

STRENGTHENING AMERICA'S SUPPLY CHAIN

Note: This PDF provides a concise overview of the key aspects of legislation addressing ABMA's stance on the ongoing CDL shortage and supply chain issues. Additional details and updates can be obtained by subscribing to ABMA's weekly newsletter the Advocate

ABMA is engaged in advocating for a comprehensive supply chain legislation package which includes provisions from ABMA's 2023 priorities—the LICENCE Act and SHIP IT Act.

Background:

The House Transportation and Infrastructure Committee recently approved a comprehensive legislative package targeting the strengthening of the U.S. supply chain. This strategic initiative aims to address vulnerabilities and enhance efficiency in key areas. Central to this effort are the provisions derived from two pivotal pieces of legislation:

- **H.R. 3013 The LICENSE Act:** This legislation aims to make permanent two waivers issued by the Federal Motor Carrier Safety Administration (FMCSA) in response to the COVID-19 pandemic. These waivers alleviate regulatory hurdles for Commercial Driver License (CDL) testing and allow commercial learner's permit (CLP) holders to operate trucks with licensed CDL drivers in the cab, not just the front seat.
- **H.R. 471 The SHIP IT Act:** Allows for special permits during national emergencies, grants for truck driver training, tax credits for commercial truck drivers, and funding for commercial vehicle parking projects. Additionally, it seeks to improve safety data collection and exemption for zero-emission vehicles, addressing critical needs in the trucking industry.

Other provisions include:

- **H.R.2367 - Truck Parking Safety Improvement Act:** Fixes problems with truck parking and makes it easier for truck drivers to find places to rest.
- **H.R. 3372 - To amend title 23, United States Code:** Establishes an axle weight tolerance for certain commercial motor vehicles transporting dry bulk goods providing regulatory clarity and flexibility.
- **H. R. 3408 - The DRIVE Safe Integrity Act:** Creates a training program for drivers under 21 focused on teaching and keeping young drivers safe.
- **H. R. 3365 - The Supply Chain Improvement Act:** By focusing on projects that enhance supply chain resilience, the bill aims to strengthen the nation's infrastructure and promote efficiency and reliability in the transportation of goods.

What ABMA Members Should Know:

The COVID-19 pandemic led to driver layoffs, health concerns, and training disruptions in the trucking industry, resulting in a record deficit of 80,000 drivers in 2021. While strides have been made, supply chain vulnerabilities remain. Due to continued disruptions, a freight recession occurred in 2023. Moreover, the ongoing challenge of recruiting drivers, particularly from the younger workforce, persists as a significant issue for the industry. Projections indicate that the shortage of over 60,000 drivers in 2023 is anticipated to escalate to 82,000 in 2024.

For more information and advocacy support, please contact the ABMA Government Relations Office: Francis Palasieski fpalasieski@abmalliance.org 518-880-6376.