



January 19, 2014

US Department of Transportation
1200 New Jersey Ave, SE
Washington, DC 20590

Dear Secretary Foxx:

The Agriculture Transportation Coalition (AgTC) is writing to voice our support of your recent announcement to allow Mexican motor carriers to apply for authority to conduct long-haul, cross-border trucking services in the United States.

The Agriculture Transportation Coalition's membership encompasses virtually all agriculture and forest products exported from the United States, as well as imports of these products. These products are grown, raised, processed, packaged and shipped from all regions of the U.S. on our highways to our land and sea ports, and then on to markets worldwide. Domestic transportation efficiency plays a critical role in determining the competitiveness of our U.S. exports in foreign markets.

We applaud the Department of Transportation for announcing this action for the following reasons:

- It permanently ends retaliatory tariffs on agriculture products. By allowing drivers across the border, it will permanently end the more than \$2 billion in annual retaliatory tariffs on U.S. exports of agriculture, personal care products, and manufacturing goods which have devastated US agriculture sales to our largest export market for food and agriculture. (The tariffs paused in 2011 when the Department enacted the Mexico driver pilot program.) Removing this threat is vital to the US agriculture economy.
- It relieves the pressures of the US truck driver shortage. American Trucking Associations estimates a shortage of 30,000 truck drivers in the US and growing, as truckers reach retirement age, and younger drivers are not filling in their ranks. Mexico based drivers will not be taking jobs away from US drivers, rather they will be filling a much needed gap, and increasing efficiency for US import and export businesses.
- Existing driver safety standards. We appreciate your plan to hold Mexican truck carriers and their drivers to the same rigorous safety standards as their American counterparts. In fact we understand driver monitoring and truck inspections will be even more intensive than for US drivers/trucks.

On behalf of US food and forest products exporters, we thank the Department of Transportation for this important action in implementing this 22 year old commitment and facilitating efficient, safe, and reliable cross-border trade between the United States and Mexico.

Sincerely,

Peter Friedmann
Executive Director
Agriculture Transportation Coalition