



One Hundred Seventeenth Congress
U.S. House of Representatives

November 17, 2021

The Honorable Marty Walsh
Secretary
U.S. Department of Labor
200 Constitution Ave. NW
Washington, DC 20210

Dear Secretary Walsh,

We write to request your immediate attention to the ongoing supply chain issues and labor shortage faced by trucking companies. Trucking has emerged as one of the two most critical bottlenecks in the persistent freight backlog, the other being long delays at loading docks and seaport terminals. A truck driver shortage in the United States coupled with a global economy emerging from the pandemic, has resulted in an uneven economic recovery for millions of American families. Unless we exhaust every possible avenue in which to address this crisis, we risk worsening supply constraints for manufacturers and rising prices on consumer goods.

Data from the Bureau of Labor Statistics showed that in the height of the COVID-19 pandemic, the trucking industry lost six percent of its pre-pandemic labor force of 1.52 million workers.¹ As of October, the industry recovered about 65,000 of those lost jobs but remains short of effectively meeting supply chain demands. To address these concerns, we urge the Employment and Training Administration (ETA) within the Department of Labor (DOL) to prioritize Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act (WIOA) grant applicants looking to become truck drivers. As you know, WIOA provides access to job training for dislocated workers, low-income individuals & out-of-work youth. DOL data released in December 2020 on WIOA Dislocated Worker and Adult Worker Programs, showed that more than 21,900 workers received training to drive trucks and other heavy tractor-trailers.² More importantly, WIOA program funding was available for truck drivers to pay for some or all of their truck driving school tuition.

While there is no official timeframe for receiving an approved WIOA grant application, the waiting period for applicants—including those with experience driving long haul trucks or planning to obtain a commercial driver's license (CDL)—can last several weeks, if not months. As such, we urge you to work with One-Stop career centers across the nation to a) shorten the initial 'Core' phase of the WIOA grant application process, b) expedite the 'Intensive' phase of the application requiring case workers to prepare, assess and approve an applicant's employment plan, and when appropriate, c) prioritize the 'Training' phase to increase the number of available truck drivers. With turnover rates for large, long haul truckers reaching the 90 percent mark and

¹ U.S. Bureau of Labor Statistics, Producer Price Index by Industry: Truck Transportation [PCU484484]. Retrieved from FRED, Federal Reserve Bank of St. Louis; <https://fred.stlouisfed.org/series/PCU484484>, November 4, 2021.

² U.S. Department of Labor (DOL). (2020). *PY 2019 WIOA and Wagner-Peyser Data Book*. U.S. DOL, Employment and Training Administration (ETA). Accessed: November 4, 2021.

the lag time for training and onboarding new drivers lasting several months, it is critically important DOL enact these measures as soon as possible.

The world economy has been able to flourish because of hard-working truck drivers. From medical supplies to the transport of food and agricultural commodities, the trucking industry has played a vital role in elevating our standard of living. If it weren't for the industry, most of the country's businesses would be unable to operate today. Putting forward data-driven policies to improve the quality of life and flexibility for drivers, the trucking industry's most vital asset, is important for lowering turnover rates among those workers and attracting a new generation to the workforce.

We remain observant of the steps you and the Biden Administration have taken to address the ongoing supply chain disruptions thus far, and hope this temporary policy is adopted. Thank you for your attention to this urgent matter.

Sincerely,



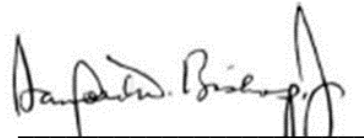
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Frank D. Lucas
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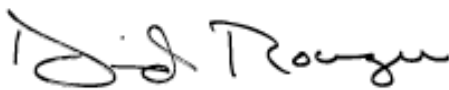
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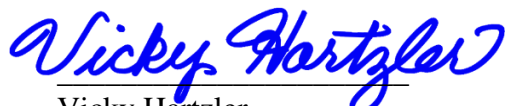
David Rouzer
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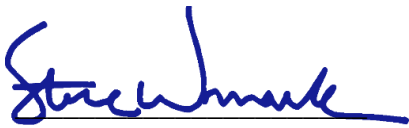
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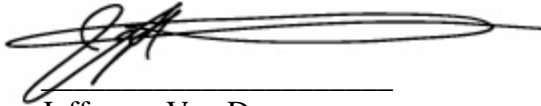
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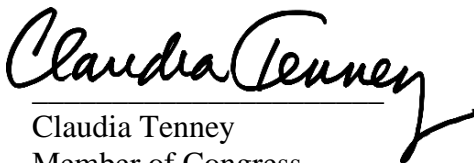
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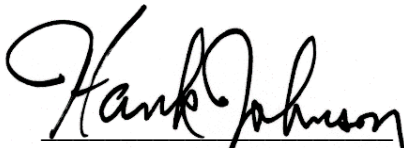
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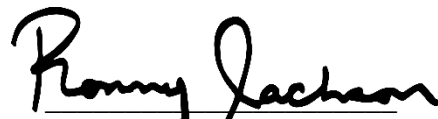
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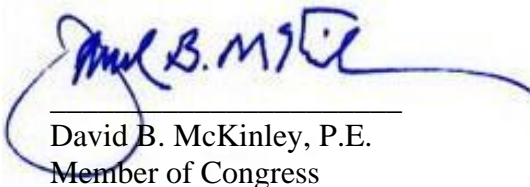
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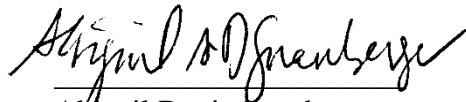
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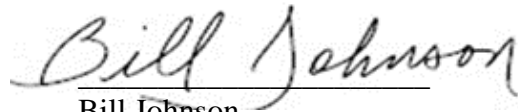
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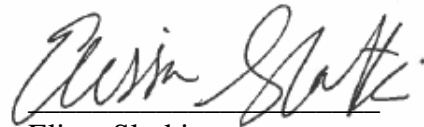
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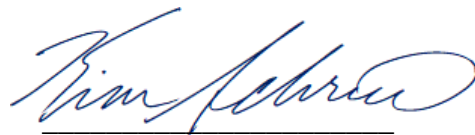
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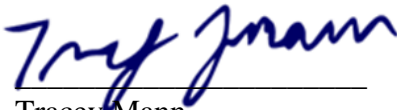
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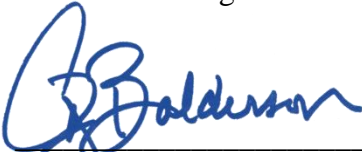
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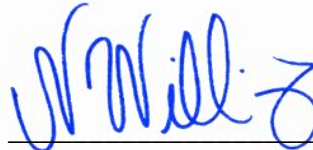
Charlie Crist
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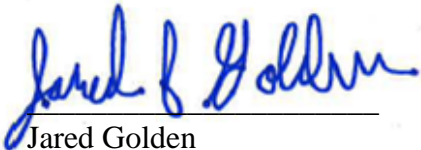
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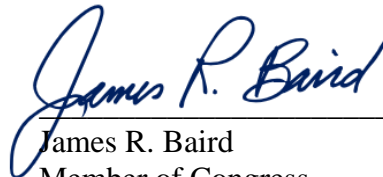
Troy Balderson
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Nikema Williams
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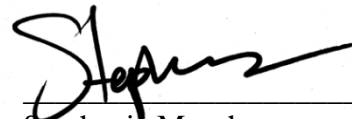
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