



Greg Gianforte
Congress of the United States

Montana
November 29, 2017

The Honorable Elaine Chao
Secretary
U.S. Department of Transportation
1200 New Jersey Ave, SE
Washington DC, DC 20090

Dear Secretary Chao,

I am writing today requesting an exception from the Electronic Logging Device (ELD) mandate for loading time for agricultural products. The ELD mandate entered the compliance stage on December 18, 2017, and is set to have full compliance by December 16, 2019.

Agriculture is consistently Montana's leading industry. According to the United States Department of Agriculture, Montana's 59.8 million acres of farm and ranch land is the second largest for a state in the nation only behind Texas. In 2015, the Montana agriculture industry generated \$4.6 billion in state industrial revenue. This revenue was \$1.5 billion more than the next leading industry. Of this \$4.6 billion, over \$2.1 billion came from the livestock production. According to the Montana Office of Economic Development, Montana is the sixth-ranked beef cattle producing state in the nation.

The ELD mandate does not account for the load times livestock haulers have during the livestock shipping process. These wait times reduce the amount of time that the driver has on the road. These drivers already have long distances to travel. With this mandate, drivers will not be able to get out of Montana, much less to their destination. This will force drivers to either leave the livestock on the trucks overnight or unload them, both of which increase stress on the animals. The added stress and lack of feed will reduce the weight of the livestock, leading to a reduction of profit for the livestock producers. The ELD mandate will also come at an extreme cost to the transportation industry. The cost ELD to the transportation industry is estimated to be nearly \$2 billion.

The Federal Motor Carrier Safety Administration (FMCSA) has acknowledged what the mandate will do to livestock haulers. In response to these concerns, FMCSA granted a 90-day delay to the ELD mandate for livestock haulers. This action is helpful, does not go far enough. This issue is a complex and needs more time to develop a proper strategy to address all the concerns.

Barring an exception, I would request a further delay to the ELD mandate to allow livestock haulers more time to better cultivate a strategy to overcome these wait times. It will also help give businesses more time to update their trucks with ELDs in the most cost-efficient way.

I appreciate your attention to this matter.

Sincerely,



Greg Gianforte
U.S. Representative