

January 31, 2012

The Honorable John Mica
Chairman
House Transportation & Infrastructure Committee
U.S. House of Representatives
2165 Rayburn House Office Building
Washington, DC 20515

Dear Chairman Mica,

As dairy farmers and members of dairy cooperatives, we are affected everyday by transportation policies that do not reflect the needs and demands of today's commercial environment. By not allowing states the option to increase their vehicle weight limits, the safety of our nation's roads are in jeopardy, while unnecessary, additional transportation costs are imposed on businesses. It is critical we address the issue this Congress, and we encourage you to support the *Safe and Efficient Transportation Act of 2011* (H.R. 763) during the upcoming surface transportation reauthorization debate.

We were extremely pleased Congress enacted into law a twenty-year extension of the pilot programs in Vermont and Maine last year. The success of these programs truly portrays the safety and economic benefits of truck weight reform. Prior to the pilot programs, both states already allowed for truck weight loads of 100,000 pounds on state and municipal roads. Unfortunately, those trucks were not allowed to travel on interstate highways – roads that traditionally can better handle these larger loads.

Building on the overwhelming success of the pilot programs, truck weight reform proves to be a responsible approach to raising truck weight limits to allow American businesses to meet demand with fewer trucks, thus removing unnecessary trucks from the highway, lessening our dependence on fossil fuels, reducing our carbon footprint and improving shipping productivity. Meanwhile, the required sixth axle would maintain braking capacity and the current distribution of weight per tire without changing the size of the truck. We are beyond additional studies and pilot programs - it is time for action now on truck weight reform.

As a leader on the House Transportation and Infrastructure Committee, we strongly encourage you to allow for responsible truck weight reform by supporting the *Safe and Efficient Transportation Act of 2011* during the surface transportation reauthorization debate. Thank you for your consideration on this critical issue to the nation's dairy farmers and dairy cooperatives.

Sincerely,

Agri-Mark
Associated Milk Producers Inc.
Dairy Farmers of America
Dairy Producers of New Mexico
Dairy Producers of Utah
Dairylea Cooperative
Idaho Dairymen's Association
International Milk Haulers Association
Land O'Lakes
Maryland & Virginia Milk Producers
Michigan Milk Producers Association
Milk Producers Council
Missouri Dairy Association
National Milk Producers Federation
Northeast Dairy Farmers Cooperatives
Northeast Dairy Producers Association Inc.
Northwest Dairy Association
Ohio Dairy Producers Association
Ohio State Milk Haulers Association
Oregon Dairy Farmers Association
St. Albans Cooperative Creamery
South East Dairy Farmers Association
Texas Association of Dairymen
United Dairymen of Arizona
Upstate Niagara Cooperative
Virginia State Dairymen's Association
Western United Dairymen

Cc: Ranking Member Nick J. Rahall, II
House T&I Committee Members