

March 26, 2018

The Honorable Duncan Hunter
U.S. House of Representatives
Washington, D.C. 20515

Dear Congressman Hunter:

We are writing today on behalf of the National Association of Wholesaler-Distributors to express our support for your legislation, the Developing Responsible Individuals for a Vibrant Economy (DRIVE Safe) Act. NAW is the “national voice of wholesale distribution,” an association comprised of employers of all sizes, and national, regional, state and local line-of-trade associations spanning the \$5.6 trillion wholesale distribution industry that employs more than 5 million workers in the United States. Approximately 40,000 enterprises with almost 400,000 places of businesses in all 50 states and the District of Columbia are affiliated with NAW.

Wholesaler-distributors form the backbone of the United States economy; the link in the marketing chain between manufacturers and retailers as well as commercial, institutional, and governmental end users. Many NAW businesses are heavily dependent on trucks and highways to move their products through the inter-state supply chain, and those businesses today share a major concern – the acute shortage of trained drivers. And it is worth noting that these are not entry-level or minimum wage jobs, but career positions that often pay more than \$65,000.

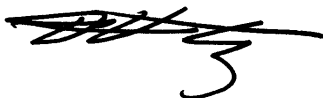
This critical driver shortage is expected to grow significantly in the coming decade, and action is needed to address the problem.

One solution is to bring younger drivers into the profession, but Federal regulation stands in the way of that solution, requiring drivers in interstate commerce to be at least 21 years of age. With almost every state permitting the issuing of commercial drivers’ licenses to 18-21 year-old drivers for intra-state commerce, these younger drivers literally have to stop at their state’s border, regardless of the distances being driven. The Federal regulation is irrational and obsolete and needs to be changed.

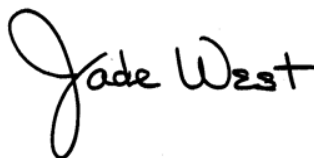
Your DRIVE Safe Act is a key solution to the critical driver shortage problem. Moreover, your legislation would not only address the driver shortage in interstate commerce, it would also open up opportunities to high school graduates to train for and obtain well-paying jobs which the current regulation denies them.

We look forward to working with you to advance this important legislation.

Sincerely,



Dirk Van Dongen
President



Jade C. West
Senior Vice President-Government Relations