

November 3, 2015

Dear Full House:

The undersigned agricultural producer, commodity and agribusiness organizations urge you to support passage of the Surface Transportation Reauthorization and Reform Act of 2015 (H.R. 3763) when it is considered on the House floor (via H.R. 22).

We believe strongly that expeditious enactment of multi-year surface transportation legislation that provides adequate funding and greater certainty for transportation infrastructure projects is critical to the competitiveness and economic growth of all sectors of U.S. agriculture, as well as the on- and off-farm jobs these sectors support.

Although supportive of the legislation, we request members consider using the amendment process as an opportunity to make the following improvements to the bill:

- **Adopt Amendment to Modernize Weight Limitations for Certain Vehicles, sponsored by Rep. Ribble (R-Wis.):** We believe that transportation efficiency will increase, without compromising safety, if states are given the flexibility to set truck weight limits on Interstate Highways within their borders at 91,000 pounds for trucks equipped with an additional [sixth] axle.
- **Adopt Amendment to Create Port Performance Freight Statistics Program, sponsored by Rep. Newhouse (R-Wash.):** Trade is critical to U.S. agriculture and when port disputes occur, it is consumers and industries, including agriculture, that bear the brunt of the economic damage. We believe that the collection of key port performance metrics, rather than a continued reliance on anecdotal reports of problems at ports, will enable policymakers to mitigate the impacts of port disputes.
- **Adopt Amendment to Create Commercial Driver's License (CDL) Pilot Program, sponsored by Reps. Crawford (R-Ark.) and Ashford (D-Neb.):** The age requirement to obtain a state CDL and operate within state lines is 18 years in all 48 contiguous states. We believe the inclusion of the pilot program to allow short hauls of 150 air miles or less across state boundaries for the purpose of transporting farm supplies, agricultural commodities, farm machinery, livestock, poultry, or other agricultural products as determined by the Secretary, would strike the appropriate balance of maintaining high motor carrier safety standards and promoting commerce.
- **Adopt Amendment to Create Hazardous Materials Endorsement Exemption, sponsored by Reps. Neugebauer (R-Texas), Farenthold (R-Texas), and Bustos (D-Ill.):** Current federal law makes it very difficult for farmers and custom harvesters to transport the amount of fuel necessary for a single day of field operations with today's agricultural equipment. Class A CDL holders cannot haul more than 118 gallons of diesel fuel without a hazardous

materials endorsement. We believe an exemption for custom harvesters and other operators of similar equipment would better reflect the needs of modern agriculture.

- **Oppose Amendments to Strike Section 5501 of H.R. 3763, sponsored by Reps. Frankel (D-Fla.) and Johnson (D-Ga.):** We believe an increase in financial responsibility requirements for motor carriers would negatively impact the availability and cost of truck transportation service for agriculture and other industry sectors.

We look forward to working with you in support of the aforementioned provisions, and urge you to vote “yes” on the Surface Transportation Reauthorization and Reform Act of 2015.

Sincerely,

Agribusiness Association of Iowa
Agribusiness Council of Indiana
Agricultural Retailers Association
American Farm Bureau Federation
California Grain & Feed Association
Corn Refiners Association
Far West Agribusiness Association
Georgia Agribusiness Council
Grain and Feed Association of Illinois
Institute of Shortening and Edible Oils
Iowa Institute for Cooperatives
Kansas Cooperative Council
Kansas Grain and Feed Association
Meat Import Council of America
Michigan Agri-Business Association
Michigan Bean Shippers
Minnesota Grain and Feed Association
Missouri Agribusiness Association
National Association of Wheat Growers
National Cattlemen’s Beef Association
National Chicken Council
National Corn Growers Association
National Cotton Council
National Council of Farmer Cooperatives
National Farmers Union
National Grain and Feed Association
National Milk Producers Federation
National Oilseed Processors Association
National Pasta Association
National Pork Producers Council
National Potato Council

National Sorghum Producers
National Turkey Federation
Nebraska Grain and Feed Association
North American Meat Institute
North American Millers' Association
North Dakota Grain Dealers Association
Northeast Agribusiness and Feed Alliance
Ohio AgriBusiness Association
Oklahoma Agribusiness Retailers Association
Oklahoma Agricultural Cooperative Council, Inc.
Oklahoma Grain and Feed Association
Pacific Northwest Grain & Feed Association
Rocky Mountain Agribusiness Association
South Dakota Grain & Feed Association
The Agriculture Transportation Coalition
The Fertilizer Institute
United States Hide, Skin and Leather Association
USA Rice
US Custom Harvesters
U.S. Poultry & Egg Association
Wisconsin Agri-Business Association