



May 19, 2026

The Honorable Sam Graves
Chairman
Committee on Transportation and
Infrastructure
U.S. House of Representatives
Washington, DC 20515

The Honorable Rick Larsen
Ranking Member
Committee on Transportation and
Infrastructure
U.S. House of Representatives
Washington, DC 20515

RE: Support for H.R. 8870, the BUILD America 250 (Building Unrivaled Infrastructure and Long-term Development for America's 250th)

Dear Chairman Graves and Ranking Member Larsen:

NATSO, the national trade association representing the travel plaza and truck stop industry, applauds the House Committee on Transportation and Infrastructure for its bipartisan surface transportation reauthorization legislation. This legislation embodies a pragmatic commitment to investing in proven infrastructure programs and stands to benefit the millions of professional drivers and motorists who rely on America's highway network every day. NATSO commends the Committee for the deliberative, bipartisan process that produced this draft, which strikes a thoughtful balance between modernizing the nation's surface transportation framework and preserving the policies that have allowed the off-highway business community to invest with confidence alongside it.

NATSO's members operate more than 5,000 travel plazas and truck stops along the U.S. Interstate Highway System, providing essential fueling, parking, food, and rest services to the commercial trucking industry and traveling public. Our members have a direct and substantial stake in the policies that shape the nation's surface transportation network, and we appreciate the opportunity to offer the following comments on provisions of particular significance to our industry.

I. Highway Trust Fund Sources.

NATSO supports robust highway and infrastructure funding, as many fuel retailers rely on strong infrastructure to service motorists traveling along Interstate highways. An effective, efficient, well-funded infrastructure is integral to the continued success of our industry.

The pace of market and technological change, including the increasing electrification of the vehicle fleet, the emergence of autonomous vehicles, the growth of ride-sharing, and continued gains in fuel efficiency, presents both significant challenges and meaningful opportunities to reexamine how taxpayers fund surface transportation in the United States. Against that backdrop, our industry has consistently supported proposals to levy an annual vehicle registration fee on

electric and hybrid vehicles.¹NATSO accordingly commends the inclusion of a new annual registration fee for electric and hybrid vehicles in the draft legislation. NATSO urges the Committee to champion sustained, long-term investment in infrastructure through mechanisms that capture contributions from all users of the nation’s roads and bridges.

II. Rest Area Commercialization and Interstate Tolling.

NATSO commends the Committee for preserving the longstanding federal prohibition on commercial activities at Interstate rest areas, and for declining to authorize new tolls on existing Interstate highways. **Preserving the prohibition on rest area commercialization is essential to the continued viability of the travel center and truck stop industry and the off-highway communities it supports.** These policies have safeguarded fair competition for decades between publicly subsidized rest areas and the private travel center and truck stop industry, which has invested billions of dollars in serving the traveling public along the Interstate Highway System.

Exchanges on the Interstate Highway System are today among the most competitive business environments in the country, with restaurants, refueling stations, and hotels clustered in close proximity and competing directly for travelers’ business. Surrounding communities rely on the tax revenue and employment this ecosystem generates. Commercializing rest areas would thus undercut local sales tax bases and the state Department of Transportation (DOT) motor fuel tax receipts that fund highway maintenance.

Tolling existing Interstates raises similar concerns. Tolls are an inefficient revenue mechanism, with administrative and enforcement costs consuming roughly a quarter of every dollar collected, compared to less than one percent under the motor fuel tax. Tolls also divert traffic onto secondary roads not designed to carry it, harm off-highway businesses and the communities that depend on them, and fall disproportionately on rural Americans whose roads and bridges are often the most in need of repair.

III. Opposition to Broad Truck Weight Increases.

NATSO appreciates the Committee’s decision to decline broad increases to the 80,000-pound federal gross vehicle weight limit on the Interstate Highway System in the legislation. Heavier trucks accelerate pavement and bridge deterioration at rates that far outpace any corresponding gains in freight productivity, shifting maintenance costs onto taxpayers and state DOTs already struggling to keep pace with existing infrastructure needs. Heavier configurations also lengthen stopping distances, complicate emergency maneuvers, and raise the severity of crashes when they occur, with consequences borne disproportionately by the passenger vehicles sharing the road.

Proposals to raise allowable truck weights present serious concerns spanning infrastructure integrity, highway safety, and the broader viability of the commercial trucking ecosystem that NATSO members serve every day. NATSO recently joined a broad-based coalition in urging

¹ See NATSO, SIGMA letter in support of the House Transportation and Infrastructure Committee’s proposed electric and hybrid vehicle registration fee, (April 30, 2025) available at https://transportation.house.gov/uploadedfiles/natso_sigma_ti_budget_reconciliation_support_letter.pdf.

Congress to reject such increases in the reauthorization.² We respectfully urge the Committee to reject efforts to add weight increase provisions during the markup, and to maintain the current weight limits in the final legislation.

IV. Truck Parking Grant Program.

NATSO supports the inclusion of a dedicated truck parking grant program funded at \$750 million over five years, based on the framework established in legislation introduced by Rep. Mike Bost (R-IL). Safe and adequate truck parking is a foundational element of highway safety and freight efficiency, and federal investment in this area is long overdue. NATSO members provide more than 90 percent of the nation's truck parking capacity, and the off-highway travel centers our members operate deliver the rest opportunities and amenities professional drivers depend on, contributing directly to highway safety and the efficient movement of goods and freight across the country. This program has the potential to create meaningful opportunities for existing operators to expand current facilities or develop new capacity in underserved corridors.

As NATSO recently outlined in formal comments submitted to the Department of Transportation,³ truck parking shortages, where they exist, are generally localized market failures concentrated in high-cost metropolitan areas rather than a uniform national shortage. These shortfalls are driven largely by misaligned incentives within the trucking industry, as motor carriers have historically not internalized truck parking costs into their operational cost structures in the way they do with fuel. The private sector remains best positioned to meet the parking needs of motorists traveling along the Interstate, and a well-designed federal grant program, targeted at genuine market gaps and structured to leverage private sector partnership, can complement the substantial private investment NATSO members have made and will continue to make in truck parking infrastructure.

As this legislation moves forward, NATSO looks forward to working with the Committee to ensure that program criteria and grant deployment are structured in a manner that complements existing private investment rather than displacing it, preserving the long-term business case for privately funded parking development and ensuring that federal funds are not deployed in ways that would undermine industry incentives to expand capacity.

V. Hydrogen Vehicle Weight Parity.

NATSO supports the inclusion of language extending the federal vehicle weight exemption to hydrogen-fueled commercial vehicles, placing hydrogen powertrains on equal regulatory footing with battery electric and natural gas vehicles for purposes of the federal weight allowance.

² See Coalition Letter Opposing Truck Weight Increases, submitted to the U.S. House Committee on Transportation & Infrastructure, the U.S. Senate Environment & Public Works Committee, and the U.S. Senate Committee on Commerce, Science, and Transportation, (April 28, 2026) available at <https://nclnet.org/wp-content/uploads/2026/04/Letter-Truck-Size-Weight-4-28-26.pdf>

³ See Comments of NATSO, Representing America's Travel Centers and Truck Stops, on "Agency Information Collection Activities; Proposals, Submissions, and Approvals: Quantifying the Benefits of Creating New Truck Parking Spaces," (May 6, 2026), FMCSA-2025-0787, submitted to the U.S. Department of Transportation, available at <https://www.regulations.gov/comment/FMCSA-2025-0787-0103>

This targeted and technology-neutral change corrects a structural disincentive to hydrogen truck deployment that has persisted since Congress extended the natural gas weight exemption to electric vehicles. NATSO led a broad coalition earlier this year in urging Congress to include parity language in the reauthorization,⁴ and we commend the Committee for incorporating it into the draft.

VI. Roadside Safety.

NATSO supports the bill's provisions that expand existing safety programs to encompass public information campaigns focused on reducing deaths and injuries involving vehicles stopped at the roadside. The safety of professional drivers and motorists who stop at NATSO members' locations, both on and off the travel lanes, is a priority our industry shares with the Committee, and roadside incidents involving stopped vehicles represent a persistent and preventable source of serious harm to drivers, first responders, and tow operators alike. NATSO was proud to lead a broad coalition of stakeholders in urging Congress to establish a uniform national "Move Over, Slow Down" standard, and we appreciate the Committee's recognition that public education is an essential complement to the underlying state laws that currently exist.⁵

Sincerely,

NATSO, Representing America's Travel Centers and Truck Stops

cc: Members of the House Transportation and Infrastructure Committee

⁴ Coalition Letter Supporting Federal Weight Exemption Parity for Hydrogen-Fueled Commercial Vehicles, submitted to the U.S. House Committee on Transportation and Infrastructure, (April 2026) *available at* <https://www.natso.com/natso-urges-parity-for-hydrogen-truck-vehicle-weight-limits/>

⁵ Coalition Letter Supporting a National "Move Over, Slow Down" Standard, submitted to the House Transportation and Infrastructure Committee (May 13, 2026), *available at* <https://multibriefs.com/briefs/natso/moveover.pdf>