

January 8, 2018

Via email & regulations.gov

Cathy F. Gautreaux,
Deputy Administrator
Federal Motor Carrier Administration
1200 New Jersey Avenue SE
Washington, DC 20590

RE: Hours of Service of Drivers of Commercial Motor Vehicles; Proposed Regulatory Guidance Concerning the Transportation of Agricultural Commodities [Docket No. FMCSA–2017–0360]

On behalf of the undersigned organizations representing several segments of the agricultural industry, the Agricultural & Food Transporters Conference (AFTC) requests a 30-day extension to the comment period for the proposed guidance concerning the transportation of Agricultural Commodities that was published in the Federal Register on December 20, 2017 (see 82 Federal Register 60360).

The Agricultural and Food Transporters Conference is the national organization representing motor carrier and allied members of the American Trucking Associations on critical issues affecting agricultural commodity and food transportation. Founded in 1995, AFTC's mission is to increase the safety, security, profitability and efficiency of transporters of agricultural commodities, food, forest products and natural resources; and to serve as the advocate for its members within the American Trucking Associations and before the government, other organizations and the public.

Our coalition has been working closely with FMCSA over the past few years to ensure our products continue to be transported in a safe and efficient manner, while minimizing any unnecessary burdensome requirements. Most recently we secured an exemption, and subsequently a change in law, to the mandatory 30 minute rest break for livestock haulers during their first eight hours of on-duty time. This modification of regulation is representative of positive change for an industry that requires additional flexibility to safely transport their products.

As you know, the agricultural exemption to the HOS rule has been in place since 1995. The exemption, along with our respective industries, has evolved over time and the current FMCSA proposal is an understanding by the Agency that our industry continues to evolve to this day. We are thankful to the Agency for providing this opportunity to comment, but due to the complexity of the issue and the diversity of our different industries, we request this extension of the comment period in order to properly address each segment's needs, respectively.

Thank you for your consideration of our request. I look forward to your response and am available should you have any questions, comments, or concerns.

Sincerely,



Jon Samson
Executive Director
Agricultural & Food Transporters Conference of ATA

On Behalf of:

American Beekeeping Federation
American Cattle Transporters Advisory Group
American Farm Bureau Federation
American Horse Council
American Sheep Industry Association
American Quarter Horse Association
California Cattlemen's Association
Florida Cattlemen's Association
Iowa Cattlemen's Association
Kansas Livestock Association
Livestock Marketing Association
Montana Stockgrowers Association
National Aquaculture Association
National Cattlemen's Beef Association
National Milk Producers Federation
National Pork Producers Council
Nebraska Cattlemen's Association
North American Meat Institute
Professional Rodeo Cowboys Association
Texas Cattle Feeders Association
U.S Cattlemen's Association
Wyoming Stock Growers Association

cc: Tom Yager, Chief, Driver and Carrier Operations Div. (MC-PSD)