

## **Transportation and Infrastructure Member Day**

### **Remarks:**

- Thank you Chairman Graves and Ranking Member Larsen for having me here today to present my priorities for the 119<sup>th</sup> Congress.
- Agriculture and forestry are two of the largest industries in the Commonwealth of Virginia, combining for over \$120 billion dollars in annual economic impact, and providing over 450 thousand jobs.
- I am here today to talk about the very first bill I introduced as a Member of Congress, the Agricultural and Forestry Hauling Efficiency Act.
- This bill allows the Commonwealth of Virginia to permit trucks up to 90,000 pounds on interstate highways that are hauling unprocessed agricultural crops and raw forest products.
- Virginia approved a maximum weight of 90,000 pounds for trucks hauling these products on non-interstate highways in 2015, but this does not apply to interstate highways.
- This bill addresses a decade long discrepancy between state and federal law. It does not permit heavier trucks or

increase weight limits; it simply enables trucks operating within state-approved weight limits to take safer, more efficient routes, bypassing winding rural roads that go through small communities, school areas, pedestrian zones, and residential districts.

- Last year, federal law was enacted that allowed the State of Mississippi to adopt this same policy.
- Additionally, Wisconsin, North Carolina, Minnesota, and New England states have similar authorization to allow agricultural product trucks permitted for higher weights to transit certain segments of the federal interstate system.
- Allowing these trucks on interstates is safer, uses less fuel, leads to fewer emissions, better fuel mileage, less wear and tear on vehicles, and provides shorter routes.
- I respectfully ask that the Committee take into consideration this important legislation, and I want to thank you for providing me the opportunity to speak in front of you all today. With that, I yield back.