RHODE ISLAND TRUCKING ASSOCIATION, INC.

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The Honorable Senator Jack Reed
728 Hart Senate Office Building
Washington, DC 20510

Dear Senator Reed:

H.R. 803, the SKILLS Act

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

Funding 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 skills 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 tuition, to get their CDL. In as little as 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,

Christopher J Maxwell
President & CEO
Rhode Island Trucking Association