

Congress of the United States
Washington, DC 20515

May 4, 2011

The Honorable Ray LaHood
Secretary
U.S. Department of Transportation
1200 New Jersey Avenue Southeast
Washington, D.C. 20590

Dear Secretary LaHood:

We are writing to express our concerns over the announced agreement between the U.S. and Mexico regarding cross border trucking. Based on the recently released details by the Department of Transportation, we have concerns that this proposed program could impact the safety of our roads and may create a security breach along our southern border.

Over the years, Congress has demonstrated its opposition to this ill-advised program. In 2007, votes were taken to require safety related restrictions to the pilot program and, in 2009, the pilot program was terminated by Congress. While we understand the need to work to remove the unfair tariffs that Mexico has imposed on U.S. agriculture products as a result, doing so should not come at the expense of the safety of our highways.

The earlier demonstration project showed serious gaps in the Federal Motor Carrier Safety Administration's (FMCSA) ability to properly manage the program when they failed to assure that every Mexican truck was properly inspected at the border. This is critical from a safety perspective to ensure that the vehicle is being operated by a licensed driver and has completed a safety inspection. With the limited number of Mexican trucks that participated in this demonstration there is concern with the FMCSA's ability to properly monitor a future demonstration project.

In addition, the program will require that Mexican motor carriers have Electronic On Board Recorders (EOBRs) on their vehicles. This requirement comes at the same time FMCSA is working on a rulemaking to require EIBRs for all U.S. carriers. An appalling difference, however, is that funds from the Highway Trust Fund will be used to pay for these devices for Mexican truckers while U.S. drivers will be required to pay for their EOBRs themselves. We feel this is an inappropriate use of the highway funds and an unreasonable expenditure for taxpayers.

More importantly with the recent rise in violence in Mexico and the changing tactics of the Mexican drug cartels, we are also concerned that moving forward with this cross border trucking program at this time is not in the best interests for security along our border. The El Paso Intelligence Center reports that commercial vehicles are widely-used by Mexican drug

trafficking organizations. Setting up a program that allows Mexican long-haul trucks to cross the border and move freely throughout the U.S. could increase this method of smuggling by the drug cartels and serve as a resource for their criminal activity.

Again, we do not believe this cross border trucking program is in the best interests of the taxpayer or our security. The current system of Mexican carriers operating within a defined commercial zone is working well for both safety and border security. We strongly oppose the Administration's cross-border trucking proposal.

With best wishes.

Sincerely,



Duncan Hunter
Member of Congress



Nick Rahall
Member of Congress



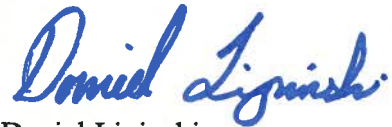
Candice Miller
Member of Congress



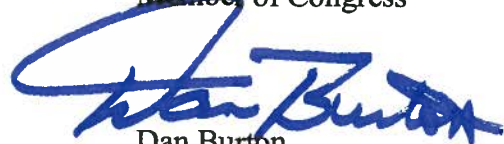
Bob Filner
Member of Congress



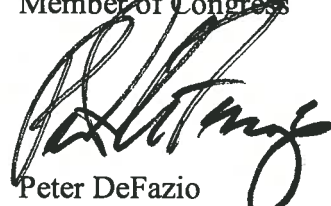
Walter Jones
Member of Congress



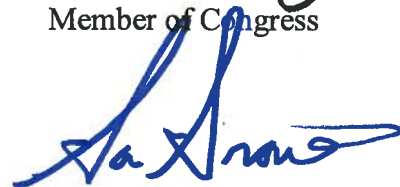
Daniel Lipinski
Member of Congress



Dan Burton
Member of Congress



Peter DeFazio
Member of Congress



Sam Graves
Member of Congress



Gary Miller
Member of Congress



James McGovern
Member of Congress



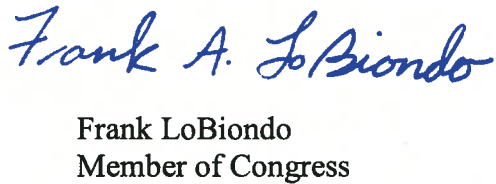
Steven LaTourette
Member of Congress



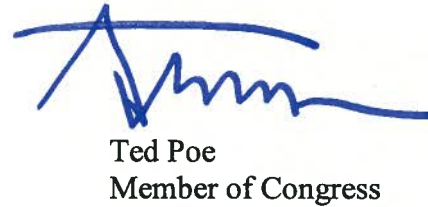
Shelley Berkley
Member of Congress



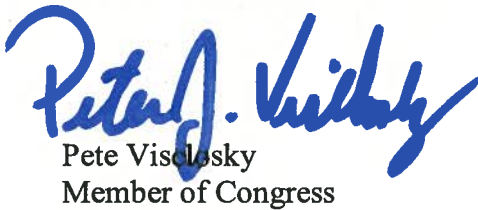
Betty Sutton
Member of Congress



Frank LoBiondo
Member of Congress



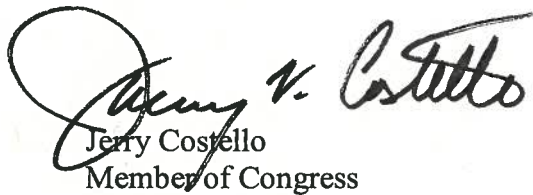
Ted Poe
Member of Congress



Pete Viselovsky
Member of Congress



Mike Michaud
Member of Congress



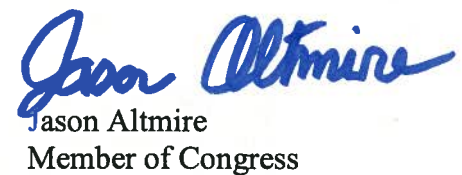
Jerry Costello
Member of Congress



Leonard Boswell
Member of Congress



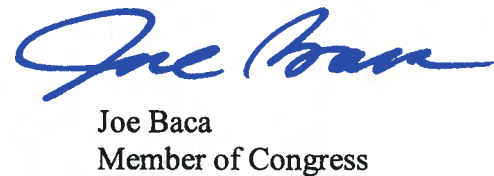
Tim Ryan
Member of Congress



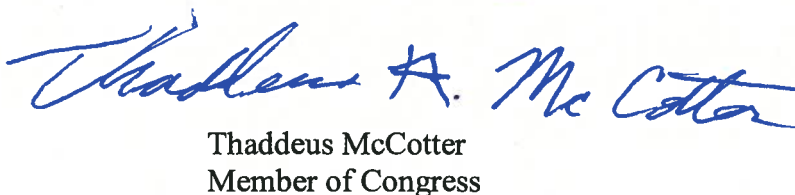
Jason Altmire
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Bill Huizenga
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Joe Baca
Member of Congress



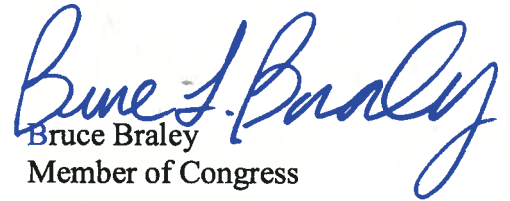
Thaddeus McCotter
Member of Congress



Loretta Sanchez
Member of Congress



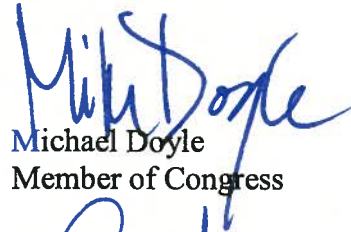
Alcee Hastings
Member of Congress



Bruce Braley
Member of Congress



Linda Sanchez
Member of Congress



Michael Doyle
Member of Congress



Elijah Cummings
Member of Congress



Pete Stark
Member of Congress



Russ Carnahan
Member of Congress



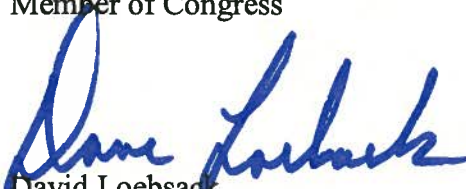
Andre Carson
Member of Congress



Mark Critz
Member of Congress



Bill Pascrell
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David Loebsack
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Michael Capuano
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Chris Smith
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Jon Runyan
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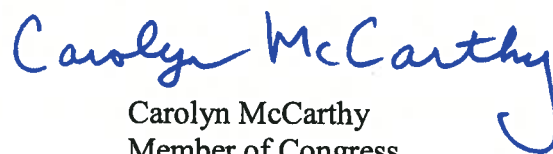
Gary Peters
Member of Congress



Tim Holden
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Martin Heinrich
Member of Congress



Carolyn McCarthy
Member of Congress