



May 22, 2023

The Honorable Sam Graves, Chairman  
The Honorable Rick Larsen, Ranking Member  
House Committee on Transportation and Infrastructure  
2165 Rayburn House Office Building  
Washington, D.C. 20515

Dear Chairman Graves and Ranking Member Larsen:

I write today as President and CEO of the Convenience Distribution Association, a trade organization working on behalf of convenience products distributors in the United States. Its distributor members represent more than \$102 billion in U.S convenience product sales, serving a variety of retail formats. The industry employs more than 59,000 people. Associate members include leading convenience product manufacturers, brokers, retailers, suppliers, and others allied to the industry.

Typical products sold by convenience distributors include candy, snacks, food service, tobacco and tobacco-related products, beverages, beverage programs, groceries, HBC, and general merchandise.

As the committee takes up a package of legislation intended to help bolster the supply chain, CDA urges you to support H.R. 2367, the Truck Parking Safety Improvement Act, H.R. 3013, the LICENSE Act, and the DRIVE Safe Integrity Act. Provisions of H.R. 2367 and H.R. 3013 were among the issues that CDA members advocated for in their recent Day on the Hill and CDA has long supported the DRIVE Safe Act legislation as a member of the DRIVE Safe Coalition.

The trucking industry, which CDA members rely on, faces an ongoing driver shortage – currently, the industry needs more than 78,000 truck drivers. This is in addition to a need to hire 1.2 million new drivers over the next decade to meet increasing freight demands. As Congress considers supply chain legislation, it is important to explore ways to expand the pool of qualified drivers while promoting appropriate safety standards and performance criteria. Other barriers to entry for new drivers should also be addressed.

The DRIVE Safe Integrity Act, introduced by Representatives Rick Crawford (R-AR) and Henry Cuellar (D-TX), offers a unique workforce and supply chain solution, building on the history of strong bipartisan support for the DRIVE Safe Act and the broad support for the inclusion of the Safe Driver Apprenticeship Pilot Program (SDAP) in the Infrastructure Investment and Jobs Act (IIJA).

The new bill addresses the regulations preventing 18- to 20-year-old professional drivers from operating in interstate commerce, when 49 states and the District of Columbia currently allow them to operate intrastate. The bill addresses the need to get the pilot program back on track, while also providing a pathway to a regulatory change that would establish a permanent apprenticeship program with appropriate safety and training criteria (modeled after the DRIVE Safe Act) upon the conclusion of the pilot program.

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Specifically, the DRIVE Safe Integrity Act:

1. Recognizes the ongoing driver shortage challenges facing commercial trucking;
2. Recognizes the importance of trucking to the nation's supply chain;
3. Recognizes that the SDAP was a carefully crafted bipartisan compromise modeled after the DRIVE Safe Act;
4. Recognizes that the SDAP, now active for more than 8 months, is failing to garner enough participants to provide meaningful data (less than a dozen driver participants in what was supposed to be 3,000 drivers at any time over the 3-year pilot program), and that extraneous requirements for program participation, which were not included in the IIJA, have contributed to that failure;
5. Urges DOT to take corrective actions that would improve participation in the SDAP;
6. Requires DOT to provide Congress detailed reports on the status of the SDAP, and corrective actions taken to improve participation; and
7. Upon the sunset of the pilot program, absent credible data showing that drivers participating in the pilot program are less safe than those currently operating a commercial motor vehicle in interstate or intrastate commerce, directs DOT to promulgate regulations for a permanent apprenticeship program for commercial drivers between the ages of 18-20 (modeled after the DRIVE Safe Act).

Thank you for your consideration. CDA looks forward to working with you in support of legislation that will provide pathways for more drivers to enter the field and keep the economy moving forward.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Kimberly Bolin". The signature is written in a cursive, flowing style.

Kimberly Bolin  
President and CEO