

Congress of the United States
House of Representatives

The Honorable Bill Shuster
Chairman
House Transportation & Infrastructure Committee
2251 Rayburn House Office Building
Washington, D.C. 20515

The Honorable Jim Inhofe
Chairman
Senate Environment & Public Works Committee
410 Dirksen Senate Office Building
Washington, D.C. 20510

The Honorable Peter DeFazio
Ranking Member
House Transportation & Infrastructure Committee
2164 Rayburn House Office Building
Washington, D.C. 20515

The Honorable Barbara Boxer
Ranking Member
Senate Environment & Public Works Committee
456 Dirksen Senate Office Building
Washington, D.C. 20510

November 20, 2015

Chairman Shuster, Chairman Inhofe, Ranking Member DeFazio, and Ranking Member Boxer:

We write to commend you on your work to pass bipartisan long-term surface transportation legislation that will lead to much needed investment in our nation's infrastructure, institute vital reforms, and give our constituents greater certainty about the future level of federal support for surface transportation programs. We also write to support the retention of language contained in Section 11203 of the Senate's *Developing a Reliable and Innovative Vision for the Economy (DRIVE) Act* that provides a level playing field between natural gas and diesel long-haul trucks:

NATURAL GAS VEHICLES.—A vehicle, if operated by an engine fueled primarily by natural gas, may exceed any vehicle weight limit (up to a maximum gross vehicle weight of 82,000 pounds) under this section by an amount that is equal to the difference between—

- (1) the weight of the vehicle attributable to the natural gas tank and fueling system carried by that vehicle; and
- (2) the weight of a comparable diesel tank and fueling system.

Natural gas is clean, affordable, and abundantly available in many parts of our country. As a result, the trucking industry has shown considerable interest in incorporating natural gas-fueled vehicles into their fleets. To meet this demand, many truck and engine manufacturers have invested in developing powerful and efficient natural gas engines and equipment. Fueling providers have also undertaken significant efforts to provide the infrastructure necessary to support liquefied natural gas (LNG) and compressed natural gas (CNG) vehicles.

Unfortunately, despite the benefits of natural gas, inflexible federal weight restrictions provide a disincentive to firms and owner-operators.

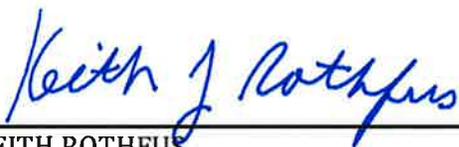
The tanks and fueling equipment required to operate a truck using natural gas can weigh between 1,600 and 2,500 pounds more than a comparable diesel system. With a strict federal weight limit set at 80,000 pounds, natural gas trucks are forced to carry 2 to 3 percent less cargo.

This hinders the adoption of more natural gas long-haul trucks into trucking fleets and slows the continued development of the fueling infrastructure that will be necessary to allow for greater use of LNG and CNG. We believe that natural gas shows tremendous promise as a viable transportation fuel and occupies an important place in America's "all of the above" energy strategy.

Remedying this imbalance will ensure that natural gas can remain an economical choice for America's motor carriers. Accordingly, we strongly support retaining this reasonable and commonsense provision to allow trucks to operate with natural gas fuel tanks and fueling equipment on a level playing field with their diesel counterparts.

We thank you for your commitment to this bipartisan effort and encourage you to retain the Senate language to ensure that natural gas can continue to be a viable option for fueling long-haul trucks.

Sincerely,



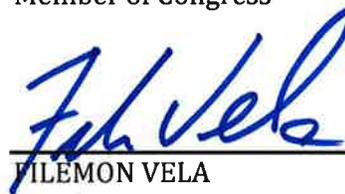
KEITH ROTHFUS
Member of Congress



TIM RYAN
Member of Congress



ALEX MOONEY
Member of Congress



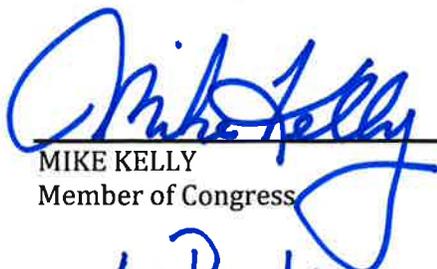
FILEMON VELA
Member of Congress



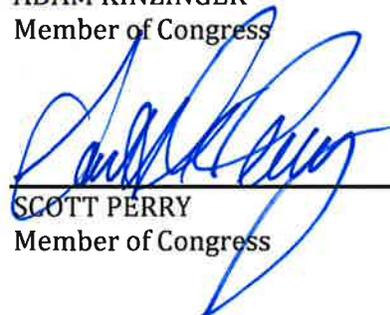
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Member of Congress



ADAM KINZINGER
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MIKE KELLY
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SCOTT PERRY
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