



Owner-Operator Independent Drivers Association

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T&I Dems choose trial lawyers over truckers

OOIDA opposes House highway bill after pro-trucker amendments fail in partisan markup

(Washington D.C., June 10, 2021) – At 5 am eastern this morning, when many truckers were either starting their day or still asleep in their cabs, the U.S. House Transportation & Infrastructure Committee passed a highly partisan highway bill, H.R. 3284, the *INVEST in America Act*. After several pro-trucker amendments were rejected on largely party line votes, OOIDA opposed the legislation, which now awaits consideration on the House floor. OOIDA’s opposition was cemented when Democratic members of Committee unanimously voted against an amendment that would have prevented an unnecessary increase in motor carriers’ minimum liability insurance from \$750,000 to \$2 million. The amendment, offered by Rep. Mike Bost (R-IL), failed on a largely party line vote with one Republican, Rep. Brian Fitzpatrick (R-PA), joining Committee Democrats in opposition.

“Democrats on the T&I Committee had a choice to make,” said Todd Spencer, President and CEO of OOIDA. “They could have stood with OOIDA members, farmers, ranchers, manufacturers, builders and every other business engaged in trucking who strongly opposed this increase or vote to further line the pockets of trial lawyers, some of their most reliable political contributors. Unfortunately, they once again uniformly chose trial lawyers over truckers.”

The Association is not alone in its fight against an increase to the minimum liability insurance for motor carriers. OOIDA is leading a group of [more than 60 organizations](#) in the trucking, agriculture, materials, manufacturing and towing industries to fight any potential increases.

During debate last night, several Republican members of the Committee spoke in support of the amendment to strike the insurance increase, making impassioned appeals to their colleagues to stand with truckers. In addition to Congressman Bost, Reps. Rodney Davis (R-IL), Garret Graves (R-LA), Doug LaMalfa (R-CA), Dusty Johnson (R-SD), Jefferson Van Drew (R-NJ), Michael Guest (R-MS), Beth Van Duyne (R-TX), Pete Stauber (R-MN), Carlos Gimenez (R-FL), Troy Balderson (R-OH), and the Committee's Ranking Member Sam Graves (R-MO) voiced their support for removing the poison pill provision.

"We want to thank Rep. Bost and his Republican colleagues on the Committee for aggressively fighting with us to prevent this unnecessary increase," said Spencer. "Our fight will continue as this bill moves to the House floor and the Senate advances its own legislation. We'll work with lawmakers from both parties to stop this harmful policy from ever becoming law."

Several other amendments championed by OOIDA were also rejected during the highly-partisan markup, including measures to prevent an automatic emergency braking (AEB) mandate, excessive screening requirements for obstructive sleep apnea, the initial step toward a side underride guard mandate, greater restrictions on the use of personal conveyance, and the expanded use of electronic logging device (ELD) data for transportation research.

"While this bill will likely pass the House in a few weeks, we're relieved it has zero chance of advancing in the U.S. Senate," Spencer continued. "We're extremely disappointed our efforts to improve the legislation for truckers were flatly rejected by Committee Democrats, but many of the most problematic provisions that remain in the bill are simply too controversial to gather sufficient support in the Senate."

The Owner-Operator Independent Drivers Association is the largest national trade association representing the interests of small-business trucking professionals and professional truck drivers. The Association currently has more than 150,000 members nationwide. OOIDA was established in 1973 and is headquartered in the greater Kansas City, Mo. area.

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