November 20, 2018

The Honorable Raymond Martinez  
Administrator  
Federal Motor Carrier Safety Administration  
1200 New Jersey Avenue Southeast  
Washington, DC 20590

Dear Administrator Martinez:

On October 15, 2018, you received a petition from the National Cattlemen’s Beef Association, Livestock Marketing Association, American Farm Bureau Federation, American Beekeeping Federation, American Honey Producers Association, and the National Aquaculture Association for a five-year exemption for livestock haulers from certain Federal Motor Carrier Safety Administration (FMCSA) hours-of-service (HOS) requirements. Given the important role the industries these organizations represent have in our states, we ask that you give their petition full and careful consideration.

Our nation’s livestock, insect, and aquaculture haulers are unique among the freight trucking industry because they move a live, perishable product. These haulers play a critical role in each of these industries by ensuring the safe and timely delivery of livestock from across the country. The current HOS regulations do not provide a level of flexibility that recognizes their unique work. Without additional flexibility, these regulations are likely to delay the movement of livestock, which can result in animal welfare concerns and fuel uncertainty in an industry already experiencing the toughest farm economy since the 1980s.

Congress gave FMCSA the authority to grant exemptions to HOS requirements if an exemption ensures an equivalent, or greater, level of safety. As noted in the petition, livestock haulers have a strong record of safety. FMCSA previously recognized this safety record when it granted livestock haulers an exemption from the 30-minute rest break requirement in June 2014.

Providing livestock haulers with additional HOS flexibility through a limited five-year exemption will ensure the hardworking production agriculture families and livestock haulers can continue to feed the world without encountering burdensome regulations. These haulers have a demonstrated and recognized record of safety. Moreover, the petition filed by the organizations mentioned above includes additional safety measures to maintain this record.

We appreciate your close consideration of this petition, and look forward to continue working with you on improved safety and flexibility within the trucking industry.

Sincerely,
Deb Fischer  
United States Senator

John Hoeven  
United States Senator

James M. Inhofe  
United States Senator

Jerry Moran  
United States Senator

Cory Gardner  
United States Senator

Joni K. Ernst  
United States Senator

M. Michael Rounds  
United States Senator

Bill Cassidy, M.D.  
United States Senator

Tina Smith  
United States Senator

Doug Jones  
United States Senator

Charles E. Grassley  
United States Senator

Cindy Hyde-Smith  
United States Senator

James E. Risch  
United States Senator

Steve Daines  
United States Senator

Mike Crapo  
United States Senator

Roy Blunt  
United States Senator
John Barrasso
United States Senator

Pat Roberts
United States Senator

James Lankford
United States Senator

Marco Rubio
United States Senator