



May 19, 2026

The Honorable Sam Graves  
Chairman  
Committee on Transportation & Infrastructure  
U.S. House of Representatives  
2165 Rayburn House Office Building  
Washington, D.C. 20515

The Honorable Rick Larsen  
Ranking Member  
Committee on Transportation & Infrastructure  
U.S. House of Representatives  
2163 Rayburn House Office Building  
Washington, D.C. 20515

Dear Chairman Graves and Ranking Member Larsen:

The National Cattlemen's Beef Association (NCBA) applauds the House Transportation and Infrastructure Committee for releasing the text of the *BUILD America 250 Surface Transportation Reauthorization Act*. Livestock producers across the country depend on a safe, efficient, and flexible transportation system, and this legislation takes meaningful steps to address the unique challenges faced by livestock haulers. The cattle and beef industry is geographically diverse with cattle production in all 50 states, a robust feeding sector that stretches from the Corn Belt to the Pacific Northwest in addition to other regions, and beef processing facilities spread across similar areas. As a result, many livestock producers must transport cattle long distances to reach the next stage of the supply chain. These hauls require flexibility to ensure both animal welfare and driver safety.

NCBA appreciates the committee's inclusion of the 150-air-mile radius from the destination and the livestock hauler exemption from Electronic Logging Devices (ELDs). These provisions are essential to giving drivers the flexibility they need. Transporting live animals presents challenges that other freight does not. Cattle cannot sit idle on a trailer for extended periods, unloading can only occur at specialized facilities, and repeated loading and unloading increases stress and risk of disease or illness. Livestock haulers also cannot simply pull over for extended rest periods with loaded cattle. A permanent ELD exemption ensures livestock haulers can prioritize animal welfare and driver safety throughout the trip and preserving and strengthening hours of service (HOS) flexibility is critical to preventing unnecessary animal stress and avoiding unsafe roadside situations for drivers.

In addition to these important measures, NCBA strongly urges the committee to include the Truck Weights Pilot Program in the final legislation. The federal truck weight limit of 80,000 pounds has not been updated since 1982, despite major advancements in vehicle safety and road paving technology. Allowing states the option to increase truck weights on federal interstate highways to 91,000 pounds on six axles would enable livestock haulers to move the same number of cattle on four trucks instead of five. This change would reduce the number of vehicles on the road, lower transportation costs, improve supply chain efficiency, and enhance safety. The U.S. Department of Transportation has found that six axle configurations stop a foot shorter than five axle trucks, and the dimensions of the truck do not increase under this proposal. NCBA appreciates the committee's continued attention to the needs of livestock producers and the transportation challenges they face. We support the *BUILD America 250 Surface Transportation Reauthorization Act* with the inclusion of the Truck Weights Pilot Program, along with permanent ELD and HOS flexibility, as the bill advances.

Sincerely,

Gene Copenhaver, President  
National Cattlemen's Beef Association

