

October 6, 2022

The Honorable Greg Gianforte  
Governor of Montana  
Office of the Governor  
P.O. Box 200801  
Helena, MT 59620-0801

The Honorable Malcolm “Mack” Long  
Director of Transportation  
Montana Department of Transportation  
P.O. Box 201001  
Helena, MT 59620-1001

Dear Governor Gianforte and Director Long,

The American Trucking Associations’ Law Enforcement Advisory Board brings together representatives of the trucking and law enforcement communities with the goal of addressing safety and security issues of mutual concern. One of the critical challenges we are focused on is the severe shortage of truck parking, and we are asking for your assistance with this longstanding and growing safety problem.

According to the U.S. Department of Transportation (USDOT), 98 percent of truck drivers regularly experience difficulties finding safe parking—a sharp uptick from the 75 percent figure reported just four years earlier. USDOT also found that the truck parking shortage exists in every state and region. Year after year, truck drivers have indicated that the parking shortage is one of the top three challenges they face, rising to number one in 2021. With the volume of freight moved by trucks expected to increase by more than 21% over the next decade, this problem is only going to get worse.

The lack of available truck parking has dire safety implications for both truck drivers and the motoring public. Federal Motor Carrier Safety Administration (FMCSA) hours-of-service (HOS) regulations require drivers to take a 30-minute break when they have driven for a period of eight cumulative hours without at least a 30-minute interruption, and a 10-hour break after 11 hours of driving or 14 total hours on-duty. When drivers are unable to find safe, authorized parking, they are stuck in an untenable situation, forced to either park in unsafe or illegal locations, or violate federal HOS regulations by continuing to search for safer, legal alternatives. As a last resort, drivers reluctantly park in unsafe locations—such as highway shoulders, interstate entrance and exit ramps, and abandoned properties—creating heightened safety risks for themselves and other motorists. Importantly, a survey of truck drivers conducted by Trucker Path indicated that 84% of drivers feel unsafe when parked in unauthorized areas, and this is especially true for female truck drivers. This dilemma puts law enforcement in a difficult position; enforcement officials can either force truck drivers to relocate, placing them in violation of HOS rules and taking a risk that the drivers may be too fatigued to drive safely, or they can allow the drivers to remain parked illegally. The bottom line is that safety is compromised when truck parking is not readily available.

Fortunately, with the passage of the *Infrastructure Investment & Jobs Act (Public Law 117-58)*, significant resources are now available to state and local governments to address this critical challenge. Construction of new truck parking capacity at rest areas or adjacent to private facilities is eligible for funding, as are improvements that allow for increased parking capacity at nontraditional locations, such as weigh stations and commuter lots, when appropriate. According to a [memorandum](#) issued by the U.S. Department of Transportation on September 20, 2022, these resources are available under several federal programs, including:

- National Highway Performance Program;
- Surface Transportation Block Grant Program;
- Highway Safety Improvement Program;

- Carbon Reduction Program; and
- National Highway Freight Program.

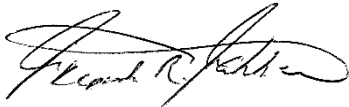
Additionally, transportation agencies can apply to USDOT for grants under a number of discretionary programs, including:

- Nationally Significant Multimodal Freight & Highway Projects Program (AKA INFRA);
- National Infrastructure Project Assistance (Mega) Program;
- Local and Regional Project Assistance Program (AKA RAISE); and
- Rural Surface Transportation Grant Program.

Several federal formula and discretionary programs are available for funding additional improvements, such as electrification, resiliency and technology solutions.

Truck drivers are the backbone of our society and economy. Without them, the daily conveniences we take for granted—from fresh water to fuel to the physical roofs over our heads—would not exist. On behalf of the Law Enforcement Advisory Board, we urge you to examine the availability of truck parking within your State and take such actions as are necessary to ensure that truck drivers have a safe place to sleep when they are out on the road delivering 72% of America's freight. We urge you to use the aforementioned resources, as well as other non-Federal resources, to prioritize and address this serious safety problem. If you would like to discuss this issue further, please contact us directly.

Sincerely,



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Christine Heggem, Chief of Staff to Governor Greg Gianforte