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FAST Act Advances Several Important Trucking Industry Priorities
Bill Will Make Moving Goods Safer and More Efficient

Arlington, Va. – Today, leaders of the American Trucking Associations praised the House and Senate for coming together on a long-term highway funding bill that advances the cause of trucking safety and efficiency.

“Today’s announcement that House and Senate leaders had reached an agreement on a long-term highway bill is welcome news to those of us in the transportation world,” said **ATA President and CEO Bill Graves**. “While we all, of course, wish there was more money to be had, this bill takes important steps to re-focus the program on important national projects and takes critical steps to improve trucking safety and efficiency.”

Notably, ATA is pleased that the bill takes steps to reform the Federal Motor Carrier Safety Administration’s CSA safety monitoring system, opens the door for the use of hair testing for federally mandated drug tests, makes it easier for veterans returning from service to enter the trucking industry and sets aside dedicated funds for important highway freight projects.

“By ordering an evaluation and improvement of CSA, as well as removing the flawed scores the system produces from public view in the meantime, this bill is an important victory for data and accuracy in regulatory oversight,” **ATA Executive Vice President and Chief of National Advocacy Dave Osiecki** said. “Similarly, by mandating that the Department of Health and Human Services set standards for hair testing, Congress has given trucking companies a powerful tool to keep habitual drug users out from behind the wheel. These are both important victories for safety.”

Other pieces of the bill ATA is pleased to see enacted are a full study of the impacts of raising minimum insurance limits and a clamping down of a program to allow conversion of untolled Interstate highways to toll roads. However, the final bill does

miss opportunities to further improve safety and efficiency in trucking – particularly in the case of allowing younger drivers to operate in Interstate commerce.

“It’s good news that Congress has created an opportunity for young veterans to transition to the trucking industry,” Graves said of the bill’s creation of a pilot program for certain veterans under the age of 21 to drive commercial across state lines. We are, however, disappointed that qualified, young, non-military CDL holders cannot have the same opportunity because we believe it is illogical to allow these younger drivers to operate in intrastate commerce in each of the 48 contiguous states, but not let them cross state borders. It is puzzling why Congress would dispense with language from both chambers that was very similar in many respects in favor of a provision that was so starkly different.”

ATA is also disappointed the final bill does not address the potential patchwork of state rules unleashed by allowing California and other states to impose their own work and rest rules.

“By not clarifying Congress’ intent, and the federal government’s role in governing interstate commerce, this bill opens the door for a hodgepodge of state regulations that will harm the safety and efficiency of the trucking industry,” Graves said. “We hope Congress will quickly revisit this issue.”

“Seeing a long-term highway bill passed was one of ATA’s top priorities,” said **ATA Chairman Pat Thomas**, senior vice president of state government affairs for UPS. “While not perfect, this bill is a tremendous step forward for trucking in many respects and we urge the House and Senate to pass it and President Obama to sign it into law before any more short-term extensions are needed.”

[American Trucking Associations](#) is the largest national trade association for the trucking industry. Through a federation of 50 affiliated state trucking associations and industry-related conferences and councils, ATA is the voice of the industry America depends on most to move our nation’s freight. Follow ATA on [Twitter](#) or on [Facebook](#). [Trucking Moves America Forward](#)