

United States Senate

November 3, 2021

Ms. Meera Joshi
Deputy Administrator
Federal Motor Carrier Safety Administration
1200 New Jersey Avenue, S.E.
Washington, D.C. 20590

Dear Deputy Administrator Joshi:

We write to you with growing concern for the labor shortage faced by the trucking industry. The truck driver shortage, coupled with the nation's ongoing supply chain issues, has been extremely detrimental to the economy. If left unaddressed, inaction to grow America's pool of truck drivers threatens to drive up shipping expenses, prolong delays, and burden already-strained consumers with additional costs.

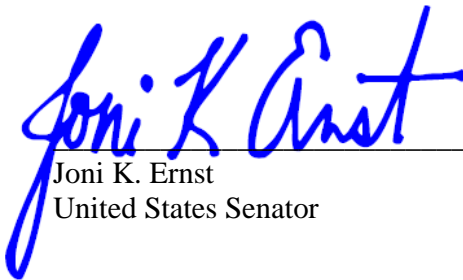
With these concerns in mind, we urge the Federal Motor Carrier Safety Administration (FMCSA) to allow persons 18 years of age and older to obtain a commercial driver's license (CDL) and operate commercial motor vehicles in interstate commerce to get American goods and services moving again. Under current law, a 20 year old trucker could drive 363 miles in Iowa from Sioux City to Davenport, but that same driver could not drive five miles into Moline, Illinois.

Our nation's commerce hinges on interstate trucking, but the age of entry for this profession blocks the youngest members of our workforce from the career field. In their 2021 report to Congress, the U.S. Department of Transportation estimated the average age of a commercial truck driver is 48 years old, six years older than the national workforce average¹. Even more concerning is that the share of this workforce over the age of 55 has grown from 10 percent to nearly 30 percent in recent years. With a large portion of this labor demographic so close to retirement, the shortage of truckers could exceed 100,000 persons by 2028.

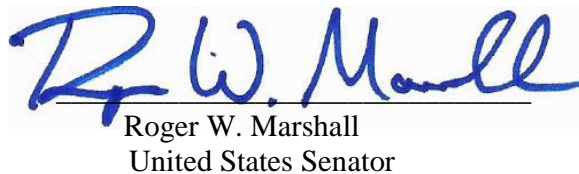
This wave of retiring drivers, exacerbated by the COVID-19 pandemic, produces severe consequences in an already delicate supply chain. While American truckers do their part to help America recover from this devastating pandemic, the FMCSA should strongly consider allowing persons 18 years of age and older to operate commercial vehicles in interstate commerce. Those seeking an alternative pathway to an expensive four-year degree may find the three-year gap between high school graduation and the eligible age for interstate trucking inhibitive. It should be our policy to aid and encourage these capable workers. We hope that under your leadership, this necessary reform will be made.

Thank you for your prompt attention to this request.

Sincerely,

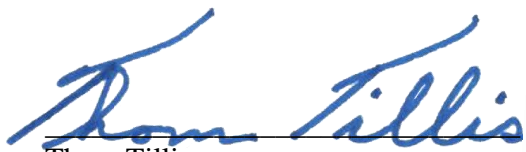


Joni K. Ernst
United States Senator



Roger W. Marshall
United States Senator

¹ United States. Bureau of Labor Statistics, Dept. of Labor. "Labor Force Statistics from the Current Population Survey." Washington: GPO, 2021. Web. 26 October 2021.



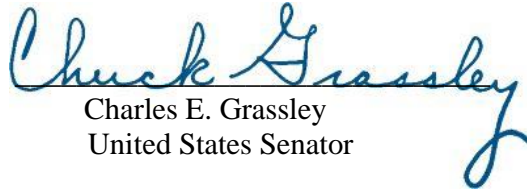
Thom Tillis
United States Senator



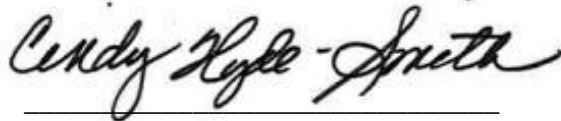
Kevin Cramer
United States Senator



Lindsey O. Graham
United States Senator



Charles E. Grassley
United States Senator



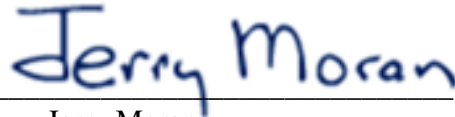
Cindy Hyde-Smith
United States Senator



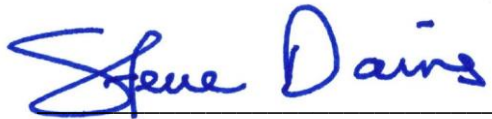
Mike Braun
United States Senator



Marsha Blackburn
United States Senator



Jerry Moran
United States Senator



Steve Daines
United States Senator