



Commercial Vehicle Safety Alliance

Improving uniformity in commercial motor vehicle safety and enforcement

May 15, 2020

The Honorable Roger Wicker
Chair
Committee on Commerce, Science and Transportation
United States Senate

The Honorable Maria Cantwell
Ranking Member
Committee on Commerce, Science and Transportation
United States Senate

The Honorable Deb Fischer
Chair
Subcommittee on Transportation and Safety
Committee on Commerce, Science and Transportation
United States Senate

The Honorable Tammy Duckworth
Ranking Member
Subcommittee on Transportation and Safety
Committee on Commerce, Science and Transportation
United States Senate

The Honorable John Thune
Majority Whip
United States Senate

Dear Senators,

The Commercial Vehicle Safety Alliance (CVSA) would like to thank you for your leadership in introducing the Motor Carrier Safety Grant Relief Act of 2020, S. 3729. As states continue to respond to the impacts of the COVID-19 pandemic across the country, the provisions in this bill are critical to providing necessary relief to the agencies responsible for commercial motor vehicle safety enforcement.

CVSA is a nonprofit association comprised of local, state, provincial, territorial and federal commercial motor vehicle safety officials and industry representatives. The Alliance aims to achieve uniformity, compatibility and reciprocity of commercial motor vehicle inspections and enforcement by certified inspectors dedicated to driver and vehicle safety. Our mission is to improve commercial motor vehicle safety and uniformity throughout Canada, Mexico and the United States, by providing guidance and education to enforcement, industry and policy makers.

As states respond to the impacts of the COVID-19 pandemic, many states have seen a temporary reduction in their commercial motor vehicle safety enforcement activities, such as roadside inspections, compliance reviews and safety audits. The national emergency declaration has temporarily reduced the pool of vehicles that are subject to inspection. In addition, many jurisdictions have reassigned enforcement personnel to other details and put into place social distancing policies to protect inspectors and drivers, to help prevent spreading the virus. All of this has

resulted in fewer activities and expenses under the Motor Carrier Safety Assistance Program (MCSAP), which is the grant program authorized by Congress to help support state commercial motor vehicle enforcement programs. Nationwide, we've seen an 85% reduction in commercial motor vehicle inspections, when you compare April of 2019 to April of 2020.

However, as states begin to return to normal operations, commercial motor vehicle safety activities will begin increasing and returning to normal levels. Unfortunately, however, some states will lose the ability to spend their grant funds, as the funds expire at the end of the fiscal year. The Motor Carrier Safety Grant Relief Act of 2020 addresses this challenge, by providing states with an additional year to spend their grant funds and providing the Federal Motor Carrier Safety Administration with the authority to keep and redistribute any unused funds at the end of the grants' cycle. CVSA and its membership thank you for recognizing the need to keep critical highway safety dollars within MCSAP and for addressing this need by introducing this important legislation.

CVSA and its membership strongly support passage of this legislation, as it is critical to the long-term success of the states' highway safety programs. As enforcement activities resume, it is imperative that states have the funds they need to get back to the work of removing unsafe drivers, vehicles and motor carriers from our roadways. Giving states the additional time and FMCSA the authority to keep and redistribute those funds once the pandemic has passed will be incredibly important to ensuring state programs can be maintained appropriately in the long term.

Once again, thank you for your support and leadership on this issue.

Respectfully,



Collin B. Mooney, MPA, CAE
Executive Director
Commercial Vehicle Safety Alliance