

TRANSPORTATION

Prepared by: Ruben Garibay and Rafael Tawil, Jr. Legislative Committee, Laredo Motor Carriers Association

REQUEST:

Short-term Solution: Address **misinterpretation issues regarding Title 8 CFR 214.2(b)(4)(i)(E) Distribution**, which in many cases leads to false accusations of cabotage. Recommend publishing a glossary of definition of terms used in (E) to better describe the differences between delivery, unloading and, above all, **a written update of what constitutes “certain permitted activities-while goods are under the stream of international commerce”**; it has been 23-years since NAFTA was written, we are due for an update.

Long-term Solution: Facilitate the creation of a **Privately Funded - Commercial Driver Development Program**. The Private Sector Fund **will support the training of new entrant U.S. Citizens under the age of 35**. The program **Targets VETERANS and UNEMPLOYED over 21** regardless of level of education if they can qualify for a driver’s license. Funds will be collected as **FEES FROM B1, H2B, EB3 Visa Drivers** and must be **Matched by the Carriers Hiring Them**. Participating carriers will have access to graduating drivers. The EB3 Drivers, under this self-funded program, will be required to train the new entrants during the final 6 months of training as reciprocal benefit for participating. **Under a Streamlined Immigration EB3 Visa Program Co-Sponsored by This Private Fund**, only highly qualified Commercial Vehicle Drivers that have logged a minimum of 3 years of exemplary compliance and safety with the FMCSA under a non-immigrant visa, that have a minimum of 6 years verifiable Commercial Driving Experience, a clean criminal background and will participate in a mentorship program for new entrants under the Commercial Drivers Development Program, will merit a EB3 Visa. By setting standards high, **we only bring in the best to train our new entrants on how Commercial Driving can be done in a Safe and Professional manner.**

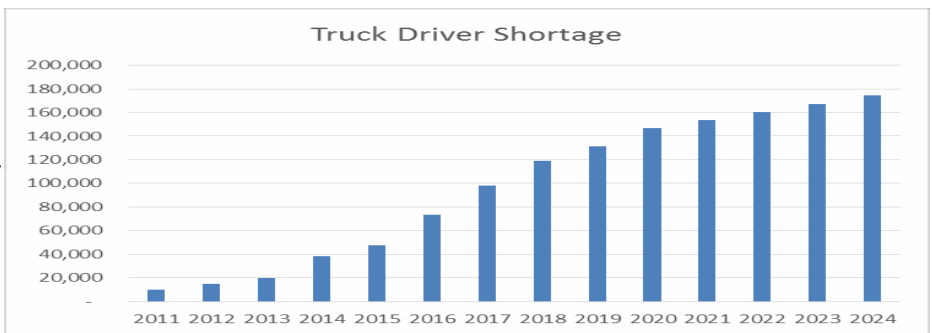
BACKGROUND: With a population of 260,000, Laredo is the third-most populated city on the U.S.-Mexico border and the largest Inland Port in the United States. Its economy thrives on commercial and industrial warehousing, transportation, imports and exports – every major U.S. third party logistics and trucking company has a local presence. Laredo boasts:

- The third largest U.S. Customs District in the nation after Los Angeles and New York handling over \$284 billion in total trade – more than the districts in Southern California, Arizona, New Mexico and West Texas combined;
- A direct connection to I-35 and I-69 in the United States, highway 85 in Mexico, and the only air cargo service with both U.S. and Mexican customs agents to pre-clear cargo flights destined for Mexico;
- Four international bridges that cross 16,000+ trucks per day – more than 50 percent of all trade between the U.S. and Mexico; and
- A railway bridge, serviced by Kansas City Southern and Union Pacific, which plays a significant role for automakers, whose supply chain moves car parts across the border at Laredo several times as it works its way to completion.

One of the nation’s busiest trade corridors, Laredo connects the industrial markets in the Midwest, northeast, central states and even the western seaboard to Mexico.

ISSUE: Bureau of Labor Statistics Outlook reports Tractor-trailer Driver Jobs are projected to grow **5% FASTER** than the average of **ALL Occupations**. The American Transportation Research Institute (ATRI) and the American Trucking Association (ATA) conducted separate independent studies and concluded the following statistical data:

- **Average Driver is 55 years of age**, few years away from retirement.
- U.S. labor force has grown by 17% since 1994, Job seekers for Truck Driving Jobs has **dropped by 66%**
- Trends show the industry will be **Short 175,000 Drivers by 2024**



Driver Shortages are a **National Economic and Security Issue**. The Demand has pushed Driver Salaries to now be the **Highest Percentage of Operational Cost** per mile in the industry per the (ATRI). These costs are not only passed on to the consumer but **hinder our competitiveness as a nation in the world economy**. The industry already taps into foreign commercial driver pools. However, the **current immigration system is not conducive to fluidly or completely meeting the industry needs**. The B1 visa is restricted to only International Freight Movements, The H2B visa, is only a temporary and seasonal fix that is usually difficult to qualify for. The EB3 visa, is the most fitting, yet the process is lengthy and the waits are long and restrictive because it lacks a clear path for Commercial Drivers.