

Member Day Written Testimony – House Transportation and Infrastructure Committee

Rep. Harriet Hageman (WY at-Large)

Chairman Graves, Ranking Member Larsen, and Members of the Committee:

I am grateful for the opportunity to testify before you for the Committee's Member Day hearing on the importance of trucking in Wyoming and to highlight a few issues that I believe necessitate further Congressional action.

Despite Wyoming's rural nature, my state hosts a considerable amount of truck traffic and remains a vital corridor for the flow of goods from America's heartland to communities across the nation. It is truly an understatement to say that a massive amount of essential resources and commodities, including affordable, reliable energy products and agricultural goods from Wyoming and beyond, are trucked across our highways every day. Wyoming's stretch of I-80 alone sees an average daily traffic count of around 13,000 vehicles, with trucks making up nearly 50%.¹ This increased traffic, in addition to supporting America's supply chains and powering the nation, brings in valuable revenue and forges connectivity for small businesses and communities throughout Wyoming.

While the significance of the trucking industry cannot be overstated, increased traffic poses its share of challenges. According to a study released in September 2025 by the Truck Safety Coalition, based on 2023 per capita data, Wyoming ranks highest in fatal truck crashes, with

¹ <https://wyoleg.gov/InterimCommittee/2023/08-2023052511-01WYDOTTalkingPointsI-80.pdf>

seven per 100,000.² Data from the Wyoming Department of Transportation revealed that, between 2018-2022, there were 4,106 total crashes involving commercial motor vehicles, with approximately 90% of these originating from out-of-state drivers. Many of these accidents can be traced back to the treacherous nature of our roadways and the unpredictability of Wyoming's weather, which creates risks for even the most skilled CDL holders. To that end, ensuring that we are limiting the issuance of CDLs to individuals who are properly vetted, trained, and prepared to react and respond in high-risk situations is critical to maintaining safety on our roadways.

One such prerequisite that should always remain uniform among CDL holders is the ability to be proficient in the English language, and to place out of service those drivers who are not. Being able to read, write, and speak English proficiently is a fundamental safety matter that impacts everyone who travels on our roadways. Across Wyoming, we frequently utilize variable message signage that displays important warnings or instructions to drivers, including for high winds, winter road conditions, black ice, and accidents ahead. Failure to read and understand these messages can have disastrous consequences. While this proficiency standard has historically been the case under preexisting federal regulations, prior Administrations have sought to loosen these practices and weaken enforcement, directly threatening the safety of American motorists. Fortunately, under President Trump and Secretary Duffy's leadership, this basic safety prerequisite, along with consistent enforcement, has been restored.³ It is essential, however, that we codify this progress to ensure these safety measures cannot be rolled back on the basis of

² <https://trucksafety.org/wp-content/uploads/2025/09/Deadliest-Truck-Crash-States-2023.jpg>

³ <https://www.whitehouse.gov/presidential-actions/2025/04/enforcing-commonsense-rules-of-the-road-for-americas-truck-drivers/>

political motivations, which is precisely why I co-introduced Connor's Law with Representative Dave Taylor.

Also of importance is how current federal policy undermines economic opportunities for 18-20-year-old CDL holders. Under existing federal regulations, these drivers are permitted to operate in intrastate commerce but are prohibited from doing so interstate. This regulatory requirement excludes a valuable segment of the driver community from regional supply chains, particularly for rural, agricultural communities along state lines, while making it increasingly cumbersome to attract prospective drivers into the career field. Furthermore, these prohibitions can oftentimes make little sense, as a qualified 18-20-year-old driver in Wyoming can make a treacherous multi-hundred-mile trip across Wyoming in varying terrain, but is forbidden from hauling a shipment just a few miles across our 6 different state lines. To address this, I introduced the ROUTE Act, which permits qualified 18–20-year-old CDL holders the ability to operate in interstate commerce so long as they remain within 150 air miles of their normal work reporting location. My legislation seeks to take a measured approach to granting regulatory relief, supporting border communities and bolstering regional supply chains, and helping to grow the next generation of professional drivers, all while balancing the need for safety.

Finally, and with regard to Surface Transportation Reauthorization, I want to shift gears briefly and urge that the Committee prioritize flexibility for State and local communities to utilize highway dollars through formula funding while modernizing outdated bureaucratic restrictions that delay the completion of vital infrastructure projects. Building on this point, I have introduced legislation to expand transferability flexibility and update National Environmental

Policy Act categorical exclusions for projects with limited federal financial assistance to reflect changes in inflation.

To wrap up, these are just a few Wyoming priorities that address safety, support supply chains, enable workforce development, and promote hard infrastructure. Once again, thank you for allowing me the opportunity to testify, and I look forward to working with each of you as we consider our next Surface Transportation Reauthorization. Should you have any additional questions, please do not hesitate to contact me and my staff at any point.