



JOHN CORNYN
United States Senator - Texas
For Immediate Release

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Cornyn Bill to Streamline Process for Veterans Applying for Commercial Drivers' Licenses Becomes Law *Jobs for Our Heroes Act Signed by the President*

WASHINGTON—U.S. Senator John Cornyn (R-TX) released the following statement after President Trump signed his *Jobs for Our Heroes Act* into law. The *Jobs for Our Heroes Act* streamlines the process by which active-duty military, reservists, and veterans apply for Commercial Driver's Licenses (CDLs).

“This bill shows our veterans that after all of their hard work defending our nation, after everything they’ve sacrificed for us, we have their backs,” said Sen. Cornyn. **“Now that this bill has been signed into law, veterans will be able to more easily transfer the commercial driving skills they’ve honed in the military to civilian life, and therefore more easily find jobs that pair well with their skillset.”**

Last year, [Sen. Cornyn met](#) with representatives from the Texas National Guard, the Texas Department of Public Safety, the trucking industry, and veterans' organizations to discuss the merits of this bill.

Background:

The latest surface transportation reauthorization bill, the *Fixing America's Surface Transportation (FAST) Act*, directed the Secretary of Transportation to establish a unique, streamlined set of standards for veterans applying for a CDL. The standards exempt veterans from all or a portion of civilian commercial vehicle driving tests if that veteran had experience driving similar vehicles while in the armed forces or reserves. Additionally, the standards allow veterans' formal military training to count as credit towards the commercial motor vehicles minimum requirements to obtain a license.

However, the FAST Act did not include active-duty members of the military and reservists in their application of standards for veterans with previous training in military driving. To correct this, the Department of Transportation (USDOT) granted a two-year exemption allowing states to waive the commercial driver's licenses knowledge test for current service members, reservists, and national guardsmen if they completed military heavy-training programs and had been regularly employed in a military position requiring the operation of heavy vehicles within the past year prior to their application.

The *Jobs for our Heroes Act of 2017* makes the USDOT's two-year exemption permanent, providing active-duty service members and reservists the same training and testing standards granted to veterans under the FAST Act.

The Senators' legislation also makes it easier for veterans to receive the DOT-required health examination to hold a commercial driver's license. The FAST Act contained a provision requiring USDOT and the Department of Veterans Affairs (VA) to collaborate and develop a streamlined and efficient process

whereby VA physicians can join the National Registry for Certified Medical Examiners (NRCME). USDOT requires that all CDL holders be examined by physicians certified by the NRCME. Currently, there is an extremely low number of physicians in the VA health system certified by the NRCME, forcing veterans to either travel exorbitant distances to see a CME or pay out of pocket for a non-VA medical professional. The *Jobs for our Heroes Act of 2017* Act allows all qualified VA medical professionals, including advanced practice nurses and physician assistants, to use the same new process afforded to VA physicians.

Senator John Cornyn, a Republican from Texas, is a member of the Senate Finance, Intelligence, and Judiciary Committees.

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