Iowa
Motor
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Association

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The Honorable Dave Loebsack
Washington, DC 20515

Dear Representative Loebsack,

H.R. 803, the SKILLS Act

On behalf of the Iowa Motor Truck Association, I urge you to support passage of HR 803, the Supporting Knowledge and Investing in Lifelong Skills (SKILLS) Act.

Funding through the Workforce Investment Act (WIA) allows nearly 7,000 individuals to be trained as professional truck drivers each year. According to a report prepared for the U.S. Department of Labor, more adults received training between April 2011 and March 2012 to become commercial truck drivers than any other discipline except nursing.

Earning one's commercial driver's license (CDL) requires passage of detailed knowledge and skill tests. Many new truck drivers learn these skills by attending a training course at special schools operated by trucking companies and community colleges. WIA makes it possible for many individuals, who otherwise could not afford the tuition, to get their CDL. In 6 weeks, an individual can finish training and have a good-paying job, with benefits.

The SKILLS Act would help WIA become more effective by –

- Focusing training on "in-demand" job opportunities, like trucking;
- Making more funds available for job training by reducing red tape, lowering overhead costs, and consolidating programs; and
- Increasing the representation of employers on local workforce boards.

Please support passage of HR 803. The importance of educational assistance through WIA is growing in our industry and others. The trucking industry expects to bring on nearly 100,000 new drivers each year, on average, over the next 10 years. We are already experiencing a shortage of 20,000 drivers, a shortage that could grow significantly unless we can attract trained drivers.

Sincerely,

Brenda Neville, CAE
President & CEO
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