



Trucking Capacity, Infrastructure and Liability

Lumber manufacturers, like many other industries across the country, are facing an on-going shortage of truck drivers, truck availability, and substandard infrastructure throughout rural America. Lumber manufacturers depend on trucks to haul logs from the forests to the sawmills and finished products to their customers. In addition to a shortage in trucking and sub-standard infrastructure, those who hire trucking companies to move products are often held liable for safety shortcomings of the carrier. SLMA supports Congressional efforts to increase the ability of manufacturers to move products while increasing the safety of transporting goods through infrastructure improvement and national hiring standards for motor carriers.

SLMA supports the DRIVE Safe Act (H.R. 5358/S. 3352).

- The Developing Responsible Individuals for a Vibrant Economy (DRIVE) Safe Act would create apprenticeships that train 18-21 year olds to drive trucks in interstate commerce
- Current rules prevent those under 21 from driving in interstate commerce, forcing potential drivers to find other employment, often losing those candidates from the driving profession permanently
- The DRIVE Safe Act would require drivers under 21 to participate in a 400 hour apprenticeship program, and be limited to trucks that include safety technology, such as automatic transmissions, active breaking collision mitigation systems, forward facing video event capture, and governed speeds of no more than 65 MPH

To co-sponsor the DRIVE Safe Act, please contact Andrew Terp (Andrew_Terp@young.senate.gov) in Sen. Todd Young's office or Reed Linsk (Reed.Linsk@mail.house.gov) in Congressman Duncan Hunter's office.

SLMA supports truck weights increasing to 91,000 pounds on interstate highways for six axle trucks.

- Studies have shown that six axle trucks are able to safely carry 91,000 pounds, allowing for more products to be moved on fewer trucks
- The current 80,000 pound limit standard was set in 1982, and has not been updated to reflect improvements in safety technology
- Lumber is a heavy commodity. Increasing the amount of lumber hauled per truck through weight increases would reduce traffic congestion and fuel consumption, while reducing the impact on state and local roads in states that already allow higher truck weights

For more information regarding safety, fuel savings, and infrastructure impact, please visit shipcoalition.org.

SLMA supports the HOURS Act (H.R. 6178).

- The Honest Operators Undertake Road Safety (HOURS) Act makes common sense technical adjustments to provide safe and effective flexibility in hours of service regulations for drivers
- Short-haul drivers currently have two sets of rules depending on whether they have a Commercial Drivers License (CDL). The Act would create one set of rules for short haul drivers that would exempt CDL drivers from the electronic logging device requirement if they operate within 150 air miles of their work reporting location and complete their workday within 14 hours. Many log and lumber trucks operate within 150 miles of their base
- The Act makes other corrections to reduce unnecessary paperwork, expand short haul agricultural transporter exemptions and provide more flexibility in how the 14 hours of service is accounted

To co-sponsor the HOURS Act, please contact Ashley Shelton (a.shelton@mail.house.gov) in Congressman Rick Crawford's office.

For more information, contact Will Telligman, Director of Government Affairs, at will@slma.org or 202-870-4731.

SLMA supports a national hiring standard for motor carriers, as included in the House FAA Reauthorization Act.

- The National Hiring Standard would promote safety in the transportation industry and enhance interstate commerce by implementing a standard to ensure that motor carriers who have been deemed unsafe to operate are no longer utilized
- The language does not reduce an individual's legal recourse to sue a third party logistics company or shipper or exclude any data from being used as evidence
- The language would require that within 45-days prior to tendering a load to a motor carrier, a shipper, third party logistics company, broker, forwarder, and/or receiver verify that the motor carrier is:
 - properly registered with the Federal Motor Carrier Safety Administration (FMCSA);
 - has obtained the minimum insurance; and
 - has not been given an "unsatisfactory" safety rating
- The language is written to adapt to any changes to the motor carrier Safety Fitness Determination (SFD) process
- The language requires the Department of Transportation (DOT) to publish guidelines that specifically outline how motor carriers can be placed out-of-service

Please support inclusion of the national hiring standard for motor carriers in the House FAA Reauthorization Act by contacting Murphie Barrett (Majority Staff) or Helena Zyplikewycz (Minority Staff) with the House Transportation and Infrastructure Committee. The Senate Commerce, Science and Transportation staff contacts are Andrew Neeley (Majority Staff) and Renae Black (Minority Staff).