solution.

Fixing the parking shortage will also help address ongoing supply chain disruptions. Studies indicate truckers spend on average 56 minutes a day of driving time looking for parking. By reducing this wasted time, USDOT can help alleviate supply chain issues by enabling drivers to be more efficient. To put this in context, MIT Professor David Correll, who specializes in supply chains and trucking research, said during a recent House Transportation and Infrastructure Committee hearing that if all truckers added just 18 minutes of driving time to their working day, it would add enough capacity to address the alleged “driver shortage.” While we know there is no shortage of drivers, this shows that the time wasted finding parking directly affects the current disruptions.

Truck parking is already eligible for funding under the Infrastructure for Rebuilding America (INFRA), Rebuilding American Infrastructure with Sustainability and Equity (RAISE), and National Infrastructure Project Assistance (NIPA) discretionary grant programs, and states can currently use their formula funding for truck parking as well. Unfortunately, hardly any federal funding has been dedicated to this problem because states have never recognized how serious this issue is to highway safety and the overall efficiency of our nation’s supply chain.

In order to reach this funding target for truck parking, we ask that you use all available authorities and opportunities to focus on truck parking, including encouraging discretionary grant applicants to apply for truck parking funding and to include truck parking as part of larger transportation project applications.

You have spoken about the need to make truck driving a more viable and sustainable career for those entering the industry and the countless Americans already making their living behind the wheel. You’ve recognized firsthand that the mythical shortage of drivers is tied directly to retention. Truckers consistently rank the lack of truck parking as one of their top concerns, and there are few better ways you could improve their safety and livelihoods than by addressing the parking crisis. It should not be a shock to anyone that good drivers leave the trucking industry over the inability to find something as basic as a safe place to rest when they are weary. We can and should do better by these absolutely and always essential workers!

Thank you,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Todd Spencer". The signature is fluid and cursive, written over a light blue horizontal line.

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