



April 8, 2024

Members of the U.S. House of Representatives
Washington, DC 20515

Dear Members of the House of Representatives,

We are writing to share the Commercial Vehicle Training Association (CVTA)'s support for H.R. 6655, *A Stronger Workforce for America Act*. This legislation reauthorizes the Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act (WIOA).

CVTA is the largest association of truck driver training programs in the U.S. CVTA's membership includes 95 schools with over 400 training locations in 46 states. Our members are the largest collective source of entry-level truck drivers in the nation, training 100,000 new drivers each year.

H.R. 6655 contains many provisions that establish a strong foundation for the nation's workforce development system. These provisions allow state leaders to innovate their workforce development programs to meet the needs of all workforce development stakeholders, provide additional support to dislocated workers seeking to develop their skills and connect to high-quality jobs, and authorize stable funding that will better position WIOA to support jobseekers aiming to enter high-demand fields like the trucking industry.

CVTA supports the following critical reforms included in H.R. 6655:

- **Establishment of Critical Industry Skills Funds:** Section 143 designates Critical Industry Skills Funds as a statewide allowable activity. This provision empowers states to identify workforce development priorities and provide additional resources to upskilling jobseekers in these priority industries.
- **Regional Consortia for Workforce Development Areas:** Section 115 establishes a process for local areas to form a regional consortium and allows governors to provide incentives for the formation of these consortia. These consortia can better ensure that jobseekers are connected to industries and employers with a positive impact on a region's economy.
- **Creation of State Innovation Demonstration Authority:** Section 193 creates a demonstration authority that allows approved bodies to receive their allocation as a consolidated grant with increased flexibility. Like the establishment of critical industry funds, this provision empowers state and regional decisionmakers more closely engaged with regional economies to improve outcomes for workers by piloting innovative ways to deliver services.
- **Streamlined Application Processes for Eligible Training Providers:** Section 122 requires eligibility determinations within 30 days of application submission and minimizes administrative burdens for training providers that provide training services in multiple states.
- **Strong Funding Foundation Under Authorized Appropriations:** Section 145 authorizes appropriations for Fiscal Years 2025 through 2030 at a rate that is three percent higher than the final appropriations figure for Fiscal Year 2023. These funding levels, if appropriated, would better position WIOA to connect jobseekers to the training and upskilling services they need to succeed in today's economy.

- **New Funding for Individual Training Accounts for Dislocated Workers:** Section 302 provides targeted assistance to dislocated workers that ensures the funds available to jobseekers will be enough to cover professional training programs.

Thousands of students utilize WIOA to get professional training at CVTA member schools each year. 9,516 students completed training at CVTA member schools in Program Year 2019, according to the most recent data available. 87 percent of students completed their programs. 73 percent of students were employed after 6 months.

The professional truck driver training programs offered by CVTA's membership provide students with the training they need to get their Commercial Driver's License (CDL) and succeed in the workforce. CVTA members provide students with training that surpasses federal minimum training requirements for entry-level truck drivers. Owing to that, CVTA member schools maintain hiring relationships with leading carriers that allow new CMV drivers to have job offers immediately upon completion of their training.

Truck driver training sets people on the path towards a rewarding, family-sustaining career. Truck driving jobs had median wages of \$55,000 to \$85,000 in 2021, according to a compensation survey conducted by the American Trucking Associations (ATA).¹ At least three-in-four carriers surveyed by ATA offered employment benefits including paid holidays, paid leave, health insurance, and retirement plans.

Truck driver training also helps support critical functions of the nation's supply chain. The trucking industry faced a shortage of nearly 78,000 drivers in 2022, according to ATA analysis. Over the next decade, the industry will need to add over 1 million drivers to support industry growth and replace drivers who leave the industry due to retirement or other factors.²

CVTA members appreciate Committee leadership putting forward a bipartisan WIOA reauthorization proposal featuring many strong policies that will support all workforce development stakeholders in the years to come. We ask for your support in passage of this bill on the floor of the U.S. House of Representatives.

For more information on these matters, please contact Kyle Hayes, CVTA's Vice President of Government Affairs, at kyle.hayes@cvta.org or 703-642-9444.

Sincerely,



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Chairman
Commercial Vehicle Training Association



Andrew Poliakoff
Executive Director
Commercial Vehicle Training Association

¹ American Trucking Associations, "2022 Driver Compensation Study: Advanced Executive Summary," June 30, 2022, https://ata.msgfocus.com/files/amf_highroad_solution/project_2358/ATA_2022_Driver_Compensation_Study_-_Press_Executive_Summary.pdf

² American Trucking Associations (ATA), "Driver Shortage Update 2022," October 25, 2022, https://ata.msgfocus.com/files/amf_highroad_solution/project_2358/ATA_Driver_Shortage_Report_2022_Executive_Summary.October22.pdf